

THE LEGACY: WHEN A GENERATION FAILS TO PASS ON THE FAITH

“And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had seen all the great works the Lord had done for Israel. But Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of one hundred and ten; and they buried him in the territory of his inheritance, at Timnath-Heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. And that entire generation was gathered to their fathers, and another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord, nor the deeds he had done for Israel” (*Judges 2:7–10*).

Every generation receives a spiritual legacy and has a responsibility to pass it on to the next generation.

Israel's tragedy was not only the death of a generation, but the loss of knowledge of God in the next generation.

The biblical account covers three generations:

1. The generation that witnessed the miracles;
2. The generation that earned its inheritance;
3. The generation that did not know the Lord.

When the legacy is not passed on, faith disappears within a few generations.

1. THE FIRST GENERATION: THEY SAW GOD'S MIRACLES

That was the generation that left Egypt. They witnessed the ten plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the pillar of fire, the pillar of cloud, the manna, and countless divine interventions.

"There has never been another prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face; nor has there been anyone like him in all the signs and wonders that the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt..." (*Deuteronomy 34:10-11*)

Although they had witnessed so many miracles, many did not develop an obedient faith.

"Yet, despite his miracles, they did not believe in him." (*Psalms 78:32*)

Experience is no substitute for obedience. Many witnessed the power of God, but died in the wilderness.



"Your corpses will fall in this desert..." (*Numbers 14:29*)

Attending church services, witnessing miracles, and listening to sermons does not guarantee spiritual maturity. A person can be surrounded by spiritual things and still not have a deep relationship with God. It's like someone who sees a fire every day but never warms themselves by it.

2. THE SECOND GENERATION: THEY CLAIMED THEIR INHERITANCE

The generation led by Joshua entered the Promised Land. They reaped what the previous generation had failed to reap.

"So Israel served the Lord throughout the days of Joshua and throughout the days of the elders who outlived him by a long time and who knew all the great deeds the Lord had done for Israel." (*Judges 2:7*)

- They knew God's works;
- They conquered cities;
- They tore down walls;
- They received the promised inheritance;

But there's an important question: Did they teach their children?

The achievement was preserved; knowledge of God was not.

The inheritance was passed down, but the faith was not passed on with the same intensity.

3. THE THIRD GENERATION: THEY DID NOT KNOW THE LORD

Here lies the greatest tragedy.

"That entire generation was gathered to their ancestors; and another generation arose after them, one that did not know the Lord or the deeds He had done for Israel." (*Judges 2:10*)

Note that the text does not say that they did not know about God. It says that they did not know the Lord. There is a difference between hearing about something and knowing it.

The word "to know" involves relationship, experience, and intimacy. They have lost the nation's spiritual memory.

THE FAILURE OF THE LEGACY

God had commanded that His Word be taught continually.

"These words that I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit at home, when you walk along the way, when you lie down, and when you rise." (*Deuteronomy 6:6-7*)

The third generation was the result of the second generation's negligence. The parents acquired land, but failed to win their children's hearts.

THE CYCLE OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE

1. First generation: experienced the miracles;
2. Second generation: enjoyed the blessings;
3. Third generation: they forgot the God of blessings.

And when God is forgotten, idolatry takes His place.

"Then the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals." (*Judges 2:11*)

A spiritual void will always be filled by something.

THE LEGACY GOD DESIRES

God's plan was never just to save one generation. God's plan has always been to reach future generations.

"One generation will praise your works to another and proclaim your mighty deeds." (*Psalms 145:4*)



"We will tell the coming generation of the Lord's praises, of his power, and of the wonders he has done." (*Psalms 78:4*)

Biblical faith is always passed on. The gospel is like a relay race. Each generation receives the baton and must pass it on to the next.

We face a similar danger. Many parents leave behind material possessions, but they do not leave behind spiritual principles. Many children inherit houses, but they do not inherit faith. Many know the history of the church, but they do not know the God of the church. If we do not disciple our children, grandchildren, and new believers, the next generation may know our churches, our hymns, and our traditions, but they will not know the Lord.

Imagine a campfire:

- The first generation lit the fire;
- The second generation grew up with it;
- The third generation didn't add any more firewood.

The result? The fire went out. That's what happens when faith isn't passed on.

The greatest legacy we can leave behind is not money, property, or influence: it is a legacy of faith.

The question is not just, "What are we building?" but, "What will remain when we are no longer here?" Because a generation that knows God can transform a nation, but a generation that forgets God can lose everything that previous generations have achieved.

"That entire generation was gathered to their ancestors; and another generation arose after them, one that did not know the Lord or the deeds he had done for Israel." (*Judges 2:10*)

A legacy is not what we leave behind for people. A legacy is what we leave within people.

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