

“God’s Rest”
(Hebrews 4:8)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. Last time we considered the history of redemption, we were looking at the revival the Lord brought to Israel.
 - a. The generation that came out of Egypt had been adversely affected by living among idolaters for 400 years.
 - (i) Not only did they refuse to believe and trust the Lord, they continued to trust their idols provoking the Lord to His face.
 - (ii) The result was that they were sentenced to die in the wilderness and not to enter God’s rest.
 - (iii) This stands as a warning to us:
 - (a) All of us are affected by our culture – the downgraded morals, the low view the world has of Christianity.
 - (b) We need to guard our hearts and minds.
 - (1) If we embrace the world, we will perish with it.
 - (2) But if we live counter to the culture, if we embrace holiness, righteousness and truth in Christ, we will live.
 - b. The second generation did – they were different.
 - (i) They were humbled by those years in the wilderness.
 - (ii) The Lord poured His Spirit out on them; He was pleased to awaken many of them; He converted many of them.
 - (iii) We see this in how carefully they lived, how they followed the Lord, how quickly they purged themselves of evil (Achan), how quickly they confronted what they thought was idolatry (the altar).
 - (iv) The Lord was establishing His church in Canaan, and so He granted His Spirit in greater measure as He also did on the Day of Pentecost when He established the New Testament church.
2. These things should encourage you:
 - a. That you need Christ’s Spirit to do anything of spiritual value.
 - (i) Embracing the things of the world chokes and quenches His work.
 - (ii) But forsaking the world, following Christ and using the means of grace will strengthen it, and your ability to do His work.
 - (iii) And so don’t be drunk with wine (with the things of the world that can control you), but be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
 - b. Let this also encourage you of the need to pray that the Lord would pour His Spirit out on you, on your children, and on His whole church.

- (i) The Lord's opening His hand of blessing or not will make all the difference in the world as far as our effectiveness as a congregation to do the Lord's work.
- (ii) Let's pray that the Lord would have mercy on us, our nation, and the world, and bring His kingdom with power to further establish His church.

B. Preview.

1. This morning, we're continuing to look at the conquest of Canaan (the time at which the Lord poured out this revival), but now from a different perspective.
 - a. Many of the events in the Old Testament were pictures looking forward to the blessings of the New Covenant.
 - b. Our subject this morning is no exception.
 - (i) God choose a leader to bring God's people into the land: Joshua.
 - (ii) The Lord used Joshua to take the land from the evil inhabitants.
 - (iii) And through Joshua, He settled His people in Canaan.
2. We'll consider these as three pictures of New Covenant truth.
 - a. First, Joshua as a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. Second, his battle against the Canaanites as a picture of Christ's warfare against the kingdom of darkness.
 - c. Finally, his settling of the people of God in the land of Canaan as a picture of how the Lord Jesus Christ would eventually settle us in heaven.

II. Sermon.

- A. Let's consider first that Joshua was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 1. His name gives us the first indication that this is the case.
 - a. Joshua is the Hebrew name from which we get the name Jesus.
 - (i) It is a compound word that means "Yahweh is salvation."
 - (ii) That's why the angel of the Lord said to Joseph regarding Mary, "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21): you shall call Him, "Yahweh is salvation," for He will save His people from their sins."
 - b. Perhaps you've seen some indications that they share the same name in the King James Version – those verses that don't seem to make sense at first because Jesus' name appears where Joshua's should be:
 - (i) "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David" (Acts 7:44-45).
 - (ii) And also our text, "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day" (Heb. 4:8).
 - (iii) Joshua was given that name because of how his work would parallel that of Christ's.

2. Second, Joshua was prophetically said to be a picture of Christ.
 - a. In Genesis 49:23-25, we read a very interesting prophecy regarding Joseph's family: "The archers bitterly attacked him, and shot *at him* and harassed him; but his bow remained firm, and his arms were agile, from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), from the God of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you *with* blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb" (Gen. 49:23-25).
 - b. Joshua was descended from Ephraim, who was one of the two sons of Joseph (the other being Manasseh).
 - (i) Jacob prophesied that the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel would come from that tribe.
 - (ii) These references at first glance seem to refer to Jesus; Jesus, however, was descended from the tribe of Judah.
 - (iii) Who was he talking about then? It appears to be referring to Joshua, the one who became both a shepherd and a stone for Israel, by God's grace.
 - (iv) But it's also referring to Jesus, the One Joshua pictured.
 3. Finally, Joshua was a picture of Christ in his office.
 - a. When Moses died, Joshua took his mantle and became the leader of Israel.
 - b. In his office of commander in chief of the Lord's army, Joshua was a picture of Christ, as Moses was.
 - c. This is also true of the work he would do.
- B. Second, his battle against the Canaanites was also a picture of Christ's warfare against the kingdom of darkness.
1. Joshua had to fight to bring God's people into the land.
 - a. He first led God's people to conquer the great kings on the east side of the Jordan: Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan.
 - b. Then, after the Lord divided the Jordan river to allow His people to cross as He had done at the Red Sea, Joshua led Israel against Jericho and Ai.
 - c. He then proceeded to destroy the five kings of the Amorites in the south.
 - d. And then he turned and destroyed the kings of the north, though the number of their army was as the sand of the seashore (Josh. 11:4), and brought Israel to her inheritance.
 2. This was a picture of the wars Jesus would have to fight in bringing us redemption.
 - a. We don't want to forget that Christ was personally involved in the wars Joshua fought as the Angel of the Covenant.
 - (i) He was the One who met with Joshua before he began his campaign to take the land: "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?' 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?’ 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” (Josh. 5:13-15).

- (ii) He was the One who caused the walls of Jericho to fall flat after His people marched around it for six days.
- (iii) He was the One who sent hailstones on the inhabitants of Gibeon as they were running away from Israel’s armies (10:9-11), hailstones that killed more men than the sword.
- (iv) He was the one who answered Joshua’s prayer for the sun and moon to stand still for a day so that God’s people might destroy the Amorites at Gibeon (10:12-13).
- (v) In doing this, He dealt several mighty blows against Satan’s kingdom.

- b. This was also a picture of what Christ *would do* to Satan’s kingdom.
 - (i) Christ fought the enemy and bound him through His earthly ministry.
 - (ii) On the cross, He dealt a mortal blow to his head.
 - (iii) And equipping His saints with the sword of His Word, He sent them into the world to destroy the devil’s kingdom and to plunder his house.
 - (iv) Christ has made the sound of the Gospel to have the same effect on the walls of the enemy’s kingdom as the trumpets did on the walls of Jericho – causing them to crumble and fall.

C. Finally, Joshua’s settling the people of God in the land of Canaan was a picture of how the Lord Jesus Christ would eventually settle us in heaven.

- 1. The one who was a type of Christ brought God’s people into a land which was a type of heaven.
 - a. In Scripture, Canaan is pointed to as a picture of heaven.
 - (i) It is called the rest of God: “And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? *So* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief” (Heb. 3:18-19).
 - (ii) This “rest” is the land of Canaan, into which Joshua later brought and settled the second generation.
- 2. At the same time, our text reminds us that Joshua did not bring them into the true rest, but only a picture of that rest.
 - a. Many years later, David wrote to those in the land, “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb. 4:7).
 - b. The author to the Hebrews tells us, “For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that” (v. 8). If Joshua had given them the true rest, the Lord would not have spoken through David of another day, of another possibility of entering it.
 - c. Canaan was a type of God’s rest, but not the rest itself.
- 3. Joshua could not bring them in, but the One he pointed to could.

- a. The reason that first generation failed to enter into God's rest was that they didn't trust God's promise: "So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. . . . the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard" (Heb. 3:19; 4:2).
- b. Faith in God's promises was necessary for them to enter the picture; faith in Christ is necessary for us to enter the reality: "For we who have believed enter that rest" (v. 3).
 - (i) Christ brought Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land as a picture of the salvation He would bring.
 - (ii) He advanced His work of redemption by bringing His people into the land in which He would be born, live, preach, work His miracles, die and rise again, and from which He would ascend into heaven.
 - (iii) Through His work, He has not only overcome all our enemies – sin, death, hell and the grave – but He has opened the doors of heaven – the true Promised Land.
 - (iv) But to enter into heaven, you must do two things:
 - (a) You must trust in what Jesus has done and nothing else.
 - (b) And you must repent of every sin – stop doing what He forbids and do what He commands.
 - (c) He is the only way of salvation – believe in the Joshua who can bring you into the Promised Land. Amen.