

Message #69

Exodus 35:30-36:7

One of the most influential missionaries to ever live was James Hudson Taylor. In the mid 1800's he went to China and his philosophy of raising money was prayer and faith. When he died in 1905, there were 205 mission stations in China. There were 849 missionaries and 125,000 Chinese Christians in the China Inland Mission. J. Hudson Taylor once said, "All God's giants have been weak men and women who did great things for God because they counted on His faithfulness."

To do a big work for God, we must learn to depend on God. Sometimes we tend to think it comes down to our planning and our scheming. But the fact is in the end it comes down to God. What Israel learned and what we need to learn is this:

WHEN GOD GIVES HIS PEOPLE A JOB TO DO, HE WILL PROVIDE EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO DO THE JOB THROUGH HIS PEOPLE.

God will give the people what they need to get the project done. He will provide the people, the resources and the skills. He will provide the ability to accomplish the task. What we all need to realize is that God's callings are God's enablements. When God gives us a job to do, He will see to it that we have all things necessary to do the job. That point is very clear from this text.

There are seven historical facts we want to observe:

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #1 – God had specifically called and gifted two men to head the project. **35:30-35**

It was now time to get worship things built and made. In order for that to happen, there were key men in place that God had specifically gifted to head this project. There are two persons we learn about here:

Person #1 - God called and gifted Bezalel. **35:30-34**

There is no question that Bezalel was a master craftsman. There are two key realities brought out here about Bezalel.

(Reality #1) - Bezalel was the son of Uri, who was the son of Hur, who was from the tribe of Judah. **35:30**

Actually Bezalel may be traced to Judah in Chronicles 2:3-20 through five ancestors: Uri, Hur, Caleb, Hezron, and Perez, who was Judah's son by Tamar. The account here in Exodus centers on his father and grandfather. Uri was his father and Hur was his grandfather. His grandfather Hur had been the one who had helped Moses hold up his hands as a support to Moses (Ex.17:10-12).

Later, one thing that this certainly reveals to us is that God had His calling on Bezalel long before he knew it. He knew who his father would be and He knew who his grandfather would be. He knew who his mother would be and He knew what skills He would give him.

God had a plan for him to be born into this family and then He had a plan to call him, gift him and use him for this project. He knew all of this before any of this family even left Egypt.

(Reality #2) - Bezalel was filled by God with the Spirit of God. 35:31-34

Now the concept that Moses had about the Spirit of God begins in Genesis 1. The Spirit of God was a key part of the Godhead in creation. So to specifically mention the Spirit of God in direct connection to Bezalel puts him in the context of a major work of God. Now this filling had four results. Since each word is different, it seems to me that we should do our best to try to grasp what each means:

Result #1 - Bezalel was filled with wisdom. 35:31a

This Hebrew word “wisdom” has to do with having a skill that comes through learning that is based on having a proper view of God and proper relationship with God. In other words, one who is not properly related to God cannot possibly have wisdom (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 278).

Result #2 - Bezalel was filled with understanding. 35:31b

This particular word has to do with having great intelligence, understanding and insight into things (*Ibid.*, p. 855).

Result #3 - Bezalel was filled with knowledge. 35:31c

This word has to do with actually knowing something. One would actually have the knowledge and would have arrived at a knowledgeable level. This has more to do with the conclusion rather than the process (*Ibid.*, p. 205).

Result #4 - Bezalel was filled with all craftsmanship. 35:31d

This word refers to one, who has a full and abundant and even kingly level and ability (*Ibid.*, p. 475).

Now look carefully at what is stated here. God gave Bezalel the wisdom, understanding and knowledge in “all” craftsmanship. He has a supernatural ability granted to him by the Spirit of God.

God singled him out from the mass of humanity and gave him these very special skills.

God did this for five stated reasons (35:32-34):

Reason #1 - So he could work and make the designs in the metal. 35:32

Reason #2 - So he could know how to cut the stones. 35:33a

Reason #3 - So he would know how to carve the wood. 35:33b

Reason #4 - So he could perform every inventive work. 35:33c

Reason #5 - So he could teach others. 35:34a

It seems that Bezalel is the key guy here. He was the head of this project. But he could not do it alone, so God had others that He has gifted to help in the project.

Now here is the point; God wanted a project completed and He raised up people who could actually be used to complete it. These guys may have had personal skills and talents, but that would not get this job done. To get this job done, God needed to use His Spirit to give special enabling grace for the job. That is precisely what He does. By the way, this is a building trades project.

I truly believe when God calls a person to a job or to a school or to a ministry, He will equip those who are faithful to Him to do their work at the highest possible level. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge and those who fear the Lord will be used greatly by God.

Person #2 - God called and gifted Oholiab. 35:34b.

Now Oholiab was the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. Now the tribe of Dan was known to be a “rather warlike” group. In fact, when Jacob pronounced his blessings on the tribes he brought out that point (Gen. 49:17). So this tribe was not known for its fabric designers; but it is clear that God had his hand on one from this tribe whose name was Oholiab. God did a special work of grace in his heart that enabled him to lead in the construction of this sanctuary.

He too had been given the same type of Spirit filling of Bezalel. He too was able to teach others how to do the work. Many believed that he was specifically enabled by God in the textile area. He was skilled with fabrics and he knew much about woven material and embroidering.

According to **verse 35**, God specifically filled them with skill to perform every work needed in this project. That word “skill” is the same word wisdom, which means God gave them a special grant of learning in this area to carry out His work.

He gave them the skill to do engraving, designing and embroidering. He gave them the skill to work with all the fabrics.

Now most people do not grasp this point. God is the One who gives people their skills and abilities. The problem is people don't recognize this. They think they gave themselves their skills.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #2 – God demanded that all those He had gifted were to use their skills in complete conformity to the Word of God. **36:1**

These guys were not to be a bunch of independent contractors who could just build and make what they wanted. They were to be men who were to use their skills in accordance with God's Word. They could not build something the way they liked it; it had to conform to what God demanded.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #3 – Moses called all Divinely skilled and gifted men to come to perform the work. **36:2**

The reason why Moses specifically calls these two men is because they are in charge and this would show all skilled workers that this was the case. It was time to begin the tabernacle project. Moses called all the skilled workers to come. Notice he did not call all the people because not all of the people were skilled.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #4 – Moses gave them all the contributions the people had given. **36:3**

Moses oversaw this whole thing. The contributions came in and he oversaw that. He made certain that all the contributions went to the project. Every dollar, every type of metal, every piece of wood, every inch of material and every ounce of oil or spices went to the project through Moses.

It is critical that leaders make certain that every penny goes to where it is supposed to go. I can stand here and look you in the eyes and tell you with absolute honesty and integrity that every penny that has ever been given to this ministry has gone exactly where it is supposed to go. This church is led by men who have integrity, who keep track of every single dollar and dime. This is the way it is supposed to work.

These people were giving people. In fact, they kept bringing more and more free will offerings every morning. People were bringing money and material and fabric. Now it is clear from this that when the project first started, they did not have everything they needed to complete it all at once. This was a process. So every morning the people would bring their free will offerings to give.

We actually don't know how long this went on. But the people kept coming and kept giving. None of these offerings were solicited, but in fact were of the people's own free will

The chronology of this is important. These people had greatly sinned against God, but now they were right with God and they wanted to give to God's work and that is exactly what they did.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #5 – All of the skilled workers came and did their specific work. **36:4**

To build this sanctuary required several men.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #6 – The skilled workers informed Moses that the people had given more than enough for the project. **36:5**

This is real integrity in leadership. These leaders were not out to fleece the people. When they had enough for the project, they informed the people. They were not out to stockpile money. They did not say, well we have so much coming in let's build something else. When the project was done, it was done.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #7 – Moses issued a command not to bring any more offerings for this project. **36:6-7**

Israel had blown it, but God had forgiven her and now it was time to do a work for Him and God saw to it that they had the people and the funds to carry it out.

When they had enough, Moses said we don't need any more you can stop now. That is integrity.

PRACTICAL LESSONS:

- 1) God gives different skills and abilities to His people to do different things for Him.**
- 2) God accomplishes His work through the generous giving of His people.**
- 3) When projects have been completed, leaders are to tell the people it is done, not we need more.**