NJPS of skill, ability, and knowledge in every kind of craft; [4]to make designs for work in gold, silver, and copper, [5]to cut stones for setting and to carve wood—to work in every kind of craft. [6]Moreover, I have assigned to him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have also granted skill to all who are skillful, that they may make everything that I have commanded you: [7]the Tent of Meeting, the Ark for the Pact and the cover upon it, and all the furnishings of the Tent; [8]the table and its utensils, the pure lampstand and all its fittings, and the altar of incense; [9]the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the laver and its stand; [10]the service vestments, the sacral vestments of Aaron the priest and

אֱלֹהִים בְּחָכְמָה וּבִתְבוּנָה וּבְדַעַת וּבְכָל־
מְלָאכָה׃ ד לַחֲשֹׁב מַחֲשָׁבֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת
בַּזָּהָב וּבַכֶּסֶף וּבַנְּחֹשֶׁת׃ ה וּבַחֲרֹשֶׁת אֶבֶן
לְמִלֹּאת וּבַחֲרֹשֶׁת עֵץ לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּכָל־
מְלָאכָה׃ ו וְאֲנִי הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי אִתּוֹ אֶת
אָהֳלִיאָב בֶּן־אֲחִיסָמָךְ לְמַטֵּה־דָן וּבְלֵב
כָּל־חֲכַם־לֵב נָתַתִּי חָכְמָה וְעָשׂוּ אֶת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתֶךָ׃ ז אֶת ׀ אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד
וְאֶת־הָאָרֹן לָעֵדֻת וְאֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת אֲשֶׁר
עָלָיו וְאֶת כָּל־כְּלֵי הָאֹהֶל׃ ח וְאֶת־הַשֻּׁלְחָן
וְאֶת־כֵּלָיו וְאֶת־הַמְּנֹרָה הַטְּהֹרָה וְאֶת־
כָּל־כֵּלֶיהָ וְאֶת מִזְבַּח הַקְּטֹרֶת׃ ט וְאֶת־
מִזְבַּח הָעֹלָה וְאֶת־כָּל־כֵּלָיו וְאֶת־הַכִּיּוֹר
וְאֶת־כַּנּוֹ׃ י וְאֶת בִּגְדֵי הַשָּׂרֶד וְאֶת־בִּגְדֵי

OJPS understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, [4]to devise skillful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, [5]and in cutting of stones for setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship. [6]And I, behold, I have appointed with him Oholiab, 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: [7]the tent of meeting, and the ark of the testimony, and the ark-cover that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the Tent; [8]and the table and its vessels, and the pure candlestick with all its vessels, and the altar of incense; [9]and the altar of burnt-offering with all its vessels, and the laver and its base; [10]and the plaited garments, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the

RASHI "understanding." What one understands by thinking about what one has learned. **Knowledge.** The holy spirit.

4 To make designs. NJPS has the sense, though OJPS is more literal. It refers to weaving.

5 To cut stones ... to carve wood. Literally, "stone workmanship ... wood workmanship." The translations follow Onkelos in specifying a particular word for each. **For setting.** Literally, "for filling": to cut the stones so that they exactly fit their setting.

6 I have also granted skill to all who are skillful. All others among you who are skillful.

7 The Ark for the Pact. The Ark for keeping the tablets of the Pact.

8 The pure lampstand. "Pure" because it is made out of pure gold (25:31).

10 The service vestments. I think that a straightforward reading of the verse cannot possibly understand this phrase to refer to "the priestly vestments," since the continuation

RASHBAM **31:6 I have also granted skill to all who are skillful.** All the skillful people who will come to make the Tabernacle—it is I who have granted them skill, so **that they may make everything that I have commanded you.**

10 The service vestments. These were a kind of hanging overlaid upon the Ark, the

IBN EZRA old he was when he became king. Moreover, he asked God for, and possessed, only "an understanding mind to judge Your people" (1 Kings 3:9), whereas Bezalel possessed wisdom of all kinds. In my commentary to Proverbs I have explained the difference between wisdom, understanding, and knowledge (as OJPS translates these words). *Hokhmah* for, as the Arab philosophers describe it, "calculation") resides in the back part of the brain, *tevunah* ("introspection") in the middle of the brain, and *da'at* ("imagination") in the front of the brain, next to the sense receptors. **In every kind of craft.** There are those who have wisdom of every kind but cannot actually do any kind of work successfully. But Bezalel

NAHMANIDES **10 The service vestments.** I do not know why these vestments were not commanded with all the rest of the things for the Tabernacle, including the vestments for Aaron and his sons. Moses should have been given instructions to "make a cloth of pure blue to cover the Ark," and so forth. But they are simply included now among the instructions Moses is to give to those who do the actual work. Perhaps the nature of these cloths was not important, and was left to their discretion, so that they might have made them all alike instead of in blue, purple, and crimson. Once they made them as they did, however, it was God who decreed [G] that the blue cloth should be for the Ark, the

[G] See Numbers 4.

could do this. NJPS omits the "and" that makes this point clear; see OJPS "and in all manner of workmanship."

4 To make designs. Literally, "to think thoughts"—to create new things out of his imagination, by the power of his thought. **in gold, silver, and copper.**

5 To cut stones. "To cut" is a generalized skill, for the word can be applied to stone or to wood. **To carve wood.** The Hebrew word is the same as to "cut" stones. He had the ability to make anything necessary out of acacia wood. **To work in every kind of craft.** According to 35:35, this catchall phrase would include embroidery and weaving.

6 I have assigned to him Oholiab. For Oholiab, though highly skilled, was not Bezalel's equal in wisdom. Saadia thinks that Bezalel and Oholiab were chosen because their two tribes, Judah and Dan, are both compared to lions. [L] and the Temple, like a lion, was wide in front and narrow in back. But this is midrash. What is the point in asking why these two were chosen? There was no one else comparable in their generation. Besides, they built the Tabernacle (which was equal in size front and back), not the Temple. **I have also granted skill to all who are skillful.** For one finds people who have the innate talent to solve complex geometrical problems without ever having studied geometry.

10 The service vestments. These were the cloths with which the sacred vessels were covered when the Ark was transported. In fact, the phrase might possibly be translated "the traveling cloths." The Hebrew word, *serad*, is at least somewhat comparable to *sarif*, which

[L] "Judah is a lion's whelp" (Gen. 49:9); "Dan is a lion's whelp" (Deut. 33:22).

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS themselves in study are often fools in political matters. So it was quite miraculous that Bezalel had both intellectual and practical wisdom (Abarbanel).

8 The pure lampstand. Only the lampstand (here) and the table (in Lev. 24:6) are called "pure," of all the furnishings of the Taber-
nacle—for no blood ever came in contact with them (Hizkuni).