

c. The lamps lit (viii.1-4)

Now that the gifts have been received for the dedication of the altar, command is given that the lamps in the tabernacle be lit. These have already been described with more detail in Ex. xxv. It is necessary that they be lit before the journey can properly be commenced. We also must have our lamps burning if we are to serve God effectively.

d. Cleansing of the Levites for service (viii.5-22).

At a formal meeting, with appropriate ceremonies, the Levites must be consecrated to God and inducted into His service. Details of their service have already been explained in chapter iv. It was necessary that the work of the altar be done by persons properly prepared for the task. Therefore, the Levites had to be cleansed both ceremonially and physically. Verses 5-19 contain God's command; verses 20-22 describe its performance.

There are many lessons for the Christian in this section. He sees here the importance of each member of God's family having his own particular task. Cf. 1 Cor. xii. It is necessary that special men be designated for particular duties, and the most important of these duties require ceremonies of installation, in order that the work of God's kingdom shall be done in orderly fashion. Those who do the work of God must be cleansed from all defilement of flesh and spirit. No one is fit in himself to serve God. It is only as we see ourselves as guilty sinners saved through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary that we can do anything that is worthwhile in God's sight. All our righteousnesses apart from Him are but 'filthy rags' (Is. lxiv.6).

e. The age of Levitical service (viii.23-26)

This brief section states that the Levites are to carry on the service of the tabernacle from the age of twenty-five to the age of fifty. In chapter iv the age of beginning of service was given as thirty. It would seem that from twenty-five to thirty the Levites were in a sort of apprenticeship, unless the legislation in chapter iv be taken to apply only to the wilderness period. Verses 25,26 describe a limited retirement after fifty. They no longer do the heavy tasks of waiting upon the service of the