Deuteronomy 33-34

Review...

- **Deuteronomy 28-30 - The choice - Blessings or Curses...**
  - Mt. Ebal / Mt. Gerizim - The option of Blessings and Curses were given to Israel...
  - A simple choice - choose this day - choose death of life / choose to be blessed!
- **Deuteronomy 31-32 - The final words of Moses...**
  - 1st - Moses could not take Israel into the Land - Joshua would lead them instead...
  - 2nd - Every 7 years the leaders were to read God's Word to the people of Israel...
  - 3rd - At the ordination of Joshua - God spoke out against the people of Israel...
    - When they arrived in the Promised Land - they would forget about the Lord...
    - When they were full - fat - happy - they would seek pleasure not the Lord!
  - 4th - The Song of Israel - comprised of 6 different verses...
    - It was a warning to the people - to help them remember the consequences of sin...
    - It concluded with the hope of all nations - God's plan of salvation through Jesus!
  - 5th - Moses was to go up to Mt. Nebo to die - because of Meribah he could not go in

The Blessing of Moses... (*3 things*)

- **1st - The 'Dawn' of the nation of Israel... vs. 1-5** Read: Deuteronomy 33:1-4
  - The Lord met with Israel at Mt. Sinai - ten thousand of His saints...
    - The sons of Jacob had simply been a multitude of slaves in Egypt...
    - But God called them out - gave them His Law - and made them His people - the saints...
    - I love that Moses calls the people of Israel saints - because they were FAR from perfect...
    - We get the wrong idea about 'saints' (*the word means holy - or set apart*)
    - We think people become saints because of what they did - good works/miracles...
    - In fact it is not what we do - it is what God did that makes us saints...
    - We are saints - 'holy' / set apart - because of what Jesus did on the cross for us!
    - If God can look at the people of Israel - as see them as saints - there is hope for us!
    - We also have our days - when we are immoral - rebellious...
    - But God looks down on us - and sees Jesus - and calls us saints!
  - God gave them His fiery Law - they received His Word...

- The word of God is like a fire - in that it is meant to spread to others...
- If you start a fire in the campo - it is hard to contain - it wants to spread out...
- In the same way God desires for His word to run like wild fire - He wants is to spread...
- **Jeremiah 20:9** - "His word burns in my heart like a fire. It's like a fire in my bones! I am weary of holding it in!"
- We have been saved - we have been made saints through the work of Jesus on the cross...
- And now we need to spread the good news - setting the world on fire with God's Word...

- **2ND - BLESSING THE 12 TRIBES... VS. 6-25** READ: DEUTERONOMY 33:6-29
  - In a farewell reminiscent of Jacob's 'blessings' to his 12 sons in **Genesis 49**...
    - Moses parting gift to the nation is a final blessing giving to each of the tribes...
      - Jacob had 12 sons - but he 'claimed' the grandsons of Joseph - Ephraim & Manasseh...
      - So there are in all 14 different tribes of Israel - 12 sons and 2 grandsons...
    - All 12 sons of Jacob are listed with one exception - the tribe of Simeon...
      - There is no specific reason given why this one tribe is left out - some assume because...
      - The tribe of Simeon would receive a portion of land in Israel – within the tribe of Judah...
      - They were eventually assimilated into Judah – not much is said of them afterwards
  - 1st - The tribe of Reuben... vs. 6
    - Moses blessing was for Reuben to not die out - even though they were a small tribe...
      - Reuben was the firstborn son of Jacob/Israel - so he is blessed first…
      - But they never amounted to much - no leader ever came from the tribe of Reuben…
      - When Israel entered the Promised Land – Reuben settled on the east side...
      - They were content to settle in the pleasant grazing lands east of the Jordan river
    - Without the natural barrier of the Jordan river – they were the first to be conquered
      - As Christians some of us only want to get close to Jesus (*the Promised Land*)...
      - But we are hesitant to fully give our lives – live our lives for Jesus…
      - But those who are so close to the world – living partially in the world…
      - Those who 'walk the line' (*like Reuben*) are the first to fall into the sin of the world!
  - 2nd - The tribe of Judah... vs. 7
    - Moses blessing for Judah was - give them strength to defend their cause...
      - Judah would become the leader of Israel - Kings would come from the tribe...
      - The burden of leadership was not one to be taken lightly - like Solomon in the beginning…
      - **I Kings 3:9** - "Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil."
    - In order to lead the people - they needed the Lord's help...
      - The responsibility to lead - whether a nation / church / or a family - is a heavy one...
      - We cannot do it on our own - we do not have the ability or the strength - we need Jesus!

- 3rd - The tribe of Levi... vs. 8-11
  - Moses blessing for Levi was longer than any other tribe (*it was his tribe*)...
    - They were the ones who had stood up for God - Golden calf rebellion...
    - So God had called them into the ministry - they were to serve in the Tabernacle...
  - They were to teach the people of Israel about God...
    - They had the Urim & Thummim - used to determine the Lord's will for the people…
    - The name Urim means - lights / the names Thummim means - perfections...
    - No one is entirely sure exactly what these were - maybe a white and black stone...
    - You would ask God a 'yes' or 'no' question then pull out a stone from the pouch...
  - We wish we could have something like that - a way to get a direct answer from God...
    - So often we want 'all the details' from God before we are willing to do something...
    - But God rarely gives us all the details - or sometimes even any of the details...
    - If we knew exactly what to do - and where we were going - it would not take faith!
    - **II Corinthians 5:7** - "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
- 4th - The tribe of Benjamin... vs. 12
  - Moses blessing to Benjamin concerned the Temple...
    - The Lord would dwell between their shoulders - Mt. Moriah and Mt. Zion...
    - Mt. Moriah - where the Temple was built - was located in the territory of Benjamin...
  - So God choose to live in within the territory of Benjamin...
    - The Lord still dwells between the shoulders - in our hearts...
    - God makes His home in our heart - He is with us everywhere we go - **II Corinthians 6:16**
- 5th & 6th - The tribes of Joseph (*Ephraim and Manasseh*)... vs. 13-17
  - Moses blessing to the tribes of Joseph - that they would be prosperous...
    - The Land they settled into was the richest in all of Israel...
    - As a result Ephraim would become one of the greatest tribes in Israel...
  - Being fruitful for the Lord...
    - **Psalm 1:2-3** – "Blessed is the man… his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night... whatever he does shall prosper. "
    - Joseph was only fruitful because of who he was connected too – stayed close to…
    - A branch by itself cannot bear fruit - a tree without water will not last...
    - We will not bear good works – fruit - apart from Jesus – **John 15:4-5**
    - We abide in Jesus – stay close - when we 'delight' in God's Word – we are blessed!
- 7th & 8th - The tribes of Zebulun and Issachar... vs. 18-19
  - Moses blessing for Zebulun and Issachar - had to do with their work...
    - **Joshua 19:11** – Zebulun was given land up by the sea – the exact borders unclear...
    - It is possible they were close the port city of Sidon (*Lebanon*) – and had ships...
    - Historically Issachar would receive a fertile portion of land in Israel...
  - Zebulun's work took them abroad - Issachar's work kept them at home...

- Many people struggle with the idea of where to work - abroad or at home...
- If we go to work overseas - we must trust in God to take care of our family...
- If we work at home - we must trust in God to provide for all our needs...
- It does not matter where we work - what is important is that we are trusting in the Lord!

- 9th - The tribe of Gad... vs. 20-21
  - Moses blessing for Gad had to do with the Land he gave to them...
    - They are one of the three tribes to settle on the east side of the Jordan River...
    - Because they settled there - they received a larder portion than others in the Land...
  - Yet they were still faithful to go into the Land to fight along with their brothers...
    - Gad did not have to go in to conquer the Land of Canaan - they already had their Land...
    - But they gave a promise to stand by their brothers - and they were faithful to their Word...
    - Being men/women of our word is not always convenient - can even make life harder...
    - But God calls us to let our Yes be Yes and our No be No - **Matthew 5:37**
- 10th - The tribe of Dan... vs. 22
  - Moses blessing for Dan had to do with him changing his territory...
    - Dan was given a small portion of Land in the southern part of Canaan...
    - They 'leapt' like a lion out of the south to Bashan - northern Israel - to the city of Dan...
  - Dan thought if they got a better piece of Land - life would be better...
    - But the tribe of Dan historically led the nation of Israel into idolatry - **Judges 18:30**
    - Jeroboam - put a Golden calf in Dan –**I Kings 12:28-30** – caused Israel to go into captivity
    - Perhaps for these reasons Dan is not listen among the tribes in **Revelation 7:4-8**
    - We often think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence...
    - If only I was in Manila I would be happy / If only I had a better job / more money...
    - But the reality is happiness is not about our circumstances - it is about Jesus...
    - If we are not right with God - no matter where we are - we will not be content!
- 11th & 12th - The tribe of Naphtali and Asher... vs. 23-25
  - Moses blessing to Naphtali - they would possess the west and south...
    - The tribe ended up possessing the fertile land near the Sea of Galilee...
    - The lake was on the south / west side of their territory...
  - Moses blessing to Asher - they would be rich...
    - They would dip their feet in olive oil / have iron and bronze gates for doors...
    - Asher was given land in northern Israel – next to the rich port cities of Tyre & Sidon
    - Perhaps compromised by the desire for the wealth of their gentile neighbors…
    - There are those who think there is an answer in wealth – the deceitfulness of riches
    - **I Timothy 6:9-10** – "Those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare..."
    - When we look to money as a solution we fall into a snare / foolish and harmful lusts
    - The richest man is the one who is content with what he has!
- The God of Jeshurun... vs. 26-29
  - God gave a nickname to Israel - only used 4 times in the whole Bible...
    - The name means - upright one - referring to Israel when they were obedient to the Lord...
    - When Israel followed the Lord - God would ride out of heaven to help them!

        - God would hold Israel safely in His arms - they would dwell in peace and safety!
    - Who is like Israel - a people saved by the Lord...
        - The answer is we are just like Israel - God is willing to ride out of heaven to save us...
        - In fact He did just that - Jesus came out of heaven to save us from our sins!
        - Since God offered up Jesus while we were still sinners - **Romans 5:8**
        - Now that we are sons how much more is He willing to take care of us - **Romans 8:32**

- **3RD - THE DEATH OF MOSES... VS. 1-12** READ: DEUTERONOMY 34:1-12
    - A tour of the Promised Land... vs. 1-4
        - Moses climbed up to the top of Mt. Nebo in the plains of Moab...
        - There the Lord gave Moses a bird's eye view of the Promised Land...
        - From the eastern plains of the Jordan River - to Mt. Hermon in the north...
        - All the way from Jericho in the south - to the Mediterranean Sea...
        - From his height Moses could see everything God was going to give to Israel!
    - The death of Moses... vs. 5-8
        - Moses was 120 when he died there on top of the mountain - in the land of Moab...
            - Yet his eyesight was good - and he was as strong as ever...
            - God buried Moses there in the valley - but no one knows where...
            - In fact Michael the archangel had to fight satan for the body of Moses - **Jude 1:9**
        - Why did God bury Moses - why did satan want his body...
            - Both God and satan knew if they body was recovered - if the grave sight was known
            - The people of Israel would think the body/place was special...
            - The farther we are from the Lord - greater our tendency to worship things...
            - We fill the void in our lives with superstations / trinkets that remind us of God...
            - No power in charms / idols / superstitions - only God has the power to save!
    - There has never been another prophet like Moses... vs. 9-12
        - A man who spoke to God face to face - as a man talks with his friend...
        - We can be like Moses - Jesus does not call us servants - He calls us friends - John 15:15...
        - If we are to be a friend of God - we have to take the time to spent time with God...
        - The problem is there are so many distractions in this life that seem to vie for attention...
        - Yet our problem is not time - it is our priorities - what is most important to us...
        - Sadly we often do everything but the one thing that is truly necessary...
        - Sit at the feet of Jesus - spend time with Him - get to know Him as our friend!