

THE TEXT OF EXODUS
TRANSLATION

35 And Mo-ses assembled all the congregation of the children of Is-ra-el, and said unto them, These are the words which Je-ho-vah hath commanded, that ye should do them. (2) Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of solemn rest to Je-ho-vah: whosoever doeth any work therein shall be put to death. (3) Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.

(4) And Mo-ses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Is-ra-el, saying, This is the thing which Je-ho-vah commanded, saying, (5) Take ye from among you an offering unto Je-ho-vah; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, Je-ho-vah's offering: gold, and silver, and brass, (6) and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, (7) and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, and acacia wood, (8) and oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense, (9) and onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the eph-od, and for the breastplate.

(10) And let every wise-hearted man among you come, and make all that Je-ho-vah hath commanded: (11) the tabernacle, its tent, and its covering, its clasps, and its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; (12) the ark, and the staves thereof, the mercy-seat, and the veil of the screen; (13) the table, and its staves, and all its vessels, and the showbread; (14) the candlestick also for the light, and its vessels, and its lamps, and the oil for the light; (15) and the altar of incense, and its staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the screen for the door, at the door of the tabernacle; (16) the altar of burnt-offering, with its grating of brass, its staves, and all its vessels, the laver and its base; (17) the hangings of the court, the pillars thereof, and their sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court; (18) the pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords; (19) the finely wrought garments, for ministering in the holy place, the holy garments

for Aar-on the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office.

(20) And all the congregation of the children of Is-ra-el departed from the presence of Mo-ses. (21) And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, *and* brought Je-ho-vah's offering, for the work of the tent of meeting, and for all the service thereof, and for the holy garments. (22) And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, *and* brought brooches, and ear-rings, and signet-rings, and armlets, all jewels of gold; even every man that offered an offering of gold unto Je-ho-vah. (23) And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, brought them. (24) Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought Je-ho-vah's offering; and every man, with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. (25) And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, the blue, and the purple, the scarlet, and the fine linen. (26) And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun the goats' *hair*. (27) And the rulers brought the onyx stones, and the stones to be set, for the eph-od, and for the breastplate; (28) and the spice, and the oil; for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. (29) The children of Is-ra-el brought a freewill-offering unto Je-ho-vah; every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all the work, which Je-ho-vah had commanded to be made by Mo-ses.

(30) And Mo-ses said unto the children of Is-ra-el, See, Je-ho-vah hath called by name Be-zal-el the son of U-ri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Ju-dah; (31) and he hath filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship; (32) and to devise skilful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, (33) and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of skilful workmanship. (34) And he hath put in his heart that he may teach both he, and O-ho-li-ab,

the son of A-his-a-mach, of the tribe of Dan. (35) Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of workmanship, of the engraver, and of the skilful 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 workmanship, and of those that devise skilful works.

EXODUS 35 - 39

These chapters repeat the material in chapters 25-31 almost word for word. The earlier chapters gave God's instructions about how to build the tabernacle. Chapters 35-39 tell how it was built part by part, following God's instructions word by word.

Naturally the forms of the verbs are changed from imperative ("thou shalt make"; 30:1) to indicative ("he made"; 37:25). Also the instructions in the earlier chapters about the *functions* of the tabernacle equipment are omitted in chapters 35-39 because the rituals associated with the tabernacle parts are given in the following books. Compare 25:30 with 37:16, and 28:35 with 39:26. Also information about how to set up the tabernacle parts is omitted in chapters 35-39 because chapter forty tells about setting up the tabernacle. Compare 25:16 with 37:5, and 30:18 with 38:18.

The *order* in which the tabernacle parts are described in 35-39 differs from the order in 25-31. Chapters 35-39 begin with a description of the basic architectural structure - the curtains, boards, bars, veil, and screen. The earlier chapters started by describing the most significant furniture - the ark, table, and lampstand. Possibly the building in which to house the items of furniture was made before the furniture. More probably a number of craftsmen were working on different parts simultaneously (see 36:2), and the order in which the parts are mentioned is not necessarily the same as the order of their construction.

The question naturally arises: Why should there be such extensive repetition of material in 35-39? Certainly it was not a mere accidental duplication of documents. The interesting additions and the rearrangements of material preclude this possibility.

Possibly the repetition was written to stress how faithfully and lovingly Moses carried out God's instructions. The phrase "as Jehovah commanded Moses" appears seven times in chapter thirty-nine and eight more times in chapter forty.

The skeptical critics at once suspect more "sources" as the explanation for repetition in 35-39. S. R. Driver¹ says, "If chapter 30 be allowed to belong to a secondary stratum of P [post-exilic Priestly writer], the same conclusion will follow for these chapters [35-39] as a necessary corollary. For in chapters 35-39 the notices referring to chapters 30-31 are introduced *in their proper order*; and chapter 30 alludes to the altar of incense." Martin Noth² regards chapters 35-39 as a later reworking of P. (He attributes chapters 25-31 to P.)

In reply to Driver we may observe that while the order in which the tabernacle parts are mentioned in chapters 30-31 is quite similar to that in 36-39, it is not identical. The anointing oil is mentioned just AFTER the laver in chapter thirty, but just after the altar of incense in chapter thirty-seven. But even if the items had been listed in exactly the same order in both groups of chapters, that would not prove multiple authorship for Exodus. It would seem to argue even more strongly for a single author for the book.

Cassuto³ has a most valuable comment. He says that the repetition in chapters 35-39 has caused some to suspect a secondary stratum of P. But this conjecture is based on ignorance of the methods employed in the composition of books in the Ancient East. Thus in the Ugaritic epic of King Keret (about 1400 B.C.), the king saw El, the father of the gods,

¹*Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Meridian, 1958), p. 42.

²*Op. cit.*, p. 274.

³*Op. cit.*, p. 453.

in a dream, and received from him instructions concerning the offering of sacrifices, the mustering of an army, and other things. At the conclusion of the instructions, we are informed that King Keret did as El had directed in his dream. And his actions are described by the literal *repetition* of the terms of the instructions, except for changes in the verb form and other very minor changes - precisely what we find in the latter section of the book of Exodus. Chapters 35-39 are not therefore a later document. They are required just where they are, and if they were not there, we should have to assume that they were missing from the text.

EXODUS 35 - 40 IN THE HEBREW AND GREEK BIBLES

In this book we have frequently referred to the wording of the Greek (Septuagint) Bible. (See Index under "Septuagint.") In chapters 1-34 there is a remarkably close overall agreement in the readings of the Hebrew and Greek Bible. There are indeed a few notable passages showing variations (for example, 1:5 and 12:40). But in most chapters only a few words, or sometimes a single verse, are different.

However, in chapters 35-40 there are very conspicuous differences between the Greek and Hebrew texts. Both tell of the construction of the tabernacle, but the order the events are related is quite different. The information is the same in both the Hebrew and the Greek, but the order of presentation certainly is not.

The question naturally arises: Which reading is closer to the original document of Exodus, the Hebrew or the Greek? How did the variations develop? Since we do not have the original document, we simply do not know. Perhaps the Dead Sea (Qumran) writings may yet shed some light on this.

Although certainty is impossible, we are strongly of the opinion that the Hebrew text (which is followed in our common

English Bibles) is preferable to the Greek reading of Ex. 35-40. Unless there is good evidence otherwise, the Hebrew Old Testament should consistently be regarded as a more trustworthy transmission of God's word than the Greek. The Greek is a translation of the Hebrew and has all the weaknesses inherent in any translation. Furthermore, Jesus endorsed the religion of the Jews as being the way of salvation (John 4:22). We suppose that this implies that He endorsed the Hebrew scriptures as the generally reliable ones.

Furthermore yet, there are certainly improbabilities in the way the Greek text of Ex. 35-40 is arranged. The very first tabernacle items described are the garments of the priests! See LXX, chapter 36. It is nearly incredible that the report about these garments actually preceded information about the making of the ark, the table, the lampstand, or the basic tabernacle structure. Also the Greek Bible mentions only the inner (linen) curtains in discussing the making of the tabernacle coverings. See LXX, 37:1-2. This just does not match up with the information in 26:1-14, whereas the Hebrew reading of 36:8-19 corresponds closely to the instructions in chapter twenty-six. Also it is very surprising to us that the Greek Bible gives information about such major items as the ark, table, and lampstand AFTER the information about less prominent things such as the curtains, veil, screen, and court. See LXX 38:1-17; 37:1-18. (See also the notes on 38:22.)

We know that in a very few verses the Greek Bible gives a reading that is more correct than the Hebrew. (For example, Psalm 19:4 has the word for "sound" [or "voice"] in the Greek Bible, rather than "line," which the Hebrew has. "Sound" makes better parallelism with the next line, and is the form quoted in the New Testament in Romans 10:18.) Nonetheless, we feel that the Hebrew Bible gives a more trustworthy form of the material in Ex. 35-40 than the Greek does.

We give here lists of the order of subject matter in Exodus 36-40 as it is given in the Hebrew Bible and in the Greek Bible.⁴

⁴Compare S. R. Driver, *Introduction to Literature of Old Testament*, p. 41.

The parallel (or nearly parallel) passages in the other version are listed alongside. Our lists start at Exodus 36:8, because the principle divergences begin there. (Admittedly Ex. 35:8-20 is arranged in a different order in the Greek than in the Hebrew, but the same material is presented.)

HEBREW (MASORETIC) TEXT

36:8-19 (Tabernacle curtains)
 36:20-34 (Boards and bars)
 36:35-38 (Veil and screen)
 37:1-9 (Ark)
 37:10-16 (Table of showbread)
 37:17-24 (Lampstand)
 37:25-28 (Altar of incense)
 37:29 (Anointing oil and incense)
 38:1-7 (Altar of burnt-offering)
 38:8 (Laver)
 38:9-20 (Court)
 38:21 (Introduction to sum of materials)
 38:22-23 (Bezalel and Oholiab)
 38:24-31 (Materials used)
 39:1-31 (Priests' garments)
 39:32 (Work finished)
 39:33-43 (Delivery of tabernacle to Moses)
 40:1-16 (Moses to rear up tab.)
 40:17-33 (Tabernacle erected)
 40:34-38 (Cloud and fire)

GREEK (SEPTUAGINT) TEXT

37:1-2 (Much omitted from Heb.)
 38:18-21 (Much omitted)
 37:3-6
 38:1-8
 38:9-12
 38:13-17
 Lacking; Compare LXX 40:5.
 38:25
 38:22-24 (Some differences)
 38:26
 37:7-18
 37:19
 37:20-21
 39:1-10
 36:8b-40 (Garments listed in same order in Heb. & Gr.)
 39:11
 39:14-23
 40:1-16 (Vss. 7-8, 11 of Heb. omitted. Some other differences also.)
 40:17-33; 38:27 (40:20b, 28, 29b-32 of Heb. omitted. LXX 38:27 resembles Heb. 40:30-32.)
 40:34-38.

GREEK TEXT

36:8a (Intro. to robes)
 36:8b-40 (Priests' garments)
 37:1-2 (Curtains. Brief)
 37:3-6 (Veil and screen)
 37:7-18 (Court)
 37:19 (Tab. service for Levites)
 37:20-21 (Bezalel & Oholiab)
 38:1-8 (Ark)
 38:9-12 (Table)
 38:13-17 (Lampstand)

HEBREW TEXT

36:8a (Intro. to tab. curtains!)
 39:1-31
 36:8b-19
 36:35-38
 38:9-20
 38:21
 38:22-23
 37:1-9
 37:10-16
 37:17-24

38:18-21 (Posts, rings, capitals, hooks, pins)	36:36, 38 (Considerably different from the Greek)
38:22-24 (Altar of burnt-offering)	38:1-7 (Numerous differences)
38:25 (Anointing oil & incense)	37:29
38:26-27 (Laver)	38:8; 40:30-32
39:1-10 (The gold, silver, brass)	38:24-31
39:11 (Israelites obey)	39:32b
39:12-13 (Leftover gold and cloth)	Lacking
39:14-23 (Items brought to Moses) (Items listed in 39:14-21 differ in order from the Heb.)	39:33-43
40:1-16 (Tabernacle set up; Greek lacks 40:7-8, 11 of Hebrew.)	40:1-16
40:17-33 (Lacks 40:28, 29b-32 of Heb.)	40:17-33
40:34-38 (Cloud and fire)	40:34-38

**EXPLORING EXODUS: CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE
QUESTIONS ANSWERABLE FROM THE BIBLE**

1. After careful reading propose a brief title or topic for chapter thirty-five.
2. What restriction was imposed on kindling fires? (35:3) Where was this to be observed?
3. Who was to give an offering? (35:5, 21, 29)
4. How are the makers of the tabernacle described? (35:10; 28:3)
5. What items are referred to as the "tabernacle" and "its tent"? (35:11; Compare 26:1, 7.)
6. What items did the men and women bring in the offering? 35:22-24)
7. What work did the wise-hearted women do? (35:25-26; Compare Prov. 31:19.)
8. Who was the leading craftsman? (35:30; Compare 31:1-5.)
9. Who was the second notable craftsman? (35:24)
10. What were the craftsmen to do besides their skilled work? (35:34)
11. How is the verb "work" translated differently in the American Standard version from the King James version? (36:1)
12. Before whom had the donated materials been placed? Who came there to receive the materials? (36:2-3)

13. When were materials being donated? (36:3)
 14. What (joyfull) complaint did the builders have about the materials available? (36:5-7)
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EXODUS THIRTY-FIVE: OFFERING, CRAFTSMEN!

I. Offering

1. Called for; 35:4-9.
2. Contributed freely; 35:20-29.

II. Craftsmen

1. Called; 35:10-19.
 2. Commissioned; 35:30—36:1.
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EXODUS THIRTY-FIVE: COMMANDS AND COMPLIANCE

I. The Lord's commands

1. Sabbath rest; 35:1-3.
2. Free-will offering; 35:4-9.
3. Wise-hearted men to come; 35:10-19.

II. The people's compliance

1. Offering collected; 35:20-29.
 2. Workmen commissioned; 35:30—36:1.
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A BUILDING COMMITTEE'S DREAM! (35:20-29)

1. Immediate response. (35:20-29).
 2. Willing earnest response. (35:21-22).
 3. Sacrificial response. (35:22-24).
 4. Working response. (35:25-26).
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WISE-HEARTED MEN! (35:10, 30—36:1)

1. Filled with God's Spirit; (35:30-31).
 2. Skilled in work; (35:32, 35).
 3. Committed to teach others; (35:34).
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EXPLORING EXODUS: NOTES ON CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

1. *What are the parallel passages to the sections in chapter thirty-five?*

(1) 35:1-3 (on Sabbath): 20:8-11; 31:12-17; 34:21.

(2) 35:4-9, 20-29 (on offering): 25:1-7.

(3) 35:10-19 (on craftsmen): 31:1-11; 35:30—36:1; 38:22-23.

2. *What was the law about fires on the Sabbath day? (35:1-3)*

No fires were to be kindled on the Sabbath days throughout their habitations. Fire was certainly permissible at the tabernacle on the sabbaths for the sabbath sacrifices (Num. 28:9-10). It was only in their habitations that fire was not kindled.

This law is not stated elsewhere in the O.T. However, Ex. 16:23 does indicate that the manna for the Sabbath was to be cooked the day before the Sabbath. This law about no fires on the sabbath days strengthens the view that the seventh-day rest was never designed to be kept in all climates by all nations.

Note (in 35:1) that Moses assembled ALL the congregation of Israel. What a huge assembly this was, unless the expression refers only to the heads of the class as representatives of all the people. However, 35:20 indicates that "all the congregation departed from the presence of Moses" to go get their offerings.

The Sabbath was to be a "holy day," literally "holiness." (35:2)

The "sabbath of solemn rest" (Heb., *shabbath shabbaton*)

was a "sabbath of entire rest." See 31:15.

The reference to the sabbath in 35:1-3 comes as a surprise so soon after the command in 34:21. Even though 35:1-3 seems to be somewhat associated with the covenant stipulations of chapter thirty-four, the text makes clear that the commandment of 35:1-3 was delivered on a separate occasion from those spoken of in 34:31-32. Israel needed to be reminded to keep the sabbath days during the construction of the tabernacle.

3. *Who was to give an offering?* (35:4-9)

"Every one" (Heb., "all") who was willing (or generous) in heart was to bring an offering. The willingness is strongly stressed. See 35:21, 22, 29. Grateful hearts give willingly. God loves a cheerful giver (II Cor. 9:7). The temple of God cannot be built unless everyone takes a part (Eph. 4:16).

The offering is called (in Hebrew) a "heave-offering" (*terumah*). See 25:2; 29:27-28. This refers to something "lifted-up" (figuratively) as an offering to God.

See 25:3-7 concerning the materials mentioned in 35:5-9.

4. *How are the makers of the tabernacle described?* (35:10-19)

They were "wise of heart." (28:3; 31:1-5). Their "wisdom" was that which was shown by manual and artistic skill. See 35:31-32.

The construction work was not limited to Bezalel and Oholiab (35:30, 34), but was shared by every wise-hearted man.

"Covering" in K.J.V. of 35:12 refers to the entrance curtain, or screen, at the door of the Holy Place.

"Tabernacle" in 35:11 refers only to the inner linen curtains. See 36:8. "Tent" in 35:11 refers to the goats' hair curtains. See 36:14. The term "tabernacle" (same Hebrew word as in 35:11) refers to the entire structure. Thus the term "tabernacle" (*mishkan*) had both a broad application and a specific narrow application.

"Cloths of service" in K.J.V. 35:19 are the priests' garments. See 31:10; 39:1, 4.

5. *What items were brought as offerings?* (35:20-24, 27-29)

They brought items of jewelry - brooches (K.J.V., "bracelets"); earrings (the same term applies to both earrings and nose-rings. See Gen. 35:4; Ezek. 16:12; Isa. 3:21); signet-rings (Signet-rings had carved designs on them which were used to stamp the owner's name on documents.); armlets (K.J.V., "tablets." Literally "globules," probably referring to strings of beads, or necklaces).

Note that the rulers brought some expensive items - onyx stones, spices, etc. (35:27-28; 28:9, 17-20).

6. *What work did the wise-hearted women do?* (35:25-26)

They spun goats' hair into yarn, which was then woven into cloth. See Prov. 31:19. Spinning was done with a stick about eighteen inches long. It bore a round weight (called a spindle-whorl) on one end. This served as a fly-wheel to help rotate the spindle. A hook on the opposite end caught the raw wool, and the rotating motion twisted it into thread or yarn.

7. *Who were the two principal tabernacle workmen?* (35:30—36:1)

Bezalel and Oholiab. See 31:1-6; 38:22-23. The obscure tribe at Dan was honored by supplying a craftsman, as well as the prominent tribe of Judah.

These men not only did artistic and craft work themselves, but they taught others. "A light that cannot kindle other lights is but a feeble flame." (J. H. Hertz)

The work of making the tabernacle could only be done by those with divine enlightenment from the Holy Spirit. See 35:31-35. Note that Gen. 41:38 speaks of administrative ability and wisdom in social affairs as "the spirit of God." We do not often think of manual work and administrative ability as something that the Spirit of God assists. But on various occasions this has been so, and probably still is.

The word "engraver" in 35:35 is translated from a verb meaning to "cut" or "engrave." The "skilful workman" (K.J.V., "cunning workman") of 35:35 is one who devises and thinks out artistic designs and then produces them.

8. *Is the division between chapters 35 and 36 correct?*

It is not correct if chapters are expected to be rather complete blocks of subject matter. The discussion about the workmen in chapter 35 goes right on to 36:7, or at least to 36:1.

Possibly one reason for separating chapters 35 and 36 at the point where they are divided was the faulty translation of 36:1 in the Greek Bible (which is followed in the K.J.V.). It translates the verb "work" as a past (aorist), "wrought." The Hebrew very plainly gives it as a future (a perfect with *waw* consecutive), which should be rendered "shall work."

THE TEXT OF EXODUS
TRANSLATION

36 And Be-zal-el and O-ho-li-ab shall work, and every wise-hearted man, in whom Je-ho-vah hath put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all the work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that Je-ho-vah hath commanded.

(2) And Mo-ses called Be-zal-el and O-ho-li-ab, and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart Je-ho-vah had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it: (3) and they received of Mo-ses all the offering which the children of Is-ra-el had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, wherewith to make it. And they brought yet unto him freewill-offerings every morning. (4) And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they wrought; (5) and they spake unto Mo-ses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which Je-ho-vah commanded to make. (6) And Mo-ses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from