

Joshua:
Common Sand To Promised Land
Week 1 - The Family

Introduction: Hello my name is, welcome! Would love to meet you whether you're here in the room or streaming this later online. Guest Suite, Mobile App – Connection Card.

Celebrate A Win, Emphasize a Value and/or Promote an action:
Small Groups – Continue the conversation.

Today we are starting a brand -new series: **Joshua: Common Sand To Promised Land**. Over the next several weeks we are going to be studying the Book of Joshua.

The Book of Joshua is all about the faithfulness of God to fulfill His promises to His people.

- His promises to the Israelites ultimately points us to God fulfilling His Covenant Promises to bless the whole world. That's us. Jesus would come through the Joshua's family hundreds of years later.

Most famous passage from Joshua:

Joshua 1:6

6 "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them.

This land was God's promised land to his people... by a show of hands: How many of you have a promised land? That place in your heart and mind where you are close to God and He is working in your life in a big way?

- If you're like me, you want the promised land and it's blessings and you want it now! ... But after following Jesus for many years, **One thing I've noticed about God is that he is always on time but he is rarely early!**

Why doesn't God just give us the life we want right now? Because if he did, we wouldn't be able to handle it.

God uses the distance between our COMMON SAND and PROMISED LAND to grow and develop us. It is in this space that God prepares us for our future and trust me, we can't take short cuts and expect our lives to turn out the way God wants them to.

Here's the big idea of our series:

God grows us one step at a time

Why we are studying the Book of Joshua? In Joshua's process, we can learn more about our own. As we look at the life of Joshua, we'll have a birds-eye view of how God Develops us and **how he works** to fulfill his promises to us through Jesus, one step at a time.

Today, we are going to kick off our series with an Origin Story, not Joshua's but God's, all the way back in the book of Genesis.

It is important to understand the past, so that you can see the overarching story, this is called the Meta-narrative.

Romans 15:4

Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.

Illustration: *The past doesn't have to define you but it CAN remind you.* Your past got you to where you are. It doesn't hold you there but it got you there. God has a larger story going on in Joshua's life and in your life.

Our history is the lens by which we can see the big picture of what God is doing. That is the power of scripture.

To understand Joshua we need to go back to the beginning

- Adam & Eve had just disobeyed God

- This was a result of their lack of trust in what God had said
- God is letting them know what the consequences are
- God speaks to the serpent / Satan first

Genesis 3:15 ...I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

This is the first prophecy in scripture about Jesus. Man had just walked away from God but **GOD ALREADY HAD A PLAN.**

This is God's promise that a descendant of the woman will undo what Satan has done. This Savior, Jesus, will take away the power of death, and undo the brokenness that Satan has introduced into the world. **Jesus will be wounded by Satan, but he will crush Satan's authority and power.**

Fast forward centuries later... we look at it as just a few pages in the Bible, but we're covering a huge amount of time here. Earth's population has dramatically increased, so then **God narrows this promise of Jesus down to one specific family...**

Genesis 12:1-3 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. **All the families on earth will be blessed through you."**

Here we see through this family, Abraham's family, all of the families will be blessed...

Abraham was already 75 when God first gave him the covenant promise. Several years go by and he still hasn't had a child. It's only 3 chapters away for us, but close to 10 years later God speaks to Abraham again...

Genesis 15:13-16

Then the LORD said to Abram, "You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years. But I will punish the nation that enslaves them, and in the end they will come away with great wealth. (As for you, you will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.) After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction."

Years have gone, so God reveals the bigger picture to Abraham! **God reveals to him the time of Moses & Joshua!**

God has been acting on his covenant promises since the beginning.

For time's sake, I'm going to give a brief recap of **several centuries** of Abraham's family which is Joshua's family.

- God makes a covenant promise to Abraham.
- Abraham's son Isaac is miraculously born, then his son Jacob continues the family.
- Then Joseph, Jacob's son saves the family from famine and moves the family to Egypt. 400 years, they go from Guests in Egypt to slaves, just like God said. What started out as God's provision for Israel becomes slavery.
- **Then Moses is born. Check this out!**

Hebrews 11:24-27

It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to share the oppression of **God's people** instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of Christ than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his great reward. It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt, not fearing the king's anger. He kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.

Wait a minute, Moses for the sake of Christ? Here in Hebrews we see the whole picture come together. Our life today and the stories of God's family then.

What do we learn from **The Family** and the story before the Joshua's story?

1. God's family is Joshua's family - Joshua's family is our family.

Ephesians 2:12-13

¹² In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. ¹³ But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 1: 5

God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

God is not an angry man in the sky just waiting to punish you – He has always loved you and always wanted to connect you to His family. He has never wanted to be a stranger to you – He wants to be your Father.

2. God's plan for us is always bigger than us.

As this story unfolds, it is important to remember that God is working a bigger plan, in Joshua but also in you! Abraham's family is Joshua's family and is our family.

1 Corinthians 2:9

That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."

3. God works through His Family.

Joshua understood that he was a part of a covenant family. When he leads and fights it isn't for himself, it is in and for the family. You and I are in the same covenant family because of Jesus.

Psalm 92:12-15 (NIV)

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."

4. God changes us before he uses us.

It is easy to think that Joshua's ability to lead God's people started when Moses died and when he comes into leadership but his preparation started many years before.

Joshua 1:1

After the death of Moses the Lord's servant, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, **Moses' assistant**.

Over the next several weeks we are going to zoom into the process that God used to develop and prepare Joshua. Don't miss a week, why? Because we learn about God's process in us as we study his process in Joshua!

Next week we will come on the scene as Joshua, Moses' protégé comes on the scene and continues the story by leading God's people into the Promised land .

God will grow us the same way He did Joshua, but only if we let Him. He's inviting you to connect with Him and your spiritual family but you have to take your next step.

(join a small group, come to new members, etc.)

Lets PRAY