

## 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: