



None Like God, None Like Us **Behold Our God! – Read the Bible for Life Series #12**

Deuteronomy 33

Pastor David Sunday

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Beginning in September, we started a 15-month journey reading through the Bible together as a church and are using a chronological schedule. [You can download these schedules from our website.] The beauty of Bible reading is you can dive in anywhere and benefit from it. So if you've fallen behind, this is a great place to get started because we've come to the end of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. If you haven't been with us and you'd like to get started, this is a good time for you to jump in. However, we are going to be taking a break for Advent in a couple weeks, then pick up with this reading again in January.

This sermon series is coming out of the section of Scripture that we've been reading. Here we are at the end of a major portion of Scripture. God made promises to Abraham back in Genesis 12 that He would make of him a great nation and that he would give him land. That has happened. There's a great nation now called Israel and they are at the edge of the Promised Land, about to enter into Canaan. God has used Moses to lead the people. He is now 120 years old and they've spent the last 40 years wandering in the wilderness because of their unbelief. But here they are, the second generation after they had come out of Egypt, ready to enter into the Promised Land.

You can imagine that they had fears in their minds about what they would encounter when they entered that land—fears of the future—so Moses' final words to God's people in Deuteronomy 33 are words of comfort and joy. Words of blessing and grace. Words of peace. This is very important because in Deuteronomy 32, Moses had spoken some very severe words of warning to the people, even predicting that through the hardness of their hearts, they would stray from God. But he does not end there.

We see in this a paradigm for gospel ministry. Will we preach the whole council of God at New Covenant Bible Church? Yes! Will we preach of God's judgment and the hard

words of Scripture? Yes! But may the dominant emphasis of our church's ministry always come back to this: The grace of God. The goodness of God. Because it is only through the grace of God that God's people ever change. It's only through His grace motivating us that we ever obey God. So Moses ends his life—his career with these people—as a pastor, tenderly speaking to the hearts of these people he knew so well, with whom he had walked for 40 years. He speaks warmly and compassionately and personally and graciously to them. He understands and agrees with something that John Chrysostom said: "He who strikes a slow man makes him slower."

Though the people of God have a lot of room for growth, he motivates them by reminding them of the blessing of God that abides on their lives. Now let's look at the chapter as a whole.

In verses 1-5, Moses reminds the people how the Lord came down to them from Mt. Sinai. This was an expression of God's love. Look at verse three: "*Yes, He loved His people, all His holy ones were in His hand...*" God gave them the law and led His people.

Beginning in verse six and going through verse 25, Moses speaks specific words of blessing to each of the individual tribes of Israel. We don't have time to go through all of them today but I want to point out a couple that I especially appreciate.

Verse 12—God's blessing upon Benjamin. It says, "*The beloved of the LORD dwells in safety. The High God surrounds him all day long, and dwells between his shoulders.*" Our God dwells between his shoulders. It's a picture of God's people being surrounded by God's presence so much so that God is dwelling between their shoulders, or perhaps as a father is carrying his son on his shoulders, God carries His people on His shoulders. What tenderness we see in that picture.

Look at the blessing of Asher in verse 25, "*Your bars shall be iron and bronze...*" Strength, stability, security. Maybe some of you just need to hear this word today, "...*and as your days, so shall your strength be.*" Maybe you're asking, "How am I going to get through next week? How am I going to face the trial four months from now? What's going to happen if I'm going to be called upon to suffer and die?"

"...*and as your days, so shall your strength be.*" God has not given you today, the grace you will need for next week; He gives you grace "for your days." Whatever He calls you to, He gives you the grace when you need it for that day. I love that! "...*and as your days, so shall your strength be.*"

For each of these tribes, there is an individual blessing. But this morning, I want us to focus on verses 26 through 29—words that God speaks to His people, Israel. He calls them in verse 26, “Jeshurun” which doesn’t mean a whole lot to us but it’s a little pet name, an affectionate name like a father would give his child. We call our youngest Rosebud. That’s her nickname. Jeshurun means “upright one.” God is speaking tenderly and affectionately to all of His people. “My upright ones. My people Israel.” Words of great comfort and joy.

Just like you’re probably going to take a turkey this week, get that thing all basted up and seasoned. You’re going to put it in the oven on slow heat and cook it for a long time so it marinates in the juices and comes out nice and tender on Thanksgiving morning. So tasty; so seasoned. I want these words to season our hearts this Thanksgiving week. I want us to meditate on these words. We’ve covered a lot of big passages of Scripture over the last several weeks. Sometimes briefer is better and I want us to focus in and let our souls marinate in the truth that God speaks about Himself and about His people in verses 26 through 29.

Let’s read God’s Word together:

*²⁶ "There is none like God, O Jeshurun,
who rides through the heavens to your help,
through the skies in his majesty.*

*²⁷ The eternal God is your dwelling place,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.
And he thrust out the enemy before you
and said, Destroy.*

*²⁸ So Israel lived in safety,
Jacob lived alone,
in a land of grain and wine,
whose heavens drop down dew.*

*²⁹ Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you,
a people saved by the LORD,
the shield of your help,
and the sword of your triumph!
Your enemies shall come fawning to you,
and you shall tread upon their backs."*

This is God's Word. May we thank Him for it. Would you join me in focusing your mind and heart on what God is saying about Himself and about us, His people, in these four verses?

I want to tell you a little secret about myself. I find that there's a manufacturing business going on inside my heart. It's a trouble manufacturer—a trouble factory in my mind and heart. I'll call it "Fear Manufacturing, Inc." They carry on a pretty ambitious business in my spirit. Conjuring up fears. Conjuring up troubles. Sometimes it's because I think of the high demands of the Christian life. The true call of the disciple and I wonder, "Will I have grace to endure to the end?" Fears and troubles rise and I think about those things. Sometimes I wonder what kind of trials will come my way in the future. Will I be able to withstand them? Often it's fear of the unknown or fear of failure, fear of disappointing God or others. Fear Manufacturing, Inc. How many of you have ever recognized the presence of that business inside your own spirit? How many of you would like to bankrupt that company for good? Just put it out of business?

The beautiful thing is "*...God gave us a spirit **not** of fear but of power and love and self-control*" (2 Timothy 1:7). In the gift of God the Holy Spirit, we find a powerful authority to dispel fear from our lives. It's not God's will for us to be living under a cloud of anxiety and fear as His people. It's God will that we be a people who are happy and rejoicing in the Lord as He describes in verse 29. But we need to go to the Holy Spirit who dwells in us and ask Him to help us so we would believe the promises of God and put Fear Manufacturing, Inc. out of business.

In this text, God gives us two potent antidotes for our fears and anxieties. In verses 26 through 28, God is saying, "Consider who your God is. Dwell on Him, His character, His ways. There is none like Him."

Then in verse 29, we see there is none like God's people. Consider who you are in God. If we take to heart what the Holy Spirit is saying in these final words of Moses, we will be a fearless people. We will be a people who are ready to embark on new and threatening ventures of faith because we've been delivered from the fears that bind us and blind us to God's promises. So let's think about our God and then who we are in God.

1. **There is None Like God – Deuteronomy 33:26–28**

One theologian said, “God is infinitely original.” That’s how Moses opens this passage. God is unlike anyone else. Incomparable. Unique. Supreme. Moses recognized this back at the crossing of the Red Sea. In Exodus 15:11 he said, “*Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?*” There is none like You! That’s our God. Supreme. Unique. Incomparable.

What is it that makes our God so unique? Let’s go to the second phrase in verse 26: He “*rides through the heavens...*” It’s an arresting word picture. God, the Sky-Rider. God, faster than the space shuttle. Free to move wherever He wills, to do whatever He pleases. Unhindered. Unimpeded. Unobstructed. Unrestrained. God declares in Isaiah 43:12-13, “I am God ... I work and none can hinder it.” The God of whom Job says, “*I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted*” (Job 42:2).

Our God rides through the heavens. We read of that in Psalm 104:3-4. “*He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters; he makes the clouds his chariot; he rides on the wings of the wind; he makes his messengers winds, his ministers a flaming fire.*” What is He riding around the heavens for? Well, look at the next phrase in Deuteronomy 33:26: “*...to your help...*” God’s on active surveillance. His eyes are roaming to and fro throughout the earth. Why? So He might strongly support you, His people (2 Chronicles 16:9). He is riding through the heavens, actively looking at His people, saying, “I’m ready. I’m available. I’m accessible. I’m dependable. I will be your helper.”

As Moses considers this God who rides through the heavens to help, he is amazed. He says, “There is no other God like this. The gods of the nations are not like this. The gods of the nations want us to carry them. Our God carries us. The gods of the nations are idols; they expect us to somehow get up to the heavens to reach them. Our God comes down from heaven and reaches us. The gods of the nations want us to work for them. Our God works for us.” It makes Him a very unique God. There is none like Him.

Isaiah 64:4 says, “*From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you who works for those who wait for him.*” I wonder, is your heart and mind positioned today, looking to your God and saying, “God, You are absolutely dependable and reliable. I am counting on You to be my Helper.” Do you believe that your God is actively available to you? That He is involved in your life? That He delights to do this?

We see this in Deuteronomy 33:26: “*...rides through the heavens to your help, through the skies in his majesty.*” Just in case you think, “My problems are too small for

such a great God, He wouldn't really want to pay attention to me." Moses reminds us that God sees this as an expression of His majesty. This is a part of His resplendent glory. He is unlike all the other gods people worship. He is a God who hurries to His needy people. He is a God who delights in coming to His people when they are outnumbered and under-resourced and overwhelmed and He says, "I will be your Helper." That is not beneath God's dignity; that is an expression of His majesty. He delights in showing us good with all His heart, with all His soul.

He is a majestic God who "...*exalts Himself to show mercy to [us]*" (Isaiah 30:18). That's our God. None like Him. Is your God distant? Remote? Detached? Or near? Actively available? Watching your every need? Do you look to Him consciously as your God and your Helper because He delights to be that?

Look at verse 27. "*The eternal God is your dwelling place...*" He is eternal. No beginning. No end. "*From him and through him and to him are all things. To Him be the glory forever*" (Romans 11:36). God has seen it all. There is nothing happening in your life right now that God hasn't already seen. There's no trial you're facing that is unprecedented for God. There's nothing happening in the world today that alarms Him. God is eternal. He will never be up for reelection. He's never going to die and need a replacement. What He has always been for all eternity to people like Moses, he will be today for you—all the days of your life. As long as the world shall endure, He will remain that faithful, steadfast God. No challenge, no crisis alarms Him. Nothing threatens Him. He is the eternal God.

Look at what Moses says about Him in verse 27: "*The eternal God is your dwelling place...*"

"Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home."

(Our God, Our Help in Ages Past by Isaac Watts)

God is our "*dwelling place.*"

Last night, we had the young married couples over for supper. We were sitting on our couch as the older people listening in, just enjoying the conversation they were having. I looked at Kate and said, "I'm so thankful God gave us this home."

Home is a place where we feel safe. Home is a place where we rest. Home is a place where we let our hearts loose. We're no longer on guard. We don't need to worry about

what we're wearing at home (unless you have teenagers—then they always have a comment). Home is where we're at ease.

There's no secret that we cannot tell our God. There's no wish that I cannot communicate to my Father. I can be thoroughly happy and delighted in His presence. He surrounds me the way the atmosphere surrounds the earth. I'm at home in Him. And at home in Him, I'm safe, provided for and protected. My God cares for the members of His household. He supplies their needs. He ensures their defense.

*“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the LORD, ‘My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.’”*

(Psalm 91:1-2)

Because I've made the Lord my dwelling place—the Most High who is my refuge—God's Word says, “...*no evil shall be allowed to befall [me], no plague come near [my] tent. For he will command his angels concerning [me] to guard [me] in all [my] ways*” (Psalm 91:9-11). So even when it does seem like evil is on the rise, I'm in my Father's House. He's my dwelling place.

If you've been listening to the sermons the past few months, you're probably thinking this is mind-boggling because this is the God who touches the mountain and it smokes. He's the God who appears in consuming fire. He's the God who would incinerate you if you were to get close to Him in His naked essence. Yet the eternal God is your dwelling place. How can that be? Unless it's because God the Son came down into this messed up, miserable, sin-wrecked world and said, “I'm going to reconcile you who believe in Me to the Holy God. I'm going to make you—His rebels—His children. He will be your Father. I'm going to go prepare a place for you and when I come again, I'm going to take you to be with me so that where I am there you may also be—in My Father's house” (John 14:1-7).

Because God the Son had agreed in eternity past to do that work, Moses and those who came before Jesus were already able by faith to enjoy this holy, awesome—even terrifying—God as their dwelling place and get close to Him and experience His presence. The eternal God is your dwelling place. But it even gets better.

Verse 27: “...*and underneath are the everlasting arms.*”

“What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms...”

(Leaning on the Everlasting Arms by Elisha Hoffman & Anthony Showalter)

I remember Elizabeth Elliot’s radio program, Gateway to Joy. Anyone who has heard it knows she said the same thing in every program: “You are loved with an everlasting love and underneath are the everlasting arms.” She always said that; it was her trademark. Underneath are the everlasting arms.

In Psalm 63:8, David says, “*My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.*” I love that because I think that’s the way I want to be. I want to be clinging to the Lord. I want to be holding on to Him tightly. But what if I let go? What if I lose my grip? I know that His right hand upholds me.

Just like when my dad would take me up to Devil’s Lake State Park when I was a little kid. We would climb the bluffs and he would carry me. We would look over the edge and see the depths of that beautiful lake. I could let go of my Dad and just dangle there, enjoying it all, and never even for a moment think that he was going to let go of me. He had me safe in his arms.

I want you to consider how large and how strong God’s arms are. I want to ask you, do you think you can ever get underneath His everlasting arms? Could you, as a child of God, ever sin yourself beyond God’s reach? Could you ever sin so badly that “the fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel’s veins” would not be deep enough to plunge your sins beneath that flood where you lose all your guilty stains? If you sin and fail, there will be consequences. There will be sorrow. But a child of God can never sin himself so far down that he’s beyond the reach of those everlasting arms.

Consider the trials that you might be called to endure during your lifetime—maybe soon. Ask yourself, “Is there any suffering, is there any difficulty, that would take me beyond the reach of God’s everlasting arms?” When you are going through an extraordinary trial, remember the depths of His great faithfulness. Charles Spurgeon said, “You will have comfort in proportion to your trials. If you have shallow sorrows you will receive shallow graces. If you have deep afflictions you will obtain deeper proof of God’s faithfulness.”

The lower our trials plunge us, the more tightly they adhere us to those everlasting arms that hold us so well in the midst of suffering. Those arms do not fail. Satan may

strike you down but he can only thrust you into the everlasting arms of your eternal, almighty Father. He thinks he's really gotten you but that's why Micah 7:8-10 says,

“Rejoice not over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise;
when I sit in darkness,
the LORD will be a light to me.
I will bear the indignation of the LORD
because I have sinned against him,
until he pleads my cause
and executes judgment for me.
He will bring me out to the light;
I shall look upon his vindication.
Then my enemy will see,
and shame will cover her who said to me,
“Where is the LORD your God?””

Where is He? He is underneath me with His everlasting arms to bear me up lest I dash my foot against a stone. The lower I sink, the more tightly I fall into His embrace. When I face that last great, terrible abyss—that dreadful abyss that we call death—and must finally submit myself to fall into that abyss, I will find that I am only falling into the safe, strong arms of my everlasting God who will not only carry me up into His presence but who will also lift me up and exalt me with His own glory in His presence. He is my refuge, my dwelling place.

“Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love
Leading onward, leading homeward to Thy glorious rest above!”

(O The Deep, Deep Love of Jesus by S. Trevor Francis & Thomas J. Williams)

Corrie ten Boom said, “There is no pit so deep, but Christ is deeper still.” Do you believe that? So why fear? Why be anxious? If God surrounds you and upholds you with His arms...

“What have [you] to dread?
What have [you] to fear?”

(Leaning on the Everlasting Arms by Elisha Hoffman & Anthony Showalter)

A woman came up to her pastor and said, “Pastor, I’m going through a lot of trials and difficult circumstances. I’m so afraid I might fall. I might fail and fall somehow.” I love the pastor’s response. He said, “Well, why don’t you do it? Just fall.” “But pastor,” she protested, “where would I fall to?”

He said, “You would fall down into the everlasting arms of God.” Then he said, “I have read in the Bible that His everlasting arms are underneath His children. And you know, I believe that if you fall down upon those everlasting arms, it is sure and certain that you will never fall through them. They will always be strong enough to uphold you.”

Sometimes it feels like we’re in free fall. We wonder, “When is He going to catch us?”

Look at Deuteronomy 32:11-12: “*Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions, the LORD alone guided him* [speaking of Jacob], *no foreign god was with him.*” Sometimes God thrusts us out of the nest and we feel like we’re spinning down, down, down, down, down to the rocks. But He calmly—like a strong eagle—swoops down, gets underneath us, spreads out His wings and bears us up. “Safe and secure from all alarm.”

He also goes before us. Look at the last phrase of Deuteronomy 33:27: “*And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, Destroy.*” That’s good! You’re going into the Promised Land and you see those fearful foes. God’s going to put them right out in front of you and He’s going to say, “Destroy them!” You might feel outnumbered and outmaneuvered. You might feel like you don’t have the weapons or ammunition. It might seem like the enemy has greater numbers and greater strength but God will make sure they have inferior power. He will fight your battles for you and you will see that He gives you the victory. That’s our God. That’s who He is. That’s what He’s committed to do for you.

If we really understand how strong He is, how tenderly He cares for us, how committed He is to never leave us nor forsake us, if we really understood and believed the power that God has to defend and enable us as His people, we would not fear but we would grow stronger in our courage and trust in Him. There’s none like our God. None like Him.

2. **There is None Like Us – Deuteronomy 33:29**

There’s one more thing—look at verse 29. There’s none like us—God’s people. We say of God, “There is none like You, Oh, God.” But God turns around and says to us, His people, “Yes, and there is none like you, My people. Do you realize My blessing on your life? *Happy are you, O Israel!*”

Can I say that of New Covenant today? Happy are you, New Covenant Bible Church. Are you happy in the Lord? Are you rejoicing in your God? Or are you so aware of trials

and difficulties and financial hardships and worries and fears right now that you've lost the joy of the Lord who is your strength? It is God's will that we be a joyful people always because of who He is and who we are in Him.

We are "...*a people saved by the Lord...*" Sin can no longer injure us. Self cannot destroy us. Satan has no more claim on us. We are saved so that judgment is averted, hell is vanquished, heaven is our home, glory is our destiny. That's hope. That brings joy. We are the ones for whom God gave His Son for our sins, to deliver us from this present evil age and we can call on Him if we're in danger of any harm and in need of any good. We have an eternal God we can run to. We're saved by the Lord.

He is "...*the shield of your help...*" He goes before you and puts His shield before you. He is the "...*the sword of your triumph!...*" We have God as our Defender and also as the One who arms us for battle—defensively and offensively. He guarantees that we will be victorious. "*Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.*"

Are you afraid of circumstances? Are you afraid of the future?

The early church father, Tertullian, said, "Are you afraid of a man, Christian, when devils are afraid of you? The world ought to fear you, seeing as you will judge it."

That's what Moses is saying here. Your enemies, they're going to come "*fawning to you.*" You're going to "*tread upon their backs.*" No weapon that's fashioned against you shall prosper. You shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. "*We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*" (Romans 8:37). That is our destiny as God's people.

There is none like God and there is none like us in all the earth. We are the object of His love, His constant attention, His majestic care. He is our dwelling place. Notice as you look at this passage how it shows us that we are surrounded by God:

- He is *above* us (verse 26), on active surveillance to come to our help
- He is *around* us (verse 27), as our dwelling place
- He is *underneath* us (verse 27), with His everlasting arms
- He is going *before* us (verse 29), to fight our battles

That is who we are—a people who are in the constant care of our God, the objects of His unfailing protection. Happy are we when we believe these truths. If

we understand these things, believe these things, embrace these things, Fear Manufacturing, Inc. will go out of business and we will be a people of joy and courage.

Let's affirm our trust in our God as we sing,

“What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.”

(Leaning on the Everlasting Arms by Elisha Hoffman & Anthony Showalter)

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