

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

Read **Exodus 36:1-7** – Israel’s Generosity

**v.1** “AND BEZALEL AND AHOLIAB, AND EVERY GIFTED ARTISAN IN WHOM THE **LORD** HAS PUT WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING, TO KNOW HOW TO DO ALL MANNER OF WORK FOR THE SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY, SHALL DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THE **LORD** HAS COMMANDED.”

Mr. Clarke contends that this should have been verse 36 in chapter 35, I tend to agree as it relates more to that subject matter. It simply states that those men God had chosen and prepared to do His work on the tabernacle would do all that God had commanded.

**v.2** “THEN MOSES CALLED BEZALEL AND AHOLIAB, AND EVERY GIFTED ARTISAN IN WHOSE HEART THE **LORD** HAD PUT WISDOM, EVERYONE WHOSE HEART WAS STIRRED, TO COME AND DO THE WORK.”

Now Moses calls the artisans that are to do the work to him to receive the material that Israel has accumulated for the work.

**v.3** “AND THEY RECEIVED FROM MOSES ALL THE OFFERING WHICH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HAD BROUGHT FOR THE WORK OF THE SERVICE OF MAKING THE SANCTUARY. SO THEY CONTINUED BRINGING TO HIM FREEWILL OFFERINGS EVERY MORNING.”

Moses then turns all of the materials offered by the Israelite people to them so that they can get the work started that God requires. We note that the people are still bringing freewill offerings to Moses every morning. Gathering this material surely took some time because of the number of people that made up the Israelite nation.

**v.4** “THEN ALL THE CRAFTSMEN WHO WERE DOING ALL THE WORK OF THE SANCTUARY CAME, EACH FROM THE WORK HE WAS DOING,”

The artisans or craftsmen, now come to Moses with a problem. The kind of problem that most elders in the Lord’s church would love to have. Their coffer are overflowing.

**v.5** “AND THEY SPOKE TO MOSES, SAYING, “THE PEOPLE BRING MUCH MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR THE SERVICE OF THE WORK WHICH THE **LORD** COMMANDED **us** TO DO.”

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

They have “MUCH MORE THAN ENOUGH” for the work that God requires. This seems typical when God’s people are doing God’s work as he has commanded and the generosity of God’s people when they see and understand a need. When Joash sought to repair the temple and restore the proper worship to God he had the same situation:

**II Chronicles 24:11** “SO IT WAS, AT THAT TIME, WHEN THE CHEST WAS BROUGHT TO THE KING’S OFFICIAL BY THE HAND OF THE LEVITES, AND WHEN THEY SAW THAT **there was** MUCH MONEY, THAT THE KING’S SCRIBE AND THE HIGH PRIEST’S OFFICER CAME AND EMPTIED THE CHEST, AND TOOK IT AND RETURNED IT TO ITS PLACE. THUS THEY DID DAY BY DAY, AND GATHERED MONEY IN ABUNDANCE.”

And then when Hezekiah, one of the good kings if Judah, conducted the Old Testament Restoration Movement and restored the proper temple worship, daily sacrifices, and the statutes of the Mosaic Covenant the same thing happened.

**II Chronicles 31:10** “AND AZARIAH THE CHIEF PRIEST, FROM THE HOUSE OF ZADOK, ANSWERED HIM AND SAID, “SINCE **the people** BEGAN TO BRING THE OFFERINGS INTO THE HOUSE OF THE **LORD**, WE HAVE HAD ENOUGH TO EAT AND HAVE PLENTY LEFT, FOR THE **LORD** HAS BLESSED HIS PEOPLE; AND WHAT IS LEFT **is** THIS GREAT ABUNDANCE.”

**v.6-7** “SO MOSES GAVE A COMMANDMENT, AND THEY CAUSED IT TO BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE CAMP, SAYING, “LET NEITHER MAN NOR WOMAN DO ANY MORE WORK FOR THE OFFERING OF THE SANCTUARY.” AND THE PEOPLE WERE RESTRAINED FROM BRINGING, FOR THE MATERIAL THEY HAD WAS SUFFICIENT FOR ALL THE WORK TO BE DONE—INDEED TOO MUCH.”

Not only do we see the generosity of the people of Israel at this time and at the times when the Levitical worship was restored but at the dedication of the temple special arrangements had to be made by Solomon for the sacrifices:

**I Kings 8:64** “ON THE SAME DAY THE KING CONSECRATED THE MIDDLE OF THE COURT THAT **was** IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE OF THE **LORD**; FOR THERE HE OFFERED BURNT OFFERINGS, GRAIN OFFERINGS, AND THE FAT OF THE PEACE OFFERINGS, BECAUSE THE BRONZE ALTAR THAT **was** BEFORE THE LORD **was** TOO SMALL TO RECEIVE THE BURNT OFFERINGS, THE GRAIN OFFERINGS, AND THE FAT OF THE PEACE OFFERINGS.”

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

Read **Exodus 36:8-19** – The Tabernacle Coverings

**v.8** “THEN ALL THE GIFTED ARTISANS AMONG THEM WHO WORKED ON THE TABERNACLE MADE TEN CURTAINS WOVEN OF FINE LINEN, AND OF BLUE, PURPLE, AND SCARLET **thread; with** ARTISTIC DESIGNS OF CHERUBIM THEY MADE THEM.”

These are the curtains that make up the covering for the tabernacle itself. Remember; the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place were considered the tabernacle by God and the rest of the structure the tent that covered it. The tabernacle was to be the dwelling place of God among his chosen nation. In the artists rendition of this structure this is the inter-most covering, the first layer of four and the only one with given to much decoration.

**v.9** “THE LENGTH OF EACH CURTAIN **was** TWENTY-EIGHT CUBITS, AND THE WIDTH OF EACH CURTAIN FOUR CUBITS; THE CURTAINS **were** ALL THE SAME SIZE.”

As we studied in chapter 26, using the 18 inch cubit given by most Bible dictionaries and reference material, we have a curtain that is 6 feet wide and forty two feet long.

**v.10** “AND HE COUPLED FIVE CURTAINS TO ONE ANOTHER, AND THE OTHER FIVE CURTAINS HE COUPLED TO ONE ANOTHER.”

Now we have a covering that is 60 feet wide and 42 feet long. Or vice versa 60 feet long and 42 feet wide depending on which way you turn it.

**v.11** “HE MADE LOOPS OF BLUE **yarn** ON THE EDGE OF THE CURTAIN ON THE SELVEDGE OF ONE SET; LIKEWISE HE DID ON THE OUTER EDGE OF **the other** CURTAIN OF THE SECOND SET.”

The loops are to hold the two larger panels together as they cover the house of God. Also note that it has a selvedge, a reinforcement on that edge to add strength much like we see on the collar of a t-shirt or other garment today.

**v.12** “FIFTY LOOPS HE MADE ON ONE CURTAIN, AND FIFTY LOOPS HE MADE ON THE EDGE OF THE CURTAIN ON THE END OF THE SECOND SET; THE LOOPS HELD ONE **curtain** TO ANOTHER.”

**v.13** “AND HE MADE FIFTY CLASPS OF GOLD, AND COUPLED THE CURTAINS TO ONE ANOTHER WITH THE CLASPS, THAT IT MIGHT BE ONE TABERNACLE.”

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

The clasps of gold were to be used to “tie” the six foot sections of curtain together.

**v.14** “HE MADE CURTAINS OF GOATS’ *hair* FOR THE TENT OVER THE TABERNACLE; HE MADE ELEVEN CURTAINS.”

The goat’s hair covering was the next layer and the first layer of the tent over the tabernacle.

**v.15** “THE LENGTH OF EACH CURTAIN *was* THIRTY CUBITS, AND THE WIDTH OF EACH CURTAIN FOUR CUBITS; THE ELEVEN CURTAINS *were* THE SAME SIZE.”

Being the covering for the tabernacle these curtains needed to be somewhat bigger than the first layer so the dimensions are a little larger. Using the 18 inch cubit; while the tabernacle covering was 60 feet wide by 42 feet long the goat hair covering is 66 feet wide by 45 feet long. In the picture we see that it hangs below the edge of the tabernacle curtain.

**v.16** “HE COUPLED FIVE CURTAINS BY THEMSELVES AND SIX CURTAINS BY THEMSELVES.”

This was apparently done so that these coverings could be rolled up and transported without taking the individual six foot panels apart. With an odd number of curtains the major panels of this layer of covering, of necessity, would not be the same size. However, it really doesn’t matter as it would not be visible after the tent is erected.

**v.17-18** “AND HE MADE FIFTY LOOPS ON THE EDGE OF THE CURTAIN THAT IS OUTERMOST IN ONE SET, AND FIFTY LOOPS HE MADE ON THE EDGE OF THE CURTAIN OF THE SECOND SET. HE ALSO MADE FIFTY BRONZE CLASPS TO COUPLE THE TENT TOGETHER, THAT IT MIGHT BE ONE.”

They are fastened together just as the tabernacle covering but with bronze or brass clasps instead of gold.

**v.19** “THEN HE MADE A COVERING FOR THE TENT OF RAM SKINS DYED RED, AND A COVERING OF BADGER SKINS ABOVE *that*.”

Just as the picture shows, the top two layers of the tent were red ram skins and then the top covering, the badger skins.

## **Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six**

Read **Exodus 36:20-34** – The Tabernacle Structure

**v.20-21** “FOR THE TABERNACLE HE MADE BOARDS OF ACACIA WOOD, STANDING UPRIGHT. THE LENGTH OF EACH BOARD *was* TEN CUBITS, AND THE WIDTH OF EACH BOARD A CUBIT AND A HALF.”

The boards that made up the structure of the ten were 18 feet long and 27 inches wide. When we stop to think; it would take a tree 30-36 inches in diameter to yield more than one or two boards this wide and a log that was at least 18 feet long. This is some heavy timber in a region that we think of as being basically a desert area. Then again we reflect that God can provide whatever is required to accomplish His purposes.

We covered God’s instructions in detail in our study of **Exodus 26** so we won’t spend a lot of time here. But we can readily see that the tabernacle wall and thus the interior elevations were at least 18 feet tall.

**v.22-23** “EACH BOARD HAD TWO TENONS FOR BINDING ONE TO ANOTHER. THUS HE MADE FOR ALL THE BOARDS OF THE TABERNACLE. AND HE MADE BOARDS FOR THE TABERNACLE, TWENTY BOARDS FOR THE SOUTH SIDE.”

What did we say a tenon was? A method of interlocking two pieces of timber or wood or in this case a piece of timber and a metal socket designed to receive it. The only place I’ve seen them in my lifetime was in a piece of furniture.

Twenty boards for the south side. We’re not told how thick these boards were but were sturdy enough to have tenon’s and still remain structurally sound. As I thought about these pillars, I’m amazed at the size of the trees and the labor that would be required just to cut, transport and work timber of this size.

**v.24** “FORTY SOCKETS OF SILVER HE MADE TO GO UNDER THE TWENTY BOARDS: TWO SOCKETS UNDER EACH OF THE BOARDS FOR ITS TWO TENONS.”

Forty sockets of silver, made to accept the tenons, each board having two tenons.

**v.25-26** “AND FOR THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TABERNACLE, THE NORTH SIDE, HE MADE TWENTY BOARDS AND THEIR FORTY SOCKETS OF SILVER: TWO SOCKETS UNDER EACH OF THE BOARDS.”

**v.27-28** “FOR THE WEST SIDE OF THE TABERNACLE HE MADE SIX BOARDS. HE ALSO MADE TWO BOARDS FOR THE TWO BACK CORNERS OF THE TABERNACLE.”

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

The west side we would probably call the west end. It would be closed in completely as the entrance faced east. The scripture isn't clear but for practical purposes I think that each corner had two boards that were fastened together to make a structural corner. The next two verses imply this arrangement.

**v.29** "AND THEY WERE COUPLED AT THE BOTTOM AND COUPLED TOGETHER AT THE TOP BY ONE RING. THUS HE MADE BOTH OF THEM FOR THE TWO CORNERS."

So these boards were "COUPLED" or "DOUBLED" (ASV) together and bound by rings.

**v.30** "SO THERE WERE EIGHT BOARDS AND THEIR SOCKETS—SIXTEEN SOCKETS OF SILVER—TWO SOCKETS UNDER EACH OF THE BOARDS."

Eight boards and sixteen sockets made up the west wall or back of the tabernacle tent.

**v.31-32** "AND HE MADE BARS OF ACACIA WOOD: FIVE FOR THE BOARDS ON ONE SIDE OF THE TABERNACLE, FIVE BARS FOR THE BOARDS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TABERNACLE, AND FIVE BARS FOR THE BOARDS OF THE TABERNACLE ON THE FAR SIDE WESTWARD."

While the boards were the vertical structural pieces of the tent, the bars were designed to be installed in a horizontal position to provide structural strength and in fact hold up the vertical boards. This reminds me of the 20 man tents we lived and worked in when deployed with the Air Guard. The two tent center poles were provided structural integrity by a 4 x4 inch ridge pole that ran between them and was fastened by metal straps.

**v.33** "AND HE MADE THE MIDDLE BAR TO PASS THROUGH THE BOARDS FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER."

Again to add strength to the structure, the middle bar of the five actually passed through each of the 27 inch side boards of the tent.

**v.34** "HE OVERLAID THE BOARDS WITH GOLD, MADE THEIR RINGS OF GOLD *to be* HOLDERS FOR THE BARS, AND OVERLAID THE BARS WITH GOLD."

All of the wood, the boards, and the bars were overlaid with gold. They probably used gold leaf as these boards would become very heavy, very quickly with gold on them that was very thick.

## Exodus Chapter Thirty-Six

Read **Exodus 36:35-38** – The Tabernacle Veil and Hanging

**v.35** “AND HE MADE A VEIL OF BLUE, PURPLE, AND SCARLET *thread*, AND FINE WOVEN LINEN; IT WAS WORKED *with* AN ARTISTIC DESIGN OF CHERUBIM.”

This is the inner veil of the tabernacle, the one between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. When we go back to verse eight we see that the “CHERUBIM” were also worked into the covering for the inter sanctuary or the tabernacle itself. Now we see that the inner veil carries the same artistic designs.

**v.36** “HE MADE FOR IT FOUR PILLARS OF ACACIA *wood*, AND OVERLAID THEM WITH GOLD, WITH THEIR HOOKS OF GOLD; AND HE CAST FOUR SOCKETS OF SILVER FOR THEM.”

Now attention is turned to the structure of the east end of the tabernacle and the entrance to the Holy Place. Its construction consisted of four pillars set in sockets of silver with hooks of gold to hold the veil.

**v.37** “HE ALSO MADE A SCREEN FOR THE TABERNACLE DOOR, OF BLUE, PURPLE, AND SCARLET *thread*, AND FINE WOVEN LINEN, MADE BY A WEAVER,”

Apparently the entrance to the tabernacle was covered by what is called a screen rather than a curtain or veil. It had the same colors as the veil and the tabernacle covering but did not require the artistic work found in the others. The artist’s rendition that we have been using, however, shows the same designs as the interior of the tabernacle.

**v.38** “AND ITS FIVE PILLARS WITH THEIR HOOKS. AND HE OVERLAID THEIR CAPITALS AND THEIR RINGS WITH GOLD, BUT THEIR FIVE SOCKETS *were* BRONZE.”

Gold continues to be used here for hooks, rings and the overlay on the wood but the sockets here are bronze or brass rather than silver.