**Research: on Bezaleel and the Tabernacle artwork**

Ex 31:1-5

1And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

“**I have called by name.**—It is a high honour to be called of God *by name.*He thus calls only those whom He appoints to some great work, as Moses. . .

**“Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur.**—Hur, the grandfather of Bezaleel, is generally supposed to be identical with the Hur who supported Moses’s hands ([Exodus 17:12](http://biblehub.com/exodus/17-12.htm)), and was left joint regent with Aaron when Moses went up into Mount Sinai ([Exodus 24:14](http://biblehub.com/exodus/24-14.htm)). There is, however, no evidence of this beyond the identity of the name.

**“Of the tribe of Judah.**—Descended from Judah through Pharez, Hezron, and Caleb” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Ellicott’s Commentary).

“The Israelites, who had been masons and bricklayers in Egypt, were not qualified for curious workmanship; but the Spirit who gave the apostles utterance in divers tongues, miraculously gave Bezaleel and Aholiab the skill that was wanting. The honour which comes from God, is always attended with a work to be done; to be employed for God is high honour. Those whom God calls to any service, he will find or make fit for it. The Lord gives different gifts to different persons; let each mind his proper work, diligently remembering that whatever wisdom any one possesses, the Lord put it in the heart, to do his commandments” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Matthew Henry’s Commentary).

3And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

“Artistic ability is a Divine gift, a very precious gift, best employed in God’s direct service, and always to be employed in subordination to His will, as an improving, elevating, and refining—not as a corrupting—influence.

**In wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge.**—By “wisdom” is probably meant the power to invent and originate artistic forms; by “understanding,” the ability to appreciate artistic suggestions received from others; by “knowledge,” acquaintance with the methods and processes of art. Bezaleel was to possess all these gifts.

**In all manner of workmanship.**—He was also to possess that wonderful dexterity of hand on which the power of artistic execution mainly depends. ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Matthew Henry’s Commentary).

4To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

5And in cutting of stones, to set *them,* and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

“To devise cunning works,.... To invent, contrive, and draw patterns, for the weavers particularly, for the making of the curtains of the tabernacle, the vail of the most holy place, the ephod, and the curious girdle of it, which were made of cunning work, curiously wrought by the weaver;

“to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass; for it is not to be supposed there were either goldsmiths or brasiers among the Israelites; only masons and bricklayers, and brickmakers, and such sort of manufacturers; so that Bezaleel had need of immediate wisdom from the Spirit of God, not only to devise curious works in these several things as in others, but to teach men how to work in them, what tools to work with, and how to use them, how to melt these several metals, and into what forms and shapes to put them, and then to polish them; as there were some things in the temple to be made of gold, as the candlestick, others of silver, as the sockets of the tabernacle, and others of brass, as the altar of burnt offering, and its vessels, with other things” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Gill’s Exposition of the Bible).

Ex 38:23

23And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen.

“This is the sum of the tabernacle—Having completed his description of the component parts of the tabernacle, the inspired historian digresses into a statement respecting the gold and silver employed in it, the computation being made according to an order of Moses—by the Levites, under the direction of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary).

Ex 39:32, 43

32¶ Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished:

43And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.

**“Moses did look upon all the work**—i.e., inspected it, examined it, to see if it was according to the pattern” shown him. Being satisfied, he expressed his own and God’s approval by blessing those who had worked so faithfully” ([www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com), Ellicott’s Commentary).

“Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded—A formal inspection was made on the completion of the tabernacle, not only with a view to have the work transferred from the charge of the workmen, but to ascertain whether it corresponded with "the pattern." The result of a careful and minute survey showed that every plank, curtain, altar, and vase had been most accurately made of the form, and in the place designed by the Divine Architect—and Moses, in accepting it of their hands, thanked God for them, and begged Him to bless them” (lwww.biblehub.com, Jamieson-Fausset-Brown).