

# Royal Arch



## The Twelve Tribes of Israel

By H. Meij August, 2002

“In the beginning...”:

Before we can discuss the 12 tribes, what theories are around to what happened to them, and how they impact Freemasonry, it is first important to have some historical background, which starts by looking at one prominent character in the Bible, namely who Jacob was.

Jacob is thought to have lived sometime around 1700 BC. He was the second son of Isaac (The second patriarch of Israel, the first being his father, Abraham). Jacob also had a twin brother named Esau. Tradition has it that his mother, Rebekah, was already feeling their presence while they were still in her womb, and that the two soon-to-be-born twins often wrestled each other, causing her to have much pain. Seeking an oracle, Rebekah was told that “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided: the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger” (Gen 25:23). Esau was the first to be born, but Jacob followed soon, clasping Esau’s heels.

Not much is known about their youths, but one day an important episode takes place, which is also described in the Bible. It is known that while Esau was a skilled hunter, and was stronger, Jacob preferred to stay at home. One day, Esau comes home, exhausted after a hunt, and finds Jacob preparing a pot of lentil soup. Esau asks for some, but Jacob replies “First sell me your birthright” (Gen 25:31). Esau replies “I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?” (Gen 25:32). Jacob makes Esau swear away his birthright before giving Esau his soup. Later, when death was approaching Jacob’s father Isaac, Jacob was able to pretend to be Esau, and was able to receive his father’s blessing. This blessing is of enormous significance, as it gave Jacob the right to inherit the lands of Canaan, and to become the third patriarch of the entire nation of Israel. Hearing of the deceit, Esau threatens to kill Jacob, and as a result it was decided that Jacob should go to Haran, an area in northern Mesopotamia, where his mother’s brother was living.

It is during the trip to Haran, that an important event takes place. One night, as Jacob sat down in the wilderness from exhaustion, he saw a vision of angels ascending and descending a ladder suspended between heaven and earth (a.k.a. Jacob’s Ladder). On the top rung stood God himself, who affirmed the promise he made to Jacob’s grandfather Abraham by saying “The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your descendents; and your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth” (Gen 28:13).

Jacob marries twice, and changes his name to Israel:

When Jacob neared Haran, he met Rachel, who was working with her father to tend to sheep. Falling in love, he asks for her hand, but Rachel's father tells Jacob that he must first work seven years with him before it will be allowed. After seven years the wedding takes place, but the next morning, Jacob finds out that it was her elder sister Leah who had secretly replaced Rachel during the ceremony. Jacob did not love Leah, and objected. However, Jacob was told that it was tradition for the elder sister to be married first, and that he would have to work another seven years for Rachel's hand. He agreed, and was allowed to marry Rachel in one week. After having served another seven years, Jacob decided to stay on as a shepherd, which he did for a total of 21 years. At God's suggestion, Jacob decides to return to Canaan, and to try to make peace with his estranged brother Esau. One night during this trip back, Jacob finds himself wrestling a mysterious stranger. They struggled for a long time, whereupon the stranger asked Jacob to be released, but Jacob refused unless he first received a blessing. The stranger replied "Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed" (Gen 32:28). Israel means "he who strives with God".

Jacob has 12 sons, and one daughter, together known as "The Children of Israel":

In all, Jacob would have twelve sons, each of which would eventually rule one of the twelve tribes. With Leah he had six sons, (number denote the order in which they were born) Reuben (1), Simeon (2), Levi (3), Judah (4), Zebulun (6), and Issachar (9), and one daughter, named Dinah. He had two sons with Leah's maid (Zilpah), named Gad (7) and Asher (8). He also had two sons with Rachel's maid (Bilhah), named Dan (5) and Naphtali (10). Finally he also had two sons with Rachel, Joseph (11) and Benjamin (12), during the birth of which Rachel died. It is said that Jacob loved his 11<sup>th</sup> son, Joseph, the most.

However, it was Jacob's favoritism towards Joseph, and Joseph's visions that he would one day lead all his brothers, that left his other brothers conspiring to kill him. One day, according to some accounts around the year 1683 BC, nine of his brothers gather to kill him; "Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him" (Gen 37:19). Reuben alone objected, and suggested they leave him in a dried up well, intending to return later to rescue him. A short time later a company of Ishmaelites was passing by, and taking this opportunity, Judah sold Joseph into slavery. Reuben was shocked, but could do nothing. Instead the brothers dipped a robe in blood, and took it to their father Jacob, who seeing the bloody robe, concluded "It is my son's robe; a wild beast has devoured him" (Gen 37:33). Meanwhile, the Ishmaelites took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, Captain of the royal guards of Pharaoh. Joseph's unique talent to be able to see and interpret visions and dreams, soon made him a powerful person, and he was appointed governor, and oversaw the grain distribution of the land, which at the time was the second highest office after Pharaoh. He also marries the daughter of Potiphar, and has two sons of his own, Manasseh and Ephraim, who later are adopted by Jacob as his own, and after Jacob dies, and the tribe of Levi is made in charge of the priesthood, both Manasseh and Ephraim were made tribes (hence making 12 tribes again).

Meanwhile, famine spread in the lands where Jacob and his remaining children were living. Jacob sends 10 of his children to Egypt to buy grain. When they arrived in Egypt, they did not recognize their brother Joseph, but he did. The brothers were imprisoned. Learning that his mother had another son, Benjamin, while he was in Egypt, Joseph decides to release his brothers, sell them the grain, and allow them to go if they left one of their brothers as a hostage, and return with Benjamin. Simeon decides to stay.

Returning home, Jacob objects sending Benjamin, saying "You have bereaved me of my children, Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin" (Gen 42:36). Later, after the grain ran out, and the brothers had to return once again to Egypt with Benjamin. This time

Joseph reveals his true identity to them, and invites his father and the entire family to Egypt, known as “The Sojourn”, which is said to have taken place around the year 1662 BC.

Following The Exodus, the Twelve Tribes Settle in Israel:

Following many years of peace, the influence the Jews were having on Egyptian society became too great for Pharaoh Sobekhotep IV, who ordered the Jews to be taken into oppressive slavery, said to have been around the year 1517 BC. The following 70 years are known as “The Bondage” years, until Moses freed the Jews and takes them on the Exodus, which continued for 37 years, until the Jews reached Mount Nebo, near the Dead Sea, being able to see the city of Jericho.

After the city of Jericho was captured (1410 BC), and eventually the whole of Canaan, the twelve tribes split up. For the next 360 years, each tribe is ruled by a series of “Judges”, and at times small skirmishes erupted between the tribes. The tribes yearned for re-unification, which they believed could be accomplished by a great king. They asked Samuel, the last of the judges, in 1037 BC to choose such a king. He names Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, to be the first king of Israel. Saul was not up for the job, and God orders Samuel to travel to a man called Jesse, of the tribe of Judah in Bethlehem, because as God said “for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” (1 Sam 16:1). Eventually, David, the youngest of Jesse’s sons, was chosen.

Israel was united under King David, and followed so during the reign of King Solomon. It is upon the installment of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, in 931 BC that Israel split in two, after the 10 northern tribes rebelled after Rehoboam said he would impose harsher taxes than even his father had. Israel was now divided, with the Kingdom of Judah, comprised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin (from which it is said that all Jews descend from) staying loyal to Rehoboam in the south, and the northern Kingdom of Israel, led by Jeroboam, which was comprised of the remaining 10 tribes.

Biographies of the sons of Jacob (in order of their birth):

1- Reuben - The name means “behold a son”. As the eldest son, he was the first in line to be the heir. However, Reuben sinned by having a relationship with Bilhah, Rachel’s maid, with whom his father had had two sons. This action forfeited his right to be heir, and caused Jacob to divide his land amongst all his sons. It is said that Reuben had four sons of his own. The flag of the tribe is said to have been red with mandrakes.

2 - Simeon - The name means “hearing”. At his birth, his mother Leah, exclaimed “Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also” (Gen 29:33). Simeon is famous for joining with his brother Levi to kill Shechem, a Canaanite prince who raped their sister, Dinah. It was for this reason that Jacob, at his deathbed, took away Simeon’s rights and territories. Simeon’s flag was said to be green, with the town of Shechem embroidered thereon.

3- Levi - The name means “to be joined”. Despite his violent attack together with his brother Simeon on Shechem, a Canaanite prince who raped their sister Dinah, it would be his descendants from which the temple priests would be selected; the first being Aaron. However, Levi would not receive any land, like his brother Simeon. The flag of Levi was said to be Levi’s was a third white, a third black, and a third red, with the Urim and Thummim embroidered on it.

4- Judah - Meaning “praise”, it was Judah that convinced the other brothers to sell Joseph into slavery. It was during the second encounter with his long lost brother Joseph, that Joseph tested him whether he would sell his brother, Benjamin, to Joseph. He refused, offering himself up instead (Gen 42:6). This convinced Joseph to reveal his true identity to his brothers. Judah had three sons. At Jacob’s deathbed, he told Judah that “Judah, your brothers shall praise you. . . . your father’s sons shall bow down before you” (Gen 49:8), and gave Judah the leadership position, after Reuben, Simeon and Levi were all

discredited due to sins they committed, even though he was fourth in line. Judah's flag was said to be resembling the heavens, with a lion embroidered on it.

5 - Dan - Meaning "he judged", no traditions about Dan himself have been preserved. Dan's flag was said to have been blue, with a serpent embroidered on it.

6 - Zebulun - Meaning "honor", The Bible does not mention much about Zebulun as well, only that he had three sons, and inherited the land around Nazareth. Zebulun's flag was said to be white, with a ship embroidered on it.

7 - Gad - Meaning "fortune", his name derives from when Leah heard that her maid Zilpah had given birth to a son, she exclaimed "Good Fortune" and gave the son his name (Gen 30:11). Not much is known about Gad himself, only that he himself had seven sons. The tribe of Gad inherited the land east of the Jordan River. Its flag was said to be a blend of black and white, with a camp embroidered on it.

8 - Asher - Meaning "the happy one", the name is said to have been given by his Leah, who hearing that her maid Zilpah gave birth to a second son said "Happy am I! For the women will call me happy" (Gen 30:13). Asher had four sons, and his tribe inherited the western part of Galilee. Asher's flag was said to be beryl with an olive tree embroidered on it.

9 - Issachar - Meaning "man of reward", the name derives from the fact that his mother, Leah, saw it as a divine favor. His tribe eventually settled in around the valley of the Jezreel River. It is said that he had four sons. Issachar's flag was said to be blue, with a sun and moon embroidered on it.

10 - Naphtali - Meaning "wrestling", it was the second son born to Rachel's maid Bilhah. Rachel is said to have named him as a result of all the struggles she had had with Leah. His tribe settled in northwest of the Sea of Galilee. He is said to have had four sons. Naphtali's flag was said to be light red, with a hind embroidered on it

11 - Joseph - Meaning "may He add other sons", much has already been discussed about the role Joseph played. As Jacob's favorite son, he is eventually bestowed as the fourth patriarch of Israel. As mentioned he had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. At Joseph's father, Jacob, on his deathbed, gave the second son, Ephraim, a stronger blessing than the traditional first son, Manasseh, saying "Manasseh also shall be great; nevertheless his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations" (Gen 48:19). Joseph's flag was said to be black, with an onyx on it.

As Joseph's two sons also played an important role, their brief biographies will be listed here:

Manasseh - Meaning "God has made me forget", not much is known about the man who will eventually led the tribe of Manasseh. A wild ox was said to adorn his flag.

Ephraim - Meaning "fruitful", his tribe eventually settled around the fertile land that is today Tel Aviv. A bullock was embroidered on his flag.

12 - Benjamin - Meaning "son of the right hand", he became Jacob's favorite son after Joseph was sold into slavery and thought to be dead by Jacob.

Theories of what happened to the twelve tribes of Israel:

Several theories exist as to what happened to the 12 tribes. It is generally accepted that the two tribes that remained loyal to Rehoboam, are the two tribes from which it is said that all Jews descended from. As a result, the remaining 10 tribes, are referred to as being "lost". However, some point to a prophecy by Ezekiel as proof that these ten tribes are not lost; "Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all sides, and bring them to their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be

king over them all; and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms” (Ezekiel 37:21-22).

So what theories abound as to what happened to these 10 tribes? Many exist, and I have just highlighted a few to give a flavor of the wide-ranging theories that abound.

They are simply “lost” - The first theory is quite simply that the tribes have been, and still are, simply lost. According to this theory, the 10 tribes in the north, which fell to Sargon II and the Assyrians in 722 BC, simply remained there as exiles, captives, and slaves.

They will be re-united - Some believe that the ten lost tribes will be re-united. They point out Ezekiel 37, that Israel will once again become one nation, and to Revelation 7:1-8, which says that 144,000 servants of God will be selected. It is claimed that each of the tribes will produce 12,000, hence totaling 144,000.

They made up several of new states - This theory stems from a prophecy in the Old Testament about the 10 tribes, namely that “My God will cast them off, because they have not hearkened to him; they shall be wanderers among the nations” (Hosea 9:17). Those who believe this theory also point to Amos 9:9 in the Old Testament, in which is written a very similar verse, namely that “For lo, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble shall fall upon the earth “. Specifically, supporters of this theory point to the following:

An explorer and Rabbi, Benjamin of Tudela (1127-1173), claimed in his book “Book of Travels” (1165) to have met several tribes in Persia, which he claimed were descendant of the tribes of Dan, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Asher.

Stories have abounded linking tribes in Central America to the lost tribes of Israel. Specifically, Bartholome de Las Casas (1476-1566), who became a great defender of the local inhabitants of Central America, was quoted as having said “I can bring proofs from the Bible that they are of the Lost Tribes.” In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a Portuguese explorer, Antonio Montezinos, claimed to know where some of the lost tribes were “beyond the Andes”, and claimed to have heard natives recite She’ma (the expression of the Jewish faith) there.

In an area between modern day Afghanistan and Pakistan live a 15 million people strong tribal grouping called the Pathans. Made up of around 60 tribes, they claim to be children of the Biblical King Saul. Many of their customs seem to be similar to Jewish traditions, such as performing circumcision of the eighth day, wearing a fringed garment similar to the Jewish tzizit, lighting candles on Friday nights and observing food customs similar to the laws of Kashrut. The Afghani Royal Family claimed to be descendants of the tribe of Benjamin, citing Makhzan-i-Afghani, a chronicle published in 1635 as evidence. The Pashtuns, the main Afghan group, have several tribe names that sound similar to the lost ten tribes of Israel, such as Asheri and Naftali. Stone tablets with Hebrew inscriptions have been found, and dated as being from 1115 to 1215, stated that there existed a Jewish community in Firoz Koh, located between Herat and Kabul.

They settled in Japan - A long shot, but nevertheless some people support this theory. It is claimed that Japan and the Holy Land have a special bond. It is even claimed that The Ark of the Covenant rests on Mt. Kenzan in Tokushima-prefecture. There is even a grave said to be that of Jesus Christ’s in Shingo Village (Herai) in northern Japan. The claims that the twelve tribes are linked to Japan stems in part from the coincidence that the Japanese imperial crest (the 16

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leafed chrysanthemum)

is similar to the crest found on a first century AD

sarcophagus known as “Herod’s family tomb”(pictured below). In addition, some point to similar Hebrew and Japanese words, for example Mikado (The Japanese Emperor) = Malchuto (meaning “His Majesty the King”), and the like. It is said that the tribe of Gad settled in Japan.

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E. Ethiopia - Some point to the tribe in Ethiopia, which were airlifted to Israel in the 70’s and 80’s as being descendants of the tribe of Dan. It stems from a legend that a Christian monk, Prester John, ruled over a wealthy empire, said to have been in Ethiopia, and that Prester John was constantly involved in wars with Israelite kingdoms there. It is said that the peoples of these Israelite kingdoms were the Falashas, the very tribe Israel airlifted to Israel.

F. China - In the 1920’s, a Scottish missionary, Rev. Thomas Torrance (1913-?), claimed that Chiang-Min, who live in the high mountain ranges on the Chinese-Tibetan border West Szechuan, were descendants of the lost tribes. He pointed to evidence that several of their customs

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were reminiscent of ancient Israelite tradition. For example, he pointed out that the local farmers used a plough similar to the ancient Israelite plough, and that it is always pulled by two oxen, never by an ox and an ass. This, he claimed, was in accordance with the Biblical stipulation found in Deuteronomy 22:10: “You shall not plough with an ox and ass together.” He also wrote that the Chiang-Min believe in one God, and that in “times of calamity or acute distress, they issue a moan or cry which sounds like ‘Yawei’, suggestive of the biblical name of God.” He also mentioned that

Chiang-Min priests, like the ancient Israelite priests, wear girdles to bind their robes, and bear a sacred rod shaped like a serpent, reminiscent of the brass serpent fashioned by Moses in the wilderness (The Nehushtan- of copper; a brazen thing a name of contempt given to the serpent Moses had made in the wilderness Num. 21:8).

In addition to the examples mentioned above, numerous other theories exist, too numerous to present in this paper. However, suffice it to say that no one theory seems to be able to explain, convincingly, the whereabouts of all the tribes. It shall therefore remain a true mystery.

The Twelve Original Points in Freemasonry:

In old Masonic lectures, which were used in England until 1813, it is mentioned that “There are in Freemasonry 12 original points, which form the basis of the system, and comprehend the whole ceremony of initiation. Without the existence of these points, no man ever was, or can be, legally and essentially received into the Order. Every person who is made a Mason must go through these 12 forms and ceremonies, not only in the first degree, but in every subsequent one.”

These 12 original points, as mentioned in the old lecture, assigned one of the 12 tribes to each of the important parts of the ceremonies held within a lodge. Specifically,

The opening ceremony was symbolized by the tribe of Reuben, he being the first son of Jacob

The preparation of the candidate for initiation was symbolized by the tribe of Simeon, as he was responsible for preparing the weapons for the fight against the Shechemites,

The report by the Senior Deacon to the Worshipful Master saying that the candidate is ready, was symbolized by the tribe of Levi, as Levi made a signal to his brother Simeon that the time was right for the attack on the Shechemites.

The tribe of Judah symbolized the entrance of the candidate into the lodge for the first time, because they were the first tribe to cross the river Jordan into the promised land, hence symbolically crossing over from the “dark” to the “light” and freedom of Canaan.

The prayer that is held for the candidate upon his entrance, was symbolized by the tribe of Zebulum, because Jacob gave his blessing to Zebulum in favor of Issachar.

Conducting the candidate around the lodge was symbolized by the tribe of Issachar, because this tribe needed a strong leader (guide shall we say) to put them on an equal term with the other tribes.

Advancing towards the altar was symbolized by the tribe of Dan, to show that we need to become truthful as quickly as, in contrast, the tribe of Dan became idolatry. Others say the tribe of Dan symbolized the advancing to the altar as Dan was described as being bold and advancing to the altar requires similar boldness.

The obligation itself was symbolized by the tribe of Gad, alluding to the solemn promise this tribe made to Jephthah, judge of Israel.

Communicating the mysteries of the degree was symbolized by the tribe of Asher, because as the candidate is “filled” with Masonic knowledge, so was Asher “filled” with royal dainties.

The investiture of the candidate with the apron, was symbolized by the tribe of Naphtali, as this tribe was invested with the all important territories of the South and the West by Moses.

Placing the candidate in the North-East corner of the lodge, was symbolized by the tribe of Joseph, for as this part of the ceremony reminds us of the superficial elements of Freemasonry, so did the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, both elements of the tribe of Joseph, were thought to be more superficial than the other tribes.

The closing of the lodge was symbolized by the tribe of Benjamin, who was the youngest son, and hence “closed” his father’s strength.

It is interesting to note, that these twelve original points of Freemasonry are not discussed much in Masonic circles, indicating that they have lost perhaps their relevance, or that modern Freemasons no longer bother to look into “old” lectures to better understand esoteric parts of Masonry.

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E.C.S.Leavenworth; Goodnews Christian Ministry.

#### **From the Jewish Virtual Library**

**TRIBES, THE TWELVE**, the traditional division of Israel into 12 tribes: Reuben, Simeon (Levi), Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim, and Manasseh. Biblical tradition holds that the 12 tribes of Israel are descended from the sons and grandsons of Jacob (Gen. 29–30; 35:16–18; 48:5–6). The tribes are collectively called Israel because of their origin in the patriarch Jacob-Israel. Jacob and his family went into Egypt as “70 souls” (Ex. 1:1–5). In Egypt “the Israelites were fertile and prolific; they multiplied and increased very greatly” (1:7), and there they became the “Israelite people” (1:9). A pharaoh, “who did not know Joseph” (1:8), oppressed them by burdensome labor. God “remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob” (2:24), made Himself known to Moses (Ex. 3), and rescued the Israelites from Egypt. By this time the nation



numbered “600,000 men on foot, aside from *taf*” which apparently means women as well as children (12:37). At Sinai, the nation received its laws and regulations, covenanting itself to God (Ex. 19–24). After wandering for 40 years in the desert under the leadership of Moses, the 12 Israelite tribes penetrated the land of Canaan with Joshua in command. The united force of the 12 tribes was sufficient to conquer the land, which was then distributed among them. During this period of settlement, and the subsequent period of the Judges, there was no predetermined pattern of leadership among the tribes, except for deliverer-judges sent to them by God in time of need (see also \*Judges, Book of). Such crises forced the tribes into cooperative action against enemies under the leadership of the “deliverer.” \*Shiloh served as a sacral center for all the tribes, housing the Ark of the Covenant under the priestly family of Eli (I Sam. 1:3, 12; 2:27). Under the impact of military pressures, the Israelites felt compelled to turn to \*Samuel with the request that he establish a monarchy, and \*Saul was crowned to rule over all the tribes of Israel (I Sam. 11:15). Upon his death, \*Ish-Bosheth, Saul’s son, was accepted by all the tribes save Judah and Simeon who preferred David. David’s struggle with the house of Saul ended in victory for him, and all the elders turned to David for royal leadership. He ruled from Jerusalem over all the tribes of Israel (II Sam. 5:3), and was succeeded by his son. After the death of \*Solomon, the tribes once again split along territorial and political lines, with Judah and Benjamin in the south loyal to the Davidic house, and the rest of the tribes in the north ruled by a succession of dynasties.

Modern scholarship does not generally accept the biblical notion that the 12 tribes are simply divisions of a larger unit which developed naturally from patriarchal roots. This simplistic scheme, it is felt, actually stems from later genealogical speculations which attempted to explain the history of the tribes in terms of familial relationships. The alliance of the 12 tribes is believed to have grown from the organization of independent tribes, or groups of tribes, forced together for historical reasons. Scholars differ as to when this union of 12 took place, and when the tribes of Israel became one nation. One school of thought holds that the confederation took place inside the country toward the end of the period of the Judges and the beginnings of the Monarchy. All of the traditions which see the 12 tribes as one nation as early as the enslavement in Egypt or the wanderings in the desert are regarded as having no basis in fact. This school recognizes in the names of some of the tribes the names of ancient sites in Canaan, such as the mountains of Naphtali, Ephraim, and Judah, the desert of Judah, and Gilead. With the passage of time, those who dwelt in these areas assumed the names of the localities. M. Noth feels that the Leah tribes, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, and Issachar, existed at an earlier stage as a confederation of six tribes whose boundaries in Canaan were contiguous. Only at a later stage did other tribes penetrate the area, eventually expanding the confederation to 12. A second school grants that the union of 12 existed during the period of wanderings in the desert, but that Canaan was not conquered by an alliance of these at any one time. Rather, there were individual incursions into the land at widely separated periods. However, the covenant among the 12 tribes and their awareness of national unity flowing from ethnic kinship and common history, faith, and sacral practices had their source in the period prior to the conquest of the land.

The number 12 is neither fictitious nor the result of an actual genealogical development in patriarchal history. It is an institutionalized and conventionalized figure which is found among other tribes as well, such as the sons of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13–16), the sons of Nahor (Gen. 22:20–24), of Joktan (Gen. 10:26–30 – so LXX), and Esau (Gen. 36:10–13). Similar organizational patterns built about groups of 12, or even six, tribes, are known from Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. In Greece, such groupings were called amphictyony (Ἀμφικτυονία), from ἄμφικτίζω, meaning “to dwell about,” that is, about a central sanctuary. Each tribe was assigned a prearranged turn in the provision and maintenance of the shrine. The amphictyonic members would make pilgrimages to the common religious center on festive

occasions. The exact measure of correspondence between the amphictyony of the Hellenic world and the duodecimal structure of the tribes of Israel may be the subject of scholarly controversy, but there can be little doubt that this pattern of 12 attributed to the Hebrew tribes is very real and historically rooted. Thus, if one tribe were to withdraw from the union or to be absorbed into another, the number 12 would be preserved, either by splitting one of the remaining tribes into two or by accepting a new tribe into the union. When, for example, the tribe of Levi is considered among the 12 tribes, the Joseph tribes are counted as one (Gen. 35:22–26; 46:8–25; 49:1–27). However, when Levi is not mentioned, the Joseph tribes are counted separately as Manasseh and Ephraim (Num. 26:4–51). For the same duodecimal considerations, Simeon is counted as a tribe even after having been absorbed into Judah (Josh. 19:1), and Manasseh, even after having split in two, is considered one. Among the six Leah tribes, Gad, although the son of Zilpah, is counted as one of them when Levi is missing (Num. 1:20–42; 26:5–50).

The confederation of the 12 tribes was primarily religious, based upon belief in the one “God of Israel” with whom the tribes had made a covenant and whom they worshiped at a common sacral center as the “people of the Lord” (Judg. 5:11; 20:2). The Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Covenant were the most sacred cultic objects of the tribal union. Biblical tradition shows that many places served as religious centers in various periods. During the desert wanderings, “the mountain of God,” that is, Sinai, known as Horeb, served as such a place (Ex. 3:1; 18:5; cf. 5:1–3; 8:23–24), as did the great oasis at Kadesh-Barnea where the tribes remained for some time (Deut. 1:46). From there the Israelite tribes attempted a conquest of the land (Num. 13:3, 26). Many sites in Canaan are mentioned as having sacred associations or as being centers of pilgrimage. Some of these, such as Penuel, where Jacob, the nominal progenitor of the tribes, received the name Israel (Gen. 32:24–32), Beth-El (28:10–22; 35:1–15), where the Ark of the Lord rested (Judg. 20:26–28), and Beer-Sheba (Gen. 21:33; 46:1–4; Amos 5:5; 8:14) go back to patriarchal times. Jacob built an altar at Shechem (Gen. 33:18–20) and the tribes gathered there “before the Lord” and made a covenant with Him in Joshua’s time (Josh. 24). Shiloh enjoyed special importance as a central cultic site for the tribes. There they gathered under Joshua to divide up the land by lot, and it was there that they placed the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Covenant (Josh. 18:1–8). Eli’s family, which traced its descent from Aaron, the high priest, served at Shiloh (I Sam. 2:27), and it was to Shiloh that the Israelites turned for festivals and sacrifices (Judg. 21:19; I Sam. 1:3; cf. Jer. 7:14; 26:9). The multiplicity of cultic places raises the question of whether all 12 tribes were, indeed, centered about one amphictyonic site. It may be that as a tribe’s connections with the amphictyony were weakened for various reasons, the tribe began to worship at one or another of the sites. Possibly, different sites served the several subgroups among the tribes. Beer-Sheba and Hebron, for example, served the southern groups of tribes (Gen. 13:18; Josh. 21:10–11; II Sam. 2:1–4; 5:1–3; 15:7–10); Shechem, Shiloh, and Gilgal (Josh. 5:9–10; I Sam. 11:14–15; 13:4–15; Amos 5:5) were revered by the tribes in the center of the country; and the shrine at Dan served the northern tribes (Judg. 18:30–31). The likelihood of a multiplicity of shrines is strengthened by the fact that clusters of Canaanite settlements separated the southern and central tribes (of the mountains of Ephraim), and divided the central tribes from those in Galilee. It is possible that various shrines served different tribes simultaneously, while the sanctuary which held the Ark of the Lord was revered as central to all 12.

The changes which occurred in the structure of the 12 tribes and in their relative strengths, find expression in the biblical genealogies. The tribes are descended from four matriarchs, eight of them from the wives Leah and Rachel, and four from the handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen. 29–30). It is a widely held view that attribution to the two wives is indicative of an early stage of tribal organization, the “tribes of Leah” and the “tribes of Rachel.” The attribution of four tribes to handmaids may indicate either a lowered status or late entry into the confederation. In the list of the 12 tribes, Reuben is prominent as the firstborn (Gen. 46:8), followed by Simeon, Levi, and Judah, the sons of Leah, who

occupy primary positions. Reuben stood at the head of a tribal league and had a position of central importance among his confederates prior to the conquest of the land (Gen. 30:14; 35:22; 37:21; 42:22, 37; Num. 16:1ff.). On the other hand, the same tribe is inactive during the period of the Judges. It did not provide any of the judges, and during Deborah's war against Sisera, Reuben "sat among the sheepfolds" and did not render any aid (Judg. 5:16). Possibly, because this tribe dwelt on the fringes of the land (I Chron. 5:9–10), its links with the others were weakened, and its continued existence as one of the tribes of Israel was in jeopardy (cf. Deut. 33:6). Simeon was absorbed by Judah. Levi spread throughout Israel as a result of its sacral duties. Judah was cut off from the rest of the tribes by a Canaanite land strip that separated the mountains of Judah and Ephraim. Reuben's place as head of the 12 tribes was taken by the house of Joseph which played a decisive and historic role during the periods of the settlement and the Judges. Joshua came from the tribe of Ephraim (Num. 13:8). Shechem and Shiloh were within the borders of the house of Joseph (cf. Ps. 78:59, 67–68). Samuel came from the hill country of Ephraim (I Sam. 1:1). Ephraim led the tribes in the war against Benjamin over the incident of the concubine in Gibeah (Judg. 19–21). At the beginning of the Monarchy, the leadership passed to Judah (cf. Gen. 49:8ff.). The passage in I Chronicles 5:1–2 illustrates well how the dominant position among the tribes passed from Reuben to Ephraim and from Ephraim to Judah.

Each of the 12 tribes enjoyed a good deal of autonomy, ordering its own affairs after the patriarchal-tribal pattern. No doubt there were administrative institutions common to all the tribes, situated beside the central shrines, though information about them is exceedingly scanty. During the desert wanderings, leadership of the people was vested in the princes of each of the tribes and the elders who assisted Moses. They met and legislated for the entire people (Ex. 19:7; 24:1, 9; Num. 1–2; 11:16–24; 32:2; 34:16–29; Deut. 27:1; 31:28). There are references to meetings of tribal leaders and elders during the periods of the settlement and the Judges. "The princes of the congregation, the heads of the thousands of Israel" along with Phinehas the priest, conducted negotiations with the Transjordanian tribes, in the name of the entire nation (Josh. 22:30). Joshua summoned "the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel" to make a covenant in Shechem (Josh. 24). The elders of Israel, speaking for the entire nation, requested Samuel to appoint a king (I Sam. 8:4). The incidents of the concubine in Gibeah (Judg. 19–21) and Saul's battle with Nahash the Ammonite (I Sam. 11) are classic examples of joint action taken by the league of 12 tribes acting "as one man, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, with the land of Gilead" (Judg. 20:1; I Sam. 11:7). In the one case, unified action was taken by the tribes against one of their members, Benjamin, for a breach of the terms of the covenant (Judg. 20:7). The war against Nahash the Ammonite proves that the tribes were required to come to the aid of any one of the league that found itself in difficulty. Because of the sacral nature of the league, the wars of the tribes were considered "wars of the Lord" (Ex. 17:16; Num. 21:14). Nevertheless, the narratives in the Book of Judges regarding the battles which Israel waged against its enemies make it clear that the league must have been rather weak in those days. The consciousness of national and religious unity had not yet led to a solid politico-military confederation. The Song of Deborah gives clear expression to the lack of solidarity among the tribes, for some of them did not come to the aid of the Galilean tribes. It is impossible to designate even one war against external enemies during the period of the Judges in which all the tribes acted in concert. Indeed, there are indications of intertribal quarrels and disputes (Judg. 7–8; 12). In this connection, there are scholars who hold that the judge-deliverers were not pantribal national leaders, but headed only individual tribes, or groups of them (see \*Judges). It was only toward the end of the period of the Judges when the Philistine pressure on the Israelite tribes increased in the west and that of the Transjordanian peoples in the east, that the religionational tribal confederation assumed political and military dimensions. The Israelite tribes then consolidated as a crystallized national-territorial entity within the framework of a monarchical regime. David, Solomon, and afterward the kings of Israel and Judah tended to weaken tribal consciousness in favor of the territorial and monarchical organization. It is apparent, however, from Ezekiel's

eschatological vision (Ezek. 47–48) that the awareness of Israel as a people composed of 12 tribes had not, even then, become effaced.

See also \*Ten Lost Tribes.

[Bustanay Oded]

### **In the Aggadah**

In aggadic literature the word *shevatim* (“tribes,” sing., *shevet*) applies to both the 12 sons of Jacob and to the 12 tribes descended from them. When Jacob left home and had his dream, he took 12 stones as a headrest and declared: “God has decreed that there are to be 12 tribes; yet they did not issue from Abraham or Isaac; if these 12 stones will join into one I will know that I am destined to beget them” (Gen. R. 68:11), and in fact the 12 stones coalesced into one (Gen. 28:11 being contrasted with v. 18). Whereas Abraham and Isaac both begat wicked sons, Ishmael and Esau, all of Jacob’s 12 sons were loyal to God (Shab. 146a; cf. Ex. R. 1:1). They were all named in reference to Israel’s redemption (Tanḥ. Shemot 5), and God declared, “Their names are more precious to me than the anointing oil with which priests and kings were anointed” (Eccles. R. 7:1, 2).

All the tribal ancestors were born outside the Land of Israel, save Benjamin, and all, with the exception of Benjamin, participated in the sale of Joseph. Therefore the tribe of Benjamin was privileged to have the \**Shekhinah*, i.e., the Temple, in its portion (Sif. Deut. 3:5, 352). None of the tribes maintained its family purity in Egypt, and all except for Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, engaged in idolatry there (Num. R. 13:8). Just as the heavens cannot endure without the 12 constellations (Ex. R. 15:6), so the world cannot endure without the 12 tribes, for the world was created only by their merit (PR 3:10). The names of the tribes are not always enumerated in the same order, so that it should not be said that those descended from the mistresses (Rachel and Leah) took priority over the descendants of their handmaids (Bilhah and Zilpah; Ex. R. 1:6).

The tribe of Zebulun engaged in trade and supported the tribe of Issachar, to enable it to devote itself to the study of the Torah; therefore in his blessings, Moses gave priority to the tribe of Zebulun (Yal. Gen. 129). All the tribes produced judges and kings, except Simeon, on account of the sin perpetrated by Zimri (Mid. Tadshe 8; see Num. 25:1–2, 14). Every tribe produced prophets; Judah and Benjamin produced kings by prophetic direction (Suk. 27b).

Whereas the tribes of Benjamin and Judah were exiled to Babylon, the Ten Tribes were exiled beyond the river \*Sambatyon (Gen. R. 73:6). The Ten Tribes shall neither be resurrected nor judged; R. \*Simeon b. Yoḥai said, “They shall never return from exile,” but R. Akiva maintained that they would return (ARN 36:4). But see \*Ten Lost Tribes. The Davidic Messiah will be descended from two tribes, his father from Judah and his mother from Dan (Yal. Gen. 160).

[Harry Freedman]

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## From the House of David Library

# The 12 Tribes of Israel

**Gen. 49:1** - Jacob called his sons, and said gather together, so he can tell what will happen to them in the last days. (Before we go into the breakdown of who the Tribes are, let's go back to Solomon when he disobeyed the Most High).

**1 Kings 11:9-13** - So the Most High stirred up adversaries against Solomon. Jeroboam rose up against Solomon. **1 Kings 11:26-36** - From this time the Kingdom was split into two kingdoms, Judah (Southern Kingdom), Israel (Northern Kingdom). **1 King 12:19** - The Most High raised up the Assyrians against Israel (Northern Kingdom). **2 Kings 17:3-8** - Israel (Northern Kingdom) went into captivity under the Assyrians. Then they were dispersed to go over the rivers. **2 Kings 17:18-24** - These are the Ten Tribes which were carried away prisoners out of their land in the time of Hosea. The Apocrypha an extension of the bible. **2 Esdras 13:40-47** - The Ten Tribes entered into the Euphrates, came through the river. And through that country was a great way to go of a year and a half. Note.. The Tribes didn't come through the bearing strait, like so called European historians state in history. These Ten Tribes came to North, South, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands.

Historical books on the Tribes just to name a few. *Lost Tribes and Promised Land* (Author Ronald Sandler pg 361-367). *History of the American Indians* (Author James Adair) *The Lost Tribes A Myth* (Author Professor Allen Godbey), *Babylon Too Timbuktu* (Author Rudolph Windsor), *Nature Knows No Color Line* (Author William Katz), *Omni Magazines "Digs" Section 1995* (Author Jeffery Hecks), *America B.C.* (Author Barry Fell).

(1) ***Reuben - Seminole Indians*** - **Gen 49:3-4** - First born son of Jacob. Jacob his might and the beginning of his strength meaning all inheritance and glory go to the first born. The excellency of dignity represents the great pride and customs and traditions that the Seminole Indians kept, when the European American unjustly killed and stole their lands and deprived them of their existence as indigenous people. Excellency of power represents great militancy, and being a formidable enemy to the European American in the wars they fought against them.

**I Chronicles 5:18-26** - Unstable as water represent their constant wandering, moving, as Nomads. Because of the European American savage and vicious, dispossession of their lands. Reuben did not excel, for one he defiled his father's concubine by sexual immorality - **I Chronicles 5:1**

**Deut 33:6** - Moses blessing Reuben to let Reuben live, and not die, and don't let his men be few. Due to the extermination that was instituted upon them by the European American Government. Reuben resides in Florida today and parts of Oklahoma and southern states.

(2) ***Simeon & (3) Levi*** - **Gen 49:5-7** - Simeon and Levi are brethren, the people occupying the Island of Santo Domingo & Haiti known as Hispaniola. They share one island divided into two, which

makes them close by neighbors or brothers. Instruments of cruelty that's in their habitations represents the machete that they use for warfare. But mainly it represents the Voodoo that used against their people or enemies.

(6<sup>th</sup> verse) - Jacob didn't want his righteous spirit to be involved in their secret endeavors that they have assembled, because of what they did to the inhabitants that dwell in Canaan (Gen 34:24-31), when they defiled their sister. Be not united; that's why Santo Domingo & Haiti is divided by language barriers, and skin color and racial differences.

(7<sup>th</sup> verse) Jacob is letting us know cursed be their anger for what they did to their enemies, who defiled their sister, for it was cruel and they were divided and scattered amongst Israel, when the nation was spilt Southern Kingdom & Northern Kingdom. Deut 33:8-11 - The Thummin and Urim represented a certain elemental stone that was worn on the breast plate of the High Priest when he went into the Holy of Holies, to commune with the Most High, and there the Most High will show him judgment of the Children of Israel. The elemental stone will illuminate, and give off accurate information from the Most High to the High Priest.

(9<sup>th</sup> verse) Meaning when it came to the judgments and laws of the Most High it was no respect of persons (Exodus 32:26-28) they executed the righteous order and penalties, and were well disciplined.

(10<sup>th</sup> verse) The office of the Levites was to teach Jacob the Most High judgments, and Israel the Law. Administer the priesthood by Putting Incense before the Most High and burnt sacrifice upon the Altar for a covenant of Salt (forever). (11<sup>th</sup> verse) Moses asking the Most High to bless Levi and all his substance (which including all the first fruit of their tithes). And to accept the work that they do for the Most High. And destroy all the enemies that rise up against Levi. So how does this correlate with the Haitians. The Haitians practice spiritual rituals on the negative side of life that requires sacrifices of animals, incense burning. Due to the fact that we broke the Most High Laws, we were punished and cursed. So we see Haiti as the bases and most contemptible of the people. Malachi 2:2-3 & 8-9.

(4) Judah - So-called Afro Americans or Black American - Gen 49:8-12 - The other tribes, Judah Brothers shall praise him for all his accomplishments in sports, academia, politics, economics, entertainment, law enforcement and military. Judah's hand shall be in the neck of their enemies (European America Government) meaning America is the top ruling nation in the world (North America) America is the head. The neck of his enemies of all the tribes Judah is the most prominent position to overtake their enemies. The other tribes shall bow down before Judah. To give respect and credence.

(9<sup>th</sup> verse) A lion's whelp represents a young courageous lion. The prey represents the bible. They have gone away from the truth of the bible. Thou art gone up. Means they have gone into the ways of the Europeans American and learned and accustomed themselves to his way of life, custom and traditions, and also to the ways of African traditions he stooped down, he couched as a lion. He is preparing to prance upon his enemy. But eventually all of his endeavors were stopped by the U.S. Government under the F.B.I., CIA and Illuminati by using infiltration tactics, drugs, and coin telpro operations. As an old lion who shall rouse him up? A more fight, spunk and courage. After the late 70's Judah fell asleep again, and became very complacent with their enemy. The prophecies of the bible shall rouse him up.

(10<sup>th</sup> verse) The Royal staff shall not depart from Judah. The sceptre represents royalty that will not

depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet. Administering justice, order, and rulership until Shiloh come. So up until Christ came on the scene Judah still had maintained the rulership. Until it was taken by the Romans. Unto him, is "Christ", shall the gathering of the people be.

**(11<sup>th</sup> verse)** Binding his foal unto the vine bringing Israel back to the Most High, back to the covenant that the Most High made with Israel. Washing his garments in wine, shows the characteristics of Judah drinking large amounts of wine, and getting his clothes immerse in wine.

**(12<sup>th</sup> verse)** His eyes shall be red with wine, the pupils of his eyes are red, being consume with wine. To perceive and receive wisdom, knowledge and understanding. White teeth characteristic of Judah.

**(Duet 33:7)** - Moses blessing Judah, the most hears the prayers and requests of Judah and gathers him unto his people. Let his works be sufficient for him for survival. And finally in the final analysis the Most High is going to protect and deliver us from our enemies (all nations including the European American).

**I Chronicles 28:4** - The Most High chose Judah to be ruler of Israel. **I Chronicles 5:2** - Of Judah came the Chief Ruler which is seen amongst the so-called Afro-Americans. **Zechariah 12:7** - The Most High shall save the tents of Judah first, that the other tribes magnify not themselves against Judah.

**5. Zebulun - Panama to Guatamala** - Indians Tribes Cunas, Chocoos and San Blas. Zebulun dwells on the sea coast surrounding good shipping accessibility, for importing & abundance of Aqua marine life, warm climate (tropical) exporting. He shall be a haven of ships. **Gen 49:13** - Represents the Panama Canal Zone completed in 1914 under Teddy Roosevelt authorization. And his border shall be unto Zidon. Back in our homeland Israel. Zebulun border extended to Zidon, a city in Israel on the sea coast.

**Deut 33:18-19** - Zebulun rejoices in their going out from trading and commerce, and Issachar in their tents. Zebulun extends his dealing and trading with his next door neighbor the Aztecs. The Land of Mexico. Zebulun represents the Mayan Indians of Central America, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Belize, Nicaragua, and Coasta Rica. Issachar in their tents represents the close relationship that they shared together as border line neighbors. The shortest route form Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean is through The Panama Canal Zone. A strategically link to both continents, but especially for the U.S.A. for military defensive purposes.

**19<sup>th</sup> verse** - Zebulon the Mayan Indians called the Aztecs and other Indian Tribes unto the mountain where they kept ceremonial customs, like the ceremonial laws that are found in the Laws of Moses. But after a period of time they started to offer unrighteous sacrifices that became wicked and evil. The abundance that they sucked from the seas represents the vast fish life, the rich coastline of riches, mineral deposit gold & diamonds, pleasant topical seas, and archaeological remains.

**6. Issachar - Mexicans or Central America Aztec Indians** - **Gen 49:14-15** - The Mexicans are strong hard working individuals that work for low wages on certain jobs in the U.S.A. for example sweat shops, farms, factories. Also N.A.F.T.A. being established in Mexicans use for carrying their heavy burdens. Two burdens on top the donkey's back, one on each side. The rest that he saw was good, represents the Siesta's they have in Mexico known as a midday nap, all work is stopped at 12 o'clock. The pleasant land represents the beautiful land of Mexico, the beaches, warm tropical climate

and tourist resorts for vacationing. He bowed his shoulder to bear, when the European invaders conquered them. And made them slaves to work in silver mines, and other forms of servitude. He became a servant unto tribute. Being taxed heavily by their oppressors.

**Deut 33:19** - The Aztecs & Mayan's shared a close-knit affiliation in trading, communication, and religious worshipping. **I Chron 12:32** - They were able to read and observe the heavenly body with great accuracy (astronomy).

7. **Gad - North American Indians - Gen 49:19** - The troop that shall overcome him, is the U.S. Calvary during the Indians Wars. But the Indians shall overcome at the last, when the Most High raises up the N.A. Indians, in the European American downfall. **Deut 33:20-21** - The blessing of the enlargement of Gad is the vast land given to them when the Ten Tribes arrived to America on ships from the Atlantic Ocean. Wood lands of the East with rivers and lakes, prairie lands in the Midwest. Sienna valley deserts and the Pacific West coast. Gad dwells as a lion is relevant to the facial war paint markings, the Indians wore. As lions the hunted the herds of buffalo with swiftness of the roe deer. The crown upon is head symbolizes the feathered headdress worn by Chiefs. Their noble looks resemble the manned majesty of a lion. The tearing of the arm pertains to the Indians blood brother alliance.

**I Chron 5:18** - They were skillful warriors. **Deut 33:21** - He provided the first part of himself, he also took of the land that was given to him here in America. Because amongst Gad there were leaders that executed the Law. And also being scouts they came with the heads of the people, with the rest of the 10 Tribes, migrating to America. Gad executed the justice of the Most High (Laws) and his judgments with Israel. Of all the Tribes Gad kept more of the Laws, customs & traditions of Israel for instance the wearing of fringes,

**Num. 15:37-40**, Chiefs over their Tribes **I King 8:1**, following the months by moon **I Sam 20:5**, smoke signals **Judges 20:38**, - Made tents from animal skins **Exd 36:19-20** - They produced curios wood works, jewelry, stones fabrics, skins (animal) **Exd 35:25-27** - Hunting the buffalo (pygarg) **Deut 14:5**, The Indians had prophets they called medicine man or shamans **I Sam 9:9-10**

8. **Asher - From Colombia South America to Uruguay - Gen 49:20** - Asher's bread shall be fat, is relevant to the vast agricultural fertile land that produces large quantities of food. The great (coffee, sugar, grains) forestry, jungles for medicinal properties. The royal dainties he shall yield, represents the exquisite chocolates, nuts, fruits and pastries grown in South America..

**Deut 33:24-25** - Asher is blessed with children in abundance, Brazil for instance, a large population of children. Let him be acceptable to the rest of his brothers scattered throughout South America.. Dipping is foot in oil is the large amount of oil produced in Venezuela. His shoes shall be iron and brass signifies the mineral deposits as iron, brass, steel, copper and many more natural resources that makes a country, self sufficient what's under your shoes the ground or earth so it's letting you know that underground is a lot of mineral resources under your shoes. As thy days, in accordance to the self sufficiency of that country, as long as they maintain their days so will their strength be.

9. **Naphtali - Argentina & Chile - Gen 49:21** - A hind is a female deer. A hind let loose is a very happy and agile creature leaping and skipping all over the place. Goodly words that he giveth are the peaceful and joyous attitude, they have when you are confronted by them. The Araucanian Indians are



the Indians of Argentina & Chile.

**Deut 33:23** - Satisfied with favor is the good land rich in cattle, coffee, wine. That's the blessing of the Lord. Possess the west and the south. Argentina & Chile is the most western country in South America, and Argentina is the most southern country in South America the furthest south of all countries. Buenos Aires capital of Argentina also represents the good air of the country, also of the Indians pleasantness.

10. **Ephraim & (11) Manasseh - Puerto Ricans & Cubans - Gen 49:22-26** Joseph fathers of Ephraim & Manasseh the name and title of Joseph fell on Ephraim. (**Num 1:32 & Ezek 37:16-19**). A fruitful bough is in relevance to a tree that has branches so abundantly, just like Puerto Ricans have numerous children. Even a fruitful bough by a well, it's planted next to a well which makes it more fruitful and fertile. Their branches ran over the wall, when the Spaniards or Conquistadors or Europeans raped and robbed them. The Puerto Ricans branches went over to the enemies. The name Ephraim means fruitful. The Archers that sorely grieved him are the Spaniards, that shot at him, and hated them the Spaniards or Conquistadors were cruel vicious, and hated the true Indigenous people of Puerto Rico. Names that they gave themselves were Boriquen or Boriqua, and Taino. The name Boriquen (means land of the noble Lord) his bow that abode in strength resembles the Most High preserving a remnant of them, from being totally destroyed from the Spaniards. Joseph himself because a shepherd (a leader) the stone of Israel when we were in Egypt. He became a ruler in the land of Egypt under pharaoh. This Joseph is the father of Ephraim. The Most High helped and blessed Joseph while he was in Egypt. The blessings of heaven above, represents the beautiful skies, warm tropical climate, and rain in its due season.

Blessings of the deep, that lieth under is beautiful seas, beaches and rivers. The vast abundance of food (fish) from the sea and its famous Blue Marlin Tournaments held annually. Blessings of the breast and of the womb, symbolizes the fertility of their women to reproduce rapidly. Breast (for breast feeding and nourishing the child). Womb (bringing forth children). We see today that Puerto Ricans are becoming one of the largest so called Hispanics or Latino group's. In New York City, there almost 2 million. The blessings of Joseph have prevailed above the blessings of his progenitors, means the blessings that were given to any of the patriarchs. He became the first leader to ever rule in a kingdom, which he became second in charge over all Egypt, and the best land of Egypt. This blessing was also passed down to Ephraim & Manasseh, when they were given possession of their lands in Israel, and when they came to the islands, Joseph was separated from his brethren, when he was sold into Egypt. This was when the crown was placed on his head.

**Deut 33:13-17** - Blessed of the Lord be his land a fertile and fruitful land, fruits and vegetables precious things of heaven for the dew, is the sun, moon, stars. Moon and stars for their visibility, and the effect it has in causing the dew to sit on the land that produces great vegetations. The deep that coucheth beneath, beautiful beaches, and seas. The precious fruits, Goya products, Mangos, Papaya's pineapples and much more fruits brought forth from the sun, warm tropical climate 82 degrees. The precious things put forth by the moon. The great tides, fishing season, planting season, and the famous coqui a frog that only comes out at night and only lives in Puerto Rico. The chief things on the ancient mountains and for the precious things of the lasting hills represents the coffee that grows in the hills, the gold that was hid in the mountains, and EL Yunque the misty heights of the mountains were Yukiyu resides. The precious things of the earth are the hidden riches seen and unseen. The goodwill of him that dwelt in the bush signify when the angel meet Moses in the burning bush. So we see that these blessings were extended down to Ephraim from Joseph. His glory is like the firstling of his

bullock represents the best quality of his attributes. The horns represents his strength, power and courage, with which he shall lead the people and courage, with which he shall lead the people (The Other Tribes) together to the ends of the earth, bringing the other tribes to America. The ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh showed that the Puerto Ricans & Cubans shared a unique history together, the Ciboney & Taino and Arawak Indians. In the blessings that came upon Ephraim Chief Cubanacan of the Cuban Indians. Manasseh (Cuba) was also blessed with a beautiful land, beaches, warm climate, fruits and natural resources. (Lost Tribes Promised Land p.361-367) proves Ephraim & Manasseh.

Note: In **Deut 33:22** - GAD - He proved the first part for himself; he also took of the land that was given to him here in America. Because amongst Gad there were leaders that executed the Law. And also being scouts they came with the heads of the people, with the rest of the 10 Tribes, migrating to America. Gad executed the justice of the Most High (Laws) and his judgments with Israel. Of all the tribes Gad kept more of the laws, customs & traditions of Israel for instance the wearing of fringes (Num 15:37-40) chiefs over their tribes (1Kings 8:1) following the months by moons (1Sam 20:5), smoke signals (Judges 20:38) made tents from animal skins (Exd 36:19-20). They produced curios wood works, jewelry, stones fabrics, skins (animal) (Exd 35:25-27) hunting the buffalo (Pygarg) read (Deut 14:5); the Indians had prophets they called Medicine Men or Shamans (1Sam 9:9-10).

**Ephraim - Hosea 4:17** - Loves and joined to idols (example Botanicas - stores that sells so-called religious items, such as statues of saints and the European idol of the Virgin Mary, and the false idol of the image of Christ (Caesar Borgia). Crosses on their chains, and jewelry. Idols and images they pray to.

**Hosea 7:8-9-11** - The Puerto Ricans mixed themselves amongst the different European groups (Spaniards, Italians). So his color is like a cake not turns yellowish in color, as oppose to dark brown when a cake is fully baked. The strangers that devoured his strength, and he knows it not represents the so-called European Caucasian (Spaniards), (Americans), when he is told about his history concerning what the Europeans did to him, he acts as if he doesn't know. They gray hairs represent the elders and learned of their people, but they refuse to accept what the European has done to them, and gave the Spanish language, flag and name (Puerto Ricans) which means rich port. The pride of our people testifies to their face of their lies and false hood life styles we are living by and they do not return to the most high nor seek him for all of those things that has come upon us. So called Puerto Ricans are like a silly dove without heart (mind, understanding, knowledge and wisdom). Meaning they act so stupidly when it comes to true knowledge of the Most High, and their true heritage, custom language, religion and history. A silly dove is a bird that just flies all over the place without any lodging or one that loses her young ones and goes crazy. They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria. It means they go to all the wrong places, mainly to the enemy to solve their problems. From one European enemy to another without thinking he is the natural enemy. Egypt and Assyria are not European nations, but are dark skinned (Black) nations that held us captives (slaves) in one point of history one after the other.

**Hosea 9:13** – Ephraim was planted in a pleasant place (Samaria a land in Israel). But he shall bring them to the murderer (Spaniards, and Euro American).

**Hosea v13-v16** – So called Puerto Ricans homeland (Samaria) became desolate for rebelling against the Most High. So called Puerto Ricans fell by the sword. Their infants were dashed in pieces, and women with child were ripped up or opened by cruel, evil Spaniards (conquistadores) when they arrived on the Island of so called Puerto Rico. Historical books that prove what biblical prophecy states

are as follows: (1) Slavery a World History by Milton Meltzer p 8, 9, Chapter 1 “People from Heaven”. (2) Destruction of the Indies by Las Casas (3) The Conquest of America by Tzvetan Todorov p. 138, 139. (4) America from Columbus to Castro by Eric Williams.

**12. Benjamin** – Black people brought to the West Indies known today as West Indians. **Gen 49:27** – Benjamin shall be vicious as a wolf, he shall devour the prey in the morning. The prey represents the European that oppresses Benjamin, from the time of slavery up until now. Raven as a wolf also represents the characteristics of Benjamin’s songs that he sings, concerning revolution his reggae music base on prophecies of the bible; Steel Pulse, Peter Tosh, Bunny Walker, and Bob Marley. Benjamin is a warrior tribe and at night he shall divide the spoil means when he devours the enemy in the morning, at night he shall divide with his brethren. The morning also represents the day the Most High raises us up in his sight, for rulership of the earth.

**Duet 33:12** – Benjamin the beloved of the Most High (The Youngest Tribe and Son of Jacob) shall dwell in safety by the Most High. How does the Most High cover him all the day long, by the skies, seas, warm climate in the Caribbean, beautiful land and beaches. And he shall dwell between his shoulders symbolizes the chain of Islands in the West Indies between North America & South America. North America the head, the West Indies the shoulder part of the body Central America, the middle section of the body, South America, the tail or lower part of the body (Torso or Foot).

The 12 Tribes are categorizing into four groups.

1. Judah, Gad, Reuben (North America)
2. Simeon, Levi, Dan Joseph, Benjamin (West Indies)
3. Zebulun and Issachar (Central America)
4. Naphtali and Asher (South America)

Historical books proving Benjamin are the so called West Indians. (Babylon Too Timbuctoo by Rudolph Windsor p. 84-86) (Nature Knows No Color-Line by J.A. Roger p 49, 63, 65, 123 & 130)

Judah, Benjamin and Levi were brought on slaves’ ship, from West Africa during the 1600’s.

**Duet 28:68** – We were brought into slavery Egypt (modern Egypt) and there we were sold as slaves. And no man shall buy us (Old Quaker English word meaning “Save”) no man shall save us out of our conditions that we face in America and throughout the Islands.

**Duet 28:48** – Serving our enemies in the want of all things. Iron collars upon our necks in slavery.

**Duet 28:30** – Slave masters raped and took our women, we builded, planted and didn’t receive our due reparation.

**Duet 28:32** – Our sons and daughters were taken away and given to different slave masters. Our eyes look, but nothing could be done; we waited for the return of our children.

**Duet 28:37** – We became an astonishment, stereotyped and depreciated examples knoons, niggers, sambo, spook; jigger boo, Afro American, Negro, colored and many more names and degrading characterization.

**Duet 28:64** – The Diaspora of us in all countries and people of the earth, where we are serving other strange and satanic religions.

**Duet 28:66-67** – Our life hanging in doubt no assurance of our life because of fear. Example: Civil Rights being violated by the European America, Law Enforcement, black on black crime, and all sorts of violence being perpetrated upon us and also during the hard bondage of slavery. In the morning we would say to the Most High it were even for the hard bondage of slavery, so when night came in we would rest. And at night it was morning, because of all the terror, burning, lynching, and all the crimes that were committed at night time in dark desolated areas.

**Duet 33:28-29** – Restoration, deliverance and rulership of the 12 Tribes of Israel which is inevitable according to the biblical prophecies of the Most High Yahawah.

**Ezekiel 39:22-29** – The Most High bringing us out of captivity in Babylon the Great (America) and all the places where we have been scattered. Then shall all nations know why the true Israelites went into slavery for our iniquity. That's the reason why the European American was able to enslave and rule over us.

As we look around Israel America and different parts of the earth. We see a conspiratorial, demonic and diabolical plot by groups of impostors and impostures that are cleaving to our heritage and glory. But the Most High Yahawah has made it cleared to us who they really are Ezek 7:21-25, Ezek 25:12-14, Ezek 35:1-15, Ezek 36:5-7, Isa 34:1-16, Rev 2:9. Rev 3:9-10.

Shalawam: Qam Ya-Shar-Ahla: All praises Dominion, Majesty, Glorification, to the only Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Most High Yahawah, who has blessed us with his knowledge, wisdom and understanding, to continuously shine upon us in these perilous times, against the principalities, against power the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places. **Ecclesiastics 36:1-12** A Prayer for Israel Amen.

This work is dedicated to Two Major Pioneers and Great Elders that led this nation to the point where we are now this present day.

Elder, Scribe, Priest Ya-I-Qab  
Elder, Brother, Father, Bishop Ma-Shah

We will meet again in the Kingdom of The Most High Yahawah. "Shalawam" And to all brothers and sisters throughout Babylon the Great, The Island and the four corners of earth. ***Isa 11:11-14.***