

PARASHAT VEZOT HA-BERACHAH

Deuteronomy 33:1–34:12

Parashat Vezot ha-Berachah, meaning “This is the blessing . . .,” begins with Moses’ blessing of and his farewell to the people of Israel. He blesses each of the twelve tribes, noting that the Torah is “the heritage of the congregation of Jacob.” He concludes with the pronouncement: “O happy Israel! Who is like you, / A people delivered by *Adonai*, / Your protecting Shield, your Sword triumphant!” Then Moses climbs Mount Nebo, located in Moab just across from Jericho and the Dead Sea, from whose peak he sees the Land of Israel. He dies there at the age of one hundred and twenty years and is buried in Moab. No one knows the location of his grave. At the end of a thirty-day mourning period, Joshua assumes leadership of the people. “Never again,” declares the Torah, “did there arise in Israel a prophet like Moses—whom *Adonai* singled out, face to face. . . .”
