

# God's Power

BELIEVERS CAN LIVE WITHOUT FEAR KNOWING  
THAT THEY SERVE THE ONE TRUE GOD.

## Deuteronomy 33:1-5,26-29

**1** This is the blessing that **Moses, the man of God**, **A** gave the Israelites before his death. **2** He said: The LORD **came from Sinai** **B** and appeared to them from Seir; he shone on them from Mount Paran and came with **ten thousand holy ones**, **C** with lightning from his **right hand** **D** for them. **3** Indeed **he loves the people**. **E** All your holy ones are in your hand, and they assemble at your feet. Each receives your words. **4** Moses gave us instruction, a possession for the assembly of Jacob. **5** So he became King in **Jeshurun** **F** when the leaders of the people gathered with the tribes of Israel. ( . . . )

**26** There is none like the God of Jeshurun, who **rides the heavens** **G** to your aid, the clouds in his majesty. **27** The God of old is **your dwelling place**, **H** and underneath are the everlasting arms. He drives out the enemy before you and commands, "Destroy!" **28** So Israel dwells securely; Jacob lives untroubled in a land of **grain and new wine**; **I** even his skies drip with dew. **29** How happy you are, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is the shield that protects you, the sword you boast in. Your enemies will **cringe** **J** before you, and you will tread on their backs.

### Exploring Key Words

- A** More than a title, the writer was referring to Moses's character, especially since he would not be entering the promised land. Despite his sin, he was still a man of God.
- B** Using poetic imagery, Moses described how God revealed Himself to Israel at points throughout their wilderness journey.
- C** The Hebrew suggests a divine Hero, leading an angelic army in protecting and providing for Israel. From God's perspective, forty years of wandering was really an unstoppable march toward His ultimate purposes.
- D** The Hebrew wording also can refer to the right side or south side (see NIV). If so, Moses emphasized that God led His people up from the south to the border of Canaan.
- E** God's love for Israel is reiterated across Deuteronomy. He loved the forefathers (4:37; 10:15), chose Israel as His own (7:8), and multiplied them (7:13). His presence and protection demonstrated His love (23:5).
- F** A term of endearment that means "upright" (32:15; 33:26; Isa. 44:2). Despite missteps, God saw Israel as true to her name, responding in love to her King.
- G** Canaanites thought their god, Baal, rode on the clouds, but Moses corrected that theology. The Lord alone rides in the heavens to support His people (Pss. 18:10; 68:33; Isa. 19:1; Ezek. 1).
- H** God had made His dwelling among His people, but Israel's security in the promised land would depend on them taking refuge in Him.
- I** Parallel to "milk and honey" in other passages.
- J** "Be found liars" (KJV); "come fawning" (ESV); "cower" (NIV). Israel's enemies would be revealed as false and would be forced to submit to God's people.



### King (Deut. 33:1-5)

- In Deuteronomy 33, Moses spoke a blessing over the Israelites before they entered the promised land.
- He first declared how God had led His people out of Egypt to the land He had promised to them.
- Moses emphasized God's love for His people and His role as their King.

### Dwelling Place (Deut. 33:26-29)

- Moses concluded his blessing by exalting God's sovereignty and majesty.
- God was both Israel's dwelling place and the One who would drive out their enemies.
- Of all the nations on earth, they were God's own people who would enjoy His protection.

### Summary Statements

*Believers can live without fear knowing that they serve the one true God.*

- Believers can trust in God's love for them.
- Believers should find their security in God alone.

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### Memory Verse

*Deuteronomy 33:29*

### Key Doctrine

*God*

There is one and only one living and true God. (See Isaiah 46:9; 1 Timothy 2:5.)

## ENGAGE

**What is the connection between fear and insecurity? Between trust and security?** (PSG, p. 118)

- In the following scenario, we may have been the parent or the child at some point in life. The child is standing on the side of the pool. The parent is in the water, arms outstretched and saying, “You can do it. I’ll catch you.”
- The child is hesitating. “Ready? On the count of three.” They still aren’t quite sure, but they want to trust the parent. Finally, they lunge forward in faith and are grabbed safely just as they reach the water.

**Bonus: What important life lessons have you learned from times when you had to leave your comfort zone and step out in faith?**

## EXPLORE

### 1. KING (DEUT. 33:1-5)

**Bonus: When has someone spoken a blessing over your life? How did it make you feel?**

- Deuteronomy 31:1–34:12 contains the last recorded words of Moses. It explains the commissioning of Joshua, contains a hymn that calls God’s people to live faithfully, and recounts Moses’s death.
- Moses spoke a final blessing over Israel. Though he had led the nation for decades and was called “the man of God,” the blessing’s power came from God alone.
- The imagery of God as a Warrior would encourage the Israelites as they faced enemies in Canaan. They would not go in their own power. The God who had given His law and led them through the desert, would go before them.
- Some scholars believe the “holy ones” were angels. Others believe they were God’s people, whom He had commanded to be holy as He is holy (Lev. 11:44; 20:26). The second option seems to fit the context better since God would send “lightning from his right hand for them.”
- Giving evidence of His love, God held His people in His hand. They belonged to Him, and He would protect them and provide for them. In response, they bowed at His feet.
- God had given His words to Israel. Both in content and intent, His words were unlike any other religious teaching.
- Moses also called God “the King in Jeshurun,” which is a poetic name for Israel. The title “King” underscores God’s ultimate authority. That God is King is a theme throughout Scripture and should provide security and comfort as we put our complete trust in His power and authority.

**Why do you think the Bible portrays God in so many ways, such as a Warrior, King, and Shepherd? Which biblical portrait or title comes to mind first when you think of Him and why?** (PSG, p. 123)

### 2. DWELLING PLACE (DEUT. 33:26-29)

**Bonus: In storms, where is your family’s “safe spot”? What makes that location so secure?**

- Verses 6-25 record Moses’s blessing on the tribes of Israel. Verses 26-28 focus not on the descendants of Jacob but on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The declaration begins triumphantly, proclaiming that no other god is like Him.
- God riding the “heavens” and the “clouds” meant that He was the triumphant King riding toward victory. Being the triumphant King, He alone could save Israel (Jeshurun). His “everlasting arms” would be a refuge for His people, a “dwelling place.”
- As He drove out His enemies, God stood above the Israelites. At the same time, His arms were beneath them, and He was at work in front of them. It is the picture of complete security. While the enemies were not named specifically, their outcome was sure. They would be destroyed, and Israel could settle peacefully in the land.
- The land would provide both peace and plenty. The harvests and the heavens would supply the people’s needs. This echoes God’s earlier promise (Deut. 7:13-14).
- Verse 29 declares there was no people like the people of Israel, whom the Lord had saved. But God ultimately was their “shield” and “sword.” He was both defender and warrior, battling on behalf of His people. Every enemy would “cringe” as Israel tread on their backs.

**What does it teach us about God that He is our “dwelling place”?** (PSG, p. 125)

## CHALLENGE

As a group, discuss why people might seek security in things they can see and touch instead of God.

**How have you seen God to be sufficient in times of need?** (PSG, p. 126)

As you look back on your own spiritual journey, focus on times when you have doubted God’s love for you.

**Who do you know that might be going through something similar? What can you say or do to offer hope and reassurance?** (PSG, p. 126)

## FURTHER DISCUSSION



Scan here for additional discussion questions for this week’s study.

### BIBLE SKILL (P. 121, PSG)

Dig deeper into the background and usage of key words and concepts.

In Deuteronomy 33 Moses blessed the tribes of Israel. Focus on the word “blessing” in verse 1. Look up the word in an English dictionary to discover its basic meaning. Read the article on “bless, blessing” in a Bible dictionary to discover the biblical usage of “bless.” Write any insights you learn in the space below. Read examples of blessing others in Genesis 27:27-29; Numbers 6:22-27; 2 Corinthians 13:13; and Hebrews 13:20-21. Finally, on a separate sheet of paper, write a blessing for each member of your family.

Guide adults to the Bible Skill (PSG, p. 121). Lead them to write a blessing for each family member as directed in the activity.

### OBJECT LESSON: SHIELD

Display an image of a shield (or an actual shield if you can secure one). Allow volunteers to suggest how a shield provided a sense of security for Israel as they prepared to enter Canaan.

Guide adults to call out other images in the text that represent security or protection. Ask: ***What promises did God make to the Israelites about things they would enjoy once they entered Canaan?***

Emphasize that Moses’s blessing for Israel focused more on God than on them because He was the One who would lead them into the land and give them victory. Challenge adults to consider the blessings God has provided for them and how they can express their gratitude to Him through praise.

### DIG DEEPER

### OUR SHIELD AND SALVATION

Moses wanted his final message to Israel to be a blessing, not a curse. So, he delivered a song of praise to God intended as a note of encouragement to the people. It begins by celebrating the Lord’s power to guide His people, to rule over them, and to protect them (Deut. 33:1-5). But along with that description, Moses reminded Israel to assemble at His feet consistently and to receive His instruction (vv. 3-4).

Moses’s words combine both God’s activity and human activity. The Lord will do His part, but He also expects His people to do their part.

The closing section of the song (vv. 26-29) echoes the opening in many ways. It speaks of God’s salvation and protection, encouraging the children of Israel to enter the promised land and drive out the enemy (v. 29). They could count on God to serve as both their shield of protection and their sword for battle. Caleb had shared this perspective decades earlier, when Israel first approached Canaan (Num. 14:9).

Our response to difficulties defines our perspective. Saul and his men saw the giant Goliath without God in the picture. As a result, “they lost their courage and were terrified” (1 Sam 17:11). This perspective leads to fear and whining.

In contrast, David asked, “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (17:26). To David, the only physical characteristic about Goliath that meant anything was that Goliath was “uncircumcised.” Despite his size, he lacked the sign of a covenant relationship with the true and living God. Since Goliath did not serve the true and living God, he didn’t have a chance.

David’s godly perspective gives courage and confidence. He was not cocky or filled with adolescent idealism. He was filled with the Spirit and confessing faith in the living God.

Often, the lost world hears God’s people fretting over our circumstances. Instead of witnessing to the true and living God, we get bogged down in our circumstances. We take our eyes off the One who “is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think” just when we need Him most (Eph. 3:20).

God remains a refuge and “dwelling place” for His people, and we remain secure with His “everlasting arms.” He will never leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5), even as He leads us into battle against the forces of evil to win a lost world for Christ.



These items are available in the *Explore the Bible Leader Pack* (print and digital).

**Visit [goExploreTheBible.com](https://www.explorethebible.com) to purchase the pack.**

**Pack Item 1:** Map: From Kadesh-Barnea to Moab (Sessions 1-13)

- Locate a map that highlights the route taken by the Israelites from Kadesh-Barnea to Moab

**Pack Item 2:** Poster: Outlines of Numbers, Deuteronomy (Sessions 1-13)

- Refer to page 9 of the PSG or a study Bible to create a poster that outlines Numbers and Deuteronomy.

**Pack Item 3:** Poster: The Journey of the Spies (Session 3)

- Use a study Bible or a Bible dictionary to locate a map that shows the movements of the Israelite scouts as they spied out Canaan in Numbers.

**Pack Item 4:** Poster: Key Verse: Numbers 14:18a (Session 4)

- Create a poster with the text of Numbers 14:18a.

**Pack Item 5:** Key Verse: Poster: Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (Session 9)

- Create a poster with the text of Deuteronomy 6:4-5.

**Pack Item 6:** Poster: Ancient Covenant Structure (Sessions 10-12)

- Using a study Bible, Bible dictionary, or other resource, create a poster that outlines the basic structure of ancient “suzerain” treaties.

**Pack Item 7:** Handout: Numbers, Deuteronomy Time Line (Sessions 1-13)

- Locate a study Bible with a time line of the major people and events related to Numbers and Deuteronomy. Include both biblical and non-biblical historical references to provide context.

**Pack Item 8:** Handout: Praying Scripture in Numbers, Deuteronomy (Sessions 1-13)

- Create a handout to help adults pray through verses in Numbers and Deuteronomy. Provide these prompts: session/verse, thoughts from the passage, what the passage teaches about God, how adults will respond to what He reveals, and space for a written prayer.

**Pack Item 9:** Handout: Complaints in the Wilderness (Sessions 2-5)

- Create a chart that lists Israel’s wilderness complaints in the book of Numbers. Include the passage reference, the specific complaint, who was complaining, and the target of the complaint.

**Pack Item 10:** Handout: Remembering God’s Faithfulness (Session 8)

- Create a handout that includes a two-column chart. One column provides space for adults to list ways God showed His faithfulness to Israel in the wilderness. The other column provides space for adults to list ways God has shown His faithfulness in their lives.

**Pack Item 11:** Handout: Balaam: All We Know (Session 6)

- Use a commentary, Bible handbook, or other source to create a handout that highlights key facts about Balaam’s life.

**Pack Item 12:** Handout: Why This Land? (Session 7)

- Use a commentary, Bible handbook, or other source to create a handout that describes what made the promised land so appealing to God’s people.

**Pack Item 13:** Handout: Moses’s Final Appeal (Session 12)

- Use a commentary, Bible handbook, or other source to create a handout that outlines Moses’s final message to the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 30.

**Pack Item 14:** Handout: Jesus and Deuteronomy (Session 13)

- Use a commentary, Bible handbook, or other source to create a chart that shares how Jesus used Deuteronomy during His ministry on earth and encourages adults toward further study of the book.

## COMING **NEXT QUARTER**



### **MATTHEW 1-13**

Session 1: **Affirmation** (Matthew 3:13-4:11)

Session 2: **Invitation** (Matthew 4:12-25)

Session 3: **Worship the King** (Matthew 2:1-12)

Session 4: **True Righteousness** (Matthew 5:13-20,43-48)

Session 5: **Treasure** (Matthew 6:19-34)

Session 6: **Authority Acknowledged** (Matthew 7:15-29)

Session 7: **Every Life Valued** (Matthew 8:1-4,14-17; 9:1-8)

Session 8: **Mercy Extended** (Matthew 9:10-19,23-26)

Session 9: **Loyalty Tested** (Matthew 10:16-20,26-34)

Session 10: **Confronting Doubts** (Matthew 11:1-6,16-24)

Session 11: **Rejecting Legalism** (Matthew 12:1-14)

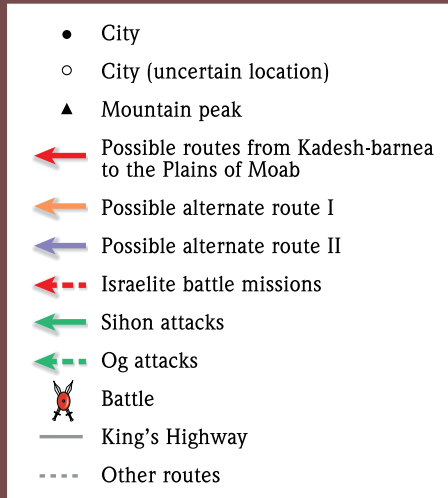
Session 12: **Judgment Coming** (Matthew 13:24-30,36-43)

# *Explore*

“You will seek me and find me when you search for me  
with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13



# The Journey From Kadesh-Barnea to Moab



"The Journey from Kadesh-Barnea to Moab" is taken from the Holman Bible Atlas (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 1998), p. 71. Used with permission.

## NUMBERS AND DEUTERONOMY

As road trips wind down, travelers start thinking about the work waiting for them back home. The ancient Israelites were no exception. The books of Numbers and Deuteronomy recount how the nation of Israel wandered in the wilderness for four decades and how God taught them to be His people as they approached the promised land. He wanted to remind them how much still needed to be done once they got "home." As you study these final two books of the Pentateuch, ask God to show you what He longs to accomplish in you and through you. Learn how to avoid a life of spiritual wandering and embrace the best He has to offer.

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