



Sermon Series: More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others

To be used with Session 1: Aaron and Hur

Sermon Title Possibilities: “Behind the Scenes”; “Leading Off Stage”; “No Spotlight Needed”

Scripture: Exodus 17:8-13; 24:13-15

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study, “More Than a Sidekick: Serving Alongside Others,” this sermon will challenge the congregation to expand their perceptions of leadership. By examining the lives, contributions, and dedication of Aaron and Hur, the congregation will discover that authentic leadership is not solely relegated to the highest and most visible positions; conversely, leadership happens in the trenches. Every leader serving in a high position depends on others to fulfill their roles to ensure the mission is accomplished. Listeners will discover that leadership is not about titles but about service. Therefore, when we serve through our presence, support, and dependability, we exude some of the highest leadership qualities and ultimately assist our communities in attaining peace and prosperity.

Introduction: We all love a good performance, don’t we? Whether it is a play, movie, TV show, concert, or sporting event, the memory of good performances is etched into the corridors of our hearts. Most people remember the stars of shows—those on the stage who are front and center. The stars are usually the focal point of the show. Stars are spotlighted on the stage, emphasized in the promotions, and usually receive most of the recognition and praise for the show. However, very seldom are the stars on the stage the show's leaders. The real leaders work behind the scenes to ensure the highest productivity in every intricate part of the show. These persons lead without spotlight or acclaim. Undeniably, no show is possible without those who lead off stage. Similarly, God’s kingdom only advances with people who faithfully commit to leading behind the scenes. Unfortunately, many people refuse to lead unless they are recognized. However, today, we will learn that some of God’s most significant leaders may serve in the background, but their roles are critical for fulfilling God’s plan.

1. Be Present (Exodus 17:8-10)

Exodus 17:8 opens by informing the reader that the Israelites were ambushed and attacked by the menacing generational enemies known as the Amalekites. At that time,

The Israelites had just endured a long and debilitating season of famine and drought in the wilderness, and now they were forced to fight for survival. Unfortunately, our worst and most challenging obstacles usually beset us when we are the most vulnerable. Indeed, attacks happen when we are exhausted, frustrated, anxious, discouraged, deprived, and seemingly defeated. According to verse 9, Moses commanded Joshua to choose some men to fight with him against the persisting antagonistic Amalekites. We all need people to be present with us when we are in the fight of our lives. Consider the people who have been present for you during crucial times. We must never forget how powerful and impactful the ministry of presence is, particularly when people are in dire need. Recall how expedient Job's friends left everything to sit with Job for seven days during his time of loss, grief, and illness (Job 2:11-13). Recall how Jonathan visited and encouraged David while he was hiding in a cave (1 Sam. 23:16). Recall how Ruth left her home and journeyed with Naomi after she lost her husband, children, and resources (Ruth 1). Indeed, genuine love and authentic leadership are best displayed through the ministry of presence. Remember: we may forget those with whom we have laughed; however, we never forget those with whom we have cried.

2. Be Supportive (Exodus 17:11-13)

It is worth noting that everyone in the Israelite camp functioned in their proper assignments for war. Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill while Joshua fought in the warzone (Ex. 17:10). Every relationship has roles and responsibilities that must be executed to ensure sustainability and vitality. We lose battles God intends for us to win when we fail to serve in our proper assignments faithfully. Therefore, identifying and operating in our proper roles are two of the best ways to support those with whom we are connected. Exodus 17:11-12 reports that Moses' assignment was to raise his hands to ensure victory; however, Moses grew weary. Every person—no matter how strong—gets tired. Consequently, Aaron and Hur supported Moses by lifting his arms. We all have benefitted from someone who has lifted us in tough times. True leaders lift people when they are weak. In fact, scripture commands us to "Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). Aaron and Hur's support ultimately secured the victory for the Israelites. Similarly, our families, marriages, friendships, businesses, and churches experience victory when we support each other.

3. Be Dependable (Exodus 24:13-15)

The plot of Exodus 24 highlights God extending an exclusive invitation for Israel's key leaders to experience God personally and intimately. What would cause God to offer this encounter to this select group? Perhaps God invited these leaders because they had proven themselves dependable. These individuals had faithfully served God's people in the wilderness for an extended period. Similarly, God desires to invite us to experience God intimately. However, faithfulness is the prerequisite. This text causes all of us to ask ourselves how dependable we have been to God. We must also remember that leadership is not always displayed front center; sometimes, leadership is revealed

behind the scenes. According to Exodus 24:13-14, when Joshua and Moses went to the mountain of God, they instructed the elders, Aaron, and Hur, to wait for them until they returned. Aaron and Hur's dependability was tested with the instruction to lead at the bottom. One will never be fit to lead on the mountaintop if he or she fails to remain dependable in the valley. We are reminded of this truth in the parable of the talents when the rich man elevated his two servants by declaring, "You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master's joy..." (Matthew 25: 14-23).

Conclusion: Joshua, Aaron, and Hur's life narratives remind us how each of us plays a vital role in fulfilling God's divine plan. Although Moses received the initial call to deliver and lead the enslaved Israelites out of bondage into the Promised Land, the mission would not have been achieved without those key leaders along the journey. We can never forget that the Kingdom of God needs our presence and participation today. Therefore, we must seek God's voice and commit ourselves to the assignments that God gives us—no matter how small or insignificant they appear. We may not receive titles, recognition, or commendation from humans on Earth for our service and sacrifice; however, we should be encouraged because "For God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you demonstrated for his name by serving the saints—and by continuing to serve them" (Heb.6:10).

Author Bio

Dr. TERRENCE CHANDLER-HARRISON serves as the Lead Pastor of The Liberty Church—Clarksville, TN. He is a graduate of Morehouse College and Vanderbilt University Divinity School. Terrence earned a Doctorate of Education from The University of Southern California and his research was awarded the dissertation of distinction merit. He is a professor of Bible and Theology and Dean at The Historic American Baptist College—Nashville, TN. Terrence and his wife Anjelica are the proud parents of Ellie Grace and Timothy James. Check out Terrence's latest work, *Spiritual Cross Training: The Book of James* on Amazon and Barnes and Noble.