

## TRIBE OF EPHRAIM – PROPHETIC OF UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

### INTRODUCTION

Numbers Chapter 2 describes a Desert Camp where twelve tribes were arranged in order around the tabernacle. Each Israelite tribe in the Camp corresponds to a world power at a time in history. The order of the Israelite tribes corresponds to the chronological order of the world powers in history. The desert tribes were marching to the 'promised land'. Secular history is leading towards the Millennium rule of Christ on Earth in Jerusalem.

We use prophetic passages in the Bible pertaining to each Israelite tribe to identify the world nation they represent. The tribal emblems and the chronological order also contribute to identifying the nation. The gematria<sup>1</sup> of the verses referring to that tribe in Numbers Chapter 2 is prophetic of events that take place in that nation at the time in history where it occurs in 'the march'.

The tribes are prophetic shadows of the world powers: the world powers are not the tribes. Because of the dispersion of Israelites among the nations and even descendants among their royalty, some believe the nations are Israelite tribes. Remnants of Israelite language and DNA may be present in a given society and culture. But Israel was a man to whom specific promises were made concerning the land of Canaan. His physical children became the tribes which occupied that land and then were dispersed. An Israelite lives in Palestine and worships God under the Mosaic covenant. No one else is an Israelite.

History shows the prophecies hidden in the Book of Numbers have been fulfilled. God being the only person who knows the future, this is strong evidence that God was the author of the Book of Numbers. The humble man Moses merely transcribed the words letter for letter as God dictated them.

### SUMMARY

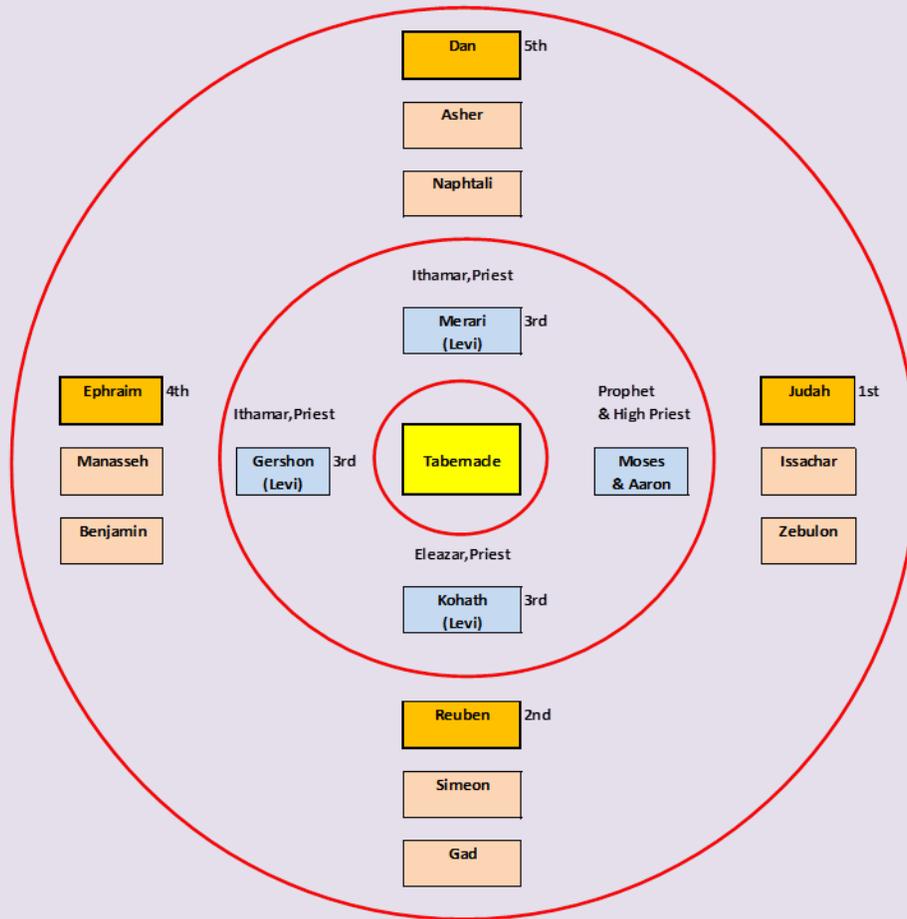
We propose the prophetic fulfillment of Ephraim to be United States [1776 AD – Present].

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

(1) Map of the Desert Camp	Page 2
(2) Process of Matching Tribes to World Powers in History	Page 2
(3) Prophecies in Scripture – Related to Ephraim	Page 3
(4) Tribal Emblems of Ephraim - National Symbols of America	Page 6
(5) <b>Gematria Analysis</b> - Numbers Chapter 2 Verse 18 & 19	Page 7
(6) Nearest Levite Family to Ephraim in the Desert Camp	Page 9
(7) History of Tribe of Ephraim – Post Desert Camp	Page 10

<sup>1</sup> Gematria is the numerical value of the Hebrew letters in the Old Testament. The numerical values of Hebrew letters are well accepted. Ancient Hebrews did not have a separate Arabic numeral system - they used letters in words and also as numbers. We take the spiritual meanings of the numbers from the 'Bible Numbers for Life' website<sup>1</sup> since the meanings of numbers provided there has been validated many different ways.

**MAP OF THE DESERT CAMP**



ORDER OF BREAKING CAMP	TRIBAL EMBLEM	PROPHETIC OF WORLD POWERS	ERA OF HISTORY	SPAN (YRS)
1st	JUDAH ISSACHAR ZEBULON	Lion/Scepter Ass/Two Flocks Haven for Ships	Babylon Media / Persia Greece / Rome	604 - 539 BC 539 - 331 BC 331 BC - 380 AD 712
2nd	REUBEN SIMEON GAD	Man/Water Sword Troop Tramples	Catholic Church and State Kings of Europe / Crusaders Colonial Empires	380 - 1776 AD 799 - 1534 AD 1492 - 1776 AD 284
3rd	LEVI	Sword	Inner Circle	ALL
4th	EPHRAIM MANASSEH BENJAMIN	Fruitful Vine/Arrows Fruitful Vine/Arrows Wolf/Eats Spoil	United States of America United Kingdom Modern State of Israel	1776 - Present 1534 - 1947 AD 1947 - Present ? 243 ?
5th	DAN ASHER NAPHTALI	Biting Viper Food of Royalty Hind Let Loose	False Prophet World Commercial System Man of Lawlessness	Last Days Last Days Last Days 7 7 7

## **THE PROCESS OF MATCHING TRIBES TO WORLD POWERS IN HISTORY**

The Bible says “**Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see**” (Heb. 11:1). For reasons known to God, he is greatly pleased when we exercise faith. In the same spirit, we cannot offer to you proof that a certain Israelite tribe is prophetic of a certain world power in history. However, we can offer you Scriptural evidence, including: the written text, numbers quoted in the written text, and the numbers implicit in the letters of the written text. Like a trial before a judge, the objective is to test the evidence to see if it supports the assertion.

To evaluate this evidence it is necessary to read Scripture figuratively as well as literally. We know from Galatians Chapter 4:21-31 that Paul used the historical characters of Hagar and Sarah to signify two groups of people: religious Jews and believing Christians respectively. Hagar and Sarah were real people who lived long ago. However, their story in Scripture is a type and a shadow of people and events many centuries later. We believe that allegories, types, and shadows exist in most if not all Bible stories. Therefore, we will base some of our evidence on matching Israelite tribes to world powers on the same principle, to wit, that God intended us to understand that these true historical accounts also prophetically signify times and events far into the future.

## **PROPHECIES IN SCRIPTURE - RELATED TO EPHRAIM**

Ephraim was a son of Joseph. There are prophetic parallels between Joseph and the United States. These parallels contribute part of the picture of Ephraim’s prophetic fulfillment:

### **BRIEF HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS – LIFE OF JOSEPH**

1. Joseph was a spiritual man with a spiritual gift. His brothers were unspiritual (Gen. 37:5-8).
2. His brothers were also jealous their father Jacob loved Joseph more than them (Gen. 37:4)
3. His brothers seized Joseph, threw him in a pit, and plotted to kill him (Gen.37:18-21)
4. By Reuben’s insistence they sent him to a far off land (Gen.37:22)
5. Joseph suffered greatly in the far off land (Gen.39:9)
6. But Joseph eventually rose to the height of power in the far off land (Gen.41:41)
7. Many years later Joseph’s brothers came to the far off land looking for food (Gen.42:2)
8. Joseph was willing to give them food if they would bring Benjamin (Gen.43:5)
9. Eventually they brought Benjamin and Joseph fed them all (Gen.43:33-34)

### **PROPHEPIC INTERPRETATION OF LIFE OF JOSEPH**

1. The puritans of Europe were the spiritual forefathers of the United States. They practiced a simple faith in Jesus Christ devoid of the trappings of Catholicism. They espoused godly living, the sanctity of marriage, the Protestant work ethic, democratic local church government, and teaching children to read and write so as to become more dutiful citizens.
2. Puritan ministers were expelled from official state approved churches
3. They were at times persecuted, humiliated, and resisted by the Crown / Catholic elites.
4. To resolve the tension, puritans were permitted to emigrate - which they did

5. Many of them died at sea on the way and others did not survive the harsh conditions
6. Under God's hand, the United States of America prospered under their influence
7. Many years later Europeans have come to America asking for food and for other help
8. Benjamin signifies the modern state of Israel<sup>2</sup>. America has been its staunch defender.
9. America indeed became the breadbasket of the world, exporting much food to all.

Importantly, there are a number of passages related to Joseph / Ephraim that are explicitly prophetic:

#### **BLESSING OF JACOB TO JOSEPH** (Genesis Chapter 49)

(v.22) "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; His branches will run over the wall.

(v.23) "The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him, and hated him"

(v.24) "But his bow remained strong, and the arms of his hands were made strong"

"By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob"

"From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel"<sup>3</sup>

(v.25) "By the God of your father who will help you, and the Almighty who will bless you

"Blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath

"Blessings of the breast and the womb"

(v.26) "The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors"

"Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills"

"They shall be on the head of Joseph"

"And the crown of him who was separate from his brothers"

#### **INTERPRETATION**

Joseph is portrayed as a nation having:

- fertile land (fruitful bough)
- strong military (strong bow / arrows)

<sup>2</sup> Please see the paper in this series on the tribe of Benjamin, who represents "Modern Nation of Israel"

<sup>3</sup> Other translations (NIV) say "Because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob; because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel". These are messianic references. The "Shepherd" is the Good Shepherd. The "Stone of Israel" is the same as the "Rock of David". These terms point to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will come out of the line of Jacob and out of the line of David. The reference in these passages underline who is the God of Jacob. We do not interpret them as prophetic of a 'Shepherd' or 'Stone of Israel' appearing in a nation in modern times.

- blessings that overflow to other nations (branches running over the wall)
- spiritual blessings (blessings of heaven above)
- God's protection (God of your father who will help you)

Some commentators believe the wall with the well from which the branches run over is a picture of Manasseh (United Kingdom), therefore Ephraim (United States) is the offshoot. It can also be viewed as the blessings (vine) of America extending outwards to other nations. America rebuilt Europe after WWII.

Indeed, both the UK and the USA have historically enjoyed fertile land and a strong military. The English longbow was lethal: it thoroughly devastated French armies. The same could be said of the American air force, which struck so many blows on its enemies through the air.

#### **BLESSING OF JACOB TO EPHRAIM AND MENASSEH** (Genesis Chapter 48)

“When Joseph saw his father placing his right hand on Ephraim's head he was displeased; so he took a hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. Joseph said to him, “No, my father, this one is the first born; put your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.” (v.17-19)

#### **INTERPRETATION**

Although the United Kingdom (Manasseh) is older than the United States (Ephraim), history records that it eventually surpassed the U.K. in population and power. The United States are considered to be one country but in its constitution it describes itself as a confederation of states, or assembly of commonwealths. This agrees with Jacob's prophecy that the descendants of the younger brother will become a “group of nations”.

#### **BLESSING OF MOSES TO EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH** (Deuteronomy 32)

[Referring to Joseph] “His glory is like a firstborn bull and his horns like the horns of the wild ox. Together with them he shall push the peoples to the ends of the Earth. They are the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh” (verse 17)

#### **INTERPRETATION**

Here is a powerful word picture: the sons of Joseph are like the two horns of the same strong ox. Although they are independent nations they have fought side by side to resolve world conflicts. Both nations have had either world-wide empires (UK) or fought world-wide wars (UK and USA), hence they both qualify as ‘pushing nations to the end of the earth’. Both nations are English speaking, democratic, and were at one time moral leaders in the community of world nations<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> As the fear of God has declined in those countries the commitment to moral standards has declined with it.

Most of the first settlers of USA came from the UK. From a spiritual perspective, for most of their history they have been known as Protestant nations and have honored the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, it is quite appropriate to see them as two horn (powers) coming out of the same stock. USA being the more powerful and the younger, its association with Ephraim is clear.

(Note: The reference of Moses to the wild ox has caused some observers to associate the star sign Taurus with the WEST side of the Israelite camp<sup>5</sup>. The constellation **Taurus** prominently features **two giant horns** as if thrusting upward in attack. The constellation is almost completely above the ecliptic, indicating it is a righteous person or nation. The sign does not reveal the rest of the bull's body. Could this mean the nation never 'sees their tail'? In other words, its days are shortened? Or, **its days as a righteous nation are shortened**? Or both?)

### **TRIBAL EMBLEMS OF EPHRAIM - NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF AMERICA**

In Numbers Chapter 2 it says "**Everyone of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house**" (Numbers 2:2). We thus conclude that each tribe of Israel had emblems, or tribal symbols. The tribal symbols of Ephraim would likely have been:

- Symbol of a Bull or Wild Ox or Horn
- Symbol of fruitfulness of the land: Sheaf of Wheat or Fruit Laden Bough
- Symbol of Strong Arm or Arrows

If the USA is the prophetic fulfillment of Ephraim we would expect to see its citizens rallying to their county's protection under similar national symbols. That is precisely what we see.

Ephraim was granted the blessing of divine protection. In the Bible this is signified by the figure of an eagle. The Lord said that he protected Israel on the exodus from Egypt "**on eagle's wings**" (Exodus 19:4). Therefore, the eagle is the symbol of God's protection: it is not the symbol of a nation per se.

Many of the national symbols of the USA match the symbols of the tribe of Ephraim.

#### **(1) GREAT SEAL OF THE UNITED STATES:**

- Eagle grasps a clutch of arrows in one claw
- Eagle grasps a fruitful bough in the other claw
- Eagle's breast displays a shield (allusion to spiritual protection)
- Eagle's head is turned to its right: facing West (allusion to the West side of the Camp)
- Over the Eagle's head is a cloud (allusion to the cloud of God which traveled with the Camp)
- Obverse side displays a pyramid (allusion to Joseph who ruled Egypt)
- Obverse side display the "eye of God" (another allusion to God's watchful protection)

#### **(2) AMERICAN MONEY:**

<sup>5</sup> The NORTH side would be Scorpio (Dan), the EAST side would be Leo (Judah), the SOUTH side would be Aquarius (Reuben).

- The penny displays a two sheafs (two tribes) of wheat: on the left and on the right
- The US one dollar bill has both sides of the Great Seal printed on it

(3) **AMERICAN MOTTOS:**

- “In God We Trust” placed on pennies (1865) official motto of US (adopted in 1956)
- “New World Order” NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM (Great Seal)
- “Out of Many One” E PLURIBUS UNUM (Great Seal)
- “He has Prospered our Undertakings” ANNUIT COEPTIS (Great Seal)

In the US national symbols the number 13 is prominent. There are 13 stars in the cloud, 13 arrows in the clutch, 13 leaves on the bough, 13 fruits on the bough, 13 strips on the shield, et cetera. The spiritual number 13 signifies “Rebellion” and in truth the United States gained its independence by rebelling against the authority of its older brother the United Kingdom. There were also 13 states in the original colonies of the United States. Normally rebellion has a negative connotation, however at the core of the American ideal of liberty and pursuit of happiness is the concept of resisting over-authoritarian governments.

**GEMATRIA ANALYSIS – NUMBERS CHAPTER 2 VERSE 18 AND 19**

There are two verses in Chapter 2 of Numbers regarding Ephraim.

**Verse 18**

Phrases	Hebrew	Gematria		Gematria	Spiritual Number Meanings	
On the west side	דגל	37				
shall be the standard	מחנה	103				
of the camp	אפרים	331	X1	1,089	Spirit (9) of Watchful Protector (121)	
of Ephraim	לצבאתם	563				
according to their armies:	ימה	55		Y1	1,879	Victory(17) of Victories (17): Escape from Bondage
and the captain	ונשיא	367		Z1	2,517	God(3) grants Freedom(839-146th prime)
of the sons	לבני	92	X2	790	Testimony (10) of Martyrs (79)	
of Ephraim	אפרים	331		Y2	1,428	Government (12) of Love Your Law (119)
shall be Elishama	אלישמע	451				
the son	בן	52	X3	638	Light (22) of Holy Life (29)	
of Ammihud.	עמיהוד	135				

**INTERPRETATION**

Gematria analysis begins at the lowest level of parts of phrases (X1 to X5), then to sums of parts of phrases side by side (e.g. Y1=X1+X2), then sums of the total phrase (e.g. Z1 = X1+X2+X3).

The spiritual meaning of the numerical value of verse **18** is **“Bondage”** and in the case of the United States of America the sense is the breaking out from bondage. Our story begins at the lowest level, the parts of the phrases. Back in the old country, the United Kingdom, there were Christians that shone forth virtue springing from spiritual rebirth: **Light (22)** of the **Holy Life (29)**. This refers to **the Puritans**, who devoted themselves to the teaching of God’s word and committed themselves to moral purity,

democratic church life, and worship of God outside the idolatrous ecclesiastical institutions of the day. Prior to the Puritans, there were early **Protestant reformers who were burned at the stake**<sup>6</sup> for believing the doctrines taught in the Bible were a higher authority than the teachings of the Roman Church: **Testimony (10)** of **Martyrs (79)**.

God saw the persecution of the saints in the United Kingdom and ruled in favor of them. In spite of their little power **God made way for them to escape oppressive mighty rulers** and plant them in the **New World: Victory (17)** of **Victories (17)**. God ensured in the **New World** the government would be under his watchful protection: **Spirit (9)** of **Watchful Protection (839 [146<sup>th</sup> prime])**. The **New World** would be a nation who could truly say '**In God We Trust**'. Furthermore, the laws of that land would reflect the principles of God's holy word: **Government (12)** of **Love Your Law (119)**. There is another sense in which the gematria can be interpreted: that America would be a nation under the rule of common law, not the rule of Kings.

The Gematria of all phrases in verse 18 has a meaning that is astounding in light of the interpretation of America being the prophetic fulfillment of Ephraim: it means **God (3)** grants **Freedom From All Bonds (146)**. Scratch the soul of an American and you will find an individual who appreciates the value of his freedom. In America there is not only freedom of religious assembly, but freedom of speech, freedom of public assembly, freedom of a proper trial and representation before the law, and freedom from tyranny (as far as possible given the balance of powers designed into the constitution). Other nations overthrew the rule of kings before America, France being a prime example, but they shortly reverted to the rule of despots (Napoleon). Our opinion in this paper is the **New World Order** that is referenced in American Mottos refers to the unique nation state of America in its early history: **Many People United as One, Under The Watchful Eye of God, Enjoying Prosperity Under His Blessing**.

As we see later, the freedom Americans enjoy brings with it a responsibility. It is not only freedom to pursue 'happiness'. It comes with expectations of world leadership and sharing the blessings of God. The vine grows over the wall – America becomes a blessing to the whole world.

**Verse 19**

Phrases	Hebrew	Gematria		Gematria	Spiritual Number Meanings
And his host,	וצבאו	105	X4	350	Testimony (10) of Suffering Servant (35)
and those that were numl	ופקדיהם	245		Y3	Life (5) of Idolatry (66)
of them, were forty	ארבעים	323			
thousand	אלף	111	X5	1235	5x13x19 Apostasy (65) of Faith (19)
and five	וחמש	354			
hundred.	מאות	447			

**INTERPRETATION**

The gematria of the word "**Ephraim**" is **331 [67<sup>th</sup> prime number]** which has the spiritual root meaning **Gentiles Praise God (67)**. America is such a shining light in the history of the world. At the time of the writing of Numbers Chapter 2, approximately 1446 BC, who would have ever thought that 3,500 years

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Oxford in 1555 when the Protestant leaders : Cramner, Ridley, and Latimer were burned at the stake.

later there would be **tens of millions of non-Jews** (i.e. Gentiles) **praising the God of Abraham** on a vast fertile continent on the other side of the world! The insight of these prophecies is so amazing and the descriptions so laser precise, only the finger of God could possibly explain how they have all come true.

The spiritual meaning of the verse number **19** is **Faith**. As we have seen from verse 18, from its inception faith has been at the heart of America as a world power. In verse 19 we see in the gematria a darker picture, of turning completely away from the faith of the fore-fathers.

The number of the host of Ephraim is **40,500** which has the spiritual meaning: **Life (5)** of **Angels (81)**. This could be interpreted as **excessive luxury**. The average American is not only well fed but surrounded by every possible convenience and personal service. As is seen over and over in Scripture, when a nation gets fat it kicks against the commandments of God (Deut.32:15). It becomes self-absorbed and believes riches will save it from any calamity. This is part of the explanation of how such a great nation under God as United States could lose its faith.

It is not likely that we have reached the fulfillment in history yet, but the gematria tells us two things: there will be persecution of God's people: **Testimony (10)** of the **Suffering Servant (35)**; and there will be a turning away from the faith: **Apostasy (65)** of **Faith (19)**. What is worse, the people will not merely turn away to vain pursuits, such as we see in the worldly life of America today, they will eventually turn to the worship of demons: **Life (5)** of **Idolatry (66)**.

#### **Verse 18 and 19 Combined**

The gematria of verse 18 and verse 19 combined is **4,102** which, using the meaning of Bible numbers, represents: **Righteousness (14)** of **Jerusalem (293 [62<sup>nd</sup> prime number])**. We could also interpret it as **Right (14) of Jerusalem (62) to exist**. This harkens back to the story of **Joseph (UK and USA)** who jealously protected his little brother **Benjamin (modern state of Israel)**. It appears from the typology of the story of Joseph together with the spiritual numbers in the verses of Numbers Chapter 2 pertaining to Ephraim that just as God is the "watchful protector" of the United States: **it is the divine destiny of America to be the "watchful protector" of the modern state of Israel**. This is part of what it means for the vine to grow over the wall. America is blessed and so America blesses others.

#### **NEAREST LEVITE FAMILY TO EPHRAIM IN THE DESERT CAMP**

In the Desert Camp each side was assigned a family of the tribe of Levites who carried a portion of the tabernacle. The Levite family on the West side of the Camp nearest Ephraim were the **Gershonites**:

**"The family of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle westward. And the leader of the father's house of Gershonites was Eliasaph the son of Lael. The duties of the children of Gershon in the tabernacle of the meeting included **the tent with its covering**, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of the meeting, the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, according to all the work relating to them."** (Numbers Chapter 3:23-26)

We will pay attention to one article of the tabernacle which is the first listed: the tent with its coverings. According to the Law of Moses the covering of the tent was constructed as follows: (version NKJ)

“You shall make **a curtain of goat’s hair** to be a tent over the tabernacle...” (Exodus 26:7)

“You shall also make a covering of **ram’s skins dyed red** for the tent, and a covering of **badger skins above that.**” (Exodus 26:14) \*\* Some translations say **sea cows** (NIV) or **porpoises** (NASB) rather than badgers. \*\*

Our view is the outer tent covering was not likely to be badger skin on the logic that God would not cover the tabernacle with the skin of an unclean animal and an especially nasty one at that. The skin of a sea cow, porpoise, or dolphin would make logical sense since they would be naturally the most waterproof. In addition all three of those animals swim in the sea and yet breath air, which makes them perfect symbols for the tent of the tabernacle which represents the life of God in the flesh (or tent) living in the midst of a sinful world (salt sea).

The point we are leading up to is the color of the three coverings of the tabernacle:

- Goat’s skins - **WHITE** \* Only unblemished goats would have been acceptable
- Ram’s skins - **RED** \* Dyed red
- Porpoise skins - **BLUE** \* Natural color is bluish grey

These are the same colors as the flags of the United States (Ephraim) and of the United Kingdom (Manasseh): white, red, and blue.

What is interesting is the flag of the modern state of Israel (Benjamin) has only the colors white and blue. This is appropriate: being a Jewish nation without a temple sacrifice system Israel is missing the blood (red). They also do not know personal salvation through Jesus’ blood as did believers in the (historically) predominantly Christian countries of the United States and the United Kingdom.

It is fair to say Americans love their country and they express that on many occasions by honoring their flag, or their ‘colors’. **One of the possible pitfalls of a nation being as great as America is its citizens might fall into a love of country that surpasses their love for God.** To them the flag is a symbol of protection, much as the skins protected the tabernacle in the desert. When citizens begin to look to their government for protection, and not to God for protection, they put their trust in the wrong place. Instead of ‘In God We Trust’ it is ‘In our Natural Resources We Trust’, or ‘In our Military We Trust’, ‘In our Government We Trust’, or ‘In America We Trust’.

When an American Christian looks at the stars and stripes, the colors should remind him that the great nation of the United States depends for its existence and prosperity on the blessing and protection of God, not the government of the day.

## HISTORY OF EPHRAIM, MANASSEH, AND BENJAMIN

In the Desert Camp the host of Ephraim were small (only 40,500 fighting men). That number is less than all the other tribes in the Camp except Manasseh (32,200) and Benjamin (35,400), which were Ephraim's supporting tribes. In other words, the troops of the three tribes led by Ephraim were the weakest of the four sides of the Camp.

After 40 years of wandering in the desert, the Camp marched again to the Promised Land. At the suggestion of Balaam, the Moabites seduced some of the Israelites with sexual immorality and caused a plague. After the plague Moses took a second census of the Camp. Ephraim's troops had declined by 8,000 since the first census. In contrast, Manasseh's troops had increased by 20,500. This suggests men of Ephraim had fallen into the temptation of sexual immorality and many were killed in the plague.

During the conquest of the Promised Land the soldiers of Manasseh were renowned fighters (Joshua 17:1). As a result Makir, the first son of Manasseh inherited the land East of the Jordan, the land of Og, King of Bashan. Bashan was famous for bulls (Psa. 22:12; Eze. 39:18; Amos 4:1), oak trees (Isa.2:13), and high hills (Psa. 68:15).

When the Promised Land was allotted the largest territory by land mass was Manasseh. His area consisted of most of the land North of Jerusalem from the Mediterranean Sea in the West to the other side of the Jordan in the East including Bashan and Gilead. The prime agricultural land in Bashan and the Plains of Sharon belonged to Manasseh. A small panhandle of land belonging to Manasseh extended beside Ephraim South to Gilgal, just North of Jericho (part of Benjamin).

Ephraim did not dislodge all the Canaanites. Those living in Gezer (Joshua 16:10) were put to forced labor (slaves). Likewise Manasseh did not dislodge all the Canaanites. Canaanites in some of the towns in the north part of the territory of Manasseh who resisted leaving were put also to forced labor (slaves). There were other parts of their land that contained Canaanites which had not been over-powered at all. These included some in the Valley of Jezreel with iron chariots and some in the forested hill country (Joshua 16:14-18).

The only other tribe that did not conquer all or part of its tribal inheritance was Dan<sup>7</sup>. The tribe of Dan left its inheritance and took the unsuspecting town of Laish in the far north of Israel. There they took the idol made out of 1100 shekels of silver by Micah, an idolator from Ephraim (Judges 17). They also took as their priest the Levite Micah had hired to be his priest (Judges 18).<sup>8</sup>

In the time of the Judges, Ephraim's soldiers were twice over-looked when Israel went to war. The first time when Gideon, who was from Manasseh, defeated the Midianites (Judges 8:1). The second time when Jephthah the Gileadite defeated the Ammonites (Judges 12:1). The tribe of Ephraim fought Jephthah because of this insult, but Jephthah killed 42,000 of the fighting men of Ephraim.

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<sup>7</sup> Judah dislodged the Jebusites in the days of King David

<sup>8</sup> In the Law of Moses, Levites were not priests. They were merely the servants of the priests, who were the descendants of Aaron.

Ephraim's inheritance was a small territory just north of Jerusalem. Ephraim's immediate neighbors were Dan (westward), Benjamin (southward), and Manasseh. Although Ephraim was small its towns were of historical significance:

#### Timnath Serah

- Joshua's inheritance and burial place.

#### Bethel

- The town where Jacob saw the ladder rising up to heaven in a dream.
- A place where the Ark of the Covenant dwelt in times before the temple was built.

#### Shechem

- The first place Abraham visited in the Promised Land.
- Where Dinah was raped by Shechem the son of Hamor, and avenged by Simeon and Levi
- Where Joshua renewed the covenant with Israel.
- Where Joseph's bones were buried.
- Where Abimelech, son of Gideon, murdered 69 of his brothers on one stone to gain power.

#### Gibeah

- Where Eleazar, son of Aaron was buried.
- Where Benjamites raped the concubine of a Levite travelling from Bethlehem and caused a civil war that resulted in the tribe of Benjamin being almost totally wiped out.

#### Shiloh

- A place where the ark of the covenant dwelt – in times before the temple was built.
- Where Joshua cast lots to allocate the inheritance of the tribes of Israel.
- Where the sons of Benjamin stole maiden virgins who danced outside to be their wives.
- Where the sons of Eli the priest sinned and the Lord raised up Samuel as prophet.
- Where the 'glory of the Lord departed' when the ark was taken to battle and captured by the Philistines. When it was returned the ark remained in the territory of Judah.

The period of the Kings of Israel begins with King Saul from Benjamin followed by King David and King Solomon from Judah. In the time of Solomon there was worship of the gods of the Ammorites, the Sidonians, and the Moabites and no respect was paid to the law of Moses<sup>9</sup>. Because of sin in the days of Solomon, Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh announced the kingdom would be divided and ten tribes given to Jeroboam, an Ephraimite. Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam but he fled to Egypt. When Solomon died Jeroboam returned and set up two calf idols: one in Bethel and the other in Dan. Jeroboam appointed priests of the high places from all tribes and invented new festivals. The sin of Jeroboam

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<sup>9</sup> 1 Kings 11:33

was so terrible God said he would uproot all of Israel and scatter them beyond the River Euphrates (1 Kings 14:15). Later Israel was invaded by Assyria and uprooted as God had foretold. Omri, King of Israel, bought the field of Shemer and founded the city of Samaria which was in the territory of Manasseh.

So, although Manasseh started their occupation of the Promised Land so gallantly – they were removed from their inheritance due to worship of idols, and along with them Ephraim.