

Immerse: Kingdoms
Day 1 – Jan. 30, 2023

Welcome to another year of Immerse! This is our third year of reading the bible together as a church community. We began in 2021 with “Beginnings”, reading the first five books of the bible called the Pentateuch. Then in 2022, we read “Messiah”, reading the whole New Testament together. This year, we will continue the story we began, as the Israelites enter the promised land and take it as their own.

We begin with Joshua, a book named after Moses’ appointed successor. We’ve met Joshua before as Moses’ military leader in their desert wanderings. Now, with Moses’ death, Joshua has assumed leadership of the Israelites, and will lead them into the land God has promised His people since the days of Abraham (see Gen. 12).

One commentary said that nobody under 40 should read the book of Joshua, for it takes a high level of maturity and experience to understand. This is a difficult book, not because of the language, but because of the content. In Joshua, we are confronted by what seems like a call for genocide – a call by God Himself! We justify this, as the intro does, by deciding that these nations are too corrupt to survive and must be removed. But in our current culture of inclusion and demonizing of any group in power, this is a hard reality for us to swallow. How do we think about a God who calls His people to kill everyone who resides in His land, yet later dies to save Jews and Gentiles alike? As a wise man asked me once after reading Joshua, “What is the difference between the Israelites here and ISIS today?” Or how do we deal with the disturbing parallels between Joshua and our treatment of Native Americans in our own history?

These questions require prayer, wisdom, and community to consider. And like people throughout history, we may not find answers. But this is why, in the Covenant, we do our theology together rather than alone (or worse yet, on social media!) So as we read on, let's not ignore these questions, but ask them of God and wait for His answer... together.