

12 Biblical Keys to Great Leadership

“I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion.” — Alexander the Great

As of this writing, we are wandering in a wilderness barren of leadership. The last lions to lead the West were Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, nearly thirty years ago. Since then, our world has seen the rise of terrorism, the erosion of national borders, the collapse of common decency and morality, and the ballooning of national debts, as one sheep after another has assumed a leadership role in the West.

Can there be any doubt of the importance of leadership? Where a leader leads, down a good path or an evil path, people will follow. Remember, in the Bible, that Israel worshiped God whenever a righteous king or judge reigned, and worshiped idols whenever a pagan king assumed the throne? Remember how Great Britain under Neville Chamberlain grovelled to the Nazis on the eve of World War II, and how she stood up and fought back under Winston Churchill? A great leader makes all the difference.

However, leadership is not just for politicians, generals, and business executives. You are a leader! If you are a manager, you are a leader to the other employees. If you are a mother or father, you are a leader to your children. If you set an example for anyone else in the world, then you are a leader. We may suffer from a lack of leadership on a national level, but each of us can be a better leader in our own right. How, then, can you be the best leader you can be?

In whatever leadership capacity you find yourself, the twelve Biblical principles outlined in this article will serve you well. This is not a comprehensive list, mind you, but these are some of the most important keys.

1. Gain Knowledge and Wisdom

Leadership guru John C. Maxwell wrote, “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.” Knowing the way is the first and most important step. A leader who does not know the way can hardly show it to others, and his ignorance will lead to disaster. As Jesus said, “If the blind leads the blind, both will fall into the ditch” (Matt. 15:14).

Centuries before Israel’s first king, Moses wrote down instructions for any future monarchs Israel might have. The instructions included this: “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life,

that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel” (Deut. 17:18-20).

The greatest duty of Israel’s kings was to serve God and set the example for their people. Before doing so, they had to know and abide by God’s laws and instructions. They had to know the way and go the way first and foremost. Thus, one of the first tasks was writing a personal copy of God’s law, to read and re-read as long as they lived.

Soon after Joshua succeeded Moses as leader of Israel, God gave him a similar set of instructions: “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Josh. 1:8).

The first duty of a leader, then, is to gain knowledge and wisdom. He must know right from wrong, and follow the right. He must know the people he leads, and the task ahead. Let us look now at a Biblical leader who made seeking knowledge and wisdom his first mission: King Solomon. (Every principle of leadership in this article will include Biblical examples.)

Good Leadership: King Solomon

Shortly after Solomon succeeded his father David as king of Israel, God spoke to him in a dream and offered him anything his heart desired. Solomon responded, “Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” (1 Kings 3:7-9).

King Solomon recognized that he needed wisdom to be an effective leader. God was so pleased with this answer that He responded, “Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days” (1 Kings 3:11-13).

Today, King Solomon is often thought of as the wisest man who ever lived. Among his many accomplishments, he built the Temple, sent fleets of merchant ships over much of the world, made Israel so prosperous that silver “was accounted as nothing” (1 Kings 10:21), and wrote three books of the Bible (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon). He achieved

so much only because he exemplified the first rule of leadership: seek knowledge and wisdom above all else.

2. Lead By Example

The US military teaches officers, “Never ask one to do something that you yourself are not willing to do.” Gen. George S. Patton expressed a corollary to this rule: “Always do everything you ask of those you command.” A leader who orders others to do what he will not do, who merely talks the talk but does not walk the walk, will not be respected or followed. The finest words in the world are easily undone by a bad example.

In a similar vein, Plutarch wrote, “...it is a most agreeable spectacle for a Roman soldier when he sees a general eating common bread in public, or sleeping on a simple pallet, or taking a hand in the construction of some trench or palisade. For they have not so much admiration for those leaders who share honour and riches with them as for those who take part in their toils and dangers...”¹

A true leader does not exalt himself over others; he recognizes that he must serve those he leads before they will serve him. What he requires of them, he must do. When they suffer hardship, he must bear the burden with them. A leader’s example will always have greater weight than his words; it can either tear them down or make them twice as strong.

The New Testament firmly establishes the twin principles of servant leadership and leadership by example. Jesus Christ admonished His disciples, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:25-28). Jesus first set the example by coming to serve humanity, and then asked His disciples to follow in His footsteps.

The Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:3-8).

¹ Plutarch, *The Life of Marius*, 7:3.

A leader must always look out for the best interests of his subordinates and put their needs higher than his own wants, just as Jesus did. When he sacrifices for them, he has the moral authority to require similar sacrifices of them. Leadership should not be viewed as authority, but as service.

Good Leadership: Jesus Christ, King David, Alexander the Great, General Patton

Of all the leaders in the Bible, Jesus Christ set the ultimate example. He came in the flesh and experienced the trials and tribulations of ordinary human life, He “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15), He devoted His life to service rather than to being honored, and finally He laid down His life for all humanity. There was never another leader exalted so high, yet who served others so much and put their needs above His own.

Many New Testament passages exhort us to follow Jesus not just because of His words, but because of His example. The Apostle Peter wrote, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth’; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed” (1 Peter 2:20-24).

Another apostle, John, also wrote to Jesus’ followers, “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6). Later he added, “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16). Jesus’ example gave His words legitimacy. If the Son of God made Himself a servant of others, how much more should other leaders do the same?

King David, too, led by example and did not exalt himself above his followers. During a war with the Philistines, as David and some of his warriors held a stronghold near the Philistine camp, “David said with longing, ‘Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!’ So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. And he said, ‘Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?’ Therefore he would not drink it” (1 Sam. 23:15-17). David refused to drink the water because he could not allow his men to sacrifice themselves for his comfort. He would not accept special treatment.

The story is similar to one told about Alexander the Great. After turning back from India, Alexander led his army through the desert along the shore of the Indian Ocean. The heat and lack of water took a terrible toll on the soldiers as they plodded through the burning sands day after day. One day, a soldier discovered a small amount of water, filled his helmet with it, and took it

back to Alexander. The king took the helmet and thanked him for the gift, then poured it on the ground in full view of the army. By this action, he showed the soldiers that he would bear every hardship he asked them to bear.

Our final example comes from General Patton during the Battle of the Bulge, near the end of World War II. In the midst of falling snow and biting cold, Patton rode up and down his columns of tanks and men in an uncovered jeep to make sure his counterattack was moving smoothly, while refusing to wear warmer clothing than the soldiers had. One soldier wrote, “Oh, yes, I knew him, though I only saw him once. We was stuck in the snow and he come by in a jeep. His face was awful red and he must have been about froze riding in that open jeep. He yelled to us to get out and push, and first I knew, there was General Patton pushing right alongside of me. Sure, I knew him; he never asked a man to do what he wouldn’t do himself.”²

3. Have Courage and Moral Strength

After naming Joshua his successor, Moses exhorted him, “Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you” (Deut. 31:6). Later, God gave him the same message: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9). King David, too, on his deathbed told his son Solomon, “I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man” (1 Kings 2:2).

Strength and courage, then, is the third key to great leadership. This not only means standing firm against enemies, as Churchill and Reagan famously did; it means standing up for the truth even when everyone else stands in opposition. A true leader must be strong and courageous, especially in the face of adversity. This is not just a principle of good leadership; it is a Biblical command: “You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice” (Ex. 23:2).

Good Leadership: Moses

Very few leaders have faced more adversity than Moses did, and even fewer have faced it without buckling. Throughout Israel’s journey in the wilderness, beginning the first week after leaving Egypt, the Israelites complained against Moses. Approximately thirteen times, the Israelites complained or rebelled against Moses and his leadership. Twice they threatened to stone him, and twice more they turned away from God to serve idols.

Through it all, Moses refused to turn aside from his mission. When they wanted to go

² Carlo D’Este, *Patton: A Genius For War* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1996), p. 689.

back to Egypt, he continued to point them to the Promised Land. In Numbers 13, when they threatened to stone him and God threatened to wipe them off the face of the earth, Moses even interceded with God on their behalf! He stood up for what was right at all costs, no matter how unpopular it was or how much danger he faced. It was Moses' strong and courageous leadership that turned a ragged band of slaves into a cohesive nation, and prepared it to conquer the Promised Land.

Bad Leadership: King Joash of Judah

Where Moses embodied the courage and strength of character needed in a great leader, King Joash of Judah embodied weakness. He ascended the throne at only seven years of age, thanks to the courage and protection of Jehoiada the priest (2 Chron. 24:1). As long as Jehoiada lived, Joash continued to serve God (2 Chron. 24:2), following his benefactor's lead. However, when Jehoiada died, the nobles of Judah came and bowed down to him and turned his heart away from God (2 Chron. 24:17). Not only did Joash allow the Jewish leaders to set up idols in the Temple of God, but when Jehoiada's son Zechariah spoke out against their idolatry, they stoned him with Joash's blessing (2 Chron. 24:19-22)! King Joash was a weak leader easily influenced by others, and it ultimately cost him his life: his own servants murdered him in revenge for the death of Zechariah (2 Chron. 24:25).

4. Inspire and Uplift Others

Not only must a leader be courageous and strong, especially in the face of adversity, but he must inspire those same qualities in others. Throughout history, a number of leaders have risen up in crisis and inspired their followers to do almost impossible feats. Two of the most inspirational leaders in more recent times, of course, were Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill, men who inspired their people to ultimate victory in the face of impending disaster.

Good Leadership: King Hezekiah

In the Bible, one of the most inspirational leaders was King Hezekiah. When he came to the throne, Judah was a vassal of the hated Assyrians. The Assyrian Empire possessed a military machine the likes of which the world had never before seen, and ruthlessly stomped out any attempt at rebellion. Rebel leaders were routinely impaled or skinned alive, while their followers were tortured and slaughtered indiscriminately. Still, Hezekiah resolved to win his kingdom's independence from the Assyrians.

As the Assyrian armies approached, Hezekiah gathered the leaders of Judah and prepared for war. They stopped up the springs of water outside Jerusalem to prevent them from falling to

the Assyrians, strengthened the walls of the city, and stockpiled weapons (2 Chron. 32:3-5), besides building a tunnel to bring water into the city (2 Kings 20:20). “Then he set military captains over the people, gathered them together to him in the open square of the city gate, and gave them encouragement, saying, ‘Be strong and courageous; do not be afraid nor dismayed before the king of Assyria, nor before all the multitude that is with him; for there are more with us than with him. With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles.’ And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah king of Judah” (2 Chron. 32:6-8). Hezekiah’s words stirred his people and had them ready to fight the strongest empire the world had known.

Despite Hezekiah’s preparations, the war began disastrously. The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, boasted of capturing forty-six fortified cities, along with countless villages, and of carrying away more than 200,000 men, women, and children into exile!³ Hezekiah began to have second thoughts about the war and tried to buy off the Assyrians with the gold from his palace and the Temple of God (a questionable decision, to be sure). The Assyrians accepted the tribute, but instead of withdrawing, sent an army to besiege Jerusalem itself (2 Kings 18:17).

The besieging Assyrians often taunted the Jewish officers and the defenders on the walls. Knowing the power of Hezekiah’s influence, the Assyrians repeatedly told the defenders such things as, “Do not let Hezekiah deceive you,” “Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD,” and “Do not listen to Hezekiah” (2 Kings 18:29-30, 2 Chron. 32:10-17). If the Assyrians could break the people’s spirits, the city would fall, but Hezekiah stood in their way.

To make matters worse for the Jewish king, the Bible indicates that Hezekiah himself may have been on the verge of dying from a serious illness “in those days” (2 Kings 20:1; 2 Chron. 32:24). The Assyrians had captured many of Judah’s cities, Assyrian armies camped outside Jerusalem taunting the defenders to undermine their confidence, and Hezekiah was nearly on his deathbed. Judging from his attempt to buy off the Assyrians, it appears that, in private, his own confidence may have wavered.

In the face of death, Hezekiah still inspired his people to persevere. Following his orders, the defenders maintained their discipline and ignored the Assyrians’ psychological warfare (2 Kings 18:36). The women of Jerusalem even laughed at the Assyrian king and his boasts (2 Kings 19:21)!

Following an exceptionally arrogant message from Sennacherib himself, in which the Assyrian king suggested that God was a deceiver with no power to deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians (2 Kings 19:10-13), Hezekiah went up to the Temple and spread out the letter before God. He cried out to God as never before to save him and his people from the Assyrians. God sent back word by Isaiah the prophet that He would fight for Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:20-34), and

³ D.D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon*, vol. 2, *Historical Records of Assyria From Sargon to the End* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 120.

sent an angel into the camp of the Assyrians one night to kill them (2 Kings 19:35). The next morning, Sennacherib gathered the remnants of his army and retreated from Judah, never to return (2 Kings 19:36-37).

Hezekiah also recovered from his illness and reigned another fifteen years after the Assyrian invasion (2 Kings 20:2-11). His leadership during the crisis was truly remarkable. Even while gravely ill and privately having second thoughts, he encouraged his people to show courage and strength in a confrontation with the greatest empire on earth. In the face of terrible defeats, their spirits remained high, to the point of mocking and laughing at the Assyrian king who threatened them all with horrible deaths!

Bad Leadership: The Ten Spies

Contrasting with Hezekiah were the spies Moses sent into the Promised Land ahead of Israel's planned entry. Twelve spies, one from each tribe, were sent to scout out the land of Canaan and report back what they saw (Num. 13:1-20). When they returned, ten of the spies brought back a bad report and emphasized the difficulties of conquering the land (Num. 13:27-29). The other two spies, Joshua and Caleb, discredited their report, but the ten spies persisted and resorted to lies. They screeched, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight" (Num. 13:32-33).

Because of the spies' efforts to terrify and discourage the Israelites, the people openly rebelled against Moses and threatened to stone him (Num. 14:1-10)! Furious at Israel's rebellion, God condemned them to wander in the wilderness for forty years until that entire generation perished (Num. 14:33-34). The deceitful spies themselves God quickly struck down by plague (Num. 14:36-37).

Unlike Hezekiah, who encouraged his people and built up their confidence, the ten spies discouraged and frightened their people. Hezekiah's efforts ultimately brought about a great victory in a desperate struggle for survival. The spies' efforts cost their own lives and the lives of an entire generation that they led into sin.

5. Listen to Advice

Many times in the book of Proverbs, King Solomon wrote about the importance of listening to advice. To Solomon, listening to advice and instruction was simply part of wisdom. In one such passage, he wrote, "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14). In the western world, we might sum it up in the popular

saying, “Two heads are better than one.”

Many advisers offer diverse perspectives that one person alone would not have considered. Knowing this to be true, Gen. George S. Patton encouraged multiple viewpoints among his advisers. As he put it, “If everyone is thinking alike, someone isn’t thinking.”

To be an effective leader, one must recognize that he does not have all the answers. Others may have better ideas, and a true leader should be willing to listen to their input. When he is wrong and others are right, he must have enough humility to accept it, however unpleasant it may be.

Good Leadership: King David

King David was a leader who listened to the advice of subordinates, even on occasions when it must have pained him to do so. When his son Absalom rebelled, David had been forced to flee with his loyal supporters and regroup. Before sending them into battle, he instructed his army commanders not to kill Absalom; he could not bear the thought of losing his son (2 Sam. 18:5).

The two sides clashed in a dense forest, and David’s army routed Absalom’s followers. As Absalom fled on a donkey, his long hair got caught in the low branches of an oak tree and his mount continued on, leaving him dangling in the tree. When David’s general, Joab, heard what had happened, he immediately seized the opportunity to crush the rebellion once and for all, grasped a spear, and ran it through Absalom’s heart as he dangled helplessly from the tree (2 Sam. 18:6-15).

Joab’s decision was likely the wisest course of action, but when word came to David of Absalom’s death, he was heartbroken. Instead of celebrating a great victory and the safe return of his troops, David wept for his son. His supporters melted away in sorrow, “as people who are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle” (2 Sam. 19:3).

When Joab heard how David’s sorrow had dampened the spirits of the people, he was furious. Immediately, he stormed into David’s room and confronted the king: “Today you have disgraced all your servants who today have saved your life, the lives of your sons and daughters, the lives of your wives and the lives of your concubines, in that you love your enemies and hate your friends. For you have declared today that you regard neither princes nor servants; for today I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all of us had died today, then it would have pleased you well. Now therefore, arise, go out and speak comfort to your servants. For I swear by the LORD, if you do not go out, not one will stay with you this night. And that will be worse for you than all the evil that has befallen you from your youth until now” (2 Sam. 19:5-7).

These would have been hard words for David to hear from anyone, but to hear them from Joab, the man who had killed his son, must have been especially difficult. However, there was no denying that Joab was right. Instead of becoming angry, David swallowed his pride and took

Joab's advice: "Then the king arose and sat in the gate. And they told all the people, saying, 'There is the king, sitting in the gate.' So all the people came before the king. For everyone of Israel had fled to his tent" (2 Sam. 19:8). This humility was the mark of a truly great leader.

Bad Leadership: King Rehoboam

King David's grandson Rehoboam, on the other hand, refused to listen to wise advice. In the later years of his reign, King Solomon had imposed heavy taxes on the people to finance his many projects. When he died and his son Rehoboam assumed the throne, the people petitioned the new king to lift the heavy burden imposed on them. Rehoboam told the people to come back in three days and he would give his answer.

First, he consulted the elders who had advised his father. They said, "If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever" (1 Kings 12:7). This was wise counsel, but it was not what Rehoboam wanted to hear.

Rejecting the advice of the elders, he called "the young men who had grown up with him" and asked for their opinion (1 Kings 12:8). Understand that Rehoboam was already forty-one years old when he became king (2 Chron. 12:13), so the friends who grew up with him would have been about the same age. They were old enough to know better, but they told him what he wanted to hear: "Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!'" (1 Kings 12:10-11).

When the people assembled again, Rehoboam answered them as his friends had advised, and his insolent answer drove them to open rebellion. He compounded his error by sending his minister of revenue to collect taxes, and the angry Israelites stoned the man to death (1 Kings 12:18-19). Rehoboam permanently lost the ten northern tribes of Israel, resulting in his kingdom and its population being reduced by well over fifty percent, as well as establishing a relentless enemy on his northern border. It all could have been avoided if he had only listened to wise advice.

6. Be Decisive

General Patton once said, "A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week." This drives home the sixth key to good leadership: a leader must be decisive. There's a time to examine the situation and weigh the available options, and there's a

time to act.

In the Bible, a psalmist wrote, “I hate the double-minded, but I love Your law” (Psa. 119:113). The Apostle James added, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (Jam. 1:6-8).

A double-minded man is one who can never make up his mind; he is always wavering between two opinions. He is never sure what he really wants, so he tries to have it both ways. As James wrote, such a man is “unstable in all his ways.” To be a leader, one cannot be a double-minded man; he must be able to make decisions and carry them out.

Good Leadership: King David

Long before he became king, David showed the decisiveness and singleness of purpose that would serve him well throughout his life. During one of Israel’s many wars with the Philistines, a Philistine giant named Goliath strode out of the Philistine camp and demanded that an Israelite warrior come out to face him in single combat. There was no need for a battle, Goliath said; the issue could be decided right then and there. If the Israelite champion killed Goliath, then the Philistines would serve Israel, but if Goliath killed the Israelite, then Israel would serve the Philistines (1 Sam. 17:4-11).

Every Israelite soldier feared Goliath, and none took the challenge. So, for forty days, every morning and afternoon, Goliath swaggered out in front of the Israelite camp and demanded for a challenger to emerge (1 Sam. 17:16). For forty days, one man intimidated an entire army of Israelites! King Saul even offered tax exemption for the whole family of any man who would stand up and kill Goliath, but still no one stepped forward (1 Sam. 25).

One day, David’s father Jesse called him from tending sheep and sent him to the Israelite camp with food for his brothers. When David arrived in camp, Goliath again came out in front of the Israelite camp and taunted the Israelites, without one Israelite soldier stepping forward to fight him. The youthful David recognized immediately what needed to be done, and loudly said so: Goliath must be killed. He would do it himself. David was brought before King Saul, where he repeated his offer to kill Goliath. Saul dismissed the young man and reminded him that Goliath was a renowned warrior, but David persisted and Saul relented (1 Sam. 17:31-37). “Why not let the boy try?” Saul must have thought.

The Philistine giant could scarcely believe his eyes as a young man dressed in plain clothes, without armor or weapons beyond a sling and a staff, emerged from the Israelite camp. “Come here,” he barked, “and I will feed your flesh to the birds and the wild beasts!” But the young man shouted right back: “God will deliver you into my hand, and I will cut off your head

and strike down your whole army!” And with that, David put a rock in his sling, whirled it round, and released. The rock struck Goliath in the head and stunned him, whereupon David ran over and finished him off with his own sword (1 Sam. 17:40-51).

“And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron” (1 Sam. 17:51b-52).

Even as a young man (probably a teenager), David recognized what needed to be done and acted decisively, without hesitation. Because of David’s decisive action, Israel won a great victory over the Philistines, and David’s career as a warrior and eventual king was launched. It should be noted that, besides decisiveness, David also demonstrated courage and leading by example, two additional keys of great leadership that were covered previously.

Bad Leadership: King Zedekiah

Throughout his doomed reign, King Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, demonstrated an inability to act decisively. He was placed on his throne by King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, with the understanding that he would continue to serve as a vassal of the Babylonian Empire. After several years of serving Babylon, he broke his oath and rebelled (2 Chron. 36:10-13). As expected, the Babylonians came against him with a powerful army.

In the crisis, Zedekiah sent messengers to the prophet Jeremiah and asked for his advice. Repent of your sins, surrender to the Babylonians, and you will live, Jeremiah said; fight and you will die, for God has determined to punish this land (Jer. 21). The Bible makes clear that Zedekiah was an evil king (2 Chron. 36:12), but on the other hand he wanted Jeremiah’s advice and asked him to pray to God for him. After hearing Jeremiah’s advice, though, he failed to act on it.

Later, Zedekiah again sent messengers to Jeremiah and asked him to pray to God for deliverance (Jer. 37:3). Jeremiah repeated his earlier message, and again Zedekiah failed to act. The Jewish nobles were angered by Jeremiah’s words, though, and, after accusing him of trying to defect to the Babylonians, threw him into the dungeon. After “many days,” Zedekiah sent and brought Jeremiah from the dungeon, secretly bringing him to the palace. For the third time, he asked Jeremiah if there was a message from God. The prophet repeated the same message as before, and again Zedekiah refused to act. He sent Jeremiah back to prison, but not to the dungeon, and commanded that he should be cared for (Jer. 37:13-21).

Jeremiah continued to preach his message from prison, so the princes of Judah went to the king and asked permission to put him to death (Jer. 38:1-4). Revealing himself as a truly weak leader, Zedekiah responded, “Look, he is in your hand. For the king can do nothing against you” (Jer. 38:5). Accordingly, the princes threw Jeremiah into a dungeon full of mire and left him

to die there (Jer. 38:6).

Jeremiah's friends appealed to the king on his behalf, so Zedekiah again reversed himself. Jeremiah must not be allowed to die, he said; bring him out of the dungeon (Jer. 38:7-13). After this, Zedekiah went to Jeremiah and asked for his advice a fourth time. Again, Jeremiah assured the king that he would live and the city would be spared if he surrendered to the Babylonians. If not, the city would be burned and the king with his whole family would fall upon the cruel mercies of the Babylonians (Jer. 38:14-28). Yet again, Zedekiah failed to act on the advice he had requested.

When the Babylonians finally captured Jerusalem, the results were just as dire as Jeremiah had predicted: "Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with fire, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem" (Jer. 39:6-8).

At least four times, Zedekiah had requested Jeremiah's advice, and failed to act on it. He acknowledged God as the Creator (Jer. 38:16), yet refused to serve Him. Though he refused to serve God, yet he asked Jeremiah to pray for His favor. King Zedekiah wanted to have it both ways. He was a double-minded man. As a result, he caused the destruction of his kingdom and suffered one of the worst fates any human being could suffer.

7. Communicate With Others

Every leader must communicate clearly and make sure his or her expectations are understood. At the same time, being brusque or rude can cause ill will and undermine the leader's authority (assuming he is not a drill instructor in the US Marine Corps, perhaps). Effective communication requires using the right words and the right tone at the right time. It requires both clarity and respect.

God expressed His expectations of His people very clearly. As Moses told the Israelites, "For this commandment which I command you today is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it" (Deut. 30:11-14).

Good Communication: Moses

Nearly every great leader in the Bible communicated well and expressed a clear vision

for his people to follow. Joseph laid out a clear, and enormous, vision for preserving Egypt through seven years of famine, and carried it through to completion. Joab and Nehemiah both expressed themselves in a blunt fashion that left no doubt about their meaning. Probably no one, though, exceeded Moses in communication skills.

To start off, Moses wrote five books of the Bible, which also happen to be some of the most well-written books in the Bible. The pace of the stories flows smoothly, the language is simple and vivid, and the thoughts and feelings of the characters are clearly expressed. In addition, while there are many different interpretations of Paul's writings, and of other Biblical writers', there has never been as much controversy around Moses' writing because his intent was usually self-evident.

In communicating with others, Moses was no less effective. Even when the Israelites disobeyed him, they never claimed ignorance of his instructions; such a claim would have been absurd. Moses also, with only one notable exception, communicated with appropriate respect, without rudeness, cursing, or uncontrolled anger. Whenever he was burdened to the breaking point, he poured out his frustrations to God, not to his fellow Israelites. His courtesy and restraint is what one would expect from a man the Bible says "was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3).

Poor Communication: Jacob

Jacob was one of the great men of the Bible, the man for whom the Israelites were named, as his name was changed to Israel. On at least one occasion, however, his communication skills were sorely lacking.

One day, as the account in Genesis 34 says, Jacob's daughter Dinah left his home and was found and raped by a Canaanite prince. The ruler then had the audacity to ask Jacob for Dinah's hand in marriage. The Bible notes that Jacob "held his peace" and said nothing (Gen. 34:5). Instead, Jacob's sons demanded that the Canaanites circumcise themselves first, and then they would let the Canaanite prince marry Dinah. Jacob still, evidently, said nothing, and communicated nothing to his sons. Three days later, when the newly circumcised Canaanite men were in pain, two of Jacob's sons boldly walked into the Canaanite town and massacred everyone in revenge for the rape of their sister. They rescued Dinah from the Canaanite prince's house, plundered the town, and returned to Jacob's settlement (Gen. 34:7-29).

At this point, Jacob expressed anger at his sons for massacring the Canaanites (Gen. 34:30). He feared that the rest of the Canaanites still outnumbered his household, and that they might in turn take revenge on him for killing their kinsmen. However, he had said nothing during the negotiations with the Canaanite rulers, instead allowing his sons to take over. He had not communicated any plan for dealing with the situation. When his sons devised and executed their own plan, however, he heartily disapproved. Yet, it was his own lack of communication that

allowed it to happen.

8. Maintain Order and Discipline

Sometimes military officers have failed to enforce strict discipline, out of a desire to earn their troops' affection. Parents, too, sometimes focus on being their children's friends rather than their parents, and neglect discipline. Managers may fail to enforce the rules of the workplace to avoid confrontations with other employees. No leader can neglect discipline and expect to maintain an effective organization. From military officers to parents to managers, the task of maintaining discipline varies widely, but is no less important.

Good Leadership: Joshua

Shortly after Joshua succeeded Moses and led Israel over the Jordan River, the Israelites captured and destroyed Jericho as God had ordered. There was to be no plundering from Jericho; the city was so evil that everything in it must be utterly destroyed. After capturing Jericho, Joshua sent a small task force to capture the next town, Ai, but to everyone's shock, the Israelites were defeated and thirty-six men lost their lives (Josh. 7:4-6).

Joshua was shocked because God had promised to go before them and fight against their enemies, yet He had not done so against Ai. God told Joshua, however, that one of the Israelites had disobeyed His instructions and had taken plunder from Jericho. The sin must be corrected or God would not fight for them anymore (Josh. 7:10-12). Here was Joshua, just a few months into his new role as leader of Israel, facing his first major test.

The next morning, Joshua assembled all the people and conducted an investigation to determine who had sinned. It became clear that a man from the tribe of Judah named Achan was guilty, so Joshua called the man before him and asked him to explain what he had done. Achan confessed that he had taken some valuables from the city and had hidden them in his tent, so Joshua sent some men to search Achan's tent. They returned with the plunder, confirming Achan's guilt (Josh. 7:16-23).

Achan's disobedience had caused the deaths of thirty-six Israelites; something had to be done. In fact, God had already instructed Joshua what to do; the sin must be purged (Josh. 7:13-15). "Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, 'Why have you troubled us? The LORD will trouble you this day.' So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones" (Josh. 7:24-25).

Because Joshua brought swift and terrible punishment upon the man (and his family) who

had disobeyed his instructions from God, he never again faced a similar situation. Israel's discipline remained intact throughout the days of Joshua. In fact, as the Bible notes later, "Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua" (Josh. 24:31). Maintaining discipline may not always be a pleasant task, but it cannot be neglected.

Bad Leadership: Eli

The consequences of not maintaining discipline are readily apparent in the story of Eli, a high priest and one of Israel's last judges. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phineas, served under him as priests, but they were evil men. They violated God's instructions for sacrificial offerings, threatened violence against those Israelites who did not cooperate with them, and committed adultery with the women who assembled at the Tabernacle for worship (1 Sam. 2:12-17, 22).

Eli, as high priest, had the authority to discipline his sons for their conduct, but failed to do so. He did reprimand them once (1 Sam. 2:23-25), but took no action beyond gently reminding them that they were sinning. Twice, God warned him that his house would be cursed forever and his descendants removed from the priesthood because he had not restrained his sons, but still Eli failed to act (1 Sam. 2:27-36, 3:11-14, 18).

After the second warning, the Philistines invaded Israel and defeated the Israelite army gathered to stop them (1 Sam. 4:1-2). The Israelites then sent and brought the Ark of God to their camp, with Hophni and Phineas in attendance. Out of superstition, they supposed the Ark itself could deliver them from the Philistines. Instead, the Philistines launched a surprise attack on the Israelite camp, killed thirty thousand Israelites, killed Hophni and Phineas, and captured the Ark (1 Sam. 4:3-11). A messenger escaped the slaughter and fled, bringing back word to Eli about the death of his two sons and the capture of the Ark. The old man was so shocked that he toppled from his seat and broke his neck (1 Sam. 4:12-18).

Because he failed to enforce discipline among the priests, particularly his two sons, Eli brought disaster on Israel and the death of his two sons and himself. His house also was cursed and his descendants removed from the priesthood, just as God had warned him (1 Sam. 22:9-21; 1 Kings 2:26-27).

9. Take Responsibility

Leaders not only must hold their subordinates accountable, they must, as always, lead by example and hold themselves accountable as well. When they make mistakes, they must take responsibility instead of trying to shift the blame to someone else. Leaders are not expected to be infallible and never make mistakes; they are expected to accept responsibility for their own actions. As Arnold Glasow said, "A good leader takes a little more than his share of the blame; a

little less than his share of the credit.”

This principle of responsibility is consistent with Biblical teaching. God told Ezekiel, “The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (Ezek. 18:20). Everyone must be accountable for his own actions, and it is a leader’s duty to lead by example.

Good Leadership: King David

King David’s greatest mistake was the affair with Bathsheba. First, he committed adultery with her, a married woman. When she became pregnant, he attempted to cover his tracks by sending her husband home on leave from the army, but he refused to go. Finally, David secretly had the man murdered (2 Sam. 11:2-17). He did all this, apparently without grasping the evil he had done, perhaps blinded by his own greatness and power.

After the birth of David and Bathsheba’s child, God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David. Nathan told the king a parable about a rich man who took a poor man’s most prized possession, and then bluntly pointed out David’s sin to him (2 Sam 12:1-12). The king suddenly realized his error, and accepted responsibility. Instead of trying to lay the blame with anyone else, David acknowledged, “I have sinned against the LORD” (2 Sam. 12:13).

As the succeeding chapters show, God did not let go David unpunished for his sins. However, because he repented and accepted responsibility for his actions, God forgave him and allowed his reign to continue. King David made several other mistakes in his reign as well, but always repented and took responsibility for his actions. That is why, though David was not perfect, God saw fit to call him “a man after My own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

Bad Leadership: King Saul

King Saul, too, made some significant mistakes as king of Israel, but most were arguably no worse than David’s, and perhaps not even as bad. Unlike David, though, Saul always refused to repent and take responsibility. Instead, he made excuses and tried to blame others. One of the most notable examples came from the war with the Amalekites.

The prophet Samuel went to Saul and informed him of God’s command to attack the Amalekites and destroy them for their sinfulness. He was to kill men, women, and children; old and young; flocks and herds; to leave nothing breathing (1 Sam. 15:3). So, Saul and his troops attacked and annihilated the Amalekites, but captured the Amalekite king alive as a prize and plundered all the flocks and herds. Following his victory, Saul even built a monument to himself (1 Sam. 15:8-12).

God was greatly displeased with Saul’s disobedience, and sent Samuel to confront him. Because Saul refused to obey God’s instructions, but spared the king of Amalek and plundered

the Amalekites' possessions, Samuel told him that God would remove him from being king. Rather than acknowledging any wrongdoing, Saul explained that the people made the choice to plunder the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:20-21). After Samuel sharply rebuked the king, he finally admitted he had sinned, but even then refused to take responsibility. He had sinned only by doing what the people wanted him to do, he said (1 Sam. 15:24-25). The people were to blame, not Saul.

Throughout his career, King Saul refused to repent or take responsibility for his actions. He simply could not bring himself to admit wrongdoing and change his ways. Though his initial sins were probably less than David's sins of adultery and murder, Saul's refusal to acknowledge his sins and repent led to his death in battle and the removal of his house from the throne of Israel.

10. Don't Show Favoritism

It is the duty of a leader to be fair. There are at least two components to this: 1) treating everyone equally, and 2) not imposing unreasonable burdens. This tenth key to good leadership focuses on treating everyone equally, without favoritism.

A leader should have neither favorites nor whipping boys. Good and bad conduct should be rewarded accordingly, not subject to personal prejudices. Whether you are a manager, parent, or teacher, having favorites will cause resentment and undermine discipline.

God does not show favorites, either. All human beings are held to the same standard, and all will be rewarded according to their works, no matter what their station in this life is. Both the Psalms and Proverbs say, "God will reward each one according to his deeds" (Psa. 62:12; Prov. 24:12). Paul added, after quoting those passages, "For there is no partiality with God" (Rom. 2:11).

Peter wrote that governments were established by God "for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good" (1 Pet. 2:14). It is the duty of governments to administer justice, and justice is by definition impartial.

Good Leadership: King Asa

When King Asa came to the throne of Judah, he determined to stamp out the idolatry allowed by his predecessors and turn the nation back to serving God. The account in 1 Kings says, "Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did his father David. And he banished the perverted persons [those practicing sodomy and prostitution in religious rituals] from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made" (1 Kings 15:11-12).

Asa's reforms quickly met a roadblock, however; his own grandmother, the queen mother,

had built “an obscene image of Asherah.” Would Asa show partiality to his grandmother, or did the law really apply to everyone? “Also he removed Maachah his grandmother from being queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. And Asa cut down her obscene image and burned it by the Brook Kidron” (1 Kings 15:13).

Had King Asa shown partiality to his grandmother, it would have undermined his reforms. Instead, he removed her from her office and cut down her idol as he had done with others. This sent the message that no one was above the law. Throughout his reign and that of his son Jehoshaphat, Judah remained faithful to God.

Bad Leadership: Jacob

The patriarch Jacob was responsible for some of the clearest cases of favoritism in the Bible. First, he showed clear favoritism to his wife Rachel over his other wife Leah, whom he had never wanted and had been tricked into marrying (Gen. 29:21-30). Jacob’s reaction was understandable, but it caused severe tension and discontent between his two wives and their respective children.

After Rachel died in childbirth, her older son Joseph became Jacob’s favorite son. He showered the boy with gifts and praise, much to the resentment of Joseph’s half-brothers (Gen. 37:3-4). The brothers began to hate Joseph, but Jacob seemingly remained oblivious to the fact. Finally, the brothers plotted to kill Joseph, but ultimately sold him into slavery in Egypt instead. Then, they lied to their father and tricked him into thinking a wild animal had killed Joseph (Gen. 37:18-35).

Though there’s no justifying the actions of Joseph’s brothers, perhaps the situation could have been avoided if Jacob had not demonstrated such favoritism. Ultimately, as we know, God worked out the whole situation for good: Joseph became ruler of Egypt, second only to the pharaoh, and saved his family from a terrible famine. The whole episode, however, is an example to all leaders of what not to do.

11. Don’t Make Unreasonable Demands

The second part of fairness is not making unreasonable demands. Great leaders bring out the very best in their followers, inspiring them to accomplish incredible things they may not have known could even be done. They lead them beyond the limits of what was thought possible, but also know when to ease up on them.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Cor.

10:13). God allows us to be tested, sometimes even beyond what we may have thought we could endure, but not beyond what we actually can endure. All human leaders should follow the same example.

Good Leadership: King David

King David, once again, provided us with a good example of leadership by recognizing the limits of his warriors and not pushing them too hard. While he and his men had been called away to campaign with the Philistine king Achish of Gath, the Amalekites had raided their city, Ziklag, burned it, and carried away all their families and possessions. Upon returning and seeing the devastation, David rallied and encouraged his men, then set out to catch the Amalekite raiders (1 Sam. 30:1-9).

After a long pursuit, two hundred of David's six hundred men grew so weary they could not continue. Rather than continue to push them harder, David left them behind with the baggage (1 Sam. 30:10). Now unencumbered by weary men and excess baggage, David and his remaining four hundred men pressed on with greater speed and caught up with the Amalekites. In the evening, as the Amalekites celebrated their victory, David's men launched a surprise attack and utterly crushed them. They rescued their families, recovered their possessions, and gathered much additional booty that the Amalekites had looted from others (1 Sam. 30:16-20).

Returning to the two hundred men David had left behind, some of his troops said the two hundred men should have no share in the spoil because they had done no fighting. In fact, they were a liability and should be sent away, the men said. David quickly overruled them, distributing an equal share of the spoil among all his men, whether they had fought or stayed behind with the baggage (1 Sam. 30:21-25). David did not push his men too hard, and treated them well regardless of the part they had played. He recognized that all had played some role in the victory, and that all should be rewarded accordingly.

Bad Leadership: King Saul

King Saul faced a similar situation and failed to make a wise decision, as David did. After a great and miraculous victory over the Philistines, spearheaded by his own son Jonathan, a jubilant King Saul bound his army with an oath to eat no food until they finished pursuing and destroying the Philistines, or, as he put it, until "I have taken vengeance on my enemies" (1 Sam. 14:24). To Saul, it was all about him; he apparently failed to even consider his men. Because of this foolish decision, the people grew too weary to continue the pursuit with the vigor they would have had otherwise, and many of the Philistines were able to escape (1 Sam. 14:30).

Finally, the soldiers could take no more, and descended on the Philistine camp in search of food. They slaughtered the Philistine sheep and cattle and devoured the meat without even bleeding it out first, in disobedience to God's law (1 Sam. 14:32-33). The pursuit of the

Philistines ceased altogether as the troops satisfied their ravenous hunger. King Saul pushed his men too far, both causing them to sin and allowing the rest of the Philistines to escape.

12. Empower Others

The final responsibility of a leader is to empower others. He must delegate responsibilities to others in order to achieve maximum efficiency. A good leader is also a teacher, though. Just as a mother or father teaches children to ultimately be independent of their parents and to make good decisions on their own, so must any leader do. Good military officers delegate authority to junior officers not only to increase efficiency in combat, but also to train the next generation of officers.

Gen. George S. Patton was a big proponent of delegating. Rather than micromanaging, he simply told his officers what he wanted done, and expected them to find a way to do it. As he said, “Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.”

Sometimes, it is necessary for a leader, such as a parent, to tell subordinates how to do things at first. As the subordinates learn more and grow in knowledge and experience, though, the leader must recognize this and take an increasingly “hands-off” approach. General guidelines will suffice where detailed instructions were once necessary.

Both Good and Bad Leadership: Moses

Micromanaging is a natural urge for most leaders; overcoming it can sometimes be difficult. Moses was no exception. When Israel first came out of Egypt, Moses was their only judge and arbiter of disputes. Every day he would rise early in the morning and sit before them, hearing complaints and making judgments all day until evening (Ex. 18:13-16).

One day, Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, came to visit the Israelite camp. Observing Moses’ demanding routine, Jethro told him he would wear himself out, and the people with him. Instead, Jethro advised him, delegate most of the judging to capable men throughout the camp. Let them handle the small disputes, and anything they cannot handle they can bring before you. Moses wisely followed his father-in-law’s advice, making the administration of the Israelite camp easier for himself and more efficient for the people (Ex. 18:17-26).

Later, in another circumstance, though, Moses apparently forgot his father-in-law’s lesson. Once again, he found himself overburdened with his duties as leader of Israel and cried out to God, “I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and do not let me see my wretchedness!” (Num. 11:14-15).

Once again, God gave him basically the same instructions his father-in-law had advised years earlier: “Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone” (Num. 11:16-17).

On two separate occasions, Moses had to learn the same lesson: to delegate responsibility to others. This demonstrates how hard it can be for a leader to do that. Once Moses did so, however, it made his burden lighter, made for more efficient administration of the nation, and trained a new generation of leaders to take over after his death.

Conclusion

Much more could be, and has been, written about leadership than you will find in this relatively short article. These twelve Biblical principles of leadership are a good foundation to build upon. As with all things, leadership is most effectively learned through application and experience, not simply through reading about it. Both learn and apply these twelve principles of leadership, and you will find them to be helpful in all walks of life.

1. Gain Knowledge and Wisdom
2. Lead By Example
3. Have Courage and Strength of Character
4. Inspire and Uplift Others
5. Listen to Advice
6. Be Decisive
7. Communicate Clearly With Others
8. Maintain Order and Discipline
9. Take Responsibility
10. Don't Show Favoritism
11. Don't Make Unreasonable Demands
12. Empower Others

Finally, remember that, regardless of your station in life, you are a leader. You are always setting an example for others. You will find many opportunities to stand up for what's right, to inspire and uplift others, to gain more knowledge, to make decisions, to be responsible, to teach others. Since you are and will be a leader, be a great leader!