

## The Word Says



### God has placed the spirit of leadership within you

In the center of the Numbers 27:16-20 pericope are two profound phrases that speak to the genesis of leadership: “Take Joshua because he has a Spirit Of Leadership...” and “Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him. God spoke both phrases.

This devotional is prompted by the question, “How does your perception of being a leader, change as you view it from the perspective that God has placed the spirit of leadership within you?”

Leadership is more than just getting people to follow; it’s about actually taking them somewhere. The spirit of leadership and authority are two different things—one needs both to slay giants! Numbers 27:16-18 reveals that Joshua had the spirit of leadership WITHIN him but God also told Moses that Joshua had an area of insufficiency: “Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him.” God, what does that mean?

The Hebrew text provides clarity: it basically says in Hebrew that Joshua was a “spirited man,” i.e. a man full of energy. The modern sense of the phrase, “spirited man” is “charismatic.” An argument could be made that the original Hebrew audience would have understood the phrase, “he has a Spirit of leadership...” to mean “he has charisma.” Underlying much of the Ott et al. (2001) survey of Organizational Behavior is the notion that most if not all leadership theories and formulations operate from the assumption that leaders are spirited people, i.e., that charisma plays a key role in leadership.

Joshua was a person full of the Holy Spirit. He had leadership but God identified that something else was needed. Just because we have leadership doesn’t mean we have authority. God told Moses to give him “some” of your authority, not ALL of it.

Some authority needs to be bestowed by public commissioning but the rest needs to be garnered on your knees before God. One’s leadership gift doesn’t give the “leader” the authority s/he needs, nor does position, or commission. It goes some of the way, but the rest must be attained through victories won and spending time in God’s presence allowing Him to address any deficit.

Biblical leaders were referred to as prophets. Prophets in the Bible engaged in three principal activities. The Old Testament uses primarily three words for “prophet” to convey those three functions.

1. A “roeh” or “hozeh” denotes a prophet (seer) who primarily receives words from God through visions.
2. A “nabi” declares prophecy through articulating the word of God to people.
3. “Ish Elohim” (man of God) refers to prophets like Moses, Elijah, and Elisha who do mighty works in the service of God.

Those three functions—sharing a vision, communicating to people, and practicing excellence and doing the awe-inspiring—are the main things leaders do. Spiritual leadership is therefore knowing where God wants people to be and taking the initiative to use God’s methods to get them there relying on God’s power. God wants people to be in a spiritual condition in a lifestyle that displays his glory and honors his name.

Therefore, the goal of spiritual leadership is that people come to know God and to glorify him in all that they do. Studying His word is in furtherance of my commitment to be a man of God and, as a member of His royal priesthood, to know Him better and help others to come to know God and to glorify Him is all that they do. Spiritual leadership is aimed not so much at directing people as it is at changing people. If we would be the kind of leaders we ought to be, we must make it our aim to develop persons rather than dictate plans. You can get people to do what you want, but if they don’t change in their heart, you have not led them spiritually. You have not taken them to where God wants them to be.

Leadership amongst Christians is catholic. “If My people who are called by My would humble themselves and seek My face, then...” Each truly “born-again” has the responsibility of leadership in some relationships. Numbers 27:18-19 speaks to the characteristics that a person must have in order to be a spiritual leader who excels both in the quality of his direction and the numbers of people who follow him. The church must be the “Church.” Then God can and will say to the Church, “... impart some of your authority so *the whole community...*”

Amen.