

Discussion Questions – The Twelve Tribes of Israel and the Death of Jacob

Read Genesis 48-50

The end of chapter 48 and chapter 49 establish the Twelve Tribes of Israel - 10 of Israel's children and 2 of Joseph's children. Joseph himself is not established as the head of a tribe. Though Levi is not given a tribe, his progeny become the Levites.

Chapter 50 tells of the death of Jacob, how the Egyptians mourned, and how Pharaoh allowed Joseph (and his brethren) to take Israel back to his home and bury him in Canaan.

- How did the brothers think Joseph would feel about them now that their father had passed on?
- Why do you think they did not believe Joseph had already forgiven them?
- Have you ever held onto a problem or a negative feeling - guilt, shame, self-condemnation - for a really long time? What does it do to you? How can you let these feelings go?
- What was Joseph's response to his brothers?
- What was Joseph's promise to his brethren, the children of Israel, before he died?