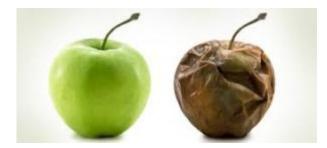


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## The Blessing and Cursing of Jacob's Sons **49: 3-27**



The future histories of **the tribes** are viewed as an outgrowth of the present character of each **son** as **Jacob** prophesies. And the character of **the son**, to some degree, becomes the character of **the tribe**. In some ways this is like the prophecy of Noah concerning his three sons (9:24-27), stemming from the actual behavior and character of his sons, and also outlining the three streams of nations that would come out of them.<sup>761</sup> We can see a deliberate two-part organization of the chapter: **negative oracles** about **Reuben**, **Simeon** and **Levi** in **verses 3-7**, followed by a series of **positive oracles** about **Judah**, **Zebulun**, **Issachar**, **Dan**, **Gad**, **Asher**, **Naphtali and Joseph** and **Benjamin** in **verses 8-27**. This was, in effect, **Jacob's** last will and testament. Each of the blessings was fulfilled. The blessing and cursing of **the twelve sons** reiterates the book's major theme. Mankind lost the blessing of **ADONAI** through sin and rebellion in the garden of Eden, but **the LORD** will restore **His** blessings through the Seed of Abraham.<sup>762</sup> There will be **a near historical** and **a far eschatological** prophecy given for each **tribe**.