

Numbers 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And four wagons and eight oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari, according unto their service, under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

Analysis

The Merarites receiving four wagons and eight oxen—double what the Gershonites received—reflects their heavier burden of boards, bars, pillars, and sockets. The bronze and wooden framework was substantially heavier than fabric coverings. This demonstrates that God distributes resources equitably based on need, not equally regardless of circumstances. The Reformed principle that to whom much is given, much is required also applies in reverse—those with greater burdens receive greater provision.

Historical Context

The Merarites carried the entire structural framework of the tabernacle, including heavy bronze sockets that formed the foundation. These components, being solid metal and wood rather than fabric, required more substantial transportation. The eight oxen provided the pulling power necessary for moving such weight repeatedly during Israel's wanderings.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does proportionate resource allocation according to burden teach about God's justice?
2. How should recognizing that harder tasks receive more support encourage those in difficult ministries?
3. In what ways does this principle challenge comparison and envy among different workers in God's kingdom?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	שְׁמֹנֶת	רְבָבָק	נָתַן	בְּנֵי
H853 And four	H853 wagons	H8083 and eight	H1241 oxen	H5414 he gave
H702	H5699	H1121	H5414	H1121
מִכְרָרִי	כִּפְרִי	בְּיַד	אִתְּמָרִי	בְּנֵי
of Merari	according	unto their service	under the hand	of Ithamar
H4847	H6310	H5656	H3027	H385
אַבְרָהָם	בְּפִנֵּי			
of Aaron	the priest			
H175	H3548			

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