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These are the Twelve Tribes of Isra'el, This is What He said as He Blessed Them 49: 28



Therefore, the prophecy section ends with this concluding summary: **All these are the twelve tribes of Isra'el**, so the prophecies go beyond **the sons to the tribes**. **And this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him**. Even though some of the predictions hardly sounded like **blessings**, they were intended indirectly to serve as such, through warning **his sons** and **their children** of those traits and tendencies against which **they** needed to especially guard. **The children** and **descendants** of **Isra'el** must have read and meditated on these sayings of **Jacob** many times during the following centuries, particularly during **their** bondage in Egypt and **their** wanderings in the wilderness. Clearly **his** words proved very helpful to **them**.⁸⁰³

These prophecies serve a purpose in the book similar to that of Noah's prophecies about his sons (**9:24-27**). Both look ahead prophetically to the destinies of the sons at the end of their respective ages - Noah in the primeval days and **Ya'akov** in the patriarchal days. This is the first time that the phrase **the twelve tribes of Isra'el** is mentioned in the Bible and the third of **Jacob's** blessings. The first was on Pharaoh (**47:1-10**), the second on Ephraim and Manasseh (**48:1-20**), and the last on **Jacob's sons** (**48:3-27**).⁸⁰⁴