

Becoming the Father that Jesus Wants You to Be

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202 Messages on "Parenting" at discipleshiplibrary.com

Example of Jonadab

Dads, let's look at the faith of a father that many people have not heard about.

We're going to have 'story time' this afternoon, and we are going to see what were the results of this man's faith and the legacy he left with his descendants.

After we look at this story, we will draw some conclusions about what happened. One of the challenges of Scripture is interpreting it correctly and applying it in our current context. We have to span thousands of years, different cultures and languages to do this. I think there are some parallels for us today.

- Israelites roaming in the wilderness for 40 years ...
 - A Kenite tribe joins them [REDACTED]
 - Why?
 - They understood that these were God's chosen people, and they wanted to be a part of God's blessing
 - Jonadab, a zealous worshipper of Yahweh, helps Jehu cleanse the prophets of Baal from the land by King Ahab's influence [REDACTED]
 - On his deathbed, Jonadab commands his children to ... [REDACTED]
 - Not drink wine (it is easily abused and leads to a lack of self control [REDACTED])
 - Always live in tents, not build houses or buy land
 - This was similar to the Nazirite vows in [REDACTED]
 - Why?
1. Jonadab was convinced it was easier to live a godly life as a nomad than in the settled life of the cities, because they would be tempted to compromise with idolatry and immorality.
 2. Tents were simple homes, so they would remain humble. They were portable, so they would not become a part of the world. They would be able to focus more on eternal things than temporary pleasures ([REDACTED])
 3. Jonadab did not ask for an oath or vow, nor did he demand a penalty if they did not observe his commands. He asked them to conform to this disciplined lifestyle as far as they found that it glorified God. He wanted them to be on their guard against the temptations of the world.
 4. Jonadab wanted to preserve the character of his family from generation to generation.
 5. Jonadab wanted his descendants to remember that they were not Israelites, and had no inheritance in the Promised Land. They had to become hard workers since they had no spiritual or legal covenants with God.
 6. Jonadab wanted to promote a spirit of peace between his descendants and the Israelites. If his family kept a low profile, they would not become a source of jealousy that would cause them to be kicked out of Judah and out from underneath God's protection.
 7. Jonadab wanted to prepare his descendants for future conflict. If things got so bad that they lost everything and had to leave, they wouldn't have that much to lose.

So let's understand what is happening in **Jeremiah 35: 1-11**

- The Babylonians invaded Judah, the Rechabites left their tents and moved within the city walls of Jerusalem.
- Their lifestyle of discipline was not so rigid that they could not change if their safety depended on it. They were not going to tempt God by not using common sense to seek protection.
- Jeremiah's test . . .
- Jeremiah was trying to see if they would break their vow to drink wine since they left their tents to move into Jerusalem.
- The Rechabites could not see how living in the city was adequate grounds to break their vow not to drink wine

Jeremiah 35:12-19

- 1) The Rechabites were faithful to a finite man like themselves, but the Israelites were disobedient to an infinite God
- 2) Jonadab had been dead almost 300 years, and had no power over whether the future generations of his family would keep his command or not. God lives forever, and has the power to bring judgment on the Israelites' disobedience.
- 3) The Rechabites could only pass down the command of Jonadab from generation to generation. God sent His prophets to His people. They spoke God's Will to them and reminded them of their covenant with Him.
- 4) Jonadab never did for the Rechabites all that God had done for His people. God had given the Israelites the Promised Land, and guaranteed them peace and prosperity if they would follow Him.
- 5) God did not ask the Israelites to live the kind of strict lifestyle that Jonadab asked the Rechabites to live.

Conclusions:

1. Jonadab wanted his descendants to avoid the entanglements of the world. Fathers, are you leading your families to maintain a lifestyle of purity?
2. Jonadab asked his descendants to not drink wine. Fathers, are you teaching your children to willfully deny lawful pleasures to avoid falling into excess? Or damaging your testimony to others?
3. The Rechabites obeyed Jonadab's commands even though they were not morally obligated to do so. How much more cautious should we, as Fathers' be, in obeying the commands of God?

The greatest testimony of a family is to have God glorified from generation to generation. Are you committed to this in your family?

Position of the Father

- Every community of any size in the Middle East has a "father"
- The father is supreme in the patriarchal system
- The authority of the father is handed down to the oldest son
- Children gave great honor to their father
 - Greeted their father by kissing his hand
 - They stood before their father in an attitude of humility awaiting his command
- Children were taught by their mother initially, then as the boys got older, their father assumed the role
 - **Prov. 1:8, 6:20**
- The Jewish home was the school and the parents were the teachers

Worship in the Home

- The altar: taught sin, God's holiness, and approaching Him through sacrifice
- The Law: [REDACTED]
- Family pilgrimages: required for men 3x a year
 - [REDACTED] - Emphasis on thanksgiving
- Prayer: the "Shema" was repeated morning and evening by men starting at the age of 12
 - Memorized three passages: [REDACTED]

Shema means literally, "to hear"

Deut. 6:4 - "SH'MA YISRAEL ADONAI ELOHENU ADONAI EHAD"

- This is considered the "creed of Judaism"
- It begins Moses' review of the Law of God to the Jews
- A Jewish man learns from his father what God is like and then teaches it to his son ([REDACTED])

It is important for Christian fathers to teach their children about the character of God

Deut. 6:5 ([REDACTED])

- The secret of a deep love for God is spending unhurried time with Him

Commit to ingraining a deep love for God in your children

Deut. 6:6

- There is a custom in the synagogue where a Jewish child kisses a drop of honey which has been placed on a copy of the Torah
- The child tastes the Word which is "sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb" ([REDACTED])

Develop in your children a hunger to taste, feed upon, and digest God's Word regularly

Deut. 6:7

- "teach diligently" was a word used by the Jews for sharpening a sword for battle
- Raising a child to fear God requires constant attention and guidance
- Like a much-used sword that needs constant sharpening, a child's character and walk with God constantly need to be sharpened and honed

Be willing to pay the price to listen and observe your children for opportunities to teach them through life situations

Deut. 6:8

- Some Jews took this so literally that they tied boxes on their arms and on their foreheads containing portions of the Law inside
- The kinds of goals we pursue reveal where our lives are focused

Lead by example, and help set proper spiritual goals for your children

Deut. 6:9

- The "mezuzah" is a little wooden or metal case that contains portions of Scripture - you'll find it on the entryway of Jewish homes and synagogues
- This serves as a constant spiritual reminder around the home and place of worship
- What are your spiritual family traditions? How can you pass them on to your children?

- Take time to go over your child's lesson or craft project from Sunday School after church
- Read Bible stories before bed time and pray with your children
- Commit to regular family devotions

Work toward establishing your own family spiritual reminders

This presupposes that you are walking with God

- Remember, **Luke 6:40**
- "fully trained" is a medical term for setting broken bones (**Mt. 4:21** – fixing nets; **Gal. 6:1** – fixing people)
- You reproduce what you are

Commit today to become the kind of father you are called to be!

Application & Assignment – Provide verses for each one of the following points

- A. Make a Plan
 - i) Protect -
 - (1) Home -
 - (2) Family -
 - (3) School -
 - (4) Media -
 - (5) Technology -
- B. Provide
 - i) Example -
 - (1) Heart for God -
 - (2) Heart for God's Word -
 - (3) Heart for people -
 - (4) Humility -
 - (5) Godly marriage -
 - (6) Living on mission -
 - (7) Love -
 - (8) Truth -
 - (9) Respect -
 - (10) Purity -
 - (11) Accountability -
 - (12) Approachability -
- C. Communicate Effectively -
- D. Show Affection -

Merchants of Cool, PBS 2001 - <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/view/>

What Mayo Clinic says about 'screen time' and children:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>

<http://mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/are-video-games-and-screens-another-addiction>

<http://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/children-and-screen-time-how-much-is-too-much/>