

VaYeLeKh Deuteronomy - Devarim (31.1-31.30)

Moses went and spoke the following words to all Israel, saying to them, "I am 120 years old and God told me that I will not cross the Jordan (River) with you. God will be the One crossing before you, destroying your enemies. Joshua will be the one to lead you across, just as God has promised. Be strong and brave. God is going with you and will not forsake you."

Then Moses called for Joshua to come forward in the presence of all Israel. Moses said to him, "Be steadfast and strong. God is with you so have no fear and do not let your spirit be broken." Moses then wrote down this Teaching and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who were responsible for the Ark of the Covenant of God.

Moses said, "At the end of 7 years, at the time of the Appointed Meetings when all Israel comes to see themselves directly before the Presence of God, you shall read this Teaching aloud. Remember you must assemble the people -- the men, the women, the children and the stranger among you so that they may hear this Teaching so they will be in awe of God enough to carry out all the words of God's Teaching. Even the children who do not yet understand must hear this Teaching and learn to be in awe of God, your God."

God then said to Moses, "Your day of death is approaching. Bring Joshua to the Tent of Appointed Meeting." Moses went with Joshua and stood in meditation in the Tent of Appointed Meeting. God appeared in a pillar of cloud and the cloud stood at the Tent entrance. God said to Moses, "You are now going to lie down beside your fathers. After you die this people will break My Covenant and forsake Me and My Teachings. They will forget and ignore and disrespect My Teachings. Because of their evil in worshipping other gods, I will hide from them.

Now, teach this song to the people of Israel. It will be a witness, so that when oppressive evils arise, the song will remind them that they mocked Me and did not follow My teachings." So on that day Moses wrote down God's song and taught it to the Israelites.

Moses finished writing the Teachings in a Torah scroll, then said to the Levite priests in charge of the Ark of the Covenant, "Place this Book of the Teaching near the Covenant of God, your God. I know your stubborn, rebellious spirit. You Hebrews did not respect God while I was alive so how much more disrespectful will you be after I am dead! In the end of days, you will be beset with evil because you will have done evil in God's eyes, angering him with your work. Then Moses began to sing God's song to the entire assembly of Israel until it was completed.

Questions: 1) How do you show respect to God? 2) Why do people turn against God and become corrupt? 3) What does the Covenant and Teachings mean to you? **Illustration Ideas:** Joshua, the people's new leader...reading the Torah aloud...or being a listener...the Torah scroll...Moses writing.... Moses teaching the son.....