

SESSION 05 – REVELATION CHAPTER ONE – PART III

¹⁰*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Saris and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."* (Rev. 1:10-11 ESV)

I. THE DAY OF THE LORD AND THE CHURCH

- A. Before John describes his first visual encounter, he has an audible *voice of the LORD* experience. This is consistent with Old Testament *appearings* of Yahweh.

¹...*The word of Yahweh was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.* (1 Sam. 3:1 LEB)

Notice the direct connection between the *word of Yahweh* and *visions*. Heiser makes the observation this sets the reader up for an expectation of a *word-vision* experience for Samuel. And that's exactly what happens.

Samuel keeps hearing a voice calling his name while he's trying to sleep... After hearing the voice a third time, Eli realizes that it is Yahweh who is calling and instructs Samuel how to respond if it happens again. Samuel goes back to bed. The narrative resumes in verse 10: "Then Yahweh came and stood there and called out as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, because your servant is listening.'" The description has Yahweh standing before Samuel... The first verse of the chapter makes a clear association between the Word of the Lord and a visionary experience—not a mere auditory event. The idea of the visible Word—the visible Yahweh—in human form is nailed down by the "standing" language.¹

- B. Another example of the *word-vision* experience can be seen with Jeremiah². Notice the following:

⁴And *the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,* ⁵*"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I consecrated you; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."* ...⁹*Then Yahweh stretched out his hand and he touched my mouth,* and Yahweh said to me, "Look, I have put my words in your mouth." (Jer. 1:4-9 LEB)

Here we see the *word of Yahweh* came to Jeremiah, then *He, the Word*, stretched out *His hand*. Audible sounds don't have hands. Yahweh Himself does, at least Yahweh in *Image Form* does (see Col. 1:15; *he is the image of the invisible God*).

¹ Heiser, Michael S.. *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (pp. 130-131). Lexham Press. Kindle Edition.

² *Ibid.*, p. 132

- C. John's experience here then is fully in context with Old Testament prophetic experience which he communicates to his readers from the rich source of the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings. As we will see in the following verses, just as the *word came then the vision* John will *hear the word then see the Word*. He makes a point before hand in verse 10 to tell us what *day* he experienced this vision. *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."*
- D. It is almost universal this *day* is a reference to a Sunday. The reason for that however is not fully evaluated. Mounce is short and to the point, "It is the Lord's day because on the first day of the week Christ rose victorious from the grave."³ And this is the point. To speak of the *Lord's Day* is in fact to speak of His resurrection. But that also carries the already-and-not yet truth of Resurrection as the singular point of inaugurated eschatology; that is, it is the event that began and made available the power of the age to come to those who follow, believe, and confess Jesus is LORD because those who enter *that age* enter by way of Resurrection, being *children* of the Resurrection (See Luke 20:34-36).
- E. This Passover feast was celebrated the day after the weekly Sabbath of in the Seven Days of Hag haMatza (Unleavened Bread)⁴. This means the Sunday following the Saturday Sabbath of that week. This means the Resurrection took place on Day 8 of Passover, or on the Day of the New Creation. We will see this Day again at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot).
- ¹⁰ "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you shall **bring the sheaf of the first fruits** of your harvest **to the priest**. ¹¹ He shall **raise the sheaf before the LORD**, that you may find acceptance; **on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall raise it...** ¹⁵ "And from the day after the Sabbath, from the day on which you bring the sheaf of the elevation offering, you shall count seven full weeks. ¹⁶ You **shall count until the day after the seventh Sabbath, fifty days; then you shall present an offering of new grain to the LORD**. (Lev. 23:10-16; Num. 28:26 NRSVue)
- F. Jesus, the First fruits of those *who are asleep*, in Him *all will be made alive*, each in order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then comes the end...for He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. (1 Cor. 15:20-26). Jesus was raised, and fifty days later at Pentecost the offering of new grain (the New Believers) were offered to Yahweh, by the New Great High King-Priest, Yeshua. The priesthood had changed. The old Levitical order was replaced by the New Order *after* Melchizedek. (Heb. 5:10; 7-8)⁵

³ Robert H. Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 56.

⁴ <https://www.thetorah.com/article/the-three-shavuot-festivals-of-qumran-wheat-wine-and-oil>; tons of discussion about whether it was the Mid-Week Sabbath that began Unleavened Bread, but here is a Qumran calendar and it shows us what and how it was recognized and celebrated in the 2TP.

⁵ Heb. 8:7 translation adds *covenant* for clarity, according to the translators. The word *diathekes* (covenant) is not present as in 8:6. The author *knew* the word because he had just used it. Intent then is to read the omitted word in context to *what had fault*. Was it the covenant or the Levites of Chapter 7 that were the mediators of the Sinai Covenant? 8:13 also omits *covenant* and reads "A new____, He has made the first obsolete." It is clear the context is pointing to the Levitical priesthood and not the Covenant he just said God was going to put in their hearts and minds. It would be odd for him to say, "God is going to write His Torah (Laws) in your hearts and then in the next

- G. We again see the Eight Day or *the Lord's Day* of John's writing in Revelation 1:10 in the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, or Sukkot. The Seven Day feast ended with an *extra day (or two days)*, the Eight Day, *Simchat Torah, the Joy of Torah*. This is literally *the conclusion and restart* (the ending and beginning) of the Torah reading cycle. However, this points to the Living Word who is the beginning and the end. We have a full expectation of this age ending and a new one beginning when He returns. Yet we can experience this now in part as the resurrection from the dead has already begun. As believers we already begin now to engage in the Eighth Day *Simchat Torah*, the Joy of the Living Word, the Joy of Jesus Himself. He ended the power of death and began the resurrection, and in effect leads us into the Sabbath Rest (Heb. 4:1-8).
- H. The *last day* of Sukkot is called *Hoshana Rabbah*. John 7:2 outlines the context of the words and deeds of Jesus in the feast of Sukkot (*the Feast of Booths*). Verse 37 says,

³⁷ Now **on the last day of the festival, Hoshana Rabbah**, Yeshua stood and cried out, "**If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to me and drinking!**" ³⁸ Whoever puts his trust in me, as the Scripture says, **rivers of living water will flow from his inmost being!**" ³⁹ (Now **he said this about the Spirit**, whom those who trusted in him were to receive later—the Spirit had not yet been given, because Yeshua had not yet been glorified.) ⁶

The end of Sukkot then speaks of a promised outpouring of His Spirit that *began* on Pentecost and continues to be available for us today. The *Lord's Day* then is not just about a random *Sunday* John notated in his letter to the Seven Churches. It pointed to something greater. He was *in the Spirit* on the *Lord's Day*. Or He was in the Spirit on the Eight Day, a perpetual *Simchat Torah*, the entering into *Sabbath Rest*.

- I. Revelation 1:10 then says the *Voice* John heard speaking was like a *trumpet*. "His prophetic authority is enforced by the description of the voice that he heard as "a great voice as a trumpet," evoking the same voice that Moses heard when Yahweh revealed himself to him on Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:16, 19–20). This idea is emphasized further by the command to "write in a book," which is reflective of the charge given by Yahweh to his prophetic servants to communicate to Israel the revelation that they had received (LXX: Exod. 17:14; Isa. 30:8; Jer. 37:2; 39:44; Tob. 12:20)."
- J. The *Voice is standing behind him*. And says to John, "Write what you *see* in a book and it to the seven churches...Ephesus...Smyrna...Pergamum...Thyatira...Sardis...Philadelphia...and to Laodicea." These were seven literal congregations or assemblies of believers in these cities. They all were present in Asia Minor

breath say, "But it's going to pass away." Rather, the Priesthood was being replaced by a New Priest. The old was growing old, and the New was set in place. A New Mediator of the Covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁶ David H. Stern, [*Complete Jewish Bible: An English Version of the Tanakh \(Old Testament\) and B'rit Hadashah \(New Testament\)*](#), 1st ed. (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1998), Jn 7:37–39.

⁷ G. K. Beale; D. A. Carson. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Kindle Locations 41466–41469). Baker Books. Kindle Edition.

at the same time. Nothing in the text would indicate they are representative of *Seven Ages of Church History*.⁸

Dr. Sam Storms writes,

We should also note that the seven churches seem to fall into three groups. Group one would be the first and seventh, both of which are in danger of losing their identity as a Christian congregation. The second and sixth letters are written to churches that have proved themselves faithful and loyal to Christ's name. The three central letters (third, fourth, and fifth) have, to varying degrees, some people who have remained faithful and others who have not. Beale suggests that in light of this we should see the churches presented in the literary form of a chiasm:

A (first letter)
 B (second letter)
 C (third letter)
 C (fourth letter)
 C (fifth letter)
 B' (sixth letter)
A' (seventh letter)

The significance of this, notes Beale,

is that the Christian church as a whole is perceived as being in poor condition, since not only are the healthy churches in a minority but the literary pattern points to this emphasis because the churches in the worst condition form the literary boundaries of the letters and the churches with serious problems form the very core of the presentation. This is highlighted as we recognize that at the center of the middle letter stands a general statement that "all the churches will know" that Christ is the omniscient judge of his unfaithful followers (2: 23). This statement is conspicuous as the only thing said in the letters about all "churches" other than at the conclusion of each letter.⁹

All these factors add to the mystery and beauty of our Lord's very personal and always very pointed assessment of the state of the local church. Once we have taken into consideration the original historical setting of each church and the factors unique to each, there are numerous lessons of immense importance for us today that we ignore to our peril.⁹

II. THE SON OF MAN IN THE MIDST OF THE LAMPSTANDS – PART I

⁸ This notion was popularized by Clarence Larkin in 1919 in his *Book of Revelation* (see <https://folcc.org/the-seven-church-ages-in-revelation-reveal-we-are-approaching-the-rapture/>) and <https://www.blueletterbible.org/study/larkin/dt/22.cfm> ; then later plagiarized by William Branham (https://en.believetheesign.com/index.php?title=The_Seven_Churches_Ages&mobileaction=toggle_view_desktop) and <https://www.pastorjessmith.com/post/recent-findings-on-larkin-branham-and-the-church-ages>

⁹ Sam Storms. *To the One Who Conquers__50_Daily_Meditations__Sam_Storms* (Kindle Locations 223-243). Kindle Edition.

¹²Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. ¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. (Rev. 1:12-17a ESV)

- A. John turns to *see the Voice*. Upon turning he first sees Seven Golden Lampstands, or Menorahs, Jesus later defines as the Seven Churches (Rev. 1:20). What is the significance of the *lampstand* imagery?

⁵They offer worship in a sanctuary that is a sketch and shadow of the heavenly one, just as Moses was warned when he was about to erect the tent. For, God said, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain." (Heb. 8:5 NRSVue)

Exodus 25:31-37 describes the *pattern* of the Lampstand in the Tabernacle and later the Temple. It was to be made of pure gold. The word used for *pure* is applied not just of the metal without impurities, but the *pattern* of being free from defilement, not contaminated. Seven lamps were set on top of the seven branches to give light in the Holy Place for the priest to minister before Yahweh at the Table of the Presence and the Altar of Incense. We will see Tabernacle and Temple imagery later in Revelation (8:1-5; 11:19). John uses this imagery as it is applied to the Church on earth and its connection to the Temple in Heaven. The pattern of Moses became reality in the People of God on the earth in the Church. That is, Jewish/Israeli believers and all of the grafted in Gentile believers who are called *the Israel of God* (Gal. 6:16).

- B. That the Voice is in the midst of the Lampstands shows us the picture of not just Jesus walking among the Church, but the imagery of the Tabernacle and later the Temple. Inside of the Temple is the Church that bears the light of the Fire in the Lamps. Jesus' explanation of what the Tabernacle/Temple furniture *meant* that He showed to both Moses and David finds its reality in Jesus and the Church that reflect the pattern of the Heavenly Temple seen first in Eden and at the end of Revelation in the Mountain City, New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2-3; 10-11; 22-27). Jesus then is the Great High Priest serving before His God and Father, tending the oil, the fire, the bread of presence, and the incense of prayer and worship ascending before God, Himself interceding for us as a faithful High Priest.

¹⁷Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. (Heb. 2:17 NRSVue)

²⁴but he holds his priesthood permanently because he continues forever. ²⁵Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. (Heb. 7:24-25 NRSVue)

¹¹...For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, ¹² saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you." (Heb. 2:11-12 NRSVue)

⁸ When [Jesus] had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. (Rev. 5:8 NRSVue)

²And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³Another angel with a golden censer came and stood at the altar; he was given a great quantity of incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that is before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. (Rev. 8:2-4 NRSVue)

- C. We are to understand, then, the *kingdom of priests* from 1:5 fits within the context of the Lampstands as the Church on the earth and the place of ministering before Yahweh that gives light in and to the Holy Place. Of course, the holy *olive* oil is what is/was set on fire by the LORD Himself and maintained by the priests so it would burn continually. This imagery appears to be drawn from Zechariah 4.
- D. Mounce says, "The purpose of the church is to bear the light of the divine presence in a darkened world (Matt 5:14–16). Failing this, its reason for existence has disappeared (cf. Rev 2:5).¹⁰" Jesus calls faithful Israel the "light of the world" in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:14-16) and thus shows again the Royal Priesthood of the Church is not only ministering before Yahweh in His Presence, but it is also giving light to those in the domain of darkness.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matt. 5:14-16 NRSVue)

- E. Zechariah 4 begins with another vision given to him by an *angel*. "The *angel* who spoke with me came again..." What *angel spoke with him*, meaning he had already spoken with Zechariah. Chapter 1 fills in the narrative:

⁷ On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo: ⁸ In the night I saw a man mounted on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the shadows... ⁹ Then I said "What are these [horses] my lord?" The angel who spoke with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." ¹⁰ So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol the earth." ¹¹ Then I spoke to the angel of Yahweh who was standing among the myrtle trees... ¹² Then the angel of Yahweh said...¹³ Then Yahweh replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who spoke with me. (Zech. 1:7-17 NRSVue)

¹⁰ Robert H. Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 57.

Is the *angel* from this passage the *same* one in Zechariah 4? It is uncertain. However, this *messenger* continues to say, “This is the word of Yahweh to Zerubbabel...says Yahweh Tzav’ot.” In any case John is motivated by Holy Spirit to use this vision of Zechariah to form the language and imagery of the lampstands.

- F. The lampstands in Zechariah 4 are described as having two olive trees on the right and left with bowls of oil on each side, presumably providing the oil that burns in the lamps. Zechariah asks, “What are these?” The answer comes in Zechariah 4:10, “These are the eyes of Yahweh that range through the whole earth.” This points back to another reference from Zechariah 1:8-10 where the *man standing* between the myrtle shrubs says the *four horses and riders*, “these are those whom Yahweh has sent to patrol the earth.” These also represent the four winds/spirits/ruach from Daniel 7:2

³The eyes of Yahweh are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. (Prov. 15:3 ESV)

⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. (2 Chr. 16:9 NSAB)

¹⁷“For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity concealed from My eyes. (Jer. 16:17 NASB)

There is then a correlation between the Omnipresence and Omniscience of Yahweh and His use of the divine sons of God *and* the Church in describing *His* eyes ranging throughout the earth. It is *His* omniscience and omnipresence, *and* the use prophetic insight with the job duties of both the *angels* and the Church (both made of divine sons – mortal and immortal).

Notice again, Zechariah 4 explicitly states the seven lamps are the eyes of Yahweh that range the earth. Zechariah 1 says they are the four riders. Daniel says they are the four winds. John says the seven spirits or angels before the throne are associated with the seven stars and the seven churches. This is a massive *matrix of ideas*.¹¹ Within this box we see the Churches described as Lampstands in the Tabernacle or Temple.

[One] interpretation concludes that the two nouns “seven” in the phrase “seven and seven” function as multipliers, producing a total of forty-nine individual lights on the same lampstand.¹² This is derived from the text “*sib’ah* (seven) *nerote* (lamps) ‘*al e’ha sib’ah* (and seven) *w sib’ah* (seven) *musuqot* (lips). If one takes the literal rendering, 49 lamps would sit on 7 lampstands with 7 lamps on each. Which is what we see in Revelation 1.

¹¹ To borrow a well quoted phrase from the late Dr. Michael Heiser.

¹² Klein, George. New American Commentary Vol. 21B: Zechariah (Kindle Locations 4779-4780). B&H Publishing. Kindle Edition

- G. The two olive branches providing the oil “are the two sons of oil”¹³ (*bene ha yishar (oil)*). The language used evokes the imagery of divine favor to be bestowed upon those who rebuild God’s house and reestablish stability in the land. The double leadership that will effect this project is thus given divine sanction – both trees stand next to God...The priestly leader is placed on par with the [kingly] political administrator.

As in chapter 3, the verb *cmd* (“to stand”) signifies a Divine Council scene. Although in the former instance “before” establishes the position of Joshua as an individual in Yahweh’s presence the use here of *cal* (“by”) is appropriate to the two figures situated near Yahweh. A royal court, with ruler and courtiers, is designated in this fashion in Judg 3:19 where Eglon, King of Moab, appears with his attendants, “all who stood by him.” The Heavenly Court is likewise indicated in 1 Kgs 22:19, where the prophet Micaiah reports having seen Yahweh enthroned with the heavenly host “standing by him.” Further, those attendants are situated “on his right” and “on his left.” This additional information about the positioning of those with access to Yahweh recalls the description in verses 3 and 11 of the two olive trees on the left and on the right of the lampstand, which symbolizes the divine presence. The two trees then must represent two figures who stand in close relationship with Yahweh.¹⁴ Or, not necessarily *two figures only*, rather *two profiles*, a Priest and a King, who together make *One (echad)* Person, a King Priest after the Order of Melchizedek.

- H. These *two* are represented by *Zerubbabel and Joshua*. Zerubbabel was the governor of Judah and was the political leader who led the temple project. Hagai 1:1 shows him as a descendant of David being the grandson of Jehoiachin and is in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:12-13; Lunk 3:27).

Although Zerubbabel is never mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah with his official title (פָּחָת, *pachath*), his status as an administrator is obvious in the descriptions of his actions. For example:

- He led a group of exiles back to Judah (Ezra 2:2; Neh 7:7; 12:1).
- Aided by Joshua, he “set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem” (Ezra 5:2 NRSV).
- Along with the elders of the community, he determined that the temple’s reconstruction would be a Judean affair (Ezra 4:2–3).¹⁵

Joshua son of Jehozadak is the other son of oil, standing before Yahweh. We know this from Zechariah 3:1, “And he showed me ***Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh.***”

Joshua appears in [Ezr 3:2](#) with Zerubbabel at the head of the returned exiles and as leader in the work of building an altar and reestablishing sacrificial worship (538 or 537 BC). [Ezr 3:8](#) tells of their laying the

¹³ Meyers, Carol L, and Eric M Meyers. *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8 : A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Editorial: Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 2004, p. 238.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 259

¹⁵ David B. Schreiner, “Zerubbabel, Son of Shealtiel,” ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

foundation of the temple, and in [4:1 ff](#) the two heads of the community refuse to allow the Samaritans to coöperate in the building operations, with the result that the would-be helpers became active opponents of the work. Building then ceased until Haggai and Zechariah in 520 ([Ezr 5](#); [Hag 1:1–11](#)) exhort the community to restart work, and the two leaders take the lead ([Hag 1:12–15](#)). The following are, in chronological order, the prophetic utterances in which J. is spoken of: (1) [Hag 1:1–11](#); (2) [Hag 2:1–9](#); (3) [Zec 1:1–6](#); (4) [Hag 2:10–19](#); (5) [Hag 2:20–23](#); (6) the visions of [Zec 1:7–6:8](#) together with (7) the undated utterance of [Zec 6:9–15](#).

- *The Vision of Zec 3:1–10*. He stood before the angel of Yahweh and *the* Satan came and accused Joshua for his *filthy garments*. The Angel said for his garments to be removed and clothed with *rich garments*. The Hebrew for *rich garments* is *mahalasot*, *ḥalaša* to be pure, white especially fine, white garments, **festival dress**¹⁶
 - *Joshua's Crown, Zech 6:9–15*. The command to take silver and gold and make a crown and set it on the head, not of Zerubbabel the son of David, rather on the head of Joshua (Heb. Yehoshua; Gr. Iesous (Jesus)). Clearly the Messianic motif is in full display for here Joshua/Iesous is presented as a King Priest. To further cement this type/picture, Zechariah declares the word of Yahweh to Joshua saying, "Thus says Yahweh of hosts: "Look, here is man whose name is Branch, and from his place he will sprout, and he will build the temple of Yahweh. And he will build the temple of Yahweh, and he will bear majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two of them." (Zech. 6:12–14 LEB; see 2 Sam. 7:12–13; Rev. 1:13–16; 3:18).
 - [T]he point there being that the king referred to was a priest, although not descended from Aaron, being a priest after the order of Melchizedek, while here the point is, if the present text be correct, that a priest is crowned king.¹⁷
- I. The visual then of the vision of John *seeing* the Voice in the *midst* of the Lampstands brings into focus a powerful image of the Church, its position in the Holy Place, the interaction with angels/divine sons, Jesus as the Great High King Priest, the working of His Holy Spirit, His Light, the role of the kingly-priestly believers in the holy place tending the oil and fire, doing good works. All of these truths flow from John's use of Zechariah in painting this tapestry of truth with the Person in the midst of the Church.
- J. The Lampstands will appear again in Revelation 11:3–4:
³And I will grant authority to **my two witnesses**, and **they will prophesy for 1,260 days**, clothed in sackcloth."
⁴These are **the two olive trees** and **the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth**. (Rev. 11:3–4 ESV)
We will return to this verse when we get to chapter eleven. The point here is, we cannot simply read into the text an assumption (i.e., eisegesis) these two *are* Moses and Elijah simply based on the demonstration of power, signs and wonders. If we were going to make an emphatic *literal, Biblical*, reading¹⁸ it would be

¹⁶ Ludwig Koehler et al., [The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament](#) (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 569.

¹⁷ David Francis Roberts, "[Joshua](#)," ed. James Orr et al., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), 1748.

¹⁸ *Whatever that may mean*.

Joshua and Zerubbabel, because those two are identified as the two lampstands who are standing before Yahweh in Zechariah's prophecy. Yet the Lampstand imagery is used by John to not point to specific persons in Revelation 1-3. Instead, he describes the Church as the *lampstands* (Rev. 1:20). When we get to chapter eleven, we must consider John's use of Zechariah concerning the Lampstands and the two sons of oil in relation to Jesus and the Church.

The one lampstand becomes two, and these two in turn are said to be synonymous with the two olive trees. Already in chapter 1 the seven churches (symbolic of the church universal) have been symbolized by seven lampstands. They are the bearers of divine light (cf. Matt 5:15–16). These light bearers are also olive trees in that "the oil of the Spirit ... keeps alive the light of life." By these two metaphors John is emphasizing a truth concerning the church that has always been true but is especially appropriate in times of persecution—that the power and authority for effective witness lie in the Spirit of God.¹⁹

¹⁹ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 218.