

Message Eleven

**The Workers of the Tabernacle
and the Sabbath in Relation to the Building Work**

Scripture Reading: Exo. 31:1-17

- I. **“...See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom and with understanding and with knowledge and with all kinds of workmanship, to fashion skillful designs, to work in gold and in silver and in bronze, and in the cutting of stones for setting and in the carving of wood, to work in all kinds of workmanship. And now, I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the heart of all who are wise in heart I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded you...”—Exo. 31:1-17:**
- A. Bezalel was a master builder, a leader in God’s building—cf. 1 Cor. 3:10:
1. His name means “in the shadow of God,” indicating that as a master builder, Bezalel was a man under the shadow of God’s grace—cf. Psa. 91:1; 1 Cor. 3:10a; 2 Cor. 12:9.
 2. Uri, the name of Bezalel’s father, means “light of Jehovah,” and Hur, the name of Bezalel’s grandfather, means “free, noble, white” (signifying clean and pure); these three names indicate what kind of persons the builders of God’s dwelling place should be:
 - a. If we are not under the shadow of God’s grace, many things may come to disturb us, but the shadow of God the Almighty will keep these things away from us and cause us to remain in a peaceful situation and condition to do the building work—Isa. 30:15a.
 - b. All the builders of God’s dwelling place should be full of light, not having any dark part—Luke 11:33-36; Eph. 5:8-9; Matt. 5:14.
 - c. All the builders of God’s dwelling place should be free, noble, and clean and pure—Gal. 2:4 and footnote 2; 5:1, 13; Matt. 5:8; 1 John 1:9; 1 Tim. 5:22b; 1 John 5:18.
 3. The building up of God’s dwelling place, the church, is a noble work to be done by all God’s people (1 Cor. 3:10; Eph. 4:12, 16); however, the wisdom, understanding, knowledge,

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Eleven (continuation)

and skill for this work must be God Himself as the Spirit to us (cf. Col. 1:28-29).

4. Only the Spirit of God can build His own dwelling place through us—Zech. 4:6; Eph. 4:4a, 30.
 5. To build up the church all the believers must know how to use the divine nature as the gold, the redemption of Christ as the silver, and God's righteous judgment as the bronze (cf. 1 Cor. 3:12) as the materials for God's work.
 6. To cut stones for setting is to help the saints to be transformed into stones and to be adjusted to fit into God's building.
 7. To carve wood is to work on the humanity of the saints for the sake of God's building.
 8. To work in all kinds of workmanship is to produce finer virtues in human character with the uplifted humanity of Christ, which are needed for the building up of the church as God's dwelling place—Eph. 4:2 and footnote.
- B. Oholiab was Bezalel's co-master builder; his name means "the tent or tabernacle of my father"; Ahisamach, the name of Oholiab's father, means "a brother of strength or support"; these two names signify that Oholiab was a man for God's tabernacle with strength and support—Exo. 31:6:
1. Bezalel was of the tribe of Judah (v. 2), the kingly tribe (Gen. 49:10), the tribe of the Lord Jesus (Heb. 7:14), and Oholiab was of the tribe of Dan (Exo. 31:6), a lowly tribe (Gen. 49:17).
 2. The same principle is seen in the building of the temple under Solomon, who was of the tribe of Judah, and Hiramabi, whose mother was a Danite woman—2 Chron. 2:11-14.
 3. This indicates that the work of God's dwelling place must be done by all God's people, including those of high estate and those of seemingly low estate—Eph. 4:11-16.
- C. The workers of the tabernacle need to be wise in heart, receive wisdom, understanding, and grace from God, and be stirred up in their heart to do the noble work of building up the church, God's dwelling place on earth—Exo. 36:1-2; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:9-10; 15:10, 58; cf. 2 Chron. 1:10; 1 Cor. 14:4b:
1. If we would build God's dwelling place, we must be a people filled with the Spirit of God—Exo. 31:3.

Message Eleven (continuation)

2. In order to be filled with the Spirit of God, we need the willingness to do something for God's building (v. 6b; cf. Mal. 3:14, footnote 1), we need to abandon our natural capacity, and we need to empty ourselves to have the absolute openness to God in prayer (Matt. 5:3).
3. Every day and all the time we need to be freshly filled with the Triune God through prayer; the Christian life is a life of prayer; if we are short of prayer, we will be short of the Spirit—Col. 4:2.
4. It is when we are willing and empty and continuously praying that we have the wisdom to work in the divine nature and to minister to the needy ones the particular Christ that they need for their growth in life and God's building.

II. The Sabbath follows the charge for the building of the tabernacle—Exo. 31:12-17:

- A. Exodus 31:13 and 16 through 17 say, "You shall surely keep My Sabbaths; for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifies you...Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed":
 1. On the seventh day God "rested and was refreshed"; He looked at man and said, "Very good," resting from His work of creation—Gen. 1:31.
 2. Man was God's refreshment—God created man in His own image with a spirit so that man could fellowship with God and be God's companion and counterpart—v. 26; 2:7, 22.
 3. Man's first day was a day of rest and enjoyment—1:31—2:2:
 - a. God rested because He had finished His work and was satisfied; God's glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan; as long as man expresses God and deals with God's enemy, God is satisfied and can rest.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Eleven (continuation)

- b. Later, the seventh day was commemorated as the Sabbath (Exo. 20:8-11); God's seventh day was man's first day; after man was created, he did not join in God's work, but he entered into God's rest.
 - c. Man was created not to work but to be satisfied with God and rest with God (cf. Matt. 11:28-30); the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).
 - d. The rest in Genesis 2:2 is a seed that develops through the Bible and is harvested in Revelation; the development of this seed includes the rest of the Sabbath day (Exo. 20:8-11) and the rest of the good land (Deut. 12:9; Heb. 4:8) in the Old Testament, the rest of the Lord's Day in the New Testament (Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2), and the rest of the millennial kingdom (Heb. 4:1, 3, 9, 11).
 - e. The consummation of rest is the rest of the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem, in which all the redeemed saints will express God's glory (Rev. 21:10-11, 23) and reign with God's authority (22:5b) for eternity.
- B. Man's first day being a day of rest established a divine principle—God first supplies us with enjoyment, and then we work together with Him; we need to be one with God in His work (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:1); this requires that we enjoy Him.
 - C. At Pentecost the disciples were filled with the enjoyment of the Lord at 9 A.M. (Acts 2:13, 15); then Peter and the eleven stood to work together with the Lord.
 - D. With God it is a matter of working and resting; with man it is a matter of resting and working; then we work with the Lord by being one with Him.
 - E. When we take Him and enjoy Him as our real Sabbath rest, He will be our strength to work and our energy to labor—1 Cor. 15:10, 58.
 - F. As God's people, we should bear a sign that we need God to be our strength, energy, and everything so that we may be able to work together with Him for the building up of the church as Christ's Body; this honors and glorifies Him.
 - G. When we work for God without enjoying Him and without being one with Him, the result is spiritual death and the loss of the fellowship in the Body—Exo. 31:14.

EXODUS (4)

Message Eleven (continuation)

- H. The sign that we bear is that we rest with God, enjoy God, are refreshed with God, and are filled up with God first (v. 17); then we work together with the very One who fills us in oneness with Him.
- I. He is our rest, our refreshment, our energy, our strength, and our everything for ministering the word of God—1 Pet. 4:10-11; 2 Cor. 2:17; 13:3.
- J. This is an eternal covenant, an eternal contract with God—Exo. 31:16:
 - 1. Keeping the Sabbath is an eternal covenant assuring God that we will be one with Him by first enjoying Him and then working with Him, for Him, and in oneness with Him.
 - 2. The mentioning of the Sabbath here indicates that everything related to the tabernacle and its furniture leads us to God's Sabbath, with its rest and refreshment in the enjoyment of what God has purposed and done.