

## Tabernacle Construction (c. September 1446–March 1445 BC)

Exodus 35–38

### Work on the Tabernacle Does Not Trump the Sabbath

35:1 Then Moses assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and said to them, “These are the things that the LORD has commanded *you* to do:

2 “For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy *day*, a sabbath of complete rest to the LORD; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.

3 You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the sabbath day.”

### A Call for Contributions

4 Moses spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, “This is the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying,

5 ‘Take from among you a contribution to the LORD; whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as the LORD’s contribution: gold, silver, and bronze,

6 and blue, purple and scarlet *material*, fine linen, goats’ *hair*,

7 and rams’ skins dyed red, and porpoise skins, and acacia wood,

8 and oil for lighting, and spices for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense,

9 and onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece.

10 ‘Let every skillful man among you come, and make all that the LORD has commanded:

11 the tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its hooks and its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets;

12 the ark and its poles, the mercy seat, and the curtain of the screen;

13 the table and its poles, and all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence;

14 the lampstand also for the light and its utensils and its lamps and the oil for the light;

15 and the altar of incense and its poles, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the doorway at the entrance of the tabernacle;

16 the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin and its stand;

17 the hangings of the court, its pillars and its sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court;

18 the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the court and their cords;

19 the woven garments for ministering in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests.”

20 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel departed from Moses’ presence.

### Men and Women Give Generously

21 Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came *and* brought the LORD’s contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments.

22 Then all whose hearts moved them, both men and women, came *and* brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and bracelets, all articles of gold; so *did* every man who presented an offering of gold to the LORD.

23 Every man, who had in his possession blue and purple and scarlet *material* and fine linen and goats’ *hair* and rams’ skins dyed red and porpoise skins, brought them.

24 Everyone who could make a contribution of silver and bronze brought the LORD’s contribution; and every man who had in his possession acacia wood for any work of the service brought it.

25 All the skilled women spun with their hands, and brought what they had spun, *in* blue and purple *and* scarlet *material* and *in* fine linen.

26 All the women whose heart stirred with a skill spun the goats’ *hair*.

27 The rulers brought the onyx stones and the stones for setting for the ephod and for the breastpiece;

28 and the spice and the oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense.

29 The Israelites, all the men and women, whose heart moved them to bring *material* for all the work, which the LORD had commanded through Moses to be done, brought a freewill offering to the LORD.

### Moses Appoints Bezalel, Oholiab and Other Craftsmen

30 Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, “See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

31 And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship;

32 to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze,

33 and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work.

34 He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.

35 He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple *and* in scarlet *material*, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs.

36:1 “Now Bezalel and Oholiab, and every skillful person in whom the LORD has put skill and understanding to know how to perform

all the work in the construction of the sanctuary, shall perform in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded.”

### Generosity That Must Be Restrained

2 Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom the LORD had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it.

3 They received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the sanctuary. And they still *continued* bringing to him freewill offerings every morning.

4 And all the skillful men who were performing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work which he was performing,

5 and they said to Moses, “The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which the LORD commanded us to perform.”

6 So Moses issued a command, and a proclamation was circulated throughout the camp, saying, “Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contributions of the sanctuary.” Thus the people were restrained from bringing *any more*.

7 For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it.

### Crafting the Curtains

8 All the skillful men among those who were performing the work made the tabernacle with ten curtains; of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet *material*, with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman, Bezalel made them.

9 The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains had the same measurements.

10 He joined five curtains to one another and *the other* five curtains he joined to one another.

11 He made loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set; he did likewise on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the second set.

12 He made fifty loops in the one curtain and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set; the loops were opposite each other.

13 He made fifty clasps of gold and joined the curtains to one another with the clasps, so the tabernacle was a unit.

14 Then he made curtains of goats' *hair* for a tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains in all.

15 The length of each curtain was thirty cubits and four cubits the width of each curtain; the eleven curtains had the same measurements.

16 He joined five curtains by themselves and *the other* six curtains by themselves.

17 Moreover, he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the *first* set, and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain *that was outermost in* the second set.

18 He made fifty clasps of bronze to join the tent together so that it would be a unit.

19 He made a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of porpoise skins above.

### Crafting the Framing

20 Then he made the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright.

21 Ten cubits was the length of each board and one and a half cubits the width of each board.

22 *There were* two tenons for each board, fitted to one another; thus he did for all the boards of the tabernacle.

23 He made the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side;

24 and he made forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for its two tenons and two sockets under another board for its two tenons.

25 Then for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty boards,

26 and their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board.

27 For the rear of the tabernacle, to the west, he made six boards.

28 He made two boards for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear.

29 They were double beneath, and together they were complete to its top to the first ring; thus he did with both of them for the two corners.

30 There were eight boards with their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets, two under every board.

31 Then he made bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of one side of the tabernacle,

32 and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the rear *side* to the west.

33 He made the middle bar to pass through in the center of the boards from end to end.

34 He overlaid the boards with gold and made their rings of gold as holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

### Crafting the Veil and the Screen

35 Moreover, he made the veil of blue and purple and scarlet *material*, and fine twisted linen; he made it with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman.

36 He made four pillars of acacia for it, and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and he cast four sockets of silver for

them.

37 He made a screen for the doorway of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet *material*, and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver;

38 and *he made* its five pillars with their hooks, and he overlaid their tops and their bands with gold; but their five sockets were of bronze.

#### **Crafting the Ark of the Testimony**

37:1 Now Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; its length was two and a half cubits, and its width one and a half cubits, and its height one and a half cubits;

2 and he overlaid it with pure gold inside and out, and made a gold molding for it all around.

3 He cast four rings of gold for it on its four feet; even two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.

4 He made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

5 He put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry it.

#### **Crafting the Cover of the Ark**

6 He made a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide.

7 He made two cherubim of gold; he made them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat;

8 one cherub at the one end and one cherub at the other end; he made the cherubim *of one piece* with the mercy seat at the two ends.

9 The cherubim had *their* wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings, with their faces toward each other; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.

#### **Crafting the Table of the Bread of the Presence**

10 Then he made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long and a cubit wide and one and a half cubits high.

11 He overlaid it with pure gold, and made a gold molding for it all around.

12 He made a rim for it of a handbreadth all around, and made a gold molding for its rim all around.

13 He cast four gold rings for it and put the rings on the four corners that were on its four feet.

14 Close by the rim were the rings, the holders for the poles to carry the table.

15 He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold, to carry the table.

16 He made the utensils which were on the table, its dishes and its pans and its bowls and its jars, with which to pour out drink offerings, of pure gold.

#### **Crafting the Golden Lampstand**

17 Then he made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work, its base and its shaft; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers were *of one piece* with it.

18 There were six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand from the one side of it and three branches of the lampstand from the other side of it;

19 three cups shaped like almond *blossoms*, a bulb and a flower in one branch, and three cups shaped like almond *blossoms*, a bulb and a flower in the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand.

20 In the lampstand *there were* four cups shaped like almond *blossoms*, its bulbs and its flowers;

21 and a bulb was under the *first* pair of branches *coming* out of it, and a bulb under the *second* pair of branches *coming* out of it, and a bulb under the *third* pair of branches *coming* out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand.

22 Their bulbs and their branches were *of one piece* with it; the whole of it *was* a single hammered work of pure gold.

23 He made its seven lamps with its snuffers and its trays of pure gold.

24 He made it and all its utensils from a talent of pure gold.

#### **Crafting the Altar of Incense**

25 Then he made the altar of incense of acacia wood: a cubit long and a cubit wide, square, and two cubits high; its horns were *of one piece* with it.

26 He overlaid it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and he made a gold molding for it all around.

27 He made two golden rings for it under its molding, on its two sides—on opposite sides—as holders for poles with which to carry it.

28 He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold.

#### **Crafting the Oil and Incense**

29 And he made the holy anointing oil and the pure, fragrant incense of spices, the work of a perfumer.

**Crafting the Altar of Burnt Offering**

- 38:1 Then he made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood, five cubits long, and five cubits wide, square, and three cubits high.  
 2 He made its horns on its four corners, its horns being *of one piece* with it, and he overlaid it with bronze.  
 3 He made all the utensils of the altar, the pails and the shovels and the basins, the flesh hooks and the firepans; he made all its utensils of bronze.  
 4 He made for the altar a grating of bronze network beneath, under its ledge, reaching halfway up.  
 5 He cast four rings on the four ends of the bronze grating *as* holders for the poles.  
 6 He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze.  
 7 He inserted the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar, with which to carry it. He made it hollow with planks.

**Crafting the Washbasin**

- 8 Moreover, he made the laver of bronze with its base of bronze, from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

**Crafting the Courtyard and Its Curtains**

- 9 Then he made the court: for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits;  
 10 their twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets, *made* of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands *were* of silver.  
 11 For the north side *there were* one hundred cubits; their twenty pillars and their twenty sockets *were* of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands *were* of silver.  
 12 For the west side *there were* hangings of fifty cubits *with* their ten pillars and their ten sockets; the hooks of the pillars and their bands *were* of silver.  
 13 For the east side fifty cubits.  
 14 The hangings for the *one side of the gate were* fifteen cubits, *with* their three pillars and their three sockets,  
 15 and so for the other side. On both sides of the gate of the court *were* hangings of fifteen cubits, *with* their three pillars and their three sockets.  
 16 All the hangings of the court all around *were* of fine twisted linen.  
 17 The sockets for the pillars *were* of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands, of silver; and the overlaying of their tops, of silver, and all the pillars of the court were furnished with silver bands.  
 18 The screen of the gate of the court was the work of the weaver, of blue and purple and scarlet *material* and fine twisted linen. And the length *was* twenty cubits and the height *was* five cubits, corresponding to the hangings of the court.  
 19 Their four pillars and their four sockets *were* of bronze; their hooks *were* of silver, and the overlaying of their tops and their bands *were* of silver.  
 20 All the pegs of the tabernacle and of the court all around *were* of bronze.

**Summary of Craftsmen and Materials Used**

- 21 This is the number of the things for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were numbered according to the command of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.  
 22 Now Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD had commanded Moses.  
 23 With him *was* Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and a skillful workman and a weaver in blue and in purple and in scarlet *material*, and fine linen.  
 24 All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary, even the gold of the wave offering, was 29 talents and 730 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary.  
 25 The silver of those of the congregation who were numbered was 100 talents and 1,775 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary;  
 26 a beka a head (*that is*, half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for each one who passed over to those who were numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for 603,550 men.  
 27 The hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets of the veil; one hundred sockets for the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.  
 28 Of the 1,775 *shekels*, he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their tops and made bands for them.  
 29 The bronze of the wave offering was 70 talents and 2,400 shekels.  
 30 With it he made the sockets to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and the bronze altar and its bronze grating, and all the utensils of the altar,  
 31 and the sockets of the court all around and the sockets of the gate of the court, and all the pegs of the tabernacle and all the pegs of the court all around.