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Six Biblical Leadership Eras Approaching the Bible with Leadership Eyes

Introduction

In my opinion, the Bible provides one of the richest resources that Christian leaders have on leadership. The Bible is full of leadership insights, lessons, values and principles about leaders and leadership. It is filled with influential people and the results of their influence... both good and bad.

Three assumptions undergird what I will say in this article.

1. I have a strong **conviction** that the Bible can give valuable leadership insights.
2. I have made a **willful decision** to study the Bible and use it as a source of leadership insights.¹
3. To study the Bible for leadership insights, you need **leadership eyes** to see leadership findings in the Bible. That is, there are many leadership perspectives, i.e. paradigms, that help stimulate one to see leadership findings. I have been discovering and using these in my own study.

I want to do three things in this keynote overview. I want to introduce two most helpful perspectives for studying the Bible for leadership findings: 1. Seeing Leadership Eras; 2. Recognizing Leadership Genre. I will give more space to *the Six Leadership Eras*. These two concepts will help give one *leadership eyes*. And then I want to talk about the impact of the two most important boundary times between leadership eras, Moses desert leadership and Jesus' foundational work instigating a major movement. Both of these were fundamental and foundational times of Biblical leadership. They introduced radical macro lessons that deeply impact our own leadership today.

The Six Leadership Eras

A first step toward having *leadership eyes*, for recognizing leadership findings in the Bible involves seeing the various leadership eras in the Bible. These time periods share common leadership assumptions and expectations. These assumptions and expectations differ markedly from one leadership time period to the next. Though, of course, there are commonalities that bridge across the eras.

¹ I have been doing this deliberately for ten years at this writing.

Definition *A leadership era is a period of time, usually several hundred years long,² in which the major focus of leadership, the influence means, basic leadership functions, and followership have much in common and which basically differ with time periods before or after it.*

Table 34-1 contains the outline of the six eras I have identified.

Table 34-1 Six Leadership Eras Outlined

Era	Label/ Details
I.	Patriarchal Era (Leadership Roots)—Family Base
II.	Pre-Kingdom Leadership Era —Tribal Base A. The Desert Years B. The War Years—Conquering the Land, C. The Tribal Years/ Chaotic Years/ Decentralized Years—Conquered by the Land
III.	Kingdom Leadership Era —Nation Based A. The United Kingdom B. The Divided Kingdom C. The Single Kingdom--Southern Kingdom Only
IV.	Post-Kingdom Leadership Era —Individual/ Remnant Based A. Exile--Individual Leadership Out of the Land B. Post Exilic--Leadership Back in the Land C. Interim--Between Testaments
V.	New Testament Pre-Church Leadership —Spiritually Based in the Land A. Pre-Messianic B. Messianic
VI.	New Testament Church Leadership —Decentralized Spiritually Based A. Jewish Era B. Gentile Era

The three overarching elements of leadership include: the *leadership basal elements* (leader, follower, situation which make up the **What** of leadership); *leadership influence means* (individual and corporate leadership styles which make up the **How** of leadership); and *leadership value bases* (theological and cultural values which make up the **Why** of leadership).³ It was this taxonomy which suggested questions that helped me see for the first time the six leadership eras of the Bible. It is these categories that allow comparison of different leadership periods in the Bible. Later I will apply the taxonomy to each of the eras and give my preliminary findings.

Using these leadership characteristics I studied leadership across the Bible and inductively generated the six leadership eras as given above. Table 2 adds some descriptive elements of the eras.

² There is one exception. Though technically, the N.T. Pre-Church Era includes the inter-testamental time, I only really focus on Jesus' ministry which lasted a short period of time. But it is so unique and so radically different from what preceded and followed it that I treat it as the essential time in this era.

³ See the **Article**, *Leadership Tree Diagram* which explains in details these three elements of leadership.

Table 34-2 Six Leadership Eras in the Bible—Definitive Characteristics

Leadership Era	Example(s) Leader(s)	Definitive Characteristics
1. Foundational (also called Patriarchal)	Abraham, Joseph	Family Leadership/ formally male dominated/ expanding into tribes and clans as families grew/ moves along kinship lines.
2. Pre-Kingdom	Moses, Joshua, Judges	Tribal Leadership/ Moving to National/ Military/ Spiritual Authority/ outside the land moving toward a centralized national leadership.
3. Kingdom	David, Hezekiah	National Leadership/ Kingdom Structure/ Civil, Military/ Spiritual/ a national leadership—Prophetic call for renewal/ inside the land/ breakup of nation.
4. Post-Kingdom	Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah	Individual leadership/ Modeling/ Spiritual Authority.
5. Pre-Church	Jesus/ Disciples	Selection/ Training/ spiritual leadership/ preparation for decentralization of Spiritual Authority/ initiation of a movement.
6. Church	Peter/ Paul/ John	decentralized leadership/ cross-cultural structures led by leaders with spiritual authority which institutionalize the movement and spread it around the world.

When we study a leader or a particular leadership issue in the Scripture, we must always do so in light of the leadership context in which it was taking place. We cannot judge past leadership by our present leadership standards. Yet, we will find that major leadership lessons learned by these leaders will usually have broad implications for our leadership.

Second Major Perspective for Getting Leadership Eyes—The Seven Leadership Genre

Further study of each of these leadership eras resulted in the identification of seven leadership genre which served as sources for leadership findings. I then worked out in detail approaches for studying each of these genre.⁴ These seven leadership genre are shown in Table 34-3.

Table 34-3 Seven Leadership Genre—Sources for Leadership Findings⁵

Type	General Description/ Example	Approach
1. Biographical ⁶	Information about leaders; this is the single largest genre giving leadership information in the Bible/ Joseph	Use biographical analysis based on leadership emergence theory concepts.
2. Direct Leadership Contexts ⁷	Blocks of Scripture which are giving information directly applicable to leaders/ leadership; relatively few of these in Scripture/ 1 Peter 5:1-4	Use standard exegetical techniques.

⁴ See Article, *Leadership Genre—Seven Types*. See also **For Further Study Bibliography, Leadership Perspectives—How To Study the Bible for Leadership Findings**. Altadena: Barnabas Publishers.

⁵ See the **Article**, *Leadership Genre—Seven Types*.

⁶ See the **Article**, *Biographical Study in the Bible—How To Do*.

⁷ I have identified many of the direct leadership texts and exegetically analyzed the important ones.

3. Leadership Acts ⁸	Mostly narrative vignettes describing a leader influencing followers, usually in some crisis situation; quite a few of these in the Bible/ Acts 15 Jerusalem Council	Use three-fold leadership tree diagram as basic source for suggesting what areas of leadership to look for.
4. Parabolic Passages ⁹	Parables focusing on leadership perspectives: e.g. stewardship parables, futuristic parables; quite a few of these in Matthew and Luke./ Luke 19 The Pounds	Use standard parable exegetical techniques but then use leadership perspectives to draw out applicational findings; especially recognize the leadership intent of Jesus in giving these. Most such parables were given with a view to training disciples.
5. Books as a Whole	Each book in the Bible ¹⁰ ; end result of this is a list of leadership observations or lessons or implications for leadership/ Deuteronomy	Consider each of the Bible books in terms of the leadership era in which they occur and for what they contribute to leadership findings; will have to use whatever other leadership genre source occurs in a given book; also use overall synthesis thinking.
6. Indirect Passages	Passages in the Scripture dealing with Biblical values applicable to all; more so to leaders who must model Biblical values/ Proverbs; Sermon on the Mount	Use standard exegetical procedures for the type of Scripture containing the applicable Biblical ethical findings or values.
7. Macro Lessons ¹¹	Generalized high level leadership observations seen in an era and which have potential for leadership absolutes/ Presence Macro	Use synthesis techniques utilizing various leadership perspectives to stimulate observations.

The Criteria For Evaluating An Era

What Are the Distinguishing Characteristics We Are Looking For? I have used the following categories:

1. Major Focus—

Here we are looking at the overall purposes of leadership for the period in question. What was God doing or attempting to do through the leader? Sense of destiny? Leadership mandate?

2. Influence means—

Here we are describing any of the power means available and used by the leaders in their leadership. We can use any of Wrong's categories or any of the leadership style categories I define. Note particularly in the Old Testament the use of force and manipulation as power means.

⁸ Many leadership acts have been identified and more than 20 have been analyzed. There is much work to do on analyzing leadership acts.

⁹ I have studied every parable, exegetically, in Matthew, Mark and Luke for its central truth and applicable leadership lessons.

¹⁰ I have done this for each book in the Bible over the past 10 years. My findings are included in **The Bible and Leadership Values** (and in this **Handbook**). Though I have made a good start, there is much more to be done here. I am intending other Handbooks which include all of the top 25 Bible books on leadership.

¹¹ This area needs the most research. Several PhD research projects are now focused on this.

3. Basic leadership functions—

We list here the various achievement responsibilities expected of the leaders: from God's standpoint, from the leader's own perception of leadership, from the followers. Usually they can all be categorized under the three major leadership functions of task, relational, and inspirational functions. But here we are after the specific functions.

4. Followers—

Here we are after sphere of influence. Who are the followers? What are their relationship to leaders? Which of the 10 Commandments of followership are valid for these followers? What other things are helpful in describing followers?

5. Local Leadership—

In the surrounding culture: Biblical leaders will be very much like the leaders in the cultures around them. Leadership styles will flow out of this cultural press. Here we are trying to identify leadership roles in the cultures in contact with our Biblical leaders.

6. Other:

Miscellaneous catch all; such things as centralization or decentralization or hierarchical systems of leadership; joint (civil, political, military, religious) or separate roles.

Thought Questions—

In addition to the above categories, I try to synthesize the questions that I would like answered about leaders and leadership if I could get those answers. With these thought questions I am considering such things as the essence of a leader (being or doing), leadership itself, leadership selection and training, authority (centralized or decentralized), etc.

My preliminary findings for these categories for each leadership era follows.

1st Leadership Era: Patriarchal Leadership

1. **Major Focus**--Pass on the promise and heritage of the Most High God to the family; priestly role (regularity)--intercede, sacrifice, and worship the Most High God;
2. **Influence means**--apostolic style, father-initiator, father-guardian, full range of Wrong's typology: force, manipulation, authority (coercive, inducive, positional--fatherly head, competence, personal), spiritual authority
3. **Five basic leadership functions**—(1) Godly/ priestly functions:- demonstrate absolute loyalty to God; - demonstrate reality of the unseen God; - pass on heritage of what is known (revelatory) of God and His ways and desires, very little revelation, animistic; - pass on sense of destiny; --God's prophetic promises; (2) Primarily performing the inspirational function—largely through modeling; the relational function consisted primarily of keeping the family together and obedience to the patriarch. Inspirational function -Creating hope in God -Creating sense of God's intervention in life; (3) Mediate Blessing of God: - contagious blessing; - heritage blessing; (4) Military head--protection of family; (5) Civil--judge/ justice
4. **Followers**--family members: (1) Age/masculine-oriented; (2) Almost all of 10 Followership Laws in force; (3) Oldest to receive blessing and birthright; (4) The one receiving blessing and birthright passes it on to next generation
5. **Local Leadership**--in the culture around the Patriarchs: - tribal heads; - City States / Regional heads (called kings);
- local priests (practitioners/ animistic); - local military
6. **Other:** Highly Decentralized; each given family responsible to God

Thought Questions— 1. How did other families relate to God (Melchizedek's, Labin's, etc.)? 2. What were expectations of Patriarchs as leaders? by followers? by God? by surrounding culture? 3. What was the foundational aspect of character? What was integrity to the Patriarchs? 4. What was the birthright? What was the blessing? 5. If modeling was the primary training methodology, what were the most important positive leadership qualities modeled by Abraham? by Isaac? by Jacob? by Joseph? by Job? 6. Using a modified form of the six characteristics of finishing well, how did the Patriarchs finish? Abraham? Isaac? Jacob? Joseph? Job?

2nd Leadership Era: Pre-Kingdom Leadership

1. **Major Focus**--Uniting of a people, preparing them to follow God, preparing them to invade the promised land, settling them in the land. The Desert leadership is one of discipline, a heavy time of revelation, and supernatural events backing leadership. The Challenge Era is one of stretching of faith to overcome the many obstacles involved in capturing the land. The Judges Era has the major challenge of how to unite disparate peoples, survive attacks, and degeneration of relationship to God. In each there is Charismatic Leadership: You lead because of spiritual authority, personal authority or competence not because of nepotism or birth; a formal priestly role is secondary--there is an inheritance with this role--and this leadership is weak, probably because of that.
2. **Influence means**--apostolic style, father-initiator, father-guardian, full range of Wrong's typology: force, manipulation, authority (coercive, inducive, positional--fatherly head, competence, personal), spiritual authority
3. **7 basic leadership functions** seen include: (1) Centralize Authority/ Develop Authority Structures:- military, political, religious;- tribal/ trans-tribal (elders); (2) Primarily performing the

inspirational function: -Creating hope in God; -Creating sense of God's intervention in life. (3) Revelatory (Desert)/Inscribe and pass on the basic revelation of God as given in the law/how to live separated lives; (4) Military head--protection/ mobilize an on-call army distributed over the tribes; (5) Civil--judge/ justice/ set up legal system for interpreting and applying the law; (6) Fulfill Promise of Taking the Land; settling it; (7) Call to renewal; recrudescence; see God work anew.

4. **Followers**—12 large tribes:(1) Age/ masculine-oriented leadership; (2) Almost all of 10 Followership Laws in force; centralization out of balance; leadership more nepotistic than functional; reciprocal commands a legalistic thing carried by enforcement of law.
5. **Local Leadership**--in the surrounding culture:- tribal heads; - City State / Regional heads (called kings); - local priests (practitioners/ animistic); - local military
6. **Other:** Highly centralized during desert and capturing of land; highly decentralized during Judges era/ continuity of leadership a major problem except for the first transition from Moses to Joshua

Thought Questions:

1. How were leaders selected and developed? 2. What did they do at the different levels? 3. What is missing from the Judges Era that was the driving force of the Warfare Era? 4. What has happened to the Abrahamic mandate? Which of the eras, if any, are concerned with that mandate? 5. How does this era compare with the Patriarchal, spiritually?

3rd Leadership Era: Kingdom Leadership

1. **Major Focus**--The Kingdom united the dispersed tribal groups into a more cohesive nation which could provide government and military protection. The Davidic covenant was part of an on-going means to bring about Abraham's promise and to manifest the concept of God's rule on earth as well as provide resources to bring others into relationship with God. It never lived up to its ideals.

2. **Influence means**--the full range of Wrong's typology : **force, manipulation, authority** (coercive, inductive, positional)--fatherly head; competence, personal, spiritual authority.

3. **6 basic leadership functions** seen include:(1) Centralize Authority/ Develop Authority Structures:- military, political, religious; - tribal/ trans-tribal (elders); (2) Revelatory (Particularly in the Divided Kingdom and the Single Kingdom)/ Much of the corrective revelation done by the prophets was oral. But there was also the Prophetic revelation which was inscribed. Often these writings were a call to repentance, renewal, and a return to kingdom ideals; (3) Military head--protection/ have a standing army that could defend against the attacks that were coming more frequently from the expanding empires or ambitious kings. They would also mobilize an on-call army distributed over the tribes to go along with the standing army in big crises. (4) Civil—judge/justice/set up legal system for interpreting and applying the law; (5) Call to renewal; recrudescence; see God work anew (prophetic function); (6) Persevere as a people of God; maintain a base from which God could work. Major Problems: communication and control; followership scattered over large area; -large empires on the rise

4. **Followers**--a. United Kingdom-12 large tribes, also the many surrounding small kingdoms that were conquered

b. Divided Kingdom--Northern-10 1/2 Large Tribes c. Southern--About 1 1/2 tribes--mostly Judah; Leadership (1) Age/ masculine oriented; (2) Almost all of 10 Followership Laws in force; centralization out of balance; leadership more nepotistic than functional;

5. **Local Leadership**--in the surrounding cultures: - tribal heads; - kings of territories with a number of cities; usually one dominated and was walled; - local priests (practitioners/ animistic); - military.

6. Other: Large Empires are vying for world dominion or at least for large influence: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon

Thought Questions: 1. Why were the prophets raised up? 2. According to Deuteronomy what was the place of the law for the Kings? Was it followed? 3. Was the central religious function (the three yearly treks) carried out? 4. Why was the nepotistic approach to leadership selection used? Was it successful? 5. How does this era compare spiritually with the Pre-Kingdom era?

4th Leadership Era: Post-Kingdom Leadership

1. Major Focus--The nation no longer exists. It has been disciplined by God. Leadership during this time must do several things: analyze what happened and why; bring hope during this time; demonstrate the importance of godliness under oppressive conditions; demonstrate the importance of God's sovereignty; point to the future in which God is going to work.

2. Influence means--largely by modeling, spiritual authority, toward latter time in the time of the return, Jewish leaders again take up roles: political, religious, quasi-military for the Jewish people.

3. Basic leadership functions seen include: The inspirational function is dominant. The need for community in little pockets brings out the need for the relational function of leadership. The rise of the synagogues--small communities upholding their Jewish origins and religion bring about the need for scribes, and those who interpret the written scriptures.

4. Followers--Pockets of scattered Jewish people

5. Local Leadership--in the surrounding cultures: - tribal heads; - City States / Regional heads (called kings); - local priests (practitioners/ animistic); - local military; - emperors/ kings/ heads of powerful international groups formed by conquering vast territories and kingdoms/ various administrative leaders under these

6. Other: ?

Thought Questions: 1. Why did Jewish leaders prosper during these oppressive days? 2. What kinds of leadership did they participate in? 3. What has happened to the Abrahamic promise? How did the Jewish people feel about it in these days? 4. How were religious leaders selected (e.g. for the synagogues)?

5th Leadership Era: Pre-Church Leadership

1. Major Focus--Galatians 4:4. This is the acme of charismatic leadership. Jesus models servant leadership and ideal spiritual authority--all aspects of it. The end result of this leadership is revelation, redemption, and a movement to universalize the redemption to all humankind.

2. Influence Means--the entire range of Pauline leadership styles are demonstrated. The whole range of Wrong's Typology is seen.

3. Leadership Functions: (1) Provide the redemptive base reconciling God and humankind and its major ramifications, the revelation and enabling power for human beings to realize their idealized human potential.

(2) Provide a leadership mandate that will utilize all three major leadership functions in its fulfillment. Task, relational, and inspirational functions are essential to the accomplishment of the mandate. (3) Create a movement that will institutionalize the leadership functions for on-going effective leadership. (4) Provide a call for renewal to Israel. (5) Present the Kingdom of God in concept and power. (6) Provide a revelatory base, model, and standards for future revelation.

4. Followers--In the land there were remnants of the tribes, mixed ethnic groups (like Samaritans), religious leadership like the Pharisees, Saducees, and the political leaders of the Roman empire

along with garrisons of Roman Military to give authority as well as the Jewish Religious leaders the Sanhedrin.

5. Local Leaders: Sanhedrin, Saducees, Pharisees, Lawyers, Roman Military, Synagogues/ elders, Rabbis.

6. Other: This is a mixed era of centralized and decentralized means and authority. Jerusalem provided some means of religious centralization. There was political centralization in a number of centers. But Jesus leadership was not centralized.

Thought Questions: 1. What renewal aims did Christ specifically focus on? 2. What were the leadership selection and development processes in existence in the culture? 3. What were Jesus' leadership selection and development processes? How different? 4. How does Christ leadership compare or contrast with essential characteristics of each of the previous eras?

6th Leadership Era: Church Leadership

1. Major Focus—When Barnabas and Paul give their report to the elders back in Jerusalem at the Jerusalem conference described in Acts 15, there is much discussion. Finally, James summarizes the essence of the major focus of the Church leadership era, "Simon has declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15;14)." The central message of the book of Acts emphasizes this thrust in more detail. THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH which spreads from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth is seen to be of God, takes place as Spirit directed people present a salvation centered in Jesus Christ, and occurs among all peoples, Jews and Gentiles. During this leadership era, God is developing an institution that will carry His salvation to all cultures and all peoples. The development of this decentralized institution which can be fitted to any culture and people, the church, with its nature its leadership and its purposes for existing will be at the heart of this leadership era. Paul is a major architect of this leadership era. The book of 2 Corinthians is especially helpful to give us insights into early church leadership.

2. Influence Means—My past leadership studies have identified a number of leadership styles. In particular, I have categorized ten Pauline leadership styles. The entire range of Pauline leadership styles are demonstrated during the Church Leadership Era. The whole range of Wrong's Typology is seen including force, manipulation, authority, and persuasion power forms.

3. Leadership Functions—All three of the generic leadership functions are prominent: task oriented leadership, relationship oriented leadership and inspirational leadership. The major models for this era include Peter, John, and Paul with much more information given about Paul. Paul is dominantly a task-oriented leader with a powerful inspirational focus. He sees the necessity of relationship oriented leadership but that is not his strength. John is more of a relationship-oriented leader who also has a powerful inspirational thrust. Peter is dominantly a task oriented leader with inspirational thrust. As each matures they become more gentle--that is, relational leadership begins to come to the front. But always they are dominantly inspirational. God is creating new forms through which to reveal Himself to the world and followers must be inspired to participate and carry it all over the world in the face of persecution and obstacles.

4. Followers—The beauty of the church lies in its ability as an institutional form to fit into any culture. Since leadership in a given culture is defined in part by the followers expectations of what a leader is, we will have distinctive differences in various cultures as to leadership and followership. Each cultural situation will be different and hence have its unique demands. But there are commonalties in Biblical church leadership across cultures. This is seen especially in the values

which determine why leaders operate and the standards by which they are judged. The book of 2 Corinthians helps us understand key leadership values.

5. Local Leaders—Various kinds of models of leadership existed in the various cultures. Paul, the main architect of local church leadership, gives us various descriptions of qualitative characteristics of leaders in his various epistles. The essential trait that flows throughout all of them is integrity. But Paul having described key character traits recognizes that these will manifest themselves differently in different cultures and situations.

6. Other—The church leadership era is a highly decentralized period of time. Churches are to exist in all cultures and peoples. They will be spread far and wide. Because of the decentralized nature of the church it is especially important to ask what unites it? What is common? Particularly is this important for leadership. And one of the answers is leadership values. 2 Corinthians helps us see some of the values that Paul modeled.

The Findings—The Best of Each Era

Table 34-4 summarizes some of the more important aspects of each of the leadership eras.

Table 34-4 Six Leadership Eras in the Bible—On-Going Impact Items/ Follow-Up Study

Era	On-Going Impact Items And Areas For Follow-Up Study
1. Patri-archal	Destiny leadership; Introduction of biographical study of leadership (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job); God’s shaping processes introduced; intercession macro lesson introduced; character strength highlighted (Abraham, Jacob, Joseph); leadership responsibility to God instigated (accountability); leadership responsibility to followers introduced (blessing); leadership intimacy with God introduced (Abraham—friend of God, Job—trusting in deep processing). Key Macro Lesson: Destiny—Leaders must have a sense of destiny.
2. Pre-Kingdom	Seven Macro lessons from Moses’ desert leadership (Timing; Intimacy; Intercession; Burden; Presence; Hope; Transition); Spiritual authority highlighted in Moses’ and Joshua’s ministries; pitfalls of centralized leadership seen; pitfalls of decentralized leadership seen; roots of inspirational leadership seen (Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Deborah, Jephthah, Samuel, David); outstanding biographical genre material. Key Macro Lesson: Presence—The essential ingredient of leadership is the powerful presence of God in the leader’s life and ministry.
3. Kingdom	Five macros carry a warning for all future leadership (Unity; Stability; Spiritual Leadership; Recrudescence; By-Pass). Excellent biographical material both positive and negative examples (Saul, David, Asa, Josiah, Uzziah, Hezekiah, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and many others). Key Macro Lesson: Spiritual leadership can make a difference in the midst of difficult times.
4. Post-Kingdom	All five macros stress revelational perspective (Future Perfect; Perspective; Modeling; Ultimate, Perseverance). Excellent biographical genre available (Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah). Key Macro Lesson:

	Future Perfect—A primary function of all leadership is to walk by faith with a future perfect paradigm so as to inspire followers with certainty of God’s accomplishment of ultimate purposes.
5. Pre- Church	Selection/ Training/ spiritual leadership/ preparation for decentralization of Spiritual Authority/ initiation of a movement. Major Biographical— Jesus’ and his movement leadership. Key Macro Lesson: Focus—Leaders must increasingly move toward a focus in their ministry which moves toward fulfillment of their calling and their ultimate contribution to God’s purposes for them.
6. Church	Decentralized leadership/ cross-cultural structures led by leaders with spiritual authority, which institutionalize the movement and spread it around the world. Excellent biographical (Peter, Barnabas—a bridge leader, Paul, John); numerous leadership acts. Key Macro Lesson: Universal—The church structure is universal and can fit any culture. It must be propagated to all peoples.

The Foundational Transitions—Moses’ And Jesus’ Leadership Eras

Three figures give perspectives on Biblical leadership. Figure 34-1 illustrates the relative time involved in the six leadership eras. Figure 34-2 pinpoints distinctive features of leadership across the time-line. Figure 34-3 focuses on the two major transitions—Moses’ Desert Leadership; Jesus’ Movement Leadership.

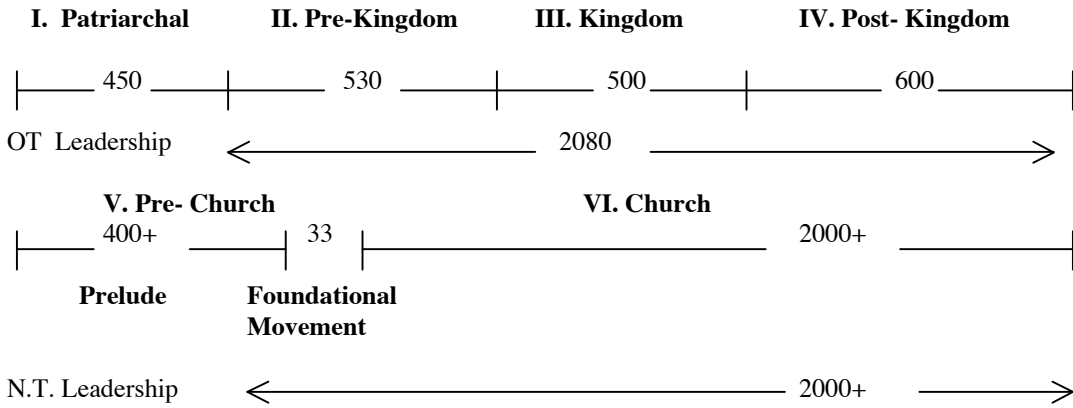


Figure 34-1 Leadership Eras--Approximate Chronological Length In Years

I. Patriarchal Leadership Roots	II. Pre-Kingdom Leadership	III. Kingdom Leadership	IV. Post-Kingdom	V. N.T. Pre-Church Leadership	VI. Church Leadership
A. Abraham B. Isaac C. Jacob D. Joseph E. Job	A. Desert B. Conquering The Land C. Conquered By the Land	A. United B. Divided C. Single	A. Exile B. Post Exile C. Interim	A. Pre-Messianic B. Messianic	A. Jewish B. Gentile
Family	Revelatory Task Inspirational	Political Corrective	Modeling Renewal	Cultic Spiritual Movement	Spiritual Institutional
Blessing Shaping Timing Destiny Character Faith Challenge Purity	(Timing) Presence Intimacy Burden Hope By-Pass Spiritual Authority Transition Weakness Continuity	Unity Stability Spiritual Leadership Recrudescence	Hope Perspective Modeling Ultimate Perseverance	Training Focus Spirituality Servant Steward Harvest Shepherd Movement	Structure Universal Giftedness Word Centered

Figure 34-2 Overview Time-Line of Biblical Leadership

In Figure 34-2 above, macro lesson labels occur at the bottom in the six columns. Just above the macro lesson labels are given distinctive characteristics of each of the eras. Finally, above that occurs the outline of the sub-time periods and the major time-line with the six eras.

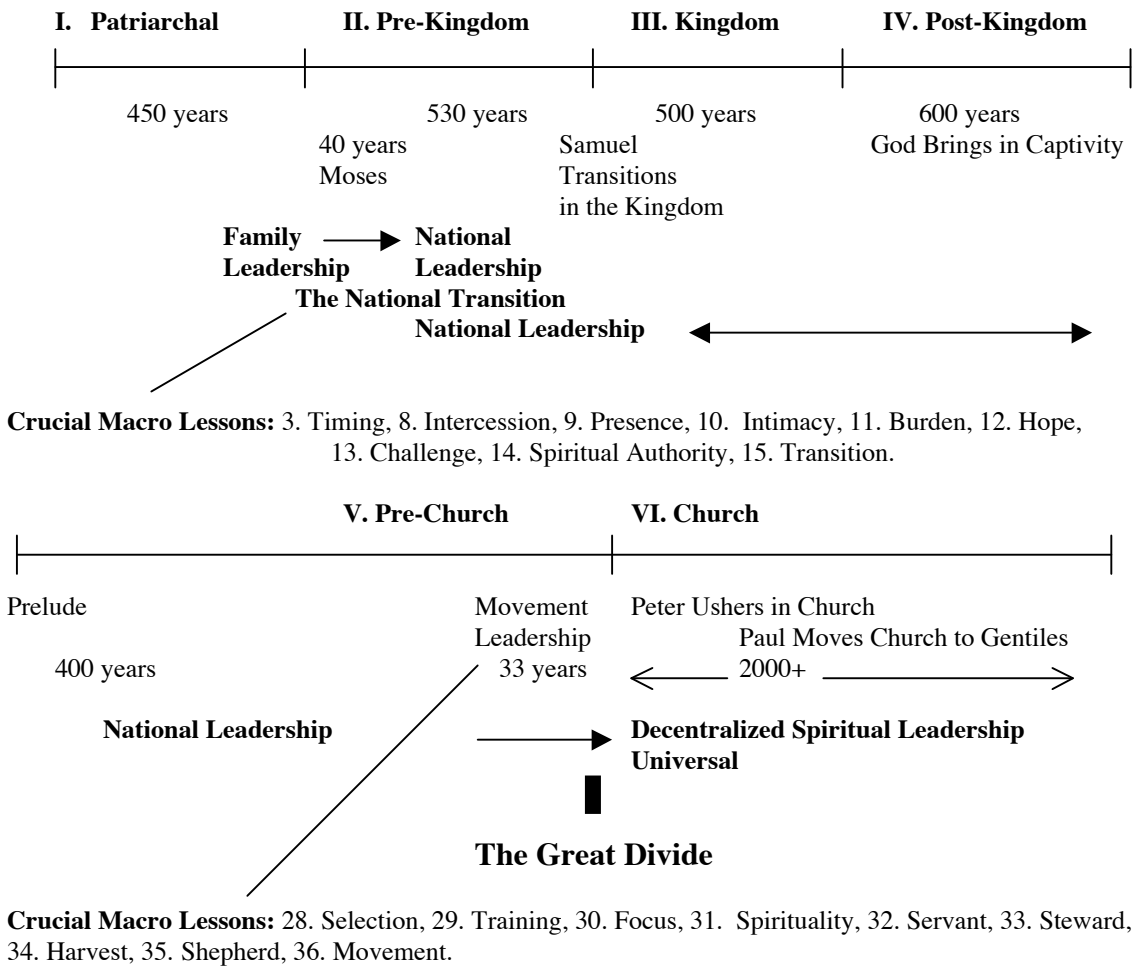


Figure 34-3 Two Major Transitions—The National Transition and The Great Divide

Note two things. These major transition times were short. God brought in major changes in a short period of time. Both transition times contain a large number of important macro lessons. For such short periods of time these are relatively large numbers of important leadership lessons.

Table 34-5 lists the transitions and key figures and the result of the transition.

Table 34-5 Transitions Along the Biblical Leadership Time-Line

Transition	Eras Involved	Key Figure/ Results
To God Directed Leadership	Begin Patriarchal Era	Abraham/ a God directed destiny involving an ethnic group and leaders from that group hearing God, getting revelation from Him, and obeying God.
Tribal to National	From the Patriarchal Era to the Pre-Kingdom Era	Moses/ A nation is established. God established concept of influential leader with spiritual authority to direct the nation; God reveals truth about Himself, life, and destiny for this nation. Major leadership guidelines (important macro lessons) flow through this transitional leadership.
Federation to Kingdom	Pre-Kingdom to Kingdom	Samuel/ A dispersed geographical/tribal society, each doing its own thing and basically not following God-given truth, is moved toward a centralized, unified national entity directed by one major leader—a king, who is to direct the nation with God’s direction.
Babylonian Captivity	From Kingdom to Post-Kingdom	God/ God dismantles the kingdom structure. He disperses the followers. God by-passes the kingdom leadership altogether and begins a long preparation that will eventually emerge in spiritual leadership. In this era, individual spiritual leadership is highlighted in which God’s perspective is crucial.
The Great Divide	From Post-Kingdom to Pre-Church. From a defunct national leadership to spiritual leadership which can be decentralized anywhere.	Jesus/ Jesus re-established God-directed leadership—the concept of the Kingdom of God. God by-passes the Jewish national leadership when they reject Him—i.e. His message through Jesus. Jesus at the same time of offering the kingdom also builds the foundational roots of a movement which will eventually contextualize the Kingdom of God in an institutional church form which can move into any culture on earth.
Universal Invitation	From Pre-Church to Church	Peter, Paul/ Peter ushers in the church to the Jewish followers of Jesus. Paul takes the church to the Gentiles. God’s invitation of salvation and His truth for living God-directed lives become available (decentralized) to any people on the earth.

Note that there are transition times between all the eras. Each of these are important in themselves but two stand out: Moses’ Desert-Leadership; Jesus’ Movement-Leadership. As is sometimes the case crucial transitions in the Bible are foundational. God focuses intently in these times and usually reveals foundational truth. Such is the case with all the transitions.

Tables 34-6 and 34-7 give the macro lessons discovered in these key transition times with suggested implications for today.

Table 34-6 Moses' Transition/ Lessons/ Implications

<p>Timing— God's timing is crucial to accomplishment of God's purposes. Implication(s): Leaders today, especially in their complex ministries involving multi-cultural settings, must be more sensitive to the timing of God than ever before.</p>
<p>Intercession— Leaders called to a ministry are called to intercede for that ministry. Implication(s): Various prayer movements have gained tremendous momentum in our day testifying to the fact that God sees this as a very important aspect of leadership in our day.</p>
<p>Presence— The essential ingredient of leadership is the powerful presence of God in the leader's life and ministry. Implication(s): Much present day leadership misses the balance of this—God both in powerful ministry and in powerful life changing impact in the leader himself/herself.</p>
<p>Intimacy— Leaders develop intimacy with God which in turn overflows into all their ministry since ministry flows out of being. Implication(s): Doing and achievement dominate present day leadership. God through the various spirituality movements is calling leaders back to spirituality and beingness as the core of their ministries.</p>
<p>Burden— Leaders feel a responsibility to God for their ministry. Implication(s): Accountability is missing altogether in most cultures. This is true of Christian leadership as well. Sensitivity to this needed ingredient would avoid many of the leadership gaffes that are seen.</p>
<p>Hope— A primary function of all leadership is to inspire followers with hope in God and in what God is doing. Implication(s): This is especially true for leaders trying to reach Xers—generally without hope. But it is needed in all ministries as complex situations tend to take away hope for most Christians.</p>
<p>Challenge— Leaders receive vision from God which sets before them challenges that inspire their leadership. Implication(s): A leader must hear from God if that leader is to influence specific groups of people toward God's purposes—the basic definition of a leader. This is deeply needed especially in the many small churches which are floundering in our day.</p>
<p>Spiritual Authority— Spiritual authority is the dominant power base of a spiritual leader and comes through experiences with God, knowledge of God, godly character and gifted power. Implication(s): Abuse of power is one of the five major barriers facing leaders today. There are lots of leaders with all kinds of authority but few who exercise spiritual authority as a primary power base (with all its implications).</p>
<p>Transition— Leaders must transition other leaders into their work in order to maintain continuity and effectiveness. Implication(s): Every work of God is just one generation away from failure if it does not transition emerging leaders into its decision-making influential positions.</p>

Table 34-7 Jesus' Transition/ Lessons/ Implications

<p>Selection— The key to good leadership is the selection of good potential leaders which should be a priority of all leaders. Implication(s): Leadership selection is desperately needed in church and parachurch organizations. Recruitment is often haphazard at best, especially in local church situations.</p>
<p>Training—Leaders should deliberately train potential leaders in their ministry by available and appropriate means. Implication(s): If emerging new leaders are not developed they will exit organizations and go somewhere else, depriving churches and parachurch organizations of on-going leadership. Leading with a developmental bias is the key to seeing on-going recruitment and longevity in organizational life.</p>
<p>Focus— Leaders should increasingly move toward a focus in their ministry which moves toward fulfillment of their calling and their ultimate contribution to God's purposes for them. Implication(s): Focused leaders are few and far between. Most leaders are faddish leaders jumping on the bandwagon of other apparently successful leaders. What is needed is leaders, knowing their own focus, and following it. Focused leaders are the need of the hour.</p>
<p>Spirituality— Leaders must develop interiority, spirit sensitivity, and fruitfulness in accord with their uniqueness since ministry flows out of being. Implication(s): As previously seen with the intimacy lesson from Moses' era, spirituality is crucial to leadership. And what is true of intimacy, one aspect of spirituality, is true as leaders develop balanced spirituality. Doing and achievement dominate present day leadership. God through the various spirituality movements is calling leaders back to spirituality and beingness as the core of their ministries.</p>
<p>Servant— Leaders must maintain a dynamic tension as they lead by serving and serve by leading. Implication(s): Servant leadership is not naturally found in any culture. It requires a paradigm shift for any leader to move into this leadership model—which is what Jesus intended for leaders he developed. Because of accepted leadership patterns in some cultures (great power distance) this is really difficult for emerging leaders to see or accept.</p>
<p>Steward— Leaders are endowed by God with natural abilities, acquired skills, spiritual gifts, opportunities, experiences, and privileges which must be developed and used for God. Implication(s): Accountability is greatly needed in our generation where successful leaders dominantly self-authenticate their own ministries and heed little or nothing from outside resources which could hold them accountable.</p>
<p>Harvest— Leaders must seek to bring people into relationship with God. Implication(s): The outward aspect of the Great Commission must be carried out. God is focusing on this as He continues to raise up missionary movements from all over the world. The impetus of the missionary movement has already moved from the western world to the non-western world. We need to support this while at the same time bringing about renewal of missionary thinking in the western world.</p>

Shepherd— Leaders must preserve, protect, and develop God's people. **Implication(s)**: God still gets most of the leadership business done at local church level. Leaders who hold to the shepherd model concepts must in fact carry local church ministries—especially as cultures become more radically opposed to Gospel values. This means that more pastoral work will be necessary if we are winning those from deteriorating cultures.

Movement— Leaders recognize that movements are the way to penetrate society though they must be preserved via appropriate on-going institutions. **Implication(s)**: New life can be instilled in parachurch organizations and churches when movement ideals are focused on. We see all around us movement leaders being raised up by God who are creating new ministries which God is blessing. This can be done more deliberately and proactively when movement dynamics are heeded.

Conclusion

The Six Leadership Eras and the seven leadership genre provide major perspectives for studying leadership in the Bible. This **Handbook** presents eight Bible books and applies these perspectives. Of particular importance are two of the leadership genre—the *macro lessons* across each leadership era and the *Bible books as a whole*. The macro lessons flowing from Moses' desert leadership and Jesus' movement foundations are particularly instructive. They apply with great force to today's leadership challenges.

See **Articles**, *Biographical Study in the Bible—How To Do; Bible Centered Leader; Leadership Act; Leadership Eras in the Bible—Six Identified; Leadership Genre—Seven Types; Macro Lessons Defined; Macro Lessons—List of 41 Across Six Leadership Eras; Principle of Truth.*