

**Num. 7:1** On the day that Moses finished setting up the Tabernacle, he anointed and consecrated it and all its furnishings, as well as the altar and its utensils. When he had anointed and consecrated them, <sup>2</sup> the chieftains of Israel, the heads of ancestral houses, namely, the chieftains of the tribes, those who were in charge of enrollment, drew near <sup>3</sup> and brought their offering before the LORD: six draught carts and twelve oxen, a cart for every two chieftains and an ox for each one.

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**Num. 7:12** The one who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab of the tribe of Judah. <sup>13</sup> His offering: one silver bowl weighing 130 shekels and one silver basin of 70 shekels by the sanctuary weight, both filled with choice flour with oil mixed in, for a meal offering; <sup>14</sup> one gold ladle of 10 shekels, filled with incense; <sup>15</sup> one bull of the herd, one ram, and one lamb in its first year, for a burnt offering; <sup>16</sup> one goat for a sin offering; <sup>17</sup> and for his sacrifice of well-being: two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling lambs. That was the offering of Nahshon son of Amminadab.

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**Num. 7:84** This was the dedication offering for the altar from the chieftains of Israel upon its being anointed: silver bowls, 12; silver basins, 12; gold ladles, 12. <sup>85</sup> Silver per bowl, 130; per basin, 70. Total silver of vessels, 2,400 sanctuary shekels. <sup>86</sup> The 12 gold ladles filled with incense—10 sanctuary shekels per ladle—total gold of the ladles, 120.

**Num. 7:87** Total of herd animals for burnt offerings, 12 bulls; of rams, 12; of yearling lambs, 12—with their proper meal offerings; of goats for sin offerings, 12. <sup>88</sup> Total of herd animals for sacrifices of well-being, 24 bulls; of rams, 60; of he-goats, 60; of yearling lambs, 60. That was the dedication offering for the altar after its anointing.

**Num. 7:89** When Moses went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him, he would hear the Voice addressing him from above the cover that was on top of the Ark of the Pact between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.

Baruch Levine, Numbers (Anchor Bible)

**89.** Chapter 7 concludes with a cryptic verse, intended to acknowledge the function of the Tabernacle as an oraculum. In Exod 25:22 we read that God would “meet” Moses in the inner chamber of the Tent and speak to him from the space above the *kappôret* ‘the expiation lid’.

*continuously speaking.* The Hebrew form *middabbēr* represents the assimilated *hithpaʿel*: *mitdabbēr* < > *middabbēr* ‘He continuously spoke’; compare the same form in 2 Sam 14:13; Ezek 1:2; 43:6. The Jewish tradition, represented by Rashi, explains this form as a tendentious repointing of the normal *piʿel* form, *medabbēr*, occasioned by the awesome fact that the speaker is God. But this is probably not the original intent. Targum Onkelos has *mitmallal*, an Aramaic *ithpaʿal* participle, having iterative force: “He spoke continually.”

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The import of Num 7:89 is phenomenological. Moses would customarily hear God speaking to him from above the cherubs. The last words of the verse recapitulate what has been said: *wayyedabbēr ʿêlâw*, literally, “he (= God) spoke to him (= Moses).” This reading seems to accord with other priestly depictions of the process (Exod 25:22), though it is surely tempting to translate “he (= Moses) would [then] speak to him (= God).”

Numbers 7 is a highly instructive source of information about the accounting methods employed by the priests of biblical temples and by representatives of other agencies operating within biblical society over an extended period of time.

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**RASHI: When Moses went into the Tent.** As noted in the interpretive rules of R. Ishmael, when one finds two verses that contradict each other, the thing to do is to look for a third verse to decide the question. One verse says that the Lord “spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting” (Lev. 1:1), but with Moses standing outside the inner curtain, while in another place God tells Moses that He will speak with him inside the curtain: “There I will meet with you, and I will speak to you from above the cover” (Exod. 25:22). Our verse is the decisive one: Moses would go into the Tent, and there he would hear the Voice coming from above the cover. The Voice would come forth from heaven to the space between the two cherubim, from where it would go forth into the Tent. **He would hear the Voice.** Not simply a “sound” (as the Hebrew word might mean), which could be a quiet sound, but “the Voice” that had spoken with him at Sinai. But when the Voice reached the entrance of the Tent, it was cut off; no sound escaped outside the Tent. **Addressing him.** The Hebrew is not *medabber*, the Piel verb that means “speaking,” but *middabber*, a Hitpael form. Out of respect for heaven, this reflexive verb form is used to imply that He was speaking to himself and Moses overheard.

Nili Fox, “Numbers,” *Jewish Study Bible*

**89:** This appended v. reiterates how Moses communicates with God in the Tent of Meeting, the portable site for revelation where God dwells (Exod. 25.17–22; Lev. 9.23). God’s name is not mentioned but is substituted by *the Voice*, a term that is the precursor of the rabbinic “bat kol,” “daughter of the voice,” or “echo,” signifying a divine voice from the heavens.

Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers* (JPS Torah Commentary)

**89. Him** Both the thought of this verse and the word Him lack any antecedent. It has been noted that the promise in Exodus 25:22 that God would communicate with Moses from above the Ark is not fulfilled in any of the passages that speak of the building of the Tabernacle (e. g., Exod. 37, 40). Moreover, its absence there is deliberate, since Exodus 40:34–35 explicitly states that Moses was not able to enter the Tent because of the density and power of God’s Presence when the sacrificial laws (Lev. 1–7) were revealed to him (Lev. 1:1). Only upon the conclusion of the first public service after the seven-day consecration of the Tabernacle, was Moses (and also Aaron) permitted to enter the Tent (Lev. 9:23). This is perhaps what our text means to convey. Beginning with the Priestly Blessing at the first service (Num. 6:22–27; Lev. 9:22–23), God’s commands to Moses, like the instructions concerning the chieftains’ gifts (7:4), were delivered to him from the Ark-throne while he stood alone inside the Tent.

**IBN EZRA: When Moses went into the Tent of Meeting.** This might mean “the first time that Moses went into the Tent,” indicating the original divine utterance of Lev. 1:1, after the dedication was complete.

**Lev. 1:1** And he called to Moshe—YHWH spoke to him from the Tent of Appointment, saying:

Benjamin Sommer, “YHWH’s Simulated Speech: The Priestly Interpretation of Prophecy”

Numbers 7:89 represents P’s own commentary on its earlier statement in Leviticus 1:1, as well as on another earlier verse in P, Exodus 25:22.

<https://www.thetorah.com/article/yhwhs-simulated-speech-the-priestly-interpretation-of-prophecy>

**Num. 8:1** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> Speak to Aaron and say to him, “When you mount the lamps, let the seven lamps give light at the front of the lampstand.”

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