

The Roles of Biblical Leadership

February 15, 2026

1. From the beginning of time
 - a. Leadership can be traced back
 - b. To Patriarchal leadership
 - c. Father leading his family
2. Abraham
 - a. Ishmail
 - b. Isaac
3. Isaac
 - a. Esau
 - b. Jacob
4. Jacob
 - a. 12 sons
 - b. Joseph becomes 2 nations
 - i. Manasseh
 - ii. Ephraim
5. Became 12 nations
 - a. 400 years in Egypt
 - b. Persecuted by Pharaoh
6. Moses becomes first Judge
 - a. Chosen by God to lead (overseer of all 12 nations)
 - b. Not a military leader
7. Joshua becomes second Judge
 - a. Succeeded Moses
 - b. Military leader

Judges 2:8–10

“Joshua, son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten. And they buried him in the land of his inheritance, at Timnath Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel.”

Judges 2:16–19

“Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the LORD’s commands. Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was

with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.”

8. Numerous Judges

- a. Chosen by God
- b. To rescue God’s people from their enemies
- c. Book of Judges highlights 16 main leaders
- d. Military leaders (not courtroom judges)
 - i. Othniel
 - ii. Ehud
 - iii. Deborah
 - iv. Gideon
 - v. Jephthah
 - vi. Jehu
- e. Tribal leaders
 - i. Eli
 - 1. Hophni
 - 2. Phinehas
 - ii. Samuel

1 Samuel 8:1–5

“When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice. So, all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.”

- 1. Joel
- 2. Abijah

9. Kings and Prophets

1 Samuel 8:21–22

“When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the LORD. The LORD answered, “Listen to them and give them a king.”

- a. Saul first king
- b. David second king

- c. After Solomon
 - i. Split into Two nations
 - ii. Each having their own king
 - iii. Rehoboam – King of the Southern Kingdom (Judah)
 - iv. Jeroboam – King of the Northern Kingdom (Israel)
- 10. Last King
 - a. Judah – Zedekiah
 - b. Israel - Hoshea son of Elah

2 Kings 17:13–15

“The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: “Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your fathers to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets.” But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their fathers, who did not trust in the LORD their God. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their fathers and the warnings he had given them. They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless. They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, “Do not do as they do,” and they did the things the LORD had forbidden them to do.”

- 11. They didn't listen,
 - a. So, God sent them into exile
 - i. Babylon
 - ii. 70 years
- 12. Coming out of exile
 - a. Nehemiah
 - i. Lead Israelites out of captivity
 - ii. Established form of leadership for next 400 years
 - 1. Governors – Civil leadership
 - 2. Priest – Spiritual leadership
 - b. Zerubbabel – 1st governor
 - c. Jeshua – 1st priest

- 13. When **Rome** became the ruling party
 - a. Civil government positions
 - i. were removed from Israelites
 - b. Time of religious sects
 - i. High Priest
 - ii. Sadducees
 - iii. Pharisees

iv. Essenes

14. BRINGS US TO THE TIME PERIOD OF JESUS

What does the Bible teach about leadership?

**LAST WEEK WE LOOKED AT DAVID
WHOM GOD CHOSE
TO SHEPHERD HIS PEOPLE**

2 Samuel 5:1–3

“All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “We are your own flesh and blood. In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.’” When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a compact with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.”

- a. To protect God’s people
- b. Lead them spiritually
- c. To make sure they are taken care of

15. How God feels when leaders don’t do their job:

Ezekiel 34:1–16

“The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So, they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them.

“Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the

mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.”

16. JESUS IS THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

John 10:1–15

“I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

Therefore, Jesus said again, “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So, when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

17. The New Testament lays out the roles of leadership for the church

Ephesians 4:11–13

*“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors (**shepherds**) and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”*

18. BREAK DOWN THE ROLES OF LEADERSHIP

19. Prophets

- a. These were people receiving direct revelations from God
- b. No longer needed now that we have the New Testament

2 Timothy 3:16–17

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

20. The work of Pastors/Shepherds:

1 Peter 5:1-4

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”

1 Timothy 3:1-7

“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”

1 Timothy 5:17

“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.”

21. Who is the leader of the church then?

- a. Who leads the family – the father
- b. Who leads the church – the Elder
 - i. To be an elder, you must
 - ii. Proved that
 1. you know and
 2. have experience
 3. In leading spiritually
- c. Elder responsibility is to treat the congregation like his own family
- d. Should an elder know the names of his flock?
 - i. If he wants to be like Jesus, he will
- e. Should an elder need to know
 - i. what the needs of his flock are?
 - ii. If he wants to be like Jesus, then
- f. Jesus knows because he is **omniscient**.

- i. An elder knows by getting **personally involved**.

1. TO SUMMARIZE

- A. He knows the names of all the sheep
- B. He leads them (always out front)
- C. Knows where he is going
- D. Protects them (from Lion and Bear)
- E. They listen to him

22. The work of the Evangelist

2 Timothy 4:1-5

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry."

Duties of an Evangelist

1. **Preach** the Word

- a. Extra time studying their Bibles
- b. Growing in knowledge of the scriptures

2. **Ensure** sound doctrine is taught

- a. When it's not being taught
- b. Correct, rebuke and encourage
- c. Help mature the body of Christians

3. **Lead** the way (by example) in Evangelism

a. Setting example in

- i. Bringing visitors to church
- ii. Setting up bible studies with the lost
 - 1. Both personally
 - 2. Helping our Christians in the congregation

23. Their responsibility is **NOT** to lead the church

- a. Or make decisions for the church
- b. **They can offer advice** or share opinions
- c. But Elders make all the final decisions

24. Too many churches have the leadership roles on BACKWARDS

a. **Ministers and Preachers are leading the church**

- i. (haven't proven qualified)
- ii. Qualifications come from leading your family
- iii. Before leading a church
- iv. **That's why churches have problems**

1. young, inexperienced men are leading

- b. Elders and Overseers are used only for supportive roles in leadership
- c. **Backwards** – Cart leading the horse

25. Don't expect the Evangelist or Teacher to fulfill the role of the Elder

- a. minister to the sick (spiritually and physically) in the church.
- b. That is the responsibility of the shepherd/elder.
- c. **But** as a member of the body, the Evangelist should
 - i. Do their best to get involved
 - 1. with the needs of the body (members)
 - ii. Just as every Christian should do for those in need

26. The leadership of an Elder is **vital for** the health and maintenance of a congregation

It's why:

Acts 14:23

"Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust."

Titus 1:5–6

"The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you."

27. Each church is **autonomous**

- a. Because each has its own set of leadership
 - i. That is why Paul prioritized the appointment of elders
- b. If no one is available – do your best
 - i. Have someone move to your city/town
 - ii. to take on that role
- c. **No** Biblical precedent of one church having authority over another
 - i. Except Jerusalem church
 - ii. Where Apostles were the leaders of that church
 - iii. Or special counsel called to deal with doctrinal issues
 - 1. Gentiles Accepted

2. Circumcision required
- d. The role of **Bishops** evolved
 - i. Leader from another congregation
 - ii. Assuming leadership over another congregation
 - iii. **Reason:** During Biblical times
 1. Leaders were the ones Romans imprisoned
 2. Had them executed
 3. Congregation left without leadership
 4. **Note:** NOT mentioned in leadership roles in Bible
 5. **Not intended to be permanent roles**
 - a. Temporary
 - b. Until new leaders were appointed

28. The role of the Teacher

- a. to teach
 - i. classes
 - ii. seminars
 - iii. write books
 - iv. Assist the Evangelist in maturing the congregation
 - v. If a doctrinal error is circulating the church
 1. To teach sound doctrine
- b. not his responsibility to be the Evangelist
 - i. (though he could be both)