

**Sermon, February 6, 2011.**

***“Already, Not Yet”, Joshua 1:11,3:17,6:2-5,11:23,21:43-45,14:1-2,24:14-15***

**Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy**

**Review of the Pentateuch**

<b>Genesis</b>	Grace and mercy of God; God provides; God promises
<b>Exodus</b>	God delivers, sets free, redeems; gives His law
<b>Leviticus</b>	Rules for a Holy People
<b>Numbers</b>	Rules broken; obedience, disobedience and consequences
<b>Deuteronomy</b>	Moses farewell; keep the covenant; love God, obey the LORD

**Now we move into the Books of History**

- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
- About 1,000 years of history, from 1400BC to 400BC.

**From “What the Bible is All About”, H. Mears, p.90:**

- Moses passed through the Red Sea
- Moses led Israel from bondage
- Moses gave a vision of faith
- Moses told of an inheritance

**There is “*anticipation*” in Deuteronomy**

- Joshua passed over the Jordan
- Joshua led Israel into blessing
- Joshua led them into a life of faith
- Joshua led them into possession

**We see “*realization*” in Joshua**

**Joshua** means, “the LORD saves”. It was the same Hebrew name as Jesus.

**Outline of Joshua**

Joshua is neatly divided up into three main divisions plus an epilogue.

- Chapters 1-5 Israelites Enter the Land
- Chapters 5-12 Israelites Conquer the Land
- Chapters 13-21 The Land is Distributed to the 12 Tribes of Israel
- Chapters 22-24 Epilogue

**In Joshua we find that entering, battling for, and taking possession of the “Promised Land” can only be done through the LORD.**

- For Christians today, we enter, battle for, and possess the kingdom of heaven ***already*** through the will of God the Father, the leading of God the Son (Joshua), and the power of the Holy Spirit; we are ***already*** in the Kingdom of heaven, although ***not yet*** what it will be in eternity.

**Preparing to Enter the Promised Land - Joshua 1:11**

<sup>11</sup> *“Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, to possess it.’”*

- **Jesus tells us we must lay hold of (possess) what God gives - the kingdom of heaven**  
**Matthew 11:12** - *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.*
- **We are also to know that the kingdom of God is already upon us**  
**Luke 17:20-21** <sup>20</sup> *Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; <sup>21</sup> nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or, ‘There it is!’ For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.”*
- Are you responding to what God is giving you, realizing that the kingdom of heaven is upon you already?
- The kingdom of heaven is where God is. God has given you His Holy Spirit to dwell in you (John 14:26; 15:26; Romans 8:11, 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14)
- You are ***already*** in the kingdom of heaven, but ***not yet*** what it will be.

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**Israel Enters the Promised Land Led by God - Joshua 3:17**

<sup>17</sup> *And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.*

- Just as Israel was led into the “Promised Land” by the “Ark of the Covenant” (the presence of God), it is the Lord that leads you into the kingdom of heaven, the “Promised Land”
- Just as Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land, Joshua (Jesus) leads you into the kingdom of heaven.

**Israel is ready to “possess” the land, but not by any way humans would think of...Israel’s Battles Directed By God - Joshua 6:2-5**

<sup>2</sup> *The LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors.” <sup>3</sup> “You shall march around the city, all the men of war circling the city once. You shall do so for six days. <sup>4</sup> “Also seven priests shall carry seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark; then on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. <sup>5</sup> “It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people will go up every man straight ahead.”*

- Do you have your plans all figured out or should you wait on the Lord and follow His direction for the best outcome?
- Joshua and Israel followed the LORD and they won battle after battle.
- When you follow the Lord Jesus He works all things for your good (Romans 12:28).
- You are to trust Him and “lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5).

**This is what Joshua and Israel did; they conquered the “Promised Land” as God had promised and God Divided the Land among the Twelve Tribes of Israel – Joshua 14:1-2; 21:43-45**

**Joshua 14:1-2** <sup>1</sup> *Now these are the territories which the sons of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan... as the LORD commanded...*

**Joshua 21:43,45** <sup>43</sup> *So the LORD gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it <sup>45</sup> Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.*

- When you are in the “Promised Land” God has very specific areas for you to “possess”.
- You are to follow Him and go where He leads you.
- Just as God promised Israel the land He promises you the Kingdom of heaven.
- Just as He had special and specific places for the Israelites to occupy, God gifts you to “possess” that special place where He wants you to serve in His kingdom.

**You are to love the Lord your God, love others as yourself, and serve the LORD in “sincerity and truth”...**

**Joshua Gives His Final Exhortation - Joshua 24:14-15**

<sup>14</sup> *“Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup> “If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”*

- Service to God is done with a loving heart, a sincere heart, a truthful heart, eager to be where God is and serve Him only.
- Put away your idols, do not serve other gods in your life, battle against the “powers and principalities of this world” (Eph 2:1-2).
- Put on the armor of God (Eph 6) and listen to His orders and serve Him.

**In Joshua we find that entering, battling for, and taking possession of the kingdom of heaven can only be done through the LORD.**

- For Christians today, we enter, battle for, and possess the kingdom of heaven already through the will of God the Father, the leading of God the Son (Joshua), and the power of the Holy Spirit; we are already in the Kingdom of heaven, although not yet what it will be in eternity.

In the kingdom of heaven, enter the battle under God’s direction, “possess” that special place where He wants you to serve in His kingdom, and remember to serve Him with a loving heart, a sincere heart,