

HAVING A MULTI-GENERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

*“Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways!
You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD. The LORD bless you from Zion!
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life! May you see your children’s children! Peace be upon Israel!” Psalm 128:1-6*

In Deuteronomy 6:3, Moses makes it clear that the commandments are important *“that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord God of your fathers has promised you.”* Blessing and cursing will follow in family lines. Deuteronomy 7:9—*“Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them.”*

GOD WORKS THROUGH FATHERS TO IMPLEMENT GENERATIONAL VISION

1. The Bible reveals the central role entrusted to fathers to play the premier function in training the next generation.
2. Faithfulness through genealogical lines:
 - The Old Testament carefully traces the story of faithfulness to God through genealogical lines. Matthew tells us that there are 14 generations from Adam to Abraham, 14 generations from Abraham to David and 14 generations from David to Christ.
3. The prominent role of fathers in the Old Testament:
 - With the opening pages of the Bible we are shown a trans-generational view of life. The first eleven chapters of Genesis, revolve around two fathers and their sons: Adam and Noah. From chapter 12 forward the focus is on four patriarchs and their sons: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

I. OVERCOMING THE SINFUL PATTERNS OF UNFAITHFUL FATHERS (A CASE STUDY)

*Psalm 78:1-11—“Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; **incline your ears to the words of my mouth!** I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, **but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.** He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which **he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget***

the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God. The Ephraimites, armed with the bow, turned back on the day of battle. They did not keep God's covenant, but refused to walk according to his law. They forgot his works and the wonders that he had shown them."

This Psalm highlights three points of Israel's history from Egypt to King David:

1. The repeated disobedience and ingratitude of unfaithful fathers
2. The recurring and unfailing mercy of God to the disobedient nation
3. A vision for the future generations

The study of history is not just the relating of facts. History can teach us lessons that need to be learned so that we do not fall into the same sins of those who have gone before us.

Zechariah 1:4-6—"Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried out, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.' But they did not hear or pay attention to me, declares the LORD. Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers? So they repented and said, As the LORD of hosts purposed to deal with us for our ways and deeds, so has he dealt with us."

[These issues impact women as well.]

Do the iniquities and sins of fathers/parents impact their children?

- Exodus 20:5—"You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me." Also see Exodus 34:7; Deuteronomy 5:9-10; Numbers 14:17-21.
- Jeremiah 14:20—"We acknowledge our wickedness, O LORD, and the iniquity of our fathers, for we have sinned against You."
- The Hebrew word for visiting is *pawkad*. It means "to superintend, to watch over to oversee." Visiting does not mean that it is a final penalty or a permanent state. The oversight relates directly to the responses of the sons and daughters to the iniquities of their fathers. If they continue in them they will be judged, if they acknowledge them and turn from them they will live.
- The Greek word for iniquity is *anomeeah*. It means not being subject to God's Law. Another way to put it—doing our own will (Matthew 7:21-23; Isaiah 53:6).
- A son cannot blame his father for his sin. God will deal with each one according to his own actions.
 - Jeremiah 32:18-19—"You show steadfast love to thousands, but you repay the guilt of fathers to their children after them, O great and mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts, great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the children of man, rewarding each one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds."

SATAN’S GOAL: To get you to believe that generational issues do not really matter or it does not affect me.

Our Heavenly Father will be a father to us.

- *Psalm 2:7—“I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”*
- *2 Corinthians 6:18—“and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”*

God is able and wants to mentor each man.

- *Galatians 4:4-7—“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”*
- *Hebrews 12:5-8—“And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”*

Insights from Asaph in Overcoming the Sinful Patterns (Psalm 78:1-8a)

Asaph gives fathers direction to communicate to their children, to address the hopelessness of the situation. Many fathers lack training and lack role models.

- He is tuned into hearing from God. His ears need to be inclined to the right source. (In God’s Word on a regular basis.)
- He is a man with a message, he communicates to his family and what fathers say matters.
- He has a generational perspective. **Generational thinking generates right thinking and setting of priorities.**
- He is a man who praises God and finds his strength in God.
- He teaches his children to put their hope in God, not to forget what God has done, to keep God’s commands, and to break the ungodly sin patterns.

Sinful Patterns to Overcome in our Lives (Psalm 78:8-11)

1. **Stubborn**—“Unreasonably obstinate; inflexibly fixed in opinion; not to be moved or persuaded by reasons; inflexible; as a stubborn son; a stubborn mind or soul” (Webster 1828 Dictionary).
 - Stubbornness is a manifestation of pride in our lives; pride is an improper focus on self.
 - *1 Samuel 15:23a—“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.”*

- Manifestations of Stubbornness:
 - Discontent and ungratefulness—I have a hard time accepting my suffering.
 - Unforgiving and bitterness—“I cannot release my offenders to God.”
 - Self-willed, rather than seeking the will of God.
 - Leaning on my own understanding rather than seeking God’s guidance.
 - Reliance on my own strength and abilities rather than depending on the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - Blaming vs. recognizing and admitting when they are wrong
- 2. **Rebellious**—As the sin of witchcraft, coming under the influence of Satan; having an independent spirit that is motivated by pride in our lives.
 - Rebellion causes people to resent and reject correction.
 - In Psalm 68:6, David describes the rebellious as living in a dry land. Those with rebellious hearts will always have unmet needs.
 - When a rebellious couple marries, the rebellion is turned toward each other and each partner reacts to the control of the other.
 - I Samuel 12:15 states, *“If you rebel against the Lord...then the hand of the Lord will be against you.”* Because God cannot use someone who exhibits a rebellious spirit, He seeks to uproot them and will often use calamity (Proverbs 1:24-25) to bring that person to a place of usefulness to Himself.
- 3. **Their heart was not steadfast**—they set their heart on wrong things.
- 4. **Unfaithful spirit toward God**—they served false gods, idolatry.
- 5. **Cowardly**—they did not fight for righteousness.
 - God is calling men out of their passivity all throughout scripture.
 - *Proverbs 24:24, 25—“He who says to the wicked, ‘You are righteous,’ him the people will curse; Nations will abhor him. But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, And a good blessing will come upon them.” (NKJV)*
- 6. **Did not keep God’s covenant**—they were not doers of the Word.
- 7. **Forgetful of the works of God**—they did not pass on to their sons God’s redemptive history.

II. WHY SHOULD WE HAVE A GENERATIONAL VISION?

1. **It is God’s design for the family. It is his perspective.** (Deuteronomy 6,7)
2. **God makes covenants with generations.** (Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc.)
3. **God desires godly seed; it is part of his plan for evangelism.**
 - *Malachi 2:14-15—“Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth”*
4. **God cleanses the bloodline of His people.** (Numbers 14:17-19)

5. **We are to be sent out as shining lights in this world.** (Philippians 2:13-16)

III. CONSIDERATIONS FOR A GENERATIONAL VISION

1. **God turns the heart of fathers to their children.** *Malachi 4:2-6— “But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts. ”Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”*
2. **We need to redeem the time we have in this life and use it to build into further generations.** *Psalm 90:9-17— “For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh. The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? **So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.** Return, O Lord! How long? Have pity on your servants! Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil. Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!”*
3. **Fathers must be men of conviction and live their lives according to God’s core values in all their relationships.**
 - God
 - Wife
 - Children
 - Fellowship with Others
 - Ministry/Work
 - Discipleship/Training Others

Personal Evaluation Questions:

1. Do you have a generational vision for your family?
2. Have you found yourself embracing the Biblical foundations for having a generational vision for your family?
3. Has the impact of the gospel in your life turned your heart toward your children?
4. Have you had a half time evaluation in your life? Are you winning or losing?
5. How does God want to use your temporal blessings of good health, time, and money to build the Kingdom of God?
6. What core, biblical values do you live your life by?
7. Are these some generational iniquities that need to be addressed in your life?