

Sunday, July 23, 2023

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The Land

The Story of Israel, Episode 4 of 10

Deuteronomy 34

Welcome to the story of Israel! The story of Israel is (true) history, it is sacred history, and it is our family history. We are telling this story in ten episodes: Promise, Salvation, Law, Land, Covenant, Temple, Division, Prophets, Exile, and Restoration. Today is episode #4, as Israel receives the land God had promised.

Thinking about “land”—what does it mean to us, and what did it mean to Israel?

The land was...

- Israel’s **Home**
 - Not foreign, strange (Ps 137:1,4)
- Israel’s **Rest**
 - No longer anxiously on the move (Joshua 1:13)
- Israel’s **Nourishment**
 - Milk, honey, and more! (Lev 20:24, Deut 6:10-11)

But what about the *conquest* of the land? Israel makes war upon the land’s inhabitants.

- A divine judgment upon Canaanite wickedness (Deut 9:5)

- Likewise, Israel is a *tenant* that can be expelled (Lev 18:27-28, 25:23)
- The importance of a Christian worldview: God owns everything, and can give to whom He pleases
 - Without this worldview, the conquest becomes objectionable

But Moses, the servant of the Lord, doesn’t get in... An ominous sign! What does this mean?

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. What does “land” mean to you? How much do you value it, and why?
2. The (promised) land for Israel meant *home*, *rest*, and *nourishment*. See Bible verses mentioned in the outline above.
 - Does this topic remind you of things you take for granted? Pray with gratitude to the Lord.
3. We sometimes sing these words: “I am bound for the Promised Land.”
 - How so? What Bible passages come to mind?
 - How relevant is this to your spiritual life and why?