

Exodus Chapter 31

- This chapter is divided up into two paragraphs:
 1. The first dealing with the work of the Lord, the construction of the things we've talked about over the last several chapters.
 2. The second paragraph addresses the Sabbath, the "covenant" between God and His people.
- We have consistently seen that God requires the very best of all things, the first fruits. Even though the men that God uses or in this case those that he would use – all had natural skills in workmanship – they had been Pharaoh's artisans.
- They needed something else – the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom:

Psalm 127:1 "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it:"

V: 1 Once again the Lord is speaking to Moses.

- I can only imagine Moses being very attentive to the Word of God through this whole process – being in God's presence – not being distracted by other things.
- We've heard very little if anything about Moses speaking: God has been doing all the talking.

Eli instructing a young Samuel:

1 Samuel 3:9 "... speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."

V: 2 Moses has been receiving a lot of information from the Lord, a lot of vision from the Lord – but God didn't intend for Moses to do all these things himself.

- God would raise others up to help with the needs of the ministry.
- When God called Noah to build the ark, his sons were with him.
- Just like Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons – these men were called of God:

"See, I have called by name Bezaleel..."

Exodus 35:30-35 ³⁰And Moses said unto the children of Israel, see, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; ³¹And He hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; ³²And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

³³and in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work. ³⁴And He hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵Them hath He filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.”

Exodus 36:1-2 “¹Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded. ²And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:”

- God called these men to serve Him, God revealed who these men were to Moses, then Moses called them. (affirmation)
- This is a round peg in a round hole. If you ever feel like you're a square peg being crammed into a round hole – then you may not be called by God to that ministry or area of service.
- **Bezaleel:** “In the shadow of God” – figuratively meaning under God’s protection.

Psalm 17:8 “Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.”

Psalm 57:1 “Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.”

V: 3-5 Not only were these men called by God, but they were controlled by the Holy Spirit.

- They were filled with the Spirit of God – wisdom, understanding, knowledge, in all manner of workmanship. Basically what to do, and how to do it.

This reminds us of Jesus:

Luke 2:20 “And the child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.”

- In the previous chapters we’ve seen that Aaron & his sons are “anointed” to serve in the capacity of priest.
- Here we see the “anointing” to minister in practical ways.

- It's also good to point out that as these men are filled with the Holy Spirit, they are characterized as having wisdom.

Acts 4:13 “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”

Stephen addressing the Judaisers:

Acts 7:10 “And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.”

- As the Apostles got bogged down in the distribution to the widows and in some of the practical aspects of ministry, there was a need to bring others into the ministry:

Acts 6:2-4 “²Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, it is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. ³Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

- Bezaleel is “gifted” in all manner of workmanship, just as he has gifted each of us in different ways to serve in the kingdom of heaven.
- **Romans Ch. 12 & 1 Corinthians Ch. 12** both talk about the gifts of the Spirit – some of the gifts that God gives to His servants.

1 Corinthians 12:11 “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.”

- God has gifted mankind with skills; whether a professional athlete, an artist, or a school teacher who speaks wisdom into the heart of children.

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

V: 6 Aholiab: “father’s tent”

- Bezaleel’s will be the foreman, and Aholiab will be his chief assistant.
- The hardest position to fill in an orchestra is 2nd violin, everybody wants to be in the first chair, but few are content to be the one to play harmony, to play 2nd fiddle.

- To be a good leader, it's important to know how to follow as well.
- Each of these men would excel at the position appointed to them by God.

Zechariah 4:10

Zechariah exhorts us not to “despise the day of small things”.

Psalms 75:6-7 “⁶For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. ⁷But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and sitteth up another.”

- God is the one who assigns us our positions in life.

Amos 3:3 “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”

- God puts a team together that all have a common vision and goal:
- God has also ordained structure, Moses, Bezaleel, Aholiab.

“In all that are wise hearted, I have put wisdom”

- All wisdom comes from God:

Proverbs 2:6 “For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

Psalms 51:6 “Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.”

- We know that when we lack wisdom, we know where to get it:

James 1:5 “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not (no reproach); and it shall be given him.”

The last part of this verse:

“That they may make all that I have commanded thee”

Same thing in verse 11

“... according to all that I have commanded thee, shall they do.”

- This reveals another characteristic of a servant of God:
 1. Called
 2. Filled with the Spirit.
 3. Wisdom from God.
 4. Obedient, taking direction from the word of God.

Psalms 119:105 “Thy word is a lamp unto my fee, and a light unto my path.”

- A servant of God doesn't just do their own thing, they do those things that God commands.

V: 7-11 A review of the things that are to be made:

1. The Tabernacle of the congregation.
 2. The ark of the testimony.
 3. The mercy seat that goes on the ark.
 4. All the furniture of the Tabernacle: the accessories or instruments, utensils, implements.
 5. The table of showbread & it's accessories / utensils.
 6. The candlestick & it's instruments / utensils.
 7. The altar of incense.
 8. The altar of burnt offering.
 9. The laver & pedestal.
 10. The cloths of service.
 11. The holy garments for the High Priest, Aaron.
 12. The garments for Aaron's sons.
 13. The anointing oil.
 14. The sweet incense.
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V: 12-18 Sabbath / shabat.

- There are always a lot of discussions about the “Sabbath”. The “Sabbath” has always been the 7th day as it's re-iterated in V: 16. 6 days of work, then the 7th is a day of rest, or the Sabbath – which is Saturday, not Sunday.
- There are those who insist on keeping “Sabbath” – but the Sabbath is not a stand alone word, or covenant. It is connected to a lot of other prohibitions and requirements in the law.

Notice as well who it is directed to:

V: 13 “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel...”

V: 16 “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath...”

V: 17 “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel...”

- Notice that there is no mention of Gentiles.
 - The children of Israel were also set apart, distinguished from all the other peoples through their dietary laws – but these did not apply to Gentiles, not even later to Gentile believers.
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V: 12 First God tells them what they are going to do, then He tells them how they are going to do it.

- By keeping the Sabbath, amongst other things they are keeping God in the proper perspective.

- They are not to be too focused or obsessed with the work, but for the One for whom they are working.

Honoring God in all things:

Ephesians 6:7 “With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.”

- For me this is such an appropriate admonition: There are some people that really don't care about construction, or home improvement, or maintenance – handy man work – it's not a distraction to me.
- I hear a skill saw, or a table saw fire up – and I can tell the difference. I hear the “cachun” – “cachun” / the pop-pop, pop-pop or a nail gun and my ear perk up.
- There is nothing more distracting to me than having someone around me do any kind of construction or building project.
- Here God is saying to the children of Israel – keep things in perspective – don't be so distracted with the work of ministry that you forget who you're ministering to.

V: 13 There are 3 purposes in keepings the Sabbath:

1st purpose:

- Because it is a sign between God and His people, symbolic of their sanctification unto the Lord, demonstrating that there is a relationship between God and His people.
- Every covenant that God has made with His people is and has been accompanied by a corresponding sign:
 - God's covenant with Noah; to never again destroy the world with a flood. Sign: Rainbow.
 - God's covenant with Abraham; possess the land; descendants; all the world to be blessed through his seed: Sign: Circumcision.
 - Davidic covenant; that one of his descendants would always be on the throne, that the Messiah would come through his lineage: Sign?

Isaiah 7:14 “Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

The sign is the virgin birth of Jesus.

- Our subject is the Mosaic covenant; the Law, the old covenant.
- Following that we have the New Covenant; the New Testament: The sign is: “blood” (not grace).

Hebrews 9:22 “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

Jesus declared:

Luke 22:20 “... This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you.”

- The sign that accompanies the New Testament is the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.
- The sign of the Mosaic covenant, which is to the children of Israel: the Sabbath.

V: 14 A reiteration of the command, “*Ye shall keep the Sabbath*” – and the penalty for failure to do so.

“Everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death:”

- Keeping the Sabbath is an outward expression of an inward truth – that they belong to God, that they are sanctified and set apart for His use, for His good pleasure.
- Not keeping or rejecting the Sabbath is an expression of being separated from God; this is actually the definition of death – separation from God is death.

Webster:

Death: The end of life.

Brain Death: complete cessation of brain function as evidenced by absence of brain-wave activity on an electroencephalogram: sometimes used as a legal definition of death.

Fashion Queen: the wrong accessories or mis-matched colors with a particular outfit.

- From a spiritual perspective, death is separation from God, eternal death – is eternal separation from God – also known as being cast into “outer darkness”.
- God is light, and being outside His presence is being in that place where there is no light.

2nd purpose: reason for the Sabbath.

V: 15 Work for 6 days, but the 7th is the “Sabbath of rest.”

- The physical body needs a break.
- God simply modeled for us, what we were later to do – God didn’t and doesn’t need a “rest” – if God takes a break then we are all in big trouble...

Mark 2:27-28 ²⁷“And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: ²⁸Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.”

- Part of the purpose for the Sabbath is for our physical rest, because we need it.
- Along with physical rest, there is often times that need for spiritual rest, we can get “used up” and drained in a way that is not necessarily physical and we need to be refreshed in our spirit.
- There are times when we seek to do the Lord’s work, but we’re doing it in the flesh – and it’s exhausting! We become weary and weak.
- We can think that we’re indispensable to the work of the Lord – and we’re not – no one is. It’s not always up to us, in fact it never is!

Hebrews 4:1-3 ¹“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. ²For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: (those in the wilderness) but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. ³For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, as I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

- There is a rest that only the Gospel, and believing it can bring.

Romans 5:1 “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- We can stop striving for that which only God can give us anyway. We can have peace, rest for our soul.

Matthew 11:28-30 ²⁸“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

- There is a difference though between having peace with God, and having the peace of God.

Philippians 4:6-7 ⁶“Be careful / anxious for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Colossians 3:15-16 ¹⁵“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one

another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

The warning repeated:

V: 15b “... *whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.*”

- No work is to be done on the Sabbath day, no non-worship work.

V: 16-17 The 3rd reason for the Sabbath: it was to leave a reminder of what God had done on the 7th day.

Genesis 2:1-3 “¹Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He made.”

- Here we see that God ended His work of creation, but He did not cease from all His work.
- We still work on the Sabbath, it’s just a different kind of work.
- If you’re a construction worker, or some other trade that you do through the week to support your family, that you do 6 days a week, but that stops on the 7th day, the Sabbath day.
- Now we do a different kind of work, it’s the work of worship and sacrifice; both of which particularly in those days was strenuous work.
- Nehemiah commanded the children of Israel not to carry a burden on the Sabbath day, he’s speaking of the burdens that they carried into the city so they could sell them, the work of being a merchant, so he put an end to that, but not to work all together.

John ch. 5 – Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath day: the Jews because of their “tradition” sought to slay Jesus for violating the Sabbath.

Jesus responded to them:

John 15:17 “But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh (present tense) hitherto, and I work.”

- The idea generally is that there was a day that was set aside or apart for the worship of God.
- Many of us have whittled it down to an hour or two on Sunday – that’s the time we dedicate to God.

- We should seek to somehow make Him the focus of our day, resting in Him, keeping Him in the forefront of our thoughts and activities.
- There are those who make a big deal about Christians / Gentiles worshipping on any day but Saturday, the Sabbath – they may even tell you that it is the mark of the beast – which is wrong.

Colossians 2:13-3:4 (turn to / read)

V: 18 Oh, and don't forget these – going back to chapter 20 – the 10 commandments.

- Often non-believers will complain or allege that the Bible is not inspired writing, that it was written by men.

2 Peter 1:20-21 ²⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ¹⁶All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

- His hands created the universe that we live in.

Psalm 8:3 “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.”

- His hands created the world that we live in:

Psalm 95:5 “The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.”

- His hands created us:

Psalm 119:73 “Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.”

- It should be no wonder that it will be through His hand, that we learn His commandments.

Psalm 25:4-5 ⁴Shew me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths. ⁵Lead me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day.”

Psalm 86:11 “Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth: unite my heart to fear Thy name.”