

Joshua 21:45

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

Analysis

This climactic verse provides theological summary of Joshua's entire book, testifying to God's absolute faithfulness. The phrase 'There failed not ought' (lo-nafal davar, לֹא־נָפַל דָּבָר) literally means 'not one word fell'—every promise stood firm and was fulfilled. The Hebrew davar (דָּבָר) means word, matter, or thing—God's spoken promises all achieved realization. The phrase 'of any good thing' (mikol-hadavar hatov, מִכָּל־הַדְּבָר הַטוֹב) emphasizes that God's beneficial promises especially find fulfillment. The description 'which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel' grounds these fulfilled promises in divine speech—what God says, He accomplishes. The final declaration 'all came to pass' (hakol ba, הַכֹּל בָּא) uses comprehensive language leaving no exceptions. This verse establishes a critical theological principle: God's Word never fails (Isaiah 55:10-11, Luke 21:33). From a Reformed perspective, this demonstrates both the inerrancy of Scripture and the certainty of divine promises. If God fulfilled every promise to Israel regarding land, enemies, and rest, believers can trust every New Testament promise regarding salvation, sanctification, and glorification. This verse provides biblical foundation for confidence in God's faithfulness to His covenant people across all ages.

Historical Context

After approximately seven years of conquest and subsequent land distribution, Joshua concludes Israel's settling in Canaan with this theological testimony. Every promise God made through Moses in Deuteronomy, repeated to Joshua in Joshua 1, and confirmed through the conquest found literal historical fulfillment.

Archaeological and historical evidence supports Israel's emergence as the dominant power in Late Bronze Age/Iron Age I Canaan, consistent with Joshua's comprehensive victory claims. This summary statement parallels similar testimonies throughout Scripture where God's people acknowledge His complete faithfulness: 1 Kings 8:56 (Solomon), Nehemiah 9:7-8 (Ezra), Luke 1:45 (Elizabeth). Such public testimonies served multiple purposes: memorializing God's faithfulness for future generations, encouraging continued trust in divine promises, and calling God's people to reciprocal covenant loyalty. The comprehensive fulfillment of temporal promises (land, victory, rest) provided foundation for trusting eternal promises (covenant relationship, Messiah, resurrection). New Testament writers cite Joshua's historical fulfillment as evidence that God will similarly fulfill all redemptive promises through Christ (Romans 4:16-21, Hebrews 6:13-20, 10:23).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What unfulfilled promises in your life tempt you to doubt God's faithfulness, and how does Joshua 21:45 strengthen your faith?
2. How should the fact that 'not one word failed' shape your approach to Bible reading and application?
3. What testimony of God's faithfulness in your life could encourage others to trust His promises?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	נָפַל ל	הַדָּבָר ר	מִכֹּל	הַדָּבָר ר	הֵט וֹב	אֲשֶׁר	דָּבָר ר
H3808	There failed	not ought	H3605	not ought	of any good	H834	had spoken
	H5307	H1697		H1697	H2896		H1696
יְהוָה ה	אֶל	בֵּית	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	הֵכָל ל	בָּא:		
which the LORD	H413	unto the house	of Israel	H3605	all came to pass		
H3068		H1004	H3478		H935		

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 8:56 (Good): Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

Numbers 23:19 (Good): God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (Parallel theme): Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Hebrews 6:18 (Parallel theme): That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

1 Corinthians 1:9 (References Lord): God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Titus 1:2 (Parallel theme): In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;