Freewill Offerings Numbers 7 6 April 2023

Beloved sisters and brethren

The people of Israel after four hundred and thirty years in Egypt were brought out with signs and wonders by the mighty hand of God. The firstborn of Egypt were slain unless they kept the Passover. At Sinai they were through Moses delivered the Law of God. Also under direction Moses was given the pattern of the Tabernacle (Ex 25) They been told to bring specified gifts vs1-7 (the bulk of what they possessed would have come from the Egyptians, see Ex12 v36 they spoiled the Egyptians and from these and their labours in the field in cutting down wood and hunting for badgers (thought now to be porpoises) all the materials were to hand in order to make The Tabernacle of worship whilst on their travels to The Promised Land.

Ex 25:9 *According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.* Then they prepared for their journey to the Promised Land. But they were a vast people and they are shown how to group in their tribes for an orderly march.

Balaam sent to curse them was overwhelmed when he saw the order-

Num 24:5-9 *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters. He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted. God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.*

A census of the people was taken by their tribes; tribal captains

appointed and the order of assembly as with everything under instruction by God through Moses.

In Numbers chapter 6 vs22-27 a special blessing by the High Priest Aaron and his sons for the children of Israel was pronounced by God.

Num. 7:1 *And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it* - to cover with oil (Ex30v2) and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them. Thus everything was sanctified, set apart and anointed with oil thus a link with the Word of God (Jas5/14), everything in harmony with His will.

Num 7:2 *That the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers, who were the princes of the tribes, and were over them that were numbered, offered.* And they brought identical gifts

Num 7:3 *And they brought their offering before the LORD, six covered wagons, and twelve oxen; a wagon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox: and they brought them before the tabernacle*.

But these were the result of their discussions and ponderings. They knew there were eleven days' journey to the Promised Land (Deut. 1) and they understood that the Tabernacle was their responsibility. They earnestly discussed and no doubt prayed among themselves as to how they would manage.

A good lesson here that we must do all in our power to help ourselves as we seek God's help. So when sick we pray and seek medical help if available. But know if we pray believing, help will come **but in accordance with God's will**. If out of money we don't go to lenders nor stand as guarantor/surety. Always guided by the Word.

In bringing identical gifts they must have talked to one another and decided not to outshine but act in unity. (2Cor 9v7)

Thus Num 7:4-8 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take it of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man*

according to his service. Two wagons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service: And Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites. Two wagons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service:

Num 3:25 *And the charge of the sons of Gershon in the tabernacle of the congregation shall be the tabernacle, and the tent, the covering thereof, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

Num 7:8 *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.*

Num 3:36-37 *And under the custody and charge of the sons of Merari shall be the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto, And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.*

Thus we see the wagons were placed where they were most needed

Num 7:9 *But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders-the ark with the cherubim, incense altar, table of shewbread, brazen altar.*

Each made their gift of dedication on their set day for twelve days.

shoulders.

Num 7:10-13 *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. And the LORD said unto Moses, They shall offer their offering, each* ***prince on his day****, for the dedicating of the altar. And he that offered his offering the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah: And his offering was one silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both*

of them were full of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering:

Robert Roberts says of this offering that a man could give a portion of what the man required for his own particular use. He said that some things were compulsory but this was not, thus it was a spontaneous action of love see Lev 2, and always unleavened and no honey, but seasoned with salt (salt is very special in bringing out the flavor –the taste).

Mat 5:13 *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Mar 9:49 *For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.Mar_9:50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.*

Num 7:14-17 *One spoon of ten shekels of gold, full of incense: -a sweet smell unto the Lord- Faith and praise shown in prayer. One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt offering:* (R.R. strength, desire, and obedience absorbed in the incorruptible at the resurrection). *One kid of the goats for a sin offering*: (the sacrificial condemnation of sin in the flesh

Num 7:17 *And for a sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he goats, five lambs of the first year* (all strength, executiveness, waywardness and innocence brought into reconciliation with God and employed in His service).

This *was* the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab and repeated twelve times on twelve consecutive days would make the lesson well understood and impress all who witnessed it. Each prince represented his people and so all Israel were implicated in these offerings. The lessons were meant to come home to everyone in the congregation.

Rom 3:23-26 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this*

time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Thus in making these offerings the leaders on behalf of their tribe acknowledged this

Num 7:84-88 *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: Each charger of silver weighing an hundred and thirty shekels, each bowl seventy: all the silver vessels weighed two thousand and four hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: The golden spoons were twelve, full of incense, weighing ten shekels apiece, after the shekel of the sanctuary: all the gold of the spoons was an hundred and twenty shekels. All the oxen for the burnt offering were twelve bullocks, the rams twelve, the lambs of the first year twelve, with their meat offering: and the kids of the goats for sin offering twelve. And all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace offerings were twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he goats sixty, the lambs of the first year sixty. This was the dedication of the altar, after that it was anointed.*

We see here that the people of Israel, through their leaders, and in this that the gifts were voluntary. The leaders must have conferred about what they could give. Here we see unity of mind and they all entered into the spirit of the occasion, the preparation for the journey to the Promised Land (are we not on this journey where ever we are as we wait for our Lord to return?).

Thus we see all Israel all set for their journey. But it was a mixed multitude that went up: Exo 12:38 *And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle*. This would have included many of the Egyptians who were impressed by the miracles that God did through Moses but they were the weak link in the journey and the faith of Israel was affected. It is the weakest link that breaks the chain. A lesson also not to be too close to those outside our faith.

Brother Ken