

## Nitzavim

### Deuteronomy 29:9 - 30:20

*This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh*

<sup>9</sup> You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God — your tribal heads, your elders and your officials, all the men of Israel, <sup>10</sup> your children, your wives, even the stranger within your camp, from woodchopper to waterdrawer — <sup>11</sup> to enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, which the Lord your God is concluding with you this day, with its sanctions; <sup>12</sup> to the end that He may establish you this day as His people and be your God, as He promised you and as He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. <sup>13</sup> I make this covenant, with its sanctions, not with you alone, <sup>14</sup> but both with those who are standing here with us this day before the Lord our God and with those who are not with us here this day.

<sup>15</sup> Well you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we passed through the midst of various other nations through which you passed; <sup>16</sup> and you have seen the detestable things and the fetishes of wood and stone, silver and gold, that they keep. <sup>17</sup> Perchance there is among you some man or woman, or some clan or tribe, whose heart is even now turning away from the Lord our God to go and worship the gods of those nations — perchance there is among you a stock sprouting poison weed and wormwood. <sup>18</sup> When such a one hears the words of these sanctions, he may fancy himself immune, thinking, "I shall be safe, though I follow my own willful heart" — to the utter ruin of moist and dry alike. <sup>19</sup> The Lord will never forgive him; rather will the Lord's anger and passion rage against that man, till every sanction recorded in this book comes down upon him, and the Lord blots out his name from under heaven.

<sup>20</sup> The Lord will single them out from all the tribes of Israel for misfortune, in accordance with all the sanctions of the covenant recorded in this book of Teaching. <sup>21</sup> And later generations will ask — the children who succeed you, and foreigners who come from distant lands and see the plagues and diseases that the Lord has inflicted upon that land, <sup>22</sup> all its soil devastated by sulfur and salt, beyond sowing and producing, no grass growing in it, just like the upheaval of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the Lord overthrew in His fierce anger — <sup>23</sup> all nations will ask, "Why did the Lord do thus to this land? Wherefore that awful wrath?" <sup>24</sup> They will be told, "Because they forsook the covenant that the Lord, God of their fathers, made with them when He freed them from the land of Egypt; <sup>25</sup>

they turned to the service of other gods and worshiped them, gods whom they had not experienced and whom He had not allotted to them. 26 So the Lord was incensed at that land and brought upon it all the curses recorded in this book. 27 The Lord uprooted them from their soil in anger, fury, and great wrath, and cast them into another land, as is still the case."

<sup>28</sup> Concealed acts concern the Lord our God; but with overt acts, it is for us and our children ever to apply all the provisions of this Teaching.

### **Chapter 30**

<sup>1</sup> When all these things befall you — the blessing and the curse that I have set before you — and you take them to heart amidst the various nations to which the Lord your God has banished you, <sup>2</sup> and you return to the Lord your God, and you and your children heed His command with all your heart and soul, just as I enjoin upon you this day, <sup>3</sup> then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and take you back in love. He will bring you together again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. <sup>4</sup> Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you. <sup>5</sup> And the Lord your God will bring you to the land that your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will make you more prosperous and more numerous than your fathers.

<sup>6</sup> Then the Lord your God will open up your heart and the hearts of your offspring to love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul, in order that you may live. <sup>7</sup> The Lord your God will inflict all those curses upon the enemies and foes who persecuted you. <sup>8</sup> You, however, will again heed the Lord and obey all His commandments that I enjoin upon you this day. <sup>9</sup> And the Lord your God will grant you abounding prosperity in all your undertakings, in the issue of your womb, the offspring of your cattle, and the produce of your soil. For the Lord will again delight in your well-being, as He did in that of your fathers, <sup>10</sup> since you will be heeding the Lord your God and keeping His commandments and laws that are recorded in this book of the Teaching — once you return to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.

<sup>11</sup> Surely, this Instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for you, nor is it beyond reach. <sup>12</sup> It is not in the heavens, that you should say, "Who among us can go up to the heavens and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?" <sup>13</sup> Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who among us can cross to the other side of the sea and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?" <sup>14</sup> No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it.

<sup>15</sup> See, I set before you this day life and prosperity, death and adversity. <sup>16</sup> For I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His laws, and His rules, that you may thrive and increase, and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land that you are about to enter and possess. <sup>17</sup> But if your heart turns away and you give no heed, and are lured into the worship and service of other gods, <sup>18</sup> I declare to you this day that you shall certainly perish; you shall not long endure on the soil that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. <sup>19</sup> I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day: I have put before you life and death, blessing and curse. Choose life — if you and your offspring would live — <sup>20</sup> by loving the Lord your God, heeding His commands, and holding fast to Him. For thereby you shall have life and shall long endure upon the soil that the Lord swore to your ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them.

## Va-yelekh

### Deuteronomy 31:1-30

*This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh*

#### Chapter 31

<sup>1</sup> Moses went and spoke these things to all Israel. <sup>2</sup> 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." <sup>3</sup> 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. — <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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!"

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> And Moses instructed them as follows: Every seventh year, the year set for remission, at the Feast of Booths, <sup>11</sup> 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. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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." <sup>18</sup> Yet I will keep My countenance hidden on that day, because of all the evil they have done in turning to other gods. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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, <sup>21</sup> 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.

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

<sup>23</sup> 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."

<sup>24</sup> When Moses had put down in writing the words of this Teaching to the very end, <sup>25</sup> Moses charged the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, saying:

<sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> 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! <sup>28</sup>

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.

<sup>29</sup> 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.

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