

NUMBERS 7:1-9 (AN OFFERING FOR THE LEVITES)

There is actually very little left to accomplish before Israel sets out for the land of Canaan. They have spent almost a year in the Wilderness, and about 330 days at Sinai. Within the next 20 days, they are scheduled to leave, and with an anticipated travel time of mere weeks, they should be standing on the bank of the Jordan River, ready to enter into their promised inheritance.

To help the Levites in what should be a most arduous trek through rough terrain, preparations have been made by the people, and they will be given as an offering to them. This is the subject of today's verses. After that, there will be more offerings made, and then in just a very short time after that, the people will be departing.

In all, Chapter 7 is probably the most repetitive and difficult passage in all of the five books of Moses, and indeed, the whole Bible. Several times, I have heard people say, I tried reading the Bible, but eventually gave up. For those that said "when" they gave up, Leviticus or Numbers is at the top of the list. For Numbers, my guess is that Numbers 7 was probably the clincher.

People love Genesis, they enjoy much of Exodus, struggle through Leviticus hoping for another narrative like Genesis, and get to Numbers... and lose all hope. They turn a few pages scanning for something that will be interesting, their eyes alight on these 89 verses, and they carefully and quietly close the book, promising themselves they will read more later, and they never come back. It's a shame, after Numbers 7, it's all uphill once again!

Text Verse: "My soul faints for Your salvation,
But I hope in Your word.

⁸² My eyes fail *from searching* Your word,
Saying, "When will You comfort me?"

⁸³ For I have become like a wineskin in smoke,
Yet I do not forget Your statutes." Psalm 119:81-83

Actually, in God's word, there are no low spots. Everything is a mountaintop when it is taken in its proper perspective. If we just keep looking for how things point to Jesus, the routine or repetitive verses don't seem so bad. We may not understand why they are there, but we know they are there for a good reason. Before we finish today, we'll have a better idea about these nine verses, including some interesting things along the way.

We will also revisit the ending of our verses from last week, tying them in with the purpose of the carts that are mentioned in our passage today. The reason for carts is to carry things along on the journey. The purpose of a journey is to carry us to a chosen location. The chosen location is because it is our goal.

Along the way, there may be difficult times, flat tires, cheating car mechanics (if such a thing is actually possible), and other difficulties. But when we are protected on the journey, there is no need to fret or worry. The carts make the burden light, the things that we do carry are because they are precious to us, and the safety of being protected makes the trip a content and happy one. This is the intended idea of the progression of thought so far, whether you have seen it or not. Today, you'll get a glimpse of that. More will be seen as we head out.

Oh, and just as we need food and provision along the way, please don't forget that all this time, and all of the time ahead, they are daily going out and gathering manna. Nothing is missing in the trek to the Land of Promise and nothing is missing in our walk to glory. Be assured of this. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. In That Day (verses 1-3)

¹ Now it came to pass,

The Hebrew reads, *vayhi b'yom* – “And it came to pass in the day.” Because of the words, and what is next stated, some scholars look at this as a contradiction within the text itself. That contradiction is supposedly evidenced by the next words...

^{1 (con't)} **when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle,**

The date which Moses accomplished this is recorded in Exodus –

“And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was raised up.” Exodus 40:17

However, the narrative of Numbers has thus far been recorded from a month later than that. Numbers 1:1 said –

“Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first *day* of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:”

Thus, liberal scholars are happy to find an error of contradiction in God’s word, chiding the ignorant editor of the narrative for being so stupid as to record such an obvious error. In this, they only show their own inept ability to perceive what is being said. In verse 10 of this chapter, the exact same phrase, *b'yom*, or “in the day,” is also used. That verse will read –

“And the princes presented the dedication-gift of the altar on the day that it was anointed; and the princes presented their offering before the altar..”
(DARBY)

All of the offerings to come are stated as being “in the day that it was anointed,” and yet the offerings will be presented over a period of twelve days. Thus, the term *b’yom*, or “in that day,” is inclusive of the entire period of the narrative, from Exodus 40, even up to now, more than a month later. The term *b’yom* then is a Hebraism meaning, “at that time.” It has been used this way to speak of indeterminate intervals of time, such as during and after the creation of man in Genesis 2:4, and of an entire period of a person’s life, such as in Genesis 35:3. No contradiction exists, except in the confused minds of liberal scholars who are willing to spend more time trying to undermine the word of God than they are in actually trying to learn it.

What is being said here is that the tabernacle is set up, but it is not yet fully set up. That process is ongoing, and it will continue until all of its implements, including those to be offered in the verses of this chapter, are included in its completion. That is certain based on the next words...

^{1 (con’t)} **that he anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings, and the altar and all its utensils; so he anointed them and consecrated them.**

The anointing of these items was accomplished at the erection of the tabernacle, but it is said here to include not only its furnishings and the altar, but also “all its utensils.” These utensils include the offerings which are to be made by the individual tribes in the verses ahead, and over a twelve-day period.

An actual timeline is difficult to pin down, but some things are known for certain. There is a fifty-day period from the erection of the tabernacle in Exodus 40:17 and the departure of the people from Sinai which will be on the twentieth day of the second month according to Numbers 10:11. The tabernacle was anointed in Leviticus 8:10, and the ordination of Aaron and his sons lasted eight days (Leviticus 9:1). During this time, there was also a Passover celebration.

Therefore, what is to be detailed concerning the offerings of the tribes probably occurred during the time of the writing of Leviticus. The twelve daily offerings would not take more than an hour or so, and the rest of the day, Moses would probably be in the tent of meeting, receiving the laws we have already gone through in Leviticus from the Lord. This would explain the words of the very last verse of Chapter 7 –

“Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that *was* on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.” Numbers 7:89

Adam Clarke rather boldly states that “the proper place of this account is immediately after the tenth chapter of Leviticus.” That is the chapter which recorded the death of Aaron’s two sons, and then which detailed the prescribed conduct for the priests. In this, we can see that the book of Leviticus was partially received and recorded during the events of the book of Numbers, as was stated in our introduction to Leviticus, a sermon presented to you on March 26, 2017.

These things are assured concerning the term *b’yom*, or “in the day,” because the tabernacle is one portion of the greater whole. What was the purpose of the tabernacle? It was to be the dwelling place of the Lord. But what use is that unless it is inclusive of the people – fully numbered and arranged around it – for whose sake it was fashioned and erected in the first place.

In other words, all of what we are reading is for a purpose. It is so that the Lord may dwell among His people. The census of them, their arrangement, the calling of the Levites, the duties of the priests – all of this and more – is one united act in regards to the account before us. Thus, the term *b’yom*, or “in the day,” carries the full significance of everything that is recorded, from the day of the tabernacle’s erection, until the day that these things are complete. But what is the actual importance of this? It is because, as we

have seen, everything – even to the minutest detail – has been given as a picture of Christ. God incarnate came to dwell among His people. “In the day” then includes every aspect of what God has done, and is doing, in order for that to literally come about in the future. For those looking forward to the true dwelling of God with men, “in the day” is speaking of right now. Until the final detail is complete, we are “in the day.”

The finality of that day carries two major parts to it, the first is the millennial reign of Christ. The prophets speak of that day numerous times. The term “in the day” is used by Isaiah again and again and again in this manner. The second part is the eternal state which will continue on forever. It is where God will dwell with men in the fullest and most complete sense. Until then, the people of God are being numbered, arranged, and their offerings are being made in preparation for what God has determined since before a single atom came into existence.

² Then the leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers’ houses, who were the leaders of the tribes and over those who were numbered, made an offering.

The Hebrew is completely the opposite in order of all English translations. It begins, not ends, with the words “And made an offering.” Only after that does it specify who made the offering. Again these words confirm to us the general, rather than specific, timing of the events which comprise *b’yom*, or “in the day.” Here “the leaders of Israel” are those who have already been named as such in Chapter 1 verses 5-16. This becomes even clearer with the words, “over those who were numbered.” Not only is this after the selection of the tribal leaders, but it is after the census of the men in each tribe.

All of this is then after that naming and its subsequent census. And so, the writing of at least Leviticus 11 through Numbers 6, actually comes after that date. Numbers 7, comprising the twelve offerings over twelve days, certainly runs in a contemporary manner with the writing of those chapters.

If these offerings were started on the day after the census, which would have been an incredibly full day, the twelve offerings would end on the 13th of the second month. As the 14th of the second month will be designated as a special, second, Passover according to verse 9:11, this appears to be the correct timing of these events – from the 2nd through the 13th day of the second month. We cannot be dogmatic about this, but this seems to be a perfectly arranged time to accomplish what lies ahead.

It would mean that these offerings were presented without regard to the Sabbath. If so, then the presentation would probably have been made in connection with the morning offering by the priests, who ministered regardless of a Sabbath day. Again, we can't be dogmatic about this, but it does appear from the account that the twelve offerings came on twelve consecutive days.

And so what is probably the case is that the offerings we will see were brought forward each morning, one tribe a day. After that, Moses would go into the Tent of Meeting and receive more of the law from the Lord. The amount of theological information received and then passed on by Moses in these few short days has, as we have found out, been enough for people to study for 3500 years.

And yet, even today a new insight will arise from time to time concerning what is recorded here. How many have been found and recorded within the last year alone is unknown, but it is of no small amount. How much is left hidden for the future is likewise unknown, but it is certain that it is enough for numerous scholars to dedicate their lives to, and to rejoice in the amazing details to be drawn out which are hidden in picture, in prophecy, and in verse, word, and letter. Moses probably didn't even have an inkling that what he sat and wrote out from the mouth of the Lord was so rich, so filled with pictures of Messiah, and so instructive for the lives of God's people. It truly is almost impossible to imagine the level of wisdom which passed between Creator and his humble servant in those marvelous moments where they spoke face to face and issued forth for the people of Israel, and even for us today, the words which are so cherished by a few, and

yet so unhappily ignored by so many. Thus it is with the word of God – the incomprehensible, glorious, and eternally relevant WORD OF GOD.

³ And they brought their offering

As you saw, most of the previous verse is parenthetical. It now resumes with the main thought. It is the leaders over the numbered men who accomplish this, bringing their offering...

^{3 (con't)} before the Lord,

The words *liphne Yehovah*, or “before the Lord,” will be explained at the end of verse 3 as “before the tabernacle.” They came forward from their tribes, walking a rather vast distance through the Levite’s encampment, in order to come to the spot for the presentation of their offering. There in front of the beautifully ornamented screen of the gate which was woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and of fine woven linen, they presented their gifts to the Levites. These consisted of...

^{3 (con't)} six covered carts

shes eglot tsav. What the words actually mean is highly debated. The Greek translation of them doesn’t help much. Many ideas have been put forth, two-wheeled carts, four-wheeled wagons, and litters – meaning something not borne on wheels, but between the two oxen, one in front and one behind. The idea with this is that the rough terrain would make wheels impractical. However, the weight of these items makes litters equally impractical.

The word *agalah*, is translated as a cart, or wagon, elsewhere. It comes from the same word as *egel*, or calf. Both are derived from *agol*, meaning

“circular.” The idea is that a calf in its youth will twirl about in a circular manner, enjoying life as it prances in the fields. Thus, these *agalah* are round-wheeled vehicles. Whether they are carts or wagons is unknown. We will stick with wagons for consistency, and because wagons – having four wheels – would be a smoother, more stately ride. It makes a nicer mental image.

The second word, *tsav*, is from a root meaning “to establish.” It then probably refers to a covering which is fixed to the wagon. Most translations say “covered,” or they just ignore the word altogether, hoping nobody notices.

^{3 (con’t)} **and twelve oxen,**

The oxen are certainly for pulling wheeled vehicles, not carrying the items of the tabernacle. It is simply unreasonable to expect that the fabrics, wood, and metal pieces, which were of such great weight, would be carried on litters by so few oxen.

^{3 (con’t)} **a cart for every two of the leaders,**

Despite what most commentaries state about the nature of these gifts being voluntary. The word for “offering” in this verse is *qorban*. It is simply an offering brought near, whether voluntarily or not. For example, the sin offering of Leviticus 4 is a *qorban*. Though willingly offered, it was still a required offering for atonement of sins. What is probable, is that these were built along with the tabernacle, and the Lord expected it as an offering. The same word is again used for the offerings which are coming in the verses ahead in this chapter. The reason why their construction wasn’t mentioned in Exodus is simple. It is because they have nothing to do with the pictures of Christ which everything described by the Lord concerning the sanctuary did. When the Lord specified certain materials, measurements, weights, and

the like, it was always to give us a picture of Christ. These carts, other than their number, have no details about their construction which point to Him.

The carts, if in fact built specifically for this service, as I submit is the case, they were built by the people and presented by leaders of two tribes each. As two leaders came forward to present them, it is probable that they were not merely common wagons, but were rather beautifully made and ornamented. It would be an honor to come forth with a second tribal leader and present such a beautiful piece of craftsmanship.

^{3 (con't)} **and for each one an ox;**

Twelve oxen, one representing each of the tribes, and thus two oxen for each wagon, were also brought forth. Six, being the number of man, the six wagons are the logical number to be brought forth for carrying the articles of the sanctuary which point, in every detail, to Christ the Man. The twelve oxen point to the number of governmental perfection. The twelve oxen, represent the twelve tribes of Israel. As the oxen draw along – in picture – the coming Messiah, so Israel pressed forward through time, bringing forth to the world the coming Messiah.

^{3 (con't)} **and they presented them before the tabernacle.**

The words *liphne ha'mishkan*, or “before the tabernacle,” explain the term, *liphne Yehovah*, or “before the Lord.” They are used synonymously. To be presented before the tabernacle implies that they are thus presented before the Lord. What is amazing about the scene which is unfolding here is that these people have been at the foot of Sinai for over three hundred days. During that time, a great deal has happened, both good and bad. However, for much of the time, the tabernacle has been prepared. The materials were gathered, the people were selected for its construction, it was made, and it was finally set up. Now, almost as soon as it has been set up, it is time to break it down and depart. Within less than three weeks, that will occur.

*In that day, all will be right – right as rain
In that day, all things will be made new
There is coming a time when there will be no more pain
In that day it will come from our Savior, Faithful and True
In that day, we shall know even as we are known
The day is coming when these things shall come to pass
In that day, to us God’s glory will be shown
As we stand before the sea, clear as the clearest glass
That day is coming for the redeemed of the Lord
In that day all will be as it was meant to be
Everything that was marred and corrupted will be restored
In that day we shall see Jesus smiling upon us so tenderly
In that day. Oh what a day it will be!*

II. The Offering for the Levites (verses 4-9)

⁴ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

The translation is not correct. It says *v’yomer Yehovah el Moshe lemor*. The word is *amar*, or said, not *daber*, or spoke. The Hebrew words carry somewhat the same meaning, but “said” is used here because the task requires a partnership and people working together. It may seem like trifling, but there is no such thing when attempting to discern what the Lord is relaying to us. And so we rightly say now that “the Lord said to Moses, saying...”

⁵ “Accept *these* from them,

The Targum of Palestine inserts the thought that Moses would not originally accept the wagons because he doubted if they would be acceptable for use in conveying the tabernacle. That makes no sense at all. It is obvious that the items were to be conveyed on wagons, with the exception of the most holy things, each of which was built with rods for transport.

Further, the Lord would not wait until mere days before the departure to suddenly decide that wagons were needed, as if He forgot such an important detail. Rather, this entire offering was one prepared for the purpose, and in advance of this day. The edifice is standing, the priests have been ordained, and it is now the appropriate time to make the offering. Moses, as the leader, is accepting them from their hands in order to then present them to those who will use them. There is a dignity and a formality to the offering, not a haphazard and dubious state of events taking place.

^{5 (con't)} **that they may be used in doing the work of the tabernacle of meeting;**

Another incorrect translation. Twice already, in 7:1 and 7:3, the term *mishkan*, or tabernacle, has been used. Now a different term, *ohel moed*, or tent of meeting, is used. It completely destroys the movement of thought to translate the two words both as “tabernacle.” The symbolism is all but lost when this happens.

To help in understanding this, we could use another example and equate the *mishkan* with the oval office within the White House. The tent of meeting would then be equated to the White House. In verse 1, Moses finished setting up the oval office, and in verse 3, the offering is presented before the oval office, meaning where the president actually is. However, here, these things are to be used in the work of the White House. This is the importance of ensuring individual words are translated individually here.

^{5 (con't)} **and you shall give them to the Levites,**

Moses is the leader of the congregation, and so on behalf of the Levites, he formally receives the offerings. This is no different than his inspection of the completion of the work in the construction of the sanctuary. At the end of the people's laborious work, we read this in Exodus 39 –

“According to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work. ⁴³Then Moses looked over all the work, and indeed they had done it; as the Lord had commanded, just so they had done it. And Moses blessed them.” Exodus 39:42, 43

Nothing is said about him inspecting the wagons. As there was no picture of Christ in their construction, other than the number of them, all that mattered was that they were capable of bearing the loads. Therefore, Moses accepted them for the Levites, maybe with a thumbs up, a pat on the back, and a “Job well-done guys.” Once they were accepted for the Levites, he was to pass them on...

^{5 (con't)} **to every man according to his service.”**

This clause will continue to be explained, but it means that according to the need, based on weight and bulk, the carts would be portioned out. As there are three divisions of Levites, one would think that maybe they would go 2x2x2. But such is not the case. There were some extremely heavy objects that would need to be transported, and most of those went to one tribe...

⁶ **So Moses took the carts and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites.**

Just as the Lord said to Moses, so Moses complies with His words. He received the carts and the oxen in the same manner as a leader would

receive an offering of assistance from a foreign country for one of his provinces that was in need, and then he would take what was offered, and formally present it to those needy souls. Everything about the ceremony here bears an air of dignity and formality. From the hands of their brother Israelites, and through their great leader, the Levites are then presented with the wagons as follows...

⁷ Two carts and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon, according to their service;

As you perfectly remember, because we went through it in detail, the Gershonite's service was recorded in Numbers 4. There it said –

“They shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle and the tabernacle of meeting *with* its covering, the covering of badger skins that *is* on it, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, ²⁶ the screen for the door of the gate of the court, the hangings of the court which *are* around the tabernacle and altar, and their cords, all the furnishings for their service and all that is made for these things: so shall they serve.” Numbers 4:25, 26

These things were heavy and bulky. Layer upon layer of tent material would be carefully piled up between these two carts. Being covered, they would be kept safe from the elements. While hanging in the open, the rain wouldn't affect them, but if it were to rain on them while piled up, mold would quickly be a problem. Plus, the immense amount of dust raised by the vast multitudes of people in march makes having them covered much better as well.

In total, it was an immense amount of skins and fabrics by the time all the packing was completed. Commentaries which claim this was cumbersome, but not very heavy, have missed the reality of the matter. They were heavy, but not heavy in comparison to those items which were transported by those in the next verse...

⁸ and four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service,

Double the amount of carts and oxen went to Merari. Assuredly you also remember the list of items they were tasked with, but in case someone nodded off during those important verses – which certainly seems unlikely – here is what they said –

“And this *is* what they must carry as all their service for the tabernacle of meeting: the boards of the tabernacle, its bars, its pillars, its sockets, ³² and the pillars around the court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, with all their furnishings and all their service; and you shall assign *to each man* by name the items he must carry. ³³ This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Merari...” Numbers 4:31-33

The weight of each socket is unknown, but supposing each was forty pounds, the combined weight of just those would be over 4000 pounds. That, along with the boards, bars, pillars, pegs, cords, and so on, would be an immense amount of weight. The oxen would earn their feed on their way from destination to destination, as they trudged through the dry, barren, rocky, inhospitable land.

^{8 (con't)} under the authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

These words are repeated from verse 4:28, after the service of Gershon was noted, and then 4:33 after that of Merari was noted. The thoughts are combined into one statement for both tribes. Ithamar was the youngest of Aaron and still a teenager, but he was given this great duty to supervise, just as he was given the duty of overseeing the inventory of the materials for the Tabernacle of the Testimony in Exodus 38:21, which was also for the service of the Levites. The name Ithamar means “Island of Palms” or “Land of Palms.” The *tamar*, or palm, is a symbol of uprightness. Thus the Levities

under the supervision of Ithamar are considered an island of upright people who are administering a service before the Lord.

⁹ But to the sons of Kohath he gave none, because theirs *was* the service of the holy things,

Kohath, as you remember perfectly from Chapter 4, carried all of the holy things recorded in verses 5-15 – from the Ark with its coverings, to the brazen altar and everything in between. It was a great deal of things to carry, and some of them were rather heavy. But they were deemed most holy, and were never to be placed on a cart. Just as the king of Israel was carried upon a palanquin as seen in the Song of Solomon, so these items, representing the true and great King of Israel, were to be given this same respect and honor.

Correct translations of this verse say “holy things,” “sacred objects,” or “holy objects.” The word is *ha’qodesh*, or “the holy.” It is speaking specifically of these most holy items. Some translations say “the service of the sanctuary.” That would be incorrect. The “sanctuary” is the entire compound in which the Tent of Meeting and Tabernacle reside, inclusive of its exterior borders, known in Exodus 25:8 as the *miqdash*. The Kohathites didn’t carry the whole sanctuary, but only these particular holy objects, as is seen in our final words of the day...

***⁹ (fin) *which* they carried on their shoulders.**

Though these items were heavy, they were carried on poles sufficiently long enough for the appropriate number of men to carry them. Further, there would be many Kohathites on the journey, and they could easily call to one another to come and provide relief as needed. Like geese moving in and out of the front of the formation to get relief at times, so these men could easily move in and out of the duty without even breaking a stride. In the end, the

honor of carrying these most sacred objects would far outweigh the burden which temporarily weighed them down.

As we are slowly having Christ revealed to us, now is a wonderful time to see a comparison to Him as King of Israel from the Song of Solomon. Before going there, we need to remember the last portion of our previous sermon. It was the pronouncement of the *birkat kohanim*, or the Priestly Prayer. As I noted then, it was composed of sixty letters. In the song of Solomon, we read the following. As you listen, think of the tribes of Israel on their march towards the Land of Promise...

“Who *is* this coming out of the wilderness
Like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the merchant’s fragrant powders?
⁷ Behold, it *is* Solomon’s couch,
With sixty valiant men around it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
⁸ They all hold swords,
Being expert in war.
Every man *has* his sword on his thigh
Because of fear in the night.” Song of Solomon 3:6-8

The words are written in the feminine, but it is noted that the form may more rightly be taken as neuter, because there is no specific neuter form in Hebrew. Thus, the question, in accord with the surrounding words, is asking, “Who is this group of people coming out of the wilderness?”

Solomon was in type a picture looking forward to Christ, but the words about him also look back in remarkable similarity to the people of Israel conducting their King, Yehovah. “Who is this coming out of the wilderness?” The word “wilderness” is *midbar*, the same name as the Hebrew book of Numbers, *b’midbar*, or “in the wilderness.” Israel is soon to be on a trek out of the wilderness.

“Like pillars of smoke” looks to the cloud, a picture of Christ, which will go forth with Israel throughout their journeys and out of the wilderness. “Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,” reflects two of the ingredients found in either the holy oil and/or in the holy incense each picturing Christ. The “merchant’s fragrant powders” are the other ingredients selected by the Lord, each picturing Christ in one manner or another.

“Solomon’s couch,” is the resting place of the Lord, the Ark of the Covenant, where *shalem*, or peace (and also where the name Solomon is derived from) is granted. The sixty *gibborim*, or mighty ones, would be the sixty letters of the Priestly Prayer resting upon the people as they were blessed by Aaron. The words of the prayer would be as swords of protection for the *milkhamah*, or battle against the Lord’s enemies. The “fear in the night” is that terror which comes about in the night and which the Lord and His prayer of protection would keep them from.

The symbolism looks back to Israel, being led out of the wilderness to the Land of Promise, protected by the Lord, Yehovah. The symbolism also looks forward to Christ, leading His people through the wilderness of their lives, guiding us by His Spirit, until we are brought into the eternal presence of the Father. The multitudes of Israel, forming an immense cross in the wilderness when encamped, were a living picture of a spiritual reality of all of God’s redeemed.

We are safely in Christ because of His cross, and we are tenderly guided by His Spirit. We are enveloped in His fragrance, protected by the blessing of His name, and are on our way to the Land of Promise where our King of Peace will forever protect us from the harm of spiritual darkness. Fear in the night? It shall never be so. The High Priest has pronounced His blessing upon us. Who shall fear in the night?

Closing Verse: So we may boldly say:

“The Lord *is* my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?” Hebrews 13:6

Next Week: Numbers 7:10-89 *This is one hugely long passage, but your attention shall not falter...* (An Offering for the Altar) (14th Numbers Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It may seem at times as if you are lost in a desert, wandering aimlessly. But the Lord is there, carefully leading you to the Land of Promise. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

An Offering for the Levites

Now it came to pass
When Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle
That he anointed it and consecrated it and all its furnishings
-----and the altar and all its utensils
So he anointed them and consecrated them; these jobs he did tackle

Then the leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers' houses
Who were the leaders of the tribes, as we know
And over those who were numbered
Made an offering, and here is how it did go
And they brought their offering before the Lord
Six covered carts and twelve oxen

----a cart for every two of the leaders, so their job they could tackle
And for each one an ox
And they presented them before the tabernacle
Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These words to them He was then relaying
“Accept these from them
That they may be used in doing the work
-----of the tabernacle of meeting, you see
And you shall give them to the Levites
To every man according to his service, so shall it be

So Moses took the carts and the oxen too
And gave them to the Levites, as he was instructed to do
Two carts and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon
-----according to their service
And four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari
-----according to their service too
Under the authority of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest
As the Lord instructed Moses to do

But to the sons of Kohath he gave none
Because theirs was the service of the holy things
Which they carried on their shoulders
Mostly by poles, slipped through appropriate rings
Lord God, we are even now in a wilderness
And we are wanting to be led by You

Without You to direct, our lives would be a mess
And so be our guide, O God; You who are faithful and true
We long for the water in this barren land
May it flow forth from the Rock, our souls to satisfy
Give us this refreshing, spiritual hand
And may we take it, and to our lives daily it apply

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to you for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...