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The Tent of Meeting

31: 14-18

The tent of meeting DIG: What themes from Moses' discourse with God and with Isra'el are continued in these verses? What typically happened in the Tent of Meeting? What might Joshua expect to happen this time? What does he see and hear instead?

REFLECT: How are you encouraged or discouraged by God's knowledge of your future failings? Why? Where do you go to meet God? Where is your "Tent of Meeting?" When have you felt the discipline of the LORD? How did you handle it? What has changed?

ADONAI commissioned Joshua for the third time at the Tent of Meeting, and confirmed to Moses that his time to die was near.

The day before Moses died.



Then ADONAI said to Moses, "Behold, your time to die is near. Call Joshua, and present yourselves at the Tent of Meeting outside the camp (see the commentary on Exodus, [to see link click Gy - Moses and the Tent of Meeting](#)), and I will commission him." Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the Tent of Meeting (31:14).

Just as **David** had been anointed three times to lead **the nation (First Samuel 16:1-3, Second Samuel 2:1-7 and 5:1-5)**, and **his son Solomon** was anointed three times to lead **the Israelites** after **his father's** death (**First Kings 1:28-53; First Chronicles 17:1-15 and 29:21-25**), **Joshua** was also anointed three times. **He** had already been set apart by **Moses** before **Eleazar the high priest** and **the congregation** to assume leadership after **his** death in the wilderness (**Numbers 27:18-23**). **Then** here, **Moses summoned Joshua** publicly and **said to him in the sight of all Isra'el (31:7a)**. **ADONAI** appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud, a visible reminder of **His** presence, and **stood over the opening of the Tent**. Finally, **YHVH commissioned Joshua** privately in **the Tent of Meeting (31:14-15 and 23)**.

Even though **Moses** had repeatedly warned **the Israelites** of the dangers of idolatry and of the need to obey the stipulations of the covenant (see [Cr](#) - **The Second Address: The Specific Stipulations of the Covenant**), still **ADONAI** knew **they** would give in to it. Speaking from **the pillar of cloud**, **ADONAI said to Moses**, **“Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers**. After a lifetime of service to the nation, **Moses** heard, with a heavy heart, these words: **Then this people will rise up and prostitute themselves with the foreign gods (Exodus 34:15-16; Leviticus 17:7, 20:5; Numbers 15:39; Judges 2:17, 8:27 and 33; Hosea 1:2, 4:12, 9:1, etc) of the Land they are entering. They will abandon Me and break My covenant that I cut with them (31:16)**. The words of **God** are not primarily prophetic; rather, they portray divine insight into the basic character of **the people** and **their** constant tendency to unfaithfulness. Having forsaken **YHVH** in the past, it didn't take too much insight to know that **they** would probably forsake **Him** in the future.

If **the nation** obeyed **God** and served **Him** joyfully, **His face** would **shine upon them (Numbers 6:22-27)**, but if **they** turned to **idols**, then **YHVH** said: **My anger will flare against them on that day, and I will abandon them and hide My face from them**. The breach of the covenant would result in **the curses** of **Chapter 28**. **So, they will be devoured, and many evils and troubles will come on them. They will say on that day, “Isn't it because our God is not among us that these evils have come on us?” I will surely hide My face on that day because of all the evil they have done, for they have turned to other gods (31:17-18)**. This somber note in the words of **God** to **Moses** serves as an introduction to **the song Moses** was to write and teach the people (see [Fv](#) - **Teach This Song to the Israelites**).

The LORD employs powerful language in describing **His** response to **Isra'el's** potential sin. One might think that **He** was guaranteeing the permanent destruction of **His** relationship with **His chosen people**. However, we must interpret these statements in the context of other passages from the TaNaKh. In **Isaiah 54:8**, the prophet declares: **"In a surge of anger I hid My face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you, says ADONAI your Redeemer."** In **Ezeki'el 39:29**, He adds, **"I will never again hide My face from them. For I have poured out My Ruach upon the house of Isra'el."** It is a declaration of **ADONAI**. **YHVH** will always be faithful to **His** promises.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise you for being such a wonderful **Father**! **You** are always faithful to **Your** every promise! **You** are the best! There is no way that you could be better in anything **You** do. It is such a comfort to know that **You** are always with **Your** child. **For God Himself has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).** **You** know all that is going on and **You** are always guiding what is best for **Your** child. **ADONAI, You searched me and know me. Whenever I sit down or stand up, You know it. You discern my thinking from afar. You observe my journeying and my resting and You are familiar with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, ADONAI, You know all about it. You hemmed me in behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain (Psalms 139:1-6).***

*Since **You** are so loving and have total control and power over all situations, I can rest in peace in whatever happens being in **Your** control - when I have prayed over any situation, committing it to **You** and I am walking in **Your** way. When I seek to follow **You** and life's plans do not work the way that I think they should, there is no room for fear. In prayer I seek **Your** control of what is causing the problem/pain and I trust **Your** powerful and loving hand to guide the situation. Prayer may or may not calm the storm; but prayer always calms me, for I know that whatever happens I can trust **Your** perfect timing and **Your** control. **I pleaded with the Lord three times about this, that it might leave me. But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."** Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of **Messiah** may dwell in me (**Second Corinthians 12:8-9**). In **Yeshua's** holy name and **His** power of resurrection. Amen*