

**July 16**

**Scriptures:** Deuteronomy 33

**Key Verse:** “The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms...”  
(Deuteronomy 33:27)

## **Overview**

The same day Moses recited the Song of Witness to Israel, the Lord told him he was to go up to Mount Nebo where he would die (32:48-50). In his farewell, he blessed the tribes of Israel, as was the custom for a leader or a father to do before his death (e.g. the patriarch Jacob). Moses considered Israel his own children, for he had loved and fathered them for 40 years. These were his last words to the congregation; therefore, they were to be well noted.

The blessings Moses gave were based upon the words: “Yes, He loved the people; all His saints are in Your hand” (v.3). God is great enough to care for each one of His children that none come to harm while they are safe in His hand. Jesus confirmed the protection we have in the hand of God: “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (John 10:29).

Those who find refuge and comfort in God’s hand are said to sit down at His feet and receive His words (v.3), just as did Mary, the expresses submission, reverence, and the giving of one’s full attention to the teacher. To be God’s children, we must sit at the feet of Jesus and learn from Him—listening prayerfully, reading and absorbing His Holy Word. Moses called God’s Word to them “a heritage of the congregation of Jacob” (v.4). It was to be treasured, respected, and passed down to future generations.

Moses is done with pronouncing curses. He now utters only blessings, but these blessings can be enjoyed only in obedience to the Lord. His words are poetic, prophetic, prayerful, and thankful. They express his concern and love, for as we have seen, Moses was a great intercessor on behalf of Israel. His words concerning the tribe of Reuben are a plea to God that they may not see extinction (v.6). The blessing for Judah, the royal line of the Messiah (as prophesied by Jacob, Gen.49:10), seems to be a prayer that they might fulfill Jacob’s prophecy and accomplish victory for his people over the enemies (v.7).

Interestingly, Simeon is not mentioned in the blessing of Moses. Jacob had foretold that his descendants would be scattered in Israel and lose their identity as a tribe. On the other hand, Levi, who shared the same prophecy (Gen.49:7), had the curse turned into a blessing. They were indeed scattered throughout Israel, but because of their faithfulness to God (Ex.32:26-28) it was with new significance. Levi received the honor of ministering before God and teaching His Law to the people (v.10). Moses prayed that God’s Thummim and Urim (Ec.28:30) would be with the high priest, giving him wisdom and knowledge from God.

Benjamin would find safety and shelter in the Lord (v.12). Joseph had been given the double portion of the inheritance when Reuben forfeited his right as the first-born (Gen.48:22); therefore his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were each given separate tribal status. Their blessing is the

longest as well as the choicest, with the promise of great abundance in earthly blessings. The rest of the tribes are given loving blessings involving success.

After Moses blessed the tribes, he referred once again to the “God of Jeshurun: (vv.5, 26), the God of the upright, who comes quickly to their aid and provides refuge for the righteous. He holds them in His loving, never-tiring, never-failing arms (v.27). He is their shield and sword (v.29). None other can compare with the omnipotent God of Israel. He is the Source and Giver of every blessing (Eph.1:3); Moses sought to make this clear to his beloved people before his death, and it is something that believers today need to know as well.

## **Prayer**

Lord God, what peace and security we have being held in Your everlasting arms! May we never allow sin to jeopardize that eternal blessing from You.