

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

Moses appoints Bezaleel, Aholiab, and their associates, to the work, and delivers to them the free-will offerings of the people, Exodus 36:1-3. The people bring offerings more than are needed for the work, and are only restrained by the proclamation of Moses, Exodus 36:4-7. The curtains, their loops, taches, etc., for the tabernacle, Exodus 36:8-18. The covering for the tent, Exodus 36:19. The boards, Exodus 36:20-30. The bars, Exodus 36:31-34. The veil and its pillars, Exodus 36:35, Exodus 36:36. The hangings and their pillars, Exodus 36:37, Exodus 36:38.

Verse 1

Then wrought, etc. - The first verse of this chapter should end the preceding chapter, and this should begin with verse the second; as it now stands, it does not make a very consistent sense. By reading the first word **וַיַּעַשׂ** (veasah), then wrought, in the future tense instead of the past, the proper connection will be preserved: for all grammarians know that the conjunction **ו** (vau) is often conversive, i.e., it turns the preterite tense of those verbs to which it is prefixed into the future, and the future into the preterite: this power it evidently has here; and joined with the last verse of the preceding chapter the connection will appear thus, Exodus 36:30-35, etc.: The Lord hath called by name Bezaleel and Aholiab; them hath he filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work. Exodus 36:1: And Bezaleel and Aholiab Shall Work, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom.

Verse 5

The people bring much more than enough - With what a liberal spirit do these people bring their free-will offerings unto the Lords! Moses is obliged to make a proclamation to prevent them from bringing any more, as there was at present more than enough! Had Moses been intent upon gain, and had he not been perfectly disinterested, he would have encouraged them to continue their contributions, as thereby he might have multiplied to himself gold, silver, and precious stones. But he was doing the Lord's work, under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit, and therefore he sought no secular gain. Indeed, this one circumstance is an ample proof of it. Every thing necessary for the worship of God will be cheerfully provided by a people whose hearts are in that worship. In a state where all forms of religion and modes of worship are tolerated by the laws, it would be well to find out some less exceptionable way of providing for the national clergy than by tithes. Let them by all means have the provision allowed them by the law; but let them not be needlessly exposed to the resentment of the people by the mode in which this provision is made, as this often alienates the affections of their flocks from them, and exceedingly injures their usefulness. See Clarke's note on Genesis 28:22, in fine, where the subject is viewed on all sides.

Verse 8

Cherubims of cunning work - See on Exodus 25:18 (note). Probably the word means no more than figures of any kind wrought in the diaper fashion in the loom, or by the needle in embroidery, or by the chisel or graving tool in wood, stone, or metal; see Clarke on Exodus 25:18 (note). This meaning Houbigant and other excellent critics contend for. In some places the word seems to be restricted to express a particular figure then well known; but in many other places it seems to imply any kind of figure commonly formed by sculpture on stone, by carving on wood, by engraving upon brass, and by weaving in the loom, etc.

Verse 9

The length of one curtain - Concerning these curtains, see Clarke on Exodus 26:1 (note), etc.

Verse 20

And he made boards - See Clarke's note on Exodus 26:15, etc.

Verse 31

He made bars - See on Exodus 26:26 (note), etc.

Verse 35

He made a veil - See Clarke on Exodus 26:31 (note), etc.

Verse 37

Hanging for the - door - See Clarke on Exodus 26:36 (note), etc.

Verse 38

The five pillars of it with their hooks - Their capitals. See Clarke on Exodus 26:32 (note), etc.

There is scarcely any thing particular in this chapter that has not been touched on before; both it and the following to the end of the book being in general a repetition of what we have already met in detail in the preceding chapters from Exodus 25 to 31 inclusive, and to those the reader is requested to refer. God had before commanded this work to be done, and it was necessary to record the execution of it to show that all was done according to the pattern shown to Moses; without this detailed account we should not have known whether the work had ever been executed according to the directions given.

At the commencement of this chapter the reader will observe that I have advanced the dates a. m. and b.c. one year, without altering the year of the exodus, which at first view may appear an error; the reason is, that the above dates commenced at Tisri, but the years of the exodus are dated from Abib.