

1. The wagons and the oxen (vii.1-9). The twelve leaders of the tribes offered the six covered wagons and the twelve oxen needed for transporting the tabernacle. The cost was equally divided among them (3). Verses 4-9 tell how the wagons were divided among the Levites, not equally, but according to their service. The sons of Gershon, whose service was described in Nu.iv.25-26, received one-third of the wagons and oxen (7). The sons of Merari, having the heaviest materials to carry (cf.iv.31-32), received twice as many (8). The sons of Kohath received none at all (9), since it was their duty to carry the sacred vessels from the interior of the tabernacle upon their shoulders (iv.1-15). At this point it is well to read the account in 2 Sa.vi. 3-7 of the death of Uzzah, a direct result of forgetting this requirement and carrying the ark on a wagon. God desires His work to be done in accordance with the directions of His Word.

ii. Gifts for the dedicating of the altar (vii.10-89). It would seem that the altar was anointed on the first day of the month (10; cf. Ex.xi.2, 10, 17), but that the actual dedication was spread over twelve days (11), with each prince bringing his gifts on a different day. The gifts of each are described in great detail, even though what was given was exactly identical on each separate day. There is great similarity in the things that God requires of each Christian, yet each of us is very important in His sight and He is interested in every detail of our life and service. It is interesting that the order of the tribes here is not that of the numbering in chapter i but of the description of the encampment in chapter ii. Deuel (42,47). See note on ii.14.

Verses 84-89 summarize the offerings given on the twelve days, which total exactly twelve times what was given by each prince. Full details are given in each case. God keeps record even of our smallest acts and deeds. He desires exactness. Careless and shoddy work is never acceptable to Him.

The account of the offerings ends in verse 88. In verse 89 we read that in the holy of holies Moses heard a voice speaking to him from above the altar. The next chapter gives us additional messages that God gave to Moses. It is impossible to say whether this verse is introducing viii.1 or finishing the account of the dedication of the altar.