

Numbers 7:84

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold:

Analysis

This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed (זאת חנוכה המזבח ביום המשח אותו, zot chanukat hamizbeach beyom himashach oto)—The dedication (chanukkah, חנוכה) commemorates the altar's anointing and consecration. **Twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold**—the repetition of "twelve" emphasizes completeness: all twelve tribes participate equally in Israel's worship.

The summary transforms repetitive detail into profound truth: unified diversity in worship. Each tribe's contribution was identical yet individual, sequential yet equal. This prefigures the New Covenant church, where Jews and Gentiles from every tribe and tongue bring the same faith in Christ through individually encountered grace (Revelation 7:9). The twelve-fold repetition also anticipates the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14).

Historical Context

The tabernacle's dedication occurred in the first month of the second year after the Exodus (Exodus 40:17), but the tribal offerings extended over twelve days (Numbers 7:1-88). This sequential presentation allowed each tribe to participate fully, preventing any sense of marginalization or favoritism.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the twelve-day dedication (rather than simultaneous presentation) reflect God's desire for personal participation over mere collective ritual?
2. What does the identical value of each tribe's offering teach about spiritual equality despite differences in size, prominence, or history?
3. Why might the summary (verses 84-88) be necessary after such detailed repetition, and what theological purpose does it serve?

Interlinear Text

זֶאת	הִנֵּה	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	בַּיּוֹם	הַמָּשָׁח			
H2063	This was the dedication	of the altar	in the day	when it was anointed			
	H2598	H4196	H3117	H4886			
וְ	יָמָא	נָשִׂיאֵי	קָעֵר	כֶּסֶף	שֵׁתִּים		
H853	H853	by the princes	of Israel	chargers	of silver		
		H5387	H3478	H7086	H3701		
עֲשָׂה:	מִזְרְקֵי	כֶּסֶף	שְׁנֵים	עֲשָׂה:	כַּף	זָהָב	שֵׁתִּים
twelve	bowls	of silver	H8147	twelve	spoons	of gold	H8147
H6240	H4219	H3701		H6240	H3709	H2091	
עֲשָׂה:							
twelve							
H6240							

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 7:10 (Sacrifice): And the princes offered for dedicating of the altar in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their offering before the altar.

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