

Deuteronomy 33:24–25

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-33/deuteronomy-3324-25/>

Moses pronounces blessings on the tribe of Asher.

Moses's final benediction involves *Asher* (v. 24). Asher was the second son of Leah's maid Zilpah, the first son being Gad (Genesis 30:9–12). The name *Asher* means "happy one" in the sense of being "fortunate." It appears to be a play on words to Leah's words when Asher was born, "'Happy am I! For women will call me happy.' So she named him Asher" (Genesis 30:13).

Moses stated that *more blessed than sons is Asher; May he be favored by his brothers*. These two lines indicate that the tribe of Asher would be blessed materially above all the others and that the Suzerain (Ruler) God might bless the tribe of *Asher* by continuing to grant him favor more than the other tribes.

The extent of this blessing could be seen when *Asher* would *dip his foot in oil*. The "oil" here is probably olive oil because the tribal territory had many olive groves (see map in Additional Resources) . The "oil" is a metaphor for material prosperity (Deuteronomy 32:13; Job 29:6). Asher dipping *his foot in oil* is a picture of the people of this tribe enjoying the prosperity He has given them.

Such prosperity would have included Asher's territory having access to the Mediterranean Sea and the trade they conducted with other countries. But having a direct route to the sea would have made them vulnerable to attack as well.

So, having prayed for Asher's prosperity in his territory, Moses now wished that Asher's land be secure with *locks of iron and bronze* (v. 25). The word for *locks* (Heb. "min'āleḵā") can also be rendered as "bolt." In the ancient world, the locking system on gates and doors usually included a bar made of wood or metal that slid into openings in the posts along with bolts to hold the bar in place. This bar would keep the gate or door closed to prevent someone from entering to hurt others. These bolts and brackets that were made of *bronze or iron* could make it much more difficult to break through. That is why Moses asked that Asher's *locks* be secure with *iron and bronze*.

With such protection, Moses concluded the benediction on *Asher* by saying that *according to your days, so will your leisurely walk be*. That means that the tribe of *Asher* would enjoy God's blessing and protection.

Biblical Text:

²⁴ **Of Asher he said,
More blessed than sons is Asher;
May he be favored by his brothers,
And may he dip his foot in oil.**
²⁵ **Your locks will be iron and bronze,
And according to your days, so will your leisurely walk be.**