

## Reading Discussion Questions

# BEHOLD THE DAWN

1. What was unique about the setting of the book and how did it enhance or take away from the story?
2. What specific themes did the author emphasize throughout the novel? What do you think she is trying to get across to the reader?
3. In what ways do the events in the book reveal the author's world view?
4. Early in the story, Annan tells Gethin, "All men put their backs to the past. We cannot turn about and live it again." Do you agree? Is this view proven right or wrong by the end of the book?
5. Was King Richard justified in killing the prisoners of Acre when Saladin was late in paying the ransom?
6. How did Lady Mairead feel when she had to marry Annan? How would you feel in her situation?
7. When Mairead wants to name the gray courser, Annan tells her he doesn't name his animals. She asks him why. What is the significance of his response? What is the unspoken message when he later tells her to name the horse?
8. Fire is used throughout the book in connection to Annan; hawks and birds of prey are used in connection to Gethin the Baptist. What does this use of symbology tell you about each of these men?
9. Annan refers to his "misguided sense of compassion that was forever entangling him with the dregs of mankind." How is this compassion evident in his actions? Do you think it was incompatible with his more ruthless behavior?
10. Mairead eventually learns to love Annan. Was there one event that caused her to see him in a new light or several things combined? Explain your answer.
11. At the beginning of the book, Annan has little purpose in life except to fight in the tourneys and one day be killed in them. Does he achieve a different purpose over the course of the book? How does Mairead influence this?
12. Why does Marek follow Annan to Jaffa to rescue Mairead, even after Annan warned him stay with Brother Warin and Lady Eloise?
13. How do the characters change or evolve throughout the course of the story? What events trigger such changes?