

Deuteronomy 32:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.

Analysis

And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.

The phrase wayyabo Moshe ("and Moses came") emphasizes Moses' final public act—delivering the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:1-43) to all Israel. Hoshea is Joshua's original name (Numbers 13:16), meaning "salvation," before Moses changed it to Yehoshua ("Yahweh is salvation"). This mention foreshadows the leadership transition and connects Joshua's role as covenant witness to his future role as Moses' successor.

The Hebrew be'oznei ha'am ("in the ears of the people") indicates oral proclamation requiring active listening—not private study but public covenant renewal. Moses doesn't merely recite but waydabber ("spake/declared"), implying authoritative proclamation. The song functions as covenant witness (v. 46), testifying against Israel's future rebellion while simultaneously offering hope of restoration (v. 36-43).

Joshua's presence as co-witness establishes continuity of covenant leadership beyond Moses' death. The communal hearing emphasizes collective responsibility—every generation must personally appropriate covenant realities, not rely on ancestral faith. This pattern recurs throughout Scripture: covenant renewal requires audible proclamation and communal response (Joshua 8:30-35; Nehemiah 8:1-8).

Historical Context

This event occurs on the plains of Moab in the eleventh month of the fortieth year (Deuteronomy 1:3), weeks before Moses' death and Israel's Jordan crossing. Moses is 120 years old (Deuteronomy 31:2). The Song of Moses represents ancient Near Eastern covenant treaty form, where songs served as mnemonic devices for treaty stipulations and warnings. Public recitation before the assembled nation parallels Hittite treaty ceremonies where vassal populations heard treaty terms read aloud.

Joshua's Hebrew name Hoshea appears here, though he's typically called Yehoshua/Joshua elsewhere in Deuteronomy. Some scholars suggest this reflects source material from different periods, while traditional interpretation sees it emphasizing his original identity before his role as Moses' successor was fully realized. The song would be taught to all Israel (31:19) and preserved for future generations as prophetic witness.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the communal nature of covenant hearing challenge individualistic approaches to Scripture?
2. What role does corporate worship and public Scripture reading play in maintaining covenant faithfulness across generations?

Interlinear Text

הָיָא אֵת	הַשִּׁירָה	דִּבְרֵי י	כָּל	אֶת	וַיִּדְבֹּר	מֹשֶׁה ה	וַיָּבֹא א
	of this song	all the words			and spake	And Moses	came
H2063	H7892	H1697	H3605	H853	H1696	H4872	H935
נֹחַ:	בֶּן	וְהוֹשִׁיעַ	ה וַא	הָעָם	בְּאָזְנוֹ י		
of Nun	the son	he and Hoshea		of the people	in the ears		
H5126	H1121	H1954	H1931	H5971	H241		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 13:8 (Parallel theme): Of the tribe of Ephraim, Oshea the son of Nun.

Numbers 13:16 (References Moses): These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.