

Once We Were Brothers

by Ronald H. Balson

Discussion Questions

1. Does it trouble you to think that remnants of the Nazi era may remain? Of the 600,000 SS members, only a few thousand were actually brought to justice. Most escaped. Some to America. Was Ben's quest after all these years, in spite of Rosenzweig's civic contributions, justified? Is there a time to move on or forgive?
2. They say that "First impressions are lasting ones." What were your first impressions of the principal characters? At what point did your opinion change? Why?
3. Was there a part of the story that was particularly moving to you, that stayed with you the longest?
4. Did *Once We Were Brothers* compliment your understanding of the period? Did the story give you a perspective you didn't have before?
5. Why did the Solomons remain in Zamosc?
6. If the story were to continue, what do think would happen next to each of the characters? How might their lives be affected?
7. From the diaries of survivors, there are many stories of extraordinary heroism, of ordinary people, who in the darkest moments find unbelievable strength and courage. Have you known such people? Where do you think they find such courage?
8. If you had the opportunity to speak to any of the characters at any moment of the story, who would you choose to talk to, what advice would you give and what would you say?
9. Ben was a religious man, as was Catherine. How does a religious person accept the existence of the Holocaust in God's world? Do you accept Ben's explanation?

