

WEEK 48 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 Shoftim | שופטים | “Judges”

Week 48

This week we read from the following Scriptures:

Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9, Isaiah 51:12-52:12, Matthew 5:38-42, Acts 3:13-26, 7:35-53, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 1 Timothy 5:17-22 and Hebrews 10:28-31

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

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 ... “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.

¹ 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 (Isaiah 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 (Isaiah 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 (Isaiah 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 Yitro telling Moses what you doing trying to keep the entire leadership role for your self → 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.

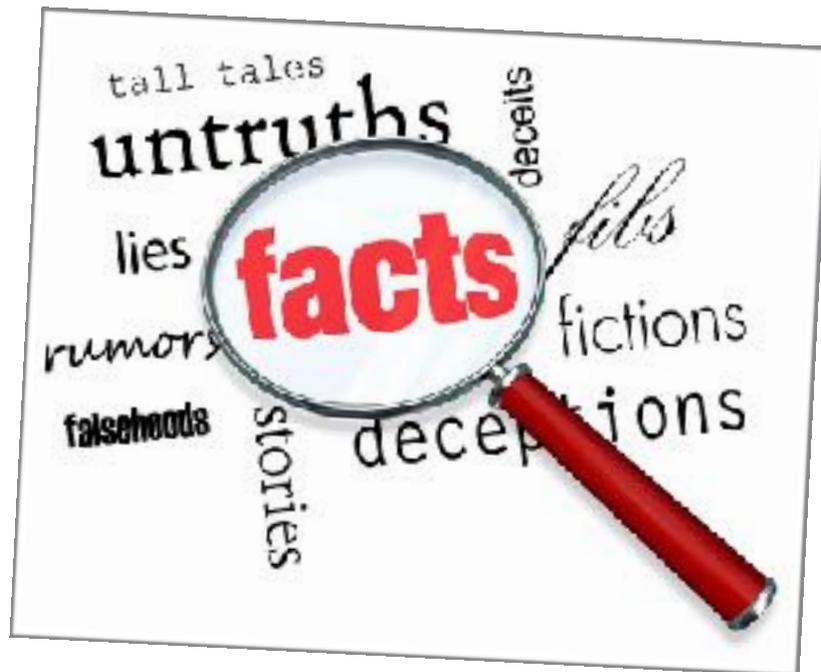
But more critically, is the change in the distribution and control of information.

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

Reading through this week's portion I come across these words ...

When you go out to fight your enemies ... you are not to be afraid of them.

Deuteronomy 20:1-4 *“When you go out to fight your enemies and see horses, chariots and a force larger than yours, you **are not to be afraid of them**; because ADONAI your GOD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, **is with you**. When you are about to go into battle, the cohen is to come forward and address the people. He should tell them, ‘Listen, Isra’el! You are about to do battle against your enemies. Don’t be fainthearted or **afraid**; don’t be alarmed or frightened by them; because ADONAI your **GOD is going with you to fight on your behalf** against your enemies and give you victory.”*

These words are particularly relevant to the man who we will study this week, **Jonathan**, the son of king Saul.

In the world of earthly kings, the right to be the next in line is reserved for the first-born son.

Jonathan is that son.

Normally, that right, by virtue of the fact that you have grown up in the palace, experienced the honour of being a prince, lived through the benefits of the house of the king - will have already impacted your ego / value system.

Jonathan, reveals the **heart of servant leadership** - when he hears that YHVH has declared that his father has disappointed Him, and that He would appoint someone else ... he accepts that decision without question, and never attempts to hijack the role for himself.

This fact alone sets him apart from most leaders.

A. Jonathan reveals the art of CREATIVITY

The enemy (Philistines) surrounds them on the battlefield.

His father, Saul, sits under the pomegranate tree - he has no desire to fight – and he has 600 men with him.

1 Samuel 14:1-2 *“One day Y’honatan the son of Sha’ul said to the young man carrying his armor, “Come, let’s go across to the garrison of the P’lishtim on the other side. But he didn’t tell his father. Sha’ul was waiting at the far edge of Giv’ah under the pomegranate tree in Migron; the **force with him numbered about 600 men.**”*

Jonathan realizes that he needs to do something radical in order to bring a victory.

Jonathan **has faith in YHVH's Provision** ... he has clearly heard the Words recorded for us in **1 Samuel 14** above.

When you go out to fight - be not afraid.

And he is not afraid.

He **believed that YHVH would do what he had Promised** to do.

1 Samuel 14:6 *"Y'honatan said to his armor-bearer, "Come on, let's go across to the garrison of these uncircumcised people. Maybe ADONAI will do something for us, since **ADONAI can rescue with a few people as easily as with many.**"*

They will show themselves to the Philistines ... who laugh at them.

Then they climb up a steep cliff, with the minimum of weapons - and as soon as they appear on top - the two of them (Jonathan and his amour bearer), the entire army of the enemy panic and run away.

Two men with faith in YHVH , do more than 600 men sitting under a tree.

1 Samuel 14:7-15 *"His armor-bearer replied, "Do everything you think you should; I'm with you, whatever you decide." Y'honatan said, "Here, we'll cross over to those men and let them know we're there. If they say, 'Wait till we come to you,' we'll stand still where we are and not go up to them. But if they say, 'Come up to us,' we'll go on up; and that will be the sign that ADONAI has given us Victory over them." So both of them let their presence be known to the garrison of the P'lishtim; and the P'lishtim said, "Look, some Hebrews coming out of the holes they've been hiding in!" Then the men of the garrison said to Y'honatan and his armor-bearer, "Come up to us; we want to show you something." Y'honatan told his armor-bearer, "Come on up after me, for ADONAI has handed them over to Isra'el." **Y'honatan climbed up, using his hands as well as his feet, with his armor-bearer behind him.** The P'lishtim fell before Y'honatan, and his armor-bearer following him finished them off. That first slaughter, of about twenty men, was accomplished by Y'honatan and his armor bearer in a space only half as long as one side of the area a pair of oxen could plow in a day (about 200 yards)."*

1 Samuel 14:15 *"There was panic in the field camp among all the P'lishtim; likewise, the garrison and the raiding party panicked. Besides all this, there was an earthquake; thus it grew into panic caused by GOD."*

B. Jonathan reveals a love for JUSTICE

It is true that there are two sets of rules today ... one for the upper class, the president / prime minister / king and so on, AND another set of rules for the ordinary citizens.

They can drive fast, because they are on “important” business, while the ordinary citizen must keep to the speed limit.

It's also true that it is difficult to stand up for justice when you are a junior and the boss / general, etc has given a command.

But this is exactly where Jonathan stands out.

- ◆ YHVH and Saul are not aligned ... Saul has made too many of his own choices, and refuses to return to YHVH's Paths.
- ◆ Accordingly, YHVH has told Saul - that the kingdom will not pass to his own family, but rather to a man of YHVH's choice.
- ◆ Saul now takes his anger out on David.

When Saul speaks to Jonathan about this and he steps up to the plate of integrity / truth / justice and asks ... why should he be killed ...what has he done?

1 Samuel 20:30-32 *“At that Sha’ul flew into a rage at Y’honatan and said, “You crooked rebel! Don’t I know that you’ve made this son of Yishai your best friend? You don’t care that you’re shaming yourself and dishonoring your mother, do you? Because as long as the son of Yishai lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be secure. Now send and bring him here to me — he deserves to die.” Y’honatan answered Sha’ul his father, “Why should he be put to death? What has he done?”*”



C. Jonathan reveals the attribute of STEWARDSHIP

- ◆ Jonathan knows that David will be crowned king.
- ◆ He also knows that his father Saul has an unholy anger and a hatred for David that is unhealthy.

1 Samuel 19:1-3 “Sha’ul told Y’honatan his son and all his servants that they should have David killed. But because Y’honatan was very fond of David, he told him, “My father Sha’ul is out to have you killed. Therefore you must be very cautious tomorrow morning. Find a well-concealed place to hide in. I will go out and stand next to my father in the countryside where you’re hiding. I will talk with my father about you; and if I learn anything, I’ll tell you.”

1 Samuel 19:4-7 “Y’honatan spoke well of David to Sha’ul his father and said to him, “**The king shouldn’t sin against his servant David, because he hasn’t sinned against you.** On the contrary, his work for you has been very good indeed. He put his life in his hands to attack the P’lishtim, and ADONAI accomplished a great victory for all Isra’el. You yourself saw it, and you were happy about it. So why do you want to sin against innocent blood by killing David without any reason?” Sha’ul heeded Y’honatan’s advice and swore, “**As ADONAI lives, he will not be put to death.**” Y’honatan called David and told him all these things. Then Y’honatan brought David to Sha’ul to be in attendance on the king, as before.”

1 Samuel 19:8-10 “War broke out again, and David went and fought the P’lishtim. He defeated them with a great slaughter, and they fled before him. Then an evil spirit from ADONAI came upon Sha’ul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. David was playing his lyre, when Sha’ul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear. But he dodged it and moved out of Sha’ul’s way, so that the spear stuck in the wall. David fled, so that night he escaped.”



- ◆ Jonathan will stand by his father - he will honour him, and die with him in battle.
- ◆ But he will protect the “Garden of YHVH’s Purpose”
- ◆ Jonathan chooses to be loyal to David, to protect him from the unfair attention of his father - he chooses to be a good friend.

Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing out of rivalry or vanity; but, in humility, regard each other as better than yourselves - look out for each other’s interests and not just for your own.”

Jonathan and David make a covenant of friendship.

1 Samuel 20:9-10 “Y’honatan said, “Heaven forbid! If I ever were to learn that my father had definitely decided to do you harm, wouldn’t I tell you?” Then David asked Y’honatan, “Who will tell me in the event your father gives you a harsh answer?” Y’honatan said to David, “Come, let’s go out in the countryside.”

1 Samuel 20:11-14 They went out, both of them, to the countryside. Y’honatan said to David, “ADONAI, the GOD of Isra’el (is witness): after I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or the third day, then, if things look good for David, I will send and let you know. **But if my father intends to do you harm, may ADONAI do as much and more to me if I don’t let you know and send you away, so that you can go in peace.** And may ADONAI be with you, just as He used to be with my father. However, you are to show me ADONAI’s Kindness not only while I am alive, so that I do not die;”

D. Jonathan understands the principle of LEGACY

- ◆ He knows that David will be king.
- ◆ He knows that Saul will never give the kingship up willingly.
- ◆ He pleads for the life protection of his family, a promise that David will honour forever.

1 Samuel 20:5-17 “ ... but also, after ADONAI has eliminated every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth, you are to continue showing kindness to my family forever.” **Thus Y’honatan made a covenant with the family of David**, adding, “May ADONAI seek its fulfillment even through David’s enemies.” Y’honatan had David swear it again, because of the love he had for him — he loved him as he loved himself.”



A FINAL THOUGHT

In many ways, Jonathan seems to be an Old Testament version of Barnabas.

Someone who had wonderful leadership talents, **and yet chooses to serve the one person that YHVH places in their lives.**

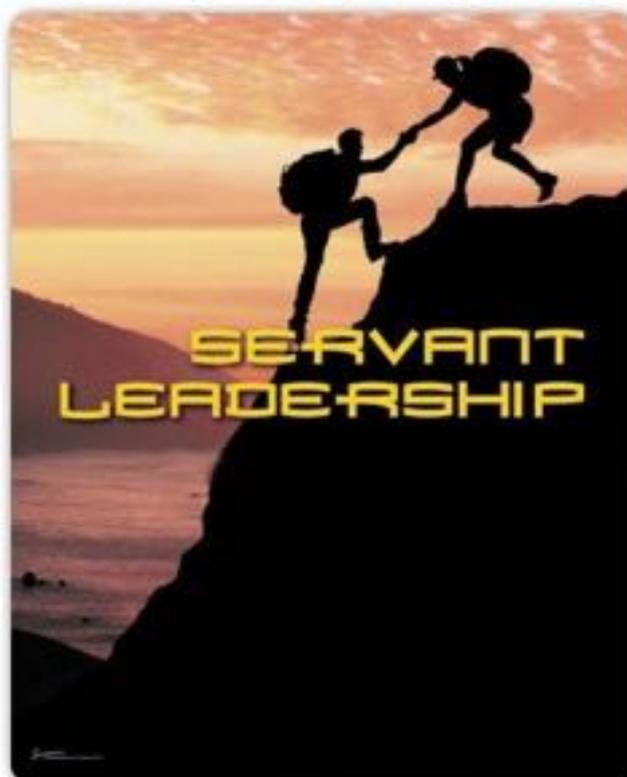
Just as Jonathan serves David, so too, does Barnabas serve Paul ...

When Jonathan takes off his robe and gives it to David, he passes over his standing / authority in the community, when he passes over his sword to David, he is handing over the military leadership.

- ❖ This is a lesson for most leaders.
- ❖ Seldom can one leader hand over to the next generation.
- ❖ Yet we have a GODLY example ... follow Jonathan's example.

Be a servant leader!

Mark 10:42-45 *“But YESHUA called them to Him and said to them, “You know that among the Goyim, those who are supposed to rule them become tyrants, and their superiors become dictators. But among you, it must not be like that! **On the contrary, whoever among you wants to be a leader must be your servant; and whoever wants to be first among you must become everyone’s slave!** For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve — and to give His Life as a ransom for many.”*



BLESSING

Numbers 6:24-27

“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.

