

# WEEK 11 SCRIPTURE

5778 / 2017-18



**SHEMA** שמע  
(shem-ah)

A Hebrew word for “To listen intently with willing anticipation and readiness to do what is heard.”

Shema O Israel

*by Roly Buys*

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# Parashah Vayigash | “He Approached”

## Week 11

This weeks portion covers **Genesis 44:18 – 47:27; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Luke Luke 24:30-48.**

## SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

This series intends to look at the concept of Godly<sup>1</sup> leadership to identify the good, wise and wonderful attributes that we would do well to emulate.

***I will “repeat” the description of what I believe Godly leadership ... “servant-leader” is all about, I that way you can benchmark the attributes of the character that I have selected to analyze for this week.***

I submit that our actions, if they are restricted to only Bible study, or spirit worship, will not please the FATHER.

YHVH wants us to reveal His Kingdom to the world and make an impact ... our failure to be obedient to this task, means that YHVH's Glory is limited and the opportunity to present a meaningful alternative to the world model is lost.

## OUR GOAL

***1 Peter 4:10-11*** “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of GOD’s varied Grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of GOD; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that GOD supplies—in order that in everything GOD may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To Him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

This fact, therefore, implies that fathers will ROLE-MODEL the various behaviours / attitudes / values that are acceptable over an extended period of time.

When the child is very small, these examples must be presented as simply as possible.

Over time the same lesson will take on far more complicated scenarios and interplay with others.

Taking this forward in Biblical time means that the basic lessons must be in place, for all possible events, by the age of 13, when other peer groups will begin to implant THEIR VIEWS OF LIFE. When this happens, we need to have the Biblical BENCHMARK set firmly into our character.

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<sup>1</sup> We use the Name **YHVH** instead of GOD, except where it appears in Scriptures.

## Y'shua as Role Model

The prophet Isaiah speaks quite often about the coming Messiah - in many verses we find the reference to: "*My Servant ...*"

I will take those verses and inject them into each one of the attributes that are listed below

Firstly, that verse will validate the specific attribute.

Secondly that verse will give us the understanding that the behaviour defined, is in fact a extremely reachable target

### (a) A father's role-model of Justice / healing

One of the fundamental building blocks of any human-being value system, is a sound understanding of the concept of *justice*.

Justice is not only the action to be fair in time of dispute, **but rather the principle never to do anything (business / sport / politics) that would give you an unfair advantage over others.**

This includes concepts such as:

- ◆ Paying a fair wage
- ◆ Opposing slavery
- ◆ Opposing abuse

Since many people have suffered abuse at the hands of others, and now carry wounds and hurts that preclude them from a normal healthily life, one of the leadership roles is to identify those hurt, **and to facilitate a process of healing.**



Once people have been made whole ... the servant-leader should go about the process of **identifying their YHVH-given gifts / talents.**

He should take steps to train people in their specific gifts, empower them to cover the weaknesses of those gifts and then ...

**Release them into the appropriate position** within the Body of Messiah where they can grow / flourish AND make a difference in other people's lives.

We will know that we cannot do things on our own. Even more surely, we are made for a very specific part of the Body of Messiah.

This implies that we can really only function in that place that we were made for.

Healing / satisfaction comes when I take responsibility for that work / action that is required of that part of the Body of Messiah.

### Y'shua as Role Model (Is 42.1)

#### **(b) A father's role-model of Compassion / empathy**

In a world where the best receive the glory and those last in line are all but forgotten, Biblical leaders should have the wherewithal to see the individual value and special abilities in a person.

Not only should he see these, but he should be focused on further development and training in these areas, and then he should be concerned with finding the right position for that individual to thrive

Such a leader will **value diverse opinion** ... he will **seek to hear alternative views, and he will not be putting people into stereotype boxes** - based on the fact that these people come from a different culture.

Not only will he be able to understand diverse views, but also he will be able to work in a community made up of strangers and still be able to reveal how YHVH expects us to love our neighbour.

### Y'shua as Role Model (Is 42:3)

#### **(c) A father's role-model of Humility / trust / listening**

- i) The first thing that you will realise of a leader, who is humble, is that books, articles and electronic media surround them. They are always searching for the truth and openly express the opinion that they welcome investigation into their thinking in order to test its credibility.

**This principle of continuous learning** is not only a wonderful means to remain humble; it's a prerequisite from YHVH (**Deuteronomy 17:19 / Joshua 1:8**).

- ii) The second attribute of a servant-leader who is humble, is the ability to create a **culture of TRUST**.

The modern world, with its performance-orientated goal creates a web of deceit and mistrust. Simple said, *how can I trust you with a secret or a better plan when both of us want to be recognised as the best in the team?*

Servant-leaders reject all forms of gossip, create opportunities for people with opposing views to face one another and debate the matter, and actively work to ensure transparency and sharing of all information.

- iii) A third attribute of servant leaders is that they are **good listeners**. They will seek clarity on what is said and felt.



They will be able to understand the fears/hopes and dreams of all concerned so that not one of the family / tribe is left behind (this does not mean that we agree with everything being said).

**Y'shua, as Role Model (Is 49:3)**

#### **(d) A father's role-model of emotional connectedness**

One of the realities of this fast-paced world, is that we have all become so very busy. Not only do we have the opportunity to do many and diverse things / activities, we are also faced with the communication era of computers / smart phones / and software that connects people such as Facebook.

In this fast-paced world, its very easy not to be aware of the emotional status of some of your family and friends.

In one sense, it's wonderful not be see / be aware of any problems - simply because you don't have to worry about it.

But if you are a parent who is determined to follow their calling, **then you will want to be very tuned in to their fears / concerns / expectations and so on, so that you can react timeously and can offer the support needed.**

Once you are aware that a problem exists, then you can set in motion the action which can work towards a healing.

Importantly, these problems will manifest on many different levels ... it is not only spiritual .. it can also be physical and emotional...

For example:

- ◆ It can be a perceived weight problem for girls,
- ◆ It can be a poor muscle structure for a boy,
- ◆ It can be a lack of ball sense ...

In other words, it can be any thing that the world will use to judge and benchmark someone against as **unacceptable**.

One of the features of a great parent is the **ability to encourage** despite the circumstances – and note the words are: → “*let us ...*” ...and not “*you go and try on your own*”.

Fathers, who are emotionally connected, will strive to **delegate responsibility** to others in order to challenge them to grow.

Such Fathers will never be afraid to give up power, because they know that seeing others take up the challenge and succeed is far more significant than being successful at something yourself ... simply because you know that the feat can be multiplied dozens of times even when you are absent.

A Biblical example is Jethro telling Moses what you do trying to keep the entire leadership role for yourself → is NOT GOOD (**Exodus 18:14-17**).

**Y’shua as Role Model (Isaiah 50:5)**

### **(e) A father’s role-model of revealing Godly influence**

The world system speaks of a system of “command” and obey ... these days the world system tries to modify this by implying that consultation before decision making is an inclusive system.

In fact, this façade creates more unhappiness as people soon realise that there is a hidden agenda at play; the people can then become either:

- ◆ a group that is happy to be disengaged,
- ◆ or a group who is actively seeking to move on.

Influence is the ability to convince others of a need to change - either a burning platform or a common better goal.

Both David and Joshua best display this ability by getting TWELVE tribes of different thinking people to work together.

An influencer thinks of “**you**” ... not “**me**”

- ◆ This can only be true if you **truly believe in the people whom you lead**
- ◆ They may make mistakes that you have to correct

- ◆ They may disappoint you sometimes,
- ◆ BUT you know that they are mainly giving of their best.

### Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 42:2)

#### (f) A father's role-model of releasing creativity

Innovation has become the name of the game.

People have dreams that are based on the exploits of others that have gone before them.

There was a time when – to run the mile in under 4 minutes was a huge feat. Today, new records get set at regular intervals.

Fathers are empowered to discern exactly what talents and gifts have been implanted in each child.

To develop those talents requires a concerted effort to plan, not only in the **timing** - how do we expose people to challenges, but also the **pace** at which we do so ... in this case its important to set stiff enough goals without discouraging the individual.

And YHVH knows what the best time is ... listen carefully to the Holy Spirit!! (**Numbers 27:16-17**)

### Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 49:6)

#### (g) A father's role-model the art of Strategic planning

We live in a world that is constantly changing. Consider the fact that 100 years ago most people still used the horse or the donkey / camel, while today any trip of some distance can only be done in an airplane. Think about the concept of the old landline telephone and the new portable cell phone.

But more critically, is the change in the distribution and control of information.

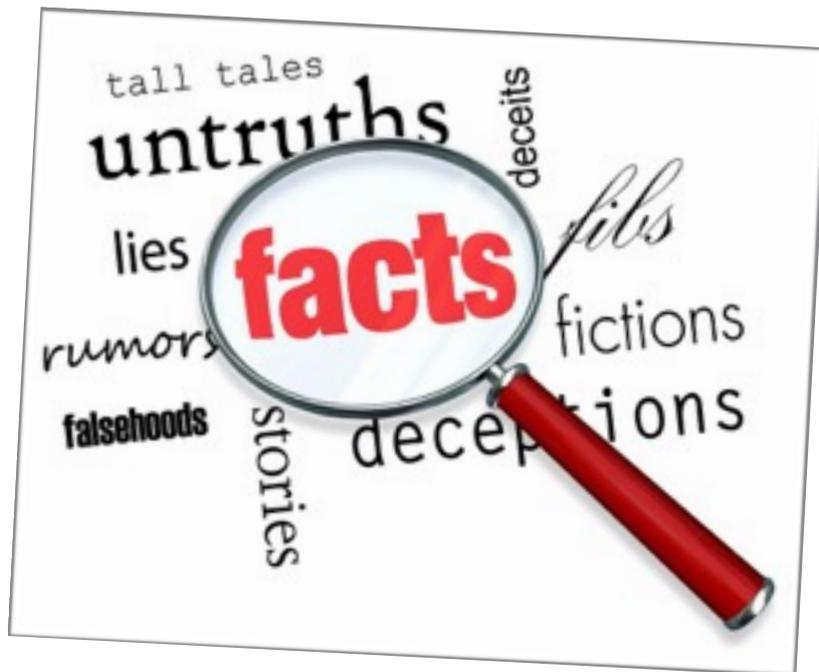
Shops that sold books are now obsolete as people purchase these over the Internet.

You must be **prepared to investigate** strange things!!! (**Exodus 3:2-3**)

It's this type of change that can radically make or break a fantastic plan.

For this reason, fathers must teach children the art of scenario planning.

The ability to take note of changes in the environment, of new developments, of new evolving trends, and then commit this to a scenario plan to identify possible alternatives to be investigated.



A father who puts his child on a single track destination without this kind of training, is failing dismally in his leadership role as the likelihood of a dead-end, or a cliff without a bridge.

### **What do we want to do?**

We need to empower the next generation to have the foresight to see various outcomes from a difficult situation and to be able to plan various alternative solutions so that they are not stuck.

What we need is to repeat the lessons of old - every single mistake or Biblical forefathers made, we need to help them identify the current realities for what they are – we need to take the Land (and not what we would want them to be), and we need to build an appreciation for estimating the cost / consequence of any action taken (as for me and my house we will serve the LORD).

We need to teach others to look up and around, while at the same time looking down at the job at hand (**Joshua 2:1**).

### **Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 49:2)**

### **(h) A father's role-model of function of Stewardship**

The Book of Genesis describes clearly ... we have been given a mandate – to **keep and guard** the Garden; to have dominion over the earth and all that is on it (but not on fellow humans), and we have to be accountable to YHVH for what we accomplish with this calling (**Genesis 1:28**).

Stewardship speaks to an understanding that we have a responsibility ... to leave the Garden in a better state than how we found it, that we have to build more than we utilise.

To this end, the perpetual use of farm land without rest is contrary to YHVH's Principles and the use of water without a care in the world reflects a belief that we can call on YHVH anytime that we like bring more rain ... that a undesirable level of arrogance **and** shows that we do not value the gift of the Garden. Nor the Giver of the gift!!!

It is within this domain that many of our most precious values are to be discovered.

### **Integrity**

How many of us remember the day when, if two people shook hands on a deal, then it was irrevocable , and everybody understood that.

This concept is a fundamental building block of the principle of Covenant.

The bond of my word was enough to live or die by.

A similar thought is contained in the **salt covenant** idea, Once we had broken bread, together with salt , you as my guest are completely safe from all harm.

You simply cannot be a good steward if you do not have integrity.

### **Honesty**

Honesty, as a value follows closely on that of integrity.

However, honesty includes the understanding that you will make right all possible damage / harm caused under your roof, even if no claim is laid.

Honesty includes the application of fairness, diligence, and justice.

***A wonderful quote by RL Stevenson ...***

***“Don't judge each day by the harvest that you reap, but by the seeds that you plant,”***

**Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 42:4)**

### **(i) A father's role-model of Community building / citizenship**

The world has created large corporations / huge companies that own a great deal of resource or governmental organisations that attempt to control mankind via their influence in the media and the minds of the masses.

The best structure from the Bible is the family; in a clan, in a tribe, and in a community.



Community come together for common purpose i.e. religion / welfare / celebrations; and sometimes to go to war when the group is under attack.

Within this context, the community either grows together or suffers together, and we do not get the huge differentials of wealth, health, etc, that we do today!

While leadership can be stressful and demanding ... (**Numbers 11:11-15**)

... the rewards are great when you see a community respond and start to function for themselves!

**Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 50:6)**

## **(j) A father's role-model of how to be leaving a legacy**

The moment that you accept that:

- ◆ every individual is "equal and unique",
- ◆ that people should never be oppressed by anyone,
- ◆ that you realise that you are called to be accountable for your stewardship of the Garden,

... then you will believe in and work towards leaving a legacy.

- ◆ Legacy empowers OTHERS in your lifetime – legacy does not equal inheritance.
- ◆ Legacy is described in these strange words 'It's better to teach a man to fish than to feed him everyday'

But then you will understand that legacy equals hard work and sometimes, for a neighbour that does not even think or believe as you do ... we call that loving your neighbour.

**Y'shua as Role Model (Isaiah 50:10,11)**

## **LEADERSHIP IS NOT EASY**

We see many examples of Biblical men who thought that they did not have what it takes:

- ◆ **Moses** → who am I?
- ◆ **Isaiah** → I am not a man of words!
- ◆ **Jeremiah** → I am a man of unclean lips!
- ◆ **Jonah** → I cannot speak!

The highest accolade → Moses is a servant ... **he is called YHVH's Servant.**

## THE WAY FORWARD

The point of this short description is not to do an in depth study of Biblical leadership, but to define some of the Godly Characteristics of such a role.

We will look at various individuals during this Torah cycle study.

I do not intend to discuss their shortcomings, but to focus on their Godly Leadership qualities so that we can learn from these and start to emulate these attributes.

As such, I also do not intend to allocate their attributes under each of the heading described above, merely to reflect on their revealed lifestyle.

## LET US RETURN TO THIS WEEK'S PORTION...

If we look at the Haftorah portion we see that there is reference of the tribe of Judah.

One of the notable leaders that come from this tribe is the man called **Nehemiah**.

### (a) Nehemiah reveals Strategic understanding.

1. Having come to the realisation that it is YHVH's Will that the people must return and the city of Jerusalem must be rebuilt, he implements a strategic plan to align all of the parties in this vision.

**Nehemiah 2:2-6** *"The king asked, "Why do you look so sad? You're not sick, so this must be some deep inner grief." At this, I became very fearful, as I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why shouldn't I look sad, when the city, the place where my ancestors' tombs are, lies in ruins; and its gates are completely burned up?" The king asked me, "What is it that you want?" I prayed to the God of heaven, then said to the king, "If it pleases the king, if your servant has won your favor, send me to Y'hudah, to the city of my ancestors' tombs, so that I can rebuild it." With the queen sitting next to him, the king asked me, "How long is your trip going to take? When will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a time."*

**Nehemiah 2:7-9** *"I then said to the king, "If it pleases the king, have letters given to me for the governors of the territory beyond the (Euphrates) River, so that they will let me pass through until I reach Y'hudah; and also a letter for Asaf the supervisor of the royal forests, so that he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress belonging to the house, for the city wall and for the house I will be occupying." The king gave me these, according to the good Hand of my God on me. I went to the governors of the territory beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. The king had sent with me an escort of army captains and cavalry."*

- ◆ He approaches the king to request permission.
- ◆ He develops a plan of action to get the job done.
- ◆ He delegates roles and responsibilities.

**Nehemiah 3:1-2** *“Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Hananel. And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.”*

2. As soon as they experience opposition, Nehemiah changes the strategy and arranged for people to guard, while others continue to build.



I wonder if you have ever thought about this, but in effect Nehemiah has returned to the Garden of Eden Commandment.

### **Mankind must guard and keep the garden.**

Nehemiah understood that the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Tabernacle was in fact their Garden.

**Nehemiah 4:15-18** *“When our enemies heard that it was known to us and that God had frustrated their plan, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail. And the leaders stood behind the whole house of Judah, who were building on the wall. Those who carried burdens were loaded in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and held his weapon with the other. And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me.”*

As soon as the people understand that they have YHVH’s Blessing, and that their leader has strategic vision, they work with restored dignity and pride ... they are no longer wanderers, but rightful owners that have been restored!!

**(b) Nehemiah reflects Justice.**

The people have returned, but many are destitute ... years of slavery have had their toll.

But not everyone is that badly off.

Nehemiah thinks of social solidarity - he realises that unless everyone has a reasonable financial status, they will not be as committed to the vision.

**Nehemiah 5:8-13** *"I said to them, "We, to the limit of our ability, have redeemed our brothers the Judeans who sold themselves to the pagans. Now you are selling your own brothers, and we will have to buy them back!" They stayed silent; they couldn't think of anything to say. I also said, "What you are doing is not good! You should be living in fear of our God, so that our pagan enemies won't have grounds for deriding us. Moreover, my brothers and my servants, I too have loaned them money and grain. Please, let's stop making it so burdensome to go into debt. Please! Today! **Give them back their fields, vineyards, olive groves and homes; also the hundred pieces of silver and the grain, wine and olive oil you demand from them as interest.**" They answered, "We will give it back. We will require nothing from them. Yes, we will do it, just as you say." Then I called the cohanim and took an oath from them that they would do as they had promised. Shaking out the fold in my garment, I said, "May God thus shake every man from his house and from his work who fails to live up to this promise — may he be shaken out like this and made empty." The whole assembly said, "Amen!" and praised ADONAI; and the people did as they had promised."*

**(c) Nehemiah reveals the attribute of Stewardship.**

Often people get a vision of what YHVH wants them to do.

However, they seem to think that they must pass the job along to others.

Whatever calling / gifting we each get, it is our own responsibility, and we will have to account for whatever we did with it or not.

Many times others will oppose us ... will want to deter us from going ahead with whatever it is that we are to accomplish.

**Nehemiah 6:9** *"They were all just trying to scare us, thinking, "This will sap their strength and keep them from working." But now, (God), increase my strength!"*

Nehemiah had such enemies.

He focused his sights on the calling and pushed through.

**(d) Nehemiah reflects the attribute of Compassion.**

- (i) Firstly, he weeps at the news that the walls of Jerusalem and the people left behind are surviving in great shame.

**Nehemiah 1:2-3** "...that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."

(ii) Secondly, he feeds those who are poor out of his own pocket.

**Nehemiah 5:17-19** "Moreover, there were at my table 150 men, Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us. Now what was prepared at my expense for each day was one ox and six choice sheep and birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because the service was too heavy on this people. Remember for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people."

**(e) Nehemiah reveals a heart of a Humble man.**

One of the major hallmarks of humility is the fact that people have TRUST in you.

Why would people trust him?

Because he turns to YHVH in time of need ... he trusts in the faithfulness of YHVH.

**Nehemiah 1:11** "O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear Your Name, and give success to Your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

As you page through this Book you find many examples of actions, which build trust.

- ◆ He lives exactly what he preaches.
- ◆ He put others needs before his own.
- ◆ He shows the people that he has perseverance.



When the going gets tough he is at the battlefront, together with all of the others.

**This attribute has become the hallmark of the officers of the Israeli Defence Force.**

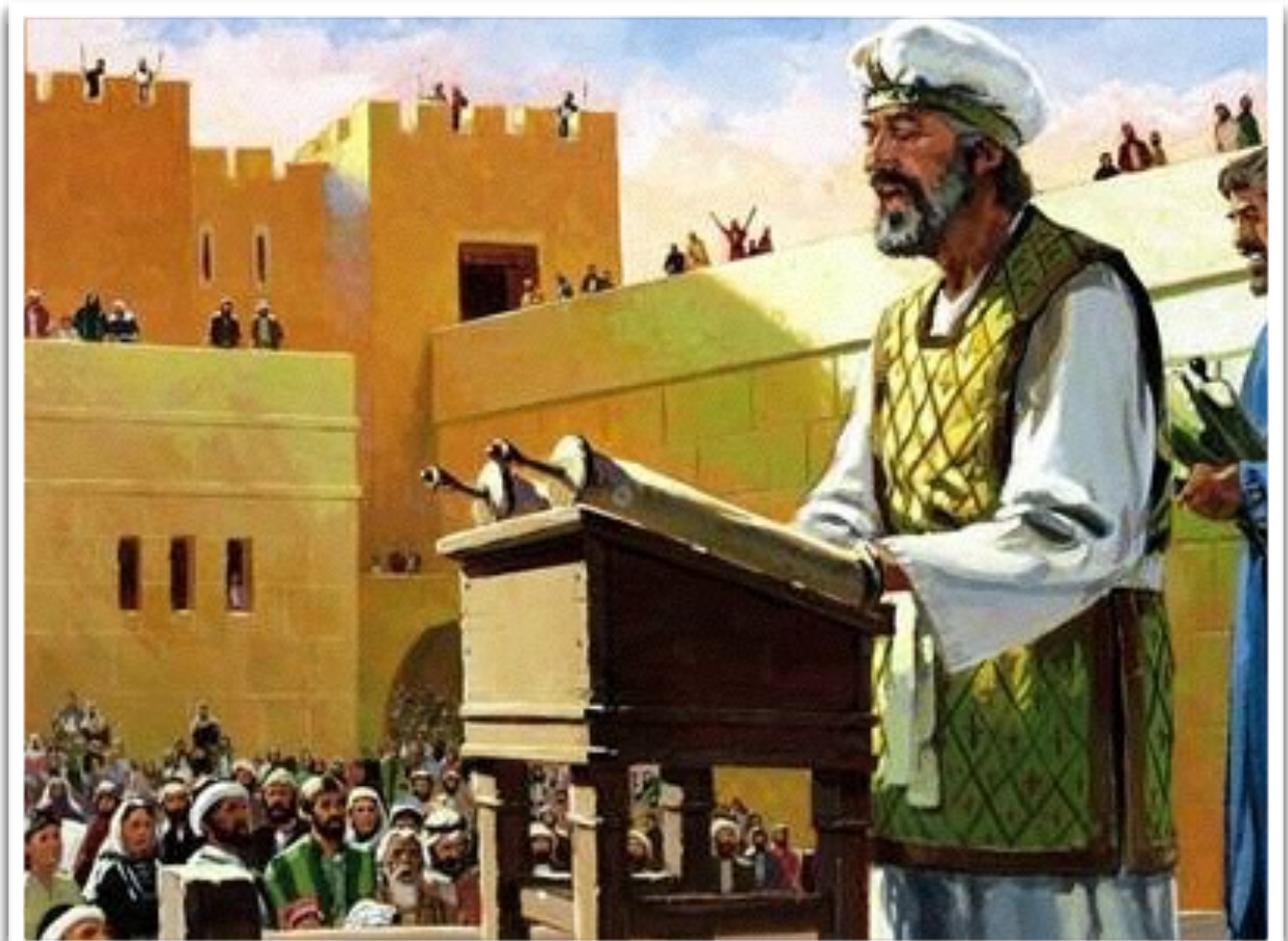
Most armies will protect the Generals ... they stay in the background planning and giving orders.

The officers of the IDF have time and again been at the forefront of the battle.

**(f) Nehemiah reveals an understanding of the principle of Legacy.**

Nehemiah realises that if there will be any value in restoring the wall, the people must grow spiritually.

He goes about the process to reintroduce the reading of the Torah, of worship, and the return to their roots when they repent and begin to celebrate the Feast of Sukkot.



**Nehemiah 8:9-18** “And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, **“This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.”** For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. Then he said to them, “Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. **And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.**” So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.” And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make **great rejoicing**, because they had understood the words that were declared to them. On the second day the heads of fathers’ houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe in order to study the words of the Law. **And they found it written in the Law that the LORD had commanded by Moses that the people of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month**, and that they should proclaim it and publish it in all their towns and in Jerusalem, “Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths, as it is written.” So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. And day by day, from the first day to the last day, they read from the Book of the Law of God. They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.”

**Nehemiah 9:1-3** “Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God.”

## A FINAL THOUGHT

Nehemiah rebuilt the city walls.

Men who build relationships, friendships, communities leave huge stones ... just like those that you see today in the Western Wall.

Maybe one of those stones that we see in the Western Wall today were part of the original ones used by Nehemiah ... who knows?

If you go there today, to stand before the Wall and call out to YHVH, maybe, just maybe, the voice of Nehemiah or one of his fellow men could echo back from that stone.

We, as Holy Priests, should be building a new Tabernacle ... one made of Living Stones.

**Are you building on that wall?**



**Are you standing guard on the lookout for the enemy?**

## **PRIESTLY BLESSING**

*“Y’varekh’kha YHVH v’yishmerekha.*  
**May YHVH bless you and keep you.**

*Ya’er YHVH panav eleikha vichunekka.*  
**May YHVH make His Face shine on you and show you His favour.**

*Yissa YHVH panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom.*  
**May YHVH lift up His Face toward you and give you peace.**

In this way they are to put My Name on the people of Israel, so that I will bless them.

