

23And 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."

24When Moses had put down in writing the words of this Teaching to the very end, 25Moses charged the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, saying: 26Take 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. 27Well 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! 28Gather to me all the elders of your tribes and your officials, that I may speak all these words to them and

23 וַיִּצְוֵנוּ אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן־נֹון וַיֹּאמֶר חֹזֵק וַיִּמָּץ כִּי אַתָּה תָבִיא אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לָהֶם וְאֲנֹכִי אֲהִי עִמָּךְ׃  
24 וַיְהִי ׀ כְּכֹלֹת מֹשֶׁה לְכַתֵּב אֶת־דִּבְרֵי שְׁבִיעֵי הַתּוֹרָה־הַזֹּאת עַל־סֵפֶר עֵד תָּמִם׃ 25 וַיִּצְוֵ מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַלְוִיִּם נֹשְׂאֵי אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה לֵאמֹר׃ 26 לְקַח אֶת סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּה וּשְׂמַתֶּם אֹתוֹ מִצַּד אֲרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה אֲלֵהֵיכֶם וְהָיָה־שָׁם בְּךָ לְעֵד׃ 27 כִּי אֲנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת־מְרִיבְךָ וְאֶת־עֲרֻפְךָ הַקָּשָׁה הֵן בְּעוֹדֵנִי חַי עִמָּכֶם הַיּוֹם מִמְּרִים הָיִתֶם עִם־יְהוָה וְאַף כִּי־אַחֲרֵי מוֹתִי׃ 28 הַקְהִילוּ אֵלַי אֶת־כָּל־זְקֵנֵי שְׁבִטֵיכֶם וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם וְאֶדְבַּרְהָ בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה׃

GOD APPOINTS JOSHUA (v. 23)

23. He charged This is the first time that God speaks directly to Joshua. I will be with you God confirms what Moses promised Joshua in verse 8.

CONVEYING BOTH THE TEACHING AND THE POEM (vv. 24-30)

24. put down in writing Hebrew: *likhtov* ... *al seifer*. In the Bible, *seifer* means any kind of written document—even a brief letter, a legal document, or an inscription, whether written on a sheet or scroll of papyrus or parchment, or on stone, plaster, or pottery. The *seifer* in this verse is undoubtedly a leather scroll.

this Teaching Deuteronomy. 25. Levites See verse 9.

26. Ark of the Covenant The Ark containing the two tablets of the Covenant on which the Decalogue was written (4:13; 10:1-5). Ancient treaties were commonly deposited in sanctuaries. Keeping the Teaching next to the Ark of the Covenant indicates that it embodies the principles of the covenant and is as binding as the Decalogue itself because it comes from the same divine source. The scroll with the Teaching was undoubtedly to be kept in a container, such as a jar

or a box, to protect it from damage by moisture or worms.

as a witness against you Against the Israelites, whom the Levites here represent. Moses assigns the Teaching a new function: It is to be a witness, like the poem (v. 19). Unlike the poem, however, it does not testify to Israel's betrayal of God after settling in Canaan. He probably means that the Teaching will serve as evidence that Israel accepted the terms and conditions of the Covenant; this will enable the people to understand their misfortunes.

27. Well I know No one knows better than I, having experienced your defiance so often.

defiant and stiffnecked Moses used these terms to characterize Israel's behavior earlier, particularly its refusal to advance on the Promised Land and the incident of the Golden Calf (see 9:13,23).

how much more, then Even Moses, despite his authority, could not restrain the Israelites while he was alive; how much more likely are they to rebel after his death.

28. Gather As the people are to be gathered to hear the Teaching (v. 12), so their leaders are to be gathered to hear the poem.

elders of your tribes Because verse 30 indicates that Moses addressed the entire people, one

24. This included the description of his own death. Moses' final challenge, indeed the

final challenge for anyone, was coming to terms with his own mortality.

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:

would have expected the text to contain a statement referring to all of the Israelites and not only the elders. The Septuagint has a longer reading, "the heads of your tribes, your elders, judges, and officials."

*all these words* The poem.

*heaven and earth to witness* Heaven and earth will be the third "witness" (after the poem and the Teaching) that Israel was warned.

וְאֶעֱיֵדָה בָּם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ :  
<sup>29</sup> כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אַחֲרַי מוֹתִי כִּי־הִשְׁחַתְתִּי  
תִּשְׁחַתּוּן וְסַרְתֶּם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי  
אֶתְכֶם וְקִרְאת אֶתְכֶם הִרְעָה בְּאַחֲרֵית  
הַיָּמִים כִּי־תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה  
לְהַכְעִיסוֹ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם :

<sup>30</sup> וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה בְּאָזְנוֹ כָּל־קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל  
אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת עַד תָּמָם : פ

**29. in time to come** The situation described in the poem fits several periods in Israel's later history, beginning with the time of the chieftains ("Judges") after Joshua's death.

**30.** This verse is the introduction to the poem in chapter 32.

*whole congregation of Israel* The entire nation, now formally assembled for the occasion.

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RELATION OF THE HATTAHARAH  
TO THE CALENDAR  
And a royal diadem

This section brings to a conclusion the seven Hattaharot of Consolation. As a concluding recitation, it is replete with themes and phrases from the previous recitations. For example, the call "Never more shall you be called 'Forsaken'." Nor shall you be called "Forsaken" for the people. But you shall be called "God comes with you" and the declaration that "God comes with you" and "recompense" (32:10-11) echo a phrase in the first Hattaharot of Consolation: "Clear . . . A word I have spoken for the LORD" (Isa. 40:3,10). Repetition like this contributes to create an aura of climactic culmination at once the conclusion of consolation and the onset of redemption. And as bridegroom rejoices over his bride, So will your God rejoice over you.

וְאֶעֱיֵדָה בָּם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ :  
כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אַחֲרַי מוֹתִי כִּי־הִשְׁחַתְתִּי  
תִּשְׁחַתּוּן וְסַרְתֶּם מִן־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי  
אֶתְכֶם וְקִרְאת אֶתְכֶם הִרְעָה בְּאַחֲרֵית  
הַיָּמִים כִּי־תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה  
לְהַכְעִיסוֹ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם :

The Hattaharot develop through a series of recitations that move from hopeful anticipation to thanksgiving. The shift from Zion's hope to God's abundant blessing is the most of garments. God's abundant blessing is the people's new condition (cf. Isa. 52:1 "Awake, awake, O Zion! Clothe yourself in splendor") as the redemption ditches its past. This new reality is then mirrored in the divine garment of victory. Material things conveyed through wedding garments (32:10) is further developed in the proper word of encouragement. God shall take back His city and build, crowning the one and making delight in the other. "And as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you." (32:1) which links these words through their incorporation into the 16th-century

My whole being exults in my God.  
I joyfully rejoice in the LORD.