

## **Generation to Generation**

### **Questions that are being asked:**

- 1. Boomers: is it true? Is it *factually* true?**
- 2. Gen X: is it real? Is it authentic?**
- 3. Millenials: is it good? Is it good for me and the world?**
- 4. Gen Z: is it beautiful? Is it repentance, authentic and the good stuff of life?**

### **Challenges in first generation and second generation:**

- First generation does “whatever it takes.” Second generation does “only what I’m asked to do.”
- First generation assumes personal responsibility. Second generation assumes someone else will do it.
- First generation expects personal sacrifice. Second generation expects personal comfort.
- First generation sees problems and seeks solutions. Second generation sees problems and complains.
- First generation sees possibilities and dreams about what could be. Second generation sees barriers and reasons to quit.
- First generation hears the voice of God firsthand and owns the vision. Second generation inherits the vision secondhand and questions every decision.
- First generation steps out with bold, reckless trust in God. Second generation sits satisfied in the stability of the institution.
- First generation fears holding anything back from God. Second generation fears commitment.
- First generation feels privileged to be a part of the movement. Second generation feels entitled to the benefits of the institution.

## **Four Generations of Faith**

<https://leaders.church/4-generations-faith/>

Tony Evans and Bruce Wilkenson observation.

### **1. The First Generation “Experiences” Faith.**

It is critical that every generation have a direct “experience” with Jesus. While many are born into Christ-following homes, each person must seek a personal relationship with the Lord. When each generation “experiences” faith, then faith continues in a family generation after generation.

### **2. The Second Generation Inherits Faith.**

Being born into a Christ-following home happens a lot. It is a wonderful privilege to be raised in a home like this where everything in the home is about church and faith. I know there really are no second-generation Christians, however, unless the second generation has an “experience” of faith, the slide to faith becoming a nuisance begins.

### **3. In the Third Generation, Faith Becomes a Convenience.**

The third generation does not fully turn its back on faith but it does begin to see faith as a convenience. You have it when you marry and when you bury. You have it in a crisis. Otherwise, faith is not part of your life on a regular basis; a very dangerous position.

#### 4. In the Fourth Generation, Faith is a Nuisance.

The saddest of all generations is when a generation sees no use for faith at all and views it as a nuisance. This happens when the transfer of faith from generation to generation fails to move that generation to an “experience” of faith.

#### **Leadership from Moses to Joshua: sons do not inherit the leadership role but disciples do:**

One of the great tragedies of Moses 'life was that his children did not fill his shoes. **Rarely does one find in biblical or even general history that great people produced offspring who succeed them in a meaningful fashion.** Moses 'successor will not be among his descendants. In fact, one of his great-grandchildren will become a pagan priest.

No one has any contracts or guarantees. Greatness is not a matter of **inheritance**. It has to be earned by each individual and each generation. Even if a person is born into a great family he has to carve out his own greatness through his own efforts.

#### **Joshua – Be Strong!**

Moses 'disciple was Joshua. He was a person of great talents and enormous ability in his own right. He was a warrior, political leader, skilled negotiator, prophet and the greatest scholar of his time. Nevertheless, he may have completely subjugated himself to Moses that it was as if he had no confidence in himself when his master passed on.

Before he died, Moses blessed Joshua as follows: “If nothing else, be strong” (*Deuteronomy 31:23*). That blessing is said to

someone who may not be strong, who is beset with great inner doubts and insecurity.

## **Chazak! Be strong! Take courage!**

<https://www.czaa2.org/single-post/2018/03/10/chazak-be-strong>

“Be strong!” — Moses told him. “Be strong!” — God told him (*Joshua* 1:6, 9). “Be strong!” — the Jewish people told him (*Joshua* 1:18). That phrase is repeated time and again in the Book of Joshua.

a. Joshua was the warrior who led the battle against Amalek (*Exodus* 17:9).

b. He was the spy who went to the Land of Israel and came back to give the correct report in the face of enormous peer pressure (*Numbers* 14).

c. Sun stood still: He was the leader of the army who fought the 31 kings of Canaan and defeated them. The sun was stopped for his sake. (*Joshua* 10)

Yet everyone kept telling him, “Be strong!”

To his dying day, Joshua lived in a vacuum caused by Moses’ death. He was the disciple without his master, the student without his teacher. He did not see himself able to fill Moses’ shoes.

**Moses dies and Joshua is the national leader.**

A month after Moses died, the Jewish people crossed the Jordan, which miraculously split for them in a fashion similar to the Red Sea (*Joshua* 3:16-17).

a. Jews had returned to their homeland after a 250 year absence.

b. They would remain in the land for over 800 years, be exiled after the destruction of the First Temple in 587 BC

c. Return from Exile after 70 years.

d. Israel remains in the Promised Land 400 years

e. Israel is exiled after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD

f. remain in exile for almost 2,000 years.

g. Israel became a state 1948

Every time they came back it was with blood. Even under the protection of God, the Jewish people were never free of war.

**Amalek** attacked them almost immediately after the exodus. Then in succession they had to **fight Midian, Moab and Sichon**. When the Jewish people returned in Joshua's time it, too, would be a time of one war following another.

### **Joshua Fought the Battle at Jericho**

Joshua fought for seven years to conquer the land. It was costly, bloody and tiresome. We can well imagine that there were people who lost hope along way.

31 different kings united against them. The first battle took place just after they crossed the Jordan River near Jericho, which was a great fortress city. In one of the most renowned biblical miracles, the Jewish army marched around the city seven times blowing trumpets until the walls came tumbling down (*Joshua 6*).

There was not one Jewish casualty. It was completely miraculous. They did not even have to draw their swords from their sheaths.

### **The Battle of Ai, Confession and National Responsibility**

Given the miraculous way the Battle of Jericho went, people expected all the battles to go that way. They expected all the Canaanite cities to lay down their arms and make peace. However, it was not to be. The very next city they tried to conquer, Ai, put up a bloody fight.

The story is recounted in Chapter 7. The Jewish army was routed and 36 soldiers were killed in battle. Beyond the casualties themselves, the defeat broke their spirit. “The hearts of the people melted away” (*Joshua 7:5*). Their morale was shattered.

Joshua fell to the ground and said to God, “Did You take this people across the Jordan, to deliver us to the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Oh, God, we would have been content to dwell on the other side of the Jordan.”

This is remarkable. Joshua’s words are reminiscent of the rebels who complained to Moses every time there was trouble, “Why did you take us out of Egypt?” We hear again the echo of their

complaints – but the shocking thing now was that the words were coming out of the mouth of Joshua, the leader!

The Talmud derives a very important lesson from this: If you hear negativism long enough it will seep into you. Joshua was one of two people to stand up to the negativity of the spies – yet now he mouthed it himself!

God's response was: "Why are you laying prostrate?" Get up. There was still a war to fight. The reason you lost was because one of the soldiers sinned. Find out who it was and continue the battle.

A man by the name of Achan confessed that he had secretly taken booty and buried it (*Joshua 7:20*). After he was put to death, the Jewish army went on to capture the city of Ai.

### **The Day the Sun Stood Still: Joshua 10**

The Book of Joshua also contains the famous incident when God stopped the sun, **lengthening the day in Joshua's merit**, in order to pursue a critical battle to its end (*Joshua 10:12*). It was literally a moment frozen in time, which gave the Jewish army victory.

a. There are many interpretations of the sun standing still, including of course the *literal one*.

b. The deeper point is that over and over again the Jewish people would **never** have been able to conquer the Land of Israel by **natural means**.

It would not entail wars purely of strategy and arms. Not every battle would be openly miraculous, but in general the conquering of the Land of Israel was not going to be natural.

## The Luck of the Draw

The division of the Land of Israel between the tribes was done by choosing lots (chapters 14-21). The great moral lesson implied is that we all receive gifts from heaven not dependent upon anything logical. Why is one person born with certain gifts and not another? Why is one person born under apparently favorable circumstances and not another? Ultimately it is a mystery. It comes from God.

The division of the Land of Israel is not subject to negotiations. Everyone thinks he knows what is best for him. However, a person never really knows what is best for him. He never knows what is blessing and what is not. Many times in life things occur that we think are terribly negative, but turn out to be completely positive. And vice versa. There are people who pursue a deal again and again and again... until they finally get it – and it turns out to be a deal that undoes everything they accomplished previously.

One never knows in life. When God said the land would be divided by lots He was in effect saying, “Let me choose your lot in life for you. I know what you really need better than you do. Do not look at the other person’s property. It has nothing to do with you. Look at your own property. Look into what you are going to do with what you have.”

This great life lesson is hammered home by very method through which the Land of Israel was divided between the tribes.

[Joshua 21:43-45](#)



**So the Lord gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their ancestors, and they took possession of it and settled there. 44 The Lord gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their ancestors. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the Lord gave all their enemies into their hands. 45 Not one of all the Lord's good promises to Israel failed; every one was fulfilled. Years Later**

a. Seven years the land was more or less subdued.

b. That was followed by seven years of development as the twelve tribes divided the country.

### **Phineas and the Altar: A Witness between Us (Joshua 22)**

#### **Joshua 23: Covenant contingent on Israel being faithful**

**Before his death**, Joshua disbanded the great Jewish army that won the war. He also disbanded the central council of the tribes and thus in effect created a confederacy of twelve distinct tribes rather than a single country united with a strong central government.

They were united by a common past, a common Torah and a common God, but they were not a truly centralized political entity. As we will see in the time of Samuel, there was an advantage to that.

Joshua accomplished all the goals he set out from the beginning. Together with Moses, they were like a single, great individual who ruled and formed the people for a combined 80 years.

After them, it would be a different world. The transition from Joshua to the era of the Judges would not be so smooth. Indeed,

after Joshua the Jewish people would go into a steady decline, which would only be arrested at the time of Samuel, Saul and King David.

### **Covenant renewal ceremony and commitment (Joshua 24)**

- a. Similar to the speeches in Acts 2-8
- b. History of Israel and the leadership of Abraham

### **October 5, 2023: Marching at the Biblical site of Joshua's altar at Mount Ebal in Samaria**

<https://allisrael.com/thousands-of-israelis-march-in-defense-of-biblical-joshuas-altar-site>

### **Ellie Wiesel: Joshua of the Bible, article from Bible Review**

<https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/hebrew-bible/joshua-in-the-bible/>