



LEADERSHIP IN THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT

Types of leaders and their purpose

Particular individuals whom God calls. To initiate His purposes in specific ways, and in general structures to oversee society.

Priests. Representing God's holiness, communicating His Law, the offering of worship and sacrifice. **Judges.** The earliest

formal leadership in Israel, exercising God's good rule through ensuring the right ordering of relationships in society. **Kings.**

Anointed by God, bringing stability, caring for the people, ensuring they thrive. **Prophets.** Raised directly by God to call His people back to His ways.

Examples of Old Testament leaders

Noah: obedience to God alone. **Abraham:** responding to God's call and embracing the unknown. **Joseph:** a vision to endure through hard circumstances and showing grace. **Moses:** taking responsibility for people, ensuring succession. **Joshua:** by example rather than command. **David:** defeating giants through trusting in God's power. **Solomon:** exercising wisdom. **Esther:** knowing when to act with courage. **Isaiah:** taking the initiative before others. **Daniel:** maintaining resolve. **Nehemiah:** casting God's vision.



Two key Old Testament leadership images

Leader as **Shepherd.** Leader as **Servant.**

JESUS AND LEADERSHIP

He is our pattern.

Jesus intensified many of the themes of leadership in the Old Testament.

He was anointed and called by God.

He did not act on His own authority

He laid down His life for others.

His security was in His relationship with God, rather than His status as a leader.

He served his followers

He taught and demonstrated humility as the foundation of leadership.

He offered His own life as an example for others.

He called His followers to steward and take responsibility.

He called and released others into ministry and leadership – His key strategy.



LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The NT is less concerned with the position and more with the purpose and manner of leadership. Various words are used to describe the character and importance of oversight in different ways.

Proistamenos: caring for those you have oversight of.

Hegoumenos: those who act as guides, and are worth imitating.

Kubernesis: enables all the gifts in the body to work together.

Episkopos: care for people, enabling them to grow in faith.

Presbuteros: someone who is older with responsibility.

Diakonia: waiting on others as a servant, being a go-between messenger.

Apostolos: being sent out with the full authority of the sender, to share the good news of the kingdom.

Equipping others:

Paul portrays God's grace being given to every member of the church - through different leadership gifts interacting the whole body can represent the fullness of Christ in the world.



LEADERSHIP AND THE STORY OF THE BIBLE

Creation: leaders do not have ultimate authority to determine the trajectory of the world or of any group of people.

Incarnation: authentic, deeply identifying with people, willing to go beyond the comfort zone, embodying the kingdom message.

Trinity: interdependent relationship and mutual raising up.

Holy Spirit: Pentecost announces an anointed community in which all are gifted.

New Creation: mission is never static. Therefore leaders will not be just custodians of the past, but catalysts for the future, fostering godly discontent with the status quo, embracing the discomfort this may bring, in the awareness of accountability to the returning master.



NEIL COLE: "SERVANTHOOD IS NOT AN ADJECTIVE TO DESCRIBE A GOOD LEADER AS IF IT IS ONE OF THE MANY QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER. SERVANTHOOD IS WHAT WE NEED, EVEN MORE THAN LEADERSHIP. LEADERSHIP IS JUST A FUNCTION FOR THE SERVANT."

