

“Ministry Of The Light”: Biblical Profiles in Leadership

By Bishop Michael Blue

“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. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”

II Samuel 23:3-4 KJV

Academic General Topic: Ecclesiology

Academic Subtopic(s): Anthropology

RATIONALE:

God placed humanity upon the earth, and with that placement came the assignment to **lead**. That is, God commissioned humans to be His stewards over the earth and to manage it on His behalf. That leadership assignment was never rescinded.

Therefore, leadership is to be viewed not merely as one among many social strata, either to be pursued or to be despised, according to one’s personal, political, or cultural temperament. Instead, leadership is in truth a sacred trust – trust by those who submit to another’s influence and direction and, most of all, trust by God – the One Who knows us best and yet believes... He believes in His purpose and its fulfillment... in and through US.

Because the Bible is God’s Book, we would expect to find within it **profiles** regarding this all-important topic of leadership.

Mosaic Profiles – Part 1

Exodus 18, Numbers 11, Numbers 27:15-23, Deuteronomy 31:7-8, Joshua 1:1-9

Profiles Of Leaders in Relationship: Moses & Jethro

Exodus Chapter 18

I. At the time that Moses met Jethro, Moses was at his lowest. Ex. 2:11-22

A. Jethro was already in the ministry as priest of Midian.

B. Moses had a calling on his life, with a damaged past and a questionable future.

II. Jethro was likely instrumental helping Moses over a forty-year period. Ex. 2:21-22

A. Helping Moses adjust socially and emotionally in Midian.

B. Helping Moses to come to a more mature knowledge of God (pastoral)

III. Jethro released Moses to carry out the call of God upon him. Ex. 4:18

A. God had called him, but Moses still asked for a release.

B. Moses took his family with him to Egypt, but apparently, they had gone back to Jethro.

IV. When Moses met Jethro, he bowed - by Eastern custom, a demonstration of esteem (mutual). Ex. 18:7

V. When Moses met Jethro, he kissed him - by Eastern custom, a demonstration of endearment (mutual).

Ex. 18:7

VI. When Moses met Jethro, they inquired of each other's welfare - a demonstration of enhancement.

(mutual). 18:7

VII. They talked together, in private, in the tent. 18:7

VIII. Moses was free to tell all that the Lord had done. 18:8

Moses was also free to tell all the hardships that they had come through.

IX. Jethro rejoiced in what God had done for Moses, with no envy. 18:9-11

A. Clearly Moses' ministry had outgrown his.

C. God had used him to help in preparing Moses for this day.

X. Jethro declared that Moses' testimony taught him, Moses' senior, something new about God. v.11

A. *E.g., **DIVINE PLAGUES vs. EGYPTIAN DEITIES** – Exodus 12:12, Numbers 33:4*

XI. Jethro was able to help Moses---

A. Personally by bringing his family to him. v.5-6

B. Ministerially, teaching him delegation of responsibility / authority. v.13-26 _

XII. Jethro and Moses accepted each other's greatness yet distinctness. Ex. 18: 27

XIII. They were able to be transparent with each other.

A. Share their joys.

B. Share their vision. Hab. 2:2

C. Share their struggles.

D. Share constructive criticism. Gal. 2:11-14

XIV. Friendship is the highest form of human relationship, regardless of gender, and *covenant* is the highest form of

human friendship. (Marriage, as God intended it, is a prototype of *covenant*, as an expression of highest human

friendship.) See II Samuel 1:26, John 15:15, Eph. 5:28-33

XV. One of Scriptures greatest examples of *covenant* friendship is the relationship between Jonathan and David.

I Samuel 18, et. al.

XVI. Many of the brethren and sisters are suffering for lack of covenant friends.

A. They suffer physically and die prematurely. I Cor. 11: 29-30

1. Stress-related illnesses

2. Thinking that, for spiritual supermen or superwomen, admitting illness is a lack of faith. Phil.2: 25-30

B. They suffer mentally and emotionally for lack of sharing, unloading, etc. Prov. 12: 25, Prov. 18:14

1. Loneliness

2. Fear that they will be branded as proud if they talk about blessings. Psalm 34:2, 3

D. They suffer spiritually because they do not have anyone to turn to for spiritual development. Prov. 27:17

1. They are afraid to let anyone know they have a need for spiritual strength. Eph. 4:11-16(SEE vs.16)

a. Afraid to appear weak.

b. Afraid to be scandalized.

2. They suffer spiritually because they do not believe they need their spiritual strength reinforced.

- a. They begin to believe the good things that people say about them, taking God's glory for their own. Jn 5:41, 44; Pr. 27:21
- b. They lack friends to hold them accountable for their personal walk with the Lord. As long as their spiritual gifts and abilities work, they are considered to be "all right". Pr. 28:19

XVI. God, in Jesus Christ, invites us to friendship with Him. Jn 15:15, Matt. 10: 24, 25; Jas.2:23

XVII. God directs us to friendship with one another:

A. He instructs us to emulate Him. Eph. 5:1-2

B. He extolls friendship by precept and example, in the Word. Prov. 17:17; 18:24; Ecc. 4:9-12, etc.

E. He teaches that comprehension of the depths of God only takes place in a pluralistic context. Eph. 3:17-18

F. He teaches that the maturity and perfection of the body of Christ will only occur as corporate ministry for its equipping takes place. Eph. 4:11-16; I Cor. 12: 12-26

E. He teaches that the blessing of God is commanded on such a relationship. Psalm 133: 3

G. He declares that through our relationships with each other the world will know Who He is. Jn. 13:35, I Jn. 3:14, Romans 8:35-39

Mosaic Profiles – Part II

Exodus 18, Numbers 11, Numbers 27:15-23, Deuteronomy 31:7-8, Joshua 1:1-9

LATERAL SUCCESSION

The Elders of Exodus 18

THE OBSERVATION – The Look

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

THE EVALUATION – The Limits

And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

THE RECOMMENDATION: THE ROLE OF MOSES – The List I: Instruction

Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

THE RECOMMENDATION: THE ROLE OF THE OTHER LEADERS – The List II: Lateralization (including *Qualification*)

Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge...

THE RATIONALE – The Logic

...so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, **and God command thee so**, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.” Exodus 18:13-23

THE ACCESSION, IMPLEMENTATION, ACCEPTANCE – The Lift

“So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves. Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.” Exodus 18:24-27

LATERAL SUCCESSION:

THE NECESSARY POSITIONING OF THE ELDERS OF EXODUS 18

They are to serve alongside Moses, within his administration, to enhance his leadership efficiency and consequently its / his effectiveness.

FOR THEMSELVES

The elders will now have the privilege and responsibility to perform a much greater proportion of what has solely been Moses' duties prior, because they possess the proven competency to do so and shall now be authorized to do so.

The elders, through their opportunities to serve, will grow in all the graces, gifts, abilities, and honor that God has entrusted to them – this is beneficial in their immediate lives, but it is preparatory for the “greater works” that God has ordained for each of them.

FOR MOSES

The elders will, in effect, empower and liberate Moses to do “THAT WHICH NO ONE ELSE CAN DO” (whether or not he has ever done “THAT” before) because he is now unencumbered with what the elders have the ability to do.

The elders will, in effect, protect Moses' health and longevity, by allowing him to concentrate his energies rather than to diffuse them.

The elders will preserve Moses' legacy, by augmenting and deepening the impact of his leadership's effectiveness.

FOR THE COMMUNITY & NATION

The elders will provide for individuals and the community as a whole, ensuring that all needs are properly met, thereby promoting a culture of peace and progress.

*The elders will, in effect, protect the community and the nation by ensuring that – in sharing Moses' divine leadership mandate - it has a senior (and secondary) leadership that “**leads strong and lives long**”: in a word, **stability**.*

FOR THE WORLD: ULTIMATELY FOR GOD

Most importantly, the elders get to participate in God's Will for the redemption of the entire world, through their service to this Messianic nation.

Mosaic Profiles – Part 2

LATERAL SUCCESSION

The Elders of Numbers 11

*The Seventy (70) Elders of Numbers 11:11-17, 24-25 (along with Exodus 24:1) are **not unlike** the Administrative Elders of Exodus 18 (not called “elders” nor numbered), but the emphasis in Numbers 11 is on not the structural but the supernatural positioning of these leaders. The Seventy Elders framework seems to have persisted all the way to the time of Jesus: the Sanhedrin was a council of Seventy, reminiscent of this Mosaic order of Elders.*

In Exodus 18, Jethro sees the need to preserve Moses and initiates a conversation with Moses.

In Numbers 11, Moses feels the need to preserve himself and initiates a conversation with God.

In Exodus 18, Moses establishes leaders.

In Numbers 11, Moses gathers leaders who are already recognized as such.

In Exodus 18, leaders are positioned by Moses – under the ultimate sanction of God.

In Numbers 11, leaders are anointed by God – taking of His Spirit that is upon Moses.

*In Exodus 18, leaders are positioned to do **what** Moses did.*

In Numbers 11, leaders are anointed to do as Moses did.

Mosaic Profiles – Part 3

LATERAL SUCCESSION

The Elders of Numbers 13

*These are all recognized by God and Moses as leaders (Numbers 13:2), though not formally referred to as
as
“elders.”*

They each represent one of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

They have influence individually, and they exert influence jointly.

Ten of them exert negative influence.

Two of them attempt, unsuccessfully, to exert positive influence.

The people rebel against the word of the Lord and of Moses because of the leaders, a majority, that rebel.

*Ten of these leaders, in effect, exact a tragic toll on their nation **by their unbelief**: they cost the Children of Israel 39 extra years in the Wilderness and countless deaths in the Wilderness among who are twenty years old and below at the time of the Rebellion, possibly including the death of Moses prior to his entrance into the Promised Land.*

*Two of these leaders, whom we recognize as “Elders” according to Hebrews 11:2, **by faith** become **next-generation Leaders / Elders** as well: Joshua supports Moses in LATERAL SUCCESSION and then follows Moses in LINEAR SUCCESSION. Likewise, Caleb supports Moses in LATERAL SUCCESSION and later becomes a key player in support of Joshua and the other Tribes in taking possession of the Promised Land. Though Caleb is not THE successor of Moses, he is most definitely A LINEAR successor to Moses and his God-ordained work.*

Mosaic Profiles – Part 4

LINEAR SUCCESSION

Joshua (A Summary)

“I. Joshua’s Process as An Example

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek...” Exodus 17:8-10a

“And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God. “ Exodus 24:13

“And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.” Exodus 33:11

*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.” Numbers 27:15-23

Who Was Joshua?

Joshua, God’s anointed, was appointed by Moses. The hand of God was upon Joshua seemingly from the outset, for he is seen early in the Exodus account leading the fledgling nation in war. He and Moses had a divine connection, and as Moses held up his hands, Joshua and his army were equipped to gain victory over the Amalekites. Also, when Moses went up into the mountain to receive the law of God, Aaron was left overseeing the people, but Joshua went up with Moses at least part of the way up into Horeb. The first person Moses addresses, when God abruptly sends him down the mountain to confront the people’s idolatry, is Joshua. It is difficult to conceive that Joshua’s spending that much time in the afterglow of the Presence of God did not affect him. Furthermore, the scripture accounts that Joshua “abode” in the tabernacle, after it was built. This time spent in the Presence of the Lord and of Moses was obviously critical to Joshua’s development.

No Guessing about Succession: Appoint the Anointed

God later told Moses to lay hands on Joshua and to put some of his honor upon him, in order that the people might learn to obey him. Ultimately, God made it known to Moses that Joshua was to lead Israel after the death of Moses. It was not to be a natural son of Moses or Aaron the high priest, or either anyone of their tribe, the tribe of Levi. Moses did not leave a situation in which the assembly would have to either seek God, campaign, or vote (all of which have legitimacy in their proper context) in order to choose the next leader after Moses' death. He appointed Joshua, for it was clear to Moses, and probably to many others, that God had already anointed him. This example certainly extols the virtue of senior leaders having a "living" succession plan."

(From *Building Credibility in Leadership*. M. A. Blue 2011)

TO BE CONTINUED...

2 | "Ministry of the Light" Biblical Leadership Profiles: (Mosaic 1-4) Michael