

# Tribes in Deborah?

I am reading The Oxford History of the Biblical World.

A few interesting points. There are parallel stories. One of the most surprising is that from the Song of Deborah you count 10 tribes, not 12. Of which 2 are not considered tribes generally.

From Judges 5:14

<sup>14</sup> From **Ephraim** they set out<sup>[e]</sup> into the valley,<sup>[f]</sup>  
following you, **Benjamin**, with your kin;  
from **Machir** marched down the commanders,  
and from **Zebulun** those who bear the marshal's staff;

<sup>15</sup> the chiefs of **Issachar** came with Deborah,  
and Issachar faithful to Barak;  
into the valley they rushed out at his heels.

Among the clans of **Reuben**  
there were great searchings of heart.

<sup>16</sup> Why did you tarry among the sheepfolds,  
to hear the piping for the flocks?

Among the clans of Reuben  
there were great searchings of heart.

<sup>17</sup> **Gilead** stayed beyond the Jordan;  
and **Dan**, why did he abide with the ships?  
**Asher** sat still at the coast of the sea,  
settling down by his landings.

<sup>18</sup> Zebulun is a people that scorned death;  
**Naphtali** too, on the heights of the field.

So that gives

1. Ephraim
2. Benjamin
3. *Machir*

4. Zebulun
5. Issachar
6. Reuben
7. *Gilead*
8. Dan
9. Asher
10. Naphtali

Gilead and Machir are not usually considered tribes, and this list is missing:

Manasseh  
Judah  
Gad  
Simeon

And Levi, though Levi is not usually considered one of the twelve. So is this an older list from further back?

Some interesting points the book make that argue for true memory in these stories is the fact that none of the ancient names – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob etc have YHWH in them. This is much more common later. Also that many of these characters do things later banned by the law – Abraham planting a Tamarisk tree (Gen 21.33), later banned in Deut 16:21 and Jacob marrying sisters (Gen 29:16-30), later banned in Lev 18:18.

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## **What do we learn of Paul's Journeys from his letters?**

I recently went through Tom Wright's book Paul: A Biography.

It made me think about what we would learn about Paul's

background and comings and goings if we did not have the book of Acts. The results were quite surprising to me. It turns out we learn a lot.

I am going through Paul's letters in the order of the New Testament.

## Romans

From Romans we learn Paul is an Apostle sent to the Gentiles. That immediately tells us he was not operating around Jerusalem. We learn he has not yet been to Rome, but hopes to visit them – implying a future visit to Rome. Paul talks about the message being accompanied by signs and wonders.

He also hopes to go on to Spain after seeing them. Implying he is to the East of them currently.

Paul Mentions Macedonia and Achaia being pleased to give financial help to the saints in Jerusalem, and his concern about being handled badly by the Jews of Jerusalem, implying he is going to go to Jerusalem shortly. Also that he has been in the areas of Macedonia and Achaia before.

He mentions being in prison with his relatives Andronicus and Junia.

So from a quick look at Romans we learn Paul was an Apostle who travelled widely, with great ambitions in getting around. Having already travelled around Greece and planning to go to Jerusalem, then Rome and after that Spain.

“so that from Jerusalem and as far around as **Illyricum** I have fully proclaimed the good news of Christ” Rom 15:9

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyricum\\_\(Roman\\_province\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illyricum_(Roman_province))

## 1 Corinthians

Paul appeared to them in fear and trembling. Implying a very difficult situation beforehand.

There is a lot about Paul and Apollos. So we learn that Paul first preached in Corinth (sowed the seed) and that later Apollos took the church on further (watered it).

We learn that Paul has seen Jesus. He quotes Jesus' sayings at the Last Supper. He also quotes Jesus on the subject of divorce. 1 Cor 7:10.

We also learn that he has seen Jesus (Ch 9) and that earlier in his life he persecuted the church.

Paul tells us that he has been in Ephesus for a while and a door is open there. He has fought with wild beasts there (had a lot of trouble).

## **2 Corinthians**

Paul had trouble in Asia, and thought that he might die there. He plans to go to Macedonia and see the Corinthians on the way.

Paul has had two visits to them. The last one was a painful visit.

He came to them via Troas looking for Titus.

Paul sent the Church a letter which made them sorry.

He is going to pick up a gift that they had promised. When Paul was in Corinth, his needs were met by believers from Macedonia. He boasts about his sufferings and weaknesses. That gives a long list of the difficulties he has been through stoning, shipwreck, lashes from Jews, beaten with rods etc.

## **Galatians**

We learn Paul was advancing in Judaism beyond his peers when young and was very zealous (persecuting the church). Jesus revealed himself to him. He went immediately into Arabia, then Damascus. 3 Years later to Jerusalem to meet Cephas and James

(in response to a revelation). Then he was in Syria & Cilicia. 14 years later he goes to Jerusalem again. He talks about a confrontation with Peter in Antioch.

Map below shows Cilicia.



## **Ephesians**

Very few details here. He is a prisoner, has received a revelation and a commission.

## **Philippians**

Paul is in prison but that has served to help the gospel. He was circumcised on the 8th day, a Benjamin, Hebrew, Pharisee. Zeal in persecuting the church. Zeal and violence mentioned together here like Phineas.

He left Macedonia. They gave him help, they sent a gift to him in Thessaloniki.

# Colossians

We learn again about Paul's sufferings. Also that he is in prison. He is working hard for them and those in Laodicea.

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## Notes from Son of God no Amazon Prime

I learned a few interesting nuggets of information watching Son of God from Amazon Prime.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Jesus-Son-God-Luke-Waldock/dp/B01IRRNX5G/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?s=instant-video&ie=UTF8&qid=1535386946&sr=1-3&keywords=son+of+god](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Jesus-Son-God-Luke-Waldock/dp/B01IRRNX5G/ref=sr_1_3?s=instant-video&ie=UTF8&qid=1535386946&sr=1-3&keywords=son+of+god)

The references from Ignatious were interesting. I looked them up in the book, Early Christian Writings. Penguin, translated by Maxwell Staniforth. 1987 version.

Ignatious – in his letters to various churches talks about Jesus as our God.

Ignatious to Polycarp (end of the letter) – Farewell always in our God Jesus Christ.

Ignatious's Epistle to the Ephesians (beginning of the letter) – ... by the will of the Father and Jesus Christ our God.

later on in that letter – ... Jesus Christ our God was conceived by Mary of the seed of David and of the Spirit of God

Ignatious to the Romans (beginning of the letter) – All perfect happiness in Jesus Christ our God...

Ignatious to the Smyrnaeans (beginning of the letter) – Glory be to Jesus Christ, the Divine one.

These letters are all written approximately 110AD.

Also the reference from Pliny.

Pliny – talks about Christians singing to Christ as to a God. This is in a letter to the Emperor Trajan. Text can be found here. <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/texts/pliny.html>

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## **Notes from the Conclusion to Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul**

Paul quotes most from Isaiah, The Psalms, Deuteronomy and Genesis.

Isaiah is an obvious choice with its large focus on eschatological hope, and also the inclusion of the gentiles.

The Psalms would be a good choice as the songbook of the Jews and the early Christians.

Deuteronomy's emphasis on blessings and curses fits neatly into early Christian belief.

Genesis quotations are mostly to do with Abraham.

Unlike Philo who uses a metaphorical method in interpreting scripture, Paul does not have a simple system.

One interesting way Paul uses scripture is the way he changes

the tense, e.g.

For the Lord will not forsake his people (Psalm 94:14)

God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew (Rom 11:2)

I shall not be put to shame (Isaiah 50:7)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16)

The way the tenses change implies that the decisive event has occurred.

Paul is not always bothered about the context of the original usage but is interested in the immediate application to this very important new situation.

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# Overview of Romans

## Romans 1

The gospel reveals the covenant justice of God.

God has come to put the world to rights.

The good news is about God's Son, and power is released when Jesus, the Crucified One, Israel's Messiah, raised from the dead is proclaimed Lord of the World.

Deuteronomy 27-30 and Daniel 9 speak about God's anger and punishment as being part of his covenant justice, God's hostility to idolatry.

God is coming to judge the world – Psalm 96, 98.

## Romans 2

The Jew is the answer to the problem of sin in the world.  
However, Israel's vocation went wrong.

All humans have sinned ... What is God going to do about it?

He granted promises to Israel ... How is God going to be faithful to those promises?

Genesis 15 is in Paul's mind.

## **Rom 5**

Reconciliation through the work of Jesus. Peace, reconciliation, the love of God.

Renewal of humanity – Genesis 1. When humans are redeemed creation is set free from its slavery.

Glory – rule over creation

– the divine presence returning

## **Rom 6,7,8**

Holy spirit reveals glory in human lives.

Romans 6,7,8 parallel the Exodus.

6 Slaves going through the water/ baptism

7 Mount Sinai / the Law

8 God dwells in the Tabernacle, leads as a pillar of cloud / Spirit

Led to promised land / Renewal of creation

Jesus shaped, spirit driven?

At end of paragraph after paragraph we read "through Jesus the Messiah", or "in Jesus..."

Through – to do with the human being Jesus Christ

In Christ – who we are as his people.

Purpose of the law – to draw sin into one place and let it be dealt with there.

Love of God – Covenant Love of God. Because of Love longs to do justice. Because of Love, does justice.

God does justice on the cross.

Romans 12-16

Doctrine of ethics. Follows through from 3-4 in the new humanity.

The world was divided into slave and free, class. In the new age there are none of these divisions.

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## **Mark in 1 Go**

Yesterday I listened to (on my Bible Audio app) the Gospel of Mark in pretty much one sitting.

Here are some notes on what struck me.

There is the intensity of it. The intro about the Good News then the quotation mixing Malachi and Isaiah. Then soon we have the time is fulfilled. Miracles some teaching etc.

It is very much a story of Israel. There are connections with the Law (questions about the Sabbath, resurrection), the Psalms (22 at the Crucifixion), and the Prophets (quotation at the start and theme of the coming of the Kingdom of God). Many famous characters are referenced to. John the Baptist's description makes one think of Elijah. Then Jesus says he was Elijah, and Elijah comes on the mountain at the transfiguration. Moses is also there and in other places when the law is mentioned. The stilling of the waters also makes one think of Moses. Thoughts of Elisha and Elijah come when the raising of the dead girl. There is also plenty of reference to David. In the incident about plucking grain on the Sabbath, Jesus is hailed as Son of David. There is reference to the coming Kingdom of our Ancestor David. There is also the question concerning Psalm 110. Abraham is mentioned once along with Isaac and Jacob in relation to the resurrection story.

The feeding of the multitude (twice) would have made a Jewish reader think of the manna in the wilderness. The calming of the sea, the crossing of the Red Sea. The death of Jesus and its connection with Passover is very deliberate.

I was very interested in Mark 13:24-26 which is much closer to the great commission than anything I expected in Mark's gospel:

*'But in those days, after that suffering,*

*the sun will be darkened,*

*and the moon will not give its light,*

<sup>25</sup> *and the stars will be falling from heaven,*

*and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.*

<sup>26</sup> *Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of*

*the earth to the ends of heaven.*

Previously along with many other contemporary Christians I would have thought of this as about Jesus' second coming.

There is more about faith and repentance, in a more explicit way, than in the OT. Although of course it is there, it is clearly named and praised.