

# Zechariah 4:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

## Analysis

**And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof.** The angel's question mah attah ro'eh (מָה אָתָּה רֹאֶה, "what do you see?") demands careful observation. Zechariah responds with detailed description of what would become one of the Old Testament's most significant symbolic visions. The **candlestick all of gold** (menorah kullah zahav, מְנוֹרָה כָּלָה זָהָב) recalls the seven-branched lampstand in the tabernacle and temple (Exodus 25:31-40), representing Israel as light to the nations and God's presence among His people.

However, Zechariah's lampstand differs from the tabernacle menorah in crucial details. It has **a bowl upon the top of it** (vegullah al-roshah, וְגַלְלָה עַל־רֹאשָׁה—a reservoir supplying oil to the lamps. The **seven lamps** (shiv'ah neroteha, שְׁבַעָה נְרוֹתֶה) represent completeness (seven being the number of perfection). Most remarkably, there are **seven pipes to the seven lamps**—literally "seven and seven" supply channels, meaning forty-nine pipes total (seven pipes feeding each of the seven lamps). This elaborate supply system ensures abundant, continuous oil flow without human intervention.

The vision's emphasis on self-sustaining oil supply anticipates verse 6's message: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." The

lampstand burns continuously not through human effort (priests daily filling lamps, Exodus 27:20-21) but through supernatural supply. This prefigures the Holy Spirit's ministry in the Church—believers shine as lights (Matthew 5:14-16; Philippians 2:15) not by human strength but by the Spirit's continuous empowerment (Acts 1:8). Revelation's seven lampstands represent churches (Revelation 1:20), and Christ walks among them, sustaining their light.

## Historical Context

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The tabernacle's menorah required priests to daily trim wicks and refill oil (Exodus 27:20-21; Leviticus 24:1-4). This labor-intensive maintenance symbolized Israel's dependence on human mediators and continual sacrifice. Zechariah's vision revolutionizes this imagery: the lampstand sustains itself through supernatural oil supply, pointing beyond Levitical system to new covenant reality where the Spirit indwells believers directly.

The vision came during temple rebuilding when the returned community lacked resources, manpower, and political power to complete the work. The supernatural lampstand assured them that God's Spirit, not human ability, would accomplish His purposes. This spoke directly to their discouragement: they need not depend on Persian patronage, financial resources, or popular support—God's Spirit would empower the work.

Church tradition saw the lampstand as Christ (the light of the world, John 8:12) or the Church illuminated by Him. The seven lamps pointed to the sevenfold Spirit (Isaiah 11:2; Revelation 1:4; 4:5). The inexhaustible oil supply prefigured Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out permanently on believers (Acts 2:1-4). Protestant Reformers emphasized that the Church's light depends entirely on Word and Spirit, not human tradition or ecclesiastical structure—only Spirit-empowered proclamation of Scripture sustains the Church's testimony.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

1. How does the self-sustaining lampstand challenge reliance on human methods, strategies, or resources to accomplish spiritual work?
2. What does it mean practically for believers to be 'lamps' supplied by the Spirit's inexhaustible oil rather than burning out through self-effort?
3. In what ways does this vision's emphasis on continuous supply encourage you when feeling spiritually depleted or insufficient for God's calling?

## Interlinear Text

רִאָמָר	רִאָמָר	רִאָמָר	רִאָמָר	רִאָמָר	רִאָמָר
And said	H413	H4100	H859	I have looked	And said
H559				H7200	H559
					H7200
וְהִנֵּה הַמְנֻבָּת	וְהִנֵּה הַמְנֻבָּת	וְהִנֵּה בְּכָל הַבָּהָר	וְהִנֵּה בְּכָל הַבָּהָר	רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:
H2009	and behold a candlestick	H4501	all of gold	H3605	H5921
			H2091		upon the top
					H7218
וְשְׁבַעַת	וְשְׁבַעַת	לְפָנָיו וְ	לְפָנָיו וְ	וְשְׁבַעַת	וְשְׁבַעַת
of it and his seven	lamps	H5921	of it and his seven	of it and his seven	of it and his seven
H7651	H5216		H7651		H7651
רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:	רָאשָׁה:
מִזְבֵּחַ	מִזְבֵּחַ	מִזְבֵּחַ	מִזְבֵּחַ	מִזְבֵּחַ	מִזְבֵּחַ
H834	H5921	H7218	H5921	H7218	H5921

## Additional Cross-References

**Revelation 4:5** (Parallel theme): And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

**Revelation 1:12** (Parallel theme): And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

**Jeremiah 52:19** (Parallel theme): And the basons, and the firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; that which was of gold in gold, and that which was of silver in silver, took the captain of the guard away.

**Zechariah 5:2** (Parallel theme): And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

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