

GENESIS

THE CREATION

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.^a
2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. **3** Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **4** God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” There was an evening, and there was a morning: one day.

6 Then God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters, separating water from water.” **7** So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above the expanse. And it was so. **8** God called the expanse “sky.”^b Evening came and then morning: the second day.

9 Then God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10** God called the dry land “earth,” and the gathering of the water he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good. **11** Then God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.” And it was so. **12** The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. **13** Evening came and then morning: the third day.

14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will serve as signs for seasons^c and for days and years. **15** They will be lights in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth.” And it was so. **16** God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night — as well as the stars. **17** God placed them in the expanse of the sky to provide light on the earth, **18** to rule the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. **19** Evening came and then morning: the fourth day.

20 Then God said, “Let the water swarm with^d living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” **21** So God created the large sea-creatures^e and every living creature that moves and swarms in the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged creature according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **22** God blessed them: “Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.” **23** Evening came and then morning: the fifth day.

^a1:1 Or *created the universe* ^b1:8 Or “heavens.” ^c1:14 Or *for the appointed times*

^d1:20 Lit *with swarms of* ^e1:21 Or *created sea monsters*

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that crawl, and the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. ²⁵ So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man^a in^b our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth,^c and the creatures that crawl^d on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image;
he created him in^e the image of God;
he created them male and female.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls^f on the earth." ²⁹ God also said, "Look, I have given you every seed-bearing plant on the surface of the entire earth and every tree whose fruit contains seed. This will be food for you, ³⁰ for all the wildlife of the earth, for every bird of the sky, and for every creature that crawls on the earth — everything having the breath of life in it — I have given^g every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good indeed. Evening came and then morning: the sixth day.

2 So the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. ² On the seventh^h day God had completed his work that he had done, and he restedⁱ on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it he rested from all his work of creation.^j

MAN AND WOMAN IN THE GARDEN

⁴ These are the records of the heavens and the earth, concerning their creation. At the time^k that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ no shrub of the field had yet grown on the land,^l and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not made it rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground. ⁶ But mist would come up from the earth and water all the ground. ⁷ Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.

⁸ The LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he placed the man he had formed. ⁹ The LORD God caused to grow out of the ground every tree pleasing in appearance and good for food, including the tree of life in the middle of the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

^a1:26 Or *human beings*; Hb *'adam*, also in v. 27 ^b1:26 Or *as* ^c1:26 Syr reads *sky*, and over every animal of the land ^d1:26 Or *scurry* ^e1:27 Or *man as his own image*; he created him as ^f1:28 Or *and all scurrying animals* ^g1:30 *I have given* added for clarity ^h2:2 Sam, LXX, Syr read *sixth* ⁱ2:2 Or *ceased*, also in v. 3 ^j2:3 Lit *work that God created to make* ^k2:4 Lit *creation on the day* ^l2:5 Or *earth*

¹⁰ A river went^a out from Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became the source of four rivers.^b ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon, which flows through the entire land of Havilah,^c where there is gold. ¹² Gold from that land is pure;^d bdellium^e and onyx^f are also there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon, which flows through the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Tigris, which runs east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die." ¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." ¹⁹ The LORD God formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky, and brought each to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every wild animal; but for the man^g no helper was found corresponding to him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place. ²² Then the LORD God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ And the man said:

This one, at last, is bone of my bone
and flesh of my flesh;
this one will be called "woman,"
for she was taken from man.

²⁴ This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ Both the man and his wife were naked, yet felt no shame.

THE TEMPTATION AND THE FALL

3 Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden?'"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. ³ But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "No! You will not die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "In fact, God knows that when^h you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God,ⁱ knowing good and evil." ⁶ The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who

^a2:10 Or goes ^b2:10 Lit became four heads ^c2:11 Or of the Havilah ^d2:12 Lit good

^e2:12 A yellowish, transparent gum resin ^f2:12 Identity of this precious stone uncertain

^g2:20 Or for Adam ^h3:5 Lit on the day ⁱ3:5 Or gods, or divine beings

was with her, and he ate it. ⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

SIN'S CONSEQUENCES

⁸Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze,^a and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹So the LORD God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰And he said, "I heard you^b in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

¹¹Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹²The man replied, "The woman you gave to be with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate."

¹³So the LORD God asked the woman, "What is this you have done?"

And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴So the LORD God said to the serpent:

Because you have done this,
you are cursed more than any livestock
and more than any wild animal.
You will move on your belly
and eat dust all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put hostility between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring.
He will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.

¹⁶He said to the woman:

I will intensify your labor pains;
you will bear children with painful effort.
Your desire will be for your husband,
yet he will rule over you.

¹⁷And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'Do not eat from it':

The ground is cursed because of you.
You will eat from it by means of painful labor^c
all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ You will eat bread^d by the sweat of your brow
until you return to the ground,

^a3:8 Lit *at the wind of the day* ^b3:10 Lit *the sound of you* ^c3:17 Lit *it through pain*

^d3:19 Or *food*

A CLASSICAL WEDDING CEREMONY

JIM HENRY

THE PROCESSIONAL

THE WELCOME

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the presence of this company, to join this man and this woman in holy matrimony, which is commended by the Apostle Paul to be honorable among all men; therefore, it is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate, these two persons come now to be joined. (*The following statement is optional: If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else, hereafter, forever hold his peace.*)

THE CHARGE

_____ (groom), wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

Groom responds: "I will."

_____ (bride), wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

Bride responds: "I will."

THE GIVING OF THE BRIDE

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

Father responds: "I do," "We do," or, "Her mother and I do." (The father is then seated.)

THE STATEMENT OF MARRIAGE

_____ (groom) and _____ (bride), as part of your marriage ceremony, you have chosen to use what has been known as "the traditional wedding vows." They can be traced back to the 1300s in England, yet they have remained, perhaps, the most loved and best known of all ceremonies. In these moments, before you take your vows, let's go further back than the 1300s. Let's travel back in time to the first wedding and look at that original match. We will seek the answer to the question some people ask, "Why do people get married?" God answers that for us in his Word.

As we examine the creation events in the first chapter of Genesis, we discover the triune God saying, "Let us make man in our image, according

to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.' So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female" (Gn 1:26-27). God created male and female and joined them together as a *demonstration* of himself. When a couple is united in the oneness of marriage, God is glorified, and the divine image of the heavenly Father is reflected on earth.

The creation account tells us more about the importance of the union of man and woman. We know that marriage is important because it was God's plan for the *elevation* of a new kind of creation, one that was superior to all else God had created. God told man to rule over his magnificent creation: "Fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth" (Gn 1:28).

As we examine the second chapter of Genesis, we find that God made marriage as the *completion* of his supreme creature, man. Adam lived in a perfect environment and had a fascinating creation to observe, but still something was missing. God, ever sensitive to his creature's needs, said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him" (Gn 2:18). Was God successful? The first recorded words of Adam are: "This one, at last, is bone of my bone" (Gn 2:23a). The Living Bible paraphrases his words as: "This is it!" Adam finally knew the satisfaction of being complete.

In the Academy Award-winning movie *Rocky*, the boxing champion had a love relationship with a woman named Adrian. Her brother, Pauly, couldn't understand it. "I don't see it," he said. "What's the attraction?" To which Rocky responded, "I don't know . . . fills gaps, I guess." Pauly asked, "What gaps?" "She's got gaps; I got gaps," Rocky explained. "Together we fill gaps."

Another reason we marry may be discovered in Genesis. We read that God made marriage for the *reproduction* of a godly heritage. "God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply'" (1:28). Godly children are a gift from God. "Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD, offspring, a reward" (Ps 127:3). Marriage, simply defined, is the contemplation of the love of God in and through the form of other human beings—the spouse and the child.

Believing that you understand something of the reason for marriage as God has revealed it, are you ready now to confirm your commitment to God and to each other in Christian marriage?

Couple responds: "We are."

THE VOWS

_____ (groom) and _____ (bride), join hands and repeat after me:

Groom: "I, _____ (groom), take thee, _____ (bride), to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health; to

MATTHEW

THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST

1 An account of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

- ² Abraham fathered^A Isaac,
Isaac fathered Jacob,
Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers,
- ³ Judah fathered Perez and Zerah
by Tamar,
Perez fathered Hezron,
Hezron fathered Aram,
- ⁴ Aram fathered Amminadab,
Amminadab fathered Nahshon,
Nahshon fathered Salmon,
- ⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab,
Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth,
Obed fathered Jesse,
- ⁶ and Jesse fathered King David.

FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

- David fathered Solomon^B by Uriah's wife,
- ⁷ Solomon fathered Rehoboam,
Rehoboam fathered Abijah,
Abijah fathered Asa,^C
 - ⁸ Asa^C fathered Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat fathered Joram,^D
Joram fathered Uzziah,
 - ⁹ Uzziah fathered Jotham,
Jotham fathered Ahaz,
Ahaz fathered Hezekiah,
 - ¹⁰ Hezekiah fathered Manasseh,
Manasseh fathered Amon,^E
Amon fathered Josiah,
 - ¹¹ and Josiah fathered Jeconiah
and his brothers
at the time of the exile to Babylon.

^A1:2 In vv. 2-16 either a son, as here, or a later descendant, as in v. 8 ^B1:6 Other mss add *King* ^C1:7,8 Other mss read *Asaph* ^D1:8 = Jehoram ^E1:10 Other mss read *Amos*

FROM THE EXILE TO THE CHRIST

- ¹² After the exile to Babylon
 Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel,
 Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel,
¹³ Zerubbabel fathered Abiud,
 Abiud fathered Eliakim,
 Eliakim fathered Azor,
¹⁴ Azor fathered Zadok,
 Zadok fathered Achim,
 Achim fathered Eliud,
¹⁵ Eliud fathered Eleazar,
 Eleazar fathered Matthan,
 Matthan fathered Jacob,
¹⁶ and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband
 of Mary,
 who gave birth to Jesus who is called
 the Christ.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations; and from David until the exile to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the exile to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.

THE NATIVITY OF THE CHRIST

¹⁸ The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged^a to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.

²⁰ But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

- ²³ **See, the virgin will
 become pregnant
 and give birth to a son,
 and they will
 name him Immanuel,^b**

which is translated "God is with us."

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did as the Lord's angel had commanded him. He married her ²⁵ but did not have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son.^c And he named him Jesus.

^a1:18 Or *betrothed* ^b1:23 Is 7:14 ^c1:25 Other mss read *to her firstborn son*

WISE MEN VISIT THE KING

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him.”^a

³ When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Christ would be born.

⁵ “In Bethlehem of Judea,” they told him, “because this is what was written by the prophet:

⁶ **And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah:
Because out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”^b**

⁷ Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him.”^c

⁹ After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was — the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. ¹² Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

¹³ After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him.” ¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt. ¹⁵ He stayed there until Herod’s death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: **Out of Egypt I called my Son.**^e

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

^a2:2 Or to pay him homage ^b2:6 Mc 5:2 ^c2:8 Or and pay him homage ^d2:11 Or they paid him homage ^e2:15 Hs 11:1

¹⁸ A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping,^a and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children;
and she refused to be consoled,
because they are no more.^b

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, ²⁰ saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, because those who intended to kill the child are dead." ²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother, and entered the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee. ²³ Then he went and settled in a town called Nazareth to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

THE HERALD OF THE CHRIST

3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!" ³ For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

**A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
Prepare the way for the Lord;
make his paths straight!^c**

⁴ Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

⁷ When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore produce fruit consistent with^d repentance. ⁹ And don't presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with^e water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove^f his sandals. He himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with fire that never goes out."

^a2:18 Other mss read *Ramah, lamentation, and weeping*, ^b2:18 Jr 31:15 ^c3:3 Is 40:3
^d3:8 Lit *fruit worthy of* ^e3:11 Or *in* ^f3:11 Or *to carry*

A BRIEF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP¹

MATT CHANDLER, ERIC GEIGER, AND JOSH PATTERSON

Leadership is a hot topic. Myriads of books dissect it from every angle, universities offer doctoral degrees on it, and leadership gurus debate over the exact combination of personality types and attributes that make the perfect leader. While much of this conversation is profitable, perhaps the attempt to produce a formula for making the ultimate leader has caused us to lose the wonder of God's providence in choosing and using leaders. Throughout history, God has raised up men and women, some weak and some strong, some smart and some slow, in certain seasons and certain situations, to accomplish his overarching purposes in the world. A distinctly Christian understanding of leadership must be biblically rooted and theologically formed. Even a cursory study of the biblical witness provides several prominent elements necessary for our understanding of leadership.

First, our leadership is a derivative leadership sourced in God himself. He establishes nations and governments and directs the course of the king's heart (Pr 21:1; Rm 13:1). He dresses the lilies of the field and watches over the sparrow (Mt 6:26-31; 10:29). This becomes even more explicit when talking about God's sovereign leadership over his church. Jesus is the head of the church and has been given authority over all (Eph 1:20; 5:23). He is the pre-eminent one and the "chief Shepherd" of the church (Col 1:18; 1Pt 5:4). Every joint and ligament in the body of Christ is held together and fits together in him (Eph 4:16; Col 2:19). God's sovereign leadership over all is foundational for understanding human leadership.

In short, because our leadership is ultimately derived from God's, it is always subservient, always secondary. In no way does this demean the role and responsibility of human leaders; rather, it defines the scope of human leadership. It puts it in its proper place and provides the right limitations. The apostle Paul discusses this in 2 Corinthians 5 when he describes the role and responsibility of the believer in ambassadorial terms (v. 20). We are sent to the world as agents on behalf of another. We are representatives carrying the message of one greater than ourselves.

Second, God raises up leaders. They are born under his auspices. They are elected under his watch. They rise to the occasion under his reign. They are given a voice by his decree. He builds up platforms and dismantles platforms. He gives some of them long seasons of influence, while others have shorter windows in which to serve.

Yet in all of this, there is mystery. God's sovereign reign over leaders does not diminish the freedom for humanity to seize opportunities. Consider, for example, Mordecai's wisdom to Queen Esther: "If you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will come to the Jewish people from another place,

¹ This section is indebted to A. D. Clarke, "Leadership," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, eds. Desmond T. Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

but you and your father's family will be destroyed. Who knows, perhaps you have come to your royal position for such a time as this" (Est 4:14). In this passage we see that God's purposes cannot be thwarted (namely, that deliverance will come to his people), but Esther still had the opportunity to act, to lead. God's sovereignty doesn't diminish our responsibility or opportunity.

God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies the called. How often we see him in Scripture calling the unexpected and the average into significant roles of leadership. In some sense, there is no concrete mold or predictable pattern for the person God raises up to lead. Consider the calling of Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery. Moses was filled with reluctance and anxiety. He was slow and hesitant in speech. How was he to be God's mouthpiece?

But Moses replied to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent—either in the past or recently or since you have been speaking to Your servant—because my mouth and my tongue are sluggish."

The LORD said to him, "Who placed a mouth on humans? Who makes a person mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go! I will help you speak and I will teach you what to say" (Ex 4:10-12).

Samuel was called to anoint the new king of Israel, knowing it would be one of Jesse's sons. However, even this godly judge of Israel forgot that God qualifies those he calls. Samuel was looking for certain outward indicators of who this next king would be, but God shows us through the calling of David that a certain age, appearance, or pecking order is not God's criteria for leadership:

"In peace," he replied. "I've come to sacrifice to the LORD. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and said, "Certainly the LORD's anointed one is here before him."

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him. Humans do not see what the LORD sees, for humans see what is visible, but the LORD sees the heart."

Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. "The LORD hasn't chosen this one either," Samuel said. Then Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, "The LORD hasn't chosen this one either." After Jesse presented seven of his sons to him, Samuel told Jesse, "The LORD hasn't chosen any of these." Samuel asked him, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," he answered, "but right now he's tending the sheep." Samuel told Jesse, "Send for him. We won't sit down to eat until he gets here." So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance.