

Joshua Chapter 23 Commentary

1 ¶ And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age.

We see again, this does not mean that they have conquered and annihilated all the enemies in the land of promise. It simply means; the remaining inhabitants of the land are not making active war against Israel. It means that God will no longer have "all of Israel" fighting the inhabitants of the land of promise under the command of Joshua. It means that God is giving Joshua some time to enjoy the land of promise. Joshua is being retired from the position of being pastor over Israel and will get to enjoy life with his family.

2 And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age: 3 And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you. 4 Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward. 5 And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you. 6 Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; 7 That ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8 But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day. 9 For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day. 10 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you. 11 ¶ Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. 12 Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: 13 Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. 14 And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. 15 Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. 16 When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; 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.

Again, this does not mean that they have conquered, and annihilated, all the enemies in the land of promise. It means that God will no longer have "all of Israel" fighting the inhabitants of the land of promise under the command of Joshua. It means; God has giving Joshua some time to enjoy the land of

promise. Joshua was retired from the position of being leader, pastor, over Israel to enjoy life with his family.

In this chapter Joshua begins his farewell address to Israel and their elders. He tells Israel:

- God has faithfully fought against and destroyed the nations they have already conquered.
- God will continue to destroy, the enemies that remain in the land of promise, if Israel remains faithful to God.
- He reminds Israel of the faithfulness of God to do all that he promised; even, while Israel has been obedient to him.
- He also reminds them; God has promised to bring great evil upon them, and that he will drive them out of the land of promise, if they forget God and turn to idolatry.

This is a great lesson for our Christian lives. If you desire the continued blessing of God in your life, remain faithful unto God and Christ. Rest assured, failure to be faithful to God will bring destruction, and sorrow, into your life. God, help us to be faithful to you, we pray in Jesus's name. Amen!

In conclusion, let us remember; though it may seem insignificant to us, to have all these details of the possessions of property; it is a reminder to us of the possession we are given when we are born-again. Israel was given general descriptions of the land of promise, then given more detailed descriptions of each tribe's possession in the land of promise, and finally given even more refined descriptions of the land of promise, and what each tribe of Israel was to possess.

The bible gives us, the children of God, the church, general descriptions of the possession we have in the church, here on earth. Such things as life in Christ, love, faith, thankfulness, prayer, and many more. As we read and study scripture, we find more refined descriptions of the meanings of these gifts. When we are born-again, we enter the land of promise by joining the church. This is the beginning of our warfare to take possession of the gifts, and blessings, that God has given us. As we learn, through our daily struggles in living the Christian life, we see the more refined descriptions of the truths, and boundaries, which the bible sets forth for us in our inheritance.

Let us be salt and light to the world around us as seen in: ***Php 3:13-17; 13 "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 ¶ Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. 17 ¶ Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.***" This is being a true evangelist and living the Christian life.

May we learn, from the mistakes of Israel, not to compromise with the enemy, and have suffer the consequences of disobeying God. May God help us all to press forward, to the full inheritance in the defined boundaries of our possession. May we be fully persuaded, and wholly willing, to do the work of an evangelist, taking to ourselves the fulness of God's blessings, as we live out our Christian lives. May we continue the make war against our enemies, fully occupy, and possess all the Lord has given to us here in time. We ask these blessings, in the name of our Saviour and Lord, Christ Jesus, Amen!