

The Book of Numbers

Lesson 4

Chapters 7 - 9

Consecration of Tabernacle

Num 7:1 Now on the day that Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle, he anointed it and consecrated it with all its furnishings and the altar and all its utensils; he anointed them and consecrated them also.

For some reason, the Lord instructs Moses to make an interesting turn in the story. What is that turn? Notice that the text says, “Now on the day that Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle.” Everything said thus far in the first six chapters occurred on the first day of the second month. The setting up of the Tabernacle occurred on the first day of the first month.⁶ That means that the LORD had Moses back up thirty days and tell more about what occurred in the last pages of the book of Exodus when Moses consecrated the Tabernacle complex and ordained Aaron and his sons as priests. Actually, the LORD had already prepared for the details of the first day of the second month thirty days before. This entry is just a note about when the following offerings were collected.

Offerings from Tribal Heads

7:2 Then the leaders of Israel, the heads of their fathers' households, made an offering (~~they were the leaders of the tribes; they were the ones who were over the numbered men~~). **7:3** When they brought their offering before the LORD, six covered carts and twelve oxen, a cart for *every* two of the leaders and an ox for each one, then they presented them before the tabernacle.

Thirty days before, all the tribes had brought to Moses six covered carts and twelve oxen. These gifts were brought by the leaders that were spelled out by name by the LORD as found in Numbers chapter one. It is interesting that the twelve men who would be selected to head the twelve tribes on the first day of the second month were the same men who brought these gifts to Moses thirty days before.

Acceptance of Carts and Oxen

7:4 Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, **7:5** "Accept *these things* from them, that they may be used in the service of the tent of meeting, and you shall give them to the Levites, *to each man according to his service.*"

The six carts and twelve oxen were given to Moses for the purpose of helping the Levites do their work. Thirty days before, the Levites had not been set aside for the purpose of helping

⁶ Monday, Nisan 1 2724 ACA, April 11, 1463 BC. See Dr. Jim Hastings, *Book of Days*. Volume 1, © 2018.

Aaron and his sons. Nevertheless, the Omnipotent LORD knew and made the provisions ahead of time.

Carts and Oxen for Gresham and Merari

^{7:6} So Moses took the carts and the oxen and gave them to the Levites. ^{7:7} Two carts and four oxen he gave to the sons of Gershon, according to their service, ^{7:8} and four carts and eight oxen he gave to the sons of Merari, according to their service, under the direction of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

Although it does not say so, it seems that we are now back on the first day of the second month and Moses divided the carts and oxen between the two Levite families that would need them. Gershon received two carts and four oxen; Merari received four carts and eight oxen. In review, the Gershonites were charged with tearing down, carrying and setting up the Tabernacle. The Merarites were charged with tearing down, carrying and setting up the curtain wall and columns that surrounded the Tabernacle complex. Obviously, the Merarites had the larger load to carry and required more carts and oxen than the Gershonites.

No Carts and Oxen for Kohath

^{7:9} But he did not give *any* to the sons of Kohath because theirs *was* the service of the holy *objects*, *which* they carried on the shoulder.

No carts or oxen were given to the Kohathites. All the holy objects they carried were to be mounted on the shoulders of that family, not on beasts of burden or man-made carts and wheels.

Presentation of Offering by Leaders

^{7:10} The leaders offered the dedication *offering* for the altar when it was anointed, so the leaders offered their offering before the altar. ^{7:11} Then the LORD said to Moses, "Let them present their offering, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar."

Once again, the text does not indicate it, but it seems that we are back thirty days to the dedication ceremony that concluded in the last pages of the book of Exodus. For twelve days after the dedication ceremony, and after the giving of the carts and oxen, each tribe was to bring a special and specific offering to the Tabernacle. The offering for day one, which actually occurred on the second day of the first month, is a perfect example of the offerings for all twelve days.

Offering Day One

^{7:12} Now the one who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah; ^{7:13} and his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:14} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:15} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:16} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:17} and for the

sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

As we see, Nahshon, the LORD's choice for the head of the tribe of Judah, brought all the items listed and gave them to Aaron and his sons at the Tabernacle. These gifts would keep Aaron and his sons extremely busy for twelve days just processing the gifts as they arrived that day. The rest of the twelve days required the exact same list of offerings as the first. The text is therefore redundant and we will build a chart to display all the gifts. The only differences in the days' listings are the names of the tribe, the names of the leader and the days and they were brought. The following chart lists all the information found in the rest of chapter 7.

Twelve Days of Gifts to the Tabernacle by the Tribes
Numbers 7:12-88

Day	Leader	Tribe	Gifts Per Tribe										
One <i>Nisan 2</i>	Nahshon	Judah	1 silver dish weighing 130 shekels	1 silver bowl weighing 70 shekels full of fine flour mixed with oil	1 gold pan weighing ten shekels full of incense	1 bull	1 ram	1 male lamb one year old	1 male goat	2 oxen	5 rams	5 male goats	5 male lambs one year old
Two <i>Nisan 3</i>	Nethanel	Issachar											
Three <i>Nisan 4</i>	Eliab	Zebulun											
Four <i>Nisan 5</i>	Elizur	Rueben											
Five <i>Nisan 6</i>	Shelumiel	Simeon											
Six <i>Nisan 7</i>	Eliasaph	Gad											
Seven <i>Nisan 8</i>	Elishama	Ephraim											
Eight <i>Nisan 9</i>	Gamaliel	Manasseh											
Nine <i>Nisan 10</i>	Abidan	Benjamin											
Ten <i>Nisan 11</i>	Ahiezer	Dan											
Eleven <i>Nisan 12</i>	Pagiel	Asher											
Twelve <i>Nisan 13</i>	Ahira	Naphtali											
Totals			12	12	12	12	12	12	12	24	60	60	60

Offering Day Two

^{7:18} On the second day Nethanel the son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, presented *an offering*; ^{7:19} he presented as his offering one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:20} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:21} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:22} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:23} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Nethanel the son of Zuar.

Offering Day Three

^{7:24} On the third day *it was* Eliab the son of Helon, leader of the sons of Zebulun; ^{7:25} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:26} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:27} one young bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a

burnt offering; ^{7:28} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:29} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.

Offering Day Four

^{7:30} On the fourth day *it was* Elizur the son of Shedeur, leader of the sons of Reuben; ^{7:31} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:32} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:33} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:34} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:35} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

Offering Day Five

^{7:36} On the fifth day *it was* Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, leader of the children of Simeon; ^{7:37} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:38} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:39} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:40} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:41} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

Offering Day Six

^{7:42} On the sixth day *it was* Eliasaph the son of Deuel, leader of the sons of Gad; ^{7:43} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:44} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:45} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:46} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:47} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

Offering Day Seven

^{7:48} On the seventh day *it was* Elishama the son of Ammihud, leader of the sons of Ephraim; ^{7:49} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:50} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:51} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:52} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:53} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

Offering Day Eight

^{7:54} On the eighth day *it was* Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, leader of the sons of Manasseh; ^{7:55} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:56} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:57} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:58} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:59} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

Offering Day Nine

^{7:60} On the ninth day *it was* Abidan the son of Gideon, leader of the sons of Benjamin; ^{7:61} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:62} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:63} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:64} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:65} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen,

five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Abidan the son of Gideon.

Offering Day Ten

^{7:66} On the tenth day *it was* Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, leader of the sons of Dan; ^{7:67} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:68} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:69} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:70} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:71} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

Offering Day Eleven

^{7:72} On the eleventh day *it was* Pagiel the son of Ochran, leader of the sons of Asher; ^{7:73} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:74} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:75} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:76} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:77} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Pagiel the son of Ochran.

Offering Day Twelve

^{7:78} On the twelfth day *it was* Ahira the son of Enan, leader of the sons of Naphtali; ^{7:79} his offering *was* one silver dish whose weight *was* one hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; ^{7:80} one gold pan of ten *shekels*, full of incense; ^{7:81} one bull, one ram, one male lamb one year old, for a burnt offering; ^{7:82} one male goat for a sin offering; ^{7:83} and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, five male lambs one year old. This *was* the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

Dedication Offering of the Leaders of Israel

^{7:84} This *was* the dedication *offering* for the altar from the leaders of Israel when it was anointed: twelve silver dishes, twelve silver bowls, twelve gold pans, ^{7:85} each silver dish *weighing* one hundred and thirty *shekels* and each bowl seventy; all the silver of the utensils *was* 2,400 *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary; ^{7:86} the twelve gold pans, full of incense, *weighing* ten *shekels* apiece, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, all the gold of the pans 120 *shekels*; ^{7:87} all the oxen for the burnt offering twelve bulls, *all* the rams twelve, the male lambs one year old with their grain offering twelve, and the male goats for a sin offering twelve; ^{7:88} and all the oxen for the sacrifice of peace offerings 24 bulls, *all* the rams 60, the male goats 60, the male lambs one year old 60. This *was* the dedication *offering* for the altar after it was anointed.

Moses Speaks with the LORD

^{7:89} Now when Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim, so He spoke to him.

After all the gifts were given to Aaron and his sons for the altar, Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the LORD. Once again we find a verse that indicates that the Tabernacle and the Tent of Meeting were two names for the same object. The Ark of the Testimony/Covenant was located in the Holy of Holies at the rear of the Tabernacle. Here we see that Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the LORD and Moses heard the LORD's voice coming from "above the Mercy Seat." Not indicated here, the LORD's voice came from the small cloud that would be called the *Shekinah glory of the LORD* and floated

above the Mercy Seat between the extended wings of the two cherubim carved on the Seat. Obviously, from the context, this meeting with the LORD was on the first day of the first month, not the second month, even though a summary of the twelve days was given. That summary consisted of the instruction for Moses to communicate with the twelve tribes what they must do, not that they had been done. However, they most definitely fulfilled the requirements during the following twelve days.

What is not indicated here is the event that took place on the ninth day of the first month during the twelve days of the offerings by the twelve tribes! On that day, Nadab and Abihu prepared their fire-pans (censers) with fire coals that were not taken from fire started by the LORD. As you will remember, the LORD blew fire from inside the Tabernacle and they died immediately at the door to the Tabernacle/Tent of Meeting. Aaron and his sons were beginning the process of receiving the gifts for that eighth day when the LORD killed the two sons. Aaron and his surviving sons were not allowed to react or mourn. They had work to do for the service of the LORD; relatives could mourn and bury the dead.

Mounting of the Lampstand

Num 8:1 Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, **8:2** "Speak to Aaron and say to him, 'When you mount the lamps, the seven lamps will give light in the front of the lampstand.'" **8:3** Aaron therefore did so; he mounted its lamps at the front of the lampstand, just as the LORD had commanded Moses. **8:4** Now this was the workmanship of the lampstand, hammered work of gold; from its base to its flowers it was hammered work; according to the pattern which the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

Everything was dedicated on that first day of the first month and it was time for Aaron to light the seven-fingered lampstand on that day. The lamp was to provide light to the inside of the Tabernacle. Moses also included in this passage a more detailed description of the lamp we call the menorah today.

Cleansing of the Levites

8:5 Again **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, **8:6** "Take the Levites from among the sons of Israel and cleanse them. **8:7** "Thus you shall do to them, for their cleansing: *sprinkle* purifying water on them, and let them use a razor over their whole body and wash their clothes, and they will be clean. **8:8** "Then let them take a bull with its grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil; and a second bull you shall take for a sin offering.

It is not indicated here, but the cleansing of the Levites had to occur on the first day of the second month because that was when they were set aside from the rest of the tribes to live around the Tabernacle and be in the service of the priests. The cleansing ceremony required that they all be cleansed with holy purifying water, their bodies shaved and their clothing washed. The ceremony also required two offerings, a grain offering and a sin offering. It is not clear how many grain and sin offerings were required. Was it one per person or one for the entire Levite clan? We do not know.

Presentation of the Levites

8:9 "So you shall present the Levites before the tent of meeting. You shall also assemble the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, **8:10** and present the Levites before the LORD; and the sons of Israel shall lay their hands on the Levites.

Once the Levites were clean, they were presented to the twelve tribes. At that presentation, the men of the twelve tribes laid their hands on them just like a guilty person would lay his hand on the head of a ram or lamb to transfer all guilt to the animal. The Levites were the redemption of the men of the other tribes and the laying on of hands transferred the guilt of their sins to the Levites. The Levites would then make atonement for the sin laid on them.

Wave Offering for the Levites

8:11 "Aaron then shall present the Levites before the LORD as a wave offering from the sons of Israel, that they may qualify to perform the service of the LORD.

It was time for the first offering for the Levites on that first day of the first month. It began with a wave offering. A wave offering was just that. The offering was raised into the air and waved from side to side in that part of the ceremony. It was different from a heave offering in which the item was lifted straight up as high as possible but not waved.

Atonement Offering for the Levites

8:12 "Now the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls; then offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites.

Just a few minutes before, the men of the twelve tribes had laid their hands on and transferred their personal sins to the Levites. Here, the Levites laid their hands on the bulls to transfer their own sin plus the sins that came from the tribes to the bulls. Here we see that two bulls were used, one for the sin and one for the burnt offering. What we do not know is if the offering was two bulls per Levite or two bulls for the entire lot. In either case, the sacrifices were for the "atonement for the Levites." "Atonement" is an English word first used in the early 1500s A.D. At that time it was used to indicate the condition of being "at one" (with others). It comes from the idea of being in agreement, in accord, or in harmony through some process. It meant the "satisfaction or reparation for the wrong or injury, or a propitiation of an offended party." Today it has lost the major focus of its original meaning. The Hebrew word is *kaphar* and it truly means to reconcile or make a reconciliation. In most cases it is translated "to reconcile" in other places in the Bible. Why it is not translated as such here lies totally in tradition. We like the word "atonement" better than "reconciliation." Theologians also prefer the word "atonement." It is their English theological word; however, even they cannot deny that the meaning is to "reconcile," and in this case, reconcile with God. The sins of the tribes laid upon the Levites who

had sins of their own had to be reconciled with God. The sins had to be laid aside or covered up. The only way to do that in God's plan was to make a sacrifice to be made. In Egypt, the sacrifice was one firstborn Egyptian for every firstborn of Israelite. In the camp at Mount Sinai, it was one Levite for every firstborn in the Israelite nation. Now it was time for the reconciliation of the Levite. Bulls were sacrificed to cover the sins transferred to them as well as their own.

Wave Offering of the Levites

8:13 "You shall have the Levites stand before Aaron and before his sons so as to present them as a wave offering to the LORD. **8:14** "Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the sons of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine.

It was impossible for Aaron to lift the Levites to wave them before the LORD so He instructed them to simply stand and the LORD would accept them as His own. This ceremony has already been discussed in Numbers chapter 3, but not in this detail.

Service Begins for the Levites

8:15 "Then after that the Levites may go in to serve the tent of meeting. But you shall cleanse them and present them as a wave offering; **8:16** for they are wholly given to Me from among the sons of Israel. I have taken them for Myself instead of every first issue of the womb, the firstborn of all the sons of Israel. **8:17** "For every firstborn among the sons of Israel is Mine, among the men and among the animals; on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for Myself. **8:18** "But I have taken the Levites instead of every firstborn among the sons of Israel. **8:19** "I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the sons of Israel, to perform the service of the sons of Israel at the tent of meeting and to make atonement on behalf of the sons of Israel, so that there will be no plague among the sons of Israel by their coming near to the sanctuary."

After the three offerings for the Levites, one bull was sacrificed with grain for a grain offering; another bull was sacrificed for the sin offering, and the Levites themselves were presented as a wave offering, the LORD accepted them and they could begin work in the services of the priests before the LORD. A commentary concerning the detail about their selection was covered in the notes of chapter 8:12.

Moses, Aaron and Levites Obeyed the LORD

8:20 Thus did Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the sons of Israel to the Levites; according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so the sons of Israel did to them. **8:21** The Levites, too, purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes; and Aaron presented them as a wave offering before the LORD. Aaron also made atonement for them to cleanse them. **8:22** Then after that the Levites went in to perform their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and before his sons; just as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did to them.

And so, in this passage we see that Moses, Aaron and the Levites as well as the congregation of the Nation of Israel did all that the LORD commanded. Everything was completed on the first day of the second month. Everything was ready for the regular daily work of the priests and Levites to begin on the second day of the second month.

Levites Begin Work At 25 and Retired at 50

^{8:23} Now **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, ^{8:24} "This is what *applies* to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall enter to perform service in the work of the tent of meeting. ^{8:25} "But at the age of fifty years they shall retire from service in the work and not work any more. ^{8:26} "They may, however, assist their brothers in the tent of meeting, to keep an obligation, but they *themselves* shall do no work. Thus you shall deal with the Levites concerning their obligations."

We often hear that the LORD never speaks of retirement in the Bible. Well, that is not a true statement. Although the priest could and would work well past the age of 50, the Levite helpers could not. The Levites were to begin their training at the age of 25 and retire at the age of 50. That did not mean that they had to completely abandon their former work; they were allowed to "assist their brothers in the Tent of Meeting, to keep an obligation, but they *themselves* shall do no work." Much speculation abounds as to what that means. No one knows. Therefore, we will not speculate.

Instructions for Anniversary of the Passover

^{Num 9:1} Thus **the LORD spoke to Moses** in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, ^{9:2} "Now, let the sons of Israel observe the Passover at its appointed time. ^{9:3} "On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall observe it at its appointed time; you shall observe it according to all its statutes and according to all its ordinances." ^{9:4} So Moses told the sons of Israel to observe the Passover. ^{9:5} They observed the Passover in the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did.

As chapter nine begins, Moses has returned to tell the story of his conversation with the LORD in the first month of the second year in the wilderness concerning the anniversary and memorial service of the Passover. The original Passover occurred on Nissan 14th, 2723 ACA.⁷ The meal was prepared on Nisan 14th and the consumption began before 6:00 PM on Thursday evening. The time before the change of day was called "twilight" as the sun was setting in the west but there was still the glow of light on the land. The record of that first Passover is recorded in Exodus 12.

Although the day and event have already passed, Moses records that the celebration of the anniversary of the Passover occurred one year later on Sunday, Nisan 14th 2724 ACA.⁸ An interesting point to be made here is that all the gifts from the twelve tribes to the Tabernacle were

⁷ Thursday at twilight, Nisan 14th, 2723 ACA, May 4, 1464 BC.

⁸ Sunday at twilight, Nisan 14th, 2724 ACA, April 24, 1463 BC.

completed on Nisan 13th. (See chart for Numbers 7:12, this lesson) The next day the Passover was celebrated. Also, it is not mentioned here, but Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu died on the day the seventh tribe presented its gift on Tuesday, Nisan 9th, within seven days before the celebration of Passover on Nisan 14th. Their deaths caused a problem for some of their relatives who mourned and buried them. Now we know why Moses must address the men and their problem in the next passage and why chapters 7 and 8 include the information from 30 days before in detail.

Question From Unclean Men

^{9:6} But there were *some* men who were unclean because of *the* dead person, so that they could not observe Passover on that day; so they came before Moses and Aaron on that day. ^{9:7} Those men said to him, "*Though* we are unclean because of *the* dead person, why are we restrained from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the sons of Israel?" ^{9:8} Moses therefore said to them, "Wait, and I will listen to what the LORD will command concerning you."

Here we see a great quandary even for Moses. He did not know how to answer them. Surely, these were also his relatives because they were the relatives of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu. Here we also see the mark of a true leader. Moses was just that! He did not know the answer; he did not make a quick decision; he sought the Authority in the matter. All leaders, especially those in the work of the LORD, should seek the Authority in a matter.

Answer for Unclean Men

^{9:9} Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, ^{9:10} "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If any one of you or of your generations becomes unclean because of a *dead* person, or is on a distant journey, he may, however, observe the Passover to the LORD. ^{9:11} 'In the second month on the fourteenth day at twilight, they shall observe it; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ^{9:12} 'They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.

The LORD had the answer for Moses. The men could celebrate the Passover, but not with the regular group. They would need to wait one month and celebrate on the 14th of the second month. Nothing else was different. Moreover, the LORD expanded permission to celebrate the Passover to include those who were on a long journey and could not celebrate it on the specified day. But the LORD included a warning to those who were not unclean or on a journey in the next passage.

Warning to Clean Man Who Neglects Passover

^{9:13} 'But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and yet neglects to observe the Passover, that person shall then be cut off from his people, for he did not present the offering of the LORD at its appointed time. That man will bear his sin.

The Passover was important to the LORD. The Passover was paramount to the LORD. The Passover was an imperative to the LORD. No tribal member was excused from participating in

the celebration. Not to participate was a sin. Not to participate meant expulsion from the Nation of Israel.

Alien and the Passover

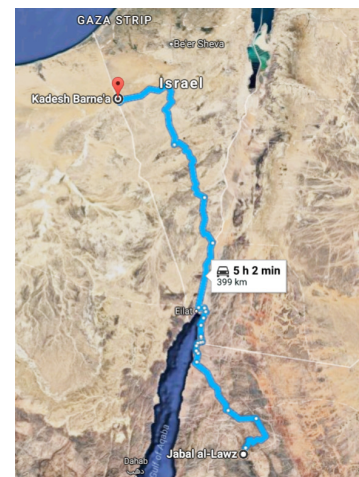
9:14 'If an alien sojourns among you and observes the Passover to the LORD, according to the statute of the Passover and according to its ordinance, so he shall do; you shall have one statute, both for the alien and for the native of the land.'

The definition of alien has shifted over the years. To a child in the 1960s, an alien was a being from outer space and has been the informal thinking of most Americans since that time. A popular topic through the last fifty years has been the aliens hidden in Area 51, whatever that entails! But from its earliest records in English writings of the 1300s it has meant *citizens of foreign lands or countries*. Such is the meaning here! The LORD is speaking of anyone who joins in the journey of the Nation of Israel who is not a blood descendant of Jacob with his four wives. If such an alien wants to live with the Israelites, he may observe the Passover with the same restrictions originally put in place by the LORD.

Cloud and the Tabernacle

9:15 Now on the day that the tabernacle was erected the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony, and in the evening it was like the appearance of fire over the tabernacle, until morning. **9:16** So it was continuously; the cloud would cover it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night. **9:17** Whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. **9:18** At the command of the LORD the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. **9:19** Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep the LORD'S charge and not set out. **9:20** If sometimes the cloud remained a few days over the tabernacle, according to the command of the LORD they remained camped. Then according to the command of the LORD they set out. **9:21** If sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning, when the cloud was lifted in the morning, they would move out; or *if it remained* in the daytime and at night, whenever the cloud was lifted, they would set out. **9:22** Whether it was two days or a month or a year that the cloud lingered over the tabernacle, staying above it, the sons of Israel remained camped and did not set out; but when it was lifted, they did set out. **9:23** At the command of the LORD they camped, and at the command of the LORD they set out; they kept the LORD'S charge, according to the command of the LORD through Moses.

Once again, Moses returns to the memories of the first day of the first month of the second year out of Egypt and the instruction from the LORD. This reminder has to do with the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. On that first day, when the Tabernacle was



Today's route by car from
Mount Sinai to Kadish Barnea

constructed and dedicated, the cloud by day and the fire by night that had been leading them since the second day out of Egypt began to hover over the Tabernacle. There it would remain until it was time for the camp to move. The camp knew to pack and follow the cloud or fire when either of them moved from above the Tabernacle and paused a short distance from the camp. When everything was packed according to the instruction already given in this book, the camp would set out to follow the cloud or fire. When the cloud or fire paused, the camp paused. When the cloud or fire moved, the camp moved according to the command of the LORD. The camp had not moved from Mount Sinai as of yet, but they would soon. They would need to be camped at Kadish Barnea before the anniversary of the second year after leaving Egypt on Nisan 15th, 2725 ACA, which is 247 miles away from Mount Sinai (at least a 13 day journey if they did not stop to camp along the way of which they will do three days out from Mount Sinai).