

Exegetical Notes, Exodus 35:1-29
“Sabbath and Offerings”

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen, Pastor, Cornerstone Fellowship
101 Kylies Road, Coatesville, PA 19329
610-384-1375
charleshjensen@aol.com

Exodus 35:1-29

Verse 1-3

Moses assembled the whole Israelite community and said to them, “These are the things YHWH has commanded you to do: For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to YHWH. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death. Do not light a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day.”

- Moses summoned together the entire community, all the people of Israel, to hear the terms of the covenant.
- The first issue he raised was the keeping of Sabbath. Israel was to work for six days. On the seventh day they were to rest. Israelites who did not observe this principle were to be executed. They were to do no work on the Sabbath, not even something as simple as lighting a fire.

Verse 4-9

Moses said to the whole Israelite community, “This is what YHWH has commanded: From what you have, take an offering for YHWH. Everyone who is willing is to bring to YHWH an offering of gold, silver and bronze, blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair, ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil for light; spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense; and onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece.”

- Moses commands that an offering be taken. He solicits specific items from the people that are to be used to construct the Tabernacle, the tent of God. This offering is to be a free will offering. While all are invited to give, no one is obligated to do so.
- This offering is very much like the one Aaron took to make the golden calf. See Exodus 32:2-4.

Verse 10-19

“All who are skilled among you are to come and make everything YHWH has commanded: the tabernacle with its tent and its covering, clasps, frames, crossbars, posts and bases; the ark with its poles and the atonement cover and the curtain that shields it; the table with its poles and all its articles and the bread of the Presence; the lampstand that is for light with its accessories, lamps and oil for the light; the altar of incense with its poles, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; the curtain for the doorway at the entrance to the tabernacle; the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils; the bronze basin with its stand; the curtains of the courtyard with its posts and bases, and the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard; the tent pegs for the tabernacle and for the courtyard, and their ropes; the woven garments worn for ministering in the sanctuary – both the sacred garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests.”

- In addition to the offering of materials from which to build the tabernacle and to make the various objects God commanded Israel to make, there is to be an offering of talents and skills. Those who have skills to use in the service of God are asked to offer them.

Verse 20-29

Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses’ presence, and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to YHWH for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments. All who were willing, men and women alike, came and brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. They all presented their gold as a wave offering to YHWH. Everyone who had blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen, or goat hair, ram skins dyed red or hides of sea cows brought them. Those presenting an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to YHWH, and everyone who had acacia wood for any part of the work brought it. Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun – blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen. And all the women who were willing and had the skill spun the goat hair. The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. They also brought spices and olive oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to YHWH freewill offerings for all the work YHWH through Moses had commanded them to do.

- After Moses had made the request for an offering of materials and skills, the community was dismissed. Each man and woman went home to consider how they would respond to YHWH's request for themselves. The call from God was to each individual Israelite. The community, as a whole, was not asked to decide how to respond to God's request. Each individual must decide for himself and must not be under any compulsion or pressure from the rest of the community. This was to be a free will response of each person as an individual to the call of God.
- The people did respond to God's call. Individuals gave materials and used their skills in response to God's call.
- The materials that the Israelites gave to God were originally given to them by God through the gifts of the Egyptians. See Exodus 12:33-36.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Sabbath and Offerings*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen, Senior Pastor at Cornerstone Fellowship, Coatesville Pennsylvania. All rights are reserved by Dr. Jensen and *Cornerstone Fellowship*.)