

The Rest God Gives

Joshua 1:10-18

Hebrews 4; Numbers 16 & Luke 9

The Bible is the revelation of God. In it, we learn who God is, how to relate to him, what he requires, blesses and curses. This is important, because as the book of Genesis and Exodus demonstrate, there is only one God to whom we must respond and whom we cannot escape.

Book's Theme: 21:45 - *Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. ⁴⁴ And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. ⁴⁵ Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.*

In Joshua, Israel has left Egypt, wandered for 40 years and is now camped on the eastern side of the Jordan River, ready to cross into the Promised Land.

Picture of Map of Israel crossing Jordan River

1:2 - *...arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.*

Last week we saw two important things:

- 1 – God is giving Israel the land but that does not absolve Israel of responsibility.
- 2 – God works through Joshua as the people's representative.

V 6 - *Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.*

Here is a video to help us better understand the book -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqOqJIFF_eU

The section of the book we're looking at is 1:10-18 and it concerns itself with God's ultimate goal for Israel and us – rest

Would you think for a moment about what most keeps you from trusting God and keep that in your mind as we walk through these verses?

And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, ¹¹ "Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'" ¹² And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, ¹³ "Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.' ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and

your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them,¹⁵ until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”¹⁶ And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses!¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.

In Numbers 32 and Deuteronomy 3:12-20 Moses gave 2 ½ half tribes, Reubenites, Gadites and half the tribe of Manasseh, land on the Eastern side of Jordan and not actually in Canaan where Moab presently lived.

First: The Rest God Gives. 13-15

¹³ “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them,¹⁵ until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

God’s goal for all creation is Sabbath rest (Genesis 1:1-2:3).

God’s ultimate goal for all of us is rest. It is an eternal rest typified in the trust we place in Jesus that gives us rest now

The 4th commandment to honor the Sabbath with rest reminds us that salvation is a gift that cannot be earned, and that God’s ultimate goal is to give his people eternal rest

This is why the idea of rest is so important in Joshua -

Joshua 21:44 – And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands.

Joshua 22:4 – And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brothers, as he promised them.

Joshua 23:1- A long time afterward, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their surrounding enemies, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years,

Because it points to a day of eternal rest –

Isaiah 2:2-5 – *It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, ³ and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law,^[a] and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.*

Our response to this promise of rest is

⁵ *O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.*

Joshua’s leadership of Israel to victory over the 7 nations in Canaan prefigures Jesus leadership of the church in victory that ends in a forever rest.

1 Corinthians 15:56-57 - *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 2:14 - *But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.*

The rest that Israel entered into ended because of their disobedience. But God has promised a rest not dependent on our work but that of Christ

Hebrews 4:1-11 – **T**

That rest won for us by Jesus will one day be realized when we cross over—not the Jordan River—but into the presence of God. There at last, in the true promised land which is glorious beyond measure (because of the presence of God in all his glory) we will be forever safe from all our enemies. Jesus Christ has won the final victory for us, defeating sin and conquering death and the grave in his cross and resurrection. This is why we are exhorted to strive to enter that rest through faith in Christ and then to live our lives in light of that glorious day when all the struggles of life finally give way to the ultimate Sabbath rest in the presence of our God. The Lord promises rest to his weary people. That rest comes through faith in Jesus Christ. When Joshua leads Israel into Canaan and they are victorious over the Canaanites so they can rest, Joshua is actually pointing us to Jesus Christ, in whom we find that true Sabbath rest which God has promised to his people. For Jesus has won the victory. As he himself promises us, “come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” For he is our Sabbath rest and he is the fulfillment of everything God promised to Israel on the plains of Moab.

– Kim Riddlebarger

Second: The Allegiance We Offer. 16-18

¹⁶ *And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses! ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your*

commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.

Israel pledges loyalty to Joshua in the same way they followed Moses. And it was important that they follow Moses because Moses was God's appointed leader.

Israel rebelled against Moses 7 times during the Wilderness wanderings -

1. "And the people **complained** about their hardships." (11:1) "And the rabble among them had greedy desires... and said 'Who will give us meat?'" (11:4)
2. "And Miriam and Aaron **spoke against** Moses." (12:1)
3. "And all the community raised their voice... and **grumbled against** Moses and Aaron." (14:1-2)
4. "And Korah... with Nathan and Abiram... with two hundred and fifty leaders of the community... **rose up against** Moses." (16:1-3)
5. "And the entire community **grumbled against** Moses and Aaron." (16:41)
6. "And the people **quarreled** with Moses." (20:3)
7. "And the people **spoke against** God and Moses." (21:5)

Perhaps the most devastating picture of the results of rebellion against Moses is found in

Numbers 16:31-35 & 41-50 – T

Why is rebellion so devastating? It is summarized well in the words Jesus spoke

Matthew 7:12 - *Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy^[a] that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.*

And then summarized by the apostle Paul –

Acts 4:12 - *And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*"

In Moses and Joshua, God is teaching his people and demonstrating for us, the importance of following his appointed leader. Who does Moses and Joshua foreshadow? Who is God's ultimate leader? Jesus!

Luke 9:28-36 - *Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. ³⁰ And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"—not*

knowing what he said. ³⁴ As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" ³⁶ And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.

Third: The Fight We Endure. 14-15 & 17

There are two enemies –

a) Outside

14-15a - ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, ¹⁵ until the LORD gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them.

b) Inside

¹⁷ Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses! ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.

Look at 17a - *Just as we obeyed Moses in all things.* Did they?

17b - *so we will obey you.* And Joshua probably said, "Thanks, I look forward to that..."

It was the negative report of the spies in Numbers 13:30-14:3 that kept Israel in the wilderness for 40 years.

Numbers 14:2-3 - *And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!" ³ Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" ⁴ And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt."*

There are voices outside of you and inside your head that tell you not to trust Jesus.

Conclusion:

Israel did not fear God only. They feared Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, broke their covenant with God and made covenants with these nations, accepting their gods as god. As a result, God used these nations to remove Israel from the land of promised rest to all that was involved in captivity.

The same choices that faced Israel also tempt us.

Will we serve those gods that tend to rule our lives; fear, worry, peer pressure, comfort, stuff, memories, personal agendas? Do we submit the whole of our lives to God's rule or do we pick and choose what we let God control versus what we try to control?

Is the God of the Bible worthy of your trust?

Joshua 24:14-15 - "Now therefore fear the LORD and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. ¹⁵ And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Community Groups:

Community Groups:

- 1 – What things most trouble you and test your trust in God?
- 2 – What do you do to rest from anxiety, work, memories or what most presses you?
- 3 – What are popular stress relievers among your friends, family, co-workers?
- 4 – How do temporary respites solve and not solve whatever stress you?
- 5 – Think of some biblical examples that demonstrate God's trustworthiness.
- 6 – Share some personal examples of God's faithfulness.
- 7 – In your own words, what does it mean to trust Jesus?
- 8 – How can you trust Jesus in the midst of life's crisis?
- 9 – How could knowing the Bible help you in that time?
- 10 – What does a life look like that trusts Jesus instead of choosing worldly options?
- 12 – How did Israel fail to trust God at the Red Sea? In the wilderness? In the Promised Land?
- 13 – What did it cost them to mistrust God and place their trust in worldly answers?
- 14 – What steps can you take to regularly, in the moment of mistrust?