Exodus Chapter Thirty One

Overview of Exodus Chapter 31

Exodus chapter 31 is divided into three sections: (1) The Lord appoints Bezalel and Oholiab and other craftsmen to construct the tabernacle (1-11). (2) The Lord gives Moses laws concerning the Sabbath (12-17). (3) The Lord presents Moses with the Ten Commandments (18).

In Exodus 25-30, the Lord presents Moses with instructions on Mount Sinai regarding the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishing along with instructions concerning the proper procedures to worship Him. Now, in Exodus 31:1-11, the Lord informs Moses as to which persons in Israel He wants to build the tabernacle. Then, in Exodus 31:12-17, the Lord completes communicating to Moses the covenant instructions on Mount Sinai. This took forty days and forty nights. In these verses the Lord returns to the subject of the Sabbath reminding Moses of the importance that the Israelites obey His instructions concerning it. Lastly, in verse 18, the Lord presents to Moses the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone.

It is fitting that the Lord would end His instructions to Moses by presenting Moses in writing on tablets of stone, the Ten Commandments since this long discourse by the Lord began in Exodus 20:1 with aural reception of the Ten Commandments. Thus, Exodus 20:1-31:18 begins and ends with the Ten Commandments. First was the aural reception and then they are presented to Moses in written form at the end of the Sinai discourse. Exodus 31:12-18 is not only identifying the craftsmen who are to carry out the Lord’s instructions concerning the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings but also it provides comprehensive summary of chapters 25-30.

Exodus 31:1-11: The Lord Appoints Bezalel and Oholiab and Other Craftsmen to Construct Tabernacle

Exodus 31:1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, 4 to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, 5 and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship. 6 And behold, I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill, that they may make all that I have commanded you: 7 the tent of meeting, and the
ark of testimony, and the mercy seat upon it, and all the furniture of the tent, 
8 the table also and its utensils, and the pure gold lampstand with all its 
utensils, and the altar of incense, 9 the altar of burnt offering also with all its 
utensils, and the laver and its stand, 10 the woven garments as well, and the 
holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, with which 
to carry on their priesthood; 11 the anointing oil also, and the fragrant 
incense for the holy place, they are to make them according to all that I have 
commanded you.” (NASB95)

Verse 2 reveals that God selected “Bezalel” (BEHZ-uh-lehl) to oversee the 
construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings. This verse says that he 
descended from the tribe of Judah and was the son of Uri (yoo-RICH) and his 
grandfather was Hur (HUHR). His family tree appears in 1 Chronicles 2:4-20. His 
name means “in the shadow of El (God)” or in other words “in the protection of 
God.”

“I have called by name Bezalel” means that the Lord chose Bezalel to oversee 
the construction of the tabernacle and the production of the furnishings and various 
articles and utensils connected to the worship that would take place in it. This 
translation reflects a Hebrew idiom that connotes specifically selecting an 
individual to a specific job. Thus, Bezalel and no one else could oversee the 
tabernacle project. There could be no substitute to be used in his place. The Lord 
wanted his specific skills and background, which He would enhance by the power 
of the Holy Spirit.

Exodus 31:3 records that the Lord filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God in 
wisdom, understanding, knowledge and all kinds of craftsmanship. Then, in verse 
4 the Lord reveals the purpose for doing so, namely in order to make artistic 
designs for work with gold, silver and with bronze with cutting and setting stone 
and with cutting wood to work in all kinds of craftsmanship. Verse 4 tells the 
reader what materials were to be employed by Bezalel in the construction of the 
tabernacle, namely acacia wood, gold, silver, bronze, and other gemstones and 
fabric. These are all mentioned in detail in Exodus 25-30.

In Egypt, every kind of artistic skill was diligently cultivated by the Israelites 
during their four hundred year stay. Egypt surpassed all the other nations in the 
ancient Near East in the manufacture of beautiful furniture, fabrics, pottery and 
monuments of every kind. Their pyramids and palaces and temples were superior 
to the Sumerians, Babylonians, Hittites and Arameans. Undoubtedly, Bezalel and 
Oholiab were already trained in the production of artistic masterpieces by the time 
the Lord selected them to construct the tabernacle and produce its furnishings, 
fabrics and utensils. This is clearly indicated in Exodus 31:6 which records the 
Lord telling Moses that “and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill, 
that they may make all that I have commanded you.” Notice, the Lord says He
put skill and those who are skillful, thus implying that Bezalel and Oholiab and the other workers were already skilled but received even greater skill because of receiving skill from the Holy Spirit. Exodus 31:2 and 5 state that the Lord gave Bezalel and Oholiab and all those who would be working with them the Spirit of God in wisdom, understanding, knowledge and all kinds of craftsmanship to carry out this task.

“I have filled him with the Spirit of God” is composed of the first person singular piel active imperfect form of the verb mā·lē(’) (מָלֵל) (maw-lay’), “I have filled” and then we have the object marker ’ēt (אֵת) (ayth), which is followed by the third person masculine singular pronominal suffix –hû (הָוָּה) (who), “him” and then we have the feminine singular construct form of the noun rû·hîm (רֻהִים) (roo´-akh), “with the Spirit of” which is followed by the masculine plural noun ʾlō·hîm (לֹוָאָהמִים) (el-o-heem’), “God.”

The verb mā·lē(’) does not mean “filled” but rather “to give” meaning that the Lord “gave” Bezalel the Holy Spirit in order to perform the task of overseeing the tabernacle project so as to meet His perfect standards. The verb refers to conferring to Bezalel the Holy Spirit as a gift.

This use of the verb appears in Exodus 28:3 where the NASB95 translates it “endowed” and is used in relation to the Lord imparting or giving skillful artisans in Israel the ability to make Aarons’ garments. Here in Exodus 31:3, it is used of the Lord giving Bezalel the ability to accomplish the task of constructing the tabernacle and the production of its furnishings in a manner that meets the Lord’s perfect standards. This interpretation is further confirmed by the statements in Exodus 31:6 and 35:34-35, which record the Lord telling Moses that He had given Oholiab skill to complete the tabernacle project.

In Exodus 31:3, the piel stem of the verb mā·lē(’) is factitive meaning that the subject of this verb causes its direct object to enter a state that can be described by the same verb in the qal. Here the direct object is Bezalel. Thus, the piel stem indicates that the Lord caused Bezalel to enter the state of having been given the Holy Spirit to complete the task of the tabernacle project.

The noun rû·hîm refers to the Holy Spirit and is in the construct state meaning that it is governing the noun which follows it, which is the noun ʾlō·hîm. This construction expresses a genitive relationship. Specifically, the noun ʾlō·hîm is an appositional genitive which is an individual member of the class given by the construct term, which is rû·hîm. The sense of this construction is that the Lord gave Bezalel the Spirit, “who is” God. Some interpret this as a possessive genitive meaning “God’s Spirit.”

“In wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship” is composed of the preposition b- (בּ), “in” and its object is the feminine singular noun ḥā·ḵmā(h) (חַכֹּמָה) (khok-maw’), “wisdom” and then we
have the conjunction \(w\cdot\) (\(ו\)), which is not translated and followed by the preposition \(b\cdot\) (\(ב\)), “in” and its object is the feminine singular noun \(\textit{t}b\·n\textit{h} (\textit{תבנש})\) (\textit{teb-oonaw}), “understanding” and once again we have the conjunction \(w\cdot\) (\(ו\)), which is not translated and followed by the preposition \(b\cdot\) (\(ב\)), “in” and its object is the feminine singular qal infinitive construct form of the verb \(d\·\textit{t} (\textit{דשת})\) (\textit{dah-ath}), “knowledge” and once again we have the conjunction \(w\cdot\) (\(ו\)), which is again not translated and followed by the preposition \(b\cdot\) (\(ב\)), “in” and its object is the feminine singular noun \(m\·l\·\textit{k} (\textit{מלך})\) (\textit{mel-aw-kaw}), “craftsmanship” which is modified by the adjective \(k\·\) (\(כל\)) (\textit{kole}), “all.”

In each instance, the preposition \(b\cdot\) is a marker of specification and means “with regards to” indicating that the Lord is telling Moses that He gave Bezalel the Spirit who is God “with regards to” wisdom, understanding, knowledge and each and every type of craftsmanship.

The noun \(h\·k\·m\·(\) (\(חמש\)) means “skill” i.e. the technical ability to perform a craft. The noun \(t\·b\·n\cdot(\) (\(תבנה\)) means “ability” i.e. the capability to perform a craft. The verb \(d\·\textit{t} (\textit{דשת})\) means “skillful” in the sense of knowledge applied to a particular craft. The noun \(m\·l\·\textit{k} (\textit{מלך})\) means “craftsmanship” referring to a skill specific in a trade or occupation. The word is modified by the adjective \(k\·\) which means “every kind of” i.e. a totality of kinds or sorts.

Therefore, we can see that the Lord gave Bezalel the Spirit who is God with regards to the skill and ability and knowledge and with regards to each and every type of craftsmanship. By giving Bezalel the Spirit, the Lord gave him the technical ability to construct the tabernacle and produce its furnishings. He gave him the capability to perform this task and the capability to apply the knowledge necessary to perform this task. So the Holy Spirit enabled Bezalel to be wiser, more insightful and knowledgeable and more capable with regards to any type of craftsmanship with which the Lord assigned him. This was all so that his work would be up to God’s perfect standards. This entire expression means that God gave Bezalel the ability to perform the task which God assigned him and to fulfill this task exactly as He prescribed to Moses on Mount Sinai.

This expression is thus not the same filling of the Spirit that appears in the New Testament such as in Ephesians 5:18. The command in Ephesians 5:18 was given to church age believers and could only be fulfilled by them since they are all permanently indwelt by the Spirit (cf. Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:19). Ephesians 5:18 is a command that requires the volition of the believer to submit to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and direction and influence. The Lord did not require Bezalel to be filled with the Spirit or more accurately influenced by means of the Spirit but rather the Lord told Moses that He gave him the Spirit. Thus, we can also see that Bezalel was not given the filling of the Spirit, which appears in the New Testament.
Exodus 31:6 records that the Lord also selected a man named “Oholiab” (oh-HOH-lih-ab) whose name literally means “tent of the father.” This verse says that his father was “Ahisamach” (uh-HIZ-uh-mak) and he was from the tribe of Dan. His name appears in Exodus 35:34 and 36:1-2 as well as 38:23, which record the fulfillment of the Lord’s instructions by Bezalel and Oholiab and the other craftsman assigned to the tabernacle project. Oholiab does not appear in the Bible outside of these passages.

The Lord instructed that only the tribe of Levi could serve in the tabernacle. However, here in Exodus 31:1-11, we have the Lord selecting two individuals who are from the tribe of Judah and Dan to construct the tabernacle and its furnishings. No one from these two tribes as well as the other tribes could touch anything in the tabernacle once it had been constructed and sanctified according to the Lord’s instructions.

Women were also involved in the tabernacle project since Exodus 35:25-26 records that they were responsible for the fabric manufacture. Both men and women were involved together in locating and contributing the materials necessary to construct the tabernacle and produce its furnishings (35:29; cf. also 36:6).


In Exodus 31:11, the Lord’s statement “they are to make them according to all that I have commanded you” is for the benefit of those taking part in the tabernacle project. It is reiterating for them and emphasizing with them that it is absolutely essential that they follow the Lord’s instructions meticulously. Throughout Exodus 25-30, the Lord has periodically insisted with Moses that the Israelites perform an exact replication (25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8).
God is sometimes compared to a master craftsman in his work of creation. Scripture also identifies God as giving talent and ability to certain individuals, in particular those employed in the construction of the tabernacle and the temple. In Scripture, God is described as the Creator and is seen as a master craftsman (Proverbs 3:19-20; cf. Genesis 1:1-31; Job 38:4-38 inanimate creation; Job 38:39-39:30 animate creation; Proverbs 8:22-31).

Exodus 31:1-11 along with Exodus 26:1, 31 and 28:6-8, 15; 35:30-36:3, 8-38:11 and 39:1-3 reveal that craftsmen were employed in the construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings. They were also employed in the construction of the temple and its furnishings (1 Kings 7:13-45; cf. 2 Chronicle 4:2-61 2 Chronicles 4:10-16; cf. 1 Kings 5:17-18; 1 Chronicles 22:14-16; 29:3-5; 2 Chronicles 2:5-7, 13-14).

Exodus 31:1-11 teaches that the Lord gave Bezalel and Oholiab and other skilled craftsmen the ability and skill to carry out the instructions He gave to Moses on Sinai regarding the construction of the tabernacle and the production of its furnishings. He did this by imparting to them the Holy Spirit, who would give them the ability and skill to carry out the Lord’s instructions and to meet His perfect holy standards. This reveals a principle that is taught throughout Scripture, namely the Lord gives the Spirit to His people in order to fulfill His will. Church Age believers have been given the Spirit who permanently indwells them in order that they might accomplish the Father’s will.

_*God the Holy Spirit, The Agent of Empowerment_*

In biblical theology, the Holy Spirit is the agent of empowerment. In theology, God the Holy Spirit is identified as the third Person of the Trinity. The word “Trinity” describes God as being one in essence but three coequal, co-infinite, and coeternal Persons. Who are these three Persons? They are God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Each member of the Trinity is in union with each other and all have the same divine nature with specific attributes or characteristics, which can be described. Each member of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is a separate person who possesses these divine attributes individually. There is no member of the Trinity who is lower in rank to another member. Each member of the Trinity has a specific purpose related to the plan of God.

The Bible teaches us that each member of the Trinity has their own specific role that is not shared by the others. God the Father's role in the Trinity is as the source and planner of all things. God the Son's role in the Trinity is to carry out the plan of God. God the Holy Spirit reveals the Father's plan and provides the power to carry it out.
**Personality of the Holy Spirit**

God the Holy Spirit is a Person not a thing (John 15:26; 16:7; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:2). The Holy Spirit is the unseen power of God. He reveals the Plan of God on earth and is the agent for executing the Christian way of life.


Titles related to God the Father: (1) “Spirit of God” (2) “Spirit of our God” (Gen. 1:2; Matt. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:11) (3) “Spirit of your Father” (Matt. 10:20).

Titles related to God the Son: (1) “Spirit of Christ” (2) “Spirit of Jesus Christ” (Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19) (3) “Spirit of His Son” (Gal. 4:6) (4) “Spirit of the Lord” (Acts 5:9).

These titles do speak of an attribute because an attribute would not be designated by a personal pronoun such as “He,” “Him,” and “His.” (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15).

God the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct Person in the Godhead. He is called “Lord” in 2 Corinthians 3:17 just as God the Father and God the Son are. The Holy Spirit has the attributes of personality: (1) Intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Romans 8:27). (2) Emotion (Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 10:29; James 4:5). (3) Will (1 Corinthians 12:11; Acts 16:6-11). (4) He has a mind, and therefore He thinks, searches and teaches.

**Ephesians 4:30** Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (NASB95)

**1 Corinthians 12:11** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. (NASB95)


*The Promise of the Spirit*

Forty days after His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, He received power and authority
and the title of *kurios*, “*Lord*” over history and creation. Ten days later on the day of Pentecost in June of 32 A.D., the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to permanently indwell those who had exercised faith in Him for eternal salvation. On this day, the baptism of the Spirit first took place.

Jewish believers were the first to receive it and this event is recorded in Acts 2. It took place among Gentile believers not too long after this and is recorded in Acts 10. The Spirit proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ to permanently indwell the sinner who trusts in the Lord Jesus as his Savior. There are several passages, which state that the Spirit proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ.

**John 14:16** “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” (NASB95)

**John 14:26** “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” (NASB95)

**John 15:26** “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me 27 and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” (NASB95)

**John 16:5** “But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. 12 I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.”” (NASB95)

**Acts 1:8**, “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” (NASB95)
Acts 2:33, “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.” (NASB95)

Romans 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. 10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. (NASB95)

1 John 3:23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. 24 The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (NASB95)

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (NASB95)

The Work of the Spirit


God the Holy Spirit’s post-salvation ministries on behalf of the believer: (1) Empowers the believer to execute the plan of God (Jo. 14:16, 26; Ga. 5:16, 25; Eph. 5:18; Phlp. 2:13). (2) Reproduces Christ-like character in the believer (Ga. 4:19; 5:5, 16-23). (3) Teaches the believer the doctrines of Christ (Jo. 14:26; 1 Co. 2:10-16; 1 Jo. 2:20, 27). (4) Convicts the believer of sin (Jo. 16:7-11; Rm. 8:4-14;
(5) Leads the believer in worshipping the Father (Jo. 4:24; Phlp. 3:3; Rm. 8:4-13). (6) Promotes spiritual maturity (Ga. 5:1-5; He. 5:11-6:6).
(7) Applies truth to the believer’s experience (Jo. 14:26; Rm. 8:16; Eph. 6:18). (8) Gives power to the believer’s prayer life (Jo. 15:7; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20). (9) Promotes worship of God (Jo. 4:23-24; Eph. 5:18-21; Phlp. 3:3; Is. 59:1-2). (10) Gives capacity, burden and direction for witnessing (Ac. 1:8; 1 Th. 1:5). (11) Gives capacity for ministry (1 Co. 1:12-14). (12) Provides fellowship for the believer (2 Cor. 13:14; Phlp. 2:1).

God the Holy Spirit teaches the believer through the Word of God (John 14:26; 15:26). Several passages state that the believer is to give heed to what the Spirit is saying to the churches because of this spiritual principle that the Spirit takes the doctrines of Christ and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit speaks to the church through the communication of the Word of God.

Acts 21:11 This is what the Holy Spirit says. (NASB95)
Acts 28:25 The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers. (NASB95)
1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)
1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. (NASB95)
Hebrews 3:7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE.” (NASB95)
Revelation 2:11 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)
Revelation 2:17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)
Revelation 2:7a “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)
Revelation 3:6 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)
Revelation 3:13, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)
Revelation 3:22 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (NASB95)

The church age believer is totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit in order to attain Christ-likeness and as a result execute the plan of God (Gal. 5:5, 16; Eph. 3; 16-17). He is the believer’s true teacher (John. 14:16-20, 26; 15:26; 16:7-16; 1 Co. 2:10-16; 2 Cor. 13:14; Ga. 5:5, 16-25; Eph. 3:16-19; 5:18; 1 Jo. 2:20-27). The
Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to produce Christ-like character in the believer (Ga. 5:22-23; Phlp. 2:13). He takes the Word and empowers, guides and directs the believer in the process of executing the Father’s plan (Acts 8:29; Rm. 8:14, 26; Phlp. 3:3; 2 Per. 1:21; cf. Heb. 4:12). He calls attention sin in the life of the believer by taking the Word of God and using it to convict him (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; cf. Jo. 16:7-11; 1 Cor. 2:10-16; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19). Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the Member of the Trinity Who reveals whether the believer is living in accordance with the doctrines of Christ or not (Jo. 16:7-16; Rm. 8:14).

God the Holy Spirit produces peace in the soul of the believer who applies the Word of God and in particular applies the doctrine of prayer.

**Philippians 4:6** At this very moment, all of you stop continuing to be anxious about absolutely anything, but rather, concerning anything at all by means of reverential prayer in the presence of the Father and by means of petition accompanied by the giving of thanks, let your specific detailed requests be repeatedly made known in the presence of the Father 7 and as a result the peace produced by God the Holy Spirit, which is always superior to any and every human conception, will as a dogmatic statement of fact cause your hearts to be protected and as a result your thoughts by means of the doctrine of Christ Jesus. (Author’s translation)

*Sins Against the Spirit*

There are two types of sin committed by the unbeliever against God the Holy Spirit: (1) “Blasphemy” against the Spirit (Matt. 12:14-32) (2) “Resistance” of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).

There are three sins by the believer against the Holy Spirit: (1) “Lying” to God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3) (2) “Grieving” the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30) (3) “Quenching” the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19).

The Disciple’s Study Bible presents the following summary note on the Holy Spirit, they writes, “The Spirit is not a possession we hold on to but a Person we love and obey. People must choose between the way of the flesh or sinful nature and the way of the Spirit. We should choose ‘the Spirit of life’ (Ro 8:2-note), ‘the Spirit’ (Ro 8:4-note), ‘the Spirit of Christ’ (Ro 8:9-note), ‘the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus’ (God, Ro 8:11-note), ‘the Spirit of God’ (Ro 8:14-note), and ‘the Spirit of sonship’ (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit gives life (Ro 8:2-note), peace (Ro 8:6-note), freedom (Ro 8:9-note), leadership (Ro 8:14-note), assurance (Ro 8:16-note), hope (Ro 8:23-note; Ro 8:24-note), and help (Ro 8:26-note). The Spirit is with all Christians (Ro 8:9-note, Ro 8:14-note). The Spirit makes Christians God's children and able to say ‘Father’ when we pray (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit assures us that we are in fact God’s children (Ro 8:16-note), and that, even though we pass
through much suffering, we will eventually share in the glory of Christ (Ro 8:17-note). With all this we remain free. We must choose to follow the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit (Ro 8:5-note), to set our minds on what the Spirit desires (Ro 8:5-note), to be controlled by the Spirit (Ro 8:9-note), to put to death the old way of life (Ro 8:13-note), and to be led by the Spirit (Ro 8:18-note). These phrases all refer to a serious commitment to live as Christians with the help of God's Spirit. This includes high moral standards (Ro 8:4-note) and more. Obeying the Spirit means a personal loyalty and obedience to Christ which expresses itself by following the leadership of the Spirit in all life's decisions. This is active cooperation as well as passive yielding. The Spirit's work is not irresistible. The Spirit prefers to wait and allow us to obey His leadership freely. Paul's call to obey the Spirit makes no sense at all if the Spirit is only an impersonal power or force. The Spirit is personal, and this leads to the commands to respond to the Spirit in a fully personal manner.” (Disciple's Study Bible)

Fourteen Affirmations about the Spirit in Romans 8:1-28

In Romans 8:1-28, the apostle Paul makes fourteen affirmations about the Holy Spirit that constitute His work in the life of the believer.

**Romans 8:1-2** Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus. Because, the life-giving Spirit’s authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ, who is Jesus, has set you free from the sin nature’s authoritative power as well as spiritual death’s. (Author’s translation)

In Romans 8:1, another merciful act is revealed in that the justified sinner is never under any condemnation whatsoever as a result of being placed in union with Christ. Romans 8:2 affirms that the life-giving Spirit’s authoritative power, by means of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death’s.

**Romans 8:3-4** For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Author’s translation)

Romans 8:3-4 affirms that the Father’s purpose for sacrificing His Son was so that the righteous requirement of the Law, i.e. perfect obedience would be fulfilled in an experiential sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but in submission to the Spirit.
Romans 8:5-6 For you see those who at any time exist in the state of being in submission to the flesh are, as an eternal spiritual truth, preoccupied with the things produced by the flesh. However, those in submission to the Spirit, the things produced by the Spirit. In fact, the mind-set produced by the flesh is, as an eternal spiritual truth temporal spiritual death. However, the mindset produced by the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth life as well as peace. (Author’s translation)

The third affirmation about the Spirit is that submission to the Spirit is the basis for experiencing eternal life and the peace of God, i.e. fellowship with God and failure to submit to the Spirit is loss of fellowship with God.

Romans 8:9 presents the fourth affirmation.

Romans 8:9 However, all of you, without exception are, absolutely not, as an eternal spiritual truth, existing in the state of being in bondage to the flesh but rather in subjection to the authority of the Spirit, if in fact-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, who is God does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does. However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument anyone does not possess at all the Spirit proceeding from Christ, then this one, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means belongs to Him. (Author’s translation)

Romans 8:9 affirms that the indwelling presence of the Spirit is the distinguishing mark of a Christian in contrast to the unbeliever who is not indwelt by the Spirit.

Romans 8:10 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument Christ does, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, on the one hand, the body is, as an eternal spiritual truth dead because of the sin nature while on the other hand, the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth, life in all of you because of righteousness. (Author’s translation)

Paul teaches in the protasis of a first class condition that appears in Romans 8:10 that the Christian is indwelt by Christ. Then, in the apodasis, he teaches that while on one hand, the Christian’s body is dead due to the sin nature but on the other hand, the Spirit is life and peace because of imputed righteousness. Therefore, the fifth affirmation about the Spirit is that the Spirit, who is inherently eternal life indwells the Christian and thus eternal life indwells the Christian because the Christian possesses the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Romans 8:11 presents the sixth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:11 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, proceeding from the One (the Father) who raised the unique Person of Jesus from the dead ones, does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, the One (the Father) who raised Christ from the dead ones,
will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who does permanently dwell in all of you. (Author’s translation)

Therefore, we can see that in Romans 8:11 Paul teaches that the Spirit will transform the mortal body of the Christian at the resurrection of the church, thus giving them a resurrection body to replace their present bodies that contain the sin nature.

The seventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:13.

Romans 8:12-13 Indeed, therefore, spiritual brothers, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, are debtors, by no means to the flesh, that is, a lifestyle in submission to the flesh because, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument, you, at any time, live in submission to the flesh, then, you will certainly die. However, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit, you, at any time, put to death the actions produced by the body, then, you will certainly cause yourself to live. (Author’s translation)

Romans 8:13 affirms that the Christian puts to death the deeds of the sin nature and experiences eternal life by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

In Romans 8:14, we have the eighth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:14 Because, all of us who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, led by means of the Spirit, who is God, these are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God’s sons. (Author’s translation)

The eighth affirmation about the Spirit is that the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

The ninth and tenth affirmations are found in Romans 8:15.

Romans 8:15 Because by no means have all of you received the Spirit who brings about slavery resulting in fear again. On the contrary, all of you have received the Spirit who brings about the adoption as sons by means of whom, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, cry out, “Abba! Father!” (Author’s translation)

The ninth affirmation is that the Spirit adopted the Christian “Roman style” into the family of God. The tenth affirmation is that the Spirit is the means by which the Christian cries out to God and addresses Him as “Abba! Father!”

The eleventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:16.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, bears witness to our human spirit that we are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God’s children. (Author’s translation)

This passage teaches that the Spirit bears witness to the Christian’s human spirit that they are a child of God.

The twelfth affirmation about the Spirit appears in Romans 8:23.
Romans 8:23 Furthermore, not only this, because, we ourselves, as an eternal spiritual truth, possess the first fruit, namely, the Spirit, we ourselves also always groan within ourselves. Consequently, we are always eagerly waiting for the adoption as sons, the redeeming of our body. (Author’s translation)

This passage teaches that the twelfth affirmation about the Spirit is that He is both the evidence and the guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The thirteenth affirmation is presented by Paul in Romans 8:26-27.

Romans 8:26-27 Furthermore, in the same way, the Spirit, as an eternal spiritual truth, also assists with our weakness because we are totally uncertain as to what to pray for in accordance with that which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely essential but rather the Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, intercedes on behalf of us with inexpressible groanings. That is, the one who, as an eternal spiritual truth, searches our hearts, knows perfectly and intimately what is eternally the Spirit’s mind-set because He always intercedes on behalf of the saints in accordance with God the Father’s will. (Author’s translation)

Romans 8:26-27 affirms that the Spirit assists the Christian in his weakness because the Christian does not always know what to pray for by interceding on behalf of the Christian in accordance with the Father’s will, with inexpressible groanings to the Father.

Then, lastly the fourteenth and final affirmation about the Spirit is presented by Paul in verse 28.

Romans 8:28 In fact, we know without a doubt that for the benefit of those who are characterized as divinely loving God the Father, He (the Spirit), as an eternal spiritual truth, always works each and every circumstance together for the good, for the benefit of those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, the chosen ones, in accordance with His predetermined plan. (Author’s translation)

The fourteenth affirmation about the Spirit that is contained in Romans 8:1-28 is that the Spirit works both positive and negative circumstances together for the good, i.e. conforming the Christian into the image of Christ.

Exodus 31:12-17: Laws Concerning the Sabbath

Exodus 31:12 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 13 “But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 14 Therefore you are to observe the
sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to
death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from
among his people. 15 For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day
there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work
on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. 16 So the sons of Israel shall
observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as
a perpetual covenant.’ 17 It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel
forever; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but on the seventh
day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.” (NASB95)

This is the fourth time that we have the Lord instructing Israel to observe the
Sabbath. It was first mentioned in connection with the collection of manna in
Exodus 16:21-26. Then, the fourth of the Ten Commandments was the observance
of the Sabbath (20:8-11). Lastly, it was mentioned in Exodus 23:12 in connection
with the Sabbath rests for the land. Exodus 23:12 echoes Exodus 20:8-11.

“Sabbath” is the noun šāḇ-ḇāṯ (`sabbawth´), which means “rest period”
referring to the seventh day of the week which is called “Saturday.” Genesis 2:2-3
teaches that God rested or ceased from His creative and restorative activity on the
seventh day. The Hebrew words for “seventh” and “rested” are similar.

Now, Exodus 20:8-11 makes clear that the observance of the Sabbath is
connected to the fact that God Himself rested on the seventh day after six days of
work (Genesis 2:2-3). The Sabbath is thus an invitation to rejoice in God’s creation
and to acknowledge that He is sovereign. Deuteronomy 5:15 gives another reason
for observing the Sabbath. This verse connects the Sabbath with Israel’s
deliverance from Egypt. Therefore, every Sabbath the Israelites were to bring into
remembrance that the Lord delivered them from Egyptian bondage by means of
His omnipotence. Exodus 20:10, Deuteronomy 5:14-15 and Exodus 23:12 teach
that the Sabbath was for the benefit of both man and animal in Israel.

In Exodus 31:13, the Lord commands Moses to tell the Israelites that they must
keep His Sabbaths, which refers not only to observing the seventh day as a period
of rest to worship the Lord but also involves observing the laws concerning the
sabbath rest for the land which is mentioned in Exodus 23:10-13. It is also used in
connection with the gathering of manna which is mentioned in Exodus 16:21-26.

The Lord tells Moses in Exodus 31:13 that these Sabbaths were a sign between
Him and the Israelites. He repeats this to Moses in Exodus 31:17. It is also
reiterated in Ezekiel 20:12 and 20. The repetition emphasizes the importance the
Lord attached to the Israelites observing His Sabbaths.

The keeping of the Sabbath would affirm one’s loyalty to the Lord and would
guarantee His presence and deliverance. It would manifest to the heathen nations
the covenant relationship the Israelites possessed with the Lord.
The Israelites must conscientiously observe the Sabbath as a testimony of the Lord’s finished work in the restoration of the earth and was an essential part of their sanctification as a people. The observance of the Sabbath as a corporate unit by the Israelites would serve as a powerful testimony to the heathen nations surrounding them that they were a people set apart to serve the Lord exclusively. It would demonstrate that Yahweh was present with the Israelites.

The Lord tells Moses in Exodus 31:13 and 16 that the observance of the Sabbath was applicable for all subsequent generations and was perpetual. The purpose of this perpetual observance of the Sabbath was that the Israelites would know that the Lord is the one who sanctifies them. This means that observance of the Sabbath by the Israelites would manifest the fact that the Israelites were chosen from all the nations of the earth to be a people who represent Him to the rest of the nations.

In Exodus 31:14, the Israelites were to keep the Sabbath because “it is holy for you” which denotes that the Israelites must keep Saturday as a day set aside exclusively for God, i.e., worshipping Him. This day should be set aside exclusively by the Israelites as a day to bring into remembrance who God is and what He has done for them resulting in worshipping Him, i.e., giving thanks to Him.

In Exodus 31:14 and 15, the Lord tells Moses that failure to observe the Sabbath was a capital crime. Since the Sabbath was a sign of the covenant between the Lord and Israel, those in Israel who failed to keep the Sabbath were put to death (Exodus 31:14; Numbers 15:32-36; Jeremiah 17:19-27). Numbers 15:32-36 records the Israelites stoning a man found gathering wood on the Sabbath day.

Exodus 31:17 recalls Exodus 20:11, which presents the basis for the Sabbath day observance, which is God creating the time, matter, space continuum as well as mankind and restoring the heavens and the earth which was judged by God due to Satan’s rebellion against God. The fact that God is said to have “ceased” from His activity does not mean that He was tired but simply that He was satisfied with His work, which He had brought to completion by the seventh day. It means that there was nothing He could add to what He already accomplished during the six days, thus, it was perfect in every detail.

The Lord reminds Moses that the Israelites were to observe the Sabbath in connection with the tabernacle worship since worship was to take place on the Sabbath and if it was not observed conscientiously, worship in the tabernacle would not properly take place. Therefore, proper use of the tabernacle demanded that the Israelites observe conscientiously the Sabbath.

John Durham writes “The repetition of the sabbath-commandment as the conclusion to the long sequence of Yahweh’s instructions for the media of Israel’s worship provides a bracket from the beginning of Yahweh’s teaching on the
mountain to its end. A restrictive sabbath observance also provides a continuing means of Israel’s reflection upon the Presence of Yahweh, and so a continuing means of sensitizing Israel to the reality of that Presence, as communicated by the symbolism of the Tabernacle and its equipment. Because of this, the sabbath-commandment is referred to as a sign in perpetuity of the covenant with Yahweh, and a means of helping Israel to know by experience that it is Yahweh at hand who makes them a unique people. If even Yahweh stopped to catch his breath after six days of customary labor, so also should Israel. And in that stopping, as Israel came to know Yahweh, Israel would come also to know themselves.”

The observance of the Sabbath is an ordinance given to the nation of Israel and not the church. Although the church was not given the ordinance to observe the Sabbath, they are commanded to enter into God’s Sabbath rest meaning to rest in the promises of God and one’s union with Christ (cf. Hebrews 4). Though the Sabbath was not given to the church, the principle taught by it is applicable to the church, namely, that one is to set aside time to reflect upon who and what God is and what He has done on behalf of you. In other words, they are to set aside time for God and to be devote oneself to Him exclusively. So whether one observes Saturday or Sunday or Monday, a believer should not work seven days a week but take at least one day to devote exclusively to God.

Exodus 31:18: Presentation of the Ten Commandments to Moses

Exodus 31:18 When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God. (NASB95)

This verse records the Lord completing communicating instructions to Moses and which instructions appear in Exodus 25:1:31:17. It also says that He gave Moses two tablets of stone of “the testimony,” which are the Ten Commandments. This further indicated in Deuteronomy 9:10, which records Moses reminding Israel that the Lord gave him two tablets of stone written by the finger of God and on them were all the words which the Lord communicated to them on Mount Sinai. Exodus 20:1-21 records the Lord speaking audibly to the Israelites when giving the Ten Commandments to them. After the Lord finished, the people were terrified and asked Moses that the Lord would not speak with them again for fear that they would die. Thus, only the Ten Commandments were on the two tablets whereas all the instructions the Lord communicated to Moses during the forty days and forty nights on the mountain as recorded in Exodus 25-31 were not.

“Testimony” is the noun ἔκθεσις (ay-dooth'), which has appeared eleven times previously in the book of Exodus (16:34; 25:16, 21, 22, 26:33, 34; 27:21; 30:6, 26, 36; 31:7). It is a reference to the Decalogue or Ten Commandments according to Exodus 24:12; 31:18 and Deuteronomy 4:13; 9:9 as well as 1 Kings 8:9. This word identifies the Ten Commandments as the witness or affirmation of God’s commandments belonging to His covenant with Israel. It also expressed God’s will and the duty of the Israelites. In other cultures important documents were put at the feet of the gods in the temples.²

The expression “the finger of God” is an anthropopathy, which is a figure of speech which ascribes a human body part to God which He does not possess since He is spirit and invisible in order to appeal to the frame of reference of human beings. It is used by God to teach something about Himself that would appeal to the frame of reference of human beings.

This expression has appeared previously in the book of Exodus, namely in Exodus 8:15. In this passage, it was used in connection with the ten plagues the Lord struck Egypt with. In this verse, it expressed that these plagues were a demonstration of the power and authority of God. Now, here in Exodus 31:18, this expression is another anthropopathy which expresses the fact that Ten Commandments came directly from God Himself. No one writes with their finger. Thus, this expression is designed to catch the reader’s attention in order to emphasize that Moses received the Ten Commandments in writing on two tablets of stone directly from God Himself.

Interestingly, Exodus 24:12 records the Lord commanding Moses to come up to the mountain so that He can give him the tablets of stone with the law and commands written for the Israelites’ instruction. Thus, Moses was anticipating receiving the Ten Commandments. However, he received more than as recorded by Exodus 25-31:11. The other laws which are recorded in Exodus 25:1-31:11 were important and were to be observed. However, the Ten Commandments were foundational.

Stuart has an excellent comment on Exodus 31:18 writes that “Not only does the present verse bring to a conclusion one more segment of the Mount Sinai legal revelation, but it also further endorses the Ten Words/Commandments as the premier legal formulation for Israel. All other laws are important and not to be ignored, but the Ten Words are so foundational, so principal, that they have a status and personal divine “endorsement” all their own. This is also the first place in the narrative where the number of the tablets of stone—two—is specified. The reason for the two tablets has nothing to do with the length of the commandments as opposed to the size of the tablets (as if it were necessary to employ two tablets

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to fit all the commandments onto them, half on one and half on the other). The full text of the Ten Words/Commandments was written on each tablet, one copy being God’s and one copy being Israel’s. This reflects the standard ancient Near Eastern treaty covenant practice of providing a copy of the covenant both to the vassal and to the sovereign. The fact that the two tablets were eventually placed together in the ark (Deut 10:5; 1 Kgs 8:9; Heb 9:4) further symbolized the ark’s role as a point of contact for God and his people, the place where his covenant relationship with them was symbolized by, among other things, the law, obedience to which linked Israel to Yahweh and Yahweh to Israel.”