

JOSHUA: GOD'S PROMISE AND HIS PEOPLE'S OBEDIENCE



Word: Revelation 21-22

Revelation 21:1-8

¹ Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” ⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” ⁶ He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

Revelation 22:1-5

¹ Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 22:12, 13, 18 & 19

¹² “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.... ¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

Between the death of Moses and the death of Joshua, Israel moved into the land. Joshua tells this story. This is clear from the very structure of the book: after making preparations and crossing into the land (Joshua 1–5),

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Joshua and Israel took the land (chs. 6–12), divided the land (chs. 13–21), and committed themselves to the Lord's service in the land (chs. 22–24).

However, while Joshua is a story about land, land is more than geography, for this is the land of promise—God's promise. Joshua is a story about the God who makes and keeps his promises, about the problem of sin that landed humanity outside of Eden, and about the just judgment sin deserves. In light of the fullness of God's revelation, Joshua is also a story about the kind of Savior Christ is, the kind of people Christ saves, and the kind of salvation Christ brings. Joshua takes Israel into the land with the ark. Jesus takes us into God's presence through a cross. Appropriately, Joshua's name is the Hebrew form of Jesus, meaning "Yahweh Saves." Today, Christians enjoy the certain hope of a place more wonderful than Israel's land of promise: a new creation (Revelation 21–22). Even the best years in the land of promise would be characterized by sin and death. But in the New Jerusalem—another way to speak of the new creation—death and sin and pain will be no more. There, God's people will be perfected to rest in enjoyment of God's presence for all eternity. And all of this because Jesus, the new and better Joshua, came to "save his people from their sins" through perfect obedience to God's perfect Word (Matt. 1:21; Josh. 1:9).

Discussion:

1. How has Joshua brought new clarity to your understanding of the gospel?
2. What particular passages or themes in Joshua have led you to a fresh understanding and grasp of God's grace to us through Jesus?
3. How has the book of Joshua help you understand the biblical storyline of redemption?
4. What connections between Joshua and the New Testament did you draw throughout our series of Joshua?
5. What specifically does Joshua teach us about the human condition and our need of redemption?
 - a. Where do you see yourself needing redemption?
6. What have you learned in Joshua that might lead you to praise God, turn away from sin, and trust more firmly in his promises?