

The **ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook**
***“Barnabas”* Edition**

Seven Core Values that Impact Every Leader-to-Follower Relationship:
HEART-MISSION-APPROACH-STABILITY-LIFESTYLE-FORTITUDE-WORLDVIEW

Preface: How God Prepares a Leader

By

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Preface: How God Prepares a Leader

BIBLE VERSE(S): Acts 7:20-36

ONE SIMPLE TRUTH: God prepares a leader differently than man.

APPLICATION: Becoming "*the Type of Leader God Desires YOU to Be!*"
Requires viewing YOUR preparation from God's perspective.

God desires and intends to use you as a leader. God wants to use you to positively impact the lives of the people you lead in the marketplace. God uniquely created you with specific leadership opportunities in mind. From the moment of your birth to this very second, God has orchestrated the circumstances of your life to prepare you to lead.

God prepares a leader differently than man. God's purposes, timing, focus, and methods for preparing a leader differ from how men prepare leaders. To clearly recognize God's hand of preparation in your life, you must view the process from God's perspective.

God's preparation of a leader involves eternal purposes. His timing typically last longer than we perceive necessary. God's focus of preparation centers on our inner nature or heart, resulting in core values that produce Biblically sound leadership behavior. God's method includes and even utilizes our failures, disappointments, and brokenness.

Men tend to prepare a leader to maximize earthly success. We want the process to be as short as possible. Men focus on preparing the outward appearances of skills and knowledge. Man's method avoids circumstances that allow emotional pain and seek experiences that enrich the intellect.

God selects a leader differently than man does. Man looks at outward appearances such as stature, personality, drive, skills, intelligence, knowledge, experience and past positions of authority. The wise man acknowledges that God entrusted these, and many other leadership assets, to him or her in the first place. God looks beyond these outward appearances to what resides inside a leader. The Bible calls this inner nature of man the heart. Because he selects a leader differently than man, God also prepares a leader differently than man does. Becoming “*the Type of Leader God Desires YOU to Be!*” requires viewing YOUR preparation from God’s perspective.

The Bible contains many examples of how God prepares a leader. As we study the lives of these leaders we can gain perspective into how God might be preparing us as a leader today. To illustrate how God prepares a leader we will look at the life of Moses. In particular I want you to look for differences in how we might view leadership preparation and what God actually did to prepare Moses to lead Israel. I think you will see that God’s purpose for raising Moses up as a leader was part of his eternal plan for his people, his timing was twice as long as Moses thought it should be (80 years verses 40 years), God’s preparation included the development of Moses’ inner nature or heart as well as his skills, and God allowed failure, brokenness, and time in the desert as part of this process. The end result was the type of leader God desired Moses to be and intended to use.

The entire story of the life of Moses can be found in the Old Testament. The Book of Acts in the New Testament, however, records a summary of Moses’ life. Open your Bible to the book of Acts. Read chapter seven verses twenty through thirty-six and answer the following questions.

Questions of the Biblical Text¹ (Acts 7:20-23)

In what country did Moses live the first forty years of his life? _____

Whose adopted home did Moses grow up in? _____

What was Moses educated in? _____

What was Moses powerful in? _____

How old was Moses when he decided to visit his fellow Israelites? _____

Questions of Interpretation

Given how and where Moses was raised by the age of forty list three assets Moses might have relied on to lead others?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

At the age of forty do you think Moses was fully prepared to lead others according to God's desires and intentions? _____

Why or Why not: _____

Questions of the Biblical Text (Acts 7:24-25)

What did Moses witness during his visit to his fellow Israelites? _____

How did Moses react to this injustice? _____

What did Moses think his own people would realize as a result of his attempt to come to their defense? _____

Did Moses' own people realize God was using him to rescue them? _____

¹ Unless otherwise noted the questions listed in *The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook* are based on: *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996, c1984)

Questions of Interpretation

Do you think Moses had good intentions when he tried to rescue his people and if so what makes you think his intentions were good? _____

Whose power and position of authority do you think Moses acted upon when he attempted to rescue his people by killing the abusive Egyptian? _____

What does Moses' murderous behavior tell us about the basis of his core values at age forty? _____

Does Moses' act of murder indicate he was relying on himself or God? _____

Questions of the Biblical Text (Acts 7:26-29)

What did Moses witness the next day? _____

What did Moses try to do? _____

Did the Israelite men respect Moses as God's leader over them? _____

Did the Israelite men question Moses' authority to lead them? _____

What crime had apparently become public knowledge? _____

Where did Moses flee to? _____

How does the Bible describe Moses in Midian? _____

Questions of Interpretation

Think about Moses as a foreigner in the desert, estranged from his adopted family and his own people.

Do you think Moses might have:

Regretted his actions that cost him everything he had in Egypt?

Felt like a failure as a leader?

Viewed his life as a leader over by age forty?

Blamed himself, or even God, for his circumstances?

Thought he failed God?

Felt all alone, humiliated, sad, anxious, depressed, angry, bitter, or confused?

How about fear, doubt, insecurity?

Missed the wealth, power and authority he possessed as part of Pharaoh's household?

Do you think at age 40, 45, 60, or even 79, Moses was entertaining thoughts of:

Returning to Egypt to rescue his people?

Returning to Egypt to reclaim his power, authority, and position of royal leadership?

What do you think was going on in Moses' heart and mind from age 40 to 79?

Questions of the Biblical Text (Acts 7:30-36)

How long was Moses in the desert (Midian) before called him to go back to Egypt? _____

What did Moses see when he was eighty years old? _____

Whose voice was Moses able to hear after forty years in the desert? _____

How did Moses react to hearing the Lord's voice? _____

What did Moses learn about being in God's presence? _____

What did God tell Moses he had seen and heard? _____

What did the Lord tell Moses' he intended to do for the Israelites? _____

Where did God want Moses to go? _____

Why did God want Moses to go back to Egypt? _____

How long did Moses lead Israel after the age of eighty? _____

Questions of Interpretation

From whom was Moses going to draw his authority to lead during his second visit to his people in Egypt? _____

Do you think Moses was ready to lead as God desired and intended? _____

During his forty years in the desert had Moses' education in the wisdom of the Egyptians grown? _____

During his forty years in the desert had Moses become more powerful in speech and action in regard to the Egyptians? _____

Did Moses still possess the authority to act as a leader based on being a member of Pharaoh's household? _____

If Moses' leadership knowledge and skills had not increased, and he no longer held a position of leadership authority, what do you think might have changed over forty years in the desert that led God to deem him prepared to lead his people? _____

Commentary

Moses' childhood can be described as nothing short of miraculous. God's sovereign hand protected him from day one. The Lord orchestrated every circumstance of Moses' life to prepare him to lead the Israelites according to God's purpose and timing. Moses' birth brought with it a death sentence. The king of Egypt had made a proclamation that forced Hebrew parents to throw out their newborn babies so they would die. Moses' parents placed him outside when he reached the age of three months. Left to die, Pharaoh's daughter found Moses and raised him as her own son. Moses grew up in the adopted home of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the same king who supported a death sentence on Hebrew babies.

Moses lived the first forty years of his life in Egypt. His education included all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Moses grew up to be powerful in speech and action. By all human measures by age forty, Moses stood fully prepared to lead. Moses' education, words and behavior, and royal position empowered him to lead however he saw fit. As far as Moses knew his development as a leader was complete. Moses thought he was ready to do something for God and his people.

Unbeknown to Moses the most difficult stage of his development as a leader still laid in front of him. Moses was strong in leadership skills and knowledge, but his inner nature or heart was underdeveloped and weak. Moses' core values would not produce leadership behavior consistent with God's intentions and desires. Moses was not ready to lead others according to God's desires and intentions.

At the age of forty Moses decided to visit his fellow Israelites. His Hebrew brothers and sisters suffered under the heavy hand of Egyptian oppression. During this fateful visit Moses witnessed an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite. Moses came to his brother Hebrew's defense and rescued him from the attack. But Moses did not stop here. The *New International Version* says in Acts 7:24 that Moses "avenged him". Moses took the law into his own hands and decided that the Egyptian deserved capital punishment. Moses killed the man abusing his fellow Israelite. Although he was a powerful royal leader, Moses had no right to do this.

Evidently Moses had an appreciation that the God of Israel desired and intended to use him to deliver his people from the oppression of the Egyptians. It must have made logical sense to Moses that the royal power and authority he possessed would be the means by which God would act through him. It was obvious in Moses' mind that this is why God saved him from sure death as an infant and placed him in the royal family. Unfortunately neither the Israelites nor the Egyptians recognized Moses as a leader of the Hebrews at this time.

This lack of leadership recognition was confirmed the very next day. Moses was out among his people once more and witnessed two of his fellow Israelites fighting. Moses interceded and tried to reconcile them. The aggressor in this argument pushed

Moses aside and said: “*Who made you ruler and judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?*” (NIV Acts 7:28) Evidently Moses believed that his ungodly behavior of murder would be overlooked by the Egyptians and would endear him to the Israelites. Neither of these results would prove to be true. Moses fled to Midian a fallen and failed leader where he settled as a foreigner.

In a sense, Moses had good intentions and a “godly” motivation that led him to the error in judgment that brought about his downfall as a leader. Moses acted on the power and authority of his royal position of leadership. Moses acted by relying on his own power and authority as a leader instead of God’s. Moses’ inner nature and core values were primarily shaped by his education, experience, and Egyptian culture. By the age of forty Moses evidently knew of the God of Israel, however, Moses had not encountered the Lord in such a way as to fashion his heart, inner nature, and core values. This phase of his development as a leader was still ahead of him.

Think about Moses as a foreigner in the desert, estranged from his adopted royal family and his own oppressed people. While the Bible does not tell us so it is not hard to imagine that Moses must have had moments of regret for his actions that cost him so dearly. Surely Moses would have liked to undo what was done. Certainly he had plenty of time alone to replay in his mind the events of that day and speculate what life would be like if he had not acted so irrationally. Thoughts like this are only natural when a leader makes a mistake that costs someone his or her position of leadership. Moses may have thought he failed God as the deliverer of the Hebrews.

Perhaps Moses blamed himself for his circumstances, or maybe he blamed God. Whatever the case may be Moses must have felt all alone and humiliated. Surely

emotions of sadness, anxiety, confusion, fear, doubt and insecurity raced through his thoughts and emotions.

Moses undoubtedly felt like a failure as a leader. He probably viewed his life as a leader to be over at age forty. Moses knew he would never lead the Egyptians again from a position of royal power. I doubt he harbored thoughts of leading or rescuing his fellow Israelites ever again. Think about the hopelessness Moses must have felt in the desert. Moses did eventually find another family, get married and have two children. Moses put the past behind him and settled into a completely different life in the desert.

When we think of the story of Moses we concentrate on last phase of the story where at age eighty Moses triumphantly returns to Egypt after forty years of banishment in the desert to lead his fellow Israelites out of the oppression of the Egyptians and to the promise land. In our minds we quickly jump from age forty to age eighty, mainly because that is what the Biblical text does. We know Moses left Egypt in disgrace at age forty. We know Moses encountered the Lord God Almighty in a burning bush at age eighty. We know very little of the particulars in between. We can speculate, however that he did a lot of soul searching in his forty year period. Most likely Moses did not have visions of grandeur that he would encounter the Lord at age eighty and return to lead the Israelites.

After forty years in the desert Moses observed a burning bush. Upon closer inspection, Moses heard the Lord's voice. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spoke directly to Moses. His first reaction was one of fear and the impulse to turn away. The Lord instructed Moses to respect the holiness of being in God's presence by removing his sandals. God informed Moses that he indeed saw the oppression of the Israelites at the hand of the Egyptians. The God of Abraham told Moses that the time had come to set

them free. The Lord invited Moses to come for God intended and desired to send Moses back to Egypt. Moses, who forty years earlier had fled Egypt for his life and had failed to lead his own people, was being sent back to deliver them, this time by God's power and authority, not his own.

Now eighty years old, Moses was finally prepared to lead as God desired and intended. During his forty years in the desert it is hard to imagine that Moses' education in the wisdom of Egypt had expanded. There is no reason to believe that Moses had become more powerful in speech or action while he was away. Certainly Moses no longer possessed any royal position, authority or influence. We must ask ourselves if Moses' education, skills, and authority diminished his outward appearance as a leader, what changed? How was Moses different at eighty compared to forty that God deemed him ready to lead his people? I would suggest to you that the change was internal. Moses had personally encountered the God of the universe. Moses came face to face with the Lord's holiness. Moses had learned to respect and listen to God. Moses came to understand that God would work through him as a leader to free his people as opposed to Moses using the lofty influence of his royal position to do something for God and his people. The change in Moses involved his inner nature or heart. This change involved in a new set of core values based on God's will and intentions. This change inside Moses was evidenced over the next forty years as he led Israel out of Egypt and to the brink of the promise land just as God intended and desired.

Applications

Now that we have studied the life of Moses we must ask ourselves: What can we learn from the story of this leader? What can we apply to our life as a marketplace leader in the third millennium? How can the story of a man who lived fifteen hundred years before Christ inspire us today?

The primary element of the story I want you to concentrate on is how God prepared Moses as a leader. God's eternal purpose for preparing Moses involved delivering Israel from bondage. The timing of God's preparation was twice as long as Moses thought it should be. The central focus was the preparation of Moses' inner nature, heart, core values that produced godly leadership behavior. God's method included Moses' failure, brokenness, and time alone in the desert. **Do you recognize God's hand working to prepare you as a leader in any of these four ways?**

1. God's purpose for preparing you as a leader contemplates his eternal plan for mankind. Every position of leadership you hold in the marketplace can be viewed in light of this truth. God raising you up to lead in the marketplace will always be according to his purposes. **Have you ever considered that there are lives you can impact for the cause of Christ where you lead in the marketplace that no other follower of Jesus Christ can touch? Have you ever thought of developing an eternal perspective of how and why you lead in the marketplace?**

2. God's preparation of you as a leader is on God's timetable. It took God eighty years to get Moses prepared to lead. Most likely, God is still working in your life even at this very minute. Pray that God opens the eyes of your mind so you can see his hand working to prepare you to be the leader he desires you to be. **Do you see evidence of**

such activity in your life at this time? Have you ever thought of where you might be on God's timetable to prepare you as a leader?

3. God's preparation of a leader is not complete until God has dealt with a leader's inner nature or heart. No leader can serve according to God's desires and intentions until he has dealt with the leader's heart. The leader who develops only the functional aspects of leading is not yet ready to lead others as God intends. At the age of forty, Moses had the functional aspect of education, skills, and position of authority mastered, but his inner nature was not prepared. I believe God spent the first forty years of Moses life in Egypt preparing his leadership skills and the second forty years in the desert preparing his heart, inner nature, or core values. It may very well be that God has allowed for your skills to develop first as he did Moses and is now working on your heart, inner nature, and core values. **In what ways do you think development of your heart, inner nature and core values will complement the leadership skills you already have? What does your marketplace leadership core values and behavior indicate about the development of your heart/inner nature?**

4. God's uses our failures and disappointments in his process of developing us as a leader. In his infinite wisdom God allows pain and suffering to touch our lives in order to prepare us to lead in a manner that might not be otherwise possible. As humans we do not particularly like this necessary aspect of how God works. Maybe you have failed as a leader in the past. I want you to keep in mind that this does not make you a failure in Gods' eyes. God allows pain and suffering and uses them to get our attention and prepare us to leader. **Does knowing that God's allows difficult circumstances as part of how he prepares a leader put into perspective some of you past disappointments?**

Conclusion: How does God prepare a leader?

God prepares a leader differently than man. Man concentrates on the outward appearances of leadership knowledge, skills, and positions of authority. God concentrates his preparation of a leader on a leader's inner nature or heart. Becoming the leader God desires and intends YOU to be requires you to shift your preparation from man's perspective to God's.

God prepares a leader differently than man. God's purposes, timing, focus, and methods for preparing a leader differ than how men prepare leaders. How does God prepare a leader? By allowing difficult circumstances that shape a leader's heart, inner nature, and core values according to his timing and eternal purposes! To clearly recognize God's hand of preparation in your life, you must view the process from God's perspective.