

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 (תַּחַת חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּיֹם הַמְשִׁיחַ אֶתְוָה, zot chanukat hamizbeach beyom himashach oto)—The dedication (chanukkah, חֲנֻכָּה) 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

ז את	תָּמִיכָה	בְּמִזְבֵּחַ	בַּיּוֹם	הַמְשִׁיחַ
H2063	This was the dedication	of the altar	in the day	when it was anointed

שְׁתַּיִם כָּסֶף מֵאַת שְׁבָא לְנִשְׁיָא וְקַעַר תְּמִימָה אֶת זָהָב H853 H853 by the princes of Israel chargers of silver H8147 H5207 H2479 H7096 H2701

שְׁתִּים	זֶה	בְּ	כֶּפֶר	וְתִּשְׁרֵה:	שְׁנַיִם	כֶּסֶף	מִזְרָקִי	עִשְׂרָה:
twelve	bowls	of silver	H8147	twelve	spoons	of gold		H8147
H6240	H4219	H3701		H6240	H3709	H2091		

עשרה:

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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