

The Dangers Which Face The Second and Third Generation!

Joshua 24:31; Judges 2:6-13

Introduction:

Now it was the second generation after Joshua and the third generation after Moses. Moses had anointed Joshua to take his place and he had gone to be with the Lord. Joshua and Caleb were the only ones left of the adults who left Egypt. The generation of those twenty years of age and older had died in the wilderness. The youth and children of that generation had entered into the promised land.

Joshua was dying, and after the generation that outlived Joshua had passed from the scene we have some very sad words. *“Another generation arose who knew not the Lord, nor His works.”* What will happen to this next generation? What happened to the Israelites who were one or two generations removed from the early days of God’s mighty power in their presence? What did the Israelites do? Had they obeyed what God had desired of them? What were the results of their decisions? **Was this new generation to blame for their condition?**

As we come to these third generation we will see the things they *forgot*; the things they *changed*, and the things they *lost*! Much of this took place because of the failure of the second generation... the generation who outlived Joshua.

I. SOME THINGS THEY FORGOT:

(study Judges 3:2; Deut. 4: 9, 10, 15, 22-24; 5:27-29; 31:11-13; Psa. 40:2)

A. They forgot the work of God in their early beginnings.

They forgot what God had done in their midst. The second generation (the youth in Mose’s day) had done much murmuring and complaining about most everything that God had done for them. They hated the way, hated the manna, and hated much of what was taking place. Surely they had forgot about the mighty works of God in their midst as He prepared them to leave Egypt. They were also the recipients of God’s judgment upon them as all over twenty years of age died in the wilderness. As the parents who had left Egypt and had witnessed God’s miraculous power spent much of their time murmuring and complaining surely they had a terrible impact on their children who outlived Joshua. All this even though God cared for them in miraculous ways.

B. They forgot to teach the next generation all about their wonderful, loving God.

Who was accountable that another generation arose who knew not the Lord? Who had failed to teach the next generation (the third after leaving Egypt) about their mighty God?

Old Testament fathers were to have spent time with their children and taught them.. *“line upon line, precept upon precept.”* They should have taught the next generation about God’s holiness, power, mercy, love, and care. They should have taught them what it meant to trust God.

In Joshua chapter four, (at Gilgal) we read of their taking 12 stones to leave them there where they lodged. These were to be a **sign** for their children to ask questions so they could rehearse the story of God’s mighty working in their behalf as they cross over Jordan and conquered Jericho.

Each generation must be taught so they know what God desires to do in their lives and about the miracles God had wrought. They need to understand the mighty power of the heaven Father and His desire to bless His obedient people.

C. They failed to pass on their heritage: (see Psalm 78, 127, 128; 111)

Another generation arose they knew not the Lord or His works! Did they pass on the history of God’s acts? What about this new generation referred to Judges chapter two? Did they know what God had done in Egypt.. in the wilderness.. the manna given of

God.. or what had taken place at Mount Sinai? What did they know of God's mighty hand in their midst, and what God had wrought among them!

Did they know that their parent's clothing did not wear out, probably had but little sickness? Did they know of the tremendous amount of food equivalent to over 100 train cars a day that God provided for their care? (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11) And God had provided for all their livestock as well.

In the purpose of the Passover feast we see God's hand in a tremendous way and the celebration of this should have given the occasion needed to teach a new generation. *"The blood shall be a token.. this day for you a memorial.. keep it as a feast forever"* This should have reminded them of their heritage and history of God's miraculous care.

D. They forgot that God's promises were conditional:

Did not presume upon God? Did they now think that since God had done such wonderful things they were immune to any judgment? (consider: Deut 30:15-20; Deut 4:22-24; 29-31, 39, 40; Josh 1:1-9)

II. SOME THINGS THEY CHANGED: (Judges 2: 7, 10-12)

Things do change -- schools change, people change, institutions and movements change. All around us see change. I have seen great changes take place in many good Bible colleges over the past fifty years and not all for the good either. It is easy for us to compromise and embrace change as many things around us change. Compromise is not necessarily planned, it happens as we fail to contend for the faith. (see the book of Jude) It is so easy for us to change standards, and goals as we walk through the Christian life.

A. They changed the place of their authority:

They disregarded the former authority of God who had so wonderfully delivered them. This new generation who followed those who outlived Joshua were now the worshipers of Baal and other false gods. What a contrast to the story of Joshua chapter twenty four. (Josh. 24:14-24) As they turned to Baal they moved away from God. (compare Deut 31:11-14 and Isa. 43:10-12) They disregarded God's right over them. Their parents had failed in many ways and had not passed on the knowledge of God and the heritage of the past. To a degree the former generation had looked to God for their direction as they told Joshua they would obey him, but not with a whole heart. (Joshua 1:16-18).

B. They changed the place of confidence:

When we violate God's authority, and Word, then we lose confidence in God. When we sin, do not repent, but leave God's will and direction for our lives we will naturally feel far off and no longer trust Him. King David asked that the joy of his salvation be restored to him as well as a clean heart and a right spirit. (see Psalm 51; I John 3:21-22) What a contrast between Joshua 1:8,9 and Judges 17:6.

When people leave divine authority then there is no confidence between God and man and none between man and man.

The second generation had failed as they had murmured and complained. They had not trusted as they ought to have. God could not have authority over them and they were prone to do as they pleased.

C. They changed their personal goals: (Judges 1:21; 1:27-33)

Consider that the tribes of Israel were to destroy the wicked heathen nations as they took the land God was to give them. They were to trust God to battle with them, and for them as they obeyed.. but we read the refrain *"neither did.... " over and over again!* Now it was peace at any price. They did not want to fight, to battle, or to rid their areas of the enemy as God had commanded them. What about us, don't we have commands about facing our enemies and walking in victory? We should note such portions as I Peter 5:7-9; Ephesians 6:1-4; 10:18; and Joshua 1:1-8. While they were to drive out their enemies they did not take their stand but **compromised** instead!

D. They changed in that they wanted acceptability:

(I Sam 8:5-8; 10-20) They wanted a king and in so doing they rejected God's leadership. Their desire was a rejection of a theocracy. It was not Samuel they were rejecting but God's rulership for man's rulership. And they would pay a big price for their choice. They wanted to be like nations around them.

Often pastors face the rejection of their preaching because members would rather compromise than to accept the whole counsel of God. Contending for the faith is not a popular subject among many of God's people. Often even preachers desire to be accepted by others rather than to be accepted by God.

III. SOME THINGS THEY LOST: (Joshua 24:14-24 and Judges 2:7-10)

A. They lost their separation:

Now a new generation arose who served Baal and Ashtaroth. God had called Israel to be a separated people. Their dietary laws, and other laws that had to do with clothing and many other commands were given to make them a separated people. They were to be separated unto God. Now they would intermarry and gradually compromise every command of the Lord. In Nehemiah's day, he was very burdened about this same thing.

B. They lost their convictions: (Cf. Joshua 1:16-19)

There was no "*thus saith the Lord*" for a new generation arose who knew not God, nor His works. No longer were they seeking God's will and listening to His voice through the prophet.

The former generation had said they would not leave their God nor His will nor His commands. They stated they would do what Joshua had commanded and they would bring judgment upon any who did not obey. What a contrast on the part of this third generation.

Today the man of God must speak with conviction. When people begin to reject the authority of the Word of God, they leave their convictions. (Jude 3)

Do we build convictions in the lives of our children? A conviction should be something we would be willing to die for. It is obvious that Daniel had convictions; Joseph had convictions; Joshua had convictions; Caleb had convictions as well as many others of the Old Testament times. Do our children have convictions?

C. They lost their pioneering spirit: (Cf. Josh. 14:1; Exod. 14:13-14; Exod. 15)

Israel was expected to have a pioneering spirit as they went in to conquer the land God would give to them. Joshua was promised all the areas that they would contend for against the enemies. Caleb is famous for his pioneering spirit. This third generation were much like the spies who brought back an evil report and did not trust God to take them into the promise land.

So often today children want everything as newly weds that their parents had after many years of marriage. We live in a day when people want ease. We desire that everything comes easy. We want instant gratification -- like we have instant potatoes, instant grits, etc. We don't want to struggle, to do battle over the old sinful nature, over Satan, and the world. It is easier to give in and compromise.

D. They lost God's blessings, provisions and care: (Josh. 1:16-18)

Often God gave Israel warnings that He would withdraw His blessing at their stubbornness, rebellion, and disobedience. A reading of Deuteronomy chapters thirty and thirty one would convince us of this as well as many other portions. With these things *they also lost a tender, obedient heart:*

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

1. Each new generation must receive basic training in spiritual warfare. (Ephesians 6:10-18) Let us teach our younger generation to survive in the world outside the fortress of our homes, our churches and our Christian schools. They need to know how to stand for right, for righteousness, for God. We must not throw our children to the world, but yet expose them to the realities of what sin does and how wicked the world really is. They must gain convictions about worldliness as we show them the end results of sin lest sin, and worldliness becomes attractive. For sins delight the sinful nature.

2. We must move our youth from apathy by removing ourselves from apathy. We must help them have a burden for the lost about them and compassion for the those who know not Christ. Therefore, we must provide opportunities for them to see the power of God at work in lives to deliver from sin and to save the sin sick soul. Get them involved in a prison ministry or in some way so they might witness how sinful habits bring destruction.

3. We must build a “lest we forget ministry,” (Heb. 2:1; Deut 4:9) The idea is to create opportunities for young people where they can gain a greater appreciation for their faith, for their salvation. We must work at building a heritage and spiritual milestones that put them in good stead for maturity, growth and surrender to God.

4. We must build “conviction.” in the lives of our children and youth that they will reflect upon God’s deliverance for His people in the past and today.

They must see the monuments erected as memorials to the mighty God we serve. Young people need to see afresh through Mom and Dad’s lives what God can do. How will they have convictions against the world’s music, entertainment, and all forms of worldliness unless we help them gain those convictions early in life prior to their being swept into sin and compromise. They must gain Biblical convictions before their peers have influence in their lives.

5. The new generation must know God first hand -- Too often it is a second hand knowledge of God at best. Do our children and youth know what they believe and why they believe it? Is the Word of God the authority in their lives? We must develop a conviction for the Lord and for His Word. Do they truly have a personal relationship with Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives?

6. We must perpetuate the faith to the next generation that through teaching, and living the Word before them they will embrace God’s will. They need strong preaching of the Word as well as consistent family devotions where we actually teach the Scripture... teaching doctrine.. and a walk by faith. They must develop their own faith in God and His Word. We need such a glowing family devotional time that children and youth will build their lives in Him. A thorough study of Proverbs chapters one through seven at this point would help immensely. There you will read much about the message to “*my son, my son, my children...*”