

May 23, 2010

JOSHUA AND THE LAND OF PROMISE
(An Introduction to the Book of Joshua)
Joshua 1: 1-3

It has come the time in the history of Israel for them to be given a land of their own. **Up** to this time they lived in tents and caves. **Up** to this time they have lived on land someone ELSE possessed. **Now**, it is time for them to be given the land they have been PROMISED.

Look at Joshua 1: 1-3, “**Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,**

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.”

God PROMISED this land to Abraham and to his ōseedö after him.

Look at Gen 13: 14-17, “**And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:**

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.”

The PROMISE of this land was reiterated to Isaac.

Look at Gen 26: 2-5, “**And the LORD appeared unto him (Isaac), and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:**

3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;

4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

The PROMISE of this land was carried on to Jacob.

Look at Gen 28: 13-15, ð **And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;**

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.”

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the ðpatriarchsö of Israel. They are the Fathers. They are the ones to whom God PROMISED this land. Each one of them lived in this land, but neither of them ever owned (or possessed) the land.

Look at Heb 11: 8-10, **“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.**

9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.”

God PROMISED Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He would give their ðdescendantsö a land. The book of Joshua is all about the nation Israel taking possession of that land. But, as we will learn today (and throughout the study of Joshua), it is not just about the LAND. It is much more than HISTORY. It is about a (physical) land. And, we will see much HISTORY. But, if all we learn is a history lesson about a physical land given to National Israel, we missed it.

This study is about what that land TYPIFIED. We must see how every Regenerated sinner in every generation has a (spiritual) connection to each of these men, and, therefore, a (spiritual) connection to this land.

God promised Abraham that he would be ðthe father of many nationsö.

Look at Gen 17: 4-6, **“As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.**

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.”

God is speaking here of those chosen and redeemed and regenerated sinners in every generation. It is a spiritual promise with spiritual implications.

Every sinner in every generation who worships the God of Abraham, who has the faith of Abraham, is a (Spiritual) descendant of Abraham.

Look at Gal 3: 6-9, “**Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.**

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

Also, every regenerated sinner in every generation is a ðchild of promiseö like Isaac.

Abraham had two sons. The one, Ishmael, was by Hagar, Sara’s handmaid. The other was Isaac by Abraham’s wife, Sarah. Isaac was the child of promise. He was a TYPE of Christ, who is THE Promised Seed. Brethern are those born of God in every generation, and are, therefore (spiritually) connected to Abraham, and to Isaac, the child of promise.

Look at Gal 4:28 and 31, “**Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.**”

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”

Every elect sinner is also connected to Jacob, because we all have the nature of Jacob. What nature is that? The nature of a supplanter, trickster, deceiver. Jacob tricked his brother Esau into selling him the family birthright for a bowl of porridge. Nevertheless, Jacob was ðlovedö by God with an everlasting love. “**Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.**”

God always reminds His people who we are by nature: **Because** it is who we are by nature that reminds us of our NEED for salvation TOTALLY (outside) ourselves. **Who** are we? **We** are ðsons of Jacobö.

Look at Mal 3: 6, “**For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.**”

It is NOT because of who WE are that any sinner is not consumed. **It is** because of who GOD is.

We can see, then, the (spiritual) connection of every Regenerated sinner to the Fathers.

There is another thing we must see if this study is to be more than a history lesson. **God** has not just written a bunch of facts and had them collected in a book. **No! He** caused sinners to actually live out these facts. **I.e. He** didn’t just tell about a child of promise. **He** promised Abraham and Sarah a son and then waited until they were too old (naturally

speaking) to have children. **Then** He miraculously gave them Isaac. **But** Isaac is a TYPE. He is a PICUTRE of the GREATER Promised Seed, who is Christ.

You and I know that the whole Bible is about Christ. **It's** about His person (God-man). **It's** about His offices (Prophet, Priest and King). **It's** about His work of redeeming His chosen people. **And**, there are many pictures and types of Christ in the Old Testament. **Joshua** and the land of promise are but two of these (many) types.

Up to this point in Israel's history, they have wandered. **Their** Fathers wandered. **They** went down to Egypt and became bondmen to them for 400 years. **Most** recent to the beginning of this book, they had wandered 40 years in the wilderness because their fathers rebelled against God's promise. **All** of that is described in the first five books of the Bible.

The book of Joshua is about REST. **God** gave this nation REST from their wanderings. **He** gave them REST from their bondage. **He** gave them REST from their idolatry. **I think** we will see this land of promise as a TYPE of the (eternal) REST God gives His people in Christ.

The nation Israel did not start out in this REST. **They** first had to wander. **They** first had to be enslaved. **They** first had to be delivered from bondage in Egypt. **But**, they were PROMISED this REST (even before they needed it). **Remember** what God told Jacob in a verse we looked at earlier.

Look back at Gen 28: 15, **“And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.”**

Jacob was living in Canaan (the land of Promise). **But**, God told him that he would not remain there uninterrupted. **He** would leave this land. He would go into Egypt. **The** PROMISE is to bring Israel AGAIN into this land of promise. **He** is telling Jacob about a deliverance for his people (years) before there was a NEED for such a deliverance.

When God appointed Christ the SURETY of His chosen people and gave us grace in Him before the world began, He was doing the same thing. **He** was insuring the deliverance of His people, a deliverance, which at that time, only He knew His people would need.

Joshua led the children of Israel into the land they had been promised thru their Fathers. **Each** family in the twelve tribes was given an inheritance in that land. **They** were given REST from their wanderings, REST from their slavery, REST from their idolatry. **But**, that was just a picture (a TYPE) of the eternal REST Christ gives each of His elect in each successive generation.

Look at Heb 4: 8-9, **“For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.”**

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

If Joshua had given Israel (eternal) REST, there would be no mention of ðanotherö. But, Joshua's REST was temporal and typical. It was typical of that (eternal) REST God's people were promised when Christ was made their Surety in the everlasting covenant of grace. And, it was typical of the (eternal) REST Christ's sheep will be given in each successive generation.

That is what this ðageö is all about. It is about God öbringing US inö.

Look at Deut 6: 21-23, “Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand:
22 And the LORD shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes:
23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.”

This ðageö is about God gathering His elect people from wherever He has sent them.

Look at Jer 32: 37-40, “Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:
38 And they shall be my people, and I will be their God:
39 And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:
40 And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.”

This ðageö is all about Christ ödeliveringö His sheep from the öfear of deathö that holds all of us in bondage by nature.

Look at Heb 2: 14-15, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

The Gospel is commanding EVERY sinner who is privileged to hear it to REST where God has RESTED. REST in the Righteousness Christ worked out in His life and death.

Look at Heb 4: 10-11, “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.
11 ¶ Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

When did Christ rest from His works? **When** He had put away the sin of His people.
Heb 1: 3 says, “when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

He ōsat downö (because the work was done). **He RESTED** (because everything necessary for the Final Glory of His sheep was finished). **God** commands sinners to REST their whole salvation right there (in the finished work of Christ ALONE).

I believe the land of promise is a TYPE of the ōrestö found (exclusively) in the doing and dying of Christ ALONE. **Not** one sinner starts out their religious lives THERE (i.e. resting in Christ ALONE).

But, EVERY sinner (chosen in Christ) ENDS UP there. **EVERY** sinner (redeemed by Christ) ENDS UP ōrestingö all of their salvation in Christø work ALONE.

Not ONE sinner God has chosen; not ONE sinner Christ has redeemed will be left ōwanderingö in a religion that fails to tell them about the Savior who has done EVERYTHING to ōsaveö His people from their sins. **The Spirit of God** will bring each of them to REST in Christ ALONE.

The question for sinners is, ōWhere (in whom) are YOU ōrestingö? **Are** you ōrestingö in a (so called) ōsaviorö who only made a way for sinners IF they will do something? **Or**, **are** you ōrestingö in THE Savior, whose obedience unto death brought salvation to EVERY sinner He died for?

The land of Promise was a (literal) land. **But**, it is also a TYPE of the REST God gives each elect sinner in each generation.

Now, letø look at Joshua, the one chosen to lead his nation into the land of promise.

God had told Moses that he would not be the one to take Israel into the Promised Land. **When** Moses knew Godø mind would not be changed on this matter, he asked Him to give the people another leader.

Look at Numbers 27: 16-17, “**And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying,**

16 Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,

17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.”

Moses did not want the children of Israel to be left to themselves. **And**, God responded to his request.

Look at Numbers 27: 18-20, “**And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;**

19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight.

20 And thou shalt put *some* of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.”

öTake, Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit.ö

Joshua had many qualifications to be the leader of Israel when Moses was gone. **He had** been with them in the Exodus from Egypt. **He had** been Moses' öministerö from early on. **He had** been the successful commander of Israel's armed forces since they came out of Egypt. **He had** accompanied Moses to the ömountö when he received the 10 commandments. **Joshua** and Caleb were two (of twelve) spies to give a ögoodö report concerning the Land of Promise. **He was** WELL qualified to lead Israel.

But, the ONLY qualification stated is öa man in whom is the spiritö. **He** was a man who would listen and öwholly followö the Lord. **Christ** (alone) is the Shepherd of His sheep. **And**, the ONLY qualification an öunder shepherdö needs is a willingness to follow Him.

Look back at Joshua 1: 1, “**Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,**”

That is what we will find throughout the Book of Joshua. **The** Lord speaks, and Joshua follows His instructions.

As the land of promise was a TYPE of the REST the people of God must and shall be given, we see in Joshua another TYPE.

Joshua was the one chosen by God to bring the nation Israel into the land of promise. **And**, as such, he is a TYPE of Christ. **Joshua** led Israel into the land of promise and made sure that each family received the inheritance they had been promised. **That is** TYPICAL of Christ bringing His people (His sheep) into that örestö they were promised in eternity and must and (SHALL) be given in each generation.

We will close this introduction to Joshua with the final words Joshua spoke to Israel. **These** are words we have heard quoted many times. **This** is after every household has been given their promised inheritance. **Joshua** has finished his mission. **He is** at the end of his earthly life.

Look at Joshua 24: 14-15, “ **Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.**
15 ¶ And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

The honor of God's character demanded that He give every family of Israel the land He had promised them thru Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **Failure** to do that would have

dishonored His great name. **A Just** God fulfills His promises. **They** MUST have that land.

God has RESTED the honor of His character as a Just God and Savior in His Son. **He** has RESTED His (Redemptive) glory in the Righteousness Christ worked out in His life and death. **And**, that is the ONLY place of (true) REST for any sinner. **And**, Christ will not fail to bring EVERY sinner He has redeemed and God has justified in Him into THAT REST.

So, I leave everyone listening today with this encouragement from the book of Hebrews, **“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.”**

The Book of Joshua will reveal many more pictures and types. **But**, each of them is designed to bring sinners to the Christ of Scripture, the Christ whose obedience unto death put away the sin of EVERY sinner He died for and established the Righteousness by which God justifies the ungodly.

Pray for me in this study. Pray that we will all learn more of Christ.

By Mark Pannell