

Exodus 38:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And 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.

Analysis

Aholiab's partnership 'with him' demonstrates collaborative ministry—'an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer' (חֶשֶׁב וֶרֶקֶשׁ, charash ve-choshev ve-rokem) in the colored threads. The three specific skills (engraving, designing, embroidering) represent diverse expertise united in common purpose, teaching that God's work requires varied gifts working in harmony. Aholiab (from Dan, northern tribe) partnering with Bezaleel (from Judah, southern tribe) demonstrates that building God's house transcends tribal and regional boundaries—all contribute according to Spirit-given abilities regardless of background.

Historical Context

Aholiab's specific skills (particularly embroidery in colored threads) complemented Bezaleel's strengths (metalwork and construction). Their documented partnership demonstrates intentional collaboration in ancient specialized craftsmanship, setting pattern for cooperative ministry. Dan's contribution through Aholiab ensured northern tribes' participation in tabernacle construction.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does the partnership of diverse skills (Bezaleel and Aholiab) teach about complementary gifts in building God's house?
2. How does tribal diversity (Judah and Dan) in leadership demonstrate that God's work transcends human boundaries and requires all contributions?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	בְּאָהָלִיא	בְּגַן	בֶּן	אַחִיסָמָךְ	לִמְטָה	דָן
H854	And with him was Aholiab	H171	H1121	son of Ahisamach	of the tribe	of Dan
				H294	H4294	H1835
שָׁבֵךְ	וְחַסֵּךְ	בְּרַקְעֵן	לְתַתְּ	בְּתַכְכִּים		
H2796	an engraver	H2803	H7551	in blue		
				H8504		
וְבַשְׂשִׁים	בְּשַׂנְןִים	וּבְתַולְעָתִים	וּבְאַרְגָּמָן			
and in purple	H8438	and in scarlet	H8144	and fine linen	H8336	
H713						

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 35:34 (Parallel theme): And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan.

Exodus 31:6 (Parallel theme): And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee;

