

A black and white image of a celestial scene. In the upper center, a large, cratered moon is visible against a dark, starry sky. Below the moon, a planet with a visible horizon and atmospheric clouds is shown. The overall scene is dramatic and atmospheric, with light rays emanating from the right side. The text "THE BOOK OF GENESIS" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The words "THE BOOK OF" are smaller and positioned above the much larger word "GENESIS".

THE BOOK OF
GENESIS

THE TWELVE TRIBES

GENESIS 29:31-35, 30:1-24

The Jews looked upon parenthood as a stewardship before God; and this was especially true in the case of Jacob, whose descendants would multiply to fulfill the promise made to Abraham. **Gen. 22:17**

- God would honor Jacob by making him the father of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- But four different women involved in building his family would create for Jacob one problem after another.
- Let your family's problem history end with you!



LEAH'S CHILDREN GEN. 29:31-35, 30:17-21

Half of the twelve tribes of Israel came from the deceptive marriage of the plans of the flesh.

1. Leah named her firstborn **REUBEN**, which means *“see, a son!”*
2. **SIMEON** means *“one who hears,”* and suggests that Leah had been talking to God about her misery.

They were both replaced because **REUBEN** was guilty of sexual sin (**Gen. 35:22**) and **SIMEON** had participated in the massacre of the Shechemites (**Gen. 34:24-31**). **Net zero!**

3. **LEVI** was her third son and his name means “*attached,*” for Leah was still hoping that Jacob would love her for the sons she had borne him.
4. Her fourth son seemed to bring a new joy to her life for she called him **JUDAH**, which comes from the Hebrew word meaning “*praise.*”
5. After a period of barrenness, Leah was enabled by God to bear two more sons: **ISSACHAR**, which means “*reward, wages,*” and
6. **ZEBULUN**, the tenth son of Jacob numerically, but the sixth and final son by his wife Leah. **Gen. 30:19-20**

BILHAH'S CHILDREN GEN. 30:1-8

- 7.** The Lord answered Rachel's prayers (**v. 6**), for Bilhah conceived and gave birth to a son whom Rachel claimed as her own and named **DAN**, which comes from a Hebrew word meaning "*vindication, judgment.*" The most prominent Danite mentioned in the Bible is Samson.
- 8.** Rachel called Bilhah's second son **NAPHTALI**, "*my struggle,*" because of the wrestling she had experienced over the blessings enjoyed by her more fruitful sister.

ZILPAH'S CHILDREN GEN. 30:9-13

- 9.** **GAD**, meaning "*luck has come*," was the seventh son of Jacob and the first of two sons by Zilpah, the maid of Leah. **v. 9-11**
- 10.** The second one was **ASHER**, "*blessed, happy*." Asher was the eighth son of Jacob, the second son by Zilpah, and the younger full-blooded brother of Gad. **v. 9-13**

RACHEL BEARS A SON GEN. 30:22-24

- 11.** At long last, Rachel, Jacob's favorite wife, conceived and gave birth to a son whom she named **JOSEPH**.

Years later, Jacob would replace Reuben and Simeon with Joseph's two sons, **EPHRAIM** and **MANASSEH** (**Gen. 48:1-6**); 2 out, 2 in still leaves 11!

- 12.** Rachel's prayer, "*May the Lord add to me another son,*" (**v. 24**) was answered in the birth of **BENJAMIN**, "*son of my right hand,*" but the delivery led to her death as we will see when we get to **Gen. 35:16-20**.

THE TWELVE TRIBES OF FUTURE ISRAEL

- What a family from one messed up dad named Jacob, the heel catcher, and his four wives. Well, wives and concubines or handmaids or whatever. This set of siblings form the historical backdrop for the peoples of the Jewish nation.
- **It is no wonder so many of the Jewish people are still looking for the Messiah; their family tree has some pretty crazy branches . . .**

YET GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE