

CHAPTER 35

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 35

This chapter begins with a renewal of the command of the sabbath, ^{<1251>}Exodus 35:1-3 and contains an order for a freewill offering to be brought for the service of the sanctuary, and specifies the things to be brought, and for what uses, ^{<1254>}Exodus 35:4-19 to which there was a ready compliance, and men and women, princes and the common people, everyone according to what they had in possession, brought and offered it freely, ^{<1255>}Exodus 35:20-29 and for their encouragement, that their offering would not be in vain, they were informed there were two persons divinely inspired, to do, and teach to be done, all manner of work for the tabernacle, towards which they had made such a liberal and plentiful contribution, ^{<1256>}Exodus 35:30-35.

Ver. 1. *And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together*, etc.] 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.

Ver. 2. *Six days shall work be done*, etc.] Or “may be done” ^{f982}; everyone might do what work he pleased, or the business of his calling, on the six days of the weeks; he had liberty granted him of God, and might make use of it for the advantage of himself and his family; unless this can be thought to have a peculiar respect, as this repetition and renewal of this law seems to have, to the building of the tabernacle; and so is an order for working at

it closely and constantly all the six days of the week, and in things belonging to it, until the whole was finished:

but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day; or “holiness” ^{f983}; wholly holy, and be separated and devoted to holy service and religious duties, abstaining from all manner of work, even from the work of the tabernacle; for though that was designed for the worship of God, and required dispatch, yet the sabbath was not to be violated on account of it: and, as Jarchi observes, this admonition concerning the sabbath was given previous to the command of building the tabernacle; to show that that did not drive away the sabbath, or that the sabbath was not to give way to it, or to be broken for the sake of it, it being

a sabbath of rest to the Lord; in which the Israelites were to rest from bodily labour, and spend the day in the service of God, and to his honour and glory:

whosoever doeth work therein: even though it might be in anything belonging to the tabernacle:

shall be put to death; the Targum of Jonathan adds, by casting stones, stoning being the punishment of sabbath breakers, #Nu 15:35,36.

Ver. 3. *Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.*] This law seems to be a temporary one, and not to be continued, nor is it said to be throughout their generations as elsewhere, where the law of the sabbath is given or repeated; it is to be restrained to the building of the tabernacle, and while that was about, to which it is prefaced; and it is designed to prevent all public or private working on the sabbath day, in anything belonging to that; having no fire to heat their tools or melt their metal, or do any thing for which that was necessary; for it can hardly be thought that this is to be taken in the strictest sense, as an entire prohibition of kindling a fire and the use of it on that day, which is so absolutely useful, and needful in various cases, and where acts of mercy and necessity require it; as in cold seasons of the year, for the warming and comforting of persons who otherwise would be unfit for religious exercises, and on the account of infants and aged persons, who could not subsist without it; and in cases of sickness, and various disorders which necessarily require it; and even for the preparation of food, which must be had on that day as on others, the sabbath being not a fast, but rather a festival, as it is with the Jews; and yet this law is interpreted by them in the

most rigorous sense: they put kindling a fire among the principal works forbidden on that day ^{f984}, and that not only to bake bread and boil flesh, as Aben Ezra interprets it here, but to warm themselves with; nay, they think it unlawful to touch an hearth, or a coal of fire, or a firebrand, or anything that may give them any warmth in a cold season; and if, for the sake of infants or aged persons, there is need of a fire or heating a stove, they hire a Christian to do it, or so prepare and order matters the day before that it kindle of itself ^{f985}; and so Leo Modena ^{f986} says,

“they do not meddle with any fire, nor touch any wood that is on fire, nor kindle any, nor put it out; nor do they so much as light a candle on the sabbath day: and if the place be cold where they dwell, except they have any stoves, or hot houses, or else have some one that is no Jew to kindle a fire for them; or had so ordered the matter before hand that the fire should kindle of itself at such a time; they must even be content to sit in the cold all that day:”

but here they nicely distinguish and observe, that it is said,

throughout your habitations; their private dwellings, but not the habitation of the Lord, or the house of the sanctuary; and on this score they allow of kindling a fire in Beth Moked ^{f987}, an apartment in the temple, where a fire was constantly kept for the priests that kept watch to warm themselves at.

Ver. 4. *And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel*, etc.] 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:

saying; as follows.

Ver. 5-9. *Take ye from amongst you an offering unto the Lord*, etc.] 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 ^{<023B>}Exodus 25:3-7 the reader is referred to the notes there. (See Gill on “^{<023B>}Exodus 25:3-7”).

Ver. 10. *And every wise hearted among you shall come*, etc.] Every ingenious man, that is skillful in any mechanic art and business, who has a peculiar turn of mind, and employs his thoughts to improve, in a curious manner, in whatsoever manufactory he is concerned, every such an one is invited by Moses to come to him:

and make all the Lord hath commanded, the particulars of which follow.

Ver. 11. *The tabernacle*, etc.] 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 ^{<0230>}Exodus 26:1-37 ((see Gill on “^{<0230>}Exodus 26:1”))) etc. to end of chapter:

and his sockets; which were of silver, into which the boards were let and fastened, (see ^{<1259>}Exodus 26:19), etc.

Ver. 12. *The ark and the staves thereof*, etc.] 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 veil of the covering; which divided between the holy and the holy of holies; of these (see ^{<1250>}Exodus 25:10-22 26:32,33).

Ver. 13. *The table and his staves, and all his vessels*, etc.] The table of shewbread, and all things appertaining to it:

and the shewbread; which is mentioned for the sake of the table, and to show what was intended, and the use of it; for otherwise the shewbread was not yet to be made, nor by the artificers here called together; and is to be interpreted of the dishes of the shewbread, in which it was put; and so Junius and Tremellius render it, the instruments or vessels of the shewbread; of these (see ^{<1253>}Exodus 25:23-30).

Ver. 14. *The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture*, etc.] 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; of these (see ^{<1251>}Exodus 25:31-39).

Ver. 15. *And the incense altar, and his staves*, etc.] Which were overlaid with gold; hence this altar was called the golden altar, of which (see ^{<1211>}Exodus 30:1-5)

and the anointing oil and sweet incense; each of which were made of various spices, (see ^{<1213>}Exodus 30:23-31)

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 ^{<1276>}Exodus 27:16).

Ver. 16. *The altar of burnt offering with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels*, etc.] Of which (see ^{<1270>}Exodus 27:1-8)

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

Ver. 17. *The hangings of the court*, etc.] 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 ^{<1270>}Exodus 27:9-13)

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 ^{<1276>}Exodus 27:16).

Ver. 18. *The pins of the tabernacle*, etc.] 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 ^{<1279>}Exodus 27:19).

Ver. 19. *The cloths of service, to do service in the holy place*, etc.] To wrap up the various vessels of the tabernacle, when removed from place to place; (see ^{<1281>}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 (^{<1281>}Exodus 28:1-43).

Ver. 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; as (^{<1282>}Exodus 35:21) shows: from hence, Aben Ezra observes, we may learn, that the whole congregation of Israel came to the tabernacle, company after company.

Ver. 21. *And they came everyone whose heart stirred him up*, etc.] 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 ^{<1394>}1 Chronicles 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 honour 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.

Ver. 22. *And they came both men and women, as many as were willing hearted*, etc.] 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 ^{<1242>}Genesis 24:22,30) though the word seems to have the signification of an hook, and may mean buckles or clasps, with which some part of their garments were coupled and fastened; so Kimchi says ^{f988}, that in his opinion it was an ornament somewhat like a needle, with which they pierced and joined the two parts of the collar of a shirt under the throat: 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 ^{<1232>}Exodus 32:2,3) 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 (^{<1250>}Numbers 31:50): some take them for ornaments worn on the right arm; others for the covering of another part, not to be named; others for girdles or aprons; Aben Ezra gives a different account of most of them; he says the first design ornaments in the ear, or earrings; the second such as were worn in the nose, or nose jewels; and the third indeed such as were

put on the finger; and the fourth, that were upon the arm: however, they were all

jewels of gold; or were all such ornaments as were made of gold; and these are first mentioned, as being probably first brought, and were what were asked for in the first place, gold being wanted for several things:

and every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the Lord; that is, everyone of the first company that came, their offering was of gold, or something made of gold.

Ver. 23. *And every man with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet*, etc.] Wool or yarn of either of the colours; unless it can be supposed there might be with some of them the ingredients with which colours 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 ⁴²³⁵Exodus 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.

Ver. 24. *Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the Lord's offering*, etc.] 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]; a sufficient quantity of it, for the various uses it was to be put unto.

Ver. 25. *And all the women that were wise hearted*, etc.] That were ingenious, and had a good hand at spinning particularly, these were of the common and lower sort; the more honourable 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 colours, and flaxen thread, of which fine linen was made, all ready for the weaver, whether in woollen or linen.

Ver. 26. *And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom*, etc.] To be ingenious in their business, and to study to do it in a curious manner, and to do that which others could not:

spun goats' [hair]; some join the phrase, “in wisdom”, in the preceding clause with this, neglecting the accent “Athnach”, which divides them, thus, “in wisdom spun goats’ hair”; and which, without being separated from the preceding clause, may be understood and repeated in this: for, as Aben Ezra says, to spin goats’ hair was an art that required excellent wisdom; and so Jarchi: in the eastern countries there is a sort of goats’ hair very bright and fine, and hangs to the ground, and the beauty of it is equal almost to that of silk, and is never sheared, but combed off, and the women of the country spin it; and at this day a great trade is driven with it at Angora and Aleppo^{f989}.

Ver. 27. *And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set*, etc.] Or “stones of fillings”^{f990}, to be set in ouches, and fill them up, as stones set in rings do:

for the ephod, and for the breastplate; the onyx stones were for the shoulder pieces of the ephod; and the other stones were for the breastplate of judgment, and both to be borne by the high priest, for a memorial of the children of Israel before the Lord, whose names were engraven on these stones: the rulers are mentioned last, as bringing their offerings: the reason of which may not be, because they were backward to it, for they might

offer earlier, though recorded last; or if they offered last, it might be because they brought things that others could not; namely, the precious stones here mentioned, and other things in the next verse, the common people had not; though some of the Jewish writers tax them with dilatoriness, and observe a letter wanting in the word for “rulers”, it generally has; omitted to denote, as they think, that they were slow and backward in offering; so Jarchi notes from R. Nathan.

Ver. 28. *And spice and oil*, etc.] 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; the oil, and other spices, *were 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.

Ver. 29. *The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord*, etc.] What they did, whether more or less, they did it cheerfully and willingly, as to the Lord, for his service and glory:

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 Gill on “⁴⁰⁵²Exodus 35:21”)) and as there were work and service of God’s appointment to be done in the legal tabernacle, so there are in the Gospel church; such as prayer, praise, preaching, and hearing the word, and the administration of ordinances; and for the support of which contributions are made; and all this is to be done willingly and cordially: the Gospel is to be preached not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre sake, but of a ready mind; the word is to be heard and received with all readiness, and ordinances are to be submitted to cheerfully, and with the whole heart; and the contributions made for the poor, and the support of divine service, are to be generous and bountiful: and those who have such a willing heart and spirit, have it not by nature or of themselves, but from the efficacious grace of God, which makes them a willing people in the day of his power; and from the free Spirit of God, who works in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure; and from the love of God and Christ constraining them to it: and these act according to their several abilities, some have more grace and greater gifts, and others lesser and meaner; as well as some have more of this world’s goods than others, and so capable

of doing more service; but all, according to their capacity, of every sex and class, are to contribute all they can freely and willingly, to the carrying on of the cause of God and interest of religion: some bring gold, and some goats' hair, some silver, and some brass, etc. but all being offered willingly, from right principles, and with right views, is acceptable.

Ver. 30. *And Moses said unto the children of Israel*, etc.] 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 Gill on "^{Exodus 31:2}Exodus 31:2"))).

Ver. 31-33. *And he hath filled him with the Spirit of God*, etc.] 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 31:3-5}Exodus 31:3-5), (See Gill on "^{Exodus 31:3}Exodus 31:3") (See Gill on "^{Exodus 31:4}Exodus 31:4") (See Gill on "^{Exodus 31:5}Exodus 31:5").

Ver. 34. *And he hath put in his heart that he may teach*, etc.] Instruct others in the things he had knowledge of; the Lord not only gave him gifts of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, to devise and contrive curious works, and how to perform them, but gave him a capacity, and inclined his mind to teach others, how to work these works; for not all that have knowledge have a capacity and a will to teach others also; this is of God:

[both] he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; who was joined with him as a companion and assistant in the same service; him the Lord also qualified, both to devise things, and to teach them others; of this man, ((see Gill on "^{Exodus 31:6}Exodus 31:6"))).

Ver. 35. *Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart*, etc.] 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: this was

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 an one was necessary for the making the curtains of the tabernacle, the veil 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 woollen, 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.