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Sermon preached by the late Mr. J E Hazelton on March 3rd 1907

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship., to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber to work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold I, have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisemach of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that be wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee." Exodus 31:1-6.

As the Lord may enable us we will consider this morning these two Israelites whose names, the Holy Ghost by Moses gives to us, in connection with the Tabernacle. Bezaleel and Aholiab were two gracious Israelites who were selected by God for the principal work of the Tabernacle, and their names and their work are equally significant. Bezaleel means 'in the shadow of God' - Aholiab signifies 'Tent of my Father.' 'Shadow of God' and 'Tent of my Father.' Aaron the High Priest of Israel was a glorious type in many respects of our great High Priest above. Moses, their prophet and mediator, was a type in a very striking manner of a greater than Moses, for not until the Lord Jesus Christ did there arise in Israel a prophet like unto Moses. Moses was a mediator, and Christ is *the Mediator*, but the great connection between them is found in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, where the Holy Ghost says there was no other prophet like unto Moses who saw the Lord face to face. Moses did this through the revelation of the Father, whom the Lord Jesus Christ also saw face to face, having come down from above to work out His Father's good will and pleasure. All the priests were emblems of the people of God, and what can we say to these divinely qualified workmen, the men to whom God committed the construction of the most sacred symbol that ever existed - the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat; - the men who cut the precious stones, carved, the timber, wrought the curtains, and did everything in accordance with the pattern shown to Moses in the Mount? Why, without in the least wresting God's Word, we may well understand that Bezaleel and Aholiab together represent in their names and offices our ever blessed Redeemer. Just as those two men were the constructors of the Tabernacle, so He whom they set forth is the Builder of His Church. What does our glorious Redeemer say? "On this Rock I will build My Church." and the builders Bezaleel and Aholiab are the types of the Builder of the Church, even Christ Jesus our Lord, What did He say in relation to the temple or tabernacle of His own Body? "Destroy it and in three days I will raise or build it again." This spake He of the temple of His Body. What does the great Builder say concerning the future glory? "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He will appear in His glory." What does the Holy Ghost say in the 9th chapter of Proverbs? "Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars," - that is, the Church of the living God, and the seven pillars represent God the Holy Ghost in the sevenfold perfection and diversity of His work, and if you carefully go through the qualifications of Bezaleel and Aholiab, you will find seven mentioned here, - the seven spirits before the Throne, or the one Spirit in His sevenfold manifestation. Then turn to the 11th of Isaiah and you will find the same blessed truth set forth: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him (typified by Aholiab and Bezaleel), the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Here are seven again and putting these by the side of the seven in our subject this morning, with the meaning of the words Bezaleel and

Aholiab, we have a picture of our great and glorious Lord, the Foundation of His Church, and its Builder. He is not only building His Church as one great and glorious temple, but building each of his people individually, and has placed you and me in just the positions which His love and wisdom designs that we should occupy. The Spirit of the Lord is upon Him to make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; to give Him the tongue of the learned, and the ear wherewith He listens to His Father's voice.

Let us look briefly at Bezaleel and Aholiab, first as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, and secondly as an example of the spirit which should animate all God's servants. First, the Lord the Builder, and secondly the servants of the Lord. Looking at our Lord Jesus Christ as the Builder of, this glorious House, think for a moment of Bezaleel's name, - 'In the shadow of God.' John tells us in the 18th verse of his first chapter, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him. Bezaleel, - but is there any darkness in God? No darkness excepting that of which Milton speaks when he says 'dark with excess of light.' "No man hath seen. God at any time," but He who dwelleth in the bosom and shadow of God, He hath declared Him. He came forth from God's bosom to sojourn here for 33 years, and during the whole course of His life on earth Jehovah was His dwelling place; even when suffering upon the Cross, and laying the foundation of the temple of the Lord by His death, still He trusted and knew He would not be confounded. In the shadow of God!

Who was Bezaleel the son of? Of Uri. And what does that name mean? 'Light.' Who was he the grandson of? - Hur - and that means whiteness. Now look at our blessed Lord, God's own workman! He leaves His Father's bosom, and comes down to earth to take upon Himself our nature. As the Apostle says in the epistle to the Hebrews - "Consider how great this man was. (It is true these words occur in connection with Melchizedec, but they bear upon our Lord.) Consider how great this Man was! God's co-equal and co-eternal Son. Light of Light (Bezaleel the son. of Uri), taking a human nature of white and dazzling purity and lustre. He comes from the shadow of God, the bosom of the Father, to declare the love of the Father and that God means and will say to His dear Church and people. Thus our Bezaleel carries on the glorious work of building His Church, until, viewing it as if actually completed, He says in the 17th chapter of John, "Father, I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Such was Christ when here below, He came to furnish a dwelling place for God, and to make a kingdom of priests unto God and His Father.

Think for a moment of what the Holy Ghost says in the 49th chapter of Isaiah. There He is described as saying "In the shadow of His Hand hath He hid Me, and made Me a polished shaft," and so our blessed Lord, as the Man Christ Jesus, was prepared by the sevenfold unction of the Holy Spirit for all the offices of redeeming love. He was anointed with the full measure of the Spirit, nay, the Spirit was given to Him without measure. "He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned" (Isaiah 50:4) and in obedience He came forth to glorify God on earth and to finish the work which he had given Him to do. How poor and faint was the work of Bezaleel compared with the work of Jesus! Do we know the work of Jesus? "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted." These are the people of God in this stormy, death-filled, sin stricken world of ours; this is a poor sinner feeling the guilt of sin. What is to be done? "Behold, I (He who cuts the stones) will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." (Isaiah 54:12). I will turn thy sorrow into joy, and

make all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. This is the work of Bezaleel, and surely God's own children today can say again and again 'When I have been tossed with tempest and not comforted, the Lord has blessed me and I know a little of what it is to rest upon the foundations that are laid with sapphires, - the heavenly love of Him whose love knows neither beginning nor end. "I will turn thy sorrow into joy, and work these great and glorious things on thy behalf. So much for the name of Bezaleel!

But then the Lord by Moses says, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God" and this is the sevenfold work of the Spirit. Was not the Spirit of God displayed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in those deep and wondrous blendings of grace and truth which that life set forth? Did He not learn obedience by the things which He suffered? Did He not have, as the Man Christ Jesus, skill in dealing with the poor and needy, sympathy with the afflicted and sorrowful, succour for the tried and the tempted? "The Lord hath given Me the tongue of the learned that I should know, how to speak a word in season to him that is weary? He hath filled Me with the Spirit of God to devise cunning works, in cutting of stones and in carving of all timber, and in all manner of workmanship. Bless God for that! THERE IS NOTHING OUTSIDE THE SKILL OF OUR COVENANT HEAD, nothing in our lives outside the range of Him who is skilled to work in all manner of workmanship! In connection with the Tabernacle, do you not read mortice and tenon, all brought and fitted together? So the whole building of the Church "fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." All things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to His purpose." The cutting of stones, the engraving of all hearts, and the embroidering of life and of character, all is the result of our Divine and glorious Lord in Heaven working here in and by the ministry of His own blessed Spirit.

Then again, Bezaleel and Aboliab taught others! This we see in the 6th, verse where a company of wise-hearted were to make all that was commanded by God. In the 34th verse of the 35th chapter you will find this written concerning Bezaleel, - "He hath put in his heart that he may teach;" - He was called to teach whom? The wise hearted who resorted to him willingly, and Bezaleel gladly taught them. How was it that there were wise hearted ones who resorted to be taught? The Lord says "I have put wisdom in their hearts; therefore they are wise hearted. GRACE FIRST! The wise hearted came to Bezaleel, and he was glad to teach them according to all that he had been commanded, and thus our blessed Lord is looking out and expecting the coming to Him of the wise hearted ones. He is not surprised, because all come to Him in whose hearts the Lord puts wisdom; and if there is a sinner here who is just wanting Jesus, who is feeling his own need, mourning over guilt and saying 'Lord, to whom can I go, Thou hast the words of eternal life,' God has put wisdom into his heart to know himself as a lost and ruined sinner, and to know that Christ, and Christ alone, can save. So Bezaleel stands for our Lord in His prophetic office, for Him who teacheth to profit, line upon line, - precept upon precept. He is our Prophet to teach, our Priest to atone, and our King to govern and to rule.

Have you noticed right through the Tabernacle construction what emphasis God the Holy Ghost lays upon the heart? We read of the wise hearted, the willing hearted and of those who are stirred up in heart. Do you know anything of heart stir for Jesus? Heart stir to be taught of Him, hear stir to be engaged in His service, and to be taught by Him in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and who stands in the midst of his people.

*Come, ye humble sinner train,
Souls for whom the Lamb was slain.*

The Lord by his Spirit always deals with the heart and conscience of His people, and the Apostle in the 1st of Ephesians tells us the sum and substance of his teaching, which is, that we may know what is the hope of His calling, to know Him in His life on earth, in His sin-atonement death on Calvary, in His resurrection power, in His High Priestly work, and second coming in glory. Now the Tabernacle sets forth all this; the Tabernacle that Bezaleel and Aholiab built under the teaching of God's Spirit.

Aholiab, - tent of my Father - that is, God as revealed the Father of His people through His Son, who manifests Him. His only begotten Son who was in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. Oh! No-one else can reveal to a poor sinner's heart the Fatherhood of God, but Christ Jesus the Lord in and by the teaching of the Spirit. Hence always bear this in mind, dear young friends especially, that not simply the Incarnation of our Lord shows that God is the Father. The universal Fatherhood of God! Oh, the soul deluding and soul destroying things that are said on this subject! God's Word does not tell us this. What then connects us as children with God the Father? Not just the Incarnation of the Son of God, but *Regeneration* by His Holy Spirit. Look at the Jews when our Lord was on earth! They were in physical proximity to Him, but were they joined with Him? Was there any relationship, deep and vital, between the unbelieving Jews and God manifest in the flesh? No! the "crowd pressed" but only one woman *touch*ed Him We can never know God as our Father unless we have experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in our souls, the new birth, the Life Divine which links us vitally to Jesus. Then we see Him, the Tent of my Father, and the revelation of the Fatherhood of God to our soul.

Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, which means 'my supporting Brother:' Put these together, 'Tent of my Father' and 'my supporting Brother' and the Brother born for adversity appears for us.

Let us look now at these two workmen as emblematical of the Lord's servants. In the 2nd verse we have this message, See I have called by name Bezaleel and Aholiab; and only such a calling can create gracious confidence, and give solid comfort to the heart in service or elsewhere What does it mean? Not necessarily an audible call in my heart to this service or that, but a distinct and powerful impression through God's own Word, and His work of grace in my heart, that He has called me by His Spirit.

The Apostle in the 4th of Philipians and the 3rd verse speak of fellow labourers whose names are in the Book of Life. 'See I have called by name.' He calleth His own sheep by name and leadeth them out" and surely He doth know our names. If we have been led out from the world, from the love and guilt and power of sin to a precious Saviour's feet - that is calling by name. If we have been brought in all our emptiness to Him in whom all fullness dwells, that is a calling. Does not this encourage us to talk to Him about our service? He does not say I will give a little, but "I have filled him with the Spirit of God."

*Thou art coming to a King,
Large petitions with thee bring,
For His grace and bower are such
None can ever ask too much.*

What was Bezaleel when the Lord called him? He was empty - positively empty. That is plain from a reading of this section. And what did He call him for? He called him to be filled. And what had Bezaleel been made? He had been made just ready to hold what God would be pleased to put in. He was a different sort of man from Aholiab - both good and gracious men - and they were both entirely different to the smaller men in whose hearts the Lord put wisdom; but the same Spirit taught them all, for there are various shapes and capacities, but the same 'Spirit, for it is God that worketh all and in all.

Notice in relation to Christian service that there is this calling; it is the calling of the empty ones to whom God gives a capacity to receive that which He is pleased to pour into them, a capacity to receive of Him in abundance. Bezaleel had just as much wisdom and knowledge as he required for the performance of the wonderful work to which God had been pleased to call him. May God give us grace to take our vessels to the Fountain and to receive there the best of all qualifications!

In the 4th and 5th verses we have the works to which these two men were called - cutting stones, cunning works, carving timber etc. etc. They were taught of God. If we are filled in our little measure (our Bezaleel was filled without measure with the Spirit - His nature was Infinite), we shall be among those who are described as workmen that need not to be ashamed. This is the qualification I pray for myself and for all engaged in the Lord's service, - just to be taught of the Lord. Our tools are often terribly dull in the cutting and carving. What is the remedy? The oil of grace and the whetstone of prayer. Their hearts stirred them up to come unto the work to do it. Heart stir to seek the Lord; heart stir to visit His House. Oh, that God would stir up the hearts of some of my dear people in this respect.

Finally. All this service to which Bezaleel and Aholiab and God's sent servants are called is under God's eye. He calls them by name, endues them with His Spirit, and all is under His eye.

They were to work in gold, in silver and in brass. What did that mean? The furnace and the anvil. What does that represent? Trial, weariness, faintness, but all under the eye of Him who hath called us to the work. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Oh that God would make us wise hearted and give us more and more supplies of His fulness when at His feet, and in communion with Him!

*Oh, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame:*

'Learn of Me' says our Bezaleel, 'for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find, rest unto your souls.' Oh, that the blessing which rested upon Bezaleel and Aholiab and all the wise hearted might rest upon us, for it maketh rich and He addeth no sorrow thereto.