

Youth Characteristics

Scripture reveals a significant role of youth in the Kingdom of God, showcasing their strengths, struggles, trials, and trust. Numerous youths demonstrated biblical behaviors and qualities that made them stand out as leaders, servants, and followers of God. I wish to share five key characteristics of youth in the Bible, along with examples that illustrate their importance that I pray will impact our young people this Shabbat!

1. Character, Boldness, and diligence.

Young people in scriptures often display great enthusiasm and courage. Their passion for righteousness coupled with a willingness to take risks made them powerful instruments in Adonai's hands. One of the best examples is David, who as a young shepherd boy displayed immense bravery when he faced Goliath. Despite being a youth with no experience in battle, David confidently declared:

I Samuel 17:37. Then David said, "ADONAI, who rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will rescue me from the paw of this P'lishti!" Sha'ul said to David, "Go; may ADONAI be with you."

David's trust in Adonai and fearless spirit allowed him to defeat Goliath with just a sling and a stone. David was a young person mightily used by God because David was intimate with Him! Adonai can and will use you in a mighty way, but it requires intimacy with Him on your part! Remember, David was already playing the harp for King Saul before he went out to fight with Goliath? Yet king still had to inquire about him when he killed Goliath. Could it be that the king forgot that it was the same person who played the harp for him who also killed Goliath? David's consistency with excellence made a way for him and after that encounter with Goliath, not only the king but the whole of Israel knew David.

David was a hard-working youth! He was not the type to be found idle or doing nothing. He was a diligent person who took his father's sheep business seriously and did it with all his heart. As a young person, are you diligent? Are you seeking God? How seriously do you take your schoolwork? Hone your skill sets? Your job work ethic? What are you doing to become better? How consistent are you in all you do?

Another example is Yonatan, the son of King Saul. Yonatan was drawn to David by David's character! Yonatan showed great boldness and courage when he and his armor-bearer attacked a Philistine outpost, believing that God could save Israel through a few people just as easily as through many:

I Samuel 14:11-14. So both of them let their presence be known to the garrison of the P'lishtim; and the P'lishtim said, "Look, some Hebrews coming out of the holes they've been hiding in!" ¹² Then the men of the garrison said to Y'honatan and his armor-bearer, "Come up to us; we want to show you something." Y'honatan told his armor-bearer, "Come

on up after me, for ADONAI has handed them over to Isra'el." ¹³ Y'honatan climbed up, using his hands as well as his feet, with his armor-bearer behind him. The P'lishtim fell before Y'honatan, and his armor-bearer following him finished them off. ¹⁴ That first slaughter, of about twenty men, was accomplished by Y'honatan and his armor bearer in a space only half as long as one side of the area a pair of oxen could plow in a day [about 200 yards].

These examples reveal how youthful zeal and boldness lead to great victories when combined with absolute trust in Adonai. A powerful statement Yonatan makes to his armor bearer (who isn't named but does every exact movement Yonatan does): "Come on up after me, for ADONAI has handed them over to Isra'el."

2. Faith and Trust in Adonai:

Scripture records young individuals who exhibited supernatural faith and trust in Adonai, even when faced with uncertainty or danger. One powerful example is Miryam, the mother of Yeshua. Scholars suggest that she was likely a teenager (13-15 years old) when the angel Gavri'el appeared to her:

Luke 1:26-33. In the sixth month, the angel Gavri'el was sent by God to a city in the Galil called Natzeret, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Yosef, of the house of David; the virgin's name was Miryam. ²⁸ Approaching her, the angel said, "Shalom, favored lady! ADONAI is with you!" ²⁹ She was deeply troubled by his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Miryam, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ Look! You will become pregnant, you will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Yeshua. ³² He will be great, he will be called Son of Ha`Elyon. ADONAI, God, will give him the throne of his forefather David; ³³ and he will rule the House of Ya`akov forever -- there will be no end to his Kingdom."

How did she find favor with Adonai? Like David she was after His heart! She walked in love and trust with Adonai! She was submitted to God, she sought to know Him better, she was intimate with Him, and lived in obedience to His will. After the angel delivered the message Miryam replied:

Luke 1:34. "How can this be," asked Miryam of the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

Though she was troubled by the angels' words, despite her fear and uncertainty that came with such a high calling, and hearing she'd be pregnant though she's a virgin, Miryam responded in faith:

Luke 1:38. Miryam said, "I am the servant of ADONAI; may it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Miryam's trust in Adonai's prophetic word and plan enabled her to play a critical role in the salvation of all humanity. She never wavered, even after her Son's crucifixion, death, and resurrection she never lost her dedication and resolve:

Acts 1:13-14 (TLV). When they had entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying—Peter and John and Jacob and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; Jacob son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judah son of Jacob. ¹⁴ All these with one mind were continuing together in prayer—along with the women and Miriam, Yeshua's mother, and His brothers.

This Upper Room experience occurs after Yeshua's ascension to heaven! Miryam was praying in that upper room with the rest! She could have said well, my part is done after Yeshua's resurrection and ascension, but she didn't! What trust and dedication she exhibited! It reveals her character and integrity! Another example is Yosef the Dreamer, who was sold into slavery by his brothers at a young age but trusted Adonai despite his trials. He trusted God even when he was wrongfully imprisoned! Yet eventually, God's plan came to pass:

Genesis 41:39-40. (TLV). Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You! You will be over my house, and all my people will pay homage to you. Only in relation to the throne will I be greater than you."

Through His trust and faith he became second only to pharaoh and would be Israel redeemer in a time of great famine!

3.Wisdom and Knowledge Beyond Their Years:

There are young people in scripture who demonstrate exceptional wisdom and knowledge, showing that spiritual maturity is not defined by age, its defined by character, integrity, choices, and intimacy with Adonai.

Dani'el and his friends (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) were taken captive to Babylon as young men. Despite being in a foreign land, they remained faithful to Adonai and His word, displaying remarkable wisdom, knowledge, and prophetic skills.

Daniel 1:17. To these four boys God had given knowledge and skill in every aspect of learning and wisdom; moreover, Dani'el could understand all kinds of visions and dreams.

Because of his wisdom and spiritual gifts, Daniel rose to prominence in the Babylonian kingdom.

Danile 2:48. The king promoted Dani'el to a high rank, gave him many rich gifts and made him governor of the entire province of Bavel and head of all the sages of Bavel.

After the fall of Babylon, Daniel served under Darius the Mede and later under Cyrus the Persian. Daniel's political life is marked by his unwavering faith in God, his wisdom, and his integrity, which earned him respect even from pagan kings. He served as a model of how to live faithfully in a foreign and often hostile environment while still exerting significant influence over the politics and

governments of his time. Another example is Yeshua himself, who at just 12 years old amazed the teachers in the temple with His divine insight, understanding, and knowledge:

Luke 2:46-47. On the third day they found him -- he was sitting in the Temple court among the rabbis, not only listening to them but questioning what they said; ⁴⁷ and everyone who heard him was astonished at his insight and his responses.

His wisdom and knowledge was far beyond His age, showing that God's wisdom is available to those who seek Him, serve Him, and are intimate with Him.

4. Obedience and Humility

Many young people in the Bible demonstrated humility and a willingness to obey God's call, even when they did not fully understand His plans.

Sh'mu'el was dedicate for service to Adonai as a child (5-6) years old:

I Samuel 3:1. The child Sh'mu'el continued ministering to ADONAI under 'Eli's direction. Now, in those days ADONAI rarely spoke, and visions were few.

Sh'mu'el heard Adonai calling him in the night when Adonai rarely spoke. Instead of ignoring it, he obeyed what Eli told him and humbly responded:

I Samuel 3:9-10. So 'Eli said to Sh'mu'el, "Go, and lie down. If you are called again, say, 'Speak, ADONAI; your servant is listening.' Sh'mu'el went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ ADONAI came and stood, then spoke as at the other times: "Sh'mu'el! Sh'mu'el!" Then Sh'mu'el said, "Speak; your servant is listening."

His obedience led him to become one of Israel's greatest prophets. Similarly, Timothy, a young Tamid of Sha'ul, remained humble and faithful in serving the early Messianic Community despite his youth. Sha'ul encouraged him, saying:

I Timothy 4:12. Don't let anyone look down on you because of your youth; on the contrary, set the believers an example in your speech, behavior, love, trust and purity.

Live a life of holy, righteous living! Obey the word of Adonai in your behaviors, your relationships, and all that you do! Set all believers an example in your speech, behavior, love, trust and purity regardless of your age!

5. Influence and Leadership.

Despite their young age, numerous figures played crucial leadership roles, showing that youth are not just followers but can be leaders when empowered by Adonai. One remarkable example (and one of my favorites) is King Yoshiyahu (Josiah), who assumed the throne of Judah at only eight years old.

II Kings 22:1-2. Yoshiyahu was eight years old when he began his reign, and he ruled for thirty-one years in Yerushalayim. His mother's name was Y'didah the daughter of 'Adayah from Botzkat. ² He did what was right from ADONAI's perspective, living entirely in the manner of David his ancestor and turning away neither to the right nor to the left.

Despite his young age he was zealous for Adonai! He led a major spiritual reformation, tearing down and destroying Israels idols. He cleansed and reopened the Temple, He restored true, biblical worship in Judah. They discovered the Torah which had been lost, he read it before all the people gathered together as he commanded! Upon hearing the words of Adonai Yoshiyahu tore his clothes and repented of the nation's sins. (2 Kings 22-23). The word records his great influence and leadership in:

II Kings 23:25. No previous king was like him; because he turned to ADONAI with all his heart, with all his being and with all his power, in accordance with all the Torah of Moshe; nor did any king like him arise afterwards.

Yoshiyahu's commitment to follow God was evident throughout his reign. He sought to restore obedience to Adonai's commandments in the hope of bringing about repentance and healing for the nation. His unwavering faith and dedication to God set the stage for the remarkable events that would unfold during his reign. Yoshiyahu influenced his subjects to make a solemn, covenant commitment to obey all that Adonai had commanded. With all their hearts and souls, they pledged to turn away from their sinful ways and embrace the path of righteousness which brought about radical, divine reforms in the nation.

Another example is Esther, a young Jewish woman who became queen of Persia and courageously risked her life to save her people as a teenager. She used her influence for a greater purpose, demonstrating that young people can be powerful leaders when they trust in God's guidance. When danger arose Mordecai spoke to her in:

Esther 4:14-16. For if you fail to speak up now, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from a different direction; but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows whether you didn't come into your royal position precisely for such a time as this." ¹⁵ Ester had them return this answer to Mordekhai: ¹⁶ "Go, assemble all the Jews to be found in Shushan, and have them fast for me, neither eating nor drinking for three days, night and day; also I and the girls attending me will fast the same way. Then I will go in to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."

The Scripture reveals that youth are capable of great, supernatural things when they are intimate with and rely on Adonai. Whether through zeal and boldness, faith and trust, wisdom, obedience, or leadership, young people have played a significant role in biblical history. Their stories encourage today's youth to embrace their God-given potential and trust Him in all areas of life.

The greater body of Messiah has fallen short regarding the next generation, to carry out Adonai's commands and instruction, to teach his covenant commands and mitzvahs to the next generation, L'Dor V'dor which explains is why the body is quickly and significantly shrinking, not growing, and for the most part powerless and ineffective! Yeshua engaged in L'Dor V'dor in a radical and transformative manner! It's an interesting side note that there many well-known religiously trained scholars in Judea that Yeshua could have picked for Talmidim but didn't! The well-known Gamli'el who Sha'ul Paul studied under and is quoted in Passover Seders every year to this day as well as high priests, members of the Sanhedrin... Yeshua picked none of these "scholars", rather he went to the Gen "Z's" of his age, the young people.

Matthew 10:1-4. (TLV) 'Yeshua summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, so they could drive them out and heal every kind of disease and sickness. ² Now these are the names of the twelve emissaries: first, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; Jacob, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judah the man from Kriot, the one who also betrayed Him. '

All but one of the Talmidim are under 20 years old! Which one is about 20 or 21? Peter, Kefa and of course Yeshua who is between 30-33 years old. How do I know? Let's look back:

Exodus 30:13-14. Everyone subject to the census is to pay as an offering to ADONAI half a shekel [one-fifth of an ounce of silver]- by the standard of the sanctuary shekel (a shekel equals twenty gerahs). ¹⁴ Everyone over twenty years of age who is subject to the census is to give this offering to ADONAI.

The temple tax is a required payment for every male **over the age of 20 years old! Now Let's go to:**

Matthew 17:24-27 (TLV). When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the Temple tax came to Peter and said, "Your teacher pays the Temple tax, doesn't He?" ²⁵ "Yes," Peter said. Now when Peter came into the house, Yeshua spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? The kings of the earth, from whom do they collect tolls or tax? From their sons or from strangers?" ²⁶ After Peter said, "From strangers," Yeshua said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ But so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw out a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. And when you open its mouth, you'll find a coin. Take that, and give it to them, for Me and you."

Yeshua provided for the Temple tax for Himself and for Kefa, Peter! What about the others? Not required because they were all teenagers, under 20 years old! This group that turned the world upside down were young adults, teenagers,

aged 20 and under!!!!!! A few words of encouragement to the coming generations:

Trust in God's plan: Even when faced with uncertainty, trust in God's timing and guidance.

Be an example: Young people are called to be examples of faith, integrity, and love.

Live with purpose: God has a divine purpose and destiny for each and every one of you , you can be powerful agents of change.

Stay rooted in trust: Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and resilience in overcoming.

Share your light: Don't hesitate to express your faith; to share the Good News, it will inspire those around you.

These messages are not just words; they are assurances of Adonai's love, guidance, encouragement to all of our young people (and the rest of us) to stand firm in your beliefs and aspirations so that we may walk upright before Adonai and righteousness!

Psalm 119:9 (NIV). How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

Be good stewards of Adonais gifts! Be intimate with Him and make an impact for the kingdom! Use your time wisely! Be bold, be very bold!