

Deuteronomy 33:12

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-33/deuteronomy-3312/>

Moses pronounces blessings on the tribe of Benjamin.

Moses continues the poem of blessing he pronounced upon Israel that He began in Deuteronomy 33:1. In Jacob's final words to his children, *Benjamin* ("son of the right hand"), his youngest son by Rachel (Genesis 35:17-19), was portrayed as "a ravenous wolf" that "in the morning devours the prey and And in the evening he divides the spoil" (Genesis 49:27). The use of "morning" and "evening" suggests that he had a violent character. This also might mean that *Benjamin* was brave and aggressive in war.

Here in Deuteronomy, Benjamin is called the *beloved of the LORD*, perhaps reflecting Jacob's affection and love for him (Genesis 44:20). Also, it seems that the Bible elevates and honors courage and willingness to fight battles that are worthy. This will be important for Israel when entering the Promised Land. They will be called on to be courageous (Joshua 1:6-9). Cowardice is mentioned as a negative characteristic along with unbelieving, abominable, murderers, immoral persons, sorcerers, and idolators in Revelation 21:8.

The word *beloved* (Hebrew, "yādīd," "one greatly loved", related to the name "David") is a term of endearment used frequently to describe those greatly loved by the LORD (e.g., Psalms 60:7).

The birth of *Benjamin* seems to play a role in his father's affection for him because he was born under special circumstances. The biblical material tells us that when Jacob and his household "journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor. When she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, 'Do not fear, for now you have another son.' It came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin" (Genesis 35:16-18).

The name Ben-oni means "son of my sorrow" and Benjamin means "son of the right hand." The circumstances in which Benjamin was born might explain why he was his father's beloved. These two names could picture the two

advents of Christ, coming first as a man of sorrows, then returning a second time as a conquering king (Isaiah 53:4; Revelation 19:11).

Moses prayed that *Benjamin would dwell in security by Him*. That means *Benjamin would rest securely beside God, the one who shields him all the day*. The verb “to shield” (Heb. “ḥāpāp,” “to enclose”) means to encompass someone with great care and protection.

Such special care is also reflected in the next line of the verse which reads, *And he dwells between His shoulders*. This is a picture of a parent giving both tender compassion and great security to his child. Such parental love can be seen when Naomi took her grandson Obed, “laid him in her lap, and became his nurse” (Ruth 4:16).

So, Moses prayed that *Benjamin* would be well protected by God because he would dwell *between His shoulders*, enjoying a close fellowship and tender love with Him. This was fulfilled when the smaller tribe of Benjamin was included as part of the southern kingdom of Judah.

Note that Benjamin was allotted the territory that included Jerusalem, where the LORD’s kings would rule (Joshua 18:21-28) (see map in Additional Resources) .

Biblical Text:

**¹²Of Benjamin he said,
May the beloved of the Lord dwell in security by Him,
Who shields him all the day,
And he dwells between His shoulders.**