

Dwelling in the Light

Series: Dwelling with God — The Architecture of Intimacy

Passage: Exodus 25:31–40 (Focus: verses 31–36)

Getting Started

1. Have you ever experienced pitch blackness—such as touring a deep cavern, being underground in a mine, or being caught in an abrupt total power outage at night? What does that level of dark do to your senses?
2. When life feels confusing, painful, or overwhelming, people often describe it as being "in the dark." What kinds of circumstances most often make you feel that way?

Setting the Context

The Tabernacle was covered by four heavy layers: fine woven linen, goat hair cloth, ram skins dyed red, and durable outer hides. With no exterior windows or skylights, a priest stepping inside the Holy Place stepped into absolute, impenetrable blackness—unless God provided a light.

God instructed Moses to craft a single, magnificent piece of furniture to pierce that darkness: the golden lampstand (*menorah*).

Hearing the Word

Read Exodus 25:31–36 aloud together.

1. What materials and craftsmanship were specified for making this lampstand (vs. 31, 36)? What does the detail and preciousness of its construction suggest about how God values His dwelling place?
2. Notice the recurring botanical language throughout these six verses (e.g., *branches, cups, almond flowers, buds, blossoms*). What natural object does this lampstand resemble?
3. In ancient Israel, the almond tree was known as the "waker" or "watcher" tree (*shaqed*) because it was the very first tree to bud in late winter, heralding life before spring arrived. When you picture a flowering golden tree blazing with light

inside a dark, desert tent, what does that communicate about God's nature?

4. **Read Jeremiah 1:11–12.** How does God's wordplay with the almond branch connect to His character? How does the lampstand reassure us about God's vigilance when our surrounding world looks dead or dormant?

Exploring the Deeper Connections

Read Exodus 25:37 and Numbers 6:24–26.

5. According to Exodus 25:37, the seven oil lamps were positioned so that they cast their light into "the space in front of it"—directly illuminating the Table of Showbread, which held the twelve loaves representing the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - Why is it significant that the lampstand did not point inward toward God's inner sanctuary, but outward toward the bread representing His people?
 - How does this physical arrangement embody the ancient Aaronic blessing: *"The Lord make His face shine upon you"*?
6. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:6.** How does Jesus fulfill the design, the light, and the direction of the golden lampstand? What does it mean for us to see God's "face" shining on us through Christ?

Applying the Truth

7. In the sermon, we heard how Kay Warren—in the suffocating darkness following her son's suicide—found hope not through immediate answers, but through a small reminder to "choose joy," discovering that God's presence was with her in the dark room.
 - As the sermon noted: *"God's light doesn't provide an explanation, but it does provide His illumination."* What is the difference between wanting God to explain our dark seasons and letting Him illuminate them with His presence?
8. In what area of your life right now are you tempted to believe the lie that God has turned His face away from you, or that your situation is too dark for Him to see?

9. How can we, as a small group community, help each other "dwell in the light" and remember God's attentive gaze when one of us is walking through deep pain?

Prayer & Blessing

Close your time together by praying specifically for anyone in the group currently navigating a season of grief, anxiety, or heavy trial.

Before the final amen, invite everyone to pause, open their hands, and receive the Aaronic blessing spoken aloud over the group:

"The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you;

The Lord turn His face toward you and grant you His peace." (Numbers 6:24–26)