

EXODUS 31:1-11 (BEZALEL AND AHOLIAB)

The contents of today's passage are significantly different than that which we have seen for quite a while. Instead of directions to make things or to perform certain tasks, the focus here will be on those who are going to do the actual work.

In particular, and by name, the Lord has selected two men who will be in charge of seeing that it gets done. In calling them by name, it indicates that He is both aware of their capabilities, and that He will use them in pictures of Christ. Were this not so, then there would be no need to name them.

Many others are noted as helping out in the tasks, but their names aren't given. However, none of them are unknown to God. Though we will look at the details of the passage from a historical and literal perspective, and also from a perspective which points to Christ, we shouldn't overlook the moral and personal characteristic of the verses.

The Lord is having a sanctuary built. It requires materials, instructions, leaders, workers, time, energy, and so on. Every detail of this process demonstrates a need to be fulfilled. Jesus said this during His ministry –

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish *it*—²⁹ lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him,³⁰ saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish’?³¹ Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?” Luke 14:28-31

It is unfathomable to think that the Lord would direct Moses to build this sanctuary and not have calculated that every detail of it could be met. Each person who participated, in whatever way, was a part of what the Lord had already figured into the job. If this is so with an earthly sanctuary that was to take up a limited amount of space, and which would take less than a year to complete, how much more carefully do you think the Lord has considered every detail of His heavenly sanctuary, of which we are a part!

As this is so, and as you are a part of that equation if you have called on Christ, then it means that the Lord knows you intimately, He is using you exactly, and He will complete His good work in you perfectly.

Considering that the workers of the tabernacle could have made little flaws in their work and not said anything about it, such as scratching a piece of wood and saying, "Oh, it will be covered with gold anyway, I don't need to sand it down," it means that the Lord allowed the workers to decide the quality of their work.

If Moses, or one of the men mentioned today didn't approve of what was handed to them, they could refuse to use it. Instead, it would be discarded, burnt, used for something else, or whatever, but they decided what was acceptable and what wasn't.

The same is true with us. The Lord will look at our work for Him and decide whether it is worthy of reward, or whether it will be burned up. It is up to us how we conduct our duties for His coming kingdom. For this reason, I have to tell myself (and the Lord) often, "What I am doing right now counts forever." You should have the same attitude. Let yourselves be used up for the Lord now. When we stand before Him, it will have been well worth it.

Text Verse: “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And find out knowledge *and* discretion.” Proverbs 8:12

Jobs need to be done, and if they are important to the Lord’s plans, they will, in fact, get done. We have a little church here, but there are jobs that need to get done. To me, some days are overwhelming, but apparently the load is what I am to be given. If I couldn’t take it and the job didn’t get done, it would either mean that it wasn’t a needed part of the Lord’s plans, or that the Lord was ready to send someone else to help in the tasks. JFB says –

“When God has any special work to be accomplished, He always raises up instruments capable of doing it;” Jamieson-Faucett-Brown

I would hope the things we are doing at the Superior Word are a part of His plans. And I would also hope that the Lord will raise up helping instruments for some of the tasks that will need to be done. When they walk through the door, it will be a welcome relief. Until then, “Use me up Lord. This life is yours.”

This is the moral lesson I’d like to give you today. Have this attitude. Christ is coming soon enough. Now let’s get into the literal and pictorial aspects of today’s passage. It's all to be found in His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Bezalel (verses 1-5)

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

v'dabber Yehovah el Mosheh lemor - And spoke (the word) Yehovah to Moses saying. This is now a new thought which is introduced into the discourse and so the words are offset from what is to come. Moses has his pen out and he is awaiting a new set of instructions from the Lord. Likewise, as the recipients of the word, we are being prepared for something and are being asked to get ready as well.

The chapter will logically be divided into three sections. The first is verses 1-11. This will be followed by verses 12-17. Finally, a closing thought concerning this most important time on the mountain will be given in verse 18.

²“See, I have called by name

In the Bible, it is a high honor when the Lord calls someone by name. It indicates that they have been chosen for a specific reason and to perform a particular task or mission. This is especially so in regards to redemptive history.

In Isaiah 43, the Lord told the people of Israel that He had called them by name and for His sovereign purposes in the conduct of redemptive history. Two chapters later, He says the same thing about a pagan king, Cyrus, who the Lord called by name in order to fulfill His will concerning Israel's release so that redemptive history could continue on the course purposed by the Lord –

“Thus says the LORD to His anointed,
To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—
To subdue nations before him
And loose the armor of kings,
To open before him the double doors,
So that the gates will not be shut:
² I will go before you
And make the crooked places straight;
I will break in pieces the gates of bronze
And cut the bars of iron.
³ I will give you the treasures of darkness
And hidden riches of secret places,
That you may know that I, the LORD,
Who call *you* by your name,
Am the God of Israel.
⁴ For Jacob My servant’s sake,
And Israel My elect,
I have even called you by your name;
I have named you, though you have not known Me.” Isaiah 45:1-4

Here in Exodus, after the Lord has given all of the many details concerning the gifts of the people, the design of the sanctuary, including the tabernacle and its furniture, the courtyard, the garments for the priesthood, and the making of the special anointing oil and holy incense, the Lord is calling someone by name for a particular purpose. And that person is...

² (con’t) **Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur,**

The name Betsalel is formed of three parts. The *el* at the end means “God.” The “b” at the beginning signifies “in.” and the middle part comes from the noun *tsel*, meaning shadow. Thus his name means “In the Shadow of God.” As shade is considered a protection in the Bible, such as from the heat of the sun, it thus is a

metaphor for “In the Protection of God.” This idea of the shadow being protection is seen several times in Scripture, such as these memorable words from Psalm 91

–

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the **shadow** of the Almighty.

² I will say of the Lord, ‘*He is my refuge and my fortress;*
My God, in Him I will trust.” Psalm 91:1, 2

It is even used to speak of the Lord Himself, such as –

“The Lord *is* your keeper;
The Lord *is* your shade at your right hand.

⁶ The sun shall not strike you by day,
Nor the moon by night.” Psalm 121:5, 6

He is the son of Uri, whose name means probably something like either “My Light” or “Light of Yehovah.” The name of Uri’s father is Hur which means “White.” This is Hur who was already seen in Exodus 17 along with Moses and Aaron atop the hill during the battle with Amalek. He was also mentioned in Exodus 24 as being left in charge of the camp, along with Aaron, when Moses ascended the mountain to receive this law.

Although not in the Bible, Josephus says that Hur was the husband of Miriam and thus Bezalel would then be the son of Moses’ nephew. If so, then the Lord is keeping the authority of the camp and the making of the sacred implements very close in regards to relationship with Moses.

This Bezalel is considered so important to the artistic work of the sanctuary, that he is mentioned first by Moses in the calling of the people to their tasks in Exodus

35 & 36, but he is even mentioned alone as some of the separate portions of the work are accomplished in Exodus 37.

Bezalel, and his contribution to Jewish culture is regarded in such high honor, even to this day, that Israel's national school of art is named after him. It is the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design which was established in 1906, making it the oldest institution of higher education in Israel. It is located at the Mount Scopus campus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

In the personal naming of Bezalel as the chief builder, all grounds for any type of discontent or jealousy would be removed. Nobody could feel that they had been overlooked despite the merits they possessed. And with the amount of labor to be done, it is certain that anyone with suitable ability would have plenty of opportunity to show his skills under the authority of Bezalel.

² (con't) **of the tribe of Judah.**

l'matteh yehuda. *Matteh* means a rod or staff. It was first used in the Bible in Genesis 38 when Tamar asked for Judah's staff as a pledge of future payment for services rendered. There it said –

So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"

¹⁷ And he said, "I will send a young goat from the flock."

So she said, "Will you give *me* a pledge till you send *it*?"

¹⁸ Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?"

So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your **staff** that *is* in your hand." Then he gave *them* to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹ So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood. Genesis 38:16-19

After that, it became a very common word in Exodus as Moses' *matteh*, or staff, was used to work the many miracles *for* the Lord and *against* Pharaoh leading up to and including the time of the Exodus. However, this is the first time the word *matteh* is used of a tribe rather than a physical rod.

To understand the connection, a staff is something used for chastening and correction, as a symbol of rule, and as something one would lean on for support. Therefore, the staff of Judah symbolizes those things in the tribe which issue from him. He is their support, their line of rule, and their authority for chastening as well. Therefore, his staff symbolizes the tribe of people who descend from him.

The staff is even figuratively used as the support of life itself, and thus it is used to speak of bread. Hence we get the basis of the expression, "Bread is the staff of life." As you read through the Bible, think on how this word is used in relation to both the tribe of Judah and the One who descended from Judah, but from whom Judah originally came – Christ the Lord.

Bezalel is specifically, the seventh from Judah. In line, his genealogy reads Bezalel, Uri, Hur, Caleb, Hezron, Perez, Judah.

³ And I have filled him with the Spirit of God,

The term *male* or "fill" was used in the directions for the consecration of Aaron and his sons. The term was specifically "fill the hand." It meant that they would be set apart as acceptable concerning the offerings which filled their hands *from* the people and *to* the Lord. Thus, the term "fill the hand" indicated their acceptability and hence their consecration.

Now the term is used again concerning Bezalel - *va'amale otow ruakh elohim*. He is said to be *filled* with the *ruakh elohim* or "Spirit of God." This means that his

work will be acceptable concerning the things which are required for him to accomplish.

A question arises concerning this verse as to whether this was a direct infusion of the Spirit of God, or if it was simply who he was as a person, created by God. It is more sensational to speculate that he was especially infused with the Spirit, but that has to be read into this as much as the opposite view.

Looking at it as an external filling also gives those who lean to the charismatic side a chance to claim they also are somehow externally filled with the Spirit of God. But when Paul instructs believers to be “filled” with the Holy Spirit, the word is passive, not active.

It is God who fills, not us. So how can we be “filled” with the Holy Spirit? The answer is, “By yielding ourselves to God.” Bezalel, and indeed all who are filled with the Spirit are filled by God as they yield to Him. Therefore, it is more than probable that the gifts which Bezalel possessed were used in this way. As James says –

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”
James 1:17

Like Bezalel, we all have gifts which are unique. Our makeup, and indeed all things, originally stem from God. He has filled us all with wisdom according to His purposes. What we do with it will either glorify Him or not, but the intelligence and wisdom we have certainly came from Him.

If He supplemented Bezalel directly through external inspiration, that was His prerogative to do so, but if He simply chose him, knowing that his makeup was

such that he could accomplish all these tasks, it doesn't diminish His hand in the process at all.

Bezalel was a son of Adam who was created by God, just as we all are. He submitted to God's will in order to accomplish the tasks set before him. We too have the ability to perform wonderful things. When those things are done to glorify the Lord, they find a true purpose that is lacking in any other such endeavors.

³ (con't) **in wisdom,**

The word is *khokmah* and it was first seen in Exodus 28:3 –

“So you shall speak to all *who are* gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of **wisdom**, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.” Exodus 28:3

The word signifies wisdom in a good sense. It is a common word, but it is used a great deal in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. It refers to understanding which is rightly applied in a wise, prudent, or beneficial way.

³ (con't) **in understanding,**

The word is *tebunah*. It indicates discretion, reason, skillfulness, understanding, and wisdom. Again, it is mostly used in Proverbs and it indicates an ability to comprehend. A man may read a sentence and understand its surface meaning, but he may not comprehend the deeper meaning that goes along with it, such as in a pun or an idiom. There were a bunch of pillows at the store. I got one, but my wife got the rest.

3 (con't) in knowledge,

The word is *daath*. It was first seen in Genesis 2:9 when speaking of the tree of the **knowledge** of good and evil. It indicates knowledge in the general sense. One is either aware of something or they are not. If they are, then they can use that for understanding or even in wisdom. In this we can think of empirical, experimental, or experiential knowledge.

3 (con't) and in all *manner of workmanship*,

The word is *melakah*. It is the same as the word *malak*, or angel. It thus signifies employment in a task or job, but never in a servile way. Rather it would be in an industry or occupation. Just as an angel or a messenger has his duty to carry out, this indicates the ability to accomplish the task at hand by employing the knowledge, understanding, and wisdom one possesses.

In these aspects of workmanship, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, we again see Bezalel as a type of Christ who possesses the Holy Spirit without measure, and “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3).

4 to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze,

The first category is *lakhshov makhshavot*. The words come from the same root and carry the idea of considering or contemplating. In other words, it could be paraphrased, “to think-out thoughts,” “to prepare proportions,” “to devise devices,” (YLT), “to create constructions,” “to sculpt schemes,” shall I go on? “to wisely work works,” “to fashion forms,” etc. Thus, “to design artistic works” fits the description well.

These would be those things which needed to be shaped according to the instructions of Moses based on the patterns he was given. These would be in the metals for which each was specified. The gold for those which were to be gold, the silver for those designated as silver, and the bronze for those called to be bronze.

John Gill says that “it is not to be supposed there were either goldsmiths or brasiers among the Israelites; only masons and bricklayers, and brickmakers, and such sort of manufacturers.” That is an assumption based on no facts at all.

Just because the people were noted as brick makers in the early Exodus account doesn't mean that all of them were such. Nor does it mean that people didn't do other jobs on their own time. And it also is known that a vast multitude of others came out with Israel. As they had met the requirements of Exodus 12:48, they were now included in the collective people of Israel. The Lord has already said in chapter 28 that people with such skills were, in fact, available for these tasks.

⁵ in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship.

The word for both cutting and carving is the same. It is *kharosheth*. In this noun form, it is only found four times, here and twice again in Exodus 35:33. It indicates mechanical work such as carved or cut. Despite being a noun, almost all translators make it a verb.

Several commentators note that instead of carving wood it should instead read “cutting.” The Pulpit Commentary says, “The word is the same as that used of the stones. And no ornamental ‘carving’ of the woodwork was prescribed.”

This may not be correct. Unless the horns of the altars were very basic in form, there was carving to be done on them. Also, there is no reason to assume that the actual pattern Moses was shown didn't include other carved details as well. It very well may be that all of the wood was cut only, but that cannot be known for sure.

*In the shadow of God, I find my rest
There under His wings all of my troubles cease
I am safe and secure, no longer oppressed
I have found safe refuge and a place of peace*

*Here I will stay, I have found my home
Under His wings, where all my troubles cease
Never from this safety will I roam
Here in this place I have found my peace*

*Thank You, O God for Christ my rest
Because of Him, all troubles now cease
In this home, I am more than just a temporary guest
Here in this home and as a son, I have found eternal peace*

II. Aholiab (verses 6-11)

⁶“And I, indeed I, have appointed with him Aholiab the son of Ahisamach,

By name, the Lord chose a second person to perform the necessary tasks required for the overall job. His name is Aholiab. The name comes from *av*, which means “father,” and *ohel*, which means “tent.” Therefore, the name means “Father’s Tent.” The word *ohel* is used to describe the “Tent of Meeting” which has been noted time and time again in these last chapters.

It is not a coincidence that the names of Bezalel and Aholiab are so similar in meaning. Bezalel means “In the Shadow of God” and Aholiab means “Father’s Tent.” When considering Christ, the two come more clearly into focus.

However, the name Aholiab has a second meaning. The word *ahal* is used once in the Bible, in Job 25:5. It means “to shine.” Thus the secondary meaning of his name is “Father’s Shine.” Considering that the name of Bezalel’s father is Uri, or “My Light,” we have either an amazing coincidence, or we are being shown a picture because both speak of the Father’s radiance. This Aholiab is the son of Akhisamakh. His name means “My Brother has Supported.”

^{6 (con’t)} of the tribe of Dan;

It is of note that this person is of the tribe of Dan as was the main artificer for the Temple of Solomon. We see this in 2 Ch 2:13, 14 –

“And now I have sent a skillful man, endowed with understanding, Hiram my master *craftsman* ¹⁴ (the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and

his father was a man of Tyre), skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood, purple and blue, fine linen and crimson, and to make any engraving and to accomplish any plan which may be given to him, with your skillful men and with the skillful men of my lord David your father.”

⁶ (con't) **and I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the gifted artisans,**

The Hebrew literally reads, “...in the hearts of all of the wise hearted I have put wisdom.” Again, it appears that the wisdom they possess was already possessed by them. It was there because God designed it to be there when He designed them. This fits perfectly with the idea brought out in the words of the Lord to Jeremiah –

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you;
Before you were born I sanctified you;
I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5

There is no need to assume that this wisdom came at the time of their appointment in the stream of time, but rather, it was a wisdom that they possessed at the time of their appointment by God in His eternal mind and which was given to them at birth.

⁶ (con't) **that they may make all that I have commanded you:**

All of the people, those named and those who are unnamed, are filled with the wisdom necessary to accomplish all of the tasks that the Lord has laid down for Moses to fulfill.

⁷ the tabernacle of meeting, the ark of the Testimony and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furniture of the tabernacle—

Although the details for the Ark were given first, the tent (not the tabernacle!) is mentioned first here. The word for “tent” is *ohel*, and it is the same word as the root of the name Aholiab. It is, again, not a coincidence that he was introduced in the verse preceding this one. A stress is being laid on the word *tent* for us to consider. Only after the tent is named is the Ark with its Mercy Seat detailed. These are found in the Most Holy Place. From there “all the furniture of the tent” is next named...

⁸ the table and its utensils, the pure *gold* lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense,

These are the three implements found in the Holy Place, east of the veil. The Table of Showbread was on the north of the room. The Menorah was opposite it on the south. And the Altar of Incense was to be further west, before the veil.

The word used to describe the lampstand is *tahor*. It means “pure,” and it is the same adjective used to describe the gold of the Ark, Mercy Seat, etc. However, only this item is called *tahor* in this list, not the others. Therefore, it is probably not speaking of the gold used in its making, but rather it is being used to describe its function. It is resplendent brightness.

⁹ the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base—

These are the two bronze items which were located in the courtyard. The altar was furthest east by the entrance, and the laver was further west, closer to the tent itself.

¹⁰ the garments of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests,

Two most enigmatic words are introduced here – *bigde ha'serad*, translated as “the garments of ministry.” The NKJV brushes over them by ignoring the next word which is “and.” In other words, it reads, “...the garments of ministry, **and** the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons...”

By ignoring the “and” it makes it look like the second clause is simply explaining the first, but it isn't. These *bigde ha'serad* are only mentioned four times, and all in this same context. One possibility is that the term is speaking first of Aaron's garments alone. It is then followed by an explanation of the garments which belonged to him and his sons alike. This really doesn't explain the “and” between the clauses though.

Another explanation is that they are the coverings which will be placed over the sacred things when they are transported from place to place. Those are described in Numbers 4. This is very likely because they are described with the same word, *beqed*. Just because they have not yet been detailed, doesn't mean that they cannot be noted now. On several occasions, we have already seen other things mentioned in advance of their details. For this reason, I would personally go with this explanation.

¹¹ and the anointing oil and sweet incense for the holy *place*.

The last two items mentioned before this chapter are noted now, and in the same order. If you remember, every detail of everything we have seen in all of these past 20 sermons concerning these implements has pictured Christ. The number probably reaches above a thousand. All of this is now instructed to be made...

***11 (fin) According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.”**

Moses' notebook is full of notes. He has been given extremely detailed instructions, and they have followed amazing patterns of intricacy and design. The wisdom behind the words is reflective of the wisdom of God in Christ. Receiving and then analyzing these instructions of the past chapters which were given to Moses has personally been one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

*I will dwell with the Lord for all eternity
Here in His tent I have found my home
At peace and at rest by the glassy sea
Never shall I from this marvelous spot roam*

*In the tent of my Father, no cares can be found
I am at peace in this spot, dwelling in His glory
Listening to the marvelous, beautiful sound
Of the eternally unfolding, matchless story*

*In my Father's tent all troubles have ceased
I am at peace in this place Christ prepared for me
And with the redeemed, from the greatest to the least
Here we will dwell for all eternity*

III. Pictures of Christ

As soon as the introduction was made, the Lord noted that He had called Bezalel. His name means, "In the Shadow of God." Thus it is the place of closeness, fellowship, and protection. This is seen for example in Psalm 63:7 –

"Because You have been my help,
Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice." Psalm 63:7

The shadow of the wings indicates being right up against the body of the bird, covered by it, and protected by it. That, in turn, describes Jesus who is described in the same close relation to God the Father –

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. John 1:18

There He rests in the shadow, or close relation to His Father. Bezalel is next said to be the Son of Uri. Uri, as noted, means either "My Light" or "Light of Jehovah." In this context, they both have the same end signification – that of Jesus, the Light of the world. The same wording of the name Uri, or "My Light," is used by David when speaking of the Lord in the 27th Psalm –

"The Lord *is my light (ori)* and my salvation;
Whom shall I fear?" Psalm 27:1

After naming Uri, his father Hur is then named. The name means "White." In Exodus 17, he pictured Christ the King. The same picture is given again. Each name is intended to show us Christ. He is the King, He is the Light, and He is the One who is in the bosom of the Father.

Finally, it is said that he is from the “staff” or “tribe” of Judah. The line was specifically selected to show us types of Christ who likewise descended from this royal tribe of Judah. Judah means “Praise.” This again shows us Christ, the One who brings God praise through His work. This is made explicit in Hebrews 2 –

“For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,¹² saying:

‘I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’” Hebrews 2:11, 12

Next, Bezalel was said to be filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship. Isaiah could not have made a more perfect match of this to the coming Christ –

“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
²The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” Isaiah 11:1, 2

Paul follows up with a similar, but shorter description of Christ in the New Testament –

“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom;²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness,²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:22-24

This workmanship that Bezalel was endowed with was in order to build the Lord's sanctuary; His dwelling place; His temple. This is an exact type of Christ who likewise is the One to build the Lord's temple. This is noted in both testaments, such as in Zechariah 6 –

“Behold, the Man whose name *is* the BRANCH!
From His place He shall branch out,
And He shall build the temple of the Lord.” Zechariah 6:12

It is also seen in Ephesians 2 –

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:21

In these verses, Bezalel, or “In the Shadow of God,” of the tribe of Judah – all picturing Jesus - is called by name to show us a most fitting picture of the coming Christ. After this, the many materials were noted, each as we have seen in previous sermons picture Christ. The gold, His deity; His divine glory -

“And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” John 17:5

The silver, His work of redemption –

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Galatians 4:4, 5

The bronze, His judgment. First of judgment *on* sin –

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:20, 21

And also of His judgement *of* sin –

“I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:” 2 Timothy 4:1

The stones to be cut, as we saw, signify the mediatorial role of Christ. They were to be on the shoulders and on the breastplate of the high priest. The true stone is Christ mentioned throughout Scripture as the stone rejected by men, but chosen by God, and precious. We are thus lesser stones, supported by Him through His role as our Mediator to God.

In all, five specific materials were mentioned here – gold, silver, bronze, stones, and wood. Five is the number of grace. It thus signifies the grace of God in the building of the temple, prefigured by the artificer Bezalel.

After this, Aholiab was introduced. His name means “Father’s Tent.” This is speaking of the incarnation of Christ as is seen in the words of John –

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt (tented) among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

However, the name also has a secondary meaning of “Father’s Shine.” Thus it signifies the glory of the Father. He again is a type of Christ. The glory of the Father is revealed in the glory of the Son. This is seen in the book of Hebrews where it speaks of Christ in relation to the Father –

“...who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person...” Hebrews 1:3

As I said earlier, the two names, Bezalel and Aholiab, are both connected in two specific ways. The first is that Bezalel means “In the Shadow of God” and Aholiab means “Father’s Tent.” They are showing us a picture that Christ is the one who resides in the Godhead with the Father.

But even more both names are connected directly to the radiance of the Father. Bezalel’s father is Uri or “My Light,” and Aholiab has the secondary meaning of “Father’s Shine.” Both names are given to show us that the glory of God the Father shines or radiates out in the Light of Christ. This can be no mistake.

Aholiab was next noted as the son of Ahisamach, meaning “My Brother has Supported.” This reflects the words of Hebrews 2 –

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” Hebrews 2:17, 18

Notice that the name of the Ahisamach's father isn't given. Instead of three generations like Bezalel, only two are given here. This shows us that the Lord uses names only when they will make a type of Christ for us to see.

Aholiab is said to be from Dan. Dan means "Judge." The sanctuary being built isn't just a place of praising God as the name Judah implies. It is also a place of Judgment as the name Dan implies. Both purposes are seen in the selection of these two men.

Further, the two tribes are not without another important meaning. When the tribes broke down and moved from place to place, they always broke down in a specific order. Judah always travelled first, Dan always travelled last. This is seen in Numbers 10 –

"The standard of the camp of the children of Judah set out first..." Numbers 10:14

"Then the standard of the camp of the children of Dan (the rear guard of all the camps) set out according to their armies..." Numbers 10:25

The two men from the two tribes shows the totality of the work of Christ – from beginning to end and everything in between. All of God's people are included in the work Bezalel and Aholiab, and all of God's people are included in the grouping of Judah to Dan. None are missing. The two sets represent the whole. In Christ, praise forever goes first, because judgment forever goes behind.

After the naming of Aholiab, the words "that they may make all that I have commanded you" are given. This is followed up with a list of all of the implements for the tent and outside of the tent. Each of these has been described in detail and each, if you remember, pictured Christ minutely. Following the naming of

those things a second admonition is given, "According to all that I have commanded you they shall do."

These two men, picturing Christ and His work in such specific detail, were to do everything according to the word of the Lord. This is perfectly reflected in Jesus' words –

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." John 6:38

Christ performed the task set before Him, according to all that He was given to do. And He did it perfectly. As I said at the beginning of the sermon, we have been given tasks as well. Or we have the opportunity to assume tasks that need to be done. When we go about these things, let us say, "Not my will, Lord Jesus, but Thy will be done."

Let us allow the Lord to use us up now so that He can lavish wonderful rewards upon us in the future. Let us do this to the glory of God and in the spirit of honoring the greater work already accomplished through the giving of His Son for us. And lastly, if you have never taken the step of receiving Christ Jesus, you really need to get that done now. Eternity is forever and we will all spend it somewhere. In Christ, it is a very good end; without Him, not so much. Let me tell you what you need to know...

Closing Verse: "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6

Next Week: Exodus 31:12-18 *It is for the end of the week's path...* (The Law of the Sabbath) (88th Exodus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Bezalel and Aholiab

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words that He was relaying

“See, I have called by name
Bezalel the son of Uri
The son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah
Yes, he has been called by name by Me

And I have filled him with the Spirit of God
In wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge too
And in all manner of workmanship
There are many things for Me he shall do

To design artistic works
To work in gold, in silver, in bronze also
In cutting jewels for setting
In carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship –
It is so

And I, indeed I, have appointed with him
Aholiab the son of Ahisamach; of the tribe of Dan
And I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the gifted artisans
Special wisdom according to each man

That they may make all that I have commanded you
The tabernacle of meeting, so shall it be
The ark of the Testimony
And the mercy seat that is on it, as directed by Me

And all the furniture of the tabernacle—
The table and its utensils, all of these
The pure gold lampstand with all its utensils,
The altar of incense, for a sweet burning aroma, Me to please

The altar of burnt offering with all its utensils
And the laver and its base, as you know
The garments of ministry
The holy garments for Aaron the priest, let it be so

And the garments of his sons
To minister as priests, yes before My face
And the anointing oil
And sweet incense for the holy place

According to all that I have commanded you

These are the things they shall do

Thank You, Lord for the wonderful detail we see

Every word is precious for us to ponder

And all of it points to Jesus ever so marvelously

Thank You for sharing with us such splendid wonder

Hear our thanks as we praise you for all of our days

Forever and ever we shall sing to You with joyous praise

Hallelujah and Amen...