



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

## Exodus 35:20-29 & 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 English Standard Version May 6, 2018

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, May 6, 2018**, is from **Exodus 35:20-29 & 2 Corinthians 9:6-8**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(Exodus 35:20) Then all the congregation of the people of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.**

When the Hebrews left their life of slavery in Egypt, Moses led them forth as a wealthy people, for the LORD God influenced the Egyptians to pay them in arrears (an extremely large amount overdue them) for their 400 years of slavery. The LORD told Moses: "Tell the people that men and women alike are to ask their neighbors for articles of silver and gold. (The LORD made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and Moses himself was highly regarded in Egypt by Pharaoh's officials and by the people)" (Exodus 11:2-3). By grace, God extended justice and mercy to the Hebrews for their unjust treatment by Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and He met all their material needs before they left for the Promised Land: "The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The LORD had made the Egyptians

favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians” (Exodus 12:35-36).

After the LORD led Moses and His people to the Promised Land, He gave them the law and instructions for building the tabernacle (the tent of meeting), where He would dwell in the midst of His people and meet with Moses. Then, the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses to obey the LORD.

**(Exodus 35:21) And they came, everyone whose heart stirred him, and everyone whose spirit moved him, and brought the LORD’s contribution to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the holy garments.**

After they left Moses, most of the Israelites willingly and out of thankfulness for all the LORD had done for them (if not yet out of true love for the LORD) began to give out of their abundant possessions as well as their time and service to construct what the LORD had commanded them to build. The materials they gave included all that was needed for the priests to be properly clothed as the LORD commanded during their service at the tabernacle, for implements used in worship, and for the construction of the tent of meeting.

**(Exodus 35:22) So they came, both men and women. All who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets, all sorts of gold objects, every man dedicating an offering of gold to the LORD.**

These gifts were freely given by the Israelites and not under compulsion. The LORD did not make the people “favorably disposed” toward Him as He had made the Egyptians “favorably disposed” toward the Israelites. They gave willingly. The Israelites obeyed the LORD out of a sincere gratitude for all the LORD had done for them in truly and decisively freeing them from slavery, defeating their enemies, keeping them safe, giving them a leader like Moses, revealing a just law in the Ten Commandments to teach moral behavior to their leaders and them, revealing His presence with them day and night, feeding them bread and meat in the wilderness among other

blessings. This “wave offering” was a solemn offering to the LORD and was designated especially for the LORD’s special use and would also benefit them. This wave offering was not burned or consumed or used by the priests for their use. It was exclusively and freely given to pay for the building of the tabernacle. These precious metals (from the jewelry and ornaments given to them by the Egyptians) would be recast for the LORD’s use. The Hebrews gave what they could have saved for their security or worn to beautify themselves outwardly in order to beautify the tabernacle for the LORD’ enjoyment, for they would never see most of the beautiful objects used in temple worship that were made from their gifts for use by the priests inside the tabernacle.

**(Exodus 35:23) And every one who possessed blue or purple or scarlet yarns or fine linen or goats’ hair or tanned rams’ skins or goatskins brought them.**

They also gave many of the most beautiful and costly garments and other fabrics that the Egyptians had lavished on them when the LORD influenced the Egyptians to look favorably upon them and bless them.

**(Exodus 35:24) Everyone who could make a contribution of silver or bronze brought it as the LORD’s contribution. And every one who possessed acacia wood of any use in the work brought it.**

The LORD had made certain that all their material needs would be met and all they would need for building the tabernacle would be provided when they left Egypt. In the wilderness, they would not have access to these building materials or a place to buy them. Only if they freely gave from what the LORD had given them earlier would the materials for building the tabernacle be provided. The LORD’s presence with them and providing a place for the LORD to dwell in their midst meant more to them than their most precious or practical possessions.

**(Exodus 35:25) And every skillful woman spun with her hands, and they all brought what they had spun in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen.**

Both men and women were involved in providing for the construction of the tabernacle. They gave of their possessions (including yarn and fine linen) that the LORD had given them, and they gave of their talents (they spun with their hands), and they gave of their time in the construction of the tabernacle. They became excellent examples for their children and grandchildren who would follow the LORD.

**(Exodus 35:26) All the women whose hearts stirred them to use their skill spun the goats' hair.**

The Bible teaches us how important the work of the women was in the building of the tabernacle (where goat hair was needed for the outer covering of the tent of meeting) and in the creating of garments for the priests to wear during worship (not their daily clothing). Again, the Book of Exodus teaches that all these gifts of time, talent, and treasure were “freely given” and not given under compulsion. No doubt the Holy Spirit was involved in their giving as an influence within them, but not as a cause of their giving contrary to their thankfulness to the LORD and their willingness to obey Him.

**(Exodus 35:27) And the leaders brought onyx stones and stones to be set, for the ephod and for the breastpiece,**

The ephod was a garment worn by the high priest along with the breastpiece. The leaders would most likely have been the leaders of the various twelve tribes of Israel including the Levitical priests. The onyx stones and gems probably belonged to the more wealthy tribal leaders of the Israelites, who also wanted to contribute to the building of the tent of meeting. The stones and gems would have decorated the garments of the high priest, and perhaps other priests when they served at the tabernacle. Hebrews from every social status wanted to contribute to the LORD's work.

**(Exodus 35:28) and spices and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense.**

In the Book of Revelation, the bowls of incense represent the prayers of the saints; perhaps the incense used in the tabernacle worship service

represented the prayers of the people that the priests offered to the LORD in their behalf. The ingredients for the incense and lamp oil were also provided by the Israelites.

**(Exodus 35:29) All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that the LORD had commanded by Moses to be done brought it as a freewill offering to the LORD.**

The Book of Exodus continues to emphasize that all those who gave to the LORD's work, both men and women, did so willingly and not under compulsion from God, from Moses, from tribal leaders, or from peer pressure. These were freewill offerings, and almost everyone wanted to play a part in doing the LORD's will when He told them what to do to provide for His worship and the assurance of His presence in their midst.

**(2 Corinthians 9:6) The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.**

The Apostle Paul used an illustration from farming that would have been easily understood by his readers. If a farmer sowed 160 acres with corn or wheat, he would normally reap more than a nearby farmer with similar soil who only sowed 80 acres of his 160 acres. In the spiritual realm, usually those who spend more time in worship, Bible study, prayer, studied giving to serve the Lord, and in helping others in the Name of the Lord will reap more spiritually than those who spend half that time or no time at all trying to please the Lord or obey His commands.

**(2 Corinthians 9:7) Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.**

Just as the ancient Hebrews that God had rescued from slavery in Egypt gave freely to promote the proper worship of the LORD, so Paul commended Christians who decided what to give and then gave what they had decided (the Lord Jesus being their Helper and Provider just as the

LORD had first given the Hebrews more than they needed to give to His work). Once again, giving freely means giving what one wants to give, and not because a person feels compelled to give. Those who request Christians give to promote the Lord's work should not use compulsory arguments, appeals to guilt feelings, appeals to selfishness, or other immoral means to achieve their goals. Furthermore, those who give should not do so with reluctance (preferring not to give or preferring to use the resources the Lord has given them for their own use rather than give for the Lord's use). God loves givers who give cheerfully to achieve His purposes, and especially those who give cheerfully because they love the Lord Jesus and want to serve Him and His people.

**(2 Corinthians 9:8) And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.**

Paul stimulates our faith by reminding Christians that God has the ability and the resources to bless us beyond what we need so we can have the ability and resources to do every good work that the Lord wants us to do. How different the work of the Church and Christians would be if Christians blessed with an abundance read the Scriptures and prayed so they would know and do what the Lord Jesus wanted them to do with the blessings they have received from God. God has called the Church and all Christians to abound in good works as they by faith follow the Lord's leading and use His gifts of time, talent, and treasure to do His will.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. How did the Hebrews have so much to give toward the building of the tabernacle?
2. Why do you think the Hebrews gave what they gave?
3. Who gave and what were some of the things they gave?
4. How did the Hebrews give?
5. How does the Lord Jesus want Christians to give?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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Contact: P.O. Box 1052, Edmond, Oklahoma, 73083 and [lgp@theiblf.com](mailto:lgp@theiblf.com).