

WEEK 2 SCRIPTURE READING

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 Noach | נח | "Noah"

Week 2

This week we cover the portion contained in **Genesis 6:9 - 11:32; Isaiah 54:1 - 55:5; Matt 24:36-44; Acts 2:1-16; 1 Peter 3:18-22.**

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

SUMMARY

This series intends to look at the concept of Godly¹ 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, in other words, "servant-leader", is all about. In that way you can benchmark the attributes of the character that I have selected to analyse 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.

Background

We read the Bible every week and study the story and the content with a passion to get to know YHVH better.

Paul tells us that the Bible has lessons for our every day life.

As priests in the **Living Stone Tabernacle**, we are to reveal the Glory of YHVH by the everyday actions that we model in the community.



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

This calls for Sons / Daughters of Abraham to:

- ❖ Have a clear vision of our purpose
- ❖ Have a clear understanding of our place in the Body of Messiah
- ❖ Have a sound value system that causes us to strive for JUSTICE, COMPASSION AND HUMILITY



Paul tells us that we must study the lives of the fathers of our faith so that we can follow those role-models where they reveal Godly leadership.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY FATHER-LEADER

The seminal verses that describe a father's role speak to the fact that it is at 24 hour /365 day job ... there is no "off" time, there is no holiday from the commitment.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our GOD, the LORD is One. You shall love the LORD your GOD with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. **You shall teach them diligently to your children**, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."*

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.

(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 healthy 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.

(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.

(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 *“And it shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear (and worship) the LORD his GOD (with awe-filled reverence and profound respect)) by carefully obeying (keeping foremost in his thoughts and actively doing) all the words of this law and these statutes,”*

It is to remain with him, and he is to read in it every day, as long as he lives; so that he will learn to fear ADONAI his YHVH and keep all the words of this *Torah* and these laws and obey them:

Joshua 1:8 *“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall read (and meditate on) it day and night, so that you may be careful to do (everything) in accordance with all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will be successful.”*

Yes, keep this book of the *Torah* on your lips and meditate on it day and night, so that you will take care to act according to everything written in it. Then your undertakings will prosper, and you will succeed.

- 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).

(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 are doing trying to keep the entire leadership role for your self → is NOT GOOD.

Exodus 18:14-17 “When Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, “What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning till evening?” And Moses said to his father-in-law, “Because the people come to me to inquire of GOD; when they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make them know the statutes of GOD and his laws.” Moses’ father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is **not good.**”

(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.

(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 *“Let the LORD, the GOD of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be as sheep that have no shepherd.”*

(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 *“And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was **burning**, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not **burned**.”*



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 *“And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as **spies**, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.”*

(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 *“And GOD Blessed them. And GOD said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

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,”



(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 “Moses said to the LORD, “Why have You dealt ill with Your servant? And why have I not found favour in Your sight, that You lay the burden of all this people on me? Did I conceive all this people? Did I give them birth, that You should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a nursing child,’ to the land that You swore to give their fathers? Where am I to get meat to give to all this people?”

For they weep before me and say, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' I am not able to carry all this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me. If You will treat me like this, kill me at once, if I find favour in Your Sight, that I may not see my wretchedness."

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

(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.

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.**

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...

In this week's portion we look at the life, and **leadership style** of Noah.



Certain Bible scholars say that Noah failed as leader → that righteousness is not an indication of leadership.

These allegations are made with the understanding that leaders are supposed to influence many people (a community) ... I would submit that this not the only indication of leadership.

In fact, to be able to stand / and reveal Godly Principle when all around you (your peers) reject them, is an OUTSTANDING example of leadership.

Let us work our way through the life experiences of Noah, and try to identify some of the attributes of a servant-leader.

The Bible makes it clear that we each have the right to freedom of choice. It makes it easier to choose correctly if we have access to sound teaching, to a strong community, and Godly Role-model Leadership.

1. Noah models the principle of Justice / righteousness.

The Bible tells the story in a simple manner ... there are little or no details.

Genesis 6:9 *“These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with GOD.”*

But think through the story over a period of 120 years.

The world that surrounds him, the norm of society, is corrupt and filled with violence.

We live in a world where power is corrupted; the politicians feed their ego at the expense of the masses; murder and robbery is reported daily. The newspapers / media reports are biased and often fabricated.

Genesis 6:11-12 *“Now the earth was corrupt in GOD’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And GOD saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.”*

And through all of this TIME, Noah is able to ‘consistently walk’ in a just manner, with morale excellence, never once accepting the society norm as acceptable.

AND, he is able to teach his family to live to the exact same standard.

Samuel tells us, it’s not about religion / ritual / legalism, but a lifestyle of sacrificial obedience.

1 Samuel 15:22 *“And Samuel said, “Has 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 listen than the fat of rams.”*

Noah is able to DO what is right, even when he is all-alone!!! Even when others did exactly the opposite ... all of the time.

2. Noah models the principles of Stewardship and Strategy.

Let us see ... YHVH reveals the plan to build the ARK and spells out the work that lies ahead.

Consider this - Noah did not know what rain was, and had never seen a ‘thing’ such as a boat in his life ... I also wonder whether he had ever seen all of the animals / birds, etc that he would have to save?

In that moment, did he relive the time when his predecessor Adam had looked at each specie and given them a name?

Genesis 6:18-22 *“But I will establish My Covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. And of every living thing of*

all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them. "Noah did this; he did all that GOD Commanded him."

Not only does he receive this strategic plan / pattern, but he also spends the next 120 years being a wonderful steward of this calling.

We all know that it is quite easy to begin a task with some excitement, but due to lack of time of quick progress and in this case the laughter / jokes of the community, would weigh heavily on anyone's willingness to continue.

And a 120-year project would seem never ending!!

But Noah persists / perseveres.

Genesis 6:14-16 *"Make yourself an ark of gofer-wood; you are to make the ark with rooms and cover it with pitch both outside and inside. Here is how you are to build it: the length of the ark is to be 450 feet, its width seventy-five feet and its height forty-five feet. You are to make an opening for daylight in the ark eighteen inches below its roof. Put a door in its side; and build it with lower, second and third decks."*

A number of the other attributes are also covered in this same event of building the ark!!!

3. Noah reveals his Humble nature.

- ◆ He stands alone while others mock him.
- ◆ He accepts his responsibility to walk to a different drumbeat, without compromise.

This passage confirms the principle that democracy is not YHVH's preferred model. The voice of the masses mostly does not follow YHVH's Pattern or Will.

Romans 11:5 *"So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace."*

4. Noah reveals his Creativity.

He is able to take the pattern given to him by YHVH and follow the design to produce the ARK ... something never seen before and do you know how many people laugh at the idea - so much so that in this day and age there are at least two workable models that have been constructed to verify the possible accuracy of this event.

Hebrew 11:7 *"By trusting, Noach, after receiving divine warning about things as yet unseen, was filled with holy fear and built an ark to save his household. Through this trusting, he put the world under condemnation and received the righteousness that comes from trusting."*

5. Noah reveals his understanding of Legacy.

One of the outstanding elements of his leadership, is to live up to the principle of finishing what you start ... there is a book written that talks about the same thing ... it's not **how** you start that matters, its all about **finishing strong**.

Noah's children would have seen this attribute daily for 120 years.

Did he later make mistakes? For sure, but at least two of his sons seemed to have grasped the concept that legacy matters.

Philippians 1:15 - 17 *"True, some are proclaiming the Messiah out of jealousy and rivalry, but others are doing it in goodwill. The latter act from love, aware that I am put where I am for defending the Good News; while the former announce the Messiah out of selfish ambition, with impure motives, supposing they can stir up trouble for me in prison."*

6. Noah reveals his Emotional connectedness / YHVH's Father-Influence.

Many leaders get caught up in the mission to build a church, to build a business, to build a sports career ... one can say that a 120-year vision certainly can consume you.

However, what is clearly apparent, Noah is able to stay connected to his wife, his sons, and their wives so that they stay with him **through all of the trials and tribulations**.

Genesis 7:6 *"Noah went into the ark with his sons, his wife and his sons' wives, because of the floodwaters."*

An image of a scaled down ark? You will see that almost everyone wants to see if this story could be true...



A FINAL THOUGHT

The Bible is clear - we will go through much tribulations towards the end of days.

Isaiah 54:9-10 *“This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you. For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but My steadfast love shall not depart from you, and My Covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.*”

But within that prophetic WORD there is this promise for the true sons / daughters of Abraham ... those who walk in obedience to His Commandments.

Isaiah 54:17 *“...no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed, and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD and their vindication from Me, declares the LORD.”*

And we have the promise of the Ruach Hakodesh to accompany us on this journey...

Acts 2:17-21 *“And in the last days it shall be, GOD declares, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on My male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out My Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the LORD comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the Name of the LORD shall be saved.”*

The days of Noach will be experienced once again!

- ◆ Will you be able to reflect some of these leadership attributes?
- ◆ Will you be able to show the way to the ARK?
- ◆ Will you be a servant-leader in this great time of need?



A faithful reproduction of Noah's ark, using the dimensions in The Bible, has just opened to the public in The Netherlands.

It was constructed by the Dutch creationist and millionaire building contractor Johan Huibers, after he dreamt that Holland would be flooded once again. He used the ancient measurement of the cubit (the length of a man's arm from the elbow to the fingertips) to build the craft according to Biblical proportions.

PRIESTLY BLESSINGS

“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.”

