

God's Providence in God's People

Contra Costa Gospel Church
Adult Sunday School

JOSHUA

Joshua's predecessor, Moses, was the perfect individual in Israel's history to which Jesus could be compared by later New Testament writers. Moses was the leader, he was powerful and performed miracles, he taught the Israelites, and served as the mediator between them and Him. Not coincidentally, Jesus could be described with the same attributes. It's no wonder, then, that the Lord promised Israel one day He would raise up a prophet "like Moses" (Deuteronomy 18:18). All they had to do was look for the prophet that most resembled Moses, but was better.

With Moses' passing and Joshua's succession as the leader of Israel in her conquest to retake the land of Canaan, it should not come as a surprise that once again, Jesus would have similarities to this new leader. More than just in their name (Jesus is the Greek version of Joshua), they were both tasked to take over the land from those who would invade that land unrighteously.

- 1) The book of Joshua is essentially a record of the conquest of the land, both east and west of the Jordan River, by the Israelites upon escaping slavery in Egypt. Even though it is Joshua who leads this conquest after Moses' death, this book is not so much about him as a person more than it is about Israel retaking the land that was given to her forefathers - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Read Joshua 1:1-9

We made a statement earlier that Israel never had a leader as important as Moses. How could this be true if Joshua was the one that was to lead them to the Promised Land? How do we see this in this passage?

- 2) After destroying the city of Jericho (Joshua 6) and the city of Ai (Joshua 8), Joshua's fame and the terror of Israel rang throughout the land. See Joshua 9:1-2. The Gibeonites, however, knew that they could not defeat Israel and instead sought to make peace with Israel.
 - a. What was their plan? And why was it successful?
 - b. In Joshua 9:24, the Gibeonites explained why they did what they did. How did they demonstrate faith in the Lord here?

- 3) In Joshua 10, we see again the kings of the lands banding together in order to combine forces and defeat the impending army of Israel. What we find is the total destruction of these kings and their peoples at the hands of the Israelites (see Joshua 10:28-39). The summary statement is found in Joshua 10:40-43.

This entire episode, with different names and different kings and different peoples, is replayed in Joshua 11. See Joshua 11:1-5 and 10-23. Finally, after all of the kings were destroyed, “the land had rest from war” (Joshua 11:23b).

All of this death and destruction... How are we comfortable with this? What are some reasons we can mentally justify Israel’s action in retaking this land?

- 4) Psalm 2 warns of rebellion against the Anointed One of the Lord. This is a prophetic psalm encouraging the kings of the land to pay homage to the King of Israel, who is the Lord’s “right hand man.”
- a. Read Psalm 2:1-3. What is the connection between these verses and the stories we read in Joshua?

 - b. According to Psalm 2:10-12, what *should* the kings of the land do?

The account of Joshua and his leadership is a simple one. He led Israel back to the land which was promised to their forefathers time and again. We found Israel at the end of Genesis with everything at their disposal because of the power and influence of Joseph. They had everything except one thing: they were in Egypt. The last verse of Genesis makes this clear: “So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin **in Egypt**” (Genesis 50:26). These are the last words in both English and Hebrew, bringing to a bittersweet end the account of the forefathers of Israel in Genesis.

What was Joseph’s job? To take back the Promised Land and to drive out all those who would disobey the voice of the Lord and rebel against His people. This is not for us to like or dislike, to agree with or disagree with. This is for us to understand. This process was both bloody and messy. We don’t read this with a view to find the Lord’s justification for this. He needs no justification from us. We simply take it on faith that what happened was right because it was directed by Him.

However, more than just an account of what happened, the Lord is setting us up as the reader. He is setting us up to see the comparison between Joshua taking the Promised Land back through destruction and Jesus taking the Earth back through... destruction.