

Opening Message:

AN URGENT PROPHETIC ALERT AND WARNING

Released on June 1, 2020
Jeremiah Johnson Ministries

Dear Saints and Leaders:

On the night of May 30th, while praying and pacing over the United States in my home around 2 am, a demonic entity appeared right before me in an open vision. This type of encounter has only ever happened one other time while I was ministering in a foreign country in 2015. I have always engaged in this type of spiritual warfare while asleep and dreaming prophetically, but rarely if ever to this degree while awake. This demonic entity had a visible and deep scar underneath its right eye, but it also had the ability to mutate or rather change forms. I watched this “being” morph several times right in front of me, yet the gash below its right eye remained. It pointed its finger right in my face and said, “I exist to deceive the whole world. Just as there are forerunners in the kingdom of God that go before the Son of Man, so I am a forerunning spirit in the kingdom of darkness that has been sent before the coming of the man of lawlessness.” It continued, “The scar underneath my right eye has come at the hands of the praying Church, for many of them in this hour have begun to detect our true plans and purposes to disrupt systems, divert attention, and release chaos in the land.”

At this point in the encounter, the hair on my body was standing straight up as I had never been told anything like this at length by a demonic entity. Suddenly, all I can describe is the authority and mind of Christ came upon me and I pointed my finger back at this demon and demanded, “Who is the source behind your power and influence?” It began to laugh hysterically, a sound that still taunts me and with great rage this demon answered and roared, “The Media!” I fixed my gaze upon it and said, “You devil that has come to deceive the whole world through the media and is being exposed right now, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to reveal your agenda!” With a sneer it began to manifest a foul spirit and the *first wave* I smelled was FEAR, I saw the Coronavirus spreading across the whole world and the spirit of fear attached to it. The *second wave* of stench the demon manifested was HATE and I saw the cities on fire and racism escalating. The *third wave* that came was GREED and it was the strongest of all the smells. In that moment of time, by way of Holy Spirit revelation, I understood that what we are witnessing in 2020, beyond a virus and beyond racism and police brutality is a diabolical and sinister agenda called “greed”. A wave of fear has hit through the virus and now a wave of anger through the riots, but the real culprit is greed! In other words, the world is being held hostage right now by demonic forces preparing the way for the man of lawlessness. There is so much deception being spread through the media that now we must understand what we are “seeing” and “hearing” on the news and social media is a simple diversion from the real truth! I’m telling you right now by the Spirit of God that what is happening in our world today has surpassed a virus, racism, and police brutality and the sooner we recognize what’s really going on, the sooner we can gain the victory! **For those who have ears to hear and eyes to see, we must now begin to target our prayers on the spirit of greed and understand the fight is regarding the finances! The finances behind the virus! The finances behind the rioting and looting! The finances behind taking down the President! Millions are being sold a false report.** The african american race and their justified pain is being preyed on by an agenda filled with greed! The agenda behind the virus and hopes to vaccinate and dominate is greed! After this encounter I finally see it like never before! China. The WHO. George Soros. Bill Gates. Follow the spirit of greed in this hour and it will not only expose the agenda behind the fear and hate but it will lead you to the freedom only found in TRUTH!

Jeremiah Johnson For more go to: www.jeremiahjohnson.tv

2 Peter 1:19-2:3

“And in their greed they will exploit you with false words.”

¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

False Prophets and Teachers

2 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³ **And in their greed they will exploit you with false words.** Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Night Shines as Day

It is written, “even the DARKNESS is not dark to you; the night is bright as the DAY, for darkness is as light with you,” Psalm 139:12
... or as it is described in its original language, “even the misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, and wickedness is NOT made dark or concealed to you; the adversity is becoming light - luminous - set on fire as continual day, for misery and enlightenment are alike to you,” Psalm 139:12

Some practical ways we will learn today, shinning as lights in the midst of darkness is:

“When You Step Up”

1. by refusing to complain and, instead,
1. express gratitude in all things,
2. rejoicing in the Lord always.

Philippians 2:12-15

Lights in the World

“Therefore, my beloved, *as you have always “obeyed”*, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, “**work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**”, for it is God who works in you, *both to will and to work for HIS good pleasure*. **Do everything without complaining or arguing** so that you will **prove yourselves** to be blameless and innocent, children of God **above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.**”

A Prophetic Biblical Example TODAY of practical ways we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness “When We Step Up”:

Reading out of Zechariah 2-4:

Rebuilding Jerusalem and the Second Temple (today God’s people – “The Temple”) is a huge task. And through the Prophet Zechariah, God reassures both **Joshua** (a type of Messiah, the one who leads his people into the promise land – out of bondage) and **Zerubbabel** (a type of Messiah, finishing the Temple) that He is behind the initiative. (a prophetic picture of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Third Temple in the Last Days)

Rebuilding Jerusalem and the Second Temple – YOU ARE THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN THE EARTH (THE TEMPLE - 1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Zechariah 2:1-5

A Vision of a Man with a Measuring Line

2 And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, **a man with a measuring line** (“Jesus of Nazareth” or “Jesus the Nazarene” a messianic reference meaning “Jesus, the hidden name, Christ, the revealed name (*the measured*), **Nazarene, the one who reveals what is hidden**” and “the Branch or *measuring rod out of the line of Jesse*”; **Nazarene: crown, consecration, and separation**) in his hand! ²Then I said, “Where are you going?” And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.” ³And behold, the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him⁴ and said to him, “**Run, say to that young man, ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls (people not a building), because of the multitude of people and livestock in it.**” ⁵And **I will be to her a wall of fire all around** (the empowerment of the Holy Spirit or Presence of God), declares the Lord, and **I will be the glory in her midst.**”

A man with a measuring line (the messiah), inhabiting a village without walls, and who will be a wall of fire all around – The Message: YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF GOD TO MANKIND.

Zechariah 2:6-13

⁶Up! Up! Flee from the land of the north, declares the Lord. For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, declares the Lord. ⁷Up! **Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.** ⁸For thus said the Lord of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, **for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye:** ⁹“Behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them.” Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me. ¹⁰**Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord.**

¹¹And many nations shall **join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.** ¹²And the Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

¹³**Be silent,** all flesh, before the Lord, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day; and the Lord will dwell in their midst – The Message: YOU ARE THE INHABITANCE OF GOD.

Zechariah 3:1-2

A Vision of Joshua the High Priest

3 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and **Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him** (“*the accuser of our brethren, who accuses them before our God day and night,*” Revelation 12:10). ²And the Lord said to **Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a ‘brand plucked’ or ‘Joshua’ ‘from the fire’ or ‘hardships of exile’?”**

The Lord will rebuke “Satan”, the accuser of the brethren, plucking his people from the hardships of their exile – The Message: YOU ARE BECOMING ENLIGHTENED IN DARKNESS.

Zechariah 3:3-4

³Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “**Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.**”

This righteous Branch from the line of David has appeared, and in one day, He paid the penalty for our sin and clothed us with His righteousness (on the Cross at Calvary – Our Passover Lamb).

Each of us *need* God's Spirit in our lives *empowering* us **to obey** His word, manifest His love, joy, and peace, and exercise spiritual gifts He has bestowed. **Filled with that Spirit, each of us are beacons of light that show the way to a lost and dying world.**

The Lord will take away our iniquity, in a day, and clothe us with righteousness – The Message: YOU ARE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LORD AND NO LONGER THE SINNER OF THE WORLD.

Zechariah 3:5-7

⁵And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by.

⁶And the angel of the Lord solemnly assured Joshua,

⁷“**Thus says the Lord of hosts: IF YOU WILL WALK IN MY WAYS AND KEEP MY CHARGE, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here.**”

If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts – The Message: YOU ARE OBEDIENT AND POWERFUL.

Zechariah 3:8-10

⁸Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and YOUR FRIENDS who sit before you, for they are men WHO ARE A SIGN; behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. ⁹For behold, on the stone that **I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with SEVEN EYES**, I will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts, and **I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.** ¹⁰In that day, declares the Lord of hosts, every one of you will invite his neighbor to come under his vine and under his fig tree.”

God’s friends who are a Sign of the Light of God in the Earth – The Message: YOU ARE GOD’S FRIEND AND SIGN OF THE COVENANT.

Zechariah 4:1-10

A Vision of a GOLDEN LAMPSAND

4 And the angel who talked with me came again and **WOKE ME**, like a man who is **AWAKENED OUT OF HIS SLEEP.** ² And he said to me, “*What do you see?*” I said, “**I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.** ³ And there are **two olive trees** (i.e. Revelation 11:4 “The Two Witnesses” and Matthew 17:1-13 “The Mount of Transfiguration”) by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.” ⁴ And I said to the angel who talked with me, “*What are these, my lord?*” ⁵ Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” ⁶ Then he said to me, “**This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.**” ⁷ Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’”

⁸ Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ⁹ “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. ¹⁰ **For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.**

“**THESE SEVEN ARE THE EYES OF THE LORD**, which range through the whole earth.” ¹¹ Then I said to him, “*What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?*” ¹² And a second time I answered and said to him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?” ¹³ He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” ¹⁴ Then he said, “**These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.**”

Like a man who is awakened out of his sleep, re-establishing ourselves once again as God’s witnesses in the Earth – The Message: YOU ARE AWOKEN AS GOD’S WITNESSES IN THE EARTH.

Week 33 - BEHAALOTECHA (When You Raise)
Numbers 8:1–12:16; Zechariah 2:14[10]–4:7; Philippians 2:1–18

Night Shines as Day – “When You Step Up”

“Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to Aaron and say to him, “**When you set up** (behaalotecha **בְּהַאֲלוֹתֶכָה**) **the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the Menorah.**”’” Numbers 8:1–2

Last week, in Reading, “Elevate” (Naso), the numbering of Israel continued with a census of the Levites. The Nazirite vow was detailed, as well as the Aaronic Blessing.

This week’s Scripture portion is named “When You Rise” (Behaalotecha), which means when you step up because it begins with instructions as to how the Lampstand (Menorah) is to be set up in the Tabernacle. A related word is **aliyah** - the Hebrew word for *immigrating to the Land of Israel*. It can also be defined as *the act of going up*.

To take the step of faith to RETURN to the Land is an act of spiritual elevation.

The Scripture Reading “When you Rise” (Behaalotecha) opens with the kindling of the Menorah. **This lampstand is a symbol of the light of revelation and truth.** (i.e. THE CHURCH)

Numbers 8-12

Numbers 8:1-2

The Seven Lamps

¹ Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to Aaron and say to him, **When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps** (“a single stone with seven eyes” Zechariah 3:9 or “these seven are the eyes of the Lord” Zechariah 4:10) shall give light in front of the lampstand.”

A practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To igniting the hidden potential in others, by observing, teaching and influencing others through God’s teaching and instruction, assisting them in the development of their observance, teaching and influencing so that their lamp independently glows and, in turn, kindles the potential in others.

Lighting the menorah gives the whole picture of this Week’s Reading “When you raise light” (Behaalotecha).

The lamps of the menorah are seen as representing the souls of **Israel** (those who struggle with God and man and prevail – *God’s Covenant People*).

The manner in which the potential of the soul of man is to be ignited, the duties of the “lamplighter”.

Proverbs 20:27: “A lamp of G-d, the soul of man.”

The spiritual significance of the *commandment* of lighting the menorah is that **one should be a “lamplighter”** who ignites that *hidden* potential (*for those who have been immersed in the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of hands – Acts 2*) within “the soul (soul: spirit – the breath of God, divine inspiration) of man, a lamp of G-d” (Proverbs 20:27).

In the “lamp of G-d” that is man, these polar drives converge in a flame that illuminates its surroundings with a G-dly light.

The wick, if ignited, would flare briefly and die, utterly consumed. As for the oil, one would find it extremely difficult to ignite at all. But when wick and oil are brought together in the lamp, they produce a controlled and steady light.

The soul of man is a lamp of G-d whose purpose in life is to illuminate the world with divine light. G-d provided us with the “fuel” that generates His light - *the Word of God (Torah) and its commandments (mitzvot)*, which embody His **wisdom** and **will** and convey His **luminous truth**.

The divine oil requires a “**wick**” - a physical body (*our study, teaching, proclamation*) - to channel its substance and convert it into an illuminating flame.

“²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.” **Philippians 1:21-26**

But for the divine will to be manifest in our world, there must be physical hands that actualize it and physical materials with which it is actualized.

To realize its role as a “**lamp of G-d**,” a human life must be a lamp that combines a physical existence (the “wick”) with the divine ideas and deeds of Torah (the “oil”). When the wick is saturated with oil and feeds its spiritual yearnings with a steady supply of the same, the resultant flame is both luminous and sustainable, preserving the existence and productivity of the wick and illuminating the corner of the world in which it has been placed.

“love the Lord your G-d... for He is your life”
Deuteronomy 30:20

By recognizing that G-d is the source and sustainer of his very being, the very same individual which earlier craved the most material of pleasures is now drawn to attach themselves to the Almighty, out of the realization that there is no greater fulfillment for an individual.

Thus the “wick” is both **prison and liberator** for the flame, both **tether and lifeline**. It holds the soul in its distinctiveness from the divine whole, in its apartness from its Creator. And yet, it is this distinctiveness and apartness, this incarnation in a physical life, which **allows us to connect to G-d in the deepest and most meaningful way - by fulfilling His will.**

Our lives are rendered into burning lamps, alight with flames that fluctuate from heaven to earth and back again and illuminate the world in the process.

Therein lies the specialty of the commandment of kindling the lamps of the menorah in the Holy Temple. Every COMMANDMENT generates light.

Every morning, a priest filled the menorah’s seven lamps with the purest olive oil; **in the afternoon**, he would climb a three-step foot-ladder to kindle the menorah’s lamps. **The seven flames** burned through the night, symbolizing the Divine light which radiated from the Holy Temple to the world.

When the *Priests* came to kindle the menorah’s lamps each **afternoon** in the Holy Temple, he found them fully prepared for lighting: earlier in the day, the lamps had been cleaned and filled with oil, and fresh wicks had been inserted. **All he had to do was bring near the flame he carried, so that its proximity to the waiting lamp would unleash the potential for illumination which the lamp already holds.**

Therein lies an important lesson to the spiritual lamplighter: do not think that you are achieving anything that your *co-laborer* could not, in truth, achieve on his own; **do not think that you are giving him something he does not already possess.** The soul of your *co-laborer* is a ready lamp, filled with the purest oil and equipped with **all that is required to convert its fuel into a blazing flame. It only lacks the proximity of another lamp to ignite it.** If your own soul (*hidden potential of divine inspiration*) is a light, its contact with another’s soul (*hidden potential of divine inspiration*) will awaken its potential for light, so that it may illuminate its surroundings and kindle other souls (*hidden potential(s) of divine inspiration*), in turn. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

“Speak to Aaron and say to him, when you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.” Numbers 8:2

Here’s the problem: you’re here, and you want to be there (“there” being someplace better, loftier, more spiritual than “here”). But you’re not there, and won’t be there for a good while, perhaps ever.

So, do you act as if you’re already there? Or do you tell yourself that here’s just fine, and who needs there anyway?

You can become a hypocrite, or you can come to terms with your limitations. But there’s also a third way - the way of the “*lighting of the lampstand*”.

The lesson of the “*lighting of the lampstand*” that we should aspire to spiritual heights that lie beyond our reach. Not that we should presume to be what we are not . . . but neither should we *discontinue* from our efforts to reach that place. Even when we know that we, ourselves, will never be “there”, we can still act upon that place, influence it, even illuminate it.

At times, this means that someone from that higher place reaches down to us. At times, it means that we *plan* a way to reach beyond what we are at the present time. In either case, we are . . . a “*lamplighter*”: a person who carries . . . a flame . . . lamp to lamp to ignite them; no lamp is too lowly, and no lamp is too lofty, for the “*lamplighter*” and their *aspiration to spiritual heights that lie beyond their reach*. (based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Jesus said, “*A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.*”
Luke 6:40

(i.e. Revelation 2:1-7)

To the Church in Ephesus

¹ “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars (the menorah – the golden lampstand) in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.
² “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. ³ I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. ⁴ But I have this against you, that **you have abandoned the love you had at first** (this church had lost its desire to spread the good news – “the light” - of Jesus Christ by quenching the Spirit and becoming *institutionalized*). ⁵ Remember therefore from where you have fallen; **repent**, and do the works you did at first. **If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand (my Spirit) from its place, unless you repent (stop doing it your way and start doing it God's way).** ⁶ Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.**”

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14

Those who are His followers continually grow in obedience, love, joy, and peace, becoming more and more like Jesus.

That love, joy, and peace shines forth through a dark and dreary world like a beacon of hope. It makes others desire the Source of that goodness.

1 John 2:6

⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he (Jesus) walked.

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Numbers 8:3-4

³ And Aaron did so: he set up its lamps in front of the lampstand, as the Lord commanded Moses. ⁴ And this was the workmanship of the lampstand, **hammered (beaten) work of gold**. From its base to its flowers, it was hammered work; **according to the pattern that the Lord had shown Moses**, so he made the lampstand.

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To allowing God to purify and refine our faith like gold, through testing, while allowing Him to also hammer us into the representation of the fire of the Divine Light, through his one Body, one Faith, one Spirit, and one Baptism, of God's good news being spread throughout the entire world.

James 1:2-4

Testing of Your Faith

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

Ephesians 4:4-6

“There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call - one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

This lampstand is a symbol of the light of revelation and truth.

God commanded Moses to make it out of gold according to the pattern shown him on Mount Sinai. Why gold and not bronze or silver?

Gold symbolizes something precious - of great value, and it is a metaphor for purity in the Bible.

The fire in the Menorah represents the fire of the Divine Light spreading throughout the entire world, beginning with Israel.

We can understand it also as Godliness; therefore, the fire can be seen as symbolic of God refining His people so that they may be as fine gold!

Malachi 3:3

“He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; **He will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver**. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness.”

The Seven-branched Golden Lampstand

When you look at the seven-branched golden lampstand you **actually see eight branches**. The staff or trunk is one branch and it supports the other seven. So since the staff is in a supporting role it is called the “Shamash” or **servant**. The **eighth branch** (i.e. new beginning) is representative of Jesus Christ who is in the middle or midst of the seven golden lampstands and is also seen supporting or upholding the angels or messengers of each of the golden lampstands in Revelation 1:20.

The Eternal Light

God gave Moses specific instructions on how to make the seven-branched golden lampstand. The lampstand with its seven lamps burning is called the . . . “**Eternal Light**.” The original lampstand was probably five feet tall by three and one half feet wide and represented **a tree that was on fire but not consumed**. Do you remember Moses’ encounter with God at the burning bush (tree).

The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, “I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up.” When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then He said, “Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” Exodus 3:2-5

As with Moses’ burning bush, **the seven-branched golden lampstand serves as an indication of God’s presence**.

The Almond Tree

From the Scriptures we know that the seven-branched golden lampstand is the representation of an **almond tree** with its protective petals (calyx), bud and flowers. And **when an almond tree is in bloom** with its white and pink blossoms **it has the appearance of being on fire**.

“when an almond tree is in bloom with its white and pink blossoms it has the appearance of being on fire.”

There are several other allusions that can be drawn from an almond tree that tie into the Scriptures. It is the **first tree to bloom in Israel**. The almond itself has the appearance of an eye and is used this way in Jeremiah 1:11-12. *“And the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘What do you see, Jeremiah?’ And I said, ‘I see a rod of an almond tree.’ Then the LORD said to me, ‘You have seen well, for I AM watching over My word to perform it.’”*

The almond tree is also known as the **watching tree** in Israel because the Hebrew word for almond is “shaqad”, meaning to **be alert**. And since the seven-branched golden lampstand in the Temple is an almond tree on **fire you might say it is lighted to help God see**. *And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (Revelation 4:5)* The seven lights are the seven spirits of God and when they are taken together as a whole represent the Holy Spirit. The number seven is the number of God and simply represents His fullness or completeness. **So you might say that the Holy Spirit helps God see what is going on**.

Light to See By

This ability to see is born out in another passage of Scripture in the book of Revelation. *And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. (Revelation 5:6)* Here the Holy Spirit is equated to having seven eyes.

The book of Revelation also brings the concepts of fire and eyes together when it speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems.” (Revelation 19:11-12)*

So, it is the Holy Spirit that gives God the ability to see and **judge**. And when we, as Christians, stand before the judgment seat of Christ our works will be judged through the Holy Spirit as well. For it is written: *Each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. (1 Corinthians 3:13)*

Lampstand and Church

Most people think the Holy Spirit is in heaven but from the book of Revelation it is clearly shown that the Holy Spirit, revealed through the seven burning lamps, rests upon the seven-branched golden lampstand. **And that lampstand is the Church**.

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire . . . As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.” (Revelation 1:12-20)

Although there are seven churches listed and each appears distinct from one another, **together they represent the Church as a whole**. This is born out by the fact that despite its seven branches, **God commanded the entire lampstand to be made out of one piece of beaten gold**. And being made of gold, the **symbol for faith**, the Church exists because of its faith.

“So that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:7

A Word of Caution

Just because an individual is a member of the Church does not make him the Light. It only means that he upholds the Light. In fact Jesus judges the Church and threatens to remove the lampstand of those who leave their first love and do not repent. The Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans picked up this theme and language, except he used a fig tree instead of an almond tree.

But if some of the branches were **broken off**, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich **root** of the olive tree, do not be **arrogant** toward the branches; but if you are **arrogant**, remember that it is not you who supports the **root**, but the **root** supports you. You will say then, “Branches were **broken off** so that I might be grafted in.” Quite right, they were **broken off** for their **unbelief**, but you stand by your **faith**. Do not be **conceited, but fear**; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who **fell**, severity, but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be **cut off**. (Romans 11:17-22)

Jesus, The Branch

When we look at the seven-branched golden lampstand or an almond tree we notice one significant fact . . . that all the branches are **supported** by one branch that we call the shaft or trunk (root). This central shaft is representative of Jesus Christ. It is lower than the branches indicating that it is the first to come up and is humbled . . . supporting all the others. **Jesus said, “I am the vine and you are the branches.” (John 15:5)**

When we view the central shaft as Jesus Christ, the Son of God we can also see that He is the branch spoken of in Isaiah and it is upon Him whom the seven spirits or Holy Spirit rests. *Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD (or Spirit of Christ) will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear (reverence) of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:1-2)* In turn this branch became a tree of which Christians are a part, being members of His body.

More Than A Burning Bush:

Jesus Christ and the Church, as the seven-branched golden lampstand, which has the characteristics of an almond tree also carries with it a very special designation . . . **The Tree of Life**. This revelation comes from the confirmation process God used in His selection of Aaron as High Priest and his family, the Levites as priests.

The story began when the Israelites complained against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. God had Moses take the staffs of the leaders of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, wrote their names on the staffs and put them all in the Tabernacle in the presence of God. And this is what happened! *Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted (calyx) and put forth buds (bud) and produced blossoms (flowers), and it bore ripe almonds (fruit). (Numbers 17:8)* To all the Israelites amazement a dead branch had become a living tree.

In like manner, God repeats this sign in the choosing of Jesus, the dead branch come to life. *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4)* Jesus is the High Priest of the order of Melchizedek and we His family are members of that priesthood. As it is written: *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)*

The book of Hebrews goes into great depth concerning these truths but for now let it suffice that you remember that Melchizedek (Genesis 14:17-20) was the King of Salem. His name means “King of Righteousness” and his title means “King of Peace”. Therefore, as members of this priesthood, Christians are to be ministering (up holders/lampstands/lamp lighters) to others in regards to the areas of **righteousness and peace**.

Numbers 8:(5)-22

Cleansing of the Levites (God’s Servants)

And so, we read in this Reading that the Levites who served God in the Temple had to be cleansed and purified before beginning their ministry.

5 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6 “Take the Levites from among the people of Israel and cleanse them.

A practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

As we pursue the Lord, we also pursue purity in our attitudes, our speech, and our ministry.

Numbers 8:23-26

Retirement of the Levites

23 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, **24** “This applies to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall come to do duty in the service of the tent of meeting. **25** And from the age of **fifty years** they shall withdraw from the duty of the service and serve no more. **26** **They minister to their brothers in the tent of meeting by KEEPING GUARD** (a Watchmen of sorts on the Wall), but they shall do no service. Thus shall you do to the Levites in assigning their duties.”

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To God’s “Retirement Plan”, for each one of our lives, in becoming a “Watchman on the Wall”.

God so yearns for the safety and protection of Jerusalem in the Last Days that He says:

“On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed **watchmen** [shomerim]; All day and all night they will **NEVER keep silent**. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves.” **Isaiah 62:6**

The Hebrew word for watchmen here is **shomerim**, from the root **shamar**, which means to **keep, guard, watch, and preserve**.

The **watchmen** appointed by God on the **walls of Jerusalem** could be angels, such as those the **watchers** in Daniel 4:17, or the ones who **patrol the earth** in Zechariah 1:10, or the one who **fought against the Prince of Persia** on its way to minister to Daniel in chapter 10 of the Book of Daniel . . .

or the minister who has retired, withdrawn from the duty of the service.

Guarding Israel in these ways is the desire of God’s heart, as He tells the Prophet Ezekiel:

*“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before Me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, **but I found no one.**” Ezekiel 22:30*

To help with this problem, God appointed *you to be a watchman.*

Numbers 9:1-14

The Passover Celebrated

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt . . .

Second Passover

⁶And there were certain men who were unclean through touching a dead body, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day, and they came before Moses and Aaron on that day. ⁷And those men said to him, “We are unclean through touching a dead body. Why are we kept from bringing the Lord’s offering at its appointed time among the people of Israel?” ⁸And Moses said to them, “Wait, that I may hear what the Lord will command concerning you.”

⁹The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰“Speak to the people of Israel, saying, **If any one of you or of your descendants is unclean through touching a dead body, or is on a long journey, he shall still keep the Passover to the Lord.** ¹¹**In the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight they shall keep it.** They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

For in the forty years that the Jewish people were in the desert, this was the only Passover offering they brought.

The reason that our ancestors brought no other Passover offering that G-d did not allow them to. G-d had instructed that the annual Passover offering should be observed only “When you come into the land that G-d shall give to you” (Exodus 12:25)

For more than nineteen-hundred years now, our Passovers have been incomplete. We eat the matzah and the bitter herbs, we drink the four cups of wine, ask and answer the four questions, but the heart and essence of Passover, **the Passover offering, is absent from our seder table.** For **G-d has hidden His face from us**, has removed the Holy Temple, the seat of His manifest presence on physical earth, from our midst. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

The meaning of the “Second Passover” is that it is never too late; there is always a second chance.

Why was the mitzvah of the “Second Passover” not commanded directly by G-d in the Torah from the very start, as were virtually all other mitzvot?

Because the **Second Passover represents the power . . . to “return”** and rectify past failings and transform them, retroactively . . . as a Divine response to the profound yearning of a soul . . . crying out for attachment to G-d. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

Numbers 9:15-23

The Cloud Covering the Tabernacle

¹⁵On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. **And at evening it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until morning.** ¹⁶**So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night.** ¹⁷And whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, after that the people of Israel set out, and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of Israel camped. ¹⁸**At the command of the Lord the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the Lord they camped. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they remained in camp.**

Yet the “Tent of Meeting” was erected at every encampment - even if only for a single day!

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To allowing each stage of our lives to be a place of sanctification for our lives, a “Tent of Meeting”, where God has brought us to equip us, that we might not lacking anything, where God’s presents resides, between Heaven and earth.

This teaches us that each and every one of our “stations” in life is significant unto itself. A person may find him or herself in a certain place or in a certain situation for a very brief period, and it may seem to him that he is merely “on the way” to some other place. Yet there is always something in that place or situation to be sanctified - something that can serve as a “Tent of Meeting” between Heaven and earth.

“for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” James 1:3-4

Numbers 10:1-36

The Silver Trumpets

¹The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“**Make two silver trumpets.** Of hammered work you shall make them, and you shall use them for summoning the congregation and for breaking camp. ³And **when both are blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to you at the entrance of the tent of meeting.** ⁴But if they **blow only one, then the chiefs, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall gather themselves to you.** ⁵When you **blow an alarm**, the camps that are on the east side shall set out. ⁶And when you **blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are on the south side shall set out. An alarm is to be blown whenever they are to set out.** ⁷But when the

assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow a long blast, but you shall not sound an alarm. ⁸ And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets. The trumpets shall be to you for a perpetual statute throughout your generations. ⁹ And when you go to war in your land against the adversary who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets . . .

³⁵ And whenever the ark set out, Moses said, “Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee before you.” ³⁶ And when it rested, he said, “Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousands of Israel.”

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To sound an alarm (acknowledge our call to repentance, our return to the Lord; acknowledge our call to appointed times, our exact divine appointments with the Lord; acknowledge our call to war, our victory with the Lord) with the trumpets, that we are remembered before the Lord, and be saved from our enemies.

Numbers 11:1-4, 18-35

The People Complain

¹ And the people complained in the hearing of the Lord about their misfortunes, and when the Lord heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. ² Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to the Lord, and the fire died down. ³ So the name of that place was called Taberah, because the fire of the Lord burned among them.

⁴ Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, “Oh that we had meat to eat! . . .

¹⁸ And say to the people, ‘Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat, for you have wept in the hearing of the Lord, saying, “Who will give us meat to eat? For it was better for us in Egypt.” Therefore the Lord will give you meat, and you shall eat. ¹⁹ You shall not eat just one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, ²⁰ but a whole month, until it comes out at your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before him, saying, “Why did we come out of Egypt?”’” ²¹ But Moses said, “The people among whom I am number six hundred thousand on foot, and you have said, ‘I will give them meat, that they may eat a whole month!’” ²² Shall flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, and be enough for them? Or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, and be enough for them?” ²³ And the Lord said to Moses, “Is the Lord’s hand shortened? Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not.”

Quail and a Plague

³¹ Then a wind from the Lord sprang up, and it brought quail from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, around the camp, and about two cubits above the ground. ³² And the people rose all that day and all night and all the next day, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. ³³ While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck down the people with a very great plague. ³⁴ Therefore the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving. ³⁵ From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazereth, and they remained at Hazereth.

The manna changed in their mouth into any taste they desired; as it says, “And He gave them their request” (Psalms 106:15), “And He gave them that which they craved” (ibid. 78:29). Hence, they were only looking for an excuse to complain.

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To refuse to complain and, instead, express gratitude in all things.

God also promises Moses that He will give the people so much meat that they will be sick of it, which Moses finds difficult to believe.

To satisfy the cravings of these ungrateful Israelites, God sends tons of quail. Many gorge themselves and die as God’s anger is unleashed due to their rejection of Him. They are buried at the place they named “graves of craving (Kibroth-hattaavah). (Numbers 11:31–35)

Numbers 11:16-17

Elders Appointed to Aid Moses

¹⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. ¹⁷ And I will come down and talk with you there. And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone.

Was Moses prophesy perhaps diminished? No. This is comparable to a burning candle from which many candles are lit, yet its own light is not diminished. So, too, Moses lost nothing that was his. (*Midrash Rabbah*)

On the most basic level, this is the difference between physical and spiritual giving. In physical giving, the givers resources are depleted by his gift he now has less money or energy than before. In spiritual giving, however, there is no loss. When a person teaches *his co-labor*, his own knowledge is not diminished if anything, it is enhanced.

But there are also times when we commit ourselves to *our co-laborers* so absolutely - when the gift comes from a place so deep and so true within us - that we only grow from experience, no matter how much we give of ourselves. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

Another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To share in God’s empowerment in our lives, by giving away, freely, what God has, freely, given to us, His “BETTER” Way, His “BETTER” Truth, and His “BETTER” Life, which ENHANCES our lives, rather than diminishing our lives (like our ways do, our truths do, and our lives do).

i.e. Luke 10:1-12

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

¹ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, **two by two** (i.e. two witnesses of Revelation 11), into every town and place where he himself was about to go. ² And he said to them, “**The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.**” ³ Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴ Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ ⁶ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. ⁷ And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰ But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’ ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Numbers 12:1-16

Miriam and Aaron Oppose Moses

¹ Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. ² And they said, “Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?” **And the Lord heard it.** ³ Now the man Moses was very meek (humble), more than all people who were on the face of the earth. ⁴ And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.” And the three of them came out. ⁵ And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward. ⁶ **And he said, “Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”** ⁹ And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed.

¹⁰ When the cloud removed from over the tent, behold, Miriam was leprous, like snow. And Aaron turned toward Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. ¹¹ And Aaron said to Moses, “Oh, my lord, do not punish us because we have done foolishly and have sinned. ¹² Let her not be as one dead, whose flesh is half eaten away when he comes out of his mother's womb.” ¹³ And Moses cried to the Lord, “O God, please heal her—please.” ¹⁴ But the Lord said to Moses, “If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be shamed seven days? **Let her be shut outside the camp seven days, and after that she may be brought in again.**” ¹⁵ **So Miriam was shut outside the camp seven days, and the people did not set out on the march till Miriam was brought in again.** ¹⁶ After that the people set out from Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

Miriam and Aaron also complain by speaking against their brother Moses. They criticize Moses for marrying a Cushite woman - slander, and they want more respect as prophets in their own right - **pride**.

And lastly, another practical way we can shine as lights in the midst of darkness is “When We Step Up” (or Light the Lamp):

To humbly setting ourselves apart for the things that are important to God, that others might see, hear, know and be lead by God into eternal things and not temporal things.

Next Week’s Reading:

**Week 36 - Parasha Shelach Lecha (Send Forth)
Numbers 13:1–15:41; Joshua 2:1–24; Romans 4:1–25**