

Joshua 23

v1

"And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about"

- A long time of peace. A long time of rest and enjoyment of the promise. A long time of ease, safety and establishment.
- No more wandering. No more searching. No more fighting.
- The Lord is so tender to give them this time. There was still much land to be possessed and still much to do but The Lord allowed them rest.

v3

"And you have seen all that the Lord your God has done"

- They had indeed seen incredible things. They had witnessed the power and might of The Lord in battle, seen His authority over nature.
- They had also seen His mercies, His provision, His forgiveness, patience and tenderness. They had seen His knowing, leading hand and the wisdom in His law and ways.
- God had revealed, proved and demonstrated Himself before them in so many ways. Beyond all question and doubt, far above anything they deserved. He had shown them His heart, He had demonstrated His power, He had forgiven their trespasses, He had fought their battles and provided for their every need.

v4-5

"those nations that remain"

"The Lord your God will thrust them out from before you and drive them out of your sight, and you shall possess their land, as the Lord your God promised you."

- There was land remaining that was to be claimed. The work was not over. The land was not wholly sanctified/possessed.
- It is an interesting thought that there was not an infinite amount of land. It was possible for them to possess the land fully, completely and to utterly thrust out the enemy. We often just accept that we will never be perfect and so we in a way make space for our sin and lack... But there is a finite amount of land and it was The Lord who would thrust out the enemy and give them possession if they would go on in faith believing in His promise/provision. We will never be perfect in our flesh but Christ is perfect in us.... Consider this line of thought some more...

v6

"to keep and do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses"

"Joshua 1:7-8 Only be you strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded you: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. [8] This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate upon it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it: for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success."

- The source of life, prosperity and victory was in The Word of God, The Law. It was His way and His authority. In The Law we see that God had given them EVERYTHING that they needed to grow and prosper. He had given them direction and counsel for every circumstance.

v7

"That you may not mix with these nations... or make mention..."

- There was to be no pollution. No mixture. No sympathy or space given to the worldly, wicked influence.
- Just as this message is repeated again in this book so we will repeat the notes/thoughts in a fresh way.
- The enemy was to be utterly and thoroughly cast out and destroyed. None of the world was to be in God's land/people. They were to be wholly separate, set apart, Holy unto The Lord. Sin was not to be countenanced or excused!

v8&11

"But cling to the Lord your God as you have done to this day."

"Be very watchful of yourselves, therefore, to love the Lord your God."

- Joshua is not calling here merely for legalism and adherence to The Law.
- We can hear Joshua's pleading heart for God's people. He is calling for them to LOVE The Lord. Not merely for religious obedience in the flesh but to give their hearts to Him.
- Circumcision of the heart is not a New Covenant desire!
- This is the key to understanding Old Testament examples. Their love for God is exemplary in that it often far surpasses our own. We truly live in a better and fuller revelation of God and with a clearer understanding of His glory... But the love and dependence that these saints had is beautiful to read/see.
- We cannot assume our love and rest solely on declaring it. We are told to be watchful of ourselves. We are to keep that love alive and to maintain it. We are to act in accordance to that love. To give ourselves to The Lord; to serve Him faithfully; to maintain His honour and His testimony; to magnify Him above all else; to continue to fall more in love with Him, worshipping Him in holiness, gratitude, praise and humility.

v9-10

"no man has been able to withstand you to this day."

"One man of you shall chase a thousand"

- *Judges 15:15 And he found a still moist jawbone of a donkey and reached out and took it and slew 1,000 men with it.*
- *2 Samuel 23:9-10 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: [10] He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.*
- There is no army that can stand against a man who will cleave to God's word and fight from a love for Him and His name.
- *Romans 8:31-32 What then shall we say to [all] this? If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?] [32] He who did not withhold or spare [even] His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all [other] things?*
- There is nothing and no one who can stand before The Lord. Nothing will abate or defy His will. A man or a woman who will walk in holiness by faith and obedience and claim/trust in His promises will accomplish all that God desires!

v12-13

"For if you turn back... Know with certainty that the Lord your God will not continue to drive these nations from before you; but they shall be a snare and trap to you, and a scourge in your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God has given you."

- God's people are not given immunity or impunity to sin. They are very much held accountable for it and dealt with accordingly.
- The consequences are severe and striking. Sin is dealt with in wrath and holiness!
- ***Deuteronomy 11:26-28 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse- [27] The blessing if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you this day; [28] And the curse if you will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you this day to go after other gods, which you have not known.***
- The consequence for sin is a curse! It is a route void of any blessing; outside of fellowship and communion with God; Away from His life and His light; It is to incur the wrath of God upon yourself!
- God's people are precious and peculiar to Him but God hates sin and He will not and cannot tolerate it.
- ***2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers [do not make mismatched alliances with them or come under a different yoke with them, inconsistent with your faith]. For what partnership have right living and right standing with God with iniquity and lawlessness? Or how can light have fellowship with darkness?***
- What fellowship can God have with sinful people? None! So consider how much He hates that which separates His people from intimacy with Himself.

v14

"and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one thing of them has failed."

- What an incredible revelation and truth to consider. They were living in the good of the promises. EVERYTHING had been fulfilled. They could look around them and see how The Lord had lead them and preserved them. Their history, their existence was all to God's glory and testimony!
- We too have such a precious blessing and fulfilment!
- God's loving kindnesses and tender mercies, His holiness and unchangingness are a testament... Romans 2:4 Or are you [so blind as to] trifle with and presume upon and despise and underestimate the wealth of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering patience? Are you unmindful or actually ignorant [of the fact] that God's goodness leads you to repentance?
- Oh may we never take the goodness of God for granted. May we never get too familiar and comfortable with tenderness and compassion of Almighty God. May we praise Him evermore, rejoicing in Him, being ever grateful for Him!!

v15-16

"so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things,"

"then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."

- There would be no sparing of punishment for God's people. Belonging to Israel did not grant a pass to sin.
- God would not and does not wink at sin. Sin has very real and very severe consequences and we are all subject to that rule!
- Either we are abiding in fellowship and communion with The Lord and walking in His ways; or we are outside of His loving companionship, outside of His blessing and walking in the way of His wrath.
- Read these consequences. Understand the severity. Understand that God does not change and the principals He has laid down are as eternal as His nature. Oh how we ought to fear God, to fear His wrath and to be abundantly grateful for His Salvation! Oh Lord thank You for conviction of sin, thank you for your rod and your staff, thank you for Godly sorrow... Thank you for leading us to repentance! Oh Hallelujah! What a Saviour!