

## RENEWAL

A biblical leadership lesson is a leadership principle that comes from the Bible. Although the Bible is not a leadership book, we can still derive leadership principles from its different people and events.

### PRINCIPLE:

Leaders who finish well will need repeated times of renewal.

### CONTEXT:

The situation with God's people was not good. God's people returned from exile in Babylonia and the temple was partially rebuilt under Zerubbabel, a revival happened under Ezra, and the wall was rebuilt under Nehemiah. But over time, the people's zeal for God had diminished. Their lifestyle reflected their distance from God: unacceptable offerings, intermarriage and divorce, wearying God with their words, robbing God in tithes and offerings, and speaking arrogantly against God. They had drifted away from the Lord.

### SCRIPTURE:

The Lord told the people through the prophet Malachi, "Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. **Return to me and I will return to you,**" says the Lord Almighty (Mal. 3:7).

### SOLUTION:

This was a call for God's people to renew their hearts to God.

In a leader's life, you will encounter times when you will plateau, when you aren't growing, when your zeal for God is diminished. These are times when you rely on your own strength and gifting rather than the Lord's.

It is during those times, you will need a time of renewal.

If you want to **finish well – which means at the end of your life you can look back and say you accomplished all the Lord wanted you to do and you are still close to Him** – you will need times of renewal.

### APPLICATION:

What does that look like? It's when you encounter God with freshness, and it can happen in different ways:

- You learn something new about God
- He affirms what you are doing - either personally or ministry-wise
- He inspires you to continue
- He gives a breakthrough solution for a problem
- You sense His personal presence and/or power
- There is an unusual sense of intimacy with God

But it starts with you. You must take the first step. You must return to Him.

### **PERSONAL STORY**

For the past several months I felt I was in a plateau. I wasn't growing. I wasn't using my time correctly. I read the Bible here and there but wasn't engaged with it. I was reading books that didn't affect my heart and mind correctly. And at one point, I told myself, "That's all I can stand, I can't stand no more!" In other words, "That's enough! Get back on track with God!"

So last month I decided to return to God by engaging in His Word. I would read God's Word and journal about it. But instead of trying to find an application for me, I tried to find what the Word said about Him. And the Bible came alive! That He is faithful, righteous, sovereign, patient, just. That His timing is always perfect and that His ways are always wonderful.

And in the midst of this renewal, there was a breakthrough. To help others engage in God's Word through an online Sunday School class.

So this class is an outgrowth of my renewal with God.

### **PRINCIPLE:**

Leaders who finish well will need repeated times of renewal.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Clinton, J. Robert. "Daniel – and Abraham: Old Testament Exemplars for Renewals." *Clinton's Biblical Leadership Encyclopedia Series, Volume II – Leadership Articles, D-F*. Barnabas Publishers, 2011.