“Fatherhood” means more than just the biological production of Children. Married or single-with or without Children- Man is designed or wired by God to reflect his nature in the lives of those around him. However, knowing how to live out God’s original blueprint for Men is not automatic. In clear and compelling terms, herein insightfully provides practical guidelines to help men master the skills of Fatherhood and develop the qualities of leadership by showing how to: (1) Be the Solid foundation of your family (2) Develop the Potential and gifts of Children (3) Learn what a father really is- and does (4) Discover your life Vision (5) Identify the five purposes of the male seed (fatherhood)
THE FATHERHOOD PRINCIPLE

1. Introduction
   - “Fatherhood” means more than just the biological production of Children. Married or single-with or without Children- Man is designed or wired by God to reflect his nature in the lives of those around him.
   - However, knowing how to live out God’s original blueprint for Men is not automatic.
   - In clear and compelling terms, herein insightfully provides practical guidelines to help men master the skills of Fatherhood and develop the qualities of leadership by showing how to:
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     - Develop the Potential and gifts of Children
     - Learn what a father really is- and does
     - Discover your life Vision
     - Identify the five purposes of the male seed (fatherhood)

2. Definition of Fatherhood
   What is Father?
   We should begin with the meaning of father because one of the greatest dangers to society is the misconception of what fatherhood is. Definitions determine interpretations; thus, we must start here.

2.1 In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for father is ab. Abba, meaning “Daddy,” comes from this word
2.2 In the New Testament, the Greek word for Father is Pater.
2.3 What do ab and pater mean? These words denote very basic concepts that include the following:
   - Source
   - Nourisher
   - Sustainer
   - Supporter
   - Founder
   - Protector
2.4 The source of a thing is its ab or father. As the source, the ab sustains and maintains.
2.5 Another aspect of the meaning of the father is “upholder.” Father is the source that upholds everything that comes from it

There are some other English words related to ab and pater that describes fatherhood and are absolutely essential to the purpose of the father.

2.5.1 Progenitor: The word comes from the Latin meaning “to beget forth.” It also denotes “Precurser” or “Originator”
2.5.2 **Founder:** The Concept of father includes “founder” or “foundation.” That’s why companies, institutions and movements use the word father to describe the person who established a particular institution; e.g. Nelson Mandela is known as the “Father of the New South Africa.” If someone founded something is called the father of it.

2.5.3 **Teacher:** The Father is the one who teaches and nourishes. This means that he provides nutrients and resources that develop, enrich, expand, grow and deploy that which comes from him.

*For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge.*  
*(Proverbs 2:6)*

*Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding.*  
*(Proverbs 3:13)*

*Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve them.*  
*(Proverbs 4:5)*

### 3. The Purpose of Fatherhood

- **Purpose defined**

  *Purpose is defined as the “original intent and reason” for the creation of a thing.*

3.1 The Central Principal of Life is Purpose; exploring the concept of purpose leads us to an understanding of all aspects of our lives.

3.2 The priority of purpose has its origin in our creator, and it has significant practical applications for us as human beings.

3.3 Therefore, without purpose; life ceases to be an existence and becomes a mere experiment.

- **The Principles of Purpose**

  Many of the problems males face come from a lack of understanding their own purpose in life. However, find hereunder the principles of purpose:

  I. God is a God of purpose
  II. Everything in Life has a purpose
  III. Not every purpose is known by human beings
  IV. Where purpose is not known, abuse is inevitable
  V. If you want to know the purpose of a thing, never ask the thing itself
  VI. Purpose is found only in the mind of the maker of the thing
  VII. Purpose is the key to fulfilment
The Male’s Purpose

With these principles of purpose in mind, let us now turn our attention to the concept of the “Fatherhood Principles” and how it relates to the males purpose.

1. We have seen that everything was created to fulfill a purpose and was designed according to the demand of that purpose.
2. The unique difference in design that distinguishes each created thing from another is mandated and is critical to the function it is expected to perform.

4. The Principles of Fatherhood

A principle is a fundamental law that governs function and behaviour. We must understand the basic laws of fatherhood in order to be effective fathers.

4.1 The father is the source that sustains, protects, nourishes, and provides identity for that which he produces. Men are therefore distinguished in their role of father by the following Principles:

- The Male is the source of the seed.
- The male is the host of the sperm; he is the source of human life, whereas the woman is the incubator of life. It is the woman who gives life to the man’s seed.
- The male is the nourisher of fruit. The seed of the tree get planted, and then it becomes another tree that bears fruit. Whatever comes out of the seed is fruit; therefore, as a father you are responsible for nourishing the fruit.
- The male is the source of the female. 1 Corinthians 11:8 “For the man did not come from woman, but woman form man.”
- The male is designed to protect its fruit. That’s the reason for your strength; God gave Men physical strength and physique. Their bone structure is heavier and bigger than the woman’s - not to beat her but to protect her. Many Men kick, slap, and curse their wives, and they think they are real men. They are not real men; they are imposters and fools ignorant of their God-given purpose. And such ignorant men are dangerous because where purpose is not known, abuse is inevitable.
- The safest place for a woman should be in the arms of her husband. If she cannot be safe there, she’s in trouble!
- Remember, whatever comes out of you is a part of you. If a man hates his wife, then he also hates himself (Mark 10:7-8), and the Bible goes on to say, “Love your wife as yourself” Ephesians 5:25-33.
- A male determines the type of the offspring and influences its quality. Because you carry the seed within you, you carry the type of the “tree” your offspring will become.
The Male maintains his offspring. The fatherhood principle is to maintain. The male is responsible for the security, sustenance, and development of its seed. Fatherhood means maintenance.

The Male teaches the seed. A male is a godly father when he takes responsibility for his seed and gives his seed knowledge. The source must train and instruct the resource. It’s difficult to lead child to the Lord if you are an absentee father. It’s hard to take people to where God is if you are not heading that way yourself.

4.2 The Cornerstone of Fatherhood

- If you are thinking that being a foundation or an anchor is too much weight and responsibility for you, you are right! Both a foundation and an anchor need to rest on a solid rock if they are going to be able to hold things up and hold things together.
- In the same way, it’s not enough to know your function as a father; you have to know who to lean on in order to stand situations that are hard.
- If you want to affirm the fatherhood, you need to build down in order to build up.
- The male seed is the foundation, but not the Rock. Who is the Rock? It is Jesus Christ. We read in Ephesians,

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, with Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone.

(Ephesians 2:19, emphasis added)

- Without a cornerstone the foundation would fall apart.
- As a male, you are God’s foundation for you family, but it’s an interlocking foundation that needs something to hold it secure.
- Men all over the world are creating businesses and industries, amassing wealth, constructing houses but their lives are falling apart; their wives are leaving them, their children are on drugs, they themselves are on drugs and they do not have any sense that is really important in their lives. They have much wealth, but everything is falling apart; because the male seed has been compromised and its purpose been defeated! (Luke 6:47-49)

5. THE ROLE OF THE MALE

- Basic Functions of Fatherhood
  The standard by which we should measure and train fathers can be found within these basic functions of true fatherhood:
  I. Progenitor
  II. Source
  III. Sustainer and Nourisher
In Point number (2) above, we saw that the word father in the Bible is ab in the Old Testament and pater in the New Testament, and that these words denote “source” and “progenitor.” God is a Source and Substance and all life. He is a Progenitor who creates all things all things and then supports and upholds them.

- **God the Father as Source**
  God is the Father by both nature and function. He is a father of creation. (Genesis 1; Isaiah 63; Romans 1:20) As the source of all that is, God was “pregnant” - if I may use the analogy - with the seen and the unseen world. He carried the seed of the universe. As the Source, God the Father had everything in Him before anything was. So God created the entire universe and brought into being all that is from nothing (Gr. Ex nihilo). The Hebrew verb for creating is “bara.” The only proper subject for Bara is God, for only He creates. That which produces or creates is the source – father.

- **God is the Father as Progenitor**
  Remember that progenitor is one who upholds and supports the coming generations. God is Life and he created human beings and gave them the ability to reproduce and pass along life to their children.

- **The highest honour God can give a man is to designate him a father. “Father” is his own title.**

- **If He conveys his title upon the man, then it must be the highest designation and honour that any human being can have.**

- **Fatherhood is the ultimate work of the male-man. Fatherhood is the heavy honour and tremendous responsibility.**

- **The Father’s job is to uphold and support the generation he brings forth.**

- **God created Everything to sustain Man (Psalm 8:3-6)**

- **A Father is a teacher; God gave Adam Instructions that he teach his wife (Genesis 2:15-17)**

- **We see that God mandated Abraham to teach his household (Genesis 18:17-19)**

- **David taught Solomon the Wisdom and truth he learned from God. Solomon learned to value wisdom and passed it along to those who came after him. (2 Chronicles 1:9-12)**

- **The Father instructs and the Mother Command. (Proverbs 1:8 KJV)**
6. **FURTHER SIGNIFICANCE OF A FATHER**

1. As we consider the important and absolutely necessary role of fathers, it is incumbent upon us to consider successful dads in the Scriptures.
2. We find many models for consideration as well as some poor examples among the men of the Bible. David, the sweet song writer of Israel, described as "a man after God's own heart," was a successful king and military leader but not the best father.
3. Abraham, noted as the friend of God, was a faithful dad, but this was not his most notable achievement. Others, like Jacob, had mixed success as fathers. Some of the stronger dads in the Bible seem also to have been obscure and minor characters on the pages of Scripture.
4. Others were obedient to God in their own times but did not always pass on their faith to their families.
5. A friend brought to my attention an obscure Bible character, one I had nearly forgotten. A more than casual study of all the texts about him suggests that Jonadab may be "the greatest dad in the Bible."

Jonadab cracked the code, so to speak, on how to perpetuate faith in his family down through the generations. As today, there are some men who love the Lord with all their heart, mind and soul, yet they seem to sink as fathers. What can we learn from Jehonadab to challenge us in our role as fathers?

The four primary qualities in the life of Jehonadab that make him "the greatest dad in the Bible."

**I. Jonadab had great zeal for the holiness of God. 2 Kings 10:15-31**

In Jonadab we see a man who was consumed with zeal for God's holiness among God's people. He assisted in the great reformation begun under Elijah and concluded under Jehu.

While the proper worship of God was not completely restored, nevertheless the worship of Baal from the Northern Kingdom was permanently purged. This was truly a remarkable event, and Jehonadab was the principal aid to Jehu in this endeavor. While their actions may seem extreme by New Testament standards, Jehu and Jehonadab model the attitude we should have toward false doctrine and religious practices that diminishes the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some Christians today have become "religious inclusivists," willing to tolerate many of the proliferating new gods and cults so long as they may worship God freely. They say, "Let Jesus take his place among the gods and religions of our culture just so long as he gets equal time and respect." If Jehonadab were here today, he would make us uncomfortable. He would not agree with the tolerance and syncretism that is such blight on the modem church.
In a similar theme, Paul talked of "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" 2 Corinthians 10:5. We cannot learn too much from our text (2 Kings 10) about how Jehonadab conducted his family life, but he surely didn't have any Baal music groups on the local radio station, nor any Baal dolls around the house. Jehonadab and Baal didn't see eye-to-eye, and he would have opposed Baalism seeping into his family life through the various cultural means of his day. His children learned that old Dad didn't like the god Baal, and his children didn't either.

II. Jonadab believed the Word of the Lord through the prophets (1 Kings 14:15-16; 19:15-18; 21:17-24)

Jonadab would have been a thorough Bible student for his day. Several prophets starting with Abijah had spoken earlier predicting the destruction of the Northern Kingdom. Then a few years later, Elijah predicted the complete destruction of the family of Ahab and Jezebel. Perhaps Jehonadab was a little boy at the gathering on Mt. Carmel when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal in direct battle and won. Perhaps he saw the fire of God descend and the entire gathering fall on their faces and cry out, "The Lord, He is God!" He would need to see such a miracle only once to know that Baal was a defeated god Jehonadab would later finish what Elijah had begun that day. Elijah had also prophesied that Jehu would be king of Israel. Jehonadab was willing to risk a confrontation with the family of Ahab and to assist Jehu because he knew the promises of God would be fulfilled. Many people today say they believe the word of the Lord but do not live and act accordingly. Many Christians today live as if this world were our final destiny. It seems that we do not take seriously biblical prophecies or the words of our Lord Jesus when he tells us that we should "not lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal" Matthew 6:19. Jehonadab's obedience to God enabled his family to be equipped to survive in difficult times.

III. Jonadab ordered his family life around God's word. (Jeremiah 35:1-11)

Jonadab set house rules, and his family obeyed him. He must have been a consistent and faithful worshipper of the God of Israel. We know from Luke 6:40 that faith is more caught than taught when it tells us, "A pupil when he has been fully trained will be like his teacher." When we want to see how well we are living the Christian life, take a look at our children and grandchildren. Our personal and direct influence can extend to the third generation by reaching and influencing our grandchildren for Christ, but we will need a lot of gravitas to reach six generations with the power of our faith. Our memory and testimony would have to be strong.
So it was with Jonadab. His children were still talking about him 240 years later. The events of 2 Kings 10 took place around 840 BC, and the descendants of Jonadab were awaiting the fall of Jerusalem around 603 BC. The obedience of six generations was based on one man’s faithfulness. Those old house rules were still in effect. God sent Jeremiah to test obedience one more time by putting wine before them and they all refused. They were crusty, old curmudgeons like their great-great-grandad, Jonadab. Christians ought to be the proper use of the word "no" before we are all swept away by the next wave of modernity and compromise which will surely confront us.

IV. Jonadab set standards to preserve his family spiritually. (Jeremiah 35:1-19)

The practical application is difficult to implement, but he set up strict guidelines. He wanted to assure that his family could survive the changes in Israel that would inevitably come when the nation was destroyed. He took measures that would permanently set them apart. They were to live differently than those around them. They were to maintain moral purity; hence no wine and they were to remain a nomadic people, building no houses and planting no vineyards. We would say today that he was old fashioned and behind his times. In reality, he was ahead of his times, preparing his family for the tragedy to come upon their nation in a few short years. Many other families didn't survive because they had been living the "good life." Jonadab's clan did survive and moved on because they believed the word of the Lord through the prophets and made necessary plans. These were practical plans with a spiritual goal. The key ingredient was Jonadab’s setting his family a spiritually and morally. He wanted them to be separated believers. What should the modern Christian do to follow his example? When we blend in with the culture of the world, testimony for Christ may disappear altogether. Home schooling and Christian schooling would fit the example. Demanding a pure and moral life for our children would be like Jonadab, as would teach them to avoid worldly influences and preferring a simple life.

We would encourage them to make their closest friends among their families and the Body of Christ. We can tell our children that "brothers and sisters are permanent friends" when they are feeling lonely and wondering if their peer groups will accept them. Personally teaching them a trade or profession insure that they will be able to support themselves and the work of the Lord, showing them how to stay out of debt, instructing them in the necessary disciplines of godliness - Bible study, prayer, family worship—would practically protect and prepare them if the culture and society crash, as well they might, our children will be like the children of Jonadab, safe in the walls of Jerusalem when others have failed or fallen.
CONCLUSION

In Jeremiah 35:19, we see one of the most extraordinary promises given to a father and his family in the entire Bible. It is this text and promise that has earned Jonadab his title of "the greatest dad in the Bible." The text says that the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah and rewarded the faithfulness and obedience of Jonadab and his descendants, saying, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not lack a man to stand before me forever." The new Contemporary English version says, "So I promise that your clan will be my servants and will never die out." This must mean that the descendants of Jehonadab still survive and serve the Lord somewhere in our world today. Can God preserve a family like this for such a long time? Does God bless and honor Jonadab’s type of faith and obedience today.

But what about the descendants of "the greatest dad of the Bible," Jonadab? What ever happened to them? Well, really don't know very much about them after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC. We have only the sure promise of Jeremiah 35:19 that "Jonadab...shall not lack a man to stand before me forever." Since the Bible is true, we could speculate some of the sons of Jonadab returned from Babylon' Nehemiah and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem. Later, surely a son of Jonadab sat on the hillside in Galilee when Jesus fed the 5,000. Later, one of Jonadab’s descendants gathered in the upper room when the Holy Spirit came in power on Pentecost. We may even wonder if a son of Jonadab worked with St. Augustine when he wrote his great works, Confessions, The City of God. One may even have trained at Geneva with Calvin or served John Knox in Scotland during the Reformation.

Summary

1. **To live a separated life. "drink no wine".** Jeremiah set it before them at God's command, knowing they would refuse.
2. **To be stable in the face of ridicule.** Can you believe they were still living in the tents etc. 250 years later? Everyone else was building, planting, and drinking.
3. **To live a life of self-denial.** Read the chapter and you will see that in every way they had to practice self-denial.
4. **Jonadab taught them contentment.** "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Paul told Timothy. They were still content 250 years later. Dads, when you put your job before God, you are sowing the seeds of discontentment in your children's lives and it produces disobedience in them.
5. **They were taught to live disciplined lives,** which is why they weathered storms others were destroyed by.