

## Giftings

*11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ—Ephesians 4:11-12*

In our study for today, we find Moses at the top of Mount Sinai hearing the Lord's commands for the children of Israel. Exodus 24:16-18 tells us, "<sup>16</sup> Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. <sup>17</sup> The sight of the glory of the Lord *was* like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. <sup>18</sup> So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights."

I am amazed that Moses was able to write down all that the Lord had given him for the children of Israel in forty days and forty nights, and that work has lived on for thousands of years. It took me 5 years to build curriculum for 3 grade levels, 150 teachers and 11,000 students with the help of my team and other teachers. At the end of those 5 years, I was tired and burnt out, and those 5 years of hard work was about to be revamped before I left. Although I had the skill to do the work, ultimately it was not where the Lord wanted me to be.

The Lord's plans are always greater than our own, but sometimes we are short-sighted because we don't have the Lord's perspective in mind. Before we get to our verses in Chapter 31, we first must see the Lord's preparation for the where and how he wanted to be worshipped. Exodus 25:1-9 says,

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. 3 And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; 4 blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; 5 ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; 6 oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; 7 onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

Here we see the Lord is laying the groundwork for the instructions that He will be giving to Moses for the Tabernacle. He begins with the offerings to collect the materials to prepare the people for building what would become the worship center of their community. The Lord opens the door for the children of Israel to freely offer up the 14 components and materials needed for the work. In Exodus 35, we will see how the people responded with so much enthusiasm that they had to be stopped. We will discuss the Tabernacle in more detail in our study on May 20<sup>th</sup> so this is just a preview.

### **The Lord's Plan for the Tabernacle**

Exodus 25 through 30 discuss the Lord's plan for the Tabernacle. The Lord gives Moses plans that are organized, detailed, and specific. He did not leave anything to chance or man's creativity. The Lord knew exactly what He wanted, the way He wanted it, and who He wanted to do the work. Sometimes, when we plan things, we do things in a haphazard way. When I start a project for my house, sometimes I start with an idea, but then it never goes anywhere. Sometimes, I start with some of the materials, and complete that stage, but then it takes years for the project to be completed because other things get in the way. But when it's something that the Lord wants me to do, the plans come quickly, sometimes so quickly that I can hardly keep up with writing them down. Then, I start the plan, but the Lord provides everything. It's almost effortless but it is always amazing. The Lord gives Moses His plans in forty days and forty nights. These are the things that the Lord specifically asks for:

- The Ark of the Testimony—Exodus 25:10-22
- The Table for the Showbread—Exodus 25:23-30
- The Gold Lampstand—Exodus 25:31-40
- The Tabernacle—Exodus 26:1-36
- The Altar of Burnt Offering—Exodus 27:1-8
- The Court of the Tabernacle—Exodus 27:9-19
- The Care of the Lampstand—Exodus 27:20-21
- Garments for the Priesthood—Exodus 28:1-4
- The Ephod—Exodus 28:5-13
- The Breastplate—Exodus 28:15-29
- Priestly Garments—Exodus 28:31-40

- Consecrating Aaron and his sons for the Priesthood—Exodus 29:1-35
- Daily Offerings—Exodus 29:38-46
- The Altar of Incense—Exodus 30:1-10
- The Ransom Money—Exodus 30:11-16
- The Bronze Laver—Exodus 30:17-21
- The Holy Anointing Oil—Exodus 30:22-33
- The Incense—Exodus 30:34-38

### **The Artisans for Building the Tabernacle**

Just like the Lord was detailed and specific about the Tabernacle, He was specific about the people that He wanted to do the work. In Exodus 31, we read:

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 2 “See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, 5 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.

6 “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, that they may make all that I have commanded you: 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— 8 the table and its utensils, the pure gold lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, 9 the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base— 10 the garments of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests, 11 and the anointing oil and sweet incense for the holy place. According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.”

The Lord is very specific about who He called to do the craftsmanship of the Tabernacle. He didn't just say, “Bezalel and Aholiab, the artisan.” He said, “Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah...And... Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan” Because,

just like the Lord had prepared for the materials that were going to be used for the Tabernacle, He had been preparing the artisans that would design the work of the Tabernacle. He not only gave them the physical skill to do the work, He also gave them the Spirit, “3 And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, 4 to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, 5 in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.” The Lord gave Bezalel the plans to design the work according to His will, which shows that Bezalel had a willing and submissive Spirit to the Lord and to Moses. In verse 6 He says, “I have put wisdom in the hearts of all the gifted artisans, that they may make all that I have commanded you.” Through Bezalel and Aholiab we see that the work of the ministry is not just the priesthood. They were artisans who worked with their hands to build beautiful things for the Lord. This should encourage us because wherever the Lord has placed us in our daily jobs, we can do the work as unto the Lord.

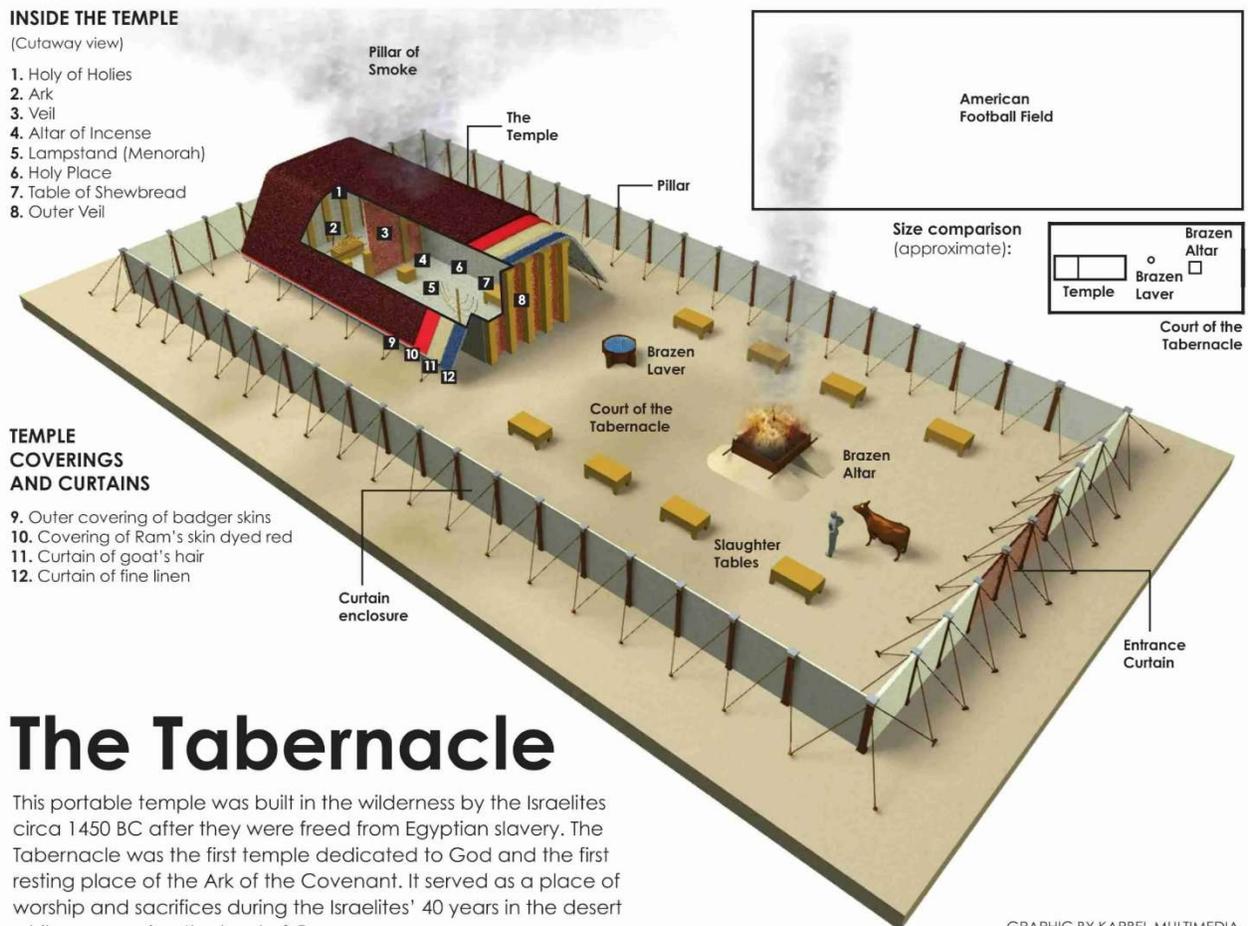
Although Bezalel and Aholiab were not the only ones who would do the work, they were named specifically because they would lead the work by designing what the Lord had given them. Because they were to craft all of the items for the tabernacle, the work was too big for just two men to complete. The work set before them was: “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— 8 the table and its utensils, the pure gold lampstand with all its utensils, the altar of incense, 9 the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base— 10 the garments of ministry, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests, 11 and the anointing oil and sweet incense for the holy place.” In Exodus 35:10 we see that they were not alone in the work, Moses tells the people, “10 ‘All *who are* gifted artisans among you shall come and make all that the Lord has commanded.’”

Through them we also see that the work of the ministry should not be a lone pursuit to perfection. Bezalel and Aholiab were called and were gifted to do the work, but they were also given other gifted artisans to help with the completion of the work. We are a community of believers in the Spirit and all have been gifted a role to play in the body. Paul describes the work of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 “4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for

the profit of all.” Moreover, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, “12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.”

The ministry is a team effort designed to bring glory to God as we all work together to show the love of Christ to each other and to everyone who comes into our congregation. Whether we are serving as pastors, teachers, leaders, ushers, servers, greeters, technicians, cooks, cashiers, secretaries, musicians, or custodians, we are serving the Lord first. Whatever the Lord has called you to do for whatever duration, do it for the glory of God.

*23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.—Colossians 3:23-24*



# The Tabernacle

This portable temple was built in the wilderness by the Israelites circa 1450 BC after they were freed from Egyptian slavery. The Tabernacle was the first temple dedicated to God and the first resting place of the Ark of the Covenant. It served as a place of worship and sacrifices during the Israelites' 40 years in the desert while conquering the land of Canaan.