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Gifts of the Twelve Tribes

7: 10-88

Gifts of the twelve tribes DIG: How do these gifts relate to the Aaronic blessing (6:22-27)? Why do you think that we are given such detail about the offerings that the heads of the tribes brought at the inauguration of the Tabernacle? Why do you think each tribe gave them an identical gift? How would this help in the unity between the tribes? How would this act help the people to identify with the Tabernacle?

REFLECT: What encouragement and what challenge can we draw from the long account of the offerings of the tribal leaders? What special offering could you bring to the Lord? What kind of gifts do you give to God in tithes and offerings, or the use of your spiritual gifts(s)? What motivates you to give these gifts? How do these gifts make you feel about God? How does God use these gifts to aid you in your spiritual journey?

ADONAI is a God of relationship. He is seeking your friendship. True love wants to share.

Throughout these early chapters of **Numbers** there is a topical presentation rather than a chronological arrangement of the material. They have been telling us the story of **the Israelite's** preparations to leave Mount Sinai. In the first four chapters of **Numbers**, **they** took a **census** (**to see link click [An](#) - The Levitical Census**) and assigned **the Levites** to **their** various tasks (see **[Ar](#) - The Four Camps of Levites**). **Numbers 7-10** is a flashback and now returns to the theme of preparation, telling us how **the Levites** came to be in possession of **six** fine **carts** and **twelve** head of **oxen** to pull **them**. In order to relate this story, we are returned to **the first day of the first month, the day the Tabernacle** was set up (see the commentary on **Exodus [Hg](#) - The Tabernacle was Set Up on the First Day of the Month**), that the Sh'khinah glory of **God** filled the Most Holy Place (see the commentary on **Exodus [Hh](#) - The Glory of the LORD Filled the Tabernacle**), and that **YHVH** called **Moses** from within **the Tabernacle**, and that **Aaron** and **his sons** began their **seven-day** orientation (see the commentary on **Leviticus [Ba](#) - The Meal and Seven Days of Training**).

Starting **on the day that the Tabernacle** was set up, **the leader of each tribe brought an offering for the dedication of the bronze altar** (see the commentary on **Exodus Fa - Build Altar of Acacia Wood Overlaid with Bronze**). And **ADONAI said to Moshe, "They are to present their offerings, each leader on his own day" (7:10-11)**. In a gesture of brotherhood, each **tribe** gave exactly the same amount. One at a time, one per day, **the tribal leaders brought their offering to ADONAI for the dedication of the Tabernacle**. This passage is a traditional reading for the festival of Hanukkah, which means dedication. Hanukkah is so named because it is the annual festival commemorating the dedication (*chanukah*) of the bronze altar during the days of Judah Maccabee. Leviticus 7 lends itself well to the festival of Hanukkah because it is the story of "the dedication of the bronze altar when it was anointed . . . (Numbers 7:10).¹¹⁸



Nachshon the son of 'Amminadab, from the tribe of Judah, presented his offering on the first day. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nachshon the son of 'Amminadab (7:12-17).

On the second day Nethanel, the son of Tzu'ar, leader of Issakhar, presented his offering. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-

and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Nethanel the son of Tzu'ar (7:18-23).

On the third day Eli'ab the son of Helon, leader of Zebulun, presented his offering. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Eli'ab the son of Helon (7:24-29).

On the fourth day was Elitzur the son of Sh'de'ur, leader of the descendants of Reuben. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elitzur the son of Sh'de'ur (7:30-35).

On the fifth day was Shlumi'el the son of Tzurishaddai, leader of the descendants of Shimeon. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; ³⁸ one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Shlumi'el the son of Tzurishaddai (7:36-41).

On the sixth day was Elyasaf the son of De'u'el, leader of the descendants of Gad.

He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elyasaf the son of De'u'el (7:42-47).

On the seventh day was Elishama the son of 'Ammihud, leader of the descendants of Ephraim. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Elishama the son of 'Ammihud (7:48-53).

On the eighth day was Gamli'el the son of P'dahtzur, leader of the descendants of Manasseh. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Gamli'el the son of P'dahtzur (7:54-59).

On the ninth day was Avidan the son of Gid'oni, leader of the descendants of Benjamin. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Avidan the son of Gid'oni (7:60-65).

On the tenth day was Achi'ezer the son of 'Ammishaddai, leader of the descendants of Dan. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achi'ezer the son of 'Ammishaddai (7:66-71).

On the eleventh day was Pag'i'el the son of 'Okhran, leader of the descendants of Asher. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Pag'i'el the son of 'Okhran (7:72-77).

On the twelfth day was Achira the son of 'Enan, leader of the descendants of Naftali. He offered one silver dish weighing 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and one silver basin of seventy shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-and-three-quarters pounds], both full of fine flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering; one gold pan of ten shekels [one-quarter pound], full of incense; one young bull, one ram, one male lamb in its first year as a burnt offering, one male goat as a sin offering, and, for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats and five male lambs in their first year. This was the offering of Achira the son of 'Enan (7:78-83).

A passage like this is perplexing to us. If we were to write the Torah by our standards, we would simply say, "And the same was offered by all the other **tribes**," and we would leave it at that. We would not be compelled to repeat the same exact list **twelve** times, varying only the names of **the tribes** and **their leader**. But the list also was used for public reading. Originally, the Torah was read aloud to the public assemblies of **Isra'el**. Members of all **the tribes** were present, gathered at the Temple. As each **tribe's name** was mentioned, there was probably a cheer that rose from those belonging to that particular **tribe**.

Here is the list of **the offerings** brought by each **tribe**:

Grain Offering: Flour and oil, in a silver dish

Grain Offering: Four and oil, in a silver bowl

Incense: Incense on a golden plate

Burnt Offering ('Olah): Ram

Burnt Offering ('Olah): Lamb

Burnt Offering ('Olah): Lamb

Burnt Offering ('Olah): Lamb

Peace Offering: Two oxen

Peace Offering: Five rams

Peace Offering: Five rams

Peace Offering: Five male goats

Peace Offering: Five lambs

Grain Offering: Flour, oil and frankincense

The summary: This was the offering for dedicating the altar which was given by the leaders of Isra'el on the day of its anointing: twelve silver dishes, twelve silver basins and twelve gold pans. Each silver dish weighed 130 shekels [three-and-a-quarter pounds] and each basin seventy shekels [one-and-three-quarters pounds]; all the silver of the vessels weighed 2,400 shekels (using the sanctuary shekel) [just over sixty pounds]. The twelve gold pans, full of incense, weighed ten shekels apiece (using the sanctuary shekel) [one-quarter pound]; all the gold of the pans weighed 120 shekels [three pounds]. The livestock for the burnt offering consisted of twelve bulls, twelve rams and twelve male lambs in their first year, with their grain offering. There were twelve male goats for a sin offering. The livestock for the sacrifice of peace offerings consisted of twenty-four bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats and sixty male lambs in their first year. **This was the offering for dedicating the altar after it had been anointed (7:84-88).** Why so many verses here? This was a moment of fellowship and encouragement between **the Creator** and **His creation**.

Throughout the Scriptures, we know this is something **He** desires to have. Therefore, our **LORD** decreed that this beautiful moment would last for **twelve days**. Numbered like the days of creation. One **day** for each **tribe**.¹¹⁹

The reading of **the tribal** names is important. The **tribal** names were etched into the stone of **the breastpiece** of **the high priest** (see the commentary on [Exodus Ga - Fashion a Breastpiece for Making Decisions](#)), and carved onto **the gates** of **the New Jerusalem** (see the commentary on [Revelation Fu - A Great High Wall with Twelve Gates](#)). The

names of **the twelve tribes** represent the totality of **Isra'el**, and **they** are prophetic types of all **the tribes** and **nations** of the Earth that will one day surround **the throne** in **Heaven** (see the commentary on **Revelation Cs - God Will Wipe Away Every Tear From Their Eyes**).

The Torah picture of the **tribal** heads bringing **their offerings** and treasures for the dedication of **the bronze altar** is a foreshadowing of the Messianic Age when all **the tribes** of the earth will carry **their** wealth to **Jerusalem** to worship **ADONAI**. **And let all kings bow down before him, all nations serve Him (Psalm 72:11). And your gate will be open continually; they will not be closed day or night, so that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession (Isaiah 60:11). "And I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations; and I will fill this house with glory," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot. "The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine," declares ADONAI-Tzva'ot (Haggai 2:7-8).**¹²⁰

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for being such a wonderful Heavenly **Father**, a **father** who desires a relationship! We love receiving **Your gifts** and we love giving **gifts** back to **You**. How we live our life is a way for **Your** children to give back to **You**. **Your gift** of salvation cost **You** so much (**Hebrews 12:2**), we desire to say thank **You** and to bless **You** for all **You** have done. **Your** children desire to abide in you and to **produce much fruit**. **In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples. "Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love! If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love (John 15:7-10).** How wonderful that by **abiding in You**, we receive **the gift** of **Joy**! When we seek to give a **gift** to you of our **joyful** obedience, like **Abraham** who rose early in the morning to go to sacrifice **his son Isaac (Genesis 22:3)**, then **You** give us back **joy**. Giving to **You** is actually a wonderful way to receive **joy**! **These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be full (John 15:11).** We love to bless **You** by our **gift** of praise, worship and **joyful** obedience. In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*