

Vayeilekh

Deuteronomy 31:1-30

Chapter 31

1 Moses went and spoke these things to all Israel. 2 He said to them:

I am now one hundred and twenty years old, I can no longer be active. Moreover, the Lord has said to me, "You shall not go across yonder Jordan." 3 The Lord your God Himself will cross over before you; and He Himself will wipe out those nations from your path and you shall dispossess them. - Joshua is the one who shall cross before you, as the Lord has spoken. - 4 The Lord will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and to their countries, when He wiped them out. 5 The Lord will deliver them up to you, and you shall deal with them in full accordance with the Instruction that I have enjoined upon you. 6 Be strong and resolute, be not in fear or in dread of them; for the Lord your God Himself marches with you: He will not fail you or forsake you.

7 Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: "Be strong and resolute, for it is you who shall go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to their fathers to give them, and it is you who shall apportion it to them. 8 And the Lord Himself will go before you. He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Fear not and be not dismayed!"

9 Moses wrote down this Teaching and gave it to the priests, sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Lord's Covenant, and to all the elders of Israel.

10 And Moses instructed them as follows: Every seventh year, the year set for remission, at the Feast of Booths, 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God in the place that He will choose, you shall read this Teaching aloud in the presence of all Israel. 12 Gather the people - men, women, children, and the strangers in your communities - that they may hear and so learn to revere the Lord your God and to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching. 13 Their children, too, who have not had the experience, shall hear and learn to revere the Lord your God as long as they live in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.

14 The Lord said to Moses: The time is drawing near for you to die. Call Joshua and present yourselves in the Tent of Meeting, that I may instruct him. Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the Tent of Meeting. 15 The Lord appeared in the Tent, in a pillar of cloud, the pillar of cloud having come to rest at the entrance of the tent.

16 The Lord said to Moses: You are soon to lie with your fathers. This people will

thereupon go astray after the alien gods in their midst, in the land that they are about to enter; they will forsake Me and break My covenant that I made with them. 17 Then My anger will flare up against them, and I will abandon them and hide My countenance from them. They shall be ready prey; and many evils and troubles shall befall them. And they shall say on that day, "Surely it is because our God is not in our midst that these evils have befallen us." 18 Yet I will keep My countenance hidden on that day, because of all the evil they have done in turning to other gods. 19 Therefore, write down this poem and teach it to the people of Israel; put it in their mouths, in order that this poem may be My witness against the people of Israel. 20 When I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey that I promised on oath to their fathers, and they eat their fill and grow fat and turn to other gods and serve them, spurning Me and breaking My covenant, 21 and the many evils and troubles befall them - then this poem shall confront them as a witness, since it will never be lost from the mouth of their offspring. For I know what plans they are devising even now, before I bring them into the land that I promised on oath.

22 That day, Moses wrote down this poem and taught it to the Israelites.

23 And He charged Joshua son of Nun: "Be strong and resolute: for you shall bring the Israelites into the land that I promised them on oath, and I will be with you."

24 When Moses had put down in writing the words of this Teaching to the very end, 25 Moses charged the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying: 26 Take this book of Teaching and place it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, and let it remain there as a witness against you. 27 Well I know how defiant and stiffnecked you are: even now, while I am still alive in your midst, you have been defiant toward the Lord; how much more, then, when I am dead! 28 Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your officials, that I may speak all these words to them and that I may call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that, when I am dead, you will act wickedly and turn away from the path that I enjoined upon you, and that in time to come misfortune will befall you for having done evil in the sight of the Lord and vexed Him by your deeds.

30 Then Moses recited the words of this poem to the very end, in the hearing of the whole congregation of Israel:

Haftarah for Vayeilekh

Isaiah 55:6 - 56:8

6 Seek the Lord while He can be found,

Call to Him while He is near.
7 Let the wicked give up his ways,
The sinful man his plans;
Let him turn back to the Lord,
And He will pardon him;
To our God,
For he freely forgives.

8 For My plans are not your plans,
Nor are My ways your ways

- declares the Lord.

9 But as the heavens are high above the earth,
So are My ways high above your ways
And My plans above your plans.
10 For as the rain or snow drops from heaven
And returns not there,
But soaks the earth
And makes it bring forth vegetation,
Yielding seed for sowing and bread for eating,
11 So is the word that issues from My mouth:
It does not come back to Me unfulfilled,
But performs what I purpose,
Achieves what I sent it to do.
12 Yea, you shall leave in joy and be led home secure.
Before you, mount and hill shall shout aloud,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
13 Instead of the brier, a cypress shall rise;
Instead of the nettle, a myrtle shall rise.
These shall stand as a testimony to the Lord,
As an everlasting sign that shall not perish.

Chapter 56

1 Thus said the Lord:
Observe what is right and do what is just;
For soon My salvation shall come,
And my deliverance be revealed.

2 Happy is the man who does this,
The man who holds fast to it:

Who keeps the sabbath and does not profane it,
And stays his hand from doing any evil.

3 Let not the foreigner say,
Who has attached himself to the Lord,
"The Lord will keep me apart from His people";
And let not the eunuch say,
"I am a withered tree."

4 For thus said the Lord:
"As for the eunuchs who keep My sabbaths,
Who have chosen what I desire
And hold fast to My covenant -

5 I will give them, in My House
And within My walls,
A monument and a name
Better than sons or daughters.
I will give them an everlasting name
Which shall not perish.

6 As for the foreigners
Who attach themselves to the Lord,
To minister to Him,
And to love the name of the Lord,
To be His servants -
All who keep the sabbath and do not profane it,
And who hold fast to My covenant -

7 I will bring them to My sacred mount
And let them rejoice in My house of prayer.
Their burnt offerings and sacrifices
Shall be welcome on My altar;
For My House shall be called
A house of prayer for all peoples."

8 Thus declares the Lord God,
Who gathers the dispersed of Israel:
"I will gather still more to those already gathered."