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Joshua 21:43-45

"Not A Word Has Failed"

May 24, 2017

Let's open our Bibles this evening to Joshua 21:43.

Joshua 21 effectively ends the report of the successful division of the land that took place seven and a half years after God brought the nation of Israel into the Land of Promise. And the book of Joshua doesn't go into great detail about the defeats over the enemies in the land. In fact, it deals with a couple of major battles - one at Jericho, one at Ai, for sure - but beyond that, it is kind of a geographical description that the LORD gives us that there is a battle that takes place for the center or the middle of the country, if you will; a battle that takes place against a bunch of very strong kinds that come from the south and then a bunch of strong kings that come from the north. And rather than going into detail, the LORD just tells us (in really just a chapter and a half) that seven and a half years pass, and the LORD has given them great victory.

Well after the battles, then, of course, comes the division of the land. And we read in those chapters of how the LORD gave to every one of the tribes a portion of land. We gave you some maps (if you were here for those). And last week we looked at chapters 20 and 21. The final division was to the Levites, the priests, and we talked to you about how the LORD gave them forty-eight cities; six of them were sanctuary cities, if you will, places of refuge for those who had committed a crime worthy of death or had done so accidentally - they could get a fair trial. But, in many ways, the Levites' place in the land was much like the church today. They were scattered about, bringing God's Word to the nation.

The book of Joshua covers twenty-five years from beginning to end. It starts about 1405 B.C., runs through about 1380. The first seven and a half years, like I said, were devoted to Joshua leading the nation into battle. The last seventeen and a half years were just the handing off of the land and all to the various tribes who were called by the LORD to then clean up their own area. But by the time they were given it, the Canaanites had been reduced in power and strength dramatically. And with Joshua getting older and unable to go on, if you will, as the commander of the armies, the LORD gave that responsibility to the individual tribes. It's much like you begin to grow up, and someone disciples you and helps you, and you can call them for anything; but at some point, you've got to kind of

start walking. And they had to start walking, now, by faith so that they could get rid of these other tribes that the LORD wanted to destroy. He wasn't giving them any more time or any more grace. It was time for judgment. Unfortunately, as you know, much of the troubles that follow are because the children of Israel refused to do that, and they left these pockets of resistance, these idolaters, and they began to affect God's people, and it had disastrous consequences, which we'll see in the book of Judges.

Now what we have left to look at in this book is the return of two and a half tribes to the other side of the Jordan. These were the two and a half tribes that had asked for that land before they came into the Land of Promise. Remember? They were cattle raisers - the tribe of Reuben and Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh. They were obligated by Moses that, "You can have the land, but first you come and fight with us. And once we take the land completely, then you can go home" (which is found in chapter 22). And next week, we will just spend our time in chapter 22 looking at the consequences of settling outside the land, settling for less than God's best, and the confusion or misunderstanding that came as a result between the people, in general, and these two and a half tribes, in particular. I think there're some interesting things to learn about misunderstanding and communication that we could benefit from greatly. Then we'll look at Joshua's farewell address (chapter 23) to only the leaders - the heads over the families and the tribes. And then chapter 24 - to everyone, including the leaders, the 2½ million-plus folks before Joshua will die and Aaron's son, Eleazar, will die, and a new generation will be presented to us.

Tonight, though, I wanted to just stop with you in three verses (chapter 21:43-45) because it's this wonderful declaration coming from a man who had been around for a long time. He'd been with Moses forty-plus years in the wilderness, had been in charge now for the better part of seven and a half years, would be with them for quite a bit more time. He's 93; he dies at 110 or so. But it's such a remarkable declaration to make at the end of this big long process that, for hundreds of years, the children of Israel had lived with. And now they were there. They were in the land, they had their portion, they had their instruction. The priests were planted. The folks that were leaving, were leaving. And there was this realization in Joshua's heart for the people and for himself, "Man, God did everything He said. He is faithful. You can trust Him. He will do exactly what He said." And so he says to the people (just in a couple of verses here) just that; that, "Not one word has failed of all that God has said." And if you believe that, you must live a pretty

good life. Because if you truly believe God will not fail - that what He has said He will do - there's a glorious future waiting for you, and it'll start right now.

Verse 43 says this, "So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers. And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass." That's a pretty cool declaration, don't you think? And for 93-year-old Joshua, who is about ready to retire, really couldn't go anymore, this is his lesson that he walks away from - a half a century worth of experience with the LORD. I want you to notice (and if you are one to take notes, you might want to circle in your Bible) the word "all" in these three verses. There are six of them in all - three little verses, six "alls."

It had been nearly 700 years earlier that God had spoken to Abraham, as he was standing up on the bluffs of Bethel. And he watched his little nephew, Lot, move towards the east, towards greener pastures, facing Sodom and Gomorrah, looking to the Jordan plains. This is what the kid wanted; he went by what he saw. But Abraham saw much more. When that sad parting of the ways occurred, the LORD (in Genesis 13) said to Abram, "Abram, I want you to look north, and now look south and then east, and turn around and look to the west. All of the land that you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever. And I'm going to make a nation of you as the dust is of the earth. If man could number the dust of the earth, he might be able to number you. So rise up, walk through the land, walk its breadth, walk its length. This is yours. I'm going to give it to you." Here, 700 years later, Joshua stands with  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million folks and says, "God did it." Unbelievably, God did it. Seven hundred years earlier, it was a dream in the heart of Abraham and a word from the LORD that he loved. But God had fulfilled His promise first made to Abraham and then handed off to every patriarch that followed, every family. Everything that you would have seen, had Joshua climbed up the hills of Mount Bethel that day, everything you could see from where he stood was theirs. It all belonged to God's people. Wherever he looked, Mount Hermon to the north, "That belongs to us." To the east, the mountains of Gilead and Moab, "Those are ours as well." To the west, all of the land that reaches out to the Mediterranean Sea to the south, every hill of Jerusalem and round about - it all belonged to God's people, even as the LORD had said. They waited long enough. They balked. For forty years they had to wander because of it. But it only took a little while by the time

the LORD began to move, and they began to follow Him. The LORD's promises had come to pass. That's how sure His Word is.

Now, it didn't mean that there weren't any enemies left to fight. There were lots of pockets of resistance. In fact, if you go back and read the first seven or eight verses in chapter 13 of this book, God goes out of His way to say, "There's a big enclave over here, there're a bunch of guys over there, and there's a hot spot over here. We're going to have to deal with that." But even though there was resistance left, the people were in a position where, had they just walked with the LORD and looked to Him, every threat to their security and victory would have been removed. They would still have to be faithful. They would still have to obey.

But everything that God had said, God did. And that's something you and I can hang on to. Whatever you read in your Bible, count on it. God doesn't fail. The promises of God are sure. His Word is sure. A little bit more than seven years earlier, they were still camped on the other side of the Jordan River. Moses had just died, and the LORD had come to Joshua and spoke in his ear. What He said to him is found in the first chapter of this book. Beginning in verse 2, this is what the LORD said to Joshua; and I suspect that these became his life verses, at least over these many years of battles. This is what the LORD said to Joshua, who was 86 years old, " 'Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them - the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.' " Seven and a half years later, Joshua is set to retire, and everything that God said was so.

Everything He said was so. And now the job of corporate victory is handed to the individual. Now you've got to go home to your land, and you've got to be that man or that woman of God that God can use to rid the land of those who are still fighting against God. God had never failed them once. Joshua knew it. The people knew it. And I would say it is good for you and me to remember that tonight. God doesn't fail. Your government will fail you. Your insurance company will fail you. Your neighbor might fail you. Your brother in Christ will fail you. (Someone in the congregation shouts "Amen!") Hey, now (Laughing), hope it ain't me. But, He won't fail. God doesn't fail.

And so here's a summary, just quickly, of the goodness of God, and it is Joshua's gathering together of all that he has realized, his statement of encouragement to remind these folks of God's faithfulness. He gives them four things to think about. You might want to write them down. He says here, "God has been faithful to give you the land. God has been faithful to give you rest. God has been faithful to deliver your enemies - all of them - into your hands." And then, just to kind of make sure he didn't leave anything out, he ends by saying, "God has been faithful to everything He said. Every promise of God, He has been faithful to." I think those are the kinds of words that make you fall in love with the Lord that you serve. And you fall in love with the word "all" because he uses it enough.

So verse 43, "So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it." Seven and a half years earlier, the second generation began their conquest of Canaan. They began with the LORD saying to them (early on in this book), "Look, every place that you put your feet is yours." In every battle that they face, you will hear the LORD saying to Joshua or to the leaders, "I have given them into your hand. There's no way you can lose. These guys can't overcome you, they can't overwhelm you. Oh, they may be bigger than you and stronger than you and better equipped than you, but you can't lose because I've given them into your hand." With that promise came instructions of victory - how to go about fighting the battles - and they weren't always the same, but they all depended on the individual listening to what God had to say and obeying what He had to say. You couldn't box God in and say, "This is always the way He works." But the fact that He never lost, that you can certainly declare. The directions from the LORD varied; the victory did not. He gave them the land, but the receiving of it depended very much upon their obedience. Would they do what God said? Would they go about it the way that He set that before them? Great victories, small victories, miraculous - all of them. And it was

certainly God's will that, over these seven and half years, 2½ million people would walk away from that experience saying, "We better do it the way He says. This is certainly God's work in our midst." Only the personal battles remained, which is what God wanted for them.

We've mentioned to you, I think, more than once that the history of Israel in the Old Testament is typical in the fact that it typifies or exemplifies the kind of spiritual life that you would walk. The Land of Promise is not heaven - way too many enemies there for it to be heaven - but it is a life that you live in the Spirit: where the wilderness is a place you wander around and go nowhere; the promises of God are that He'll fill you with His Spirit, and He'll give you victory over the enemy; that you'll conquer it and be more than conquerors. And so you see that same picture here. The Holy Spirit sends you and me into the world. There's an enemy there, of our souls. He wants to take us out. But in reality, in my life, he should be losing ground; and in yours. Right? We should be experiencing more of God's victories in our life. God has lots for you. I think your Bible on your lap has God promising you far more than you have tonight. But it's there. He promises you an inheritance of peace and of rest and of joy, of needs met and promises fulfilled, of victory and power - more than you need. He's never giving you more than what you can handle. Victory over the sin that easily besets you. What if I was to say to you - what ground have you gained in the Land of Promise this year, as God's man or God's woman? Between January and now, what ground have you gained in your walk with God? How much of the world has been put away? And how much have you advanced? What progress have you made? What goals have you set? Or how about the rest of this year? What battles are you fighting? What needs to be fought? What areas do you need to grow in? It isn't like God hasn't promised you and me victory. But it does depend on us as to what we really will commit ourselves to. Whether it's anger or self or materialism or lust, the enemy wants to stop your progress. But the Lord wants you to win. Put your foot down, man, it's yours. Take a stand. Fight the battle. It belongs to you. The big work of your salvation has been accomplished in most of you, I would suspect. But there is an area of personal growth, right? And personal victory has to become a reality. It isn't going to be long - half of the year is going to be gone already. Can you imagine? Did we not just have Christmas? I remember Christmas. And it's almost half over, you know? What kind of gain are you making, as a believer?

Joshua said to this generation, "Man, we were given everything that God promised." And for that time, and in these years, aside from a couple of real bad moves, you

don't read of the children of Israel disobeying the LORD, looking the other way, grabbing for weapons that they couldn't use. Aside from the Ai debacle and the agreement that Joshua and the leadership made with the Gibeonites early on (made some really dumb moves mostly because they didn't pray - just assumed), other than that, you don't find any bumps in the road. Now you'll find plenty in three chapters from now when a whole new generation shows up, and they don't know God, and they don't know His power, and it wasn't passed along. And there's great trouble waiting.

But we have the opportunity to gain ground - if you're willing. When Paul wrote to the Hebrews in chapter 5:12, he said, "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe." And then he says, "But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." And then Paul says, "So get off the basics, and get on with life. Grow up! There's so much more that God has for you than laying again the foundation of the doctrine about the baptism or laying on of hands or the resurrection from the dead or eternal judgment. Just get on with it, man. That's stuff you should know by now. Now grow up, and get to moving."

God had given them, faithfully, all of the land. He promised them hope. He promises you hope and confidence and fruitfulness. We will read here that the LORD gave Israel all the land, but then you set next to that the words "there are pockets of resistance." That may be, but if there's no doubt that you can have them, God just declares it in the past more often than not. If there was a doubt, the Lord might go, "I hope I can do it." But He declares it in the past tense so that you might know there's no doubt here. God can give you victory over your flesh. God can make you a man or a woman of God. You can be fruitful in this generation. You can stand up and make a difference. You can! Because you belong to Him.

The land was given. The potential for growth or victory was there. The only time they failed was when they stopped listening and stopped following. Those were the two places of tremendous failure. "I don't hear what God has to say. I'm not going to do what He says." And then we wonder where is the Lord. Peace is available. Joy is available. Gaining ground is available. You don't want to sit here in church

ten years later and be fighting the same sins that you fought ten years ago. You should be by them by now. Oh, there'll be another set to deal with, but growth is how that happens, isn't it? So, all of it is promised. What we receive of it depends upon how we respond. God gave them all of the land.

Verse 44 says, "The LORD gave them rest all around." Isn't that interesting? Not only do they have the potential to take every square foot, God says (in the midst of the battle, with the enemy living close by and the skirmishes that would invariably happen), "I've given you peace in every direction." And you want to go, "Time out, Lord. That's not peace." But the Lord doesn't lie. The children of Israel had the upper hand. There were challenges. Some of them were substantial. But here's the deal - they were not going to be able to look to Joshua anymore to lead them. Right? It was time for them to stand on their own two feet. They were going to have to hear from the LORD now and walk in the things that they learned from Him. He wasn't going to be there to hold their hand, wasn't going to be there to tell them, "Well, here's what I think the LORD would want us to do." It was time for them to grow up and to rest in Him and to do so on their own. God said, "I've given you rest." I would say that if they didn't know the LORD, there was no rest living with them. The people around - the enemy, their wickedness - there wouldn't be any time for rest there. And yet the foes were no longer insurmountable because these 2½ million folks should have grown in their understanding of who the LORD was. Look, you're in church every Sunday, every Wednesday - many of you. You should know the Lord better than you've ever known Him. Right? Your faith should be stronger today than it has ever been, certainly stronger than the day you got saved. "Oh, I remember the day I got saved." Great! Where have you gone since then? "From here to right there." No, that's not good. "I took two steps forward and three steps back. Here I am." It's not good. God wanted them to know Him in such a way that His relationship with you, as His people, would make you far greater in strength than the enemies who would like to destroy you. And if you know the Lord's rest, if you have that rest, it'll affect every place of your life - in your home, at your job, with your relationships and your ambitions. "If God be for you, who can be against you?" (Romans 8:31) It's true, isn't it? "If God is for you, who can be against you?" No one can. It was that conviction that caused little young David to charge a big Goliath, behemoth guy. All he knew was, "You're offending my LORD. I don't think He likes it. I'll be happy to be the vessel through whom He destroys you. If God is for me, I'll just go.....and take a few rocks. See how we do."

So, there were plenty of tests that came to these folks in the next many years since Joshua would speak this - over the next, say, two decades or so. But if they acted only on what they had learned, they would have been fine. They'd be able to stand on their own and survive. Can you rest tonight in the battle that you face in the Lord? Are you convinced? Joshua was pretty proud of the God that he served. "He's given us all the land, He's given us rest all around, there's no one that can take us out, there's no one that can take us on, there's no one that can be a threat to us," said 93-year-old Joshua, hacking and coughing and wheezing and leaning on his cane. "There's no one that can take me." And he was right. He was absolutely right. "I have given." See? And, "The LORD has given." That's past tense. He'd given them the promise, the sureness, the rest. His Word was sure. Isaiah would write in Isaiah 26:3, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." Where do you get peace? By knowing the Lord. Right? Where do you find rest? You find rest in resting in Him. And He gives us, what does Paul say in Philippians 4:7? "The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." His peace will fill your heart. The LORD says, "I have given you rest round about, the kind of rest that I promised to your fathers. No man will be able to stand against you. No enemy will have victory against you. I will deliver you out of their hand, every single one of you." Rest! Rest. Now I don't know about you, but there's no way to describe to people what kind of rest this is. People go, "How can you have peace at a time like this?" and you say, "Well, the Lord's in charge," which makes no sense to them unless they know Him. And if you know Him, it makes perfect sense. "Oh, yeah, that's true." As long as He doesn't fall off the throne, it'll be good. As long as He doesn't capitulate, we're going to be fine.

You know, this isn't a peace that you can get readily by reasoning. I remember talking with a guy who had a terrible time flying. He was sure the plane was going to crash every time he got on. And you could rationalize with him and tell him, "There're a million people in the air twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, all over the world. There're a million people with their feet off the ground right now. You'll be all right." "But what if I'm not?" "Well, then, you're dead. But until then....." (Laughing) "you're good." That's rational thinking, and it didn't help him. You can't get the peace of God through rational thinking. You can't will it into existence. "From now on, no more worry." Good luck with that. That won't help you. You can't gain this peace by thinking it through because the things that you might face are overwhelming. You can only find the rest that comes by knowing God. You're distinct from the world. You serve a God who lives, and He's for you

and not against you. And if He's for you, no one can be against you. That's exactly what verse 44 says. You can't lose. Forever I'm hearing Christians lament their situations as if somehow God has just been whooped. "Oh, my boss at work." Really? Who is he, anyway? "Well, you know, he's not letting me....." Well, you just tell the Lord - who is bigger than your boss at work. "Oh, this guy down the street from me." Yeah, you just tell the Lord. He's bigger than they. He's always bigger, isn't He? He's always stronger. If you believe that, you can rest. You can always rest. You can be sure to rest.

Seven years of watching God work should have brought a rest to the people only because they knew what He could do. The enemy was a shadow of his former self by now, and God had grown large in their understanding. By comparison, they should have had a rest that maybe couldn't have been discovered early on, but they'd had a long time to sit and watch. It was Isaiah who said, in chapter 14:16, as he was speaking about the devil, "Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the house of his prisoners?' " Is this the guy that's caused all of that trouble? And we're going to be, I think, amazed - as God's people - what a puny guy Satan's going to look like, by comparison. Oh, not you and him. You're done. But you and the Lord. This wasn't even a contest. Right? This is not even a problem. There were those in the land that were still problematic, but they should have rest. Look, you're saved tonight. You're resting in God's care. The Bible would order you not to be anxious. Now I know that's a hard command to receive, "Quit worrying." I used to say to my wife, "Quit worrying," and she'd, "Oh, yeah, thank you for the counsel. That's great help." But that's all I know. Stop it. Just knock it off. Believe the right things. Know the right things. Find that rest that God alone can provide. "I've sworn it to your fathers." I love that. And when the LORD begins to talk about His promises, He often uses the words, "I have sworn," which means to take an oath or to take a pledge. It's almost like the LORD kind of bends over and talks to us in language that we would understand. Right? "How can I trust You?" "Oh, I swear to Me! I'll do what I say. You can count on it." A promise of rest for our souls. Read Hebrews 4, the first eleven verses, which talk about a rest being available to the people of God. If we just won't miss it by unbelief, then we can rest. And Joshua looked at 2½ million folks that he wasn't going to be leading anymore; and seven and a half years earlier, they hadn't ever even set foot in the land, and now it was all theirs. And he went, "High five. The LORD is

awesome. This land's all ours, and we're at rest." Anything that now threatens our rest is really a matter of just letting God be God.

He says, in verse 44, the third thing was that He delivered them from all of their enemies. "And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand." I love that. If we're at war in this world because of who we serve, I know one thing for sure - we're going to win the battle. I don't care who they are or who they think they are. God fights our battles. Cities, kings, confederacies, armies - thirty-one of them that are named in this book sought to obliterate the children of God from the face of the earth. They were out to get them. They were organized together. They came not hiding their intentions but wearing them on their sleeve. "We're going to wipe these guys out. We're going to bring everyone with us. There's no way you're going to be able to stand." Everything was set against the people of God, and by the time the years went by, Joshua looked around and said, "Where are those guys? We win. Our enemies are defeated. God has fought for us." Thirty-one kings fell before a young nation who really didn't fight very well. Most of the cities had big walls of protection. They had citadels and fortresses. They marched under banners that would have frightened anyone in the land except for the Jews, except for the people that God had chosen. They came marching out, and they got carried back in coffins. You can't mess with God and win. Their progress, like I said, was only halted, and the battle was only lost, when they stopped checking in with the LORD as they had a couple of times. That's when the enemy gets the upper hand. You quit checking in with God, you're going to lose. You stay plugged in with Him, you know His will, all of the enemies are defeated. Fear goes, doubt goes, selfishness goes, covetousness goes, anger goes away. It just has to go away. I did a lot of fighting when I was a kid. You might not have guessed. But I got in a lot of fights, and I won more than I lost. And I think the reason was I didn't care if I killed you or not. Until I got saved. It's hard to fight when you don't want to hurt somebody; like you just want to stop them - you get hurt bad. Hearts change. God changes your heart. You can't fight with that kind of abandon anymore. Now, if someone tried to hurt you, I think I might still do that; or my wife or my children. Then there's cause. But beyond that, you cut me off on the freeway, I'll be all right. I'll live through it. I can handle it. Usually. (Laughing) I quoted a couple of those psalms at them from time to time. "Lord, break their teeth in their mouth. Thank You. Amen." (Laughing) But the enemy only won when they got their eyes off the LORD. You and I have far more opportunity than that, don't we? So we stay close. "Not a man of all their enemies stood; the LORD delivered them from all of them."

So every enemy falls before the LORD. Pretty good to know, isn't it? Amazing to think about. Isaiah would have the LORD declaring to the nation (in chapter 41:10), "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. Behold, all those who were incensed against you shall be ashamed and disgraced; they shall be as nothing, and those who strive with you shall perish. You shall seek them and not find them - those who contended with you. Those who war against you shall be as nothing because I am with you." I like these verses. And whenever we run into trouble in the world, I'm so glad to go, "Hey, you have to talk to my Dad. And by the way, He never has lost a battle, and He's not about to lose this one."

Faithful God had been to this nation to deliver every enemy into their hand. God wants you to be an overcomer. You know that, right? He doesn't want you a victim. He wants you to win for His glory, for His sake, to have victory over yourself and over your circumstances and over the temptation that can easily grab you and seek to destroy. Look, the enemy is still going to camp in the Land of Promise. In fact, you don't belong here. You're just visiting this planet, aren't you? This isn't your home. You're just passing through. But God wants you to be like adhesive tape. He wants you stuck to people; you can just drag them along with you. "Come on. Over here." And I pray that the rest of 2017 might find you victorious over the enemies that are in your life that have been hampering you, in many ways, far too long. The LORD gave them the land. God gave them rest. God was faithful to deliver them from all of their enemies.

Verse 45, "Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass." Everything has come to pass. You wonder how much of God's Word you can count on? Just underline the word "all." All. All. God hasn't failed. He won't fail. He can't fail. You'll fail, I'll fail, we'll fail. He won't. When they broke the covenant, He upheld it. When they thought of going back to Egypt, he slowed them down and assured them that they shouldn't go there, that that's no place for them. God's Word stands because God stands for His Word. Always. "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Word will never pass away" (Matthew 24:35, Luke 21:33). True then. True now. Isaiah 55:10 said it, "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in

the thing for which I sent it." God's Word is powerful. Right? It changes things. It changes you. It changes me.

I love Joshua's excitement as he hands off the ball to say, "God's done it. Now we just have to live it. We have a land, we have a place, we have a purpose. We've seen it fulfilled." How awesome to be able to live with the kind of confidence that says God will do as He said, you can count on it. Is that the way you live? When you face your day, do you begin by saying, "Well, at least God's in charge, I know His Word"? The One who promised to give His Son to be born of a virgin. How laughable that is, but He did it. And not only a virgin but one in Bethlehem. All right. That limits the odds. But He did it. He told us He'd be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, that that money would be thrown to the priests, and it would be used to buy a burial ground for the poor. And it was. Every detail of His birth and His ministry, His rejection, His suffering, His death, His resurrection is known through the prophets so that when He shows up, we might go, "Well, you can certainly count on what He said." Today we live at a time when Ezekiel wrote, in chapter 37, (that was 2600 years ago) that, in the last day God would bring Israel back into the land. And guess where they're at? Sitting in the land. Holy? Hardly. Hardly. If you go to Israel, you'll find out otherwise. They're not holy. But they're chosen, and they're the fulfillment of God's Word - that He's going to one day gather them from every corner of the earth from where He has scattered them, and they're going to dwell together as one nation in the land. That's happening. Over 55% of every Jew alive today lives in Israel. It's a remarkable story that just says God is faithful to His Word.

So today we live with the fulfillment of His Word, and if that is all true, then soon and very soon we're going to see the King. The Lord will come. So, God keeps His Word. He did it in the past. He'll do it in the present. It'll assure you of a good future. His Word cannot fail. Moses said it really clearly in Numbers 23:19. He said, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" It's worth going to Bible study because then you'll know what's true, and you can hang on to the promises of God. If He says He loves you, it's because He does. Now we all stand around and wonder why, but He does. When He tells you that He will forgive you and not remember your sins, He will, and He won't. He will forgive you; He will forget your sin. The slate is clean. Don't think for five minutes you're going to go to heaven, and the Lord goes, "Hey, a couple or problems here that just came off the computer." No problems, man. The blood of His Son has washed us

from all sin. You have absolute access to God because of it. When He assures you that all things work together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28), you can count on it. It does. "Well I don't get it." Nobody said you had to get it. That's not one of the promises. The promise isn't, "And Jack will understand." Never find that in there. When He tells you He's coming again to gather you to Himself, that where He is you might be also (John 14:3), rest assured. He's coming again. He promised them the land. He gave it to them. He promised them rest all around. He gave it to them. He promised them that no enemy could stand in their presence, and He took out every enemy. Not one word of all of His promises failed. It's a good God to serve. I don't understand why you're not reading your Bible more. You really want to know what's in there. There's lots to go on, isn't there?

Submitted by Maureen Dickson  
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