

Shiur L'Yom Sheni¹

[Monday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah B'ha'alotcha:*** Numbers 8:1-26
 Haftarah: Zechariah 2:10-13
 B'rit Chadasha: I Corinthians 10:1-5

They are the sons of Israel who are to be given wholly to Me
[Numbers 8: 16]

Today's Meditation is Revelation 1:4-8;
This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition #7, *Kabat* [Ingathering]

Vayadaber Adonai el-Moshe l'emor – And the Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying ...
Daber el-Aharon v'amarta elav – Speak to Aharon, and tell him ... *b'ha'a lotcha et-ha-nerot* – in your ascending to the lamps ... *el -mul p'nei ha-menorah ya'iru shiv'at ha-nerot* –the seven lamps are to illumine the face of the menorah Numbers 8:1-2.

Our season at Mt. Sinai is *almost at an end*. Soaking up the Torah in the Presence of the Holy One has been glorious, but a new adventure awaits us. The last grains of the sand of the joyful upper bulb of Sinaitic ecstasy are stampeding through the connecting tube of Torah's hourglass and dumping into the frightening lower bulb of Wilderness wandering. This is the appointed time of *the changing of the sands*. This is the week of ascending and transcending. Soon – very soon - off we will go - to the finity barrier ... and beyond!

Oh, there will be some serious crashing and burning along the way. We will on occasion behave much more like an untamed shrew than like a loving Bride. But in the heat of the desert, and in our abject failure, His love for us – as well as His unshakeable commitment to His covenant - will shine far more brightly than either has in the sterile environment of Sinai.

The Essence of the Challenge That Awaits Us In the Wilderness

A vast wilderness, full of critical trials of *kavanah*, *ahavah*, and *emunah* – not to mention *stamina* - stretches out before us. The long, winding road that between Sinai and the land of the Patriarchs is a strategically designed obstacle course. An 'upper level' stage of our King's Ultimate Extreme Bridal Makeover Protocols, this course will prove who among us truly knows, loves, and delights to walk with and serve the Holy One - and who is just hanging around looking for the blessings.

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A word of warning - If we lose either our spirit-to-Spirit connection with the One Who brought us out of Egypt or our sense of collective mission we will quickly revert to the material world-obsessed mindset and lifestyle that bound us for so long to Pharaoh's world. Don't let the sand fleas or serpents find you sitting down. Don't let the challenges of the wilderness come looking for you. Keep your eyes fixed on the direction of the movement of the Pillar of Fire and the Cloud. Keep up with the pace the Holy One sets. Keep a song of adoration in your heart and His sweet Words of instruction in your thoughts and on your lips.

As Yosef, whose bones and spirit are accompanying us on this pilgrimage, once said to his brothers: *Be careful that you do not fall out along the way!* Genesis 45:24. And as Yeshua said to His Disciples: *You are the light of the world Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.* Matthew 5:14-16.

The Menorah Represents the Shining of Our King's Face and the Light of Our King's Countenance

The Holy One kicks off this new season by reminding us allegorically of the First Day of Creation Week, when He looked into the chaos, the disorder, and the darkness of the primeval universe, dared to dream bigger, stirred His *Ruach*, and whispered: '*Yehi Ohr*' – i.e. *Light, BE!* As you will remember, Creation responded. Atoms and molecules rearranged. Electrons flew. And soon *Light was!* The seven-branched *Menorah* that stands in the Holy Place of the *Mish'kan* – on earth as it is in Heaven - is our reminder of that great kick-starting event. We are not the creators of the flame; we are mere keepers of it. We are not to merely enjoy the light for ourselves; we are to absorb its energy, spread its brilliance, and carry its life-giving illumination throughout the world. Our Creator's Will is the centerpiece of the lampstand; our voluntary acts of surrender to that Will form the offshooting branches; and our demonstrations of love for both our Creator and for our fellow man form the ornaments. He is the flame; we are the wick. His Words provide the oil and His *Ruach* the inspiration for the continuous burning of the lamps; our assigned spheres of influence provide the bowls that cast the light where it is needed most.

Job 1 in the Covenant:* ***We Are To Be Faithful Bearers of Our King's Light**

When the Holy One showed Moshe the pattern after which the *Mish'kan* [Tabernacle] and all its furnishings was to be constructed, He made it clear to Moshe that there was to be in the "holy place" *a seven-branched lamp stand made of gold*. He also made it clear that the seven lamps of this lamp stand were to be *fueled with pure*

olive oil. He also let it be known that *the care of this light source was to be entrusted to Aharon and his descendants*. In Exodus 27 Moshe was instructed:

*Instruct B'nei Yisra'el that they bring you pure olive oil,
beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually.*

*In the tent of meeting, outside the veil that is before the testimony,
Aharon and his sons are to keep it in order
from evening to morning before the Holy One:
it is to be a statute forever throughout their generations
on the behalf of B'nei Yisrael.*

[Exodus 27:20-21]

The Holy One's instructions to Moshe regarding *the specifications* for the Menorah are given in Exodus 25. The details of its construction - by *Betzalel*, the craftsman upon whom the Spirit of God rested - are detailed in Exodus 37. The initial lighting of the lamps by Moshe according to the Holy One's instructions is described in Exodus 40. Aharon was first instructed concerning his role in regard to this important part of the *Mish'kan* in Leviticus 24².

Despite all that prior information being released tid-bit by tid-bit however we are about to find out that the *Holy One decided to withhold perhaps the most fascinating secret related to the High Priest's responsibility in connection with the Menorah until today*.

Aharon did not have to "light" the *menorah* each day. Its flame was Divine and eternal. The Holy One provided the raw material for the fuel mixture in the form of olives. The extraction of oil from those olives was the responsibility of the Community. The actual filling of the reservoirs was the task of Aharon's sons. So what exactly was left for Aharon to do regarding the *menorah*? Aharon's task each morning was merely to *adjust* and *wipe clean* the lamps – to clear out any carbon deposits, trim the wicks so as to fine-tune their burning, and to redirect their light. Let me explain.

To some degree the *menorah* could provide "directional" lighting. The light produced by the *menorah* actually came from burning oil in 7 "bowls". *By slightly adjusting the wick and/or the angle at which the bowls set on their support branches, the light of the menorah could be cast in different directions*. The Holy Place was not a large place, and with a little ingenuity Aharon could if he wanted to adjust the bowls so as to make every nook and corner of the Holy Place bright and

² Moshe was there told: *"Instruct the children of Yisra'el, that they bring you pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually. Outside of the veil of the Testimony, in the Tent of Meeting, shall Aharon keep it in order from evening to morning before the Holy One continually: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. He is to keep the lamps on the pure gold menorah in order before the Holy One continually."*

cheery.

If the purpose of the *Menorah* was to provide light for the priests [who, after all, were Aharon's *sons*] to minister (taking care of the Bread of the Presence, offering incense on the golden altar, for instance), this would seem like a great idea. This would, however, have one *small drawback* - it would divert the attention and focus of the priests *away from the Holy One* and would focus it instead upon the tasks, assignments, and "ministry" performed by the priests.

So Aharon is told to cause the flames of the *menorah* to ascend "forward", thus casting their light "forward". Why, we may ask, "*forward*"? And what, we may ask, does "*forward*" mean anyway? In Hebraic thought *forwards* always means *toward the Presence of Holy One*³. Hence, a devout Jew prays facing *toward Israel*, the Holy One's holy land. If he is in Israel he always prays facing *toward Y'rushalayim* [Jerusalem], the Holy One's holy city. If he is in Y'rushalayim he always prays facing *toward the Kotel [Western Wall]*, the only remaining part of the Holy One's holy Temple. If he is at the Western Wall a Jew always prays facing *toward where the Holy of Holies once was*. "Forward" means "toward the Presence of God" - in this case, toward the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.

What was the effect of directing the flames and light of the *menorah* "forward"? It was to "backlight" the Holy Place and its furnishings. The priests who functioned there would function in backlit shadows, not brilliant light. Their attention would always be directed and drawn to the One behind the veil - to the Holy One, the source of all light, and Who deserved (and still deserves) to be the focus of *everything that goes on*.

Let it be with us today, in our families, as the Holy One instructed Moshe that it was to be with Aharon and his sons.⁴ Let not the "work" - or the men who do the work - be our focus; instead *let our attention and our longing always be directed toward Him whose Presence dwells behind the veil*. Let our attention always be captured by the One Who sits on the Throne and choreographs the work. Let us not seek to have the bright lights shine on our "ministry", but only on *Him!* Let us

³ In the Hebrew text the phrase we translate as "forward" is *at-muwl pan'ei ha-Menorah* [*i.e.* opposite the face of the *Menorah*]. The face of the *menorah* is toward the priests, and its back - *i.e.* that which is opposite its face - is toward the veil [and necessarily, therefore, toward the Presence of the Holy One, which sits enthroned on the cherubim atop the 'mercy seat', on the ark of the testimony, in the holy of holies].

⁴ We will learn soon enough as we continue to study *Sefer B'midbar* [the Book of Numbers] that the Holy One's instructions were not always heeded - even by "respected" leaders like Aharon. In Numbers 12 Aharon will forget the spiritual essence if not the substance of the instructions of today's aliyah and seek the recognition of men for himself and his sister Miryam. And yet in overwhelming grace the Holy One will restore him.

never, never, appropriate unto ourselves any of the glory that belongs to Him. Let us never seek the “limelight” or the recognition.

The limelight is HIS alone. As a royal Bride is trained to glorify her Bridegroom-King, not her own glory so are we being trained to live and work and serve in backlight, in order that our Bridegroom-King may have the limelight He deserves. If we and our ministries ever become the focus of attention, His glory becomes obscured. So let us make sure we adjust the lamps, and the direction of the light, each morning, before we do anything else! As Messiah taught us, let us start our mornings with prayers in which we “hallow” the Holy One’s name, and through which we *seek first the Holy One’s kingdom and the righteousness that comes from Him*. Arise and shine – for your Light has come!

Identifying That Which Needs Healing in the Bloodline of Levi:
A Sample Exercise For All People of all Bloodlines,
All Families, All Clans, All Tribes, and All Ethnicities

In the prophetic season to come we will discover that the most problematic relationships in the Redeemed Community always seem somehow to involve the tribe of Levi. Levi is indeed the bellwether tribe. As goes the tribe of Levi, therefore so goes the nation. Alas, Levi is not without its issues; disastrous rebellions will spring from its ranks. And at the center of the focus of the biggest problems in the camp will be the three most visible members of the tribe in the generation of the Exodus – Moshe, Aharon, and Miryam.

In some cases the problems will be initiated by these high-profile members of the tribe of Levi. In other cases the problems will be caused by the jealousy and bad attitudes of others in their tribe toward them.

We will read *a lot* about Levi’im in the remainder of the book of Numbers. And alas, most of what we will read concerning Levi’s progeny will not be pleasant to read. It is, therefore, altogether proper that before we head off into the Wilderness where the tribe of Levi will become the focus of so much negative attention, the Holy One spends some special time speaking life and health and peace and destiny over that tribe.

As you will recall it was the tribe of *Levi* who stood united with Moshe at the time of the sin of the golden calf. Exodus 32 tells us:

... When Moshe saw that the people had broken loose
(for Aharon had let them break loose, to their shame among their enemies),
Moshe stood in the gate of the camp, and said,
"Who is on the Holy One’s side? Come to me."

And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

Wow. Knowing what lies not far ahead in regard to the relationship between Moshe and the tribe of Levi, seeing this statement in Scripture again is a little unnerving. But let us return to the account in Exodus 32:

*And he [i.e., Moshe] said to them, "Thus says the Holy One, God of Israel,
'Put every man his sword on his side,
and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother,
and every man his companion and every man his neighbor.'"*

“*Every man slay his brother*” he said? Let that one play its way out in your minds. Where does the killing stop? “*Every man slay his companion*” he ordered? If that really happened ... well ... who would be left alive? “*Every man slay his neighbor*” he decreed? Is this really what Moshe declared *in the Name of the Holy One*? But the tribe of Levi took him at his word. One by one they pulled their swords. They rushed headlong into the fray, maiming and killing their brethren: *and the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moshe*. But then Torah tells us something very interesting – at least in light of the instructions Moshe gave. Torah tells us: *and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men*. Three thousand is a large number, of course. And since each number within that three thousand represented a real living, breathing human being, with a very real family who was bereaved, the trauma inflicted upon the camp was significant. But in comparison to the *wholesale slaughter* Moshe ordered the Levi'im to carry out – which amounted to nothing short of camp-wide genocide – it appears the Levi'im actually *disobeyed Moshe* and *exercised considerable restraint*. Each one did NOT kill his brother – he could not have, else there would be no Levi'im left. Each one did NOT kill his companion and neighbor – he could not have, else there would have been no one left alive in the redeemed community.

The Levi'im apparently drew their sword at Moshe's command. They apparently started to strike with indiscriminate vigilante vengeance at Moshe's command. But somewhere along the way, something wonderful happened. Somewhere along the way they pulled up short. Somewhere along the way they sheathed their swords. Somewhere along the way they stopped killing and maiming us. Somewhere along the way they let mercy triumph over judgment. And, though it was not what he had ordered, Moshe had to recognize that this restraint – and the Levi'im's blatant civil disobedience of his command to commit complete genocide – was of the Holy One. Hence, Torah tells us:

And Moshe said Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the Holy One, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day.

The relation between Moshe and the tribe from which he was born started off volatile and interesting, and will continue to be so.

The Tribe of Levi is Reconfigured and Consecrated

In today's aliyah the prophetic destiny of the tribe of Levi is revisited. The 'special blessing' Moshe prophesied after the slaughter at Sinai ended that the Holy One was going to bestow upon the tribe of Levi is given substance.

In the opening aliyah of *B'ha'alotcha* we will be reminded that Aharon's primary assigned task was to always cause the flames of the *menorah* to arise and ascend in a specific way so as to point to and give glory to the Holy One. The next thing we will read about will be how the Holy One instructed Moshe to cause the Levi'im, as a bellwether tribe, to arise and ascend after the pattern and under the direction of himself and Aharon. Moshe and Aharon's assignment will be to inspire their entire tribe to point to and give glory to the Holy One at all times.

Pointing to and giving glory to the Holy One at all times is a *tall order*. Understand that before you point fingers at the ugliness we are about to see issue forth from the Levi'im. The Levi'im, you see, are *a microcosm of the Redeemed Community*. As go the Levi'im, so goes the Body. It is therefore important that we come to understand who the Levi'im are - and are not - and of what their *avodah* [service/worship] consists.

The Service of the Levi'im

The nature of the "service" of the Levi'im is, alas, very much misunderstood today. There is a teaching prevalent in charismatic churches - a doctrine steeped in '*replacement theology*'⁵ - that singers, song leaders, musicians, dancers, and preachers in local churches and/or on the Christian "conference" circuit should be considered "Levites". Some of these people actually claim the title for themselves; others simply accept and bask in public acclamation of their so-called "*Levitical anointing*". Will such claims/doctrines survive Biblical examination? Let's see. Earlier in the book of Numbers we saw that there were three separate clans of Levi'im - the *K'hatim*, the *Gershonim*, and the *Merarim*. We have also seen that each of these three clans had a specific function to perform in relation to the *Mish'kan* [tabernacle], and particularly in regard to its *transportation*. Since the book of Numbers is about our journeys through the Wilderness on the way to the Promised Land, what had to be done on the journeys was the focus of most of our attention.

⁵ **Replacement theology** is the false teaching that something called 'the Church' [a perverse English-language rendering of the Greek *ekklesia*] has forsaken the Jews because of their breaches of Covenant and has therefore 'replaced' natural Israel as His covenant partner - at least to the extent of the promises and blessings of the TaNaKh. In other words, replacement theology says that all that the Holy One promised to do for or give to Israel, He decided to do for and give instead to 'the Church'. Replacement theology thus presents God as a capricious deity who changes his mind, and is unfaithful to his covenant undertakings.

We should have recognized however, even as we read these descriptions of the functions the various clans of Levi'im were to handle on the journey through the Wilderness, that eventually our journeys would cease. We will one day graduate from the Wilderness, and the *Mish'kan* will be made stationary – and even be replaced by the Temple. So what would the “service” of the Levi'im be once there was no longer any need to transport the *Mish'kan* or its furnishings? In I Chronicles 23 we are told:

*Twenty-four thousand of these," David said,
will have charge of the work in the house of the Holy One,
six thousand shall be officers and judges, four thousand gatekeepers,
and four thousand will offer praises to the Holy One
with the instruments that I have made for praise."*

*... their duty will be to assist the sons of Aharon
for the service of the house of the Holy One,
having the care of the courts and the chambers,
the cleansing of all that is holy, to assist also with the showbread,
the flour for korban minchah, the wafers of unleavened bread,
the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil,
and all measures of quantity or size.*

*And they will stand every morning, thanking and praising the Holy One,
and likewise at evening, and whenever approach to the Holy One is made
through korbanot olahot, on sabbaths, new moons, and feast days,
according to the number required of them, continually before the Holy One.*

*Thus they will keep charge of the tent of meeting and the sanctuary,
and will attend the sons of Aharon, their brethren,
for the service of the house of the Holy One.*

The Levitical *avodah* is part and parcel of, and *inseparable from*, the *Mish'kan* and the Aharonic priesthood. What they are called to do is but to stand in earthly shadows of a Heavenly reality. We are not to look *for* the Levi'im or *at* the Levi'im – we are to look through the Levi'im to the eternal reality in Heaven to which they are called to direct our attention. The call of the Levi'im is to serve as the earthly representatives of the *serafim* [burning ones] which surround the Holy One's heavenly throne and cry “*K'dosh, K'dosh, K'dosh*” [*Holy, Holy, Holy*] all day long. The task of the Levi'im was not - and is not - to “lead the people in worship”⁶ [i.e. to perform the task undertaken by musicians, singers, etc., in churches, synagogues, etc. today]; the task of the Levi'im, was, is, and will always be, to *minister to the Holy One*. When the Levi'im played their instruments, sang their songs, and performed their ministerial tasks, they did not do so for any earthly audience, or “congregation”, or to be honored by men. Levi'im were called to almost do their

⁶ The term ‘worship’ [Hebrew *shachah*] deserves a study of its own, but that study is outside the scope of the present commentary.

work *unseen and unheard* by men. Levi'im are not entertainers. They do not perform. The ministry of the Levi'im is a *secret, hidden service* performed in the quiet of early morning and the darkness of night, in response to the call of *serafim*. They would never consider writing pretty words or hitting impressive “licks” on guitars, pianos, or drums, or sing mesmerizing ‘runs’, or to do anything else that would either [a] draw attention to themselves or [b] appeal to the flesh of men. They minister for *an audience of One*. “Holy, holy, holy” is about all such as they know – or, indeed, *need to know*.⁷

Questions For Today's Study

1. To get started with this week's study please answer the following questions:

[A] Write the name of this week's Torah parsha and what that name means.

[B] What does the Holy One tell Moshe to instruct Aharon concerning the menorah in verse 2?

[C] What was directly in front of the menorah?

[D] List the three things we discover about the menorah in verses 3 and 4.

[E] Yeshua is the “Menorah” of the World, and He says we are to be the *menorahs* of the World. How do the descriptions of the menorah given in today's verses apply to Yeshua? To us?

2. The second subject covered by today's aliyah is the dedication ceremony that the Holy One directs Moshe to hold for the *Levi'im* [Levites], before they begin to perform the various duties they have been assigned according to their clans.

[A] In discussing the consecration/dedication of the Levi'im, the Holy One tells Moshe to do something to them, and to tell them to do some things for themselves. What is Moshe to do to start the consecration process?

[B] After Moshe starts the process of sanctification, what two things are the Levi'im themselves supposed to do to “purify themselves”?

[C] Where is the consecration/dedication ceremony to be conducted?

[D] Who is to be present?

[E] Look up the term “wave offering”. What does that mean?

[F] Imagine you are the son of a Levi. Write an entry in your “diary” or “journal” about what happened on the day of the consecration/dedication of your tribe. Try to include:

[i] as many of the actual events as you can find in today's verses, and

⁷ The Levi'im will, like Aharon, soon fail miserably to fulfill the Divine plan as outlined in today's aliyah. In Numbers 16 we will see the Levi'im at their worst, conspiring with some Reuven'im [Reubenites] to take over visible positions of leadership in the Camp from Moshe and Aharon. In their case, as in Aharon's – as in ours – the issue boils down to ***who gets the honor and glory*** – us, or THE HOLY ONE? The Levi'im got to a point when they wanted the honor and glory for themselves. And yet, in overwhelming grace, the Holy One restored them as well.

[ii] your feelings about what you are seeing as you realize this is **your** destiny and your inheritance.

[iii] Conclude with a blessing that you write for the occasion [You may want to use the Hebraic formula: "*Blessed are you, O Holy One our God, who ...*"].

3. In today's Haftarah the prophet Zechariah speaks to Zion, telling her to "Sing" and "rejoice". The timing of this prophetic message is after the Babylonian exile, after the remnant of Israel has returned to the land of promise, and rebuilt the Temple.

*Sing and rejoice, daughter of Tziyon; for, behold, I come,
and I will dwell in the midst of you,' says the Holy One.
Many nations will join themselves to the Holy One in that day,
and will be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you,
and you will know that the Holy One of Hosts has sent me to you.*

*The Holy One will inherit Y'hudah as his portion in the holy land,
and will again choose Y'rushalayim. Be silent, all flesh, before the Holy One;
for he has roused himself from his holy habitation!"*

[Zechariah 2:10-13]

The prophecy contained in these verses is a prophesy of a stunning, yet-in-the-future event, when the Holy One will "rouse Himself", and all mankind will stop their flurry of activity, and turn in awe and wonder to gaze upon Him.

[A] Who is speaking in this haftarah passage? [Hint: look at the last phrase of verse 15];

[B] What does the speaker say He is going to do?

[C] What does the speaker say many *peoples from all nations* will do?

[D] What does the speaker say The Holy One will do?

4. In I Corinthians 10:1-5 Shaul of Tarsus [a/k/a 'Paul'] recounts the Exodus experience and the miracles that the Holy One provided daily for those who came forth out of Egypt.

*Now I would not have you ignorant, brothers,
that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
and were all immersed into Moshe in the cloud and in the sea;
and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.
For they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Messiah.
However with most of them, God was not well pleased,
for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*

If you will receive it, Shaul is giving us insight into the Torah for this week and the next. He is telling us to *look carefully at what distracted the generation that left Egypt from the Holy One, and caused them to die in the desert instead of receiving their inheritance.*

Harden not your hearts, beloved ones! The warning is for us. The risk is still very, very real.

[A] List the things Shaul says about B'nei Yisrael.

[B] Shaul indicates that Messiah was with B'nei Yisrael in the Wilderness. How was He “with” them?

[C] In verse 5, Shaul says “*God was not pleased with most of them*”, and that “*their bodies were scattered over the desert*” even though these had been numbered among His people, had made commitments to be His people, and had, according to Shaul, tasted Messiah’s living waters and received from Him the Bread of Life. Explain how this could be, and what you think it means to us today.

[D] What do you think was the essence of the “mistake” made by our fathers in the desert that resulted in their failure to enter and possess the land of Israel?

*May the flame of your heart be kindled this day, and may it shine its light
not on any work or ministry, or any apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher,
or evangelist or intercessor – but only upon our glorious King.*

The Rabbi’s son

Meditation for Today’s Study

Revelation 1:10-20

*In the Spirit, I was present at the Day of the Holy One,
and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a shofar saying,
What you see, write in a book and send to the seven assemblies:
to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.*
*I turned to see the voice that spoke with me.
Having turned, I saw seven golden menorot.
And among the menorot was one like a son of man, clothed with a robe
reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest.
His head and his hair were white as white wool, like snow.
His eyes were like a flame of fire.
His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace.
His voice was like the voice of many waters. He had seven stars in his right hand.
Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword.
His face was like the sun shining at its brightest.
When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man.
He laid his right hand on me, saying, **Don't be afraid.**
**I am the Alef and the Tav, and the Living one. I was dead, and behold,
I am alive forevermore. Amen. I have the keys of Death and of She'ol.**
**Write therefore the things that you have seen, and the things which are,
and the things which will happen hereafter;
the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand,
and the seven golden menorot.
The seven stars are the angels of the seven assemblies.
The seven menorot are seven assemblies.***