

May 28, 2023

Exodus 35:20-35

20 Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses' presence, 21 and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments. 22 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 the LORD. 23 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. 24 Those presenting an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to the LORD, and everyone who had acacia wood for any part of the work brought it. 25 Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun—blue, purple or scarlet yarn or fine linen. 26 And all the women who were willing and had the skill spun the goat hair. 27 The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be mounted on the ephod and breastpiece. 28 They also brought spices and olive oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense. 29 All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to the LORD freewill offerings for all the work the LORD through Moses had commanded them to do. Bezalel and Oholiab 30 Then Moses said to the Israelites, "See, the LORD has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, 31 and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts— 32 to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, 33 to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic craftsmanship. 34 And he has given both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, the ability to teach others. 35 He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as craftsmen, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them master craftsmen and designers.



Willing and Able

Exodus 35:20-35 NIV

BIG IDEA: God who delivered his people Israel, now calls for the worship and devotion of his people through gifts of service.

OUTLINE

1. Giving our money and resources
2. Giving our skills and abilities
 - a. Everybody
 - b. Right away
 - c. Willingly
 - d. Different kinds of skill
 - e. Different levels of skill
 - f. Excellence
3. Building up the church
 - a. Everybody serves
 - b. How to discover your unique contribution of service
 - i. Explore the possibilities
 - ii. Experiment
 - iii. Evaluate effectiveness
 - iv. Expect confirmation

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Exodus 35:1–36:7 : Moses prepares the people to carry out the instructions for the tabernacle by reaffirming the need to keep the Sabbath (35:1–3), calling for the contribution of materials and craftsmen (35:10–19), and setting Bezalel and Oholiab over the work (35:30–36:1). The people respond by bringing their contributions (35:20–29), such that the craftsmen have more than they need and Moses has to restrain them from giving more (36:2–7).

Praise to Jesus. From the failure of the Israelites to obey in Exodus 32 and 34, we see described in wonderful detail the evidence of God’s forgiveness and redemptive plans in Exodus 35. Praise Jesus today for physical reminders, like the Tabernacle and our church, of the Lord’s rescue, steadfast love, and intention to be with His people whom He lavishly loves . Today, because of the Holy Spirit, Jesus’ is present with us always; lovingly leading, sustaining, providing, protecting, sanctifying, and saving us. This great work of God’s generosity motivates and fuels, Gospel gratitude in all aspects of the church.

Repentance through Jesus. Today, spend some time thinking about what it means for the Holy Spirit to live in you. Confess the ways that you have taken God’s grace and generosity for granted. If you find that your heart is not generous, confess this, and ask the Lord to lead towards Joy that comes from giving.

Consecration for Jesus. Pastor David Murray writes about Exodus 35:20-29, “Freewill giving flows from free-grace getting. Five times we’re told they were of a willing heart, or their hearts stirred them, or their hearts moved them (35:20–29). What explains this beautiful example of how God can move the most unlikely people to incredible generosity? Gratitude. After the Israelites heard God’s plans for the tabernacle and after they were reminded of His mercy towards them, they gave to the point that Moses needed to restrain them. (36:1-7).” As recipients of such mercy, and because we have been reminded that He lives in us and with us today through His Holy Spirit, His plans for His people are described in lavish detail in the New Testament, let us freely give to further His Church our resources, talents, and devotion for His glory and our good. (Murray, David. Exodus: Stories of Redemption & Relationship.)

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. What does “generosity” mean to you? Are there some generous folks in your life? In what ways are they generous? When do you find yourself most motivated to share what you have with someone else?
2. Read Exodus 35:4. What difference does it make that Moses made sure that the people knew that their gifts were a contribution to the Lord instead of to himself? Read verses 35:20-29. What motivated the giving of the Israelites? Circle the adjectives and adverbs in this passage which related to their attitude toward giving and who gave. Read Acts 4:32-37. How are these accounts of giving similar? What work did the Holy Spirit do in these two passages?
3. Read Exodus 35:25-29 and Exodus 36:2-6. Describe the many aspects of heart-motivated giving found in these verses.
4. Read Exodus 35:29 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. What parallels between the freewill giving in Exodus 35:29 can you find in 2 Corinthians 9:6-15? How does the reality that God provided for the Israelites far more (food, protection, purpose, land, deliverance) than was needed to build the tabernacle shape how you think about giving to the church? How does this type of giving glorify God?

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

1. What do we learn about the contributions to build the Tabernacle from Exodus 35:5, 21, 22, and 29? *(We learn that those that gave did so from “a generous heart” (v.5), from “everyone whose heart stirred him” (v.21), from a “willing heart” (v.22), and people “whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that the LORD commanded” (v.29). From verse 22 we read that their contributions were called “the LORD’s contribution”).*

2. Where did the Israelites get their gold, silver, and other possessions that they gave for the building of the Tabernacle? *(You can tell your children that the answer is from earlier chapters of Exodus, so that they will have to try to think back to the story. In Exodus 11:2 and 12: 35-36 we read that the LORD caused the Egyptians to give the Israelites gold and silver. This reminds us that the LORD’s deliverance from slavery in Egypt also included the provision of supplies to build the Tabernacle.)*

a. Take time to praise God for His gracious provision for us and pray for your family to have grateful hearts to God.

3. What did the Israelites do with their gold in Exodus 32? Compare that with Exodus 35 and discuss the difference. *(In chapter 32 the people gave their gold to build idols, but in chapter 35 they gave to build the Tabernacle to worship the LORD.)*

4. Read Exodus 35:25-26 and 35:30-35. What do we learn in these verses? *(We find once again just as in Exodus 31:1-11 that God moved His people to use their God-given skills for the LORD’s purposes.)*

a. Read Romans 12: 3-8, 11 and discuss what Christians are called to do with our God-given skills. *(Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are called to use our gifts to willingly serve the LORD and serve those around us.)*

b. Talk about ways you can serve this week.

Scriptures for further study:

2 Corinthians 9:6-15

1 Peter 4:7-11

FOR STUDENTS

1. What was the purpose of the Tabernacle for Old Covenant Israel? What did the Israelites do in the Tabernacle, and what did it communicate to them, and to the world, about what God was doing in and through them? How did the Tabernacle proclaim the gospel?

2. Trace the theme of Tabernacle/temple from Genesis 2 through to the end of Revelation 22. Why is it important to trace this theme and to note its development? Stated differently, what might we miss if we focus too narrowly on the details of the Tabernacle and temple that Israel built?

3. Exodus 35:1-3 once again provides Sabbath instructions. This connects us back to where we left off in Exodus 31:12-18, before the golden calf incident. What does this communicate about God's grace and His relationship with Israel? How does God's desire for His people to rest distinguish Him from Pharaoh and his building project? What does this teach us about the good news of Jesus Christ and the rest He offers as opposed to life apart from Jesus?

4. Based on Exodus 35:10, the people not only gave up their possessions but gave of themselves. How does building the Tabernacle communicate their repentance? How might we respond to God's grace beyond simply giving our possessions?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. God is a God of second chances. You may recall that the Israelites had sinned grievously against the Lord by fashioning an idol of gold. But God still loved them and effectively reinstated them. And now here they are once more worshipping Him and serving Him properly. Let this encourage us that no matter how grievous our sin, the Lord still promises to be our God and to show us His mercy and use us for His glory.

Question: If there has been some particular sin in your life, would you confess it now? Would you trust and know that God desires to not only forgive you, but by His grace to restore your life?

2. We should observe from the story of Exodus that God first delivered Israel, and only then did they worship and serve Him. This gives us a good picture of how our salvation works. We are not delivered or saved because of what we do for God. Rather, we are first delivered (saved) by God, and only then do we offer our lives in service to Him.

Reflect: Reflect on what it means to say that we are not saved by works, but we are saved for works?

3. Numerous times in this passage, we are told that the Israelites “willingly” or “from the heart” (see verses 5, 21, 22, 26, 29) gave of their possessions and talents for the building of the tabernacle. This shows that when God saves us, He also changes our hearts so that we now desire to serve Him faithfully. We recognize that all our lives, including our money and possessions and talents, are to be offered back to Him.

Question: Take an inventory of all the ways God has blessed you with money and talent. What are some unique ways God has gifted you? As a new believer in Jesus Christ, with a changed heart, are you willingly and faithfully offering these gifts for the glory of God?



The Seventh Plague of Egypt, John Martin, 1823

About the artist and painting: The English Romantic painter John Martin was no stranger to death and despair. Out of the 13 children born to his mother and father, John was one of only 6 that survived childhood. He grew up in poverty, the son of a farm laborer. In 1813, John lost his grandmother, mother, father, and youngest son all in the same year. Despite his popular appeal to English society, he was never really celebrated much less even accepted by the art community. Yet he was somewhat of a revolutionary by choosing to paint very fantastic, biblical scenes and landscapes. One can't help but think John looked to the extraordinary aspects of the bible to deal with the harsh realities of life in a broken world.

His 1823 work, *The Seventh Plague of Egypt*, helps to capture the deliverance theme so prevalent in the Book of Exodus. In the painting you have these mighty structures of Pharaoh's palace, city, and pyramids all displayed in their grandeur. In Moses' day this represented to God's people Pharaoh's power and oppression towards them as he ruthlessly made their lives harsh. Yet God is breaking into these circumstances, "showing up" to bring about His deliverance. In this painting, over and above the Egyptian structures is something more magnificent, the storm of God: thunder, hail, and fire being poured down upon the oppressor and persecutor of His people. And your eye is drawn to the man standing on the left side of the painting, Moses, with outstretched arms looking to the LORD and His deliverance.

The purpose of Exodus:

“The original purpose of Exodus was theological, to teach God’s people about himself and their relationship to him.” - Peter Enns, NIVAC, 25.

“Exodus is about a man, Moses. He is central to the narrative in a way in which no single character, not even Abraham, dominates Genesis...Exodus is about a nation, Israel, moving from slavery in Egypt into freedom...but ultimately Exodus is about God, about the God of the covenant who has instituted a new relationship between himself and those whom he has called to be his people.”
- John Mackay, Exodus, 9.

“The whole story of Exodus is a covenant narrative. The God who pledged himself to Abraham and his descendants remained the faithful God. He had made promises and intended to honor them, and when his moment came, honor them he did...in a word, Exodus cannot be described simply as the book of the holiness of the Lord, nor simply as the book of the presence of the Lord, but as the book of the holy God present in all his holiness at the heart of his people’s life, their provident savior and friend, who makes provision whereby they, in all their unworthiness, may live safely with him.” - Alec Motyer, The Bible Speaks Today: The Message of Exodus, 20, 23.

The setting for Exodus 1:1-2:25 is Israel in Egypt. The opening section sets the stage for the rest of the book by describing: the connection to the narrative of Genesis (Ex. 1:1–7), the oppression that has arisen under a new pharaoh (1:8–22), the preservation of Moses at birth (2:1–10) and later in Midian (2:11–22), and the declaration of God’s intimate knowledge of Israel’s suffering and God’s faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham and his descendants (2:23–25).

Exodus is a journey in two parts.

Part One: Egypt Exodus 1-15 Aug. 7th – Oct. 30th

Part Two: Sinai Exodus 16-18 Nov. 6th – Nov. 20th

Pause for Advent: Nov. 27th – Dec. 18th

Part Two Cont. Sinai Exodus 19 - 39 Jan. 8th – June 25th

Pause for Capital Campaign Series: Jan. 22nd-Feb. 12th

Pause for DNOW: February 19th

Pause for Missions Sunday: March 26th

Resources for further study:

Exodus: A Mentors Commentary by John Mackay

Exodus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture
(Volume 2) (The New American Commentary) by Douglas Stuart