

SHIFTING WITHIN TRIBES OF ISRAEL

In our lesson text, there is a Shifting within the original twelve Tribes of Israel.

The original sons of Jacob are listed in **Gen.35:22-27**.

- Leah (6 sons) Rueben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issacha, and Zebulun.
- Zilpah (2 sons) Gad and Asher

- Rachel (2 sons) **Joseph** and Benjamin
- Bilhah (2 sons) Dan and Naphtali

We will study five Shifting within twelve tribes of Israel.

1. The first shift within the tribes of Israel is in our lesson text. Jacob will replace Joseph with his two sons: Manasseh and Ephraim.

Jacob **adopted** Joseph's two sons into the tribal descendants under the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen.45:3-4).

(Gen.45:5) "Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, **are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are.**"

The Change: Rachel (3 sons) – Ephraim and Manasseh (in place of Joseph) and Benjamin

NOTE: This will give Jacob 13 tribes rather than 12. These 13 tribes will exist until after the Exodus and Conquest (Ex.12:40-41).

2. The Second shift came with the two censuses taken during the wilderness wandering (Book of Numbers).

- **First census** was of the Exodus generation **without Joseph and Levi** (Num.1:1,5-16).
 - Levi is given priesthood status, but without land distribution (Num.1:47-54; Josh.13:14)
 - 48 cities through-out the tribe (Joshua 21).
- **Second census** was of the second Exodus generation (wilderness generation) (Num.26:1-51)
 - Same as the first census.

Distribution of the Promised Land was based on these two censuses (Josh.15-22).

(Josh.14:2) "By the lot of their inheritance, as the Lord commanded through Moses, for the nine tribes and the half tribe."

(Josh.14:3) "For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half tribe beyond the Jordan; but he did not give an inheritance to the Levites among them." (Josh.22:1)

- Reuben, Gad, and half-tribe of Manasseh (Josh.22:13)

3. The Third shift came with the period of monarch theocracy under David and Solomon (1 and 2 Chronicles).

(1Chron.2:1-2) lists the 12 sons of Jacob by the original list of Gen.35:22-27.

NOTE: “Chronicles was written for the exiles who had returned to Israel after the Babylonian Captivity, to remind them that they were still God’s chosen people.” (NASB)

The returning exiles would be from the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Benjamin, and half-tribe of Manasseh (586BC to 516BC) [70 years of 5th cycle of divine discipline] (Lev.26 and Deut.28).

(1 Chron.2-8) gives a new listing of the 12 tribes (Judah, Simeon, Reuben, **Levi**, Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Asher).

Two tribes are missing: **Dan and Zebulun**, but Levi is added. We are not told why Dan and Zebulun are missing.

NOTE: Most theologians believe the reason for Dan being removed was based on their national idolatry of Judges 17-18.

(Judges 18:31) “So they set up for themselves Micah’s graven image which he had made, all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh.”

Idolatry found a home within the tribes of Dan and Ephraim (1 Kings 12:28-30; Hosea 14:8).

4. The Fourth shift will come with the Tribulation and the 144,000 (Rev.7:4-8).

The 144,000 consists of 12,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel. The 12 tribes are listed in (Rev.7:4-8). **Dan is missing and Manasseh replaced him. It is interesting that Joseph is included, but not Ephraim.**

We are told three times that these 12 tribes were sealed (sphragizo) [security and ownership] (Rev.7:3, 4, 8).

(Jer.51:5) “For **neither Israel nor Judah** has been forsaken by his God, the Lord of Hosts, although their land is full of guilt before the Holy One of Israel.”

5. The Fifth shift comes with the New Jerusalem of the New Heaven and Earth and (Rev.21:10-14).

(Rev.21:12) “It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the **names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel**”

(Rev.21:14) “And the wall of the city and twelve stones, and on them were the **twelve names of the twelve apostles of the lamb.**”

Many theologians believed they are the twelve sons of Israel sealed in (Rev.7:4-8). Others believe they are listed in (Ezekiel 48:30-35) Which is the same list as in (Gen.35:22-27).