

**Lessons In Leadership**  
**“Elders: Old Testament Roots”**  
**Selected Scriptures**

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**Elders were c e n t r a l in Israel’s history**

- *zager* = *elder* - can mean o l d e r men (lit “aged” or “bearded”) or a t i t l e of o f f i c e depending on the c o n t e x t
- *Elders* were a l e a d i n g body of the Israelites:
  - since the time of M o s e s (Ex 3:16, 18; 12:21; 17:5-6; 24:1,9,14)  
They were:
    - Set apart for l e a d e r s h i p (Num 11:16-17; Deut 27:1)
    - Responsible to c o u n s e l and j u d g e the people (Deut 1:9-18)
  - from J o s h u a through the time of the K i n g s. Their leadership produced:
    - S u c c e s s (Josh 24:31; 1 Chron 11:1-3)
    - F a i l u r e (Jud 17:6; 1 Sam 8:4-5; 1 Kings 21:8-14))
  - During the time of the P r o p h e t s and return from c a p t i v i t y  
Their leadership resulted in:
    - J u d g m e n t (Isa 3:13-15; Ezek 8:9-13; Lam 1:19, 2:10)
    - B l e s s i n g (Ezra 5:5-9; 6:7-14; 10:7-16)

**Key observations to keep in mind**

Elders...

- had an important f u n c t i o n and i n f l u e n c e in Israel’s life
- were the o f f i c i a l community l e a d e r s in Israel
- always appear in p l u r a l i t y, a c o u n c i l of leaders
- were able to exist and p e r p e t u a t e themselves under all c o n d i t i o n s
- constituted the q u a l i f i e d m e n of that specific community
- were to p r o t e c t, g o v e r n and administer j u s t i c e and c o u n s e l
- When elders were *godly*...the nation experienced b l e s s i n g and f r u i t f u l n e s s; when the were *ungodly*...the nation experienced d i s c i p l i n e and b a r r e n n e s s.

**Key Thought**

The c a r e and p r o t e c t i o n of His people through the service of l e a d e r s has been a provision of God from the beginning.