

CHAPTER 36

INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS 36

Bezaleel and Aholiab, with the artificers under them, having a call as well as qualifications for the service of the sanctuary, and having received from Moses the materials for it, set about it, (^{<1230>}Exodus 36:1-3) but the people bringing more than was necessary, they acquaint Moses with it, who by a proclamation restrained from it, (^{<1234>}Exodus 36:4-7) and next an account is given of the several things that were wrought by them, as first the curtains for the tabernacle, both of linen and goats' hair, and the coverings of them, (^{<1238>}Exodus 36:8-19) next the boards for the tabernacle, and the sockets they were set in, and the bars for the boards, (^{<1231>}Exodus 36:20-34) and then the vail which parted the most holy place from the holy place, and the hanging which divided between the holy place and the court, (^{<1235>}Exodus 36:35-38).

Ver. 1. *Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man,* etc.] Or every ingenious artificer under them: when they began to work is not precisely said, but it is very probable they set about it directly, as soon as they were furnished with materials for it, nor is it said where they wrought; it is very likely there was a particular place, where they were ranged according to their respective manufactories, and where they did their work under the inspection, and by the direction of these two men:

in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding, to know how to work all manner of work, for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded; for as all the wisdom and understanding, which Bezaleel and Aholiab had for the building of the tabernacle, and making everything appertaining to it, and for instructing others to do the same, were from the Lord; so all the wisdom, understanding, and capacity in the artificers to learn of them, and work according to their directions, were also from him; who in a very extraordinary manner enlarged their faculties, and increased their natural abilities, to take in what was suggested to them, and perform their work exactly agreeable thereunto.

Ver. 2. *And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man,* etc.] It was not enough that they had qualifications for this work, but they must have a call to it from Moses, to whom the whole affair was committed, to see that it was done according to the pattern shown him in the mount: so all that are concerned in the public work and service of the church of God should have a call unto it both from the Lord and from the church:

in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even everyone whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it; who had not only abilities given him of God, but a mind disposed for it, a willingness of heart, a readiness of soul for such service, was even eager upon it, and in haste to be at it.

Ver. 3. *And they received of Moses all the offering,* etc.] That is, Bezaleel and Aholiab received it of him, who delivered it to the several workmen, as the nature of their work required, some one thing, and some another: to some gold, to others silver, to others brass, and to some they delivered out fine linen, and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, and to others shittim wood; Moses gave all out faithfully that he received, and kept back nothing for his own use or private advantage, even all the above things of which the offering consisted:

which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it [withal]; and which perhaps they went and fetched the same day they were called together, and acquainted with the mind of God concerning it; or at least they brought it in a very short space of time, and as soon as it possibly could be; it was delivered to the workmen, that the work might be begun, and carried on with the utmost expedition:

and they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning; they continued for a course of time afterwards to bring their freewill offerings of one thing or another to Moses, every morning, which perhaps was the most suitable time for him to receive them; and best expresses their readiness and diligence in bringing them, and which, as they brought, he sent to the workmen, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 4. *And all the wise men that wrought all the work of the sanctuary,* etc.] The ingenious artificers who were employed, some in one thing, and some in another, either on the tabernacle itself, or the vessels of it, and things appertaining to it;

came every man from his work which they made; left off their work by mutual consent and agreement, and came in a body to Moses.

Ver. 5. *And they spake unto Moses, saying*, etc.] One in the name of the rest:

the people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make; they had taken an estimate of what was to be done, and of what was necessary for the doing of it, and of what the people brought for this service; and they found there was a great deal more brought than would be wanted, and therefore they thought proper to advise Moses of it, that no more might be brought: it is hard to say which is most to be wondered at, the great liberality of the people in contributing so freely and bountifully, and continuing to do so without being urged, or even asked; or the honesty of the workmen, one and all, who might have gone on to have received the gifts of the people by the hands of Moses, and what was superfluous might have converted to their own use; but instead of this, they agree as one man to let Moses know how the state of things was, and prevent the people from making any more contributions.

Ver. 6. *And Moses gave commandment*, etc.] Orders to some proper person or persons about him;

and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, or “caused a voice to pass”; a crier or herald, as the Targums, who went through the camp and published in every quarter:

saying, let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary; as the men in cutting shittim wood, and planing it, and the women in spinning blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and goats’ hair:

so the people were restrained from bringing; that is, any more: instead of a spur to liberality, which most want, a restraint was laid upon these to check it, and prevent an excess in it, of which there is rarely any danger; so eager, forward, and zealous were they in this good work.

Ver. 7. *For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it*, etc.] The gold, silver, brass, and precious stones, the wood and yarn, which had been already brought in, were sufficient for everything they were ordered to make:

and too much; a great deal more than would be used; much would remain after all was wrought: what was done with this is not said, whether it was returned to the people, or laid up for the use of the tabernacle and service, as might hereafter be wanted; which latter seems most probable.

Ver. 8-38. *And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle*, etc.] Did the part assigned him, what he was fittest for, and most skilful in: particularly some

made ten curtains, etc. which were properly the tabernacle, and were made first, and then the several things appertaining to it; and from hence, to the end of the chapter (¹²³¹Exodus 36:9-38), is only an account of the making of the tabernacle, its curtains, coverings, boards, sockets, and bars, the vail for the most holy place, and the hangings for the tabernacle, exactly as they are ordered to be made, (See Gill on "¹²³¹Exodus 26:1") etc. to end of chapter: and it may be observed, that throughout the account of the various articles, it is all along said "he" did this and the other; either referring to Moses, by whose orders they were done, or to Bezaleel, the chief director of the work, or to each and everyone of the artificers severally concerned.