

Quarter Four: Lessons of Faith from Joshua

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Lesson 11—Living in the Land

Tuesday: Haunted by the Past

December 9, 2025

- **Last Week:** “The True Joshua”
 - Joshua 1 & various Scriptures
 - Type & antitype; book of Joshua & Joshua vs Jesus
 - Christological, ecclesiological, eschatological fulfillments
- **This Week:** “Living in the Land”
 - Joshua 22
 - Handling disagreements amongst ourselves, even in the church
 - Dispute in Israel over the altar erected on west side of Jordan

Memory Text: “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Prov 15:1, NIV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Commitment (John D)
 - Josh 22:1 – 8 – commitment of 2 ½ tribes on the east side of the Jordan to fight with their brothers to conquer the land on the west side (prob 6 – 7 years)
- 2. **Monday:** Accusations ... (Ryan J)
 - Josh 22:9 – 20 – rift between 9 ½ tribes vs 2 ½ tribes over building of altar; Western tribes ready for war with their brothers in the east
- 3. **Tuesday:** Haunted by the Past (Jill)
 - Josh 22:13 – 15; Num 25 – Phinehas’ leadership; tribes concerned that eastern tribes falling into apostasy
- 4. **Wednesday:** A Gentle Answer (James)
 - Josh 22:21 – 29 – answer of the eastern tribes = it was a memorial, not an altar; they wanted to be faithful to God; tribes in west happy with faithfulness of eastern tribes
- 5. **Thursday:** Conflict Resolution (SQ)
 - Josh 22:30 – 34 – conflict resolution – in Joshua’s day & today in the church

Tuesday: Haunted by the Past

Josh 22:13 – 15; Num 15

- Thought Questions:
 - When has a mistake from your past adjusted your present course?
 - Have you ever overreacted because you messed up before?
 - Is it easier or harder to stand for the right today if you failed before?

- **Haunted by the Past:** A past mistake can
 - A. Make us more diligent today
 - B. Make us overreact today (when it's not an issue)
 - C. Make us discouraged & just want to quit today
 - Western tribes chose Option B
- Josh 22:13, 14 – “Then the children of Israel sent Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest to the children of Reuben, to the children of Gad, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, (14) and with him ten rulers, one ruler each from the chief house of every tribe of Israel; and each one was the head of the house of his father among the divisions of Israel.”
 - Western tribes chose 10 rulers from each tribe **and** Phinehas
 - Why Phinehas?
 - Son of Eleazar, High Priest of Israel
 - Position of leadership / influence
 - Would succeed his father, after his death
 - Phinehas stood against sin before
 - Num 25
- Num 25:1 – 3 – “Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. (2) They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. (3) So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel.”
 - Num 24 - Balaam had failed to curse Israel – went to curse, & blessings came out instead
 - Balaam developed plan to seduce male Israelites through heathen Moabite women
 - Enticed Israelite men with food & sex
 - Sexual sin – immorality
 - Food – tired of manna, getting meat
 - Led to idolatry (back at golden calf, Ex 32)
- Num 25:4, 5 – “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.’ (5) So Moses said to the judges of Israel, ‘Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor.’”
 - Judgment was executed – camp must be cleansed from sin / idol worship
- Num 25:6 – “And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.”
 - Leaders executing justice
 - Children of Israel weeping for sins of people; exhibiting repentance
 - Audacity of one Israelite to boldly sin
 - Not just quietly in his tent
 - Brought a Midianite woman into camp
 - Num 22: Midianites partnered with Moab against Israel
 - Public sin in front of all of Israel & Moses
- Num 25:7, 8 – “Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; (8) and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.”
 - Phinehas took a public stand against idolatry and sin

- Not afraid as a leader to confront sin directly
- Num 25:9 – “And those who died in the plague were 24 thousand.”
 - Highest number of casualties at any time from Egypt to Canaan
 - 3k at Golden Calf
 - 14,700 at Korah incident – rebellion against Moses / Aaron
 - This generation was to be accountable to learn from the sins of their parents
- **Balance:** Western tribes remembered Bael Peor incident
 - Don’t repeat past sins
 - Stop idolatry in its tracks
 - With eastern tribes, they overreacted before finding out the facts
 - Can we overact because of our past failures or mistakes?

4 keys to not being haunted by the past

- **Key 1: Remember the past** (counterintuitive)
 - Sometimes, we stuff the past
 - Ignore it; wish it away
 - Deny it – I never did that
 - That was never done to me
 - Key is “How” we remember the past
 - Luke 17:32 – “Remember Lot’s wife.”
 - **Remember how God dealt with other’s sin**
 - Deut 9:7 – “Remember! Do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness, from the day that you departed from the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD.”
 - **Remember how God dealt with your own sin**
 - Isa 46:9, 10 – “Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me. (10) Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet.”
 - **Remember Who our God** is in contrast to ourselves & our problems
 - Ps 119:49, 50 – “Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have caused me to hope. (50) This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your Word has given me life.”
 - **Remember the promises in His Word**
 - Ps 77 = a cry for help during the night
 - The faithful & merciful God of the exodus seems far away
 - Where are You now, God?
 - Remembering God’s faithfulness in the past gives courage for the present
 - **Remember what our God has done for us**
 - Vs 1 – 4 = Cry in anguish & distress
 - Vs 3 – “I remembered God, and was **troubled**; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.”
 - Troubled = Heb, depicts the roar of raging waters

- Why does remembering God cause Him so much anguish?
 - Source of His pain & distress:
 - Is the God of the past, still the God of the present?
 - Vs 5 – “I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times...(11) I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember Your wonders of old.”
 - Remember God’s faithfulness in your life
 - His goodness
 - His answered prayers
- **Key 2: Receive & accept His forgiveness**
 - 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
 - He forgives & cleanses
 - We simply confess & accept by faith
 - Not that God can’t forgive: that we struggle to accept that forgiveness by faith
 - Heb 11 – no sins recorded
 - Abraham’s sin with Hagar?
 - Doesn’t exist
 - Sarah’s laughter & distrust that God could fulfill the promise?
 - Moses’ murder?
 - Gideon’s multiple fleeces?
 - David’s adultery?
- **Key 3: Look to Jesus**
 - Heb 12:1, 2 – “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) **looking unto Jesus**, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - Looking unto Jesus
 - Not self or sins
 - Not past victories or defeats
 - Look to Jesus
 - 2 Cor 3:18 – “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
 - Transformed = Gk, metamorphised
- **Key 4: Make the right decision today, regardless of the past**
 - If we stepped into sin in the past (or made an honest mistake), tempted to
 - Make the same mistake – in a rut, easier
 - *Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic
 - Lack courage to do the right thing
 - *Messed up before, who am I to do the right thing now?

- *David & his sons
- Overcorrect & jump to conclusions & judge others without knowing the facts
 - *Western Israelites – assumed the worst about those on the Eastern side

4 keys to not being haunted by the past

- **Key 1:** Remember the past
- Key 2: Receive & accept His forgiveness
- Key 3: Look to Jesus
- Key 4: Make the right decision today, regardless of the past