

Joshua

Nov 20, 2022

Summary: The focal point of the book is clearly the promised land. It contains the accounts of how Israel entered, conquered, and divided Canaan. It is primarily a book of victory and fulfilled promises. While the Pentateuch covers the events up to the possession of the land, Joshua records the actual entering the land.

Christ seen:

Joshua and Jesus' names both mean "The Lord Saves." Jesus' name is a shortened form of Joshua in Greek. Jesus is the greater Joshua in that He is the LORD, and He saves us eternally.

Joshua, as his name in Hebrew indicates, is a type of Christ in that he was the one who would lead God's people into the Promised Land. Joshua was a savior of the covenant people. Jesus is the greater Savior of God's covenantal people.

Christ is seen as our Joshua - Joshua gave Israelites rest through military victories (Jos 21:44). This rest, however, was only temporary. Jesus was able to do what Joshua could not do; He gave us permanent spiritual Sabbath rest, through His finished work on the cross (Heb 4:8-9).

Heb 4:8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.

The Captain of our salvation. Joshua went before the people to bring them to the inheritance.

Jos 5:13-15 Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" 14 He said, "No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the LORD." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?" 15 The captain of the LORD'S host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

Jesus goes before His people to bring them to the true inheritance.

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author (the captain KJV) of their salvation through sufferings.

Ac 3:14-15 "But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Ac 5:30-31 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. 31 "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Joshua gives Israel what Moses couldn't, the Promised Land. Jesus gives us what the Law couldn't, God's salvation (Rom 8:2-4; Gal 3:23-25).

Jesus leads the New Testament church (Israel) into her inheritance

Heb 4:8-15 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 9 So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. 11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. 14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Eph 1:3, 14)

Seven ways we see Jesus in Joshua

1. Leader Who Follows God's Word

Throughout the book, God tells Joshua to follow God's word, not departing from it to the right or to the left, meditating on it, and practicing its precepts (Jos 1:6-8). He is promised military success if he obeys the law of the Lord.

In a greater way, Jesus perfectly kept the law, delighting to live out the Lord's law. It was his bread, his food, his very purpose and mission. If Joshua led well by following the Lord and his word, how much more did Jesus, who perfectly obeyed the will of his Father?

2. Deliverer Who Rescues Sinners

It would have been natural for Joshua to forget about or overlook the promise of protection made to Rahab during the battle for Jericho. But Joshua keeps this promise by having the spies whom Rahab saved become her saviors (Jos 6:22-23). Her promiscuous work does not prevent Joshua from "saving alive" Rahab, her father's household, and all who belong to her (Jos 6:25).

After the destruction of Jericho and Ai, the shifty people of Gibeon - who had deceived Israel - cry out to Joshua for deliverance (Jos 10:6). The people of Israel had been deceived by their neighbors only a short time earlier, and many in Israel wanted to execute the Gibeonites for their deception (Jos 9:18-21).

Despite this, Joshua remains faithful to his word and delivers them from the coalition of kings in southern Canaan. Both Rahab and the Gibeonites were undeserving of God's mercy, yet both were delivered by Joshua.

Jesus offers salvation to the undeserving.

Rom 5:6-8 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Like Joshua, Jesus brings eternal salvation to those who neither have earned nor deserved salvation.

Gal 2:16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

3. Warrior Who Conquers His Enemies

Joshua is often remembered as a warrior, a conqueror who destroyed the Canaanite armies. At the battle of Ai, he is credited with burning the city and executing its king (Jos 8:28-29). He executed the kings of the southern Canaanite coalition (Jos 10:26) and had the city of Hazor burned in the north (Jos 11:11). God's promise to Joshua that no one would stand against him all the days of his life (Jos 1:5) was proven true throughout the conquest.

Likewise, Jesus is a conquering warrior in the New Testament.

Col 2:15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. (1Jn 3:8; Heb 2:14)

Just as Joshua put his foot on the necks of his conquered enemies (Jos 10:24), because of His victory, we can also place our foot on the head of Satan.

Rom 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. (1Cor 15:25; Gen 3:15)

4. Prophet Who Speaks the Lord's Words

Joshua functioned as prophet for Israel. He speaks to the people on God's behalf, communicating divine revelation to the nation (Jo 3:7-13). He promises a curse upon the one who would rebuild the city of Jericho (Jos 6:26), it was later fulfilled (1Ki 16:34). Most dramatically, Joshua commands the sun and moon to stand still in the sky while the Israelites chase down their enemies (Jos 10:12-14).

Jesus also functioned as prophet to Israel in similar ways. He speaks to the nation on behalf of God, but also as God, and therefore as the one who perfectly reveals God's true character and nature (Jn 1:18). Jesus's ministry is sprinkled with predictive prophecy (Jn 2:19; Mt 20:18-19; 24:2). His calming the sea and raising the dead firmly place Jesus within the tradition of the prophets of Israel, of which Joshua was a prototype.

5. Victor Who Shares the Inheritance with His People

Joshua's division of the land of Canaan as inheritance for Israel may seem an anticlimactic sequel to the conquest narratives. Yet for ancient Israelites, this was the happily ever after they had sought since before their slavery in Egypt. For the first time in over 400 years, the people of Israel were coming back into the land God had promised them as their possession (Gen 15:18; 17:8). And after Joshua gives the people victory over their enemies, he stands alongside Eleazar the priest as the Lord reveals which Canaanite cities and regions would be given to the different tribes. Israel's promised inheritance had now been realized (Jos 21:43-45).

Jesus, after conquering death, brings his people into a great inheritance. Some examples are: We have forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God our Father, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, the indwelling Holy Spirit, we have been adopted as God's children, we are heirs of the covenantal promises given to Israel (Gal 3:29).

6. Servant Who Faithfully Enacts the Lord's Will

Although Joshua has his moments of failure, the final analysis of his life demonstrates he lived for the glory of God: "After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died" (Jos 24:29).

Joshua's epitaph recounts none of his victories or successes; it highlights his faithful service to the Lord. In this we have a powerful picture of Jesus, who said of himself that he came as a servant to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). Jesus is the ultimate servant of the Lord who perfectly kept the law and perfectly lives for the glory of his Father.

7. Joshua interceded for the people (Jos 7:6-9). Jesus continually intercedes for His people.

Heb 7:25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Lk 22:32)