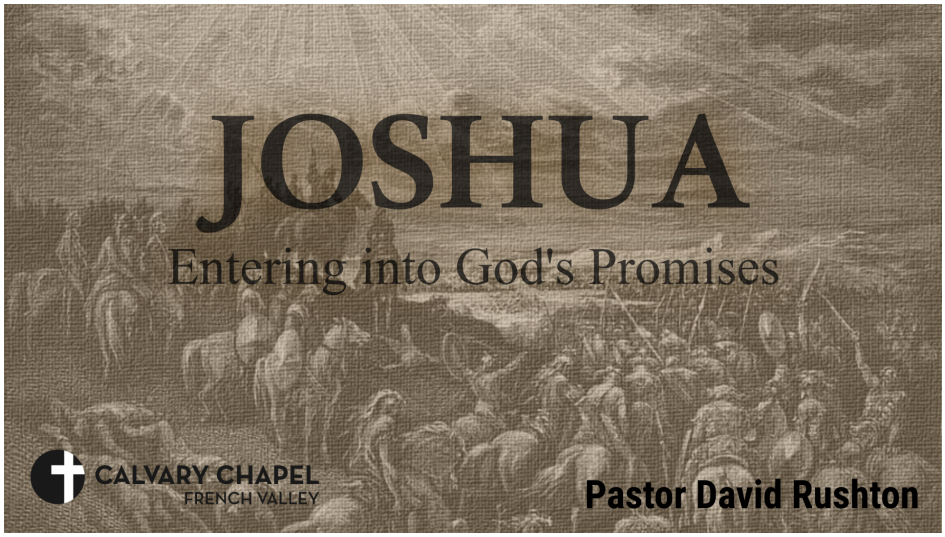
JOSHUA: Entering into God's Promises
Covenant Renewal
Joshua 5:1-15



November 16, 2025
Message 5 of ???

1. Intro
   1.1 Please open to Joshua chapter 5, continue our series **Entering into God's Promises**
   1.2 Beautiful chapter, full of belief and faith
   1.3 Also has its challenges
   1.4 Let's pray, and get into it
2. Message
   2.1 **Joshua 5:1**
      2.1.1 Read this verse last time - connects chapter 4 and 5
      2.1.2 It's important - why were they afraid? The Lord
         2.1.2.1 Not just a people - the Canaanites were no stranger to war
         2.1.2.2 They had fortified towns, the Israelites were nomadic with sticks and stones
      2.1.3 The Lord had displayed His awesome power, but it was more than that
      2.1.4 God is also preparing the way for Israel
         2.1.4.1 Not the way of war, but the way of righteousness
   2.2 **Joshua 5:2-3**
      2.2.1 Joshua commanded to circumcise the men of Israel
      2.2.2 Circumcision was important to Israel

Genesis 17:9-11

[9] And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. [10] This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; [11] and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.

         2.2.2.1 It is the sign of their covenant with God
         2.2.2.2 A reminder of their heritage, not trusting in flesh, of righteousness
      2.2.3 If circumcision is so important, why are they doing it now? What does that imply?
   2.3 **Joshua 5:4-6**
      2.3.1 Circumcision, which was supposed to be the sign of their covenant with God has been ignored
      2.3.2 Law required it be done to all male on the eighth day after birth
      2.3.3 The last time it was done was just after they left Egypt
         2.3.3.1 It hadn't been done in Egypt
         2.3.3.2 The Egyptians reserved this for their priests
      2.3.4 During the 40 years in the desert, no males were circumcised
         2.3.4.1 God's judgement on the nation was that all fighting age men, 20+, would not enter the promised land
         2.3.4.2 There's a new generation of fighting age men, none circumcised
      2.3.5 The judgement against the men was for their cowardice
         2.3.5.1 The 10 spies were afraid, all the congregation refused to enter due to fear
         2.3.5.2 They wanted to stone Caleb and Joshua
      2.3.6 Circumcision is a sign of the covenant
         2.3.6.1 The nation must hold their end of the covenant to be in the promised land
         2.3.6.2 It has to start right now, it cannot wait

2.4 **Joshua 5:7**

2.4.1 The nation expresses their intention here - to uphold the covenant

2.4.1.1 This is a beautiful picture of belief and trust

2.4.1.2 Those who know the Old Testament know that it was pretty rocky

2.4.1.3 This is a time when they got it right

2.5 **Joshua 5:8**

2.5.1 This verse calls back to point I was making in verse 1

2.5.2 Who were the nations afraid of? The Lord

2.5.2.1 That's important

2.5.3 For Israel - think about their best strategy from a human perspective

2.5.3.1 The crossing of the Jordan was awesome

2.5.3.2 They should charge right in - element of surprise

2.5.3.3 They're organized, ready, charged up

2.5.3.4 God tells them no - they need to do something first

2.5.3.5 Specifically something that makes them vulnerable

- God wants them to demonstrate their trust in Him
- Under the Mosaic Law, they are in a conditional covenant
- God has told them what He will do if they maintain the covenant

Exodus 19:5

[5] Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.

- They are entering into the promised land - the place where this covenant is supposed to live out in all fullness
- He wants this to be the first thing they do - not winning a war
- He wants their hearts in the right place, their flesh subdued in obedience
- Not based off of their own righteousness, but based on faith in belief of His promises

2.5.4 For the surrounding nations - what should they be doing?

2.5.4.1 The Israelites just performed circumcision on all their fighting men - they should attack!

2.5.4.2 But they weren't afraid of Israel, they were afraid of God

2.5.4.3 God melted their hearts - wrought fear in them

- They were frozen

2.5.4.4 He displays His awesome power, He is rightly the object of their fear

- He receives the glory in this, no one else

2.5.4.5 He does it so that the people are kept safe as they renew their covenant

- Israel doesn't know it, God receives more glory if they don't
- But He was working behind the scenes in their favor
- There's a lesson in that - how often do we believe that God is working in our favor in ways that we cannot perceive?

Romans 8:28

[28] And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

- Not just knowing the Bible says this, but believing and acting on it
- Are we walking in faith when the world says it doesn't make sense?
    - I was born this way - deny himself and take up his cross and follow
    - I am my own person, do what makes me happy - your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, you are not your own
    - You should cut them out - even we were dead in trespasses but made alive with Christ
    - Giving to your home church even when it's hard
- Through the pain and struggle, He is working

Philippians 1:6

...[6] **being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ**

- His work is the work of salvation
- We may be blessed in this life, but the promise that all believers have is eternal salvation

Hebrews 5:9

[9] **And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.**

2.5.5 The nation expressed their faith in the promises of God, and He was working on their behalf to keep them during their healing

2.6 **Joshua 5:9**

2.6.1 A reproach is an expression of disapproval or dissatisfaction

2.6.2 The reproach is their uncircumcision

2.6.3 Genesis 34, Jacob refuses to marry his daughter Dinah to Shechem, an uncircumcised man, as it would be a reproach

2.6.3.1 Every Hebrew girl has married an uncircumcised man by this time, it was all viewed as a reproach by God

2.6.4 God has orchestrated it so that they can be cleared of this reproach, found to be approved

2.6.5 Now that the reproach is gone, they are seen with approval, they can do the next thing

2.7 **Joshua 5:10**

2.7.1 Circumcision is a requirement for keeping the Passover

2.7.2 Exodus 12 says that any foreigner, servant, stranger must be circumcised

2.7.2.1 The expectation is that the Hebrew is circumcised, and that all outsiders who want to participate must become like the Hebrew

2.7.3 They haven't observed Passover since Numbers 9

2.7.3.1 The first passover was in Egypt, then they observed the second passover one year later

2.7.3.2 This is now the third passover, 39 years later

- One of the most important Jewish observances has been left unremembered due to their uncircumcision
- God, in His graciousness and faithfulness, has brought them back into the covenant and they can remember what He did for them

2.8 **Joshua 5:11-12**

2.8.1 The next day, they experience the beauty of God's promise fulfilled

Deuteronomy 8:7-10

7 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; 8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 9 a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 10 When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

2.8.2 They eat of the abundance of the promised land

2.8.3 For one day they receive manna and eat of the land - the next day the manna stops

2.8.3.1 God had provided miraculously for them for a generation

2.8.3.2 His form of provision has shifted - not stopped

2.8.3.3 The abundance of the land is tied to the covenant as well

2.8.3.4 Deuteronomy 28 says that if they are obedient the land will be bountiful

- If they are disobedient, then famine and drought

2.8.3.5 The manna was an unconditional provision, the abundance of the earth is conditional

2.8.3.6 They must continue to express their belief in, trust in, and love for God

2.8.4 39 years ago, Joshua and Caleb went into this land

2.8.4.1 They were amazed by its abundance

2.8.4.2 Now, their hopes are fulfilled - it must've been sweetest for them

2.8.5 Joshua, as the leader, has to get to business

2.9 **Joshua 5:13**

2.9.1 Joshua was near Jericho, probably scoping it out

2.9.2 They'd have to come this way - no way around

2.9.2.1 Strategy, planning

2.9.2.2 It's fortified, does it have a weakness?

2.9.2.3 He trusts in God, but he's trying to be active - do the right thing

2.9.3 A Man with a sword is before him - he questions him

2.9.3.1 If he's for Israel, that's a surprise - they have an ally

2.9.3.2 If he's against Israel, he's probably ready to fight

2.9.4 The Man gives a curious response

2.10 **Joshua 5:14-15**

2.10.1 "Are you for us or against us?" "No."

2.10.2 He's not "for" anyone - He's the commander

2.10.2.1 Israel is God's people, so of course He's on their side, but He isn't "for" them

2.10.3 Christophany

2.10.3.1 Similar to the name "Lord of Hosts"

2.10.3.2 He's not here to join Israel, He's in command of all of God's armies - heavenly or otherwise

2.10.3.3 How do we know this is Christ? He doesn't refuse worship.

- Hebrews 1 says He is higher than the angels
- Revelation, angels refuses to be worshipped

2.10.4 This is Christ - He's saying a lot more than "I'm here to help."

2.10.5 The odd answer to this question points to what God is doing at this time

2.10.5.1 Yes, He's leading the nation of Israel into the promise

2.10.5.2 He's bringing judgement on the land of Canaan

2.10.5.3 Leviticus 18 and elsewhere talks about the great iniquity of these nations

- Evil, wicked, horrible abominations committed
- All forms of sexual perversion, child sacrifice
- God had been patient, giving them time to repent of their wickedness, but now it was time for judgement

Leviticus 18:24-27

[24] 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. [25] For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. [26] You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you [27] (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled)...

2.10.5.4 Christ is the judge, and He is going to use Israel to execute judgement while also fulfilling His promise to them

3. Conclusion

3.1 The order of events is important

3.1.1 Renewal of the covenant through circumcision

3.1.2 Observance of Passover

3.1.3 Encounter with God

3.2 We want to experience God - all mankind does

3.2.1 In His grace and mercy, we will have experiences even when we are carnal

3.2.2 No person can come to God without being drawn by Him

3.2.3 But in our Christian life, are we expecting amazing encounters from God without humbling ourselves?

3.2.4 Our hearts need to be in the right place - obedience

3.2.5 Not in a legalistic way, but in a relational way

3.2.5.1 He will reveal Himself to us

3.2.5.2 He wants to bless us

3.2.5.3 He wants us to be holy

3.3 Joshua responded to God's promises in faith and obedience, and He met God

3.3.1 Standing between him and his enemy even

Micah 6:8

[8] He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

3.4 God the Father desires that we would not perish in our sin

3.4.1 In His perfect justice, He will judge all humanity

3.4.2 In His mercy, He sent Jesus Christ to pay our debt

3.4.3 In His grace, He sent the Holy Spirit to bear witness to us of the truth of our need for Jesus as our Savior

3.4.4 And in His love, He desires for us to live abundant lives of faith and righteousness