

Exodus Chapter 35

Verses 35:1-40:38 in this section the Israelites constructed the tabernacle as God so prescribed in 25:1-31:18.

In verse 1-3 (see note on 20:8). This time, however, an extra admonition forbids the making of a fire on the Sabbath.

Exodus 35:1 "And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These [are] the words which the LORD hath commanded, that [ye] should do them."

According to Jarchi, on the morrow after the Day of Atonement; that is, the next day after his descent from the mount, being desirous of setting about the building of the tabernacle, and making all things appertaining to it as soon as possible; which had been retarded through the sin of the golden calf, and making reconciliation for that.

"And said unto them, these are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them": Namely, the law of the Sabbath, as it had a peculiar relation to the making of the tabernacle, and the freewill offerings to be made on that account. For as for the commands, or other ordinances, whether ceremonial or judicial, the people had been made acquainted with them before.

Starting here and continuing through the rest of the book, the people begin to prepare for the presence of the Lord, who will dwell with them in the tabernacle. Moses also begins to prepare the people for the completion of the tabernacle work.

Exodus 35:2 "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death."

Work for the tabernacle, but on the seventh day they must not strike a stroke, no, not at the tabernacle work. The honor of the Sabbath was above that of the sanctuary.

Exodus 35:3 "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day."

The kindling of fire in early times involved considerable labor. It was ordinarily effected by rubbing two sticks together, or twisting one round rapidly between the two palms in a depression upon a board. Fire only came after a long time. Moreover, as in the warm climate of Arabia and Palestine artificial warmth was not needed, fire could only have been kindled there for cooking purposes, which involved further unnecessary work, and had already been forbidden (Exodus 16:23).

We see that Moses had brought the exact message that God had given him for the people. It seems as though this "ye shall kindle no fire", probably was an explanation of how far the keeping of the Sabbath was to go.

Verses 4-9: Exodus (chapter's 25-27), gave the blueprint for the tabernacle. Here is the "budget." God had already prepared the people for this "freewill offering to the Lord" when they left Egypt (11:2-3; 12:35-36). Those who give from a "willing heart" will be stirred to keep giving.

See note on 25:2.

Exodus 35:4 "And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This [is] the thing which the LORD commanded, saying,"

Continued his speech to them, being convened by him, after by way of preface he had repeated the law of the Sabbath, with an additional circumstance to it, "pro tempore".

"Saying, this is the thing which the Lord commanded": Ordered Moses to inform them of as his will, when he was with him upon the mount the first time. But through their idolatry, and time spent in making up matters between God and them, he had not had till now an opportunity of acquainting them with it.

Exodus 35:5 "Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever [is] of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass,"

That is, they were to take a part of their substance, of what they were possessed of. Every man according to his ability, out of what he had in his hand that was suitable, and present it as a freewill offering to the Lord, for the use of the tabernacle to be built, and the service of it.

"Whosoever is of a willing heart": That is, of a generous and liberal disposition.

"Let him bring it, an offering of the Lord": Or an offering to him, otherwise not; if brought niggardly and grudgingly it would not be acceptable, for God loves a willing and cheerful giver.

"Gold, silver, and brass": Here and in the four following verses, the several things are particularly mentioned, which would be wanted in building the tabernacle, and in the service of it, and therefore would be acceptable. And they being exactly the same, and delivered in the same words and in the same order as (in Exodus 25:3), the reader is referred to the notes there (see notes on Exodus 25:3-7).

Exodus 35:6-7 "And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' [hair]," "And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood,"

The tabernacle was to be dedicated to the honor of God, and used in his service; and therefore, what was brought for it, was an offering to the Lord. The rule is, whosoever is of a willing heart,

let him bring. All that were skillful must work. God dispenses his gifts; and as every man hath received, so he must minister (1 Peter 4:10). Those that were rich must bring in materials to work on. Those that were skillful must serve the tabernacle with their skill. As they needed one another, so the tabernacle needed them both (1 Cor. 12:7-21).

Exodus 35:8 "And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense,"

Incense of fragrant powders (Exodus 25:6).

Exodus 35:9 "And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate."

See Exodus 25:7.

We see Moses spoke to the people and gave them a list of things that they could bring as an offering unto the Lord for the tabernacle. These people had repented of their sins they committed while Moses was on the mountain with God the first time. We will find that they not only did what Moses told them was God's wishes about the offerings, but actually freely gave more than was needed to furnish the tabernacle and outer court.

Verses 10-19: "All ... gifted artisans" would make "all that the Lord ... commanded" for the tabernacle, right down to its "sockets" and "pegs". No detail would be left to chance.

See (note on 25:11-28:43).

Exodus 35:10 "And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded;"

Every ingenious man, that is skillful in any mechanic art and business, which has a peculiar turn of mind, and employs his thoughts to improve, in a curious manner, in whatsoever manufactory he is concerned. Every such a one is invited by Moses to come to him.

"And make all the Lord hath commanded": The particulars of which follow.

This had to do with those whom the Lord had filled with the knowledge to help with the work of the tabernacle.

Exodus 35:11 "The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets,"

Which is not a general name for the whole, the court, the holy place and the holy of holies. But designs the ten fine linen curtains curiously wrought. Or the under curtains, as Jarchi expresses it, which were within.

"His tent": The curtains of goats' hair, which were a covering over the others, and were made for a roof of the tabernacle, as the same writer observes.

"And his covering": The covering for the tent, which was made of rams' skins, and badgers' skins.

"His taches": Which clasped, coupled the curtains together, both the one and the other. The one sort were of silver, and the other of brass.

"And his boards, his bars, his pillars": Which were all of shittim wood. The boards were the walls of the tabernacle, the bars which kept them tight together, and the pillars were those on which the hanging of the door of the tent, and on which the vail that divided between the holy of holies, were hung. Of all which (see Exodus 26:1 etc. to end of chapter).

"And his sockets": Which were of silver, into which the boards were let and fastened (see Exodus 26:19).

Exodus 35:12 "The ark, and the staves thereof, [with] the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering,"

To carry it with, which were all made of shittim wood.

"With the mercy seat": Made of pure gold; these were set in the most holy place.

"And the vail of the covering": Which divided between the holy and the holy of holies (of these see Exodus 25:10).

Exodus 35:13 "The table, and his staves, and all his vessels, and the showbread,"

The table of showbread and all things appertaining to it.

"And the showbread": Which is mentioned for the sake of the table, and to show what was intended, and the use of it. For otherwise the showbread was not yet to be made, nor by the artificers here called together. And is to be interpreted of the dishes of the showbread, in which it was put. And so Junius and Tremellius render it, the instruments or vessels of the showbread; of these (see Exodus 25:23).

Exodus 35:14 "The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light,

The tongs and snuff dishes.

"And his lamps, with the oil for the light": The cups, in which were put the oil and the wicks to burn and give light, as Jarchi interprets them (see Exodus 25:31).

Exodus 35:15 "And the incense altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle,"

Which were overlaid with gold. Hence this altar was called the golden altar (see Exodus 30:1).

"And the anointing oil and sweet incense": Each of which were made of various spices (see Exodus 30:23).

"And the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle": At the east end of it, there being there, as Jarchi observes neither boards nor curtains (see Exodus 27:16).

Exodus 35:16 "The altar of burnt offering, with his brasen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot,"

Of which (see Exodus 27:1).

"The laver and his foot": Aben Ezra here observes that it had no staves, and conjectures it was carried in wagons when removed.

Exodus 35:17 "The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court,"

Of the tabernacle, the outward court, which were of fine twined linen, a hundred cubits long on each side, north and south, and fifty cubits broad, east and west (see Exodus 27:9).

"His pillars, and their sockets": The pillars were they on which the hangings were hung; and the sockets were what the pillars were let into and fastened in.

"And the hanging for the door of the court": At the east of it, of which (see Exodus 27:16).

Exodus 35:18 "The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords,"

Which were to fix and fasten the ends of the curtains in the ground, that they might not be moved with the wind, as Jarchi observes.

"And the pins of the court, and their cords": Which were for the same use (see Exodus 27:19).

When you look at this list above, which we actually covered in earlier lessons, you must take note that they were not listed in the same order as before. Perhaps this list indicated what would be needed first and the order in which this shall be done. Note that all of the valuable metals, materials, etc., were to come from the people to build this tabernacle and its court. I believe this endeavor was why God had the Israelites bring silver, gold and precious things into the wilderness with them. These pins (in verse 18), were not listed in the earlier list and perhaps were used in tying down the tent.

Exodus 35:19 "The cloths of service, to do service in the holy [place], the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office."

Used to wrap up the various vessels of the tabernacle when being moved from place to place (see Exodus 31:10). Or the priests' vestments, in which they did their service, and therefore it follows, by way of apposition.

"The holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office": For which there are particular directions (in Exodus 28:1).

Verses 20-29: (see note on 25:2).

Exodus 35:20 "And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses."

After they had heard what Moses was ordered to propose unto them, they immediately went to their tents, and fetched what they had with them, or were willing to part with, and brought it directly as a freewill offering to the Lord (Exodus 35:21). From hence, Aben Ezra observes, we may learn that the whole congregation of Israel came to the tabernacle, company after company.

We see that Moses went into great detail about the needs for the tabernacle and its court. And after he explained to the people everything that was needed; they immediately went to their own tents to prepare to bring all of this.

Verses 21-29: "Willing": Literally means "whose hearts were lifted up." The people gave for the work because they understood that God had freed them from slavery and made them rich (12:35-36); therefore, what they had belonged to Him. The leaders also set a godly example of giving that the people followed.

Exodus 35:21 "And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, [and] they brought the LORD'S offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments."

Who felt an impulse upon his mind, a strong inclination in Him.

"And everyone whom his spirit made willing": Or was endowed with a free and liberal spirit, and was heartily willing to bear a part, and cheerfully contribute to this service. Otherwise the willing mind, as well as the ability, were given them of God (see 1 Chron. 29:14).

"And they brought the Lord's offering": An offering to him, and such as he directed and disposed them to bring, and which was for his worship and service, and the honor of his name, and was acceptable to him.

"To the work of the tabernacle of the congregation": For the making of that, the several parts of it, and all things in it.

"And for all his service": Either the service of God, or of his tabernacle, which is the same.

"And for the holy garments": that is, of Aaron and his sons.

We see who came to bring the necessary things for the tabernacle and court, those with a willing heart. All spiritual things begin in the heart. This Scripture did not state any particular tribe. God really doesn't care what family affiliation you have, all He wants is a willing heart. When the Spirit moves upon the heart, something happens that causes people to want to work for the Lord. You will find these people going far beyond a tithe as well. They gave everything they could to the work of the Lord and they worked also. These were not things they brought grudgingly, but with a joyful heart. They were rejoicing that they could be part of this great undertaking.

Exodus 35:22 "And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, [and] brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the LORD."

And none else were asked to come; and this supposes, that as there were many of both sexes that were quite cordial, and heartily willing to contribute to the uttermost of what they had for this service, so there were others that were not.

"And brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets": The first of these, according to our version, seem to be ornaments, not about the neck, but the hands and arms, or wrists (see Genesis 24:22). The next are such ornaments as were worn in the ears, and though many had been given for the making of the golden calf, yet not all. There were many that did not give their earrings for this service, especially the women, perhaps only the men (see Exodus 32:2).

The "rings" were such as were worn on the finger, as all seem to agree. But what the "tablets" were is hard to say, the word being only used in this place and (Numbers 31:50).

"And every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the Lord": That is, every one of the first company that came, their offering was of gold, or something made of gold.

Here we see God's people bringing their jewelry to be used for God's work. They brought this willingly and voluntarily. This was not just the men, but women as well. It appears that in this particular time of history, men and women wore all sorts of jewelry. I believe this offering of gold being mentioned twice here, has great spiritual significance. I believe it symbolizes the pureness of heart the givers had.

Exodus 35:23 "And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' [hair], and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought [them]."

Wool or yarn of either of the colors; unless it can be supposed there might be with some of them the ingredients with which colors were made, brought with them out of Egypt.

"And fine linen": They had brought out of Egypt, and for which that country was famous.

"And goats' hair": Which in those countries was so long as to be shorn like the wool of sheep.

"And red skins of the rams": Died red, for it does not mean any that were naturally so, of which none are known.

"And badgers' skins": (see Exodus 25:5) of each of these, such who had them in their possession and their hearts were willing to part with them.

"Brought them": To Moses, to the tabernacle or tent where he was.

Exodus 35:24 "Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the LORD'S offering: and every man, with whom was found shittim wood for any work of the service, brought [it]."

Every one that had any quantity of either of these, whose heart was inclined freely to part therewith, brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord.

"And every man with whom was shittim wood": Or acacia, a sort of wood which grew pretty plentifully in those parts; and such who had cut it down for some use or another, and were disposed to part with it.

"For any work of the service": Of which many things were to be made, whether they were trees they had felled, or planks and boards they had cut them into.

"Brought it": Brought a sufficient quantity of it, for the various uses it was to be put unto.

Perhaps some of this silver was attained in sacrifice unto the Lord purchasing the firstborn. I believe what was intended here was the fact this was all freewill offerings.

Exodus 35:25 "And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, [both] of blue, and of purple, [and] of scarlet, and of fine linen."

That were ingenious, and had a good hand at spinning particularly, these were of the common and lower sort. The more honorable and richer sort of women are before mentioned, as bringing jewels or ornaments of gold of different sorts. But these were such who:

"Did spin with their hands": In which way, they got their living: some were more dexterous at it than others.

"And brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen": That is, yarn of these several colors, and flaxen thread, of which fine linen was made, all ready for the weaver, whether in woolen or linen.

This blue, purple and scarlet was dyed, probably before the weaving began. The fine linen was perhaps white. These women were experts in spinning. God had poured the knowledge and skill to do this job into their minds and spirits.

Exodus 35:26 "And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' [hair]."

It would seem to have been more difficult to produce a thread from goats' hair than from flax. Only the most skillful undertook the more difficult task.

It is strange that this would be separated out, but I am pretty sure that it was a different skill required to spin the goat's hair. Here again, we see that the Lord had given them the wisdom and it was the desire of their hearts to do this.

Exodus 35:27 "And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate;"

The "rulers" here intended are probably the "princes of the tribes" of Israel (Numbers 1:16; 3:3; 3:5). The twelve stones required for the breastplate would naturally be contributed by the twelve chiefs of the tribes whose names they were to bear (Exodus 28:21). The two onyx stones for the ephod (Exodus 28:9-12), may have been the further gift of two of the number, who happened to possess stones of the large size needed.

Exodus 35:28 "And spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense."

Such excellent spices and precious oil, pure oil olive, as the common people had not, and which they brought out of Egypt. The one was:

"For the light": For the light of the candlestick only.

"And for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense": The spices for the former were pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus and cassia; and for the latter, stacte, onycha, galbanum, with pure frankincense.

We see here that the rulers probably had more wealth than the others. We discussed before that this onyx meant here was a precious stone, probably not the one we know today as an onyx. The onyx was mentioned separate, because it would not be on the breastplate, but was the stone for each shoulder. The other stones were not specifically named here, but we remember that each of the 12 represented one of the tribes of Israel. We also must remember that these different oils and the spice were special preparations.

Exodus 35:29 "The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses."

Without a willing mind, costly offerings would be abhorred; with it, the smallest will be accepted. Our hearts are willing, when we cheerfully assist in promoting the cause of God. Those who are diligent and contented in employments considered mean are as much accepted of God as those engaged in splendid services. The women who spun the goats' hair were wise-hearted, because they did it heartily to the Lord. Thus the laborer, mechanic, or servant who attends to his work in the faith and fear of God, may be as wise, for his place, as the most useful minister, and he equally accepted of the Lord. Our wisdom and duty consist in giving God the glory and use of our talents, be they many or few.

Every man and woman whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work": which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses (See note on Exodus 35:21).

We remember the most important thing. They (men and women) brought them from willing hearts. This statement ("by the hand of Moses"), did not mean that Moses would actually do any of the work. He just received the plans from God and was responsible to give accurate instructions, nothing else.

Verses 35:30-36:7" the Lord also gave the two named craftsmen skill in teaching their trades. This substantiates that they were most probably the supervisors or leaders of the construction teams (see Notes on 28:3; 31:1-11).

God deserves the best that can be found in all of His creation. Not only were the finest raw materials used in the furnishing and construction of the tabernacle but the most skilled craftsmen. The lead artisan was "Bezalel," one so gifted that he was placed in charge of all the construction and craft. He was assisted by "Aholiab". The people gave of their possessions just as enthusiastically, to the point that they had to be "restrained" from giving.

Exodus 35:30 "And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah;"

After they had brought their several freewill offerings.

"See": Observe, take notice of this, for your encouragement, that your service will not be in vain, for want of proper persons to perform this work, and to guide, direct, and oversee it.

"The Lord hath called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah": Of this man and of his descent (see note on Exodus 31:2).

Exodus 35:31 "And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;"

This and the two following verses contain the account of the qualifications of Bezaleel, which he had in an extraordinary manner from the Lord, and these are expressed in the same words (as in Exodus 31:3; see notes on Exodus 31:3-5).

Exodus 35:32 "And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,"

This and the two following verses contain the account of the qualifications of Bezaleel, which he had in an extraordinary manner from the Lord. And these are expressed in the same words (as in Exodus 31:3).

Exodus 35:33 "And in the cutting of stones, to set [them], and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work."

The precious stones for the robes of the high priest, and the spices for the incense and anointing oil, were presented by the princes of the congregation, who had such costly things in their possession.

We spoke about Bezaleel (in Chapter 31), of this Bible study. It is almost unbelievable that one man had all the different skills to do such a wide variety of jobs. One of these skills would take a lifetime to perfect in the natural, but all things are possible with God. God poured His Spirit upon Bezaleel and perfected all of these abilities in him. To get the details on all of this, study (Chapter 31), of Exodus in this Bible study.

Exodus 35:34 "And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, [both] he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan."

Rather, "And he hath put it into his heart to teach." He (God), has given him the gift of being able to teach others, and so has enabled him to form a body of workmen competent to carry out his conceptions.

"Both he and Aholiab": God has given the same gift to Aholiab. On the special talent of Aholiab (see comment on Exodus 31:6).

This Aholiab was Bezaleel's assistant that God had given him. God allowed Bezaleel and Aholiab to teach these crafts to others the Lord had chosen to help. Bezaleel was the boss, Aholiab was his assistant and the other helpers were under Aholiab.

Exodus 35:35 "Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, [even] of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work."

Or wisdom in their heart, a large measure of it signified by their being filled with it. And whatever wisdom men have, whether in things natural, civil, moral, or spiritual, it is all of God.

"To work all manner of work, of the engraver": Which the setting of stones in the ephod or breastplate required.

"And of the cunning workman": And such a one was necessary for the making the curtains of the tabernacle, the vail between the holy and the holy of holies, and the ephod and breastplate of the high priest.

"And of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen": In which there were various works of things belonging to the tabernacle, and persons employed in it.

"And of the weaver": Both in linen and woolen, for the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle, and for the priests' garments.

"Even of those that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work": Whether in the above things, or in any sort of curious work, in gold, silver, brass, wood, or stone.

God had filled these helpers as well, with skill and understanding to do the job. They were under the constant, watchful eye of Aholiab and Bezaleel.

Exodus Chapter 35 Questions

1. Why did Moses gather the congregation?
2. What additional description was added to the warning not to work on the Sabbath?
3. What was the penalty for working on the Sabbath?
4. What did Moses command the people to do?
5. What was it to be used for?
6. What had to be the condition of their hearts?
7. The wise hearted were to do what?
8. Who would furnish the metals, wood, and precious stones for the tabernacle?
9. As soon as Moses had told the people all the items needed, what did the people do?
10. What 2 descriptions were given of the people who brought the materials?
11. All spiritual things begin where?
12. In verse 22, what did men and women bring for the tabernacle?
13. This gift the men and women brought being mentioned twice has what religious significance?
14. What was the description of the women who spun with their hands?

15. What was probably, the difference of the goats' hair?
16. Who brought the onyx stones?
17. Why were the onyx stones mentioned separate from the other stones?
18. What did "by the hand of Moses" mean?
19. Who had God called by name to be the head engraver, stone cutter, worker of wood, and all the other things?
20. What was almost unbelievable about Bezaleel?
21. Who was Bezaleel's next assistant?
22. What did God do for all the workers?