

Ezra 6:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

Analysis

The dedication offerings—'an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs'—were substantial but modest compared to Solomon's dedication (1 Kings 8:63: 22,000 oxen, 120,000 sheep). The sin offering of 'twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel' maintained all-Israel identity despite only Judah and Benjamin's numerical dominance. This demonstrated covenant continuity—all twelve tribes remained God's people regardless of present circumstances. The inclusive vision maintained hope for future comprehensive restoration.

Historical Context

The reduced scale of offerings reflected the returned community's modest circumstances—they were a small, poor population in a devastated land. Yet they offered substantially, demonstrating generosity proportionate to means. The twelve goats for all-Israel sin offering maintained theological vision that the northern tribes, though scattered since 722 BC, remained part of covenant people. This hope influenced later expectations about Messiah gathering all dispersed Israelites (Matthew 19:28).

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the modest dedication compared to Solomon's reflect realistic assessment of circumstances without abandoning faith in God's presence?
2. What does the twelve-tribe sin offering teach about maintaining comprehensive covenant vision despite incomplete present reality?

Interlinear Text

וְהִקְרִיבוּ לְחֹנֶכֶת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי דָּנָה תֹרֵן יָן מֵאָה הַ
And offered at the dedication house of God of this bullocks an hundred
H7127 H2597 H1005 H426 H1836 H8450 H3969

עֲזֵי יֵן וְצִפִּירֵי יָ מֵאָה הַ אַרְבַּע עֶ אֲמֹר יֵן מֵאָה הַ דָּכָר יֵן
rams an hundred lambs four an hundred he goats
H1798 H3969 H563 H703 H3969 H6841 H5796

עָשָׂה רָ תְּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כָּל עַל לְחֹטִי אַ
and for a sin offering for all Israel twelve H6236
H2402 H5922 H3606 H3479 H8648

יִשְׂרָאֵל: שְׁבֵטֵי יָ לְמִנֵּי
Israel of the tribes according to the number
H3479 H7625 H4510

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 8:35 (Sin): Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats for a sin offering: all this was a burnt offering unto the LORD.

2 Chronicles 7:5 (Sacrifice): And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

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