

## Sabbath School Lesson #12 – God is Faithful! – 13-19 December 2025

**C**hrist would have us know that God is faithful to fulfil all that He has promised. And this was the testimony of Joshua: “There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (Joshua 21:45).

**Sunday: All Came to Pass** – Read Joshua 21:43-45; what picture does the book paint of God? In these verses we have the conclusion of the history the exodus to Canaan summed up. God had promised to give the seed of Abraham the land of Canaan for a possession, and now at last He performed this promise (verse 43). Though they had often forfeited the benefit of that promise, and God had long delayed the performance of it, yet at last all difficulties were conquered, and Canaan was their own. And the promise of the heavenly Canaan is as sure to all God’s spiritual Israel, for it is the promise of Him that cannot lie.

God had promised to give them rest in that land, and now they had rest round about, rest from the fatigues of their travel through the wilderness, rest from their wars in Canaan, and the insults which their enemies there had at first offered them. They now dwelt, not only in habitations of their own, but peaceable ones; though there were Canaanites that remained, yet none that had either strength or spirit to attack them, nor so much as give them an alarm. This rest continued till they by their own sin and folly put thorns in their own beds and eyes.

God had promised to give them victory and success in their wars, and this promise likewise was fulfilled: There stood not a man before them (verse 44). It is true there were Canaanites now remaining in the land, but God had said He would not drive them out all at once (Exodus 23:30). Israel had much in their full possession as they had hands to manage, so that the Canaanites only kept parts of the country against the beasts of the field, till Israel should become numerous enough to replenish them. To the after prevalence of Canaanites, that was purely the effect of Israel’s cowardice, and the punishment of their sinful inclination to the idolatries and abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord would have cast out before them but that they harboured and indulged them. So that the foundation of God stands sure.

“There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (verse 45). This acknowledgment by Joshua was afterwards made by Solomon (1 Kings 8:56). The inviolable truth of God’s promise, and performance of it, are what all saints have been ready to bear their testimony to; if the performance has seemed to come short, they have been as ready to own that they themselves must bear all the blame.

**Monday: A Sign of Concern** – Read Joshua 23:1-5; what are the major focal points of Joshua’s introduction? “Some years had passed since the people had settled in their possessions, and already could be seen cropping out the same evils that had heretofore brought judgments upon Israel. As Joshua felt the infirmities of age stealing upon him, and realized that his work must soon close, he was filled with anxiety for the future of his people. It was with more than a father’s interest that he addressed them, as they gathered once more about their aged chief. “Ye have seen,” he said, “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.” Although the Canaanites had been subdued, they still possessed a considerable portion of the land promised to Israel, and Joshua exhorted his people not to settle down at ease and forget the Lord’s command to utterly dispossess these idolatrous nations” {PP 521.2}.

**Tuesday: Clear Boundaries** – Read Joshua 23:6-14; why do you think Joshua took such a strong position concerning Israel’s relations with the surrounding nations? “The Lord mercifully set before his people the terrible results that would follow association with the idolatrous Canaanites: “But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. Moreover, it shall come to pass that I shall do unto you as I thought to do unto them.” By mingling with the heathen, Israel would become estranged from God, and would finally pursue the same course which had provoked his wrath against the Canaanites” {ST January 13, 1881, par. 17}. “The after-history of God’s chosen people shows that these warnings were real prophecies, which have been most strikingly fulfilled. The Israelites yielded only a partial obedience to the command of God, and for many generations they were afflicted by a

remnant of the idolatrous nation, who were spared as the prophets had foretold, as “pricks in their eyes, and as thorns in their side.” {par. 18}. “Additional warning and instruction on this point was afterward given to Israel by the Lord through his servant Joshua: “Take good heed, therefore, unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of those nations, even those that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them and they to you; know for a certainty that the Lord 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.” {par. 19}. “Should they enter into any friendly relation with those nations standing under the curse of God, the Hebrews would be infatuated and beguiled by the arts of idolatrous women, and would be led to form marriages with them. All the influence of these heathen women would be exerted to lead God’s people into idolatry, and thus the devices of Satan would prove successful. The Lord would have his people regard the Canaanites as enemies to Israel and to God, – enemies who would be constantly on the watch for some occasion to avenge their own defeat. On condition that Israel be true to God, his power would be manifested in their behalf, and the gracious promise was, “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.” But if they provoked the Lord by separating from him, he would withdraw his protection, and make these nations instruments to chastise and bring them back to their allegiance. Should they still continue to withdraw from God, he would not restrain the cruelties of these wicked nations, and they would grievously torment Israel, and at length drive them from their possessions” {par. 20}.

**Wednesday: The Anger of the Lord** – Read Joshua 23:15-16; how should we interpret the descriptions of God’s wrath and retributive justice here and elsewhere in Scripture? “Joshua appealed to the people themselves as witnesses that, so far as they had complied with the conditions, God had faithfully fulfilled His promises to them. “Ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls,” he said, “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.” He declared to them that as the Lord had fulfilled His promises, so He would fulfill His threatenings. “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.... When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord, ... 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.” {PP 522.1} “Satan deceives many with the plausible theory that God’s love for His people is so great that He will excuse sin in them; he represents that while the threatenings of God’s word are to serve a certain purpose in His moral government, they are never to be literally fulfilled. But in all His dealings with His creatures God has maintained the principles of righteousness by revealing sin in its true character—by demonstrating that its sure result is misery and death. The unconditional pardon of sin never has been, and never will be. Such pardon would show the abandonment of the principles of righteousness, which are the very foundation of the government of God. It would fill the unfallen universe with consternation. God has faithfully pointed out the results of sin, and if these warnings were not true, how could we be sure that His promises would be fulfilled? That so-called benevolence which would set aside justice is not benevolence but weakness” {PP 522.2}.

**Thursday: Cling to God** – Read Joshua 23:8; how does Joshua encourage the people? Joshua encouraged and appealed to the people to cleave unto the Lord, that is, ‘delight in Him, depend upon Him, devote yourselves to His glory, and continue to do so to the end, as you have done unto this day, ever since you came to Canaan.’ Being willing to make the best of them, Joshua looks not so far back as the iniquity of Peor. There might be many things amiss among them, but they had not forsaken the Lord their God, and it is to insinuate his exhortation to perseverance with the more pleasing power that he praises them. ‘Go on and prosper, for the Lord is with you while you are with Him.’ Those that command should commend; the way to make people better is to make the best of them. ‘You have cleaved to the Lord unto this day, therefore go on to do so, else you lose the praise and reward of what you have obtained. Your righteousness will not be mentioned unto you if you turn from it.’