

Exodus 36:1-7

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/exod/exod-36/exodus-361-7/>

The first seven verses of chapter 36 continue the last section of chapter 35 concerning the work of Bezalel and Oholiab. They started to work on the construction of the tabernacle, and all the while the people continued to bring their contributions. They brought so much material to Moses that he finally had to urge the people not to bring any more.

Verse 1 seems to be a continuation of the last section of chapter 35 ([Exodus 35:30 – 35](#)). It concludes and summarizes the account concerning the call of *Bezalel* and *Oholiab*. They, *and every skillful person in whom the Lord has put skill* [lit. “wise of heart”] *and understanding* [or “discernment”]. These gifts of skill were from the LORD and were given to those who worked on the tabernacle so they would *know how to perform all the work in the construction of the sanctuary*. The root of the word translated *sanctuary* is the Hebrew word “qodesh,” which means “holiness, sacredness”. God instructed Moses to “construct a sanctuary *for Me*, that I may dwell among them” ([Exodus 25:8](#)). In the next verse the Lord says “According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture...” ([Exodus 25:9](#)). It seems the term *sanctuary* refers to the tabernacle’s function, as a set-apart dwelling for the Holy LORD. The first occurrence where “qodesh” is translated “sanctuary” (NASB) is in [Exodus 15:17](#) in the “Song of Moses” that commemorates Israel’s deliverance from Pharaoh’s army in the crossing of the Red Sea. There it refers to the “mountain of your inheritance” as a sanctuary where the LORD has made His dwelling.

The workers *shall perform* this work on the tabernacle *in accordance with all that the Lord has commanded*. The LORD had *commanded* the tabernacle be built according to His specific instructions given to Moses, as recorded in chapters 25-31. The workers were filled with the Holy Spirit, the divine enablement to do the job of constructing the tabernacle.

Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it. It was time for the work to begin, so Moses called the project foremen *Bezalel* and *Oholiab* and all of the other skilled artists together to start the construction. Note that only those *whose heart stirred him came to the work*. This was strictly a voluntary effort.

It could be that part of the enthusiasm exhibited by the people was connected to gladness at their reversal of fortunes, that God had once again agreed to dwell in their midst. The people were sad, and mourned when they heard the news that God was no longer going to dwell in their midst ([Exodus 33:3-4](#)). After Moses petitioned God to forgive the people, the LORD relented and agreed to dwell in their midst, because of His favor toward Moses ([Exodus 34:9](#)).

First, *they received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the sanctuary.* These *contributions* were in response to the LORD's command (through Moses) to provide the materials necessary for building the tabernacle ([Exodus 35:4 – 9](#)). The people responded generously to Moses' request. In fact, *they still continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning.* A list of the materials they brought can be found in [Exodus 38:21 – 31](#).

But a problem arose. It happened that *all the skillful men who were performing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work which he was performing* (v. 4). The people working on the tabernacle had a problem, so *they said to Moses, "The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which the Lord commanded us to perform."* The problem was not that the people did not bring enough material—they brought too much! Perhaps the excess had gotten to the stage that it was creating clutter and impeding the work. The craftsmen were possibly distracted with figuring out what to do with the excess materials instead of beginning construction.

Moses took action by issuing *a command.* This *command* became a *proclamation which was circulated throughout the camp.* It simply said, *"Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contributions of the sanctuary"* (v. 6). Moses had to intervene and tell the people to quit bringing their donations for the tabernacle.

The people responded accordingly. *They were restrained from bringing any more.* The generosity of the people was overwhelming and *the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it* (v. 7). This was an indication of their allegiance to the renewed covenant with the LORD and to the LORD Himself.

Biblical Text:

¹ **“Now Bezalel and Oholiab, and every skillful person in whom the Lord has put skill and understanding to know how to perform all the work in**

the construction of the sanctuary, shall perform in accordance with all that the Lord has commanded.”

² Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it. ³ They received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the sanctuary. And they still continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. ⁴ And all the skillful men who were performing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work which he was performing, ⁵ and they said to Moses, “The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which the Lord commanded us to perform.” ⁶ So Moses issued a command, and a proclamation was circulated throughout the camp, saying, “Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contributions of the sanctuary.” Thus the people were restrained from bringing any more. ⁷ For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it.