

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Brian J. Bailey

Version 1.2

“Leadership”

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to aid those who are called into leadership capacities and thus enable them to fulfil the role that the Lord has given to them. In one way or another, during one's lifetime, nearly every Christian will have leadership responsibilities to some degree. Whether it is in the home, a Sunday School class, becoming a deacon, or an elder, or in some cases, having the task of becoming a pastor or leader of a fellowship, all of us need to learn leadership skills.

We need to understand that, as Paul wrote in Romans 13:1, there is no power except of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore, leaders in every field we examine are all ordained of God. Whether it is the father of a family or the president of a country, all were predetermined and appointed before the foundation of the world by the Heavenly Father, Who is in all things, and guides and directs all things according to His infinite wisdom.

Therefore, whosoever resists the leader is, in effect, resisting God and His ordinance. Paul, speaking of all rulers, declares that they are ministers of God for good. This is why one has to honour one's parents and be in subjection to them, even as did our Lord when He was young.

Chapter 1

Definition of Leadership

It is good at this point to define what we understand a leader to be and the role that he has. A leader is one who commands others. He occupies the chief position whether it is in the home or country, and by the very virtue of his position he has the responsibility to love and care for those whom he leads. He is expected to have the final say in any decision or matter and, generally speaking, his word is law.

Also, he is responsible for the spiritual atmosphere of the home, church, or fellowship God has given to him. May it be one of love, joy, and peace. If he exudes that to his staff, they in turn will spread that throughout the church and fellowship. The result will be that it will create an atmosphere of which others will say, “God is There—Jehovah Shammah.”

There are levels of leadership that we attain to in this life. Whilst writing this paragraph, I heard of an excellent example of moving up the ladder in life. A little girl of five enrolled in a Christian day school, eventually graduated and became a kindergarten teacher. Today, she is the principal of the school with her own five-year-old daughter enrolled as a student.

We might be the oldest siblings entrusted with the care of our brothers and sisters, or at our place of work we might be given a position where we have to oversee an assembly line. Later, as we mature, we climb higher and attain unto managerial status.

Likewise, in the Church, we may progress from the level of a substitute Sunday School teacher through the grades to the position of Superintendent. Then, if we are sufficiently qualified and called of God, we are promoted to the position of an usher, deacon, elder, perhaps even an assistant pastor or pastor. Subsequently, God may even raise you up to be a leader of a fellowship. In all cases, the definition of a leader and his qualities are the same. Remember the key to promotion lies in the simple truth, ***“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much”*** (Lk. 16:10).

Chapter 2

Qualities of Great Leadership

Therefore, a leader should possess the following qualifications that the great leaders of Scripture and the Church all exuded in one manner or another. All these giftings come from God and are given by Him according to His will (1 Cor. 12:11).

Wisdom

The first is wisdom—the ability to make the right choices. This is the most prized gift of all according to King David, for he admonished his young son and heir Solomon, “*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding*” (Prov. 4:7).

The Seven Pillars of Wisdom

The ancients considered wisdom to be much more than the ability to make right choices; they believed it led to the wholesomeness of life. Holy Scripture substantiates this, and we see Solomon notes that there are seven pillars of wisdom that hold up a life and a house (Prov. 9:1).

These seven pillars are interpreted for us by the Apostle James and given to us in his epistle, “*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*” (Jas. 3:17).

1. **Pure** – The wise man has conquered his passions and lusts of the flesh. Moreover his motives have been purified so that they can be held up to the light of heaven and found to be without guile (Rev. 14:5).

2. **Peaceable** – Likewise, he pursues peace with all men, seeks to live in harmony without confrontations, to live in unity with others, and to be compatible within the confines of scriptural principles (Heb. 12:14).

3. **Gentle** – It is not only important to tell the truth, but also to bear in mind the need to be wise and sensitive, with the law of kindness on our lips when we speak it (Prov. 31:26). So many leaders tend to be rough and brutish and in so doing wound the sensibilities of those to whom they are speaking. Our speech and touch must be cradled in gentleness as a nurse cherishes her children (1 Th. 2:7).

4. **Easy to be intreated** – signifies that the wise man has a sweet reasonableness of temperament so that wherever possible he yields in the unimportant matters in life. He is a good listener and sympathetic to the views of others, not forceful or demanding, but conciliatory and sweet to all.

5. **Full of mercy and good fruits** – While I was journeying through Africa, one of the constant themes reiterated to me by veteran missionaries and natives alike was the need for mercy when dealing with workers. They will continually fail, but the constant admonition we were given was, “You must never give up on them.” Many members of congregations in which I have had the privilege of ministering stressed the forgiving aspect of the nature of Christ. They thought it

natural that they would fail, but they expected their pastor to understand and freely forgive.

Christ did so time and time again with His often-erring disciples when they were concerned as to who was the greatest, even unto the Last Supper, and when the elect three fell asleep in the garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 10:37; 14:33-41, 66-72). When Peter denied Him with cursing, there was the concern for forgiveness after His resurrection so that Peter should not lose his faith. He then lovingly restored Peter again to his apostleship before the others on the shores of the Lake of Galilee (Jn. 21:15-19).

Good fruits of the Spirit should grow and mature in abundance in the garden of the heart of a leader, to be freely offered and partaken of by one and all whom the leader encounters in his daily walk on life's way (Gal. 5:22-23). There must be love flowing to the faithful and sinner alike, longsuffering in bearing with a difficult and persistent complainer, a gentle touch for the roughest tyke and temperate in all his needs – whether it be in his meals or partaking of one of life's other pleasures, he is to watch his appetites to keep his body under subjection.

6. *Without partiality* – means to treat all equally regardless of position or relationship. It is a rare virtue possessed only by the noblest of men yet it is that trait of character to which the youngest yearn for in their leaders. For the young desire to occupy a place in the heart of their leader, a privilege that the maturest of the members of the congregation enjoy. Christ manifested it through the parable of the workers in the vineyard all of whom received equal wages irrespective of the time that they had been employed (Mt. 20:1-16).

7. *Without hypocrisy* – the essential feature in the nature of a leader. He must be genuine, or like a flawed flask, both man and God will reject him. A hypocrite disillusions, disappoints, and destroys many a young and old believer alike, often causing them to turn from the path of righteousness themselves. Regretfully, I have known many who have cast aside their hope of eternal life by perceiving, with chagrin, a hypocritical leader who practices not that which he preached and encouraged others to live by.

Keys to Receiving Wisdom

Now the importance of wisdom in the realm of leadership is illustrated by Christ as the personification of Wisdom speaking in the following verses, “*Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth*” (Prov. 8:14-16). Wisdom controls all those in authority, for as it is written, “*The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will*” (Prov. 21:1).

We must pursue the keys to receiving this most precious of all gifts. Proverbs 2:6 teaches us that the Lord giveth wisdom, and Job 28:28 as well as Proverbs 9:10 state that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. In Isaiah 33:6, we read that the fear of the Lord is His treasure, while Proverbs 8:13 says, “*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.*”

Unto whom does the Lord give wisdom? The man who is good in His sight. Solomon states, “*For God giveth to a man*

that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy..." (Eccl. 2:26).

Thus, to please God we should order our conversation aright; speaking not our own words, but those that are pleasing in His sight, not doing our own pleasure but doing His will. As we seek Him early, we shall receive wisdom (Prov. 8:17).

Daniel gives us another point to bear in mind; that God gives wisdom to the wise (Dan. 2:21). In this we understand one of the sobering truths of the ways of God—to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have in abundance (Lk. 19:26). So as we place our feet in the way of the wise, we shall become wise (Prov. 13:20), and the Lord will anoint us with the Spirit of Wisdom.

Vision

The next essentiality of a leader is that he must be a man with a vision—a God-given vision. Vision can be defined as direction so that a man of vision knows the path and is able to lead others. As we study the lives of leaders, they all had a primary goal from which they did not digress the whole of their lives. At an early age, the Lord visits His chosen with dreams, visions, or in some other way to give them an idea of His purposes for their lives. Secondary visions were given to enhance and implement the primary vision. These mighty men of God all knew where they were going.

This happens even for those in secular occupations. For example, throughout his life, Winston Churchill had always cherished the understanding that he was destined for a role

of historical significance. It came late in life, when he was in his 60s. At that age, most are contemplating and enjoying the ease of retirement. In spite of his age, because of his role as wartime leader, he was termed the man of the century.

Another leader who had visions of grandeur and destiny was Alexander the Great. He received a vision of the Jewish High Priest who assured him that he would be the ruler of the known world at that time. This he realised when he was only 30 years of age. (Please refer to *Antiquities of the Jews Book XI Chapter VIII* by Josephus for further details.)

In our own lives, we must know where we are going, and in so doing we will be able to give assurance and clarity to those whom we are given to lead. One of the most frustrating aspects of life is to follow someone whose vision keeps changing. In fact, we are told in Proverbs 24:21, *“My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change.”*

Those that keep changing their direction in life are those who do not have fruit that abides, nor do they hit the mark of God’s high calling for their lives. Moreover, they accomplish little, do not reach their desired haven, and do not experience the joy of Jesus, for they live in a constant state of uncertainty. This produces fear and a lack of the peace that passeth all understanding (Phil. 4:7). A clear vision promotes peace, which in turn brings health to our bones (Prov. 16:24).

We have sought to stress the necessity for leaders to have a vision and to then transmit that vision to faithful men who in turn will teach others. This vision is best communicated by and

through the written word. This is substantiated by Habakkuk 2:1 where first the prophet said, *“I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me...”* Then having received the vision, we read in verse 2, *“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables...”* Let us note that the vision must be clearly, lucidly, and plainly stated, so that the one that reads it may run with a clearly defined message.

Faithfulness

This is also one of the essential criteria for a leader. He has been selected by God to do a specific task. At the end of his life he must give an account to the Lord as to whether or not he accomplished and fulfilled that task. However, there are few in this life who are truly faithful. In Proverbs 20:6 it says, *“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?”* It is the final step in the life of a leader—he is one who must be called, chosen, and found faithful (Rev. 17:14).

The final event that closes the Church Age is the Second Coming, which reveals Jesus sitting upon a white horse, and He is called Faithful and True (Rev. 19:11). This is one of the prime virtues attributed to the Lord. Paul, writing in Hebrews 3:1-2, declares that Jesus was faithful to Him who appointed Him as *“the Apostle and High Priest of our profession.”* Isaiah 11:5 declares, *“...and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”*

Therefore this virtue is required of all those who are appointed to the ministry as Paul states in 1 Corinthians 4:2,

“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” In 1 Timothy 1:12 he said, *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”* Let it be said of us, beloved, that we too might be found faithful and true. May the Lord make us like David, a man after God’s own heart (Acts. 13:22), who will do all His will and faithfully feed the flock He has entrusted to us.

A leader must be called, chosen, and found faithful to the task God has given!

Diligence

Another characteristic of a leader is that he must be a hard worker. He has to devote himself to the task that has been given him and, like Ruth of old, must spend little time resting when there is work to be done (Ruth 2:7). Few leaders can have a nine to five mentality. Rather, they put in long hours on the job and are at their desk long after underlings have left theirs. Cecil Rhodes, the founder of the nation of Rhodesia would often sigh as he said, “So much to do and so little time in which to do it.”

Diligence is also the key to promotion as Scriptures teach us. First Kings 11:28 tells us that Solomon, perceiving that Jeroboam was industrious, promoted him to be the ruler over all the house of Joseph. This is in conformity to Proverbs 12:24 which states, *“The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.”* This fact is repeated in Proverbs 22:29, *“Seest thou a man diligent in*

his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.”

It is a way of life for those who are industrious because even their thoughts tend to plenteousness (Prov. 21:5), so the promise to them is that their very souls shall be made fat (Prov. 13:4). They that gather by their labours shall increase (Prov. 13:11).

Chapter 3

Teamwork and Infrastructure

Inheritance Through One's Seed

We are told repeatedly in Scriptures that one's inheritance is through one's seed. Thus to Abraham the Lord gave this promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 22:18).

This promise is also made to the barren, *“For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited”* (Isa. 54:3).

Leaders must develop teams composed of spiritual sons who will propagate their vision. The promises God has given to us shall be realised through the team that we raise up. Thus, the team has to be very carefully chosen, equipped, and trained.

The vision that the Lord has given us must likewise be birthed in the hearts and minds of the team. It must burn within their own hearts so they are able to recite and explain it to others.

Guidelines for the Smooth Functioning of Teams

Now in order for a team to function smoothly and effectively, certain guidelines should be followed:

Excellence

A standard of excellence should be instilled in each team member. This was the word that the Lord gave us when we started His work here in Zion. No matter what we were given to do within the fellowship, whether spiritual or secular, or whether in the area of buildings, books, or churches, it was required to be of the highest quality.

It did not mean that we were to be extravagant, but we were to be careful how we spent money on those things of a temporal nature. For example, when laying a floor in our multi-purpose sanctuary, I was going for the cheapest, but the Lord insisted on a standard of excellence. Thus, the floor, although far from ornate, has endured for over 20 years without need of any repairs whatsoever, proving that quality is often more economical than a cheaper variety that has to be replaced after a few years.

This standard of excellence applies, therefore, throughout the organisation whether it is materials or our everyday work ethics. This is achieved by the realisation that we are working for the King of kings to whom we must give an account on Judgment Day for the deeds that we have performed whilst here on earth.

Lean Staff

The staff should be lean. Let me illustrate this with the following. My grandfather had a garden in which he had two tomato plants growing side by side. One had a very thick trunk, branches, and stems, but produced relatively

small tomatoes. By contrast, the other had a very slender trunk, branches, and stems yet the tomatoes were very large, mature and meaty. Basically, the less of our resources that we use for ourselves, the more productive we will be. This lesson has stayed with me through life.

Whilst working in government service, I noticed that there was a tendency to employ overly large staffs. This resulted in our spending most of our time sending memos, bulletins, and correspondence to other departments asking them for their opinion.

If it had been properly and economically planned, the department for which I worked (the War Department) could have easily achieved the goal with much more speed. Furthermore, those in the field who were awaiting our decisions could have received them in a more efficient and orderly fashion. This would have allowed the troops to move more quickly instead of being held up by numerous clerks busily sending requests from one person to another for action.

The lesson is simple. The less one spends on irrelevant organisational matters, the more one can use of time, money, and labour furthering the main purpose of a Christian organisation—to get the gospel out.

*God desires quality in our work,
whether spiritual or secular.*

When administration costs are kept to the minimal, then productivity goes up. Try, as much as is possible, to farm out specialist jobs as well as repetitive work, which will occur very infrequently. This will free your own people from these duties, so that they can be devoted to the work that others outside cannot perform. In a nutshell, we could say that **the less we spend on ourselves, the more we have to give to the work of the gospel in helping others.**

Well-Trained and Equipped Staff

The staff must be well-trained and equipped for the work of the ministry to which they are called. Often, a training program is needed. Such was the case with Abraham who had 318 servants born and trained in his own house (Gen. 14:14).

The key is to be, in a spiritual sense, birthed into the vision and trained by Abraham. Similarly, Jesus used this program when He brought the twelve disciples into His entourage and trained them, having birthed the gospel vision within their hearts and minds. The vision of the leader thus becomes a corporate one to which his team is committed. Leaders should develop a training program and then give them field experience under the care of senior ministers.

Today we are blessed with equipment that is highly specialised and very complex. Yet this equipment allows us to achieve a degree of productivity that would never have been possible even a decade or so ago. Personally I try to write, on an average, three books a year, but if we did not have computers, I would be hard pressed to publish one a year. It is a maxim

that good equipment makes the staff highly productive and enables one to often do the work of three. It is wise, where possible, to invest in the latest equipment, although one must carefully watch that the latest model will be beneficial and that an increase in productivity will commensurate with the increased costs incurred by the new equipment.

Delegation

Likewise, the leader should be a good delegator so that his time is used for decision-making, prayer, and the study of the Word. Remember Moses, a great man of God, he himself became so overwhelmed by paying too much attention to the minor responsibilities in the congregation that his father-in-law, Jethro, had to caution him against attending to the trivial matters lest he be worn out (Ex. 18:13-27).

However, this matter of a good infrastructure that allows a leader to delegate his responsibilities is often neglected to his own detriment and that of the church or fellowship.

Citing an extreme case of the leader seeking to do all things, I think of a dear pastor in France. Whenever anyone in the church needed help, even if it was simply to replace a window in their house, he would be there to do it. The result was that he was totally unprepared for the evening and weekend meetings. Some members of the congregation were actually reading newspapers during the church service. It is important that a detailed job description be given with each position. In case of the absence of the senior pastor, parameters and boundaries of responsibility should be clearly enunciated. For example, how far can they go in the

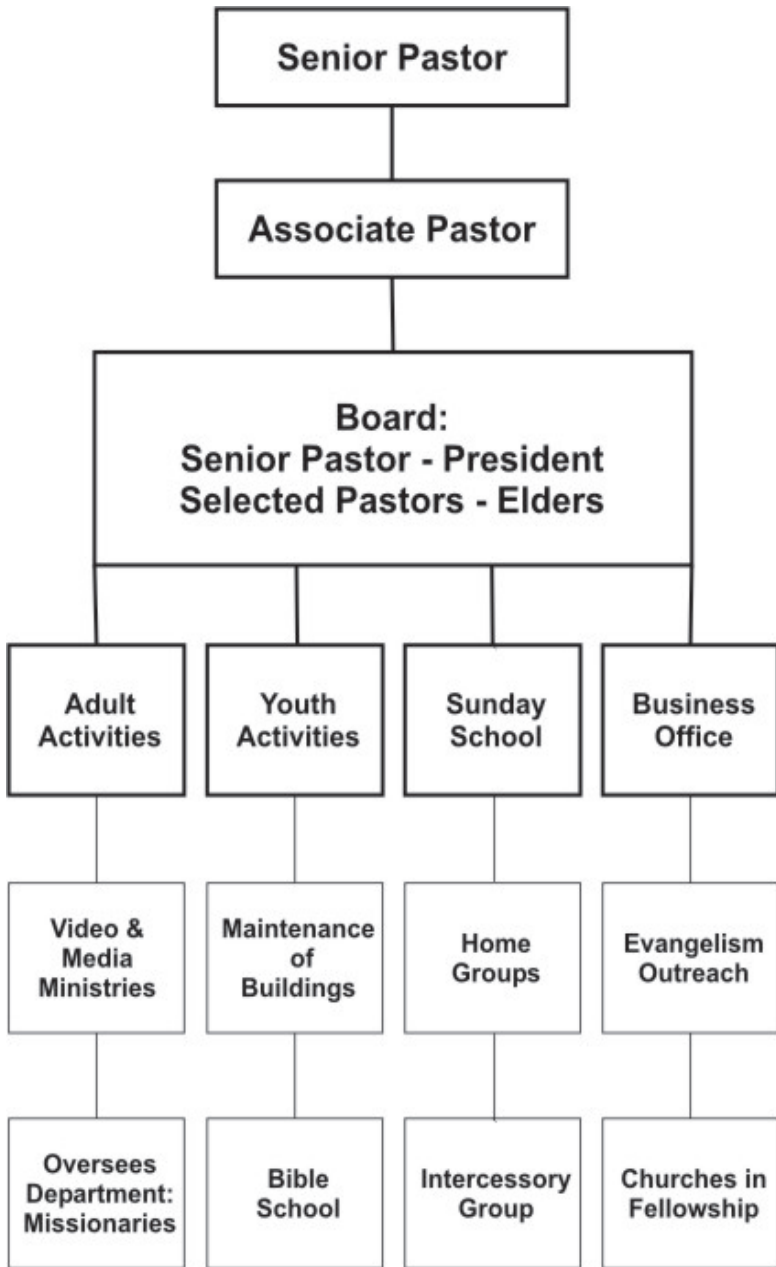
realm of counselling, approving financial expenditures, or changing any established schedules? You cannot delegate all decision-making to others in your absence or the church, like a ship, could be placed upon a different course and likely make shipwreck.

The following page has a chart that provides a sample of a way the leader should seek to delegate duties. This Board should be composed of men who have recognised spiritual and secular expertise. They are those upon whom the senior pastor can rely for sound counsel and strength in difficult decision-making situations. Furthermore, they must be totally loyal to the senior pastor and the God-given vision to the church or fellowship. I am aware that some pastors serve at the pleasure of the Board, although I see no scriptural basis for this.

The next position, that of elders, carries with it a scriptural admonition that is detailed for us in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

These form the spiritual leadership together with the other pastors and the senior pastor as the chairman. The associate pastors generally are given responsibility for different outreaches and ministries in the church.

Each of the above in the chart, according to the size of the mother church or fellowship, could have sub-groups. With respect to house meetings, it is wise not to exceed 20 or 30 people since the individual member will not receive the help needed. House leaders should be carefully selected and be responsible to a governing elder who is, in turn, responsible to an associate pastor.



Concerning deacons, their qualifications are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and they are responsible, like the Old Testament porters, for the physical needs of the congregation. We might say that they have the ministry of helps. The leader should maintain good communication with his associate pastors and staff, keeping them abreast of the happenings throughout the church and fellowship. In this way, they will be aware of the importance and effectiveness of their own ministry and their worth to the team as a whole.

When we read in Deuteronomy 32:30 that one will put a thousand to flight and two will put ten thousand to flight, we see the power of a united, joyous, Spirit-filled team.

Staffing Appointments

God-Appointed

Naturally the leader has to have a team to fulfil the task God has given him. Scripturally we understand that not only is the leader chosen by God, but also each staff member. Thus Jesus could speak of His disciples as the men God had given to Him (Jn. 17:11). It is our responsibility to place them in the position for which they are qualified.

We see that this principle is true as we consider 1 Chronicles 9:22, *“All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.”* Therefore the senior pastor should have the responsibility of carefully selecting even the most junior members of the staff so that the work of God is not hindered, but flows smoothly through an anointed team.

The Cost of Training

This sometimes is more difficult than it would first appear for the Lord does not always give us what we might term the finished product, and there is a lot of on-the-job training. This may entail many errors on the part of a member of the team and they can prove to be very costly.

The leader must realise that they will make mistakes, and he must have a very loving, generous, and forgiving attitude when these errors happen. Often the young minister is given practical responsibilities along with his spiritual duties. Errors in these areas can indeed put a serious dent into a church budget.

The author himself was entrusted on one occasion with transporting some guests from one European country to another in a newly acquired minibus. Due to a lack of experience with this new vehicle, he burnt out the engine with the result that another vehicle had to be rented for the stranded guests, a new engine purchased, and a team sent up to recover the vehicle. The total bill was horrendous.

On a different occasion, some young ministers in France had borrowed, with the permission of the senior pastor, his prized car. Not knowing how to negotiate a wet curve in the road, they sent the vehicle into a ditch. The forlorn driver reported to the pastor's wife that the vehicle was heavily damaged, and she was sent on the errand of having to soothe the emotions of her irate husband. Another budding young minister was given the task of remodelling a room in a church building. He did a beautiful job of tiling the floor, and

then afterwards plastered the ceiling and painted the walls. The result was that the plaster-covered tile floor had to be replaced at a considerable cost.

Another leader in training, when loading a church van, was seeking to push a pipe from the front to the back. With one triumphant shove he got it in, unfortunately at the expense of the pipe going through the back window. “Ah,” one leader said to me, “the joys of training the young.”

Nothing, however, compares to a pulpit disaster. There was a rector in a certain church who had a young and very inexperienced junior minister, no more than 24 years of age, sent to join his staff. His preaching was lamentable, and so to encourage him, the rector suggested he enrol in a college that would weekly send a sermon for pastors to preach. Imagine the surprise of the congregation as the young minister, armed with his first sermon from this college began by saying, “During my 50 years of missionary service in the Amazon, I experienced some dangerous situations...”

“Well,” said one dear sainted pastor, “it certainly developed forbearance, and a sweet and mild spirit, as we are feverishly praying for a few sentences that will do damage control.” So many pastors have had to sit tight-lipped, their faces turning redder and redder by the moment, their hearts palpitating, listening to weird and unscriptural comments and illustrations by their protégés. Now a seasoned pastor myself, I have become accustomed to staff going to my personal secretary to report disasters rather than coming directly to me. A certain expression on her face alerts me to the fact that it is time to pray for grace.

Character, Ability and Productivity

First of all, character has to be developed so that the sweetness of Jesus can be seen in us. Secondly, we need ability to major in those areas that will stand the test of time and be of everlasting benefit when we have left the scene. Lastly, productivity has to be taken into consideration. In this way, when we teach others the vision that we have received, we will ensure that they, too, major on reproducing the vision in the lives of others so that the fruit of our lives is multiplied. The Lord wants us to produce quality and quantity.

The ideal is to have loving, sweet, uncomplaining, good-natured fellows who are also very able and highly productive. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. We may consider the Secretary of War in President Abraham Lincoln's cabinet named Edwin McMasters Stanton. He mocked and ridiculed the President openly to his face. When asked why he kept him in the cabinet, Lincoln responded, "But he is a very able man and I cannot find a better Secretary than he." Lincoln was willing to endure the insults in order to have an efficient army.

Later, Stanton became a loyal friend and supporter of Lincoln as they worked together. When looking down at Lincoln after he had been assassinated, with tears streaming down his face, Stanton declared that Lincoln was truly a leader of men. He is credited with this quote, "He now belongs to the ages," which meant that his name would endure unto all generations among the great men of history. The leader therefore has to endure many things from team members in order to achieve the goals that he must attain.

Then, too, personal preferences cannot enter into the selection of team members as President Warren Harding observed. He could not give cabinet posts to his cronies if they were incompetent, as he would not have accomplished the job that he had been elected to do.

Also, a good leader must be able to use the people that God gives. This would be illustrated by the example of Samson, who was able to use the jawbone of an ass to slay the Philistines, whereas any other leader would have rightfully demanded the sharpest of swords (Jdg. 15:14-15). A poor workman blames his tools; a master can accomplish the finest of artwork with the most rudimentary tools.

For example, you might need a cook, and the only willing person is one who has never cooked commercially. We personally experienced this for many years. Not only had this person never cooked commercially, but she was also not a pleasant person to be around. Everyone wanted me to let her go, but that would have meant we had no one to take her place, plus the fact that she had willingly stepped into a post that was vacant and helped us out. You do not forget favours that people have done for you. We decided to wait until the Lord had arranged another post for her so that she could submit her resignation with dignity, and He did. At the same time, the Lord provided another person to cook for us. This was something of course that only God could bring to pass.

The qualities of forbearance, longsuffering, and endurance are the qualities that are developed in the leader when he accepts, with holy resignation, those who are less than adequate for the task, yet are chosen by God to be His aids.

Chapter 4

Methods of Leadership

As we contemplate God's Word, we see there are many leaders He has raised up over the millennia of man's sojourn upon earth who have employed different methods in order to attain their God-given goals.

- Moses — His leadership was not contested, except by Korah and his friends (in rebellion against God). He met God face to face, received from Him his orders, and communicated them to Aaron and the other leaders.
- Jehoshaphat — His form of leadership was the consultative form whereby he sought a collective opinion before giving a directive to the nation.
- David — He employed very much the method of Moses. For example, he received his orders from God concerning the pattern of the Temple, and then he assembled the princes and other notable leaders and communicated his decisions.

Church Leadership

This seems to have been a blending of those who heard from God and would submit their direction to the Council at Jerusalem. There were the overall leaders who were the notable apostles—Peter, John, and James, to whom Paul conferred.

However, it is clear that Paul did not hesitate to challenge Peter at times (Gal. 2:11-14). Leadership by consensus is the safest means of obtaining the desired God-given goals since these will not be achieved without the wholehearted help of the team. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 11:14, *“Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.”*

Dear reader, to give an example of what I feel is the best form of leadership, I submit the following for your consideration. On one occasion, I had to assume the pastorate of a very large church. When I was meeting with the elders, I was confronted with a decision of the highest importance that had to be made. I asked them for their opinion and was told that the previous pastor had always made all the decisions without their input and they were merely told what to do. So I told them that they had to pray and we would have another meeting the following week.

At our next meeting, six of them felt that they had heard from God and I concurred having heard from God myself, except the seventh member had an opposite view. Now I could have decided that the majority view would prevail, but I felt this decision would be detrimental to the spiritual life of this seventh member. So I asked him to pray again, which he willingly agreed to do.

A few days later, he called me to explain that he had heard from God earlier but had misinterpreted what God had said to him. The result was that a unified Board made their decision known to the church and it was carried through with the backing of the entire congregation because they saw the unity that prevailed amongst the pastors and elders alike.

The leader must hear from God. He should, however, have strong elders who can equally hear from God. We know Nathan justly corrected David when he first wanted to build the Temple by telling him that this honour was reserved for Solomon.

We may learn from two aspects that seem to apply to all these godly leaders:

1. *They all sought the counsel of God* — The leaders received the counsel of God sometimes by dreams, a word spoken to their ear or heart, or through enquiring of the anointed priests.

The priest would determine God's will when he would thrust his hand into the bag of the ephod and pull out either the urim or the thummin stones that were therein, signifying a yes or a no to the question posed (Num. 27:21).

2. *They communicated their decision to their next in command* — When the leader had obtained the consent of the priests, they declared their intentions to the next in command, received their support, and then told the people, after which they carried out their intentions. However, when this procedure was not followed there were errors and, consequently, trouble.

Classic examples of leaders at times not adhering to these principles would be:

- David when he overrode Joab in numbering the children of Israel (2 Sam. 24:1-9).

- Rehoboam when he disregarded the counsel of the old men (2 Chr. 10:6-8).
- Jehoshaphat when he ignored the word of the Lord not to go with Ahab, king of Israel (1 Ki. 22:1-29) and also when he went to sea with Ahab's son Ahaziah (2 Chr. 20:35-37).
- Josiah lost his life at Megiddo when he went out against Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, in spite of the fact that the Egyptian king, speaking in the name of the Lord, told him not to meddle with him (2 Chr. 35:22).

We may also cite the case of the Apostle Paul when he overrode the warnings given by the Holy Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-14), for in so doing he suffered needless times of imprisonment both at Caesarea and in Rome. Although in this life we are called to suffer much tribulation, often **because we do not heed warnings, we bring suffering upon ourselves that is not in the will of God.**

This brings us to the consideration of alliances, an area where many leaders make errors of judgment, which prove very costly to the spiritual and sometimes financial welfare for both them and their churches.

Chapter 5

Alliances

When performing a work for the Lord one must pay careful attention to the alliances that one makes with outside parties. We have been privileged to assist in raising up a number of works worldwide and have learned a number of useful lessons that we submit for our reader's consideration.

Local Representation

It is self-evident that when one is beginning a work, especially in foreign lands, one needs help from the natives. The locals are knowledgeable with the customs and also the codes when it is a question of physical buildings, or registering a Fellowship or a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Some countries require that their own nationals be represented on the board, especially on occasions where they have the majority vote. This can be very frustrating in that one has to ensure that they are not only likeminded, but also have the best interest of the work at heart and not their own.

Petals, Leaves, or Calyx

I have found that some people are indispensable for the beginning of a work, yet afterwards they are not necessary. Sometimes they can no longer even be permitted to remain because their character and vision do not coincide with the work that God has entrusted to us. Early in my Christian experience, I was perplexed as I did not understand this, so I asked the Lord. He explained through two illustrations.

Firstly, scaffolding, which is essential for the construction of any building, is later discarded for it does not become part of the finished building. In one particular spiritual work, I had a leadership board that seemingly flowed with the vision up to a point, but eventually, they veered from the original calling both doctrinally and spiritually.

Secondly, to my question, “Why, Lord?” He spoke to me using the example of the calyx of a flower. In this case, He bade me consider a rose that has a calyx composed of five leaves, the number of the original board of our fellowship. They were so necessary in our embryonic status for they protected the flower of the fellowship. But notice, dear ones, that they do not have the same texture as the petals of the rose. The leaves of the calyx fall away as the rose matures, and so too did these board members who manifestly showed that in character and vision, they were not truly a part of the beauty of the work of God. However, they were so needful in starting the work. So we have to learn to discern which people are the scaffolding and which ones are the calyxes.

My wife once spoke on another truth very akin to this when she was speaking in a meeting. She asked the audience, using the example of the fig tree that Jesus cursed in Matthew 21:19, “Are you “leaves” or are you producing the fruit of the Spirit?” Fruit or leaves? Rather than being calyxes that are only useful for a time, or the leaves on the fig tree that received life and yet remained barren and thus were cursed, let us choose differently. May we be as the beautiful petals of the rose or a fruitful bough, those who will faithfully carry out all that God has ordained for our lives, and produce fruit that will abide until the very end.

Dangers of Worldly Alliances

When we are looking at the spiritual direction that the Lord has given to us, so often we need help in the area of the ministry gifts in His Body. We realise that we do not have all the five ministry gifts in our congregation and we look elsewhere. Scripturally, many sought to help Israel, but Israel also went to others for help in their times of need. However, it was there that they lost the vision that the Lord had given them through the Law of Moses. In the time of Joshua, they made an alliance with the Gibeonites whom they should have destroyed because they did not seek counsel from the Lord (Josh. 9:3-15).

I have seen so often in the Church that, as with Israel, they have gone to the world for their ideas with the result that the world has entered the Church. Israel went to Egypt and Assyria, and their gods were brought into Israel and corrupted the worship that was to have been devoted to the one and only true and holy God. Similarly, the Church has brought the music, methods, and ideas of the world into the Sanctuary of God and the devils do rejoice. We are told to try the spirits; this especially applies to prophecy and the so-called prophets who seek to control the Church and her leaders. It is for that reason that the gift of discerning of spirits has been included in the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:10).

Let us remember the godly King Jehoshaphat who corrupted the lineage of David by making an alliance with Ahab and permitted his son to marry Athaliah. She, in turn, destroyed the royal seed of Judah (2 Chr. 21:6; 22:2-3).

We see that another error of judgment ensued when all the kings joined in battle against Israel during the time of Joshua.

When we walk in the counsel of the Lord there is safety. The Gibeonites worked wilily and led the Israelites to believe that they came from a far country. Because of this they were able to induce the Israelites to make a covenant with them by which they could not destroy the Gibeonites for all generations (Josh. 9:4-6). Once again, the children of Israel made an alliance with a people that should have been destroyed because they did not take counsel of the Lord.

Chapter 6

Leaders in the Old Testament

We are now going to see how these and other principles were enacted in the lives of some of the greatest leaders of all time as recorded in Holy Scripture and in the Church Age.

Joseph

Leadership abilities and roles are often evident and recognisable at an early age, as the preparation of a leader often takes long and circuitous routes and experiences. This was true with Joseph, for his father Jacob clothed him with the coat of many colours at a young age, denoting the fact that he was the heir apparent to the promises of God for the family (Gen. 37:3). His brethren fully understood, and this knowledge increased their jealousy of him.

Both antagonism and the desire to slay the leader at an early age are apparent in many of the lives of the leaders, for the enemy full well knows who they are and their destiny even more than do their families and friends. Therefore the brethren were used in their jealousy to try and thwart God's purposes, for they clearly said, "Let us slay him and then we shall see what becomes of his dreams" (Gen. 37:18-20).

Joseph had the visions of ruling over his father and brethren at the age of possibly 17 years, but the fulfilment of that dream took 20 long years of cruel betrayal even by his own brethren, who sold him into Egypt as a slave. Then, rising

into prominence in the household of Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard, he was again betrayed by the captain's wife, after he had refused her blandishments (Gen. 39:1-21). He exemplified purity of heart and steadfastness of purpose and faithfulness to his master.

Joseph spent many long years in prison, during which time we are told by the psalmist that Joseph, bound in chains, was tried by the word of the Lord (Ps. 105:17-19). Yet the Lord was with him and his character was being formed for rulership. The qualities of purity, faithfulness, care, concern, and compassion for others in less fortunate circumstances were developed in this young man, as all the prisoners in the prison with him were committed to his hand. He virtually was the ruler of the prisoners and whatsoever was accomplished in the prison was because of him (Gen. 39:21-23). How important it is to be faithful in adverse circumstances for this is when the mettle of a leader is tried, tested, and proven.

Nurse Edith Cavell, the night before her execution by a German firing squad in the First World War, said to her chaplain as she was taking her last communion service, "I must have no bitterness in my heart." These words are engraved on her statue, which is erected in the courtyard of St. Martin's, in the field near Trafalgar Square in London, England.

This was so true of Joseph, this leader of men. He tells us how he triumphed over all the wrongs that he had experienced when later, he named his firstborn son Manasseh, meaning

“For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father’s house” (Gen. 41:51). Forgetfulness is the antidote for bitterness that every leader must copiously receive from the Lord, as a bitter leader is a leader that will poison those whom he has been given responsibility to lead (Heb. 12:15).

When the Lord raised Joseph to the pinnacle of power for which He had ordained for him, there was again divine intervention in the form of dreams that were given to two of Pharaoh’s prisoners—his butler and his baker. The interpretations of the dreams given to Joseph were that the baker would be executed whilst the butler would be restored to his previous position. Plaintively, Joseph pleaded with the butler to speak to Pharaoh on his behalf, but two long years passed because the butler forgot Joseph. However when God’s perfect time came for Joseph to be released, He gave Pharaoh dreams that no one could interpret and then the butler remembered Joseph (Gen. 41:9-14).

Additional prison time was required in the purposes of God to bring Joseph to perfection. So often in our prison-like experiences we think we are ready to come forth, but the Lord alone knows when the precious work of preparation for His purposes in our lives has been accomplished. The length of time of a trial is often long, as it takes the stresses in our lives a certain duration to work in us those necessary virtues for which they are ordained of the Lord. Appearing now before Pharaoh and giving the interpretation of his dreams and the consequent necessary action, the wisdom

of God upon Joseph was evident not only to Pharaoh, but also to all his counsellors. Thus another lesson in leadership emerges as even the chosen of the Lord must have acceptance at the time appointed for the assumption of his duties.

In examining the initial ministry of Joseph to gather the grain during the seven years of plenty for the seven years of famine, we notice that Joseph built storehouses (Gen. 41:47-49). Material provisions for God's blessings are necessary, whether they be college buildings, housing for staff, printing presses, or offices to accomplish the work that we are called to perform. Failure to provide adequately for these can result in disastrous consequences for the work, even a collapse of a vision.

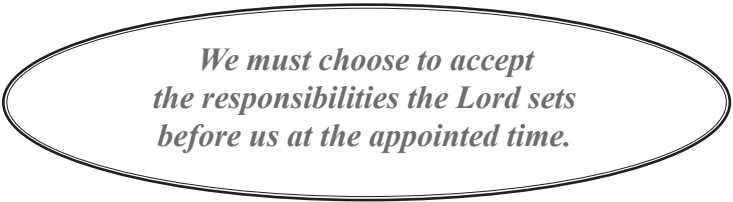
When the seven years of famine began, Joseph opened the storehouses and sold the grain to the population. It was at this time that his brethren came to buy corn and the original dream he had of them bowing down before him was fulfilled (Gen. 42:1-9).

In his restoration of his brothers, we have a lesson for all leaders who have erring members, maybe even associate leaders, who desire to come back into fellowship. It was achieved with great prudence and wisdom. Firstly, Joseph ascertained whether they were truly and sincerely convicted of their sin towards him. He achieved this by not revealing he was their brother and by imprisoning them. They then conferred in Hebrew and concluded that it was because of their conduct toward Joseph that they were now in their present plight (Gen. 42:10-24).

Obviously the manner in which Joseph obtained the information of their remorse is not possible in other situations but this is cited because, in one way or another, it must be determined if the one seeking reconciliation is truly repentant.

Regretfully we have had situations where it was truly evident that those seeking restoration to our fellowship were not willing to address and make right previous attitudes and sins. In the parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-24), let us remember that he fully acknowledged his sin and was truly repentant. Therefore he could be restored to his former position.

Now when their father Jacob died, again the brothers were in fear of Joseph, but he received them graciously as is recorded in Genesis 50:19-21, *“And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.”* The work of God had been completed in Joseph, such that he could, with great magnanimity, receive them graciously and provide for them a place in the land of Egypt.



*We must choose to accept
the responsibilities the Lord sets
before us at the appointed time.*

Lessons from the Life of Joseph

1. He was a tried and proven vessel in the areas of sexual purity and faithfulness in the realms of Potiphar's household and Pharaoh's prison house, even in times of great hardship of soul.

2. In the most adverse circumstances in the prison, he conserved his faith and his ability to hear from the Lord for others, namely in the matter of the butler and the baker's dream.

3. He could be entrusted with the affairs of the kingdom of Egypt having been proven faithful in the lesser matters.

4. During the days of plenty, he was diligent in the affairs of the king in providing storehouses for the days of famine. He therefore was an able and wise administrator.

5. He could not only receive his brethren graciously and with a forgiving heart, but he could also abundantly prepare and care for them with the best of the land.

6. His spirit was void of bitterness and only the sweetness of Christ flowed from his very being.

Joseph thus received the double portion of the blessings reserved for the firstborn (1 Chr. 5:2).

Moses

His Early Life

Like Joseph before him, Moses had a long, strenuous and varied preparation. His birth was at the time of the genocide of the male babies ordered by the new Pharaoh because the children of Israel were becoming more numerous than the native Egyptians. However, behind this crime was Satan, the prince of this world who well knew that at that time, the saviour of Israel was to be born. He therefore sought to destroy him at birth even as he executed another genocide some 1500 years later. This was when Rachel was weeping for her children at the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem, as the enemy sought to destroy the Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 2:16-18).

In spite of the orders of Pharaoh, the Hebrew midwives preserved the male children alive (Ex. 1:15-21). Thus, too, did the parents of Moses as we read in the following passage, *“By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment”* (Heb. 11:23). Moses was preserved by the faith of his parents.

Then Pharaoh’s daughter was used as the instrument of God to nourish him as her own son. Raised there in the household of Pharaoh, Moses was *“learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds”* (Acts 7:22). Written in classical Greek, the meaning, when translated, would be that Moses was exceedingly well trained.

By faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and sought out his brethren when he was 40 years of age. He defended one who was being ill-treated by an Egyptian and killed the Egyptian (Ex. 2:12). In Acts 7:25, Stephen tells us that Moses supposed that his brethren would have understood how God by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not.

Recognition as a Leader

Here we must pause to consider a very important fact in the life of a leader. As we have previously remarked, the Lord speaks to His chosen ones, often at a very young age concerning His call upon their lives. Thus, it is evident that Moses knew his call to be the saviour of the children of Israel when relatively young.

However, it is one matter for the person who is called knowing God's purpose, and a completely different matter having that call recognised by those whom he will be called to lead. It was only after Moses had passed 40 long years in the wilderness that he was finally ready to be accepted as the deliverer by the Israelites.

The Lord speaks to His chosen ones.

We read in Exodus 4:27-31, "*And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: And Aaron spake all the*

words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.”

It is only when God magnifies a person in the presence of his peers that they will accept and understand that they are one of God’s chosen leaders.

God’s Timing

So often in the life of a leader there is that time when they try to enter into a course before God’s time and before they have been prepared (Prov. 20:21). This was the case with Moses, who then fled into the desert and was nurtured there by his father-in-law, Jethro, a priest of Midian.

Attitude upon Defeat

We have also remarked that even in times of apparent defeat and bitter experiences, one must maintain one’s poise and sense of destiny and righteousness. This attitude keeps us on the pathway of God. Thus it was with Moses, who defended the daughters of Jethro against the other shepherds at the water well. In so doing he was rewarded by being given Zipporah, daughter of Jethro, to be his wife (Ex. 2:15-21). Then for 40 years he was in the backside of the desert tending to his father-in-law’s sheep.

May we appreciate this prince of Egypt, who was accustomed to all the pomp and ceremony of the royal life of Pharaoh’s

court with its refined and profound discussions pertaining to the affairs of government. Yet, here he was watching over animals without intelligence and common sense that always tended to stray and required constant care. The only way to higher heights, from one mountaintop to the next, is by passing through the valleys. Spiritually, in order to move from one mountaintop experience to the next, one first has to go through the valley of humiliating experiences.

From Called to Chosen

Finally after 40 years the time of his commissioning had arrived. Now he was not just the called of God but the chosen of the Lord. He had qualified in the desert furnace of affliction (Isa. 48:10). In the desert he had woven into the very fibre of his being that indispensable virtue for all leaders—meekness. He had been chosen to inherit the land just as it is the meek that inherit the earth (Mt. 5:5).

*The only way from one mountaintop to the next,
is by passing through the valleys.*

Knowing the Name of God

At the burning bush, Moses is introduced to the Lord as *Jehovah, the I Am That I Am* (Ex. 3:14). In other words there is no other God but the Lord. This is an essential part of leadership, the leader must know the name of God that applies particularly to his ministry gift. Thus Moses was to confront all the powers of Egypt and, in fact, the gods of Egypt.

He therefore had to know the power of the One in whose stead he was coming. For example, if a minister is called to a specific healing ministry he would have to know the Lord as Jehovah Rapha—the Lord who Heals (Ex. 15:26). When we come against sicknesses in that mighty Name, the sicknesses have to leave the person whom they are afflicting.

The importance of knowing the Names of God is illustrated in Psalm 91:14 where, speaking of His Beloved Son, the Heavenly Father said, *“I will set Him on High, because he hath known My Name.”*

Only by divine revelation are the varied Names of God given to us, and then do we indeed become partakers of those particular aspects of the nature of the Father. He desires us to be like Him, and to the degree that we know and experience His nature which that Name reveals, do we indeed become more and more moulded into His likeness. We encourage all leaders to meditate upon this truth until it becomes a part of their nature and can, in turn, be imparted unto others. We can see that the heart of the Lord is revealed to Moses as the Lord said, “I have heard the cry of My people and I am come down to deliver them” (Ex. 3:7-8). Then the Lord said that He would bring them up out of Egypt and into the good land that was occupied by the nations of the Canaanites. Furthermore the Lord gave three signs to Moses:

1. A rod that became a serpent when cast upon the ground. A rod is a symbol of authority and the serpent a type of Satan. When Moses picked up the serpent it became a rod again, thus showing that Moses had power over Satan (Ex. 4:2-5).

2. **Thrusting his hand into his bosom it became leprous and putting it back again it became clean (Ex. 4:6-7).** This showed that Moses had power over sin, for leprosy, which made a man unclean, is a type of sin (Lev. 13).

3. **When in Egypt he was told to take of the water of the river, which became blood when poured out on dry land.** This signified that Moses had the power to execute judgments in the Name of the Lord (Ex. 4:9). In this encounter, the Lord gave Moses his commissioning, his vision, his power, and also very importantly, an understanding of the heart and compassion of a God who knows the sorrows of His people.

Importance of Obeying God's Will

When Moses was on his way to Egypt, the Lord sought to kill him because he had not circumcised his sons. This showed that this minister of circumcision was not walking in complete obedience to the Lord. Like Saul, he was walking at this moment of time in partial obedience and God was displeased (1 Sam. 15:1-9). How important it is for us to remember and give heed to this lesson so that we are wholehearted with God. Saul lost all because of not fulfilling all the will of God. Moses would have lost his life had not Zipporah saved him in circumcising their boys (Ex. 4:24-25; 18:2-4).

Confrontation with Pharaoh

Another factor God warned Moses about was that when he confronted Pharaoh, Pharaoh would not relent. Instead, he would harden his heart. This was to enable the Lord to show

forth His wonders in the land of Ham. Eventually Pharaoh died in the Red Sea. We have had similar experiences in our own ministries where those who wilfully hardened their hearts against the work that God was doing through us were cut off. As King Solomon warned in Proverbs 29:1, *“He, that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”* The wicked are often not allowed to remain forever.

Fighting the Battles

Moses had to endure many battles within the congregation. For example, his own brother Aaron, the High Priest, and his sister, Miriam the prophetess, rose up against him in criticism concerning his wife (Num. 12:1-15). Wives of leaders are often the targets of the attack from the enemy, which usually comes through the conduit of other women in the congregation, and in this case, a leader of the women in Israel.

Moreover, the children of Israel went a whoring after the idols of Baal when they committed fornication with the daughters of Moab. This is a grief to any leader when, despite the fact that he has so well taught the people, they still go into error and downright sin, and when the people for whom he has laid down his life turn away from the path into which he has birthed them.

The grief of the leader is but a small reflection of the grief of our Lord, who has literally died for them. Yet he must not let their infidelities deter him from pressing on to teach his people the ways of the Lord, nor must he become despondent when he loses many people because they will not follow on

to climb higher heights in God. Nay, in all these trials, the leader must see the bigger picture and understand that they are but opportunities to know the Lord in the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

Nevertheless, in all these trials and disappointments there are the glorious promises of the Lord for those who triumph in their attitudes and allow the Holy Spirit to develop His fruit of longsuffering, patience, endurance, gentleness, goodness, and compassion for those who oppose themselves.

Trials are but opportunities to know the Lord in the fellowship of His sufferings.

The all-conquering love of Jesus enables us to turn these seeming defeats into stepping-stones to lift us higher and nearer to our blessed Lord. Also, to lose members and be rejected and rebuffed by them when seeking to draw them back often opens the way to the realisation of the promise of Isaiah 49:20 in our lives, *“The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.”*

Such was the case of Moses, who lost a whole generation in the wilderness. Nonetheless, when they arrived at the Jordan on the plains of Moab there was a whole new generation who were willing to listen to the second reading of the law and who were well able to go in under Joshua and possess the land.

Another battle that Moses had to endure was with the prophet Balaam. Balaam was a man who knew God and had

received a very high degree of the prophetic mantle, yet who also was influenced by enchantments, and thus operated or ministered under another mantle, that of a deceiving spirit at times (Num. 22). Balaam also taught Balak, the king of Moab, to lay a stumbling block before the children of Israel to eat things sacrificed to idols.

This danger of having battles with those who have dual mantles exists in the Church today. It is clearly emphasised by the Lord when He warned the church of Pergamos in Revelation 2:14, *“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.”*

Lessons from the Life of Moses

We have developed the life of Moses in detail in our book entitled *The Journey of Israel*. Therefore we will not repeat those lessons here. However, there are a few points that are relevant for this leadership study:

1. Moses followed in the minutest detail the instructions of the Lord in all that he was told to do, such that he received this commendation, *“And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after”* (Heb. 3:5).
2. Moses handled rebellion against him in the spirit of meekness so that it was the Lord who fought for him

in destroying the sons of Korah. This virtue, above all virtues, that he possessed—meekness (a holy acceptance of circumstances), must be perfected in our lives. We must remember if we fight, the Lord stands back. If we stand back, the Lord will fight and certainly win the battle for us.

3. A leader like Moses must be clothed upon with the wisdom of God.

4. He must have a clear vision of the path and goal that God has appointed for him and the people of God that the Lord has entrusted into his care.

5. He must have the heart of a shepherd who is willing to lay down his life for his sheep. When God sought to kill the rebellious people, Moses cried out, *“Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written”* (Ex. 32:32). So dearly did this shepherd of God love those erring sheep of the household of Israel.

6. A leader must be an able administrator. Certainly this was the case with Moses who learnt the art of delegating authority and responsibility from his father-in-law, Jethro (Ex. 18:13-27).

May we learn the lessons that the life of this great man teach us and seek to be like him. Above all, he had an intimate friendship with the Lord (Ex. 33:11), and hungered and thirsted to see and know the glory of God.

Joshua

Succession Planning

Joshua is an excellent example of a leader in training. One of the concerns of any leader is to prepare the deputy who will eventually become his successor and carry on the vision.

Spiritual Warrior

The first mention of Joshua is when Moses delegated the task of selecting men to fight against Amalek and leading them in battle to him. While Joshua was in battle, Moses was standing on the top of the hill with his hands held up by Aaron and Hur. As long as his hands were held up, Joshua and Israel prevailed against the Amalekites, as we see in Ex. 17:11-12,

“And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”

Thus, Joshua was proven as a military leader, something which was a necessity in those days. For us today, a leader has to be well versed in spiritual warfare. This battle against Amalek had a great significance for all time, for he was a descendant of Esau (Gen. 36:12) through Adah, a Hittite by

Eliphaz, Esau's son and Timna, his concubine (Ex. 17:9-16). Esau was a fornicator and a profane person who despised his birthright and spiritual blessings, which he sold to satisfy his fleshly desires and appetites.

We must ever remember the warning in Hosea 4:11, "*Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.*" Thus Amalek speaks spiritually of the works of the flesh against which God would war from generation to generation. We, as Christians, must heed the admonition of the Apostle James to cease from lusts that signify friendship of the world and therefore cause enmity with God (Jas. 4:1-10). The spiritual Amalekites that every generation of Christians has to battle until Jesus comes must be fought and overcome!

Servanthood

The next reference to Joshua is that he is called the minister of Moses, and he went up into Mount Sinai with him. This was like Elisha, who later on in history, was the one who poured water upon the hands of Elijah—the one whose place and office he would take later on. Thus, the designated leader is the one who is the servant to his master who, as he qualifies, will later inherit his position.

Love for God's Presence

In Exodus 33:11, we find that Joshua entered into the Tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and beheld the sight of Christ speaking with Moses as a friend speaketh to his friend. After Moses left, Joshua tarried in the presence of God.

The prospective new leader must be one who appreciates the presence of the Lord and is willing to be a servant, as it is written of Joshua, who although young (he would have been about 40 years of age at this time), tarried in God's presence. This is the key to being transformed into the image of Christ as we read in 1 John 3:2, "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*" Also, Paul writes in a similar vein in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, "*Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*"

Loyal to Leader

It is very interesting to note how zealous he was for the position of Moses when he thought that the prophesying of Eldad and Medad would diminish his status. Moses, great man that he was, replied that he wished that all the Lord's people were prophets (Num. 11:29). Sometimes, when we are young, we can have misplaced loyalties which are something the leader needs to temper. Nonetheless, **loyalty to the leader cannot be overemphasised.**

As we are faithful in another man's vineyard then we shall receive our own. However, as leaders, we shall experience betrayal from those around us. The "Absaloms" and the "Judass" will abound. The longer the period of our ministry, the more we experience betrayals. **We need to correctly handle betrayal by turning to the Lord for consolation and wisdom.**

The best way is not to attack our betrayer but rather, with dignity and forbearance, understand that the betrayer was after all chosen by God to be our companion for a time. I have noticed that often these “Absaloms” and “Judas” have at times been a great blessing before their betrayal, and I have learnt to be thankful for their ministry.

Full of Faith

Joshua and Caleb were the only spies that brought back a good report after entering into the Land of Promise. Because of this, when the decree of God went forth that the entire generation of 20 years and up would perish in the wilderness, both Joshua and Caleb were spared and were the only ones to enter into His promises. It was a clear indication and manifestation of the fact that this young man possessed vital qualities of leadership—faith in God’s Word, an implicit belief in the omniscience of God, and personal courage to face an enemy that was obviously of far greater strength than natural Israel.

Loyalty to the leader cannot be overemphasised.

Following in the footsteps of Abram whose name was changed to Abraham meaning “a father of multitudes,” Joshua had his name changed from his original name Oshea meaning “deliverer,” to Joshua (or Jesus being the same name) meaning “saviour” (Heb. 4:8). A new name signifies a new position or promotion designating a person’s eternal purpose and is one of the rewards that the Lord gives to an overcomer (Rev. 2:17).

The Changing of the Guard

Now comes the time of the changing of the guard and we see that Moses placed his mantle upon Joshua. It is described in Numbers 27:15-23, *“And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him. And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.”*

In this account the following points should be noted:

1. The new leader was designated by God through the prayer of the old leader. It is God, not man, who always ordains leaders and their successors.

2. His appointment was before the whole congregation. It was signified by the laying on of hands by the old leader thus transferring the power, the authority, and the honour of the old to the new. Note the phrase “*some of thine honour*” for it appears that as with Moses, and with David, that their successors did not enjoy the same greatness as the founders had received, or the same standing with God.

The old leader continues as the commander until his death even after the transfer of power and authority. David appointed Solomon, but still exercised his God-given authority until his death.

The death of Moses took place with the Lord Himself burying him in the land of Moab in the valley over against Beth Peor (Deut. 34:6). The new leader then assumed command as we read in Deuteronomy 34:9, “*And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.*”

Commissioning of Joshua

The commissioning of Joshua took place as the Lord spoke to him directly as the new leader of His people Israel. In this act the Lord gave Joshua the following commandments and promises:

1. The Lord gave him a vision to take the people of Israel over Jordan into the Promised Land (Josh. 1:2).
2. Every place that the sole of his foot trod upon was to be given to him by the Lord (Josh. 1:3).

3. The geographical extent of his inheritance was from the Wilderness to the Great Sea (the Mediterranean) and then northward to the great river, Euphrates (Josh. 1:4).

4. No man would be able to oppose Joshua for as He was with Moses so God would be with him (Josh. 1:5).

God commanded Joshua to be strong and of good courage three times:

- a) So that he might divide the land (Josh. 1:6)
- b) To do according to all the law (Josh. 1:7)
- c) So that the Lord would be with him whithersoever he went (Josh. 1:9)

In order for Joshua to be prosperous, the Lord commanded him in Joshua 1:8 that, *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”*

Now Joshua gave the orders to Israel and they in turn promised to hearken to him even as they hearkened to Moses. Consequently, with God’s commissioning there came the awareness on the part of the people that he was God’s leader and they were to submit.

Spying Out the Land

In performing the first of God’s commandments to take Israel over Jordan, Joshua used prudence and sent forth two men

to spy out the land. They returned with a good report that the inhabitants of the land fainted before them (Josh. 2:24). This is a principle that should be exercised before sending missionaries to a new land—a “spying out” process should be applied. One then knows the necessities and the precautions that have to be taken by those that one sends, as well as the provisions that they will need. Thus one sends them with the best possible equipment, and they are prepared for many eventualities, surprises, or emergencies that they may face in the land of their adoption.

Joshua Is Magnified

As Joshua began to make preparations to cross Jordan, the Lord reiterated that He would begin to magnify him in the sight of all Israel, so that they might know that He would be with him as He was with Moses. Joshua was obedient to the commandments of the Lord. Obedience brings an anointing for stature in the sight of the people (Josh. 3:7). Joshua assured the priests that God would give a sign to them in the drying up of the River Jordan just as God had Moses dry up the Red Sea (Josh. 3:13). Jordan speaks spiritually of the crucified life, and a leader must bring his people into that experience (Gal. 2:20).

There follows now the act of circumcision whereby, at Gilgal (Josh. 5:2-9), all the males were circumcised. The act of circumcision is the cutting away of the flesh with which we were born, and that, too, is an important spiritual experience as Paul states in Romans 2:28-29, “*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly;*

and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

The Battle for Jericho

This is one of the most renowned battles of all times and is recounted to children in every generation in their Sunday School classes, as well as being preached from the pulpits of the churches in every land as an example of the greatness of our God. A very important event took place before the battle, and it is recounted for us in Joshua 5:13-15, *“And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.”*

Before we continue with the narrative we must consider this passage very carefully. Joshua was face to face with the living Christ. Yet he did not trust his eyes or his natural discernment, but rather challenged the man.

This is clearly written for our warning and edification when dealing with manifestations from the spiritual world. If Joshua was not sure when looking at Christ Himself, how much more should we be careful? We are further warned

by the Apostle Paul that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14-15). If Joseph Smith had challenged the angel Moroni then there would not be a Mormon church.

As Captain of the Lord's Host, the Lord Himself gave the battle plan to Joshua, after first assuring Joshua that the Lord had given him the city, the king and all the mighty men of valour. This is a truth that we will see repeated in the battles of David—an assurance of victory together with the battle plan. The battle plan was extraordinary! It consisted in marching, in complete silence, around the city once every six days. On the seventh day, they were to march around seven times, followed by a mighty shout. The walls fell down and the armies of Israel rushed in and destroyed the inhabitants (see account in Joshua 6).

Defeat at Ai

The Lord had given a commandment in Joshua 6:18-19, *“And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.”*

Nonetheless, when the children of Israel came to another city small in size called Ai, the inhabitants chased the army of Israel and slew 36 men. This should have been a simple, easy battle for the army of Israel since the enemy was small, yet answering the cries of Joshua the Lord said,

“Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you” (Josh. 7:11-12).

It was clearly divine judgment by God upon the Israelites. Thirty-six is 3 x 12 signifying divine (3) government (12) intervention.

Executing Judgments

As the leader, Joshua determined by lot who the guilty persons were. Eventually, Achan was discovered to be the culprit and he was stoned. Then the Lord was with Israel again. A leader has to be firm in executing the judgments of the Lord. Although the judgments are not as extreme in our day and generation as they were in ancient days, meaning that the leader does not implement such capital sentences, the Lord still does. On several occasions in my own ministry I have seen God remove those that opposed His holy will in the Church by death.

One of the duties and privileges of a leader is enunciated to another person by the name of Joshua, a thousand or so years later in Zechariah 3:7, *“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also*

keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.” A leader has the privilege of an onward ever-higher walk with the Lord, but he also has the responsibility of judging God’s people and executing the judgment decreed by the Lord upon them. For that reason, a leader has to be wholly devoted to the Lord and cannot permit himself to be moved by human emotions.

Achan was stoned in the Valley of Achor (meaning “Trouble”). Not only did Achan die, but also his sons and his daughters. One man’s folly caused so many to lose their lives. Now there was a fresh mandate from the Lord to take all the people of war and arise against Ai. The war plan was different from that which Israel had first envisaged; the orders were to lay an ambush behind Ai. This they did, and when they had drawn the men of war out of the city by pretending to flee from them, those lying in wait burned the city at the sign of the uplifted spear of Joshua. At this point, the others turned and utterly destroyed the 12,000 men and women of Ai. Then they built an altar and wrote a copy of the Law of Moses upon the stones of the altar.

Enquire of the Lord

Here is a very solemn lesson for leaders. Joshua went to war without enquiring of the Lord. They had their own battle plan to use but a few men, however the Lord commanded that all the men of war would be engaged. The Lord wanted total annihilation of the enemy. If they only used a few men, they would have let some escape. On the other occasion at Ai, the battle plan of the Lord was to use an ambush, whereas Israel made a frontal assault and were once again defeated.

In whatever spiritual battle in which we are engaged, let us always first take counsel of the Lord.

The Leader's Partial Inheritance

Joshua was successful in defeating the 31 kings that were arrayed against the children of Israel, but at the end of his life, Israel had not yet entered into the whole of their inheritance. This is a fact that Paul notes in Hebrews 4:7-9, “*Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*”

We may make one or two other observations of the life of Joshua from the point of view of lessons for a leader. He left directions for the tribes of Israel concerning the boundaries of their inheritance so that they knew their goals. This is essential when the time comes to lay down one's God-given responsibilities so that those that are left know the original vision. With Israel, the goals were given firstly to Moses and then were repeated by Joshua. Israel was to subjugate all their enemies from the Jordan River to the great Sea (which is the Mediterranean Sea), from the river of Egypt to the great River Euphrates, and also the areas that each tribe must occupy.

It is essential for a leader to leave direction so that those who remain are able to continue in the original vision.

At his death all sub-leaders of the tribes knew exactly where they were going, for no one leader ruled the nation after Joshua until Samuel, Saul, and finally David who brought them into the fullness of their inheritance (Heb. 4:7-9, 1 Chr. 23:25).

Joshua left a final charge that they were to love the Lord and keep His commandments, for this would be their wisdom. He also gave them a strong warning not to worship or possess idols and then shared his magnificent personal testimony, *“As for me and my house we will serve the Lord”* (Josh. 24:15).

Lessons from the Life of Joshua

1. Firstly, concerning preparation, he held subordinate positions of trust and authority before assuming high command. These positions were such that they covered all aspects of his final responsibilities. They were in the realm of warfare, experiences with Moses in the realm of administration, and in the realm of knowledge of the Person and the laws of God.
2. Secondly, when he assumed the leadership position, he adhered to the admonition of the Lord to meditate day and night in the Word of God. As a result, he became strong and of good courage, and was able to do all that the Lord had commanded.
3. Regretfully, we also learn by another's errors. Since no one save the Lord Himself is perfect, all these past leaders had weaknesses that have served, and still continue to, as

warnings to us and to the future generations. The errors in the life of Joshua were—the failure to enquire of the Lord in times of battle, and the making of regrettable agreements with the Gibeonites (See Joshua 9).

There is a Scripture that I think may help us in Proverbs 3:6, *“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”* As we make this a way of life for ourselves personally, may we hopefully make fewer and fewer mistakes.

Chapter 7

Leaders in the Time of the Judges

There were altogether 13 judges that ruled Israel. They did not rule the whole nation, but rather segments, and in some cases, could well have ruled jointly with others. They were basically men of valour who stepped onto the pages of history from, generally speaking, unknown roots. Little is known of their preparation for leadership, and often it appears that they had none. This accounts for the admonition of Solomon who said in Proverbs 20:21, *“An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.”* Although the elevation to leadership and the appointment was of God, nonetheless this principle held true.

Othniel

He is mentioned as being the nephew of Caleb who did valiantly in taking Kirjathsepher (Jdg. 1:12-15). He was given Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, to be his wife. She in turn moved him to ask for the upper and nether springs of her father. Thus, in the spiritual sense, we might say he was one who desired the greater things of God and was not afraid to ask largely (Ps. 2:8; 4:1). Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. In Judges 3:8-10 it states,

“Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served

Chushanrishathaim eight years. And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim."

Therefore Othniel was tried in warfare and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him to bring forth a great deliverance for Israel, and the land had peace for 40 years until his death.

He had a godly wife to whom he listened in the matter of the springs and so received an even greater inheritance. **A good wife is a priceless treasure for a leader.** A wife was designated as a helpmate when she was created by God, and she is intended to be a strength and encouragement to her husband.

In leadership, we face many trials, tribulations, and temptations to give up in face of battle. I personally have always been grateful to my godly wife who strengthened me in times of battle.

I have seen, over the course of a lifetime in the ministry, that many leaders have failed because their wives brought them such discouragement in times of dark situations. We may quote the wife of Job who, in a time of dire circumstances, when he needed his companion to stand with him, told him: "*Curse God, and die*" (Job 2:9). Job was truly a remarkable

man who overcame this repressing counsel and stood firm for the truth, and glorified God by responding in Job 2:10, *“Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”*

Sadly, I have seen so many hearken to the errant counsels of their wives, as did Adam, and turn aside from their God-given calling. How important it is for a leader to fervently petition God to give him the wife of His choosing, who will be as the good woman of Proverbs 31.

Thus a leader is proved in the field to which he is called and, by the anointing, fulfils his commission to deliver God’s people from their enemy and into peace.

Lessons from the Life of Othniel

1. We need to be well qualified in the task that we are called and appointed to perform.
2. Marrying a godly woman enhances the benefits and enlarges one’s inheritance for as Solomon says, *“Two are better than one”* (Eccl. 4:9). She is a tower of strength and will, lifting her husband when he is down. Spiritually, with the Lord, she will form with her husband a three-fold cord that is not easily broken (Eccl. 4:12).
3. The anointing of the Lord is essential to fulfil our ministry and God-given purpose in life. So often the reward of obedience is God-given peace in our later days.

Deborah

Deborah was a leader in Israel who judged Israel by virtue of her prophetic mantle in spite of the fact that she was a woman (Jdg. 4-5). We note, however, that her husband is clearly named, showing that although she was a prophetess, she was in submission to her husband in matters of daily life.

The word of the Lord would come through her to Barak, to whom she gave instructions on how to defeat Sisera (the captain of the hosts of the Canaanites). Nevertheless, the victory was to be given to a woman, Jael, who slew Sisera with a tent nail which she drove through his temples when he was sleeping in her tent.

Thus we need to have discernment to know when God is using a woman. At that time, it was very rare that a woman would have leadership over a nation. Isaiah 3:12 states, *“As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.”*

Deborah was clearly, in her own words, “a mother in Israel” (Jdg. 5:7), and as such, she truly cared for the children of Israel who came to her to receive the word of the Lord. The essential task, for example, of fighting the enemy is still the domain of the man. Thus, the relationship between the man and the woman in authority has to be one of mutual respect and acknowledgement of their respective roles. Deborah and Barak had this essential relationship.

Lessons from the Life of Deborah

1. God does use women and does place them in positions of authority.
2. A godly husband is essential since they give boundaries to their wives.
3. Men have to, in all humility, recognise a God-given mantle upon a woman.

Gideon

Oppressed by the Midianites, whom God had sent into the land, the children of Israel repented and cried out to God for a deliverer (Jdg. 6-8). God heard their cry and chose Gideon, of whom we read in Judges 6:12, *“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.”*

Gideon’s Fleece

Regrettably, despite the manifest presence of the angel of the Lord, Gideon required a sign from the Lord that He was speaking to him. This was a weakness in the life of Gideon, which eventually led the whole nation into gross error. In Judges 6:19-21, we read of Gideon’s first request for a sign,

“And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of God said unto him, Take the

flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.”

Despite the obvious miracle from the Lord, Gideon asked for another sign as we see in Judges 6:36-40,

“And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water. And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.”

Notice the peculiarity of verse 37 where Gideon says, “*then shall I know that Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand as Thou hast said.*” Surely this is an affront to God because in actuality it is to doubt God by saying, “I want to be sure that You are going to do what You said You would do.”

Sadly, this request for a “fleece” has entered into all the languages of the Christian world and so many Christians ask for

“fleeces” from God, possibly out of ignorance. Whilst perhaps to ask for what we now term a “fleece” may be acceptable on an occasion or two, to live by them, as did Gideon, leads to error as we shall later see in the life of this judge.

The Lord Saves by Few or Many

The Lord did indeed give Israel a mighty victory over the Midianites, not with the army of 32,000, but with an army of 300. Thus, this handful of 300 (speaking of those who walk with God) held a trumpet in their hands and an empty pitcher with lamps within the pitchers. At the sound of the trumpet, they blew their trumpets, broke the pitchers, and gave a triumphant shout! We see the account in Judges 7:4-7 and 20:

“And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place... And the

three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.”

The Lord set the enemy's sword against each other and gave Gideon and his 300 the victory. From this we learn the Lord saves by few or many. Moreover, the key to victory is obedience and walking with God.

No Abiding Fruit

The asking of the fleece led to another error. After nobly refusing their request to reign over them, Gideon then asked for the earrings of their prey. We read in Judges 8:27, “*And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing*

The key to victory is obedience and walking with God. *became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.”*

An old saint of God recently recounted a story that pertains to Gideon: About 70 years ago, a mother in Israel had started a church from just a handful of people in a storefront. It grew to be a church of renown and consequence in the nation, having over 3,000 members. However, she did not insist on a holy and temperate life amongst her children. As she did not encourage them to have an onward vision, at her passing, there were terrible results. The children fought with each other, many people left to seek greener pastures, and the

church has fallen into disrepute. There was no abiding fruit, as was the case with Gideon.

As leaders, let us concentrate upon producing the fruit that endures to eternal life and a work that lasts until Jesus comes and even into the Millennium if He so chooses.

Lack of Self-control and Temperance

Another lamentable event in Gideon's life was the fact that he had many wives from whom he had 70 sons. In addition to this lustful manifestation, he took a concubine who bare him a son whose name was Abimelech. This man slew all the sons of Gideon with the exception of Jotham, and became the king at Shechem. Thus his own hurtful lusts contained the seed of the destruction of all that he had accomplished during his lifetime.

Lessons from the Life of Gideon

1. A flaw in the character of the leader, in spite of many successes and victories, can still destroy the people later.
2. The asking for "fleeces" does point to a weakness in character in the realm of faith and trust in the naked word of the Almighty. May we seek to have a heart filled with the pure faith of the Spirit to completely trust what the Lord tells us to do without asking for "fleeces."
3. We must ask the Lord for a life of temperance and self-control as King Solomon said, "*Greater is he that controls*

his spirit than he who takes a city” (Prov. 16:32) so that we will produce godly leaders with fruit that abides till the very end.

Jephthah

This judge (Jdg. 11:1-40) was the son of a harlot. He undoubtedly inherited the basest part of his father’s nature who birthed him from his union with a strange woman. In our parlance, that term could be interpreted as a street woman. He was cast out of his father’s house by the other sons. This was normal practice in the lives of families seeking to hide the sins of the father.

However, this man was a mighty man of valour who, when cast out, attracted to himself vagabonds and the riff-raff of society, as did Absalom at a later date. We learn a lesson from this judge in the realm of character. The maxim “a man is known by his friends” is so true. Unfortunately, this does not speak highly of the character of Jephthah. His companions were the most undesirable and uncouth of mankind, yet he was chosen of God to lead Israel. An analogy could be taken from Jeroboam I, king of Israel, who rebelled in his earlier years against King Solomon. Yet both were used by God and given remarkable opportunities. **God gives opportunities to even the basest of men but they never seem to change in the realm of character** for as we read in Daniel 4:17, *“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”*

However, in the time of trouble when the children of Ammon were making war against Israel, the elders turned to this renegade wild man to lead them. He in turn extracted a promise from them: if the Lord should give victory, he would remain as their leader. Now the Lord gave Jephthah the victory over the king of Ammon and, in addition, gave him back the lands that Ammon had taken from Israel.

Sadly, Jephthah made a very foolish vow. It is recorded in Judges 11:30-31, *“And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD’S, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.”*

A man is known by his friends.

He realised his foolishness when his only daughter came out to greet him as he returned from battle. He was then forced to carry out his thoughtless vow and forever lament its tragic results.

We are specifically warned concerning the making of vows by King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:1-6, *“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine*

heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?"

Some other vows that were very costly and should not have been made:

1. The elders of Israel made a vow to the Gibeonites, resulting in the preservation of a nation that should have been destroyed (Josh. 9:14-15).
2. The Apostle Paul also made a vow at Cenchrea (Acts 18:18), which was an Old Testament practice, being part of the law of the Nazarite (Num. 6:18), that should not have carried over into New Testament times.

Lessons from the Life of Jephthah

1. Being used of God is not a proof of being accepted by the Lord.
2. Let us remember the error of Jephthah, and not make foolish vows.

Samson

Samson was born of one of the seven barren women in the annals of Scripture. His mother, unnamed, was the wife of Manoah of the tribe of Dan. The other barren women were Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Ruth, Hannah, and Elizabeth. Each of these women brought forth a man-child who was renowned in the history of mankind. In chronological order they were Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Obed (lineage of David), Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist.

The birth of Samson was announced to the woman by an angel who gave specific instructions concerning his upbringing in Judges 13:4-5, *“Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”*

Samson had an exceptional birth, an exceptional ministry, but a lamentable death.

The Strength of the Lord

There are lessons for every leader from the life of Samson. Samson’s strength was formidable and enabled him to perform mighty feats because of the Spirit of Might that was upon him.

King David consistently spoke of the Lord being his strength (Ps. 18:2; 19:14; 27:1). The Apostle Paul likewise knew the

Lord in this manner as he writes in Philippians 4:13, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

Leadership requires the carrying of many heavy burdens and the fighting of many wearisome battles, often of long duration, and our own human strength quickly proves to be insufficient.

We can embrace Elijah’s frame of mind when he cried out in abject misery and weakness while fleeing from Jezebel in 1 Kings 19:4, *“But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.”*

In order to bolster his morale, an angel of the Lord was sent to feed him so that he could go in the strength of that meal for 40 days to Horeb, the Mount of God (1 Ki. 19:8). Let us cry out to know the Lord, as the One who strengthens us, so that we will neither faint nor be discouraged along the way.

Temperance and Leadership

The second aspect of the life of Samson is less than glorious—his sexual appetites. These he could not control, and because of his relationship with Delilah, he lost his anointing, his eyesight, and finally his life. Regretfully, I have known other leaders who have lost all, including their lives, because of the sin of adultery and fornication. My own senior pastor first lost his anointing, then his ministry, and ultimately his life because he committed suicide in a state of despondency because of an adulterous relationship.

This can be avoided if we meet the Lord in this area of sexual purity. First, we have to acknowledge the will of God in this matter, as Paul states in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.”* Sexual purity is of prime importance in the life of a leader. Let us bear in mind that we are *“kept by the power of God”* (1 Pet. 1:5).

Whom does God keep from falling into this pit of immorality? King Solomon answers this question with a profound promise in Ecclesiastes 7:26, *“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.”* Who pleases God and finds favour in His sight? Those who keep His law (Prov. 3:1-4), those who diligently seek to do good (Prov. 11:27), and those who find wisdom (Prov. 8:35).

Let us follow hard after wisdom (which is pure) and walk in humility before the Lord, always seeking not only to be filled with the Spirit but also to be led of the Spirit, praying that the Lord will not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Lessons from the Life of Samson

1. A godly beginning and outward observances are not guarantees of a good ending. It is inward holiness alone that can save us from destruction and ensure that we hit the mark of God's high calling for our lives.

2. **The ministry does not save a person**, as the Lord Himself reminded His hearers in His sermon on the Mount, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”* (Mt. 7:21-23). **It is the relationship that an individual has with the Lord that is the important factor.**

3. Even as disobedient as this judge was throughout his life, he repented after he had lost his eyes, and his consecration returned in the outward form of his hair growing again. God had mercy upon him, and at his death, he slew more than he did in his entire lifetime. This is very precious to me personally because the pastor that married my wife and I had left the mission field and was in a backslidden state although still in the ministry. Six months before his death, at a relatively young age of 60, he was permitted to return to the mission field and the Lord granted him wonderful miracles to rejoice his heart and bring him back to the Lord. (For further study on the lives of the Judges, please refer to our book entitled *The Book of Judges*.)

Eli

Eli was the High Priest of Israel who ministered in the Tabernacle whilst it was at Shiloh.

Honoured His Sons More than God

He is known for the fact that he honoured his sons more than God. Although he rebuked his sons (who were performing the priestly duties) for their immorality with women and for despising the offerings of God, he did not remove them from the priesthood. Wherefore God sent a man of God, who said, *“Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed”* (1 Sam. 2:29-30).

Sadly, I have known many ministers who have placed their families before the Lord. Let me share one of the many accounts: A missionary and his wife were concerned that the rigors of missionary life were too great for their young boys. Although God gave assurance that He would care for them, they left the mission field of their calling. They returned to their home country and settled down. One day, one of their two boys became seriously ill. The father jumped into their truck with the boy in his arms to rush him to hospital. Grievously, in backing up his car, he was unaware that he ran over his other son and killed him. When he arrived at the hospital, his other son had already died.

The fear they had for the safety of the two sons that caused them to leave the mission field was realised in their home

country rather than on the mission field. Both sons died the same day at home whereas had they stayed on the mission field, God would have cared for them. The result of others, who were called to the mission field and refused to go because they had young families, was that God took all desire to minister on the foreign fields out of their hearts.

I suppose that this lesson is very dear to mine own heart, because I had a dear friend (a former missionary) who had left his field of labour for the home country because he wanted to educate his children. The heartbreaking result was only one of his four children returned to the field and the others settled for a lower calling in life. But oh, what bitterness and regret he and his wife had in their hearts! He died at a missionary convention where he was encouraging others to surrender their lives for the foreign fields. A leader must lay his wife and family truly upon the altar, so that he may wholly follow the Lord and fulfil his ministry.

Returning to the example of Eli, another snare is for the leader to place his children who are bound by alcohol, immorality, or worldliness in positions of authority in the church and allow them to remain despite their sin. It is an abomination in the sight of the Lord and often results in losing all, as did Eli.

We had a minister in our fellowship who, in spite of warning after warning being given him concerning the wayward tendencies of his daughter, failed to take action. She was used extensively in the church as she was gifted in music. Yet it came to light that her life during the week was one of immorality, drugs, and alcohol. Still she was

permitted to continue to be a member of the worship team. This minister refused the many opportunities to put things right and took the side of his backslidden daughter. His church split and he is now destitute. This is the judgment of the Almighty. Beloved, let us be willing to make a difference between the clean and the unclean and not permit family relationships to compromise the standards of God in our churches.

Lessons from the Life of Eli

It is so important that we do not honour our families more than we honour God. There must be no compromising of God's standards in our lives, ministries, and churches.

Samuel

Samuel, like Samson, was also birthed by a miracle of God. His mother's name was Hannah. She was one of the two wives of Elkanah who was of the tribe of Levi. Hannah had no children, but the other wife, Peninnah, had sons and daughters. An adversary of Hannah's, Peninnah provoked her sore because she had no children (1 Sam. 1:6).

Hannah came to the tabernacle (which was at Shiloh) and there made a vow unto the Lord that if He would give her a male child, he would be given to the Lord all the days of his life and no razor would come upon his head (1 Sam. 1:11). The Lord granted her request and she brought forth a son whom she called Samuel meaning "Asked of God." Now we will consider some of the things that are mentioned concerning this wonderful prophet of God.

Faithfulness

As a leader he shows forth some of the finer qualities of those who aspire and are called to that position. Of him the Lord said in 1 Samuel 2:35, *“And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.”*

The Lord promises Samuel the reward of a *“sure house.”* This *“sure house”* which was also given to David meant that he would have a house in heaven as well as a spiritual ministry here upon earth that would be everlasting. Perhaps this is best understood by Psalm 45:17, *“I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.”*

Another feature of the life of Samuel was recorded in 1 Samuel 3:19, *“And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.”* In other words, all that Samuel faithfully spoke was indeed fulfilled, and brought forth fruit. May this be so with us.

Intercessor

The greatness of Samuel is perhaps illustrated by the following verse in Jeremiah 15:1, *“Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.”* Here he is linked with Moses as one who stood before the Lord. What a tremendous privilege!

The psalmist also places him in the same august company, “*Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them*” (Ps. 99:6). Therefore in the eyes of the Lord, Samuel was one of the greatest intercessors of all times.

He travelled in circuit once a year to key places in Israel where he judged the people (1 Sam. 7:15-16). He even had the singular privilege, along with Moses and Elijah (Mt. 17), of ministering upon earth after his death when he declared to Saul the judgment decreed upon the king (1 Sam. 28:11-20). Intercession may be termed as the act of an incessant petitioner who desires a favour of one greater than he. However, in the realm of the spiritual, that petition must be in the will of God as Paul shows in Romans 8:26-27, “*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*”

*A spiritual
petition must be
made in the
will of God!*

It is well illustrated by Jacob’s cry when wrestling with the angel, “*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*”

(Gen. 32:26). It is the act of importunity depicted by the friend in the parable of Luke 11:5-10. Jesus gives the key to moving the hand of God Himself when He tells the story of a man whose friend arrives on a journey at midnight and he has nothing to set before him. This man goes to a neighbour and asks for three loaves of bread. Although the

neighbour will not rise because he is his friend, because of his importunity, he will arise and give him as many loaves as he needs. Then Jesus continues by saying, "Ask and keep on asking until you receive. For every one that asks will receive."

Intercession is a ministry that God has instituted, for He says in Isaiah 62:6-7, "*I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.*" May we too be those who give the Holy One no rest. By our spirit, let us institute prayer so that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Family Life

In spite of his marvellous life and intimacy with the Lord, his sons were rebellious and were rejected by the people from assuming his office in Samuel's old age. It is sad that the sons of Samuel followed in the ways of those of Eli (whom he replaced).

Certainly some of the greatest and choicest saints have known, with chagrin, the heart of the Father who said in Isaiah 1:2, "*Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.*" It is for this reason that I personally plead with couples that they pray before they have children and ask the Lord's perfect will. A question they need to ponder: If we decide to have children, will our children be godly or not?

Lessons from the Life of Samuel

1. He was faithful to accomplish all that the Lord had given him and received the wonderful inheritance of a “sure house” with an eternal ministry.
2. He had a life of intimacy with the Lord such that the Lord *“let none of his words fall to the ground.”* May we, too, have a covenant relationship where our words similarly shall be fulfilled and have significance when we speak on behalf of the Lord. Samuel had such a heavy prophetic anointing that even Saul, in his presence, fell down and also prophesied.
3. As a persistent asker, knocker, and seeker, an intercessor will not stop until he receives his request. Such were Moses, Samuel, and many other notable saints who importuned God so that their petitions were granted.
4. There is a need to pray for the Lord’s perfect will in the area of having children.

Chapter 8

Leaders in the Time of the Kings

Saul

Sadly, Saul is an illustration of a leader who failed, and failed miserably. His fault lay in a character flaw that is all too common in those who have been raised from obscurity to a place of great prominence. As Samuel said to Saul in 1 Samuel 15:17, *“And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?”*

Obedience Is Better than Sacrifice

Samuel continued by reminding Saul that he had been sent on a mission by the Lord to destroy the Amalekites, but Saul had not obeyed the voice of the Lord. Saul declared that he had destroyed the enemy but kept the cattle alive to sacrifice before the Lord (1 Sam. 15:18-21). Whereupon Samuel responded with these well known spiritual principles found in 1 Samuel 15:22-23, that all leaders should have written on the fleshly tables of their hearts: *“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou*

hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.”

Fear of Man

Saul then reveals the depths of his heart in 1 Samuel 15:24 and 30, “*And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.. Then he said, I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD thy God.*” The life of Saul has this awesome reminder found in Proverbs 29:25, “*The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*”

The Lord Jesus Himself gave a warning when speaking to the scribes and Pharisees when He said, “*How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?*” (Jn. 5:44).

Let us always seek to wholly obey the Lord and be little in our own eyes, for what are we but what God has made us? Above all, let us seek the honour, approval, and approbation of the Lord only, not serving to be seen of men but of God who sees in secret (Mt. 6:6, 18).

May we always seek to wholly obey the Lord and be humble in our own eyes.

Lessons from the Life of Saul

1. God desires obedience rather than sacrifice.
2. Let us have the fear of God in our hearts rather than the fear of man.

David

The Lord gives this testimony concerning David in Acts 13:22, *“And when he had removed him (Saul), he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.”* Much is written of this great man of God.

Born of the line of Judah, he gained early experience in warfare by killing a lion and a bear that had taken a lamb out of the flock (1 Sam. 17:34-35). Scripture declares that David was ruddy, of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon (1 Sam. 16:12).

We are also told that he was an accomplished musician and a mighty and valiant man. He was prudent in all matters. This fact was emphasised throughout his life, for he behaved himself wisely at all times (1 Sam. 18:5).

Defeat of Goliath

David is best known for his stunning defeat of Goliath the giant. Coming in the name of the Lord, he downed the giant with a smooth stone hurled in a sling that hit the giant in his

forehead. Then David rushed forth, and with the giant's own sword, cut off his head (1 Sam. 17).

Leaders can learn many spiritual lessons from this battle. Whilst Goliath was a giant and the champion of the Philistines, nevertheless he is a type of the people who oppose us in our churches.

It is important that we take into account David's preparations to meet Goliath. He had successfully overcome lesser enemies like the lion and the bear (1 Sam. 17:34-37). Thus, courage and confidence in God had been formed in his life. He continually spoke in faith and declared the greatness of God and His ability to bring down Goliath.

Moreover, David relied not on his own strength but on the anointing of God and His wisdom in giving him the battle plan. Five smooth stones would speak of the grace of God that had been well developed in David's own life. (In biblical numerics, the number five speaks of grace.)

Thus, as we look at the champions of God, we find that at times, they had the most unlikely weapons—the jawbone of an ass (Jdg. 15:15), an ox goad (Jdg. 3:31), and the five smooth stones (1 Sam. 17:40). Trust God to show you His battle plan and weapon for each occasion. As you do, you too will then be able to conquer the “Goliaths” that may face you and, at times, your congregation.

A further point to note is that the defeat of Goliath meant the defeat of the whole nation of the Philistines. The key is to find the enemies' strength, strong points, and leader. As we

concentrate our prayers and thoughts on God, He will reveal the keys and the whole of the opposition will be vanquished. Praise the Lord!

Wilderness Experience

There followed a period of many years in which he first served in the house of Saul and then he was hunted by Saul. David endured many trials and tribulations. These were the times of desert purging when those beautiful virtues of meekness and faith were developed. As leaders, we will go through similar desert experiences in order for these godly attributes to become part of us.

Then too, David was known, in his own words, for the fact that the gentleness of Christ had made him great (Ps. 18:35). A leader has to endure criticism, harsh words, and spurning from even his nearest companions, and accept it all without murmuring or complaining, with never but never a harsh word in return. It is in these desert fires that one is qualified and chosen for leadership to the degree that we have been ordained (Isa. 48:10).

Called, Chosen, and Found Faithful

At the age of 30, David received his second anointing and became king of Judah. Faithful in this position, he was then anointed for the third time and entered into the whole of his inheritance. He certainly did not gain his inheritance quickly. Only after passing through many dark and foreboding situations did he attain the leadership of Israel, God's chosen

people and nation (2 Sam. 5:1-5). David then led Israel to capture Zion which he made his city; there he dwelt.

Of David it can be said that he possessed the three ministries of prophet, priest, and king. He was a prolific writer to whom over 70 psalms were attributed. These psalms were didactic, devotional, and prophetic in nature and show the depth and understanding that this man of God possessed in spiritual matters.

Profound Understanding of God's Ways

David's revelation of God's ways was profound. Although living in the Age of the Law and the appropriate animal sacrifices associated with the fulfilment of the requirements of the Law, David could declare in Psalm 40:6-8, "*Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*"

David's Weakness

The other event for which David is well remembered is his sin with Bathsheba and the consequent attempt of a cover-up by the murder of Uriah (Bathsheba's husband). It is written that the Lord was with David whithersoever he went in war (2 Sam. 8:6, 14), because David obeyed the rules of war.

In the words of Proverbs 3:5-6, David trusted in the Lord with all of his heart and did not lean upon his own

understanding, but in all his ways he acknowledged God, and therefore God directed his paths. However, he did not keep the laws of God for kings in the matter of women. This is written in Deuteronomy 17:17, *“Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.”* He multiplied wives unto himself and therefore the spirit of lust took over his heart.

Model of Restoration

David is a model for the restoration of fallen leaders. His steps back were not all that direct, for he had sought to cover his sin by the murder of Uriah. There seems to have been a time when God afflicted him with a foul disease. It was then that he was willing to recognise and confess his iniquity.

There were at least 15 judgments with which God afflicted David, and David acknowledged and accepted that the Lord had justly sent them. There were seven penitential psalms that were written at that time, the most famous being Psalm 51. In this, he not only acknowledged his iniquity and prayed that the Lord would thoroughly purge him from his sins, but he also prayed that the Lord would create a clean heart within him and renew a right spirit. He rightly acknowledged that but for the mercy of God he deservedly should have been cast away. So truly was David restored that afterwards, he had even more profound revelations such as being given the pattern of the Temple (which Solomon built from the instructions David had left him - 1 Ki. 5:5).

Lessons on Administration

There is another aspect in the life of David that reveals many gems for the reader—the administration of his kingdom. It is clear from the many chapters devoted to his administration that there is a difference between an administrator and an executive. (Refer to 1 Chronicles chapters 23-28 for more details.)

We may cite the Godhead in 1 Corinthians 12:6, “*And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*” These, in a sense, are the executive powers of the Father who orders and plans the operations. In 1 Corinthians 12:5 it reads, “*And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*” Now the executive needs to have a good administrator to carry out his proposed operations.

President Harry S. Truman made the following observation concerning Franklin D. Roosevelt: he believed him to have been a great executive, but a poor administrator, who left the executive branch ineffectively organized. There were too many duplications of functions.

Truman went on to say that he desired to establish governmental lines clearly so that he would be able to put his finger upon every person who was responsible for any given decision or in every situation. (Quoted from “*When the Buck Stops with You*” H.S. Truman on Leadership p.56.) David seems to have attained that goal.

Building and Maintaining the Temple

Perhaps of greatest interest to a church leader is the manner in which David ensured that the Temple would be built and the service thereof maintained. This is recorded in 1 Chronicles 23 whereby we are told that David first called all the princes of Israel with the priests and the Levites. The numbers from the point of view of the average pastor and the local church are astronomical. They are far beyond the numbers that any church would consider. However the divisions of the work are very instructive for any size of church or fellowship. The divisions are as follows:

1. **Construction**—Those that were appointed for the construction of the House or Temple. The ratio of officers or overseers to workers was approximately one officer to four workers.

2. **Porters** — There were the porters, whose function is detailed in 1 Chronicles 9:26. They had the responsibility for such diverse things as the rooms, the treasury or the finances, the various vessels that were used in the services, the musical instruments, and the food distribution and preparation. Today we might call them deacons (Acts 6:1) whom we appoint to oversee and to ensure the physical running of the church and likewise, also the food distribution and the care of the poor.

Lest we should think that these positions and responsibilities may be given to just anyone, let us remember the following Scripture in 1 Chronicles 9:22, “*All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.*”

Because this office was so important, the prophet Samuel and David were those who made the appointments. We see a parallel in the appointment of Eliakim to the post of Treasurer by no less than God Himself in Isaiah 22:15-25.

3. **Choir** — The musical director oversaw the singers whom we might term the choir. These were freed from any other duty so that they could fill the sanctuary with the praises of God night and day (1 Chr. 9:33). Although this might not be practical for every church, nonetheless, it is good to have those who can spend time in the sanctuary praying or worshipping God on a 24-hour prayer chain. Then in 1 Chronicles 23:30 we find there were those who stood in the sanctuary every morning and every evening to thank and praise the Lord.

4. **Young ministers** — In 1 Chronicles 23:28 they were a specific company of what we might term young ministers whose duty it was to wait upon the senior ministers who are called “*the sons of Aaron*.” These ministers may have to serve senior ministers before fully assuming their own offices, just like Elisha who poured water upon the hands of Elijah when he ministered to his master, before filling his prophetic office at the ascension of Elijah. Then we also have Joshua, who was called the minister of Moses before assuming his mantle. It is excellent training for the young minister. It also frees up the senior minister for the work of the ministry, the study of the Word, the preparation of messages, and for prayer (see Acts 6:2-4).

5. **Prophetic worship** — 1 Chronicles 25:1 tells us that David separated another group who were called to prophesy

with harps, stringed instruments, and cymbals, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. These clearly recognised and therefore designated singers were placed under the direction of trusted men of God as well as in some cases, directly under King David. These singers were different from *the choir* we mentioned earlier, as they too gave thanks and praised God, but their main ministry was in the realm of the prophetic. They were under the responsibility of Heman, the king's seer. Here we are confronted with another ministry which we will now consider.

6. **Prophets** — Whilst Moses said, “Would that all God’s people were prophets,” it is clear that there is the ministry gift of prophet in the Church (Eph. 4:11) and also the gift of prophecy, the latter also being termed prophets. (See also 1 Corinthians 14:5, 24, 29 and 31.)

Thus we have a similar situation in the Church that Moses alluded to amongst the children of Israel. There were major prophets like Moses and others that prophesied like Eldad and Medad (Num. 11:26). We have the office of a prophet and also the gift of prophecy which is one of the nine gifts of the Spirit that one can be endowed with according to the will of the Holy Spirit. David was surrounded by recognised prophets such as Gad, Heman, and Nathan unto whom God spoke to encourage or correct David if need be.

David would often seek their counsel. As leaders, we should not look exclusively to any one prophet but remember that the word is established in the mouth of two or three witnesses. We do not want to come under the influence or become controlled by those with the ministry gift of prophet. Where

there is conflict in counsel, beware. Especially as leaders, do not come under the influence of any one prophet. I have seen countless tragedies where that has occurred.

7. **Counselor** — Another office that existed in the days of David was that of counselor. Ahithophel, the grandfather of Bathsheba, was one of whom it was said in 2 Samuel 16:23, “*And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counseled in those days, was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.*” Then there was Hushai a counselor who was also termed the king’s friend. Now we read in 1 Chronicles 27:32, “*Also Jonathan David’s uncle was a counselor, a wise man, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king’s sons.*” This latter phrase should not be overlooked since it is good to have wise men to care for your children and to make sure that their companions are godly.

8. **Administration** — For those churches, fellowships, and leaders who have responsibilities in other cities or nations, the manner that David divided responsibilities amongst his administrative districts provides a template which we may follow. They are listed in 1 Chronicles 27 where he lays down the courses that will serve him month by month. This is sometimes wise when apportioning duties for lay workers, so that their responsibilities are only one month a year.

Then he details those who have responsibilities for his flocks, olive trees, vineyards, and cattle, and those that were over the storehouses and the work of the field. If we translate that into present church or fellowship needs, we could say that they would be those who were responsible for our orphanages,

book productions, bible schools, day care centres, and those that would have oversight for the feeding of the poor, etc.

All the business of the Lord placed under the care of a church should be thoroughly and carefully organised, so that the leadership might know and apportion responsibility and accountability for the designated funds for any given project. This increases not only productivity and proficiency in those areas but also engenders a trust and confidence amongst those who give of their time and substance to support these endeavours. We cannot perhaps overstate the fact that a good infrastructure prevents waste and economises the use of finances that can be used elsewhere.

9. ***Building*** — Another priceless lesson for leaders from the life of David is in the matter of the building of the Temple. Leaders at one juncture of their life or another will be called upon to build physical edifices. David first received the pattern from the Lord in 1 Chronicles 28:19. Then in the closing years of his reign, David gathered all the princes of the tribes, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the stewards, to declare that his desire was to build the Temple. He then stated that he had prepared all the material for this great task. Thus, we know the leader is not only responsible to give the pattern, and then the vision to the congregation, but also for the raising of the finance and materials for the building project.

Lessons from the Life of David

1. David's life portrays that of a godly leader who enjoyed the three anointings of being called, chosen, and found faithful. He lived within the veil of the Holy of Holies in the very presence

of God. His goal, in his own words, is expressed in Psalm 27:4, *“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.”*

2. He was an able administrator who was surrounded by wise counselors, and ensured that his kingdom had a good infrastructure.

3. He personally ministered in the three areas of prophet, priest, and king. We do need the spirit of prophecy and to be a king and priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:10-17), so that we may lead those whom God has entrusted to us in the ways of holiness, worship, and right doctrine.

4. Godly leaders need to rule justly as David stated in 2 Samuel 23:2-3, *“The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.”*

This admonition to rule justly signifies that the leader must ensure that all of his transactions with the members of his congregation and those outside must be done honestly and with integrity of purpose. It is essential that in all things he shows himself to be a pattern of good works and of sound speech where his yea is yea and his nay is nay (Tit. 2:7-8).

Solomon

He portrayed, in his own words, the one who received an inheritance quickly and yet in the end was not blessed, or to use a colloquialism to describe his life, “he had everything

at the beginning and lost everything at the end.” He started with such high hopes, but at the end was in his own words *“an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished”* (Eccl. 4:13).

He had the finest education a man could get, sitting at the feet of his father David who instructed him in the ways of wisdom. He became king at the age of 19 and reigned over a kingdom that was at peace and prosperous. He was a wise man and found favour in the eyes of the Lord who called him Jedidiah which means the “beloved of Jah,” the beloved of the Lord (2 Sam. 12:25). He wrote three books—Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes, and was the Preacher in Jerusalem.

He followed the wishes of his father and built the Temple in seven years and dedicated it on the Feast of Tabernacles. His reign was to be a type of the Lord’s millennial reign, for Tabernacles will be the feast that is celebrated in the 1,000 year reign of Christ upon earth.

Unfortunately, he enriched the nation at the expense of the population by heavily taxing them. They yearned for a respite under his son Rehoboam (1 Ki. 12:4). Solomon fell into the snare of the rich as he himself said in Ecclesiastes 2:8-10,

“I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine

eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.”

Regretfully, Solomon is a type of a second-generation pastor who inherits the work of his father who has laboured for many years to bring the vision that God had given him into reality. He is a son who has not spent years in solitude and desert-like hardships with the result that he has no appreciation of the cost that his father has paid.

Surely King Solomon is a solemn warning to a second-generation of leadership that if one inherits the work of another, it should be with a humble and contrite heart and a holy dependence upon God so that one lives frugally, realising that one is only a steward in another man's vineyard.

Lessons from the Life of Solomon

1. A man may be very gifted, but his personal life can ruin all these benefits.
2. The lack of temperance ruined Solomon.
3. His addiction to women brought a divided heart and led to the division of his kingdom.

Chapter 9

Leaders in the Captivity and Restoration Era

Daniel

This much beloved man of God in the sight of heaven was a prophet of great renown. His prophecies encompassed, in great detail, not only the times wherein he lived, but also the fate of nations until the Second Coming of our Lord. Daniel was not just a prophet, but also a very able administrator. It is to this aspect of his formation that we wish to direct our thoughts and studies. We are told in the book bearing his name that he was chosen by the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans. This was normal practice in any empire.

The Turkish Empire in the nineteenth century was a Muslim Empire. When they conquered other countries, they brought the youth back to Turkey and educated them in their language and their ways. Afterwards they would send them back to their own provinces and give them positions of responsibility. In this way they were securing their empire.

Let us consider the qualifications of those chosen by Nebuchadnezzar. We know from the ancient historians that they were generally between the ages of 14 to 17. At this age they could still be moulded. They were taken from the nobility and they had to be without physical

blemish for the ancients equated physical beauty with intelligence. These youths had to possess the ability to learn the language and also have the poise to stand before the king. In other words, they had to know how to conduct themselves in the presence of authority. Furthermore, they had to be wise, knowledgeable, and have an understanding of science; a well-rounded education. They were trained for three years after which time they were brought before the king.

Now Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat and wine which was offered up to idols (Dan. 1:8). Thus we see the cry for holiness emanating from this young man's being—a cry that every leader should express.

The Lord gave Daniel and his three friends knowledge, skill in learning, wisdom, as well as the ability for understanding in all visions and dreams to Daniel.

Since we are living in the age of the renewal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, leaders need to also have the ability to interpret dreams and visions. Through his ability to interpret the dream of the king we are told, *“Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon”* (Dan. 2:48).

Thus, at a very young age, Daniel had attained unto great prominence in the greatest empire of those days, which was in effect the centre of all idolatry, spiritism, and witchcraft.

We cannot help but admire Daniel, who could rule over the affairs of this kingdom and yet retain such an excellent spirit, with revelation, understanding, and wisdom such that even the queen of later years declared that the wisdom of God dwelt within him (Dan. 5).

Daniel endured unto a ripe old age with the same integrity of character such that Darius, who took the kingdom of Babylon for the Medes and the Persians, placed him over the whole realm. His administrative skills were such that it was acknowledged even by his enemies, *“but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him”* (Dan. 6:4).

He was a man of great courage, openly praying to God even when he knew that it would put his life in jeopardy. He was preserved in the lion’s den through faith (Heb. 11:33). The prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, named him as one of the three most righteous men along with Noah and Job (Ezek. 14:14).

Although that which warms my own heart most as I contemplate this wonderful man is that, at an early age, he was brought into favour and tender love with the prince of eunuchs. In old age, that same sweetness must have pervaded his very being since King Darius passed the night in fasting for his deliverance from the lions and was exceedingly glad when the morning came and Daniel was found to be alive and unharmed. Moreover the Archangel Gabriel declared him to be a man greatly beloved by heaven (Dan. 9:23; 10:11). Daniel, then, is a model for all leaders. What a beautiful man of God!

Lesson from the Life of Daniel

1. He led a holy life.
2. He was a man of prayer.
3. He understood the importance of being faithful in all matters pertaining to the king.
4. He was renowned for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.
5. He was a fearless witness for his God.
6. He was a man who disdained the honours of this world (5:17).
7. He was one who emanated love so that he was beloved by God and man.

Cyrus, King of Persia

In the history of ancient times, this man is perhaps the most well known king and general next to Alexander the Great. He is considered by Persia to be their founding father and is revered as being a model ruler. Inscribed on his Kurash prism is Cyrus' declaration that he came from a long line of kings.

On a clay cylinder that is in the British Museum, Cyrus gives his aims and policies as ruler. This is considered to be the first Human Charter, and a copy is in the headquarters of the United Nations in New York City.

Cyrus lived from 580 B.C. to 529 B.C., and in 536 B.C. when he became king of Babylon after Darius the Mede he issued his famous proclamation found in Ezra 1:1-2,

“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, ‘Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.’”

In Ezra 1:7-8, it goes on to say, *“Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.”* This man was named by the Lord 150 years before his birth through the prophet Isaiah who declared in Isaiah 44:28, *“That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”*

In this age of the renewal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, leaders need the ability to interpret dreams and visions.

In Isaiah 45:1-6 it says, *“Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.”*

Even as a shepherd gently cares and guides his flock, so too must a leader. The Lord Himself, who declared that He was the Good Shepherd, reminds us that the shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (Jn. 10:11). The Lord gave warnings in Ezekiel 34 concerning the duties of the shepherds with respect to the care of their flocks, which we do well to heed.

The Lord speaks of Cyrus as “His anointed.” This is an essentiality for any leader—he must have the anointing of the Lord upon his life and ministry, for it is *“not by might nor by power but by My Spirit saith the Lord”* (Zech. 4:6). Our work and ministry for the Lord is only going to be effective to the degree that His anointing is upon us, just as King David said, *“...I shall be anointed with fresh oil”* (Ps. 92:10). Consider the beautiful promise that the Lord would hold his right hand to guide and to strengthen Cyrus. It reminds me of a young

pastor who said to the Lord, “Lord, I will never let go of you,” to which the Lord replied, “I will never let you go.” I think we understand the analogy of a father desiring to cross a street with his little son. He is not going to trust the ability or the strength of the boy to hold on to him, but rather he is going to hold the boy’s hand firmly in his own.

There is a special relationship between the Lord and Cyrus now revealed, for the Lord states, “I have even called thee by thy name.” This honour was accorded to Moses as he said in Exodus 33:12 that the Lord had said unto him, “*I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight*” - not just as a member of a congregation, but as a faithful leader or one who has distinguished himself by an act of valour or merit in the service of the Lord. Phinehas was such a one (see the account in Numbers 25:6-12). These men are so different from those of whom the Lord said in Matthew 7:23, “*I never knew you: depart from me.*”

Lessons from the Life of Cyrus

1. He was considered by God to be His shepherd and as such he would care for the people of God.
2. We need the anointing of the Lord upon our lives in order to truly be successful.
3. The Lord will strengthen and guide us as we walk according to His perfect will.
4. Cyrus was one who distinguished himself in the service, plans, and purposes of God. May we too be filled with that flaming zeal for God, so that we obtain His pleasure.

Nehemiah

This giant of the Restoration Era is a role model for any leader. To him was given the divine responsibility and privilege of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. After he heard the report of others who were returning from Jerusalem, that the walls and gates of the city of Jerusalem were broken down and were in a deplorable state of disrepair, he received the spiritual burden from the Lord (Neh. 1:2-3). After earnestly seeking the Lord, he went before the king and obtained his backing and support to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. 1:4-11; 2:1-8).

Nehemiah then visited and inspected the city of Jerusalem. He would make these inspections at night to elude the enemy. As the governor, Nehemiah shared his vision with the elders and the ministers, *“Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach...”* (Neh. 2:17).

Their spirits were quickened by the Lord and with a ready heart they said, *“Let us rise up and build.”* (Neh. 2:18). Hence, the people were appointed to their different tasks. The administrator must know that every task is covered and this has to be communicated to the respective individual who is capable of performing that function.

Another problem that Nehemiah had to face was that of his brethren oppressing the poor of the land. Social justice is a concern the leader must address. He has to see that all are

treated with compassion and that their just needs are met. Because Nehemiah had a father's heart, he experienced grief and anger at the unjust treatment of the needy when he learnt of the oppression of the poor. He followed the example of Job who *“delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him”* (Job 29:12).

Nehemiah exacted an oath from the rulers and the priests that they would restore the lands and possessions that they had taken of the poor. In so doing he gave his own personal testimony in Nehemiah 5:14, 17-19,

“Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor... Moreover there were at my table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, beside those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us. Now that which was prepared for me daily was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people. Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.”

Thus, the ruler or leader must not only be one that does not oppress the people, but also one who has a peerless testimony in that he gives of his own to support those for whom he is responsible. In order to do so, he must have a very close relationship with the Lord and know Him by His name Jehovah Jireh—the Lord who provides (Gen. 22:14).

Of Nehemiah we may well say that he is indeed a model for all leaders and for those who are responsible to care for others. He was a wise, firm yet generous man whose heart was concerned for the plight for his people. Yet he also possessed a high degree of perception and discernment in that he made a difference between those who were serving God and those who were not. He refused the services of the wicked rulers of the heathen and clearly was not swayed by their threats. With boldness, he stood firm with no intention of fleeing from them.

Regretfully this is not the case of many of the servants of the Lord today, who tend to abandon their posts and tasks when the enemy rises up. Remember it was because he was a righteous man that he fulfilled the observation of King Solomon who said the righteous are as bold as a lion (Prov. 28:1).

Leaders are responsible to care for others.

Lessons from the Life of Nehemiah

1. A spiritual burden from the Lord is essential for the given task. It caused Nehemiah to mourn, fast, and pray to God that He would grant him favour in the sight of the king.
2. The permission of the authorities for the work must be obtained. It is often necessary that the request be tendered with prayer and fasting as the enemy tries to hinder through the local or state officials.

3. On occasion, the enemy seeks to be included in the project. This is unacceptable in the eyes of the Lord, for He will not accept the work of their hands as an offering unto Himself.
4. When the Lord has given the vision to the leader, the people are “willing in the day of thy power” (Ps. 110:3).
5. A good infrastructure is essential in order to accomplish a building project.
6. It is essential that the leader ensures social justice. All are to be given an equitable wage for their labours and their complaints, if justifiable, are remedied.
7. Nehemiah experienced the Lord as Jehovah Jireh and generously gave of his own to care for those under his charge.

Chapter 10

Leaders in the Early Church

Paul

Here was a man to whom we are all indebted for his 13 epistles that form the basis of church doctrine. Over and over again we shall see that the leaders who were writers and clearly enunciated their vision left an abiding inheritance and fruit that remained for generations and, in Paul's case, throughout eternity.

He himself was of short stature, not an eloquent speaker by any means, or even one who had an attractive appearance. Yet he was a leader par excellence from whom we may derive many useful and profitable lessons. He was mighty of word and possessed much learning and a great intellect.

Although he sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the greatest teacher of his day, he was sent to the backside of the desert to receive spiritual enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for three years. His doctrines thus received, he went to Jerusalem to receive confirmation from Peter, James, and John who were the pillars of the Church.

He practiced all that he had taught and encouraged his own disciples to commit all these truths to faithful men who would be able to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). Thus there was a methodical continuation of teachings through teachers of

righteousness which has lasted unto all generations of the Church Age. Another maxim that Paul developed was to set up centres wherever he went that, in turn, became the means whereby whole provinces received the gospel.

It is impossible for a leader to go everywhere—the key lies in training others to go where he cannot go. Asia, for example, was taught by reason of the fact that Paul raised up a teaching church in Ephesus, the capital city of the province.

Lessons from the Life of Paul

1. He was beloved by those to whom he ministered such that, if possible, they would have given their eyes for him. Thus, we know the fragrance of Christ emanated from Paul.
2. He could explain the most intricate doctrines of Christ and put them plainly upon paper such that all that read them understood.
3. He ensured that his ministry abided by establishing teaching centres wherever he went.
4. He appointed elders or overseers so that there would be discipline and order in the churches. Perhaps the following verse sums up this truth, *“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”* (1 Tim. 3:14-15).

5. Paul had a personal goal for his life that we too should possess, as it will hold us in times of adversity. This goal is higher than the ministry—it is that we might win Christ (Phil. 3:8), attain unto the First Resurrection (Phil. 3:11), and hit the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Chapter 11

Leaders in Church History

John Wycliffe
(*circa 1328-1384*)

John Wycliffe was born in A.D.1328, in the village of Hipswell, Yorkshire, England. A brilliant scholar, Oxford graduate, and theologian who taught at the university, he is acknowledged to be the forerunner of the Reformation that took place some 200 years later.

Both John Huss of Bohemia and Martin Luther acknowledged their indebtedness to John Wycliffe's teachings. He believed in the inerrancy of Scripture and the necessity of a believer's direct relationship with God and opposed the teaching of the Church of Rome.

Wycliffe translated the Bible into English from the original languages. Prior to this time all that was available was Jerome's Latin Version, and its reading was forbidden by anyone other than a priest of Rome.

At Lutterworth, his parish church, he trained itinerant preachers who walked barefooted, were clothed in a reddish brown robe, and held a staff in their hands, carrying also a copy of Wycliffe's Bible or part of it. They preached whenever and wherever the opportunity arose. They were derisively called *Lollards* (signifying idle people), but they

transformed the life of England over a period of about 150 years. Declared to be a heretic, Wycliffe retired to his parish church of St. Mary's in Lutterworth where he died at the age of 58, some two and half years later in 1384.

Lessons from the Life of Wycliffe

1. He was a noted preacher who divided his sermons basically into two parts. In part one, he explained the biblical text. In part two, he applied the text to the lives of the members of his congregation.
2. The power of his preaching lay in his profound knowledge of the Scriptures.
3. He trained those who would preach and go where he could not. He ensured that they carried his translation of the Scriptures.
4. He published his Bible in-house through the work of many scribes. There are as many as 170 copies of his translations still in existence today.
5. Another invaluable quality was his strict adherence to his beliefs, which were progressively developed through his life, as his understanding of biblical truths increased.

This too, is an essential quality of a leader. He receives a vision or truth from the Lord and as he faithfully carries it out, the Lord reveals that same truth in a deeper and higher way.

6. The abiding fruit came from those whom he trained and, in turn, those whom his students trained. He taught by example, and he was perhaps the best biblical expositor of his day. His was a life of constant warring with the Church of Rome, and therefore he is a type of those who contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3).

Martin Luther (1483 -1546)

At an early age, Martin Luther's intellectual talents and capacities were the admiration of the University where he obtained a Master of Philosophy. At the age of 21, he entered the College of the Augustine's at Erfurt, Germany. This he did, seeking to apply himself to piety and the knowledge of God. Then he was named, at the age of 26, a lecturer in the new university at Wittenberg. In teaching and studying the books of Romans and Galatians he came to understand Paul's teaching of "*the just shall live by faith*" (Rom. 1:17).

At the age of 33, he nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church, which was next to the Castle of Wittenburg, on All Saints Day in 1517. His intentions were that it would provide a basis for a debate, which his quick and penetrating mind loved. Instead, it started the movement of the Reformation and brought about his condemnation as a heretic by the authorities at the Edict of Worms. Hidden by friends for eight months in the Castle of Wartburg, he translated the Bible into the German language, and that translation remains unto this very day.

His writings gave courage to many to demand reforms, such that monks and nuns were renouncing their vows of celibacy

and marrying. Peasants were petitioning their feudal lords for better conditions quoting the writings of Luther, although he disavowed their attitudes. (Refer to *The Reformation Guide*, 1999 for more details.) Luther became hunted by the Pope and hated by the peasants who perceived him as a traitor.

On the 13th of June 1525, at the age of 41, Martin Luther married a former nun, Katie von Bora, who was 16 years younger than himself. They lived in the old monastery of the Augustine monks that had been deeded to them by the government. There were a considerable number of people who lived there through Martin's generosity. His table talks with his students were famous and were later published by six of them. However his language was often far from refined and his wife publicly corrected him at the table and possibly on other occasions. (Refer to *Martin Luther Had A Wife* by William Peterson for more details.)

Martin Luther had an immense following with the result that he has been justly called, "the Father of the Reformation." Churches and movements sprang up from this Reformation, and today, there are Lutheran churches throughout the world. He therefore has left a legacy that has been extremely beneficial to his own country and has moulded the history of Germany, its thinking, as well as its morals.

As with other great leaders, major character flaws were still evident. Except for the grace of God, these flaws would have lead to his downfall. His main flaw was an intransigency that would not permit the consideration of the views of others. Had Luther but prayerfully listened, it may well have been that the church that he established under his name would have

had a foundational doctrine upon which others could have built. This would have taken place as the Lord progressively revealed and restored New Testament truth to His Church.

There is another side of Luther that we must mention for the admonition of leaders. His biographers mention with sadness that as the years went by he became more and more cantankerous and bitter. It seemed as though he held offences for years, even against Ulrich Zwingli over their theological differences even after that saint had long died in battle. His short temper and anger caused concern amongst his friends that his work of many years would be undone.

Lessons from the Life of Luther

1. He was a man of great integrity, courage, and determination. His goal was very specific and so too was his message. Moreover, he did not falter or waver in proclaiming his message.
2. We might say that the mixture in his life has permeated his church and has proved spiritually costly to many generations.
3. Leaders must ensure that all doctrinal issues, as well as those pertaining to character, should be taken from the Chief Cornerstone, the Lord Jesus Christ.

John Wesley (1703-1791)

The fifteenth child and the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, John Wesley grew up in a family that lacked the

normal necessities of life. Samuel, rector of Epworth parish, wrote to his Bishop saying that he had a yearly income of 50 pounds and a new child every year. John Wesley left this life bequeathing to this world two silver spoons, a silver teapot, a library, and the Methodist Movement.

His life was so different from that of Martin Luther, for his was one of saintliness and love. On the other hand, like Luther, he was a man of considerable intellect and came from a long line of scholarly ministers. He was educated at Oxford where the Methodist Movement was birthed. Essentially it was formed by a group of earnest young believers who desired to live in conformity to God's laws. They did not at this time understand nor experience the gospel of grace and so sought salvation through works. They thirsted after a holy life and, like the Galatians, thought they could attain to it by rules.

It was not until John Wesley had undertaken missionary ministry in Georgia and returned home to England that he experienced salvation by faith in Christ. This occurred as he was in a meeting of believers in Aldersgate Street, London, where a minister was reading Martin Luther's commentary on the book of Romans. He felt a warming in his heart and could say, "I believe." As he sought out his brother Charles in his room a short distance away, that was enough to set the bells of joy ringing in his brother's heart, as he himself had already experienced that glorious ecstasy of the new birth (when we believe that Christ died for our sins and we ask Him to come to come into our hearts and save us). It was the 24th of May 1738.

One could make the comment, comparing two great religious leaders in England, that John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-1890) renounced “Justification by Faith” and put his trust in the apostolic succession and ceremonial rites of the church and went to Rome. Wesley embraced “Justification by Faith” and went to heaven preparing the way for multitudes of souls to follow.

George Whitfield, a member of the holy band, had already achieved fame through his preaching of salvation by faith and packed churches everywhere he went. After heeding the call of John Wesley to come to Georgia, he went there. Returning to England some six months later he found the pulpits closed to him by the Bishops. Whitfield then turned to preaching in the open air and had crowds as large as 20,000 in these open-air meetings.

In these meetings, there were often manifestations of perhaps demon-possessed people being delivered, while others were experiencing some blessing from the Lord, so they were often quite noisy. Bishops, clergy, and even Whitfield wrote complaining about these scenes. However, Wesley realised that in these meetings there were blasphemers crying for mercy, sinners smitten to the ground in deep conviction, and even physicians noting that people for whom they had personally cared were being cured under the workings of God’s Holy Spirit.

Wesley now saw the need to provide meeting places for his adherents so that they might worship together. In so doing he was laying the foundation for the infrastructure of the Methodist Movement.

Another important factor that emerged at this time was his journal. This not only gave the diary of his own movements but also provided a basis for the doctrines that he taught. He also wrote books that clearly lay down the truth of “Justification by Faith” and that of “Christian Perfection,” thus giving his preachers and lay people alike a sound biblical foundation for their beliefs, together with his 40 or so sermons, which are required reading for all Methodist ministers to this day.

Then he provided a sound infrastructure for the local bodies so that there were, what we might term, “house meetings.” These house meetings were under the supervision of leaders who were responsible for the spiritual and physical well being of little groups under their charge. Thus the spiritual welfare of each member could be carefully monitored and their needs met by others. He then banded his so-called meeting places or societies, as he called them, into a fellowship to which he wrote what he titled *The General Rules Of Conduct*. It was this talent for organisation that gave Wesley’s movement superiority over Whitfield who provided no such infrastructure. Consequently, although Whitfield had the greater number of attendees at his meetings, his work was soon dissipated whereas Wesley’s work remains until this day.

The lesson that we might learn from this godly man was that he was an indefatigable worker. He thought nothing, at the age of 80, of walking six miles to a preaching engagement. He was a prolific writer who sold his books for a minimal sum to ensure maximum distribution. These writings established the spiritual walk of his converts.

His organisational skills enabled the Movement to continue and expand both spiritually and numerically after his death in virtually all continents and perhaps all countries of the world. His sweet-tempered spirit was a hallmark of his life, and one which he transmitted unto many of his followers, who included such saints as John Fletcher (thought to be one of the holiest men of his generation). John Wesley's life was one of true holiness and love that we would, as leaders, do well to emulate. On a personal note I must say that he has been a role model throughout my Christian life.

This beloved man of God died at the age of 88, full of the joy of Jesus saying on his deathbed, "and the best of all is God is with us!"

Lessons from the Life of Wesley

1. He was renowned for his piety and sweet-temperedness. Altogether, he possessed a very well pleasing personality. His foremost message was that of being born again, coupled with an onward vision of Christian perfection, which he termed a "second blessing." His life and message was that of love, which he imparted to his followers.
2. He had vast spheres of interests encompassing the physical as well as the spiritual well being of his fellowmen.
3. His own life was one of simplicity to the degree that he had strong admiration for a lady who was able to exist on a bowl of porridge each day. Moreover, his own clergy gown was almost in tatters.

4. He ensured that his vision was plainly stated through many books and pamphlets. This enabled his followers to continue to proclaim the message even centuries after his death.

5. He laid a good infrastructure that resulted in the establishment of the Methodist denomination that has endured until this very day.

Chapter 12

Secular Leadership

Although this book is designed for use and instruction for Christian leaders, we have included a brief dip into the treasure trove of the wisdom of secular leaders. Our rationale for this is that so many of the great spiritual leaders had their formation in the schools, colleges, and courts of secular institutions, and we also learn by what is termed “common sense.”

However, the Lord Himself gives credence to this when He said in Luke 16:8, *“And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”*

Moreover in his dissertation on wisdom, King Solomon states in Proverbs 8:14-16, *“Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.”* Therefore we give some of the following quotes of some of the great leaders of our times:

1. William Pitt, the youngest prime minister of England said that the most important virtue of a leader was patience in dealing with people.
2. Winston Churchill, when addressing a gathering of young college students, gave the following advice, “Never, but never give up.”

3. Sam Rayburn, a former speaker of the American House of Representatives, when asked how it was that he could remember to give the same answer to a situation over many years replied, “It is not that I remember my previous answer, but it is that I always tell the truth and therefore my answer is always the same.” Oh, if only leaders would always tell the truth!

4. Harry Truman, who became the president of the United States in a very unexpected manner, was a man of order and straight forwardness. His maxim was that the best working hours were early in the morning. Incidentally, most writers would agree with him. He was also punctilious concerning the use of time.

Leaders must know how to manage their time well. If not, they will find many things do not get done because they have allowed other business that they should have delegated crowd into their day.

Leaders must know how to manage their time well, or they will find many things do not get done.

Harry Truman also had what was termed a kitchen cabinet as distinct from his formal cabinet. It was this kitchen cabinet formed of trusted men to whom he would go for advice. It is well for all leaders to have a group of advisers, for Solomon states that in a multitude of counsellors there is safety (Prov. 11:14; 15:22; 24:6). Advisors who walk with God and hear from Him will not hesitate to tell it as it is, for they are not beholden to the leader for their weekly paycheck. They have a proven track record over the years and are those to whom a leader should turn when making important decisions.

Israel was given the law through the Ten Commandments written by God upon two tablets of stone and the ceremonial law written by Moses in the Book of the Covenant. All the decrees and works of the kings were faithfully recorded in the Books of the Kings. The words of the prophets were recorded by their scribes, as we see especially in the case of Baruch, who testifying before King Jehoiakim, stated that Jeremiah spoke and he wrote down his words (Jer. 36:17-18). Try writing out your vision clearly, then polish it to make sure that the way to it is stated clearly.

Chapter 13

The Personal Life of the Leader

It would not be amiss, in fact we consider it essential, to speak on the leader's personal life. Churches, fellowships, and even revivals are founded upon key leaders. If they do well, then the work of God entrusted to them flourishes and their fruit abides.

If however, they fall from the grace of God, then so does their church or fellowship and, regretfully, the revival that they were spearheading under God fails. Such was the case with the Welsh Revival when Evan Roberts fell.

Therefore we conclude with an appeal to leaders to guard their hearts with all diligence (Prov. 4:23). Let us think of King Solomon who gave that admonition with eloquence and wisdom. His glorious kingdom was divided because his own heart was divided. ***We must be whole-hearted in all aspects of life.*** It will not work if we simply obey in one area but not in others. Therefore let us examine very carefully some of the dangers in the life of a leader which are found in Scripture.

In the beginning of Solomon's life, we are told that he was named Jedidiah—the Beloved of the Lord (2 Sam. 12:24-25). We are also told in 1 Kings 3:3 that Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David, his father. This is how we also may determine if we love God, for the Lord Himself said in John 14:21, "*He that hath my commandments, and*

keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father...” Thus, let us bear in mind that it is only if we keep His commandments that we will abide in His love.

We are told that a king must not, in addition to being a womaniser, greatly multiply silver or gold. In other words, money must not be his goal. We see in 1 Timothy 6:9, “*But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*” At the beginning, Solomon loved the Lord, but as time went by we are told he loved many strange women who turned his heart away from the true and living God to worship idols.

Hence one of the great dangers in the life of a leader is the opposite sex. So often it starts with the intellect, a mutual admiration of perhaps even spiritual qualities, and then it descends into the area of the soul where the emotions are stirred. Afterwards it is a slippery path down to sensual practices of the flesh. How many have fallen, even King David of old. However, this need not be the case as we can, like Job, make a covenant with our eyes, “*Why should we think upon a maid?*” (Job 31:1). Only by the grace of God can we have the same testimony as Paul who said in 1 Corinthians 7:25, “*I have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.*”

Another area of weakness is alcohol. Wine is a mocker and we should avoid strong drink. There are many pleasant drinks that the Lord has provided in His goodness and kindness towards mankind without the necessity of drinking

alcoholic beverages. King Solomon loved to drink wine—in fact, he sought in his heart to give himself to wine and to lay hold on folly (Eccl. 2:3). This was in spite of the fact that he himself had taught in Proverbs 23:29-30, “*Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.*”

I would personally recommend what Saint Augustine said in reference to strong drink, “Abstinence is easier than temperance.”

As he himself stated in Ecclesiastes 2:10, King Solomon fell into many snares because, “*And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy.*” In Ecclesiastes chapter 2, we find that he gave himself to mirth and pleasure (verse 1); he built houses, vineyards, gardens and orchards (verse 4); he had great possessions, cattle, silver and gold (verses 7-8); he had great wealth and amassed more than all that were before him (verse 9). Oh, the folly of riches!

The Apostle Paul warns that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10) which some have coveted after, and it has caused them to err from the faith and they have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

May we as leaders heed this warning and make our hearts dwell in 1 Timothy 6:6, which states, “*But godliness with contentment is great gain.*” Time and money have to be carefully managed. Naturally financial records should

be kept, and if possible, outside accountants be given the responsibility to audit those books. Be careful that money is not dissipated on unfruitful projects.

Rising early was a habit of leaders in the Bible and the hours before sunrise are often the most blessed and fruitful during the day. The old adage still holds true, “Early to bed, early to rise makes Jack healthy, wealthy, and wise.” These early hours can be used for prayer, study, writing, and sermon preparation, as you will most likely be undisturbed. Then the rest of the day after breakfast can be devoted to meeting the needs of others, the staff, the sick, visitation, and administrative chores. Even so, the delegation of duties is important that even through the day, the leader can give himself, as said Peter in Acts 6:4, to prayer and the study of the Word.

The leader should seek to be temperate in all things, remembering that he is a role model whom others will follow and imitate. People will copy your clothes, watches, pens, cars, and houses, thinking that these are keys to the anointing and ministry that God has given to you, little realizing that the key lies in prayer, study, and a pure heart.

Again in the matter of study, may we commend good note taking so that we roast that which we have taken in searching or hunting for the truth (Prov. 12:27). We are to be wise and set our notes in order (Eccl. 12:10), remembering that we should teach others line upon line (Isa. 28:9-13).

Chapter 14

The Prayer Life of the Leader

Prayer moves the hand of God and is, in effect, the life stream of the believer. It brings him into communion with God and is a two-way path whereby the leader petitions God and then waits to hear His response. The Lord Himself was a man of prayer during His time on earth, and as we understand from Hebrews 7:25, “*He ever liveth to make intercession*” for us. The Lord so emanated prayer that His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. The *Pater Noster* (the Lord’s Prayer—Mt. 6:9-13, Lk. 11:2-4) therefore is a very valuable and imperative guide for every leader.

Essentially, the Lord begins by emphasising the fact that God is “*our Father who art in heaven*” and a leader must know Him as such. This intimacy enables the leader to approach God with the fullest assurance that he will be heard and receive an answer. Like a natural father, God is our Provider, Guide, Counsellor, and Encourager along life’s way. **Every problem can be taken to Him with absolute confidence that He will have the solution.**

The Lord’s Prayer continues by saying “*Hallowed be Thy Name,*” speaking of the intrinsic virtue of our Heavenly Father—that He is the Thrice Holy God. With this in mind, holiness (a separation from the world, the flesh, and the devil) should be the goal of the leader, for without holiness no man shall see God (Heb. 12:14).

“Thy Kingdom come” is in reference to how we are to hunger and thirst for Him to reign, not only in His millennial reign upon earth, but also in our time. We must desire to see Him reign in our churches and fellowships.

The next portion is *“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,”* remembering the cry of the Lord Jesus as recorded in Psalm 40:7-8, *“Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”* Let it be such that we will first enquire in each circumstance to know His will and then rejoice to do it.

“Give us this day our daily bread” speaks of our Father as the One who daily provides for our needs. I love this particular story of George Muller, who was responsible for the orphanages in Bristol, England. One morning, there was no food for breakfast. Yet he commanded that the tables be set, the children seated, and a prayer of thanksgiving for food be said. As they were finishing the prayer, there was a knock on the door and a tradesman who was delivering bananas told Pastor Muller that his cart had broken down. He could not get the bananas to the market and offered the whole cartload to the children for free. Praise the Lord!

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” We are to ask for forgiveness for our sins, whether sins of commission or sins of omission. How often we, as leaders, are prone to make errors of judgment if left to our own devices. **We must remember that being granted forgiveness is predicated upon our forgiving of others.** Thus, if we desire to be forgiving souls, practicing this virtue throughout the day with the many opportunities that come our way should be of the first priority.

“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” The cry to be kept from temptation is so much more important for the leader because upon him the work is founded, and if he fails, the lives of so many loved ones are affected.

“For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory.” Finally, we must never forget that the kingdom, fellowship, or church is His, not ours. We are to be like Rachel of old, simply tending our Father’s sheep (Gen. 29:9) as undershepherds who will have to give an account to the Chief Shepherd of our souls (1 Pet. 5:4).

Let us remember that our Heavenly Father has all power and that however hopeless a situation appears, there is nothing too hard for Him. To Him alone belongs all the honour, glory, and praise. Never, but never should the leader accept praise for his work or ministry. We are what we are only by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10).

Prayer should be the breath of life to the leader—his almost minute by minute communion with the Son and the Father. Even when working, counselling, and preaching, we are with Him through the unheard petitions of our hearts. There are undoubtedly set times of devotion and special times which we spend in intercession before the throne. Nevertheless, our life should be one fulfilling the admonition of the Apostle Paul to pray without ceasing (Eph. 6:18) that He be glorified in our lives, the work of our ministry, and in the lives of our congregations.

*Prayer should be the breath
of life to the leader.*

Chapter 15

The Leader as a Soldier

Most of the great leaders in the Old Testament were warriors to one degree or another, for they fought the wars of Jehovah—Moses against the Amalekites, Joshua against the 31 kings, David (as well as the kings of Judah that came forth from his line) against the Philistines. In the New Testament, Paul likens us to soldiers in 2 Timothy 2:3-4, if not for secular wars, but certainly for spiritual warfare. He speaks of our wrestling not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12). Wherefore he exhorts us, as Christians, to take up the whole armour of God.

The Armour of God

The importance of this was stressed to me when in India. One morning, I was awoken early in the morning by a vision of a Roman soldier standing by my bed who was resplendent in shining armour. I was particularly aware of his helmet and breastplate. So let us consider the armour which Paul spiritualises for us in Ephesians 6:13-18.

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be

able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

The Loins Girded About with Truth

The loins are the strength of a man, and in the military, we trained so that one's loins would be so strong that when men stood and even jumped upon us, we supported it with ease. Spiritually, this is likened to truth by Paul, and even David makes this point in Psalm 51:6 that God desires truth in the inward parts. **The truth that we have obtained through revelation, study, and experience must become a part of us.** In other words, as Christ who is the Word of God made flesh, we too must see that truth is expressed through our beings.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate that protects the vital organ of the heart is to be covered by the righteousness of Christ (Phil. 3:9). Again that righteousness has not only to cover us, but be in us, for Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount said, *“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”* (Mt. 5:6). Every fibre of our being must exude His righteousness. May we, as the psalmist has promised, receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of our salvation (Ps. 24:5). Who receives this blessing? The blessing goes to those who have clean hands, a pure heart, and have not lifted up their soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully (Ps. 24:3-4).

The Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace

The feet, which are sometimes called the “second heart,” are known for their intricate structure and distribution of nerve endings. Thus a healthy foot promotes strength and circulation in all our other organs, as does the heart.

In Isaiah 52:7, the feet of the messengers of God are called beautiful. Our feet are to be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace so that His peace flows through every part of our being. The sense here is that we are servants who are well-trained to present the gospel to others.

Paul calls it the gospel of peace, as we are purveyors of the peace of God, and those who receive our message will not only have peace with God but also be recipients of His peace. As we teach the blessings of Philippians 4:6-8, whereby our hearts and minds will be kept by “*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding...*” we will bring peace to this troubled world. No soldier is fully equipped for battle unless he possesses the next three pieces of equipment:

The Shield of Faith

The shield, called the shield of faith, is to quench the fiery darts of doubts, fear, and discouragement, which are the enemy’s special weapons that he loves to use against the saints. Darts can be thrown with great precision, as anyone who has played the game of throwing darts at a dartboard knows. Satan is able to throw his darts and penetrate any chink in our armour.

In Isaiah 21:5, the command is given to anoint the shield, meaning we are to be anointed with fresh oil. Therefore, we need to keep our whole armour in good repair and our shield anointed with the fresh oil of faith at all times so that we can deflect all the fiery darts and sword thrusts of the enemy.

We need to be strong in faith concerning our salvation, for he seeks to accuse us and bring our failures before us. However, our salvation is rooted in the gift of faith that Christ gives us to enable us to believe in Him (Eph. 2:8).

Furthermore, the enemy seeks to make us fearful concerning the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In Luke 11:1-13, the Lord Himself gives us encouragement that if a father knows how to give good gifts to His children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?

In the realm of guidance, in Acts 11:12 Peter states that the Holy Spirit bade him go to the house of Cornelius doubting nothing. In the realm of healing, the Lord was asked by the leper, "If You will, You can make me whole." He graciously responded, "I will" (Mt. 8:2-3). It is the Lord's will that as the Apostle John states in 3 John 1:2, "*Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*"

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet of salvation that covers our mind shows forth the wonders of His great salvation. **The mind controls the whole of our body and destiny.** We can be delivered from our own thoughts, and have the mind of Christ

(1 Cor. 2:16). His mind can deliver us from pride (Phil. 2:5-8) and we become clothed with the humility of the Godhead. We are therefore delivered and able to forsake our unrighteous thoughts, for as the Lord says, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His thoughts higher than ours (Isa. 55:7-8).

Therefore, as we are clothed with the helmet of salvation, we become heavenly minded, doing His holy will and understanding His ways.

*As we become
heavenly minded,
we will understand
His ways.*

The Sword of the Spirit

The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, must ever be in our mouth just as we understand that out of His mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword (Rev. 1:16). His Word is able to divide soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12). As with Christ, so too with us, when the Tempter comes, we are able to say, “*It is written*” and pierce him to the quick, driving him away and winning the battle in our times of temptation (Mt. 4:4-7). The soldier of Christ must not entangle himself with the things of this world so that he may please Him who has chosen him to be a soldier. Rather, enduring hardness as a good soldier let it be said of us, as with Paul, that we have fought a good fight and we have finished our course (2 Tim. 2:3-4; 4:7).

In addition, the leader must be a man of prayer, praying without ceasing to bring to pass God’s purpose in our lives and those for whom we are responsible. We have spoken much of this in the previous section entitled “The Prayer Life of the Leader.”

CONCLUSION

There is a promise for us, as we choose to lay aside those things in our lives that may be good but in reality are unprofitable for the kingdom, that the Lord will make our soul fat (Prov. 13:4). Furthermore, He will make an everlasting covenant with us—**an assurance that we will not fail, even the sure mercies of David** (Isa. 55:1-4).

There are three stages in the life of the man of God that help us to understand and qualify to be a true leader of men, and they are:

1. ***He is a witness***: This means that the man of God must be an epistle written and read of all men everywhere (2 Cor. 3:2). He should be his message. His life should reveal the virtues of Christ, the fruit of the Spirit, and a sense of destiny and purpose that pervades the very fibre of his being, with his face set as a flint to do the will of God.

Some of the men who have had a great influence upon my life did so just by their very presence. Although they hardly spoke, their very personality impacted me for their message shone forth from their very being.

2. ***He qualifies to be a leader***: A leader must have a vision. He must know where he is going so that he can lead others in a straight path, helping them to negotiate the trials, tribulations, and rapids of life. With compassion, as with the ewes filled with the young, or as with a horse in the wilderness that it should not stumble, he has to lead them

on to fresh pasture that he has first inspected. This is to ensure there are no poisonous weeds or winds of doctrine that can cause the sheep to err or become sick and weak (Gen. 33:13-14, Ps. 78:71, Isa. 63:11-14).

3. *He qualifies to be a commander of men:* One who gives orders and sets people in their God-given positions in the church or fellowship. It is for him to give the orders and as with Joshua 3:7-8, God said, *“Unto Joshua, this day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant.”* In the Church Age, those that bear the ark of the covenant would represent our associate ministers, elders, deacons, and members of the congregation.

Dear ones, may we keep in mind that being a leader of men is an awesome responsibility as we read in James 3:1, *“My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”*

In closing, beloved, let us remember the condition by which Abraham received his blessing. God knew Abraham would command his children and his household after him, and that they would keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. Then God could bring upon Abraham all He had promised him (Gen. 18:19). Never let it be said of us that we won the world and lost our family. He is the Good Shepherd who loved His own and kept them, and none were lost (Jn. 10:11; 13:1; 17:12). May we be those in whom Christ so dwells that He may be admired in us (2 Th. 1:10).

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