

Thirdly, *the manner of their giving.* There is no doubt but these oxen were excellent, strong to labour and well trained: and that the wagons were of the best materials and workmanship, and well covered in honour of their destination and use. We know some who, if they could not have escaped giving, would have looked out the leanest beast, and the least valued vehicle they had. And we know the complaint brought by God himself against the Jews in the days of Malachi: "Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it: and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord. But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen." But we may fully presume that these pious donors presented what they deemed the best they had. And we are sure they gave *readily*: for they did it the very "day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it." They gave as soon as the things were wanted; yea, before they were wanted, in order to be in readiness. Here was no hanging back, hoping the offering might be dispensed with; or to see what others did first, to save as much as possible their pocket, without losing their credit. They required no excitement, no sermon full of motives from Moses or Aaron to work upon their feelings—They were volunteers; self-moved; they chose to be examples rather than followers. God loveth a cheerful giver.

Fourthly, *the acceptance and application of the present.* At first Moses seems to have hesitated whether they should be used in the service of the tabernacle. The reason probably was, that God had given him before a model of every thing, and had said, "See that thou make every thing according to the pattern showed thee in the mount." But the pattern did not extend to this, and here he was without orders. The thought had sprung from the pious reflection of these men; and it is not necessary that every minute circumstance in the administrations of religion should be prescribed; many things, or the world could not contain the books that would be written, may be, and must be, left to expediency. Thus David established the orders of singers; and thus the Jews, after their captivity, formed synagogues, in which our Saviour often taught and worshipped. Moses therefore is enjoined to receive this donation, and consecrate it to the purpose for which it was designed: "Take it of them, that they may be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service. And Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites."

But see how they were *distributed*; for this will be found very instructive. To "the sons of Gershon he gave" but "two wagons and four oxen;" but this is said to be "according to their service;" for they had only to carry the drapery, the curtains and hangings. To "the sons of Merari he gave four wagons and eight oxen, according to their service;" for they had to bear the heavy luggage, the boards, pillars and sockets; and these were heavy. "But to the sons of Kohath he gave none, because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was,