

“Father Knows Best”
Exodus Chapter 35

Moses comes down from Mount Sinai with the second tables of stone. The glory of the LORD has appeared and Moses' face shone with that glory. This chapter centers on the work that needs to be done, the rest that needs to be taken, and the offering that needs to be collected.

The building of the Tabernacle is in addition to the regular work of the camp. The camp work would be considerable. Everything is done by hand, from making of clothes and tents to the collection of manna and wood. Children and animals need to be fed and cared for. God has always provided His people with work, for it is in their best interests (Gen. 2:15; Eph. 4:28).

All work must be finished in six days. The LORD knew that the temptation for many would be to work on the Sabbath, so the death penalty is the punishment. Our heavenly Father knows what is best for His children. Although this may seem harsh to us we must remember the historical context. This is a “stiff necked people” (Ex. 32:9, 33:3; Deut. 9:6). Despite all the miracles of deliverance from Egypt and God's provision in the wilderness, they fell back into idolatry with the golden calf. The soul that sins will surely die (Ezek. 18:4). The setting apart of the Sabbath day would cause them to remember the LORD and the creation account (Ex. 20:8-11). A nation that forgets the Lord as Creator and ignores His holy day, suffers the consequences. In our own land, the Lord's Day is profaned and God as Creator has been replaced by the blind chance of evolution! Sabbath means rest, and Christ fulfills the Sabbath as our rest (Matt. 11:28-30, 12:8; Col. 2:16) and pays the penalty for our sins by His death (Rom. 6:23; Col. 1:14)!

The offering is commanded by the LORD to supply the materials for the Tabernacle. However, it is to be given by those of a willing heart (verses 5 & 21). They are to bring of their possessions, for they could not purchase what was needed in the wilderness. They, like us, needed the reminder that all that we possess is not ours but His. We are simply stewards of that which is given from God (Luke 12:42-48). God could have made the most beautiful Tabernacle by speaking it into existence, like He did the universe in creation. But God in His grace allows His people to participate in His plan and work to bring Him the glory (Matt. 5:16). God loves a cheerful giver, providing an abundance for every good work (2Cor. 9:7-8).