

The “unloved” Leah bore seven of Jacob’s children—six sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, as well as a daughter, Dinah. Jacob’s concubine Bilhah gave birth to Dan and Naphtali (Genesis 30:3-8), while another slave, Zilpah, gave him Gad and Asher (Genesis 30:9-13). Jacob’s overt favoritism toward Rachel had prompted God to keep Rachel’s womb closed, but Rachel’s love was ultimately redeemed when she gave birth to Joseph and Benjamin, Jacob’s favorites (Genesis 30:24-25). Together with the sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, these men would become the forefathers of the 12 tribes of Israel, sealing God’s covenant.