

The Twelve Tribal Blessings
(including Blessing of Levi)
in Genesis 49

<i>Patriarch</i>	<i>Verse</i>	<i>Text (Artscroll Mesorah Translation)</i>
Yehudah	v.8 - 12	<i>"Judah – you, your brothers shall acknowledge; your hand will be at your enemies' nape; your father's sons will prostrate themselves to you. A lion cub is Judah; from the prey, my son, you elevated yourself. He crouches, lies down like a lion, and like an awesome lion, who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a scholar from among his descendant until Shiloh arrives and his will be an assemblage of nations. He will tie his donkey to the vine, to the vine branch his donkey's foal; he will launder his garments in wine and his robe in the blood of grapes. Red eyed from wine, and white toothed from milk"</i>
Issachar	v.14 -15	<i>"Issachar is a strong-boned donkey; he rests between the boundaries. He saw tranquility that is was good, and the land that it was pleasant, yet he bent his shoulder to bear and he became and indentured laborer."</i>
Zebulun	v.13	<i>"Zebulun shall settle by seashores. He shall be at the ship's harbor, and his last border will reach Zidon"</i>
Ruvein	v.3 - 4	<i>"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and my initial vigor, foremost in rank and foremost in power. Water-like impetuosity – you cannot be foremost, because you mounted your father's bed; then you desecrated Him Who ascended my couch."</i>
Shimon and Levi	v.5 - 7	<i>"Simeon and Levi are comrades, their weaponry is a stolen craft. Into their conspiracy, may my soul not enter! With their congregation, do not join, O my honor! For in their rage they murdered people and at their whim they hamstrung and ox. Accursed is their rage for it is intense, and their wrath for it is harsh; I will separate them within Jacob, and I will disperse them in Israel."</i>
Gad	v.19	<i>"Gad will recruit a regiment and it will retreat on its heel"</i>

<i>Patriarch</i>	<i>Verse</i>	<i>Text (Artscroll Mesorah Translation)</i>
Ephraim and Menasheh*	v.16 – 19.f	<i>"May the angel who redeems me from all evil bless the lands, and may my name be declared upon them, and the names of my forefathers Abraham and Isaac, and they proliferate abundantly like fish within the land... yet his [Reuben's] younger brother shall become greater than he, and his off-spring[s fame] will fill the nations."</i>
Benyamin	v.27	<i>"Benjamin is a predatory wolf; in the morning he will devour prey and in the evening he will distribute spoils."</i>
Dan	v.16 - 18	<i>"Dan will avenge his people, the tribes of Israel will be united as one. Dan will be a serpent on the highway, a viper by the path, that bites a horse's heels so its rider falls backward. For Your salvation do I long, O Hashem!"</i>
Asher	v.20	<i>"From Asher – his bread will have richness, and he will provide kingly delicacies."</i>
Nap	v.21	<i>"Naphtali is a hind let loose who delivers beautiful sayings."</i>

**Ephraim and Menasheh – it should be noted that Ephraim and Menasheh are actually the sons of Yosef (Joseph). However in verse 5 Yaakov (Jacob, called Israel), as terms for his coming to Egypt to receive the hospitality of his son Yosef (Joseph), stated, "Your two sons who were born to you in the land of Egypt before my coming to you in Egypt shall be mine, like Reuben and Simeon." Our tradition tells us that by this Yaakov Avinu was adopting them as his own sons; as well as elevating Ephraim to the place of firstborn. This is what accounts for these two sons of Yosef becoming the leaders of Israel. The honor was given because of their fathers hospitality, and because they were well educated in Egypt and therefore were more qualified for leadership.*