

# Sermon Outline

## **“AND THE LORD GAVE THEM REST”: A CHRISTIAN READING OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA**

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### AND THE LORD GAVE THEM REST (JOSHUA 21:44-45)

#### **I. An Introduction to a Christian Reading of Joshua**

- A. Our title is made up of two parts.
  - 1. “And the Lord Gave Them Rest” is taken from Joshua 21:44.
  - 2. “A Christian Reading of the Book of Joshua” is the approach we will take.
    - We are not reading Joshua as Jews, but as Christians.
- B. “A Christian Reading of the Book of Joshua” is an interpretation and application of Joshua that is...
  - 1. Rooted in the belief that Jesus is the Lord YHWH of Joshua (see Jn 8:58; 12:41).
  - 2. Based on the conviction that Christ is God’s Conclusion to the Old Testament story.
- C. “And the Lord Gave Them Rest” is taken from Joshua 21:44.
  - 1. This phrase accurately summarizes the purpose of Joshua.
  - 2. Joshua was written to show that YHWH defeated the enemies of our forefathers, giving them rest.
  - 3. Joshua was written to show that YHWH brought Israel into Canaan, fulfilling his promise to Abraham.
- D. Altogether, we must read Joshua to lead us to YHWH Jesus.

#### **II. YHWH Fulfills His Promise to the Fathers of Israel (Joshua 21:44)**

- A. 21:44 is meant to show that YHWH had fulfilled his promise to Israel’s fathers.
- B. Joshua cannot be read without understanding God’s covenant to Abraham (Gen 15:7, 18-20).

#### **III. And YHWH Gave Israel Rest as He Had Sworn (Joshua 21:45)**

- A. The enemies of Israel included the following civilizations: Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Gergashites, Amorites, and the Jebusites.
- B. But why were these peoples hated by YHWH?

1. They were worshipers of false gods (i.e. demons) (Dt 12:29, 30).
  2. Their idol worship had sunken to the point of using child sacrifice (Dt 12:31).
  3. They were practitioners of magic (Dt 18:10-12).
  4. They were known for sexual perversion (Lev 18:3).
- C. But understand: God did not bring Israel into the land because Israel herself was that upright a nation.
1. According to Deuteronomy 9:4-5...
    - a. God is bringing Israel into the land because he had made a promise to Israel's forefathers.
    - b. God is bringing Israel into the land because the inhabitants have reached their limit of evil.
    - c. God is not bringing Israel into the land because Israel is good.
  2. Deuteronomy 9:4-5 is a foretaste of things to come.
    - a. Israel's future can be seen in the Canaanite-like behavior of some Judges.
      - i. Jephthah makes an ungodly vow and sacrifices his own daughter (Jdg 11:31).
      - ii. Samson constantly violates his godly vows (Jdg 14:8; 16:1).

#### IV. YHWH's Greater Rest in Jesus Christ

*Just as YHWH gave a limited, temporary rest to his people in the past under the leadership of Joshua, YHWH promises his people an even more comprehensive rest in Joshua's greatest Successor, the Lord Jesus Christ (who is YHWH himself). This greater rest in Christ is certainly rest from the human enemies of the Church. But it is ultimately rest from sin and the powers of Satan. And since this rest is promised to us, we must hold firmly to God and his Son, Jesus—relying on Christ alone for salvation and devoting our lives to his holy service.*