

Vayelech **“And he went”**

Torah Reading: Deuteronomy 31:1 - 30

Haftarah Reading: Isaiah 55:6 - 56:8

Study Notes

The Transmission of the Covenant

1. The Torah was given by the Lord as the sacred national covenant between Himself and Israel and He made provisions for it to be passed on.
2. A Prophetic Warning (31:14-18)
 - 2.1. God told Moshe and Joshua that the people would ‘stray after’ other gods.
 - 2.2. The word translated ‘stray after’ is very graphic in the sense of committing fornication with harlots.
 - 2.3. Israel would not just have a mere intellectual fascination with other religions. They would actual participate, complete with sexual and spiritual fornication.
 - 2.4. Forsaken
 - 2.5. Their eventual unfaithfulness would cause the Lord to forsake them.
 - 2.6. The word can have two meanings. In one sense a spouse leaving the home to allow their partner to be alone in their sin. In the second sense it describes temporary abandonment. It is not permanent but does not specify a time limit.
 - 2.7. Write This Song (31:19)
 - 2.7.1. Because of His endless compassion, the Lord tells Moshe to write this prophetic warning into song.
 - 2.7.2. It would be a memorized witness against their actions and would serve as a deterrent against such idolatrous actions.
3. A National Reminder (31:24-26)
 - 3.1. The second step was to instruct Moshe to place a copy of the Torah beside the Ark.
 - 3.2. This was a very tangible provision as Israel would always have a copy of the Torah with them at their national worship center. (King Josiah)
4. A National Torah Reading (31:10-13)
 - 4.1. The last provision was to have the Torah read every seven years, during Sukkot...”so that they will hear and so that they will learn, and they shall fear the Lord.”
 - 4.2. One of the emphases of this passage is the stress place on teaching the children of each generation the words of the Torah. Jewish society has always had a high rate of literacy for this reason.

- 4.3. Jewish society teaches the Torah both formally and within the home to its children, from a very young age. What better way to transmit God's Word than by this example?

Transmission of Leadership

1. Moshe never carried an official title or office but he did have a partner, Aaron. Together they lead Israel through the wilderness. Joshua would also have a partner, Eleazar.
2. Though Israel had an official leadership system (Shemot 18) God also used others to lead them.
3. A leader is a person whose personality, influence, and vision guides and stimulates others to follow him. A nation can have leaders who do not hold an office. The leaders are the real driving force of a nation.

Joshua

1. The Soldier (Shemot 17:9-18)
 - 1.1. He as Moshe's designated general.
 - 1.2. His trust in God made him a successful soldier for Israel. (Numbers 14:7-9)
2. The Servant (Exodus 24:13)
 - 2.1. A servant doesn't mean a slave. Instead, it speaks of a minister or one who gives himself to meet the needs of others. Doing this requires great humility.
 - 2.2. Joshua had a discipleship relationship with Moshe. He was continually at his side watching, listening, and learning how to be a leader. (Shemot 33:11)
3. The Spiritual Man (Bemidbar 27:12-23)
 - 3.1. It seems the characteristics that Joshua displayed as a spiritual person were those the Brit Hadasha would describe as "gifts". For example, Joshua had the gift of discernment. (Exodus 32:17-18).
 - 3.2. He was also "filled with the spirit of wisdom". (Devarim 34:9) (2 Timothy 1:6)
4. The Savior
 - 4.1. His name was changed from Hoshea to Joshua. This means "he saved" to "The Lord saves". (Numbers 13:16) Yeshua's name is really Joshua. God was giving us a picture that the saving would be done by the Lord ("the Lord saves") and not by us ("he saves").