

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM NUMBERS

### "Offerings for the Altar"

Numbers 7:1-89

#### THINK IT OVER

1. So this is what Numbers is all about: a. Tribal census (1, 2). b. Job descriptions (3, 4). c. Camp cleansing (5). d. Nazirite vows (6:1-21). e. Aaronic blessing (6:22-27).
2. It must not be forgotten that all these items were in the wilderness. Over three million people were involved. The entire matter is an absolute miracle.
3. Now is recorded in great detail tribal gifts for the altar of God. Here are the arrangements for these offerings.

#### 1. THEIR TIMING v. 1

##### a. In relation to the tabernacle

Scriptures teaches when the tabernacle was set up (Ex. 40:2). Leviticus is a book spoken out of the tabernacle (Lev. 1:1).

##### b. In relation to the activities

Exodus 40 to Numbers 6 record what happened during the month following the setting up of the tabernacle (Num. 1:1). Other important items are discussed which also took place at this time (Num. 7:1; 9:15).

Note: A phenomenal amount of work was accomplished in a relatively short period of time.

#### 2. THEIR RECORDING vv. 2-9

##### a. In anticipation

Moses is instructed to provide the organization of the camp and the duties of the Levites (chaps 1-6) before noting the gifts of the princes and the appointment of the Levites (chaps 7-8). This makes sense for it allows the reader to appreciate the significance of the events.

##### b. In responsiveness

The Aaronic blessing (6:22-27) is followed by the believing human response of the princes (chap. 7). This, in turn, is followed by greater blessing (7:89). There is obvious order and meaning in the simple record.

##### c. In distinction

The text is so clear that it was the princes, the leadership, which offered (v. 2). Although material items, they were "offerings" and that "before the Lord" and "before the tabernacle" (v. 3). The wagons (ox-carts) were "brought" and Moses was instructed to "take them"

for the "service of the tabernacle." Hence they were given to the "Levites" (v. 4). Gershonites and Merarites were given wagons, but Kohathites were not. This was "according to their service" (vv. 7, 8, 9). All was arranged under Ithamar (v. 8 cf. 4:33).

Note: There is real fellowship (partnership) here and cooperation (working together), blessed is the assembly which has both (1 Cor. 16:16).

### 3. THEIR REPETITION vv. 10-88

#### a. By tribes

Every tribe is mentioned. This is important and not mere repetition. It is like 2 Samuel 23 or Romans 16. God never passes hastily over gifts and offerings. God records the acts of service, the style of service, and the spirit of service. With the finger of God this chapter is a specimen page of the books to be opened in Glory. Yes, a record is kept which will ultimately be revealed (1 Cor. 4:1-5).

#### b. By offering

Each tribe prince brought the same offering "for dedication of the altar" (v. 10). Thus, there is unity, uniformity, and dedication before actual use of the altar (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 11:16). Look at the expensive offerings. Consider the cereal offering mentioned first, a suggestion that the princes were committed to the support of the priests (Lev. 6:14-18). Indeed, every tribe had an equal stake in the worship of God and each was committed to the support of the tabernacle and its priesthood. Glory to God--we are all essential and necessary to worship Him. Read the summary figures and stand amazed (vv. 84-88).

LAST NOTATION Let it never be forgotten--the tabernacle was not an empty shrine, but the home of the living God (v. 89). It is precious to speak to Him, but more blessed to have Him speak to us. Without this, we know not whereof we worship. God help us!