

Bethany Bible Study & Discussion



Deuteronomy Part-35 (chapter 33) KJV

9.27.2023

Chapter 33

Great God | Blessing on Israel Tribes | Blessed Israel

GLORY OF GOD: What is the title given to Moses? How does Moses exalt God? Why was the law given to people of Israel? (1-5)

BLESSINGS ON TRIBES: What tribes are listed? Is any tribe missing? Which tribes are given prominence? What are some central themes in these blessings? What are the specific blessings given to each tribe? Are the blessings material or spiritual, temporal or long lasting, or both? (6-25) How is the blessing of Moses similar/different from blessing of Jacob?

BLESSED ISRAEL: What made Israel a blessed nation? (26-29)

Promise given to Abraham... about to be fulfilled

Slaves for 400 years ¹³ And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

Redemption ¹⁴ And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

The promise of promised land ¹⁸ In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: (**Genesis 15**)

Israel is now about to see the fulfillment of the promise of this promised land

God Exalted (1-5)

And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.

² And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

³ Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.

⁴ Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. ⁵ And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

God Exalted (1-5)

Title of Moses ... Man of God (1)

God exalted

- As the glorious one (2)
 - As the giver of law and teacher (2)
 - As the lover of Israel (3)
 - As the guardian and protector of Israel (3)
 - As the King of Israel (Jeshurun, the upright one) (4)
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- Law was the link to blessings for Israel
 - Israelites broke the law (32:15-17) and lost the blessings

Security of God's children

... all his saints
are in thy hand (3)

I have inscribed you in the palm of my hands (Isaiah 49:16)

No one can pluck them out of my Father's hand (John 10:28)

Blessings on Tribes

(6-25)

Two important
blessings:
Birthright &
Final blessing of
father

JACOB CHEATED ESAU OF BOTH THE BLESSINGS

GENESIS 27:36

And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

Yet God is merciful to Jacob and blesses him.

Jacob's children, 12 sons and 1 daughter

(Genesis 29 & 30)

LEAH: Reuben | Simeon | Levi | Judah | Issachar* (born after Asher) | Zebulun | Dinah

BILACH (Rachel's servant): Dan | Naphtali

ZILPAH (Leah's servant): Gad | Asher

RACHEL: Joseph | Benjamin

Promise to Jacob: Genesis 28 "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; ¹⁴ And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Jacob blessed with new name (Israel) after he wrestles with God (Genesis 32:28)

Blessing on tribes of Israel (Genesis 49 & Deuteronomy 33)

49:1 And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Jacob's deathbed blessing of children/tribes in Genesis 49

- Spoken as father to sons
- seen as a prophecy (Genesis 49:1)
- Not all positive (Reuben chastised for his immoral behavior, Genesis 35:22, Simeon & Levi cursed for murders in Shechem Gen 34)
- Tribes mentioned in order of birth (Genesis 29-30) while no specific order in Deuteronomy (maybe grouped by geographical location).

Moses' final blessing of tribes in Deut. 33 (before entering Promised Land)

- Spoken as leader to Israel as a nation
- The nature of blessing varies between the two sections
- Prominent tribes (Two tribes of Joseph, Levi)
- Simeon is missing (Simeon's land was within the land of Judah so perhaps the tribe absorbed within Judah, although that happened later)



Blessing of Moses on Tribes

Blessing on Reuben

Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few (6)

Reuben

- Eldest son of Jacob
- Tribe settled east of Jordan (along with Gad and ½ tribe of Manasseh)

Blessing: Long life and multiplication of families

Genesis ^{49:3}

Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: ⁴ Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.

Numbers 26:7

These are the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

Blessing on Judah (7)

And this is the blessing of Judah: and he said, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him; and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

Judah (means Praise)

Blessing: Intercessor, Leader, Protection in wars

Jesus came from the line of Judah

Judah in War... Judges 1:2 Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? ² And the Lord said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

Genesis 49:8 Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. ⁹ Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? ¹⁰ **The sceptre shall not depart from Judah**, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, **until Shiloh come**; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Simeon missing ... Simeon was given land within the same territory of Judah (so maybe absorbed with the tribe of Judah)

Blessing on Levi (8-11)

⁸ And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

⁹ Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

¹⁰ They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar.

¹¹ Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands; smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

Levites, The Priestly tribe

Levites

Worship leaders and teachers (The priestly tribe)

Took a stand for the Lord (golden calf, Exodus 32:25-29)

²⁶ Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

Did not acknowledge their own family (9)

Observed the law and kept the covenant (9)

Blamed for declining standards (Jeremiah 2:8)

⁸ The priests said not, Where is the Lord? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit.

Blessing on Levi

Blessing

Lord would bless their substance,
the work of their hands,
smite those who hate them

Genesis 49:5 Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. ⁶ O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. ⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Thummim and Urim (8)

Two special stones:

Thummim and Urim

used to find God's will and exercise judgement

Exodus 28:30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.

Blessing on Benjamin (12)

¹² And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

Small tribe ... little Benjamin (Psalms 68:27)

Blessing

- Called the 'beloved of the Lord'
- Temple located in Benjamin's territory
- Region surrounded by hills (protection)
- Lord will cover all day and will dwell between God's shoulders (secure in God's love)

Genesis 49:27 Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.

Blessings on tribes of Ephraim and Mannaseh

(13-17)

¹³ And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

¹⁴ And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, ¹⁵ And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

¹⁶ And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

¹⁷ His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

How did Ephraim and Mannaseh become tribes of Israel?

Birthright given to Joseph (and not Reuben, the firstborn)

I Chronicles 5:1-2 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. ² For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)

Firstborn not given birthright

Joseph was not the firstborn but received birthright blessings (due to Reuben's sin). Birthright meant double portion given to Joseph (which is then transferred to Joseph's sons)

Just like Isaac received blessing (not Ishamael)

Just like Jacob received blessing (not Esau)

Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph, given the birthright

Genesis 48:5, 17-22

⁵ And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. ¹⁷ And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

¹⁸ And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. ¹⁹ And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. ²⁰ And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

- Ephraim and Manasseh, adopted into Jacob's family. Each given one part of the double portion of Joseph, and became the two tribes of Israel.
- Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim

Blessings on tribes of Ephraim and Mannaseh

Blessings

- Will be fruitful and enjoy the favor of God (sun, moon, precious things of heaven, springs from beneath)
- Enemies will not prevail
- Ephraim credited with ten thousands, while Manasseh with thousands

Genesis 48: 22 Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: ²³ The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: ²⁴ But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

²⁵ Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: ²⁶ The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

Blessing on Zebulun & Issachar (18-19)

¹⁸ And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents.

¹⁹ They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

- Shall encourage people to worship
- Blessed with the abundance from sea of galilee and treasures hid in the sand

Genesis 49: 13 Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon.

I Chronicles 12:32 And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.

³³ Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double hear

Blessings on Gad (20-21)

²⁰ And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. ²¹ And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated; and he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel.

- Received land, east of Jordan, before entering Canaan (Exodus 32:33) (along with the tribe of Reuben, and half tribe of Manasseh)
- Gad tribe protected their land but also assisted other tribes in the conquest in Canaan (Numbers 32:25)

Exodus 32:33 And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about

Numbers 32: 25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth. ²⁶ Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead: ²⁷ But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the Lord to battle, as my lord saith.

Blessings on Dan (22)

²² And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan.

- Gad (like Lion), Dan (Lion's cub) ... image of strength and power
- Original land (southwest of Canaan) and later migrated to northeast and annexed areas in Bashan (Judges 18)

Genesis 49: 17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

Tribe of Dan Introduced Idolatry

Judges 18:30 And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.

Blessings on Naphtali (23)

²³ And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord: possess thou the west and the south.

Blessings

Favor and full blessings of the Lord

Possession of much land

- Located in NE Canaan and extended South to sea of Galilee where Jesus ministered

Genesis 49:21 Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.

Mathew 4:13-16 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim ¹⁴ That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, ¹⁵ The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; ¹⁶ The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

Blessings on Asher (24-25)

²⁴ And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.

²⁵ Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

- Blessed with Children
- Peace with brethren
- Dip his foot in oil (olive trees ?)
- Iron and bronze for sandals (?)
- As thy days, so shall they strength be

Genesis 49:20

Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.



Blessed Israel (26-29)

Blessed Israel

²⁶ **There is none like unto the God** of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

²⁷ The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

²⁸ Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew.

²⁹ **Happy art thou, O Israel:** who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.

Jeshurun ... 32:15 (Israel) 33:5 (Israel) Isaiah 44:2 (Israel)

Blessed nation of Israel, the chosen ones ... happy art thou (29)

- Greatness due to relationship with a living God and recipients of the law from God (Deuteronomy 4:7-8)
- A helper
- Blessed with fullness of blessings on the land
- Their God is unique and powerful (Jeshurun, the upright one)
- God will destroy those who rise up against Israel
- Will find refuge in God's everlasting arms
- They shall tread upon high places

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (27)

Deuteronomy 32:9 For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. ¹⁰ He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

II Samuel 7:23 What one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?

We are also
chosen by Him!

Psalms 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Galatians 3:28-29

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: **for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.** ²⁹ And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise

I Peter 2:9-10

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;
¹⁰ Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

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