

# As Sure As the Dawn: Mark of The Lion #3

by Francine Rivers

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## About the Book

This classic series has inspired over half a million readers. Both loyal fans and new readers will want the 10th anniversary editions of this beloved series. These editions include a new foreword from the publisher, a new preface from Francine Rivers, and discussion questions suitable for personal and group use.

**As Sure as the Dawn:** Atretes. German warrior. Revered gladiator. He won his freedom through his fierceness... but his life is about to change forever.

## Discussion Guide

When writing this story, Francine had a key Bible verse in mind: "Dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight" (James 1:19-20). Notice the order: First, listen --- and be quick about it. Speech is to come slowly, after listening; that is, after getting all the facts. Anger is --- or should be --- an afterthought. How often do we reverse the order? With this in mind, let me encourage you to get together with some friends and discuss your favorite scenes, characters, and personal insights from this novel. May your insights never end.

## HADASSAH

### CHARACTER REVIEW

1. Discuss how Hadassah was perceived by those in the arena prison. How did Atretes see her?
2. Examine Hadassah's role in Atretes' life.

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Recount the information and advice Hadassah gave Atretes. How effective or persuasive was she?
2. What do you think made this conversation with Atretes so intense for Hadassah?
3. In what ways have you been persuasive or effective in intense situations?

## **PERSONAL INSIGHTS/CHALLENGES**

1. In your opinion, what stands out the most about Hadassah?
2. Do you think Hadassah's sense of peace was realistic? How does your own sense of peace measure up?
3. "Dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight" (James 1:19-20). Describe how Hadassah exemplifies this passage of Scripture.

## **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

As you recall Hadassah's patience and courage, look up the following Bible verses. They may give insight to the source of her effective life and challenge you as well.

Live wisely among those who are not Christians, and make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be gracious and effective so that you will have the right answer for everyone. COLOSSIANS 4:5-6

Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad --- because these trials will make you partners with Christ in his suffering, and afterward you will have the wonderful joy of sharing his glory when it is displayed to all the world. 1 PETER 4:12-13

Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD. PSALM 27:14

## **ATRETES**

### **CHARACTER REVIEW**

1. Select a moving or disturbing scene with Atretes and share any memorable insights.
2. Discuss Atretes' relationship with Rizpah. How did it change?

## **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Recount the plans Atretes had for his son. In what ways did God change those plans?
2. In changing Atretes' plans, how did God change Atretes?

## **PERSONAL INSIGHTS/CHALLENGES**

1. In what ways do you identify with Atreates? How are you different?
2. What do you think was Atreates? central conflict?
3. ?Dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God?s sight? (James 1:19-20). What lessons did Atreates learn along these lines?

## **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

As you examine Atreates? life, look up the following Bible verses. Consider what insights might have led to the changes in his life and may do the same for you.

We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps. It is better to be patient than powerful; it is better to have self-control than to conquer a city. PROVERBS 16:9, 32

Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.1 PETER 3:8

When you bow down before the Lord and admit your dependence on him, he will lift you up and give you honor. JAMES 4:10

## **RIZPAH**

### **CHARACTER REVIEW**

1. Discuss your favorite scene with Rizpah. What draws you into it?
2. Compare Rizpah?s faith with Hadassah?s.

### **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Describe Rizpah?s head versus heart conflict.
2. In what ways did Rizpah?s past affect her ability to trust God? How did she change?
3. What interferes with your ability to trust God?

## **PERSONAL INSIGHTS/CHALLENGES**

1. In what ways are you like Rizpah? How are you different?

2. Do you think Rizpah's relationship with God was realistic? Explain.

3. ?Dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight? (James 1:19-20). What happened with Rizpah's anger? And your own?

## **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

As you think about Rizpah and the choices she made as she struggled with her faith in God, try reading the following Bible verses. They may reveal her challenges and victories and provide insights for you as well.

For you have been called to live in freedom --- not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love. GALATIANS 5:13

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger. PROVERBS 15:1

So be careful how you live, not as fools but as those who are wise. EPHESIANS 5:15

## **THEOPHILUS**

### **CHARACTER REVIEW**

1. Choose a memorable scene with Theophilus and discuss what makes it unforgettable.
2. Compare Theophilus' relationship with Rizpah to his relationship with Atretes. What differences do you find?

### **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Describe Theophilus' reputation.
2. In what ways did Theophilus share his faith in God? Was he effective? What would you like to learn from his example?
3. How would others describe your reputation?

### **PERSONAL INSIGHTS/CHALLENGES**

1. How are you like Theophilus? In what ways are you different?
2. Consider Theophilus' wisdom and counsel. How does your own wisdom and counsel compare?
3. ?Dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight? (James 1:19-20). Discuss how Theophilus understood the principles in this verse.

## **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**

As you ponder Theophilus' life and reputation, read the following Bible verses. They may reveal his motivations and challenge you as well.

Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, making music to the Lord in your hearts. EPHESIANS 5:19

Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other. COLOSSIANS 3:16

I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped spread the Good News. PHILIPPIANS 1:12

Be sure to do what you should, for then you will enjoy the personal satisfaction of having done your work well, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are each responsible for our own conduct. GALATIANS 6:4-5

## Author Bio

*New York Times* bestselling author Francine Rivers had a successful writing career in the general market for several years becoming a born-again Christian; she then wrote REDEEMING LOVE as her statement of faith. A retelling of the biblical story of Gomer and Hosea set during the time of the California Gold Rush, REDEEMING LOVE is now considered by many to be a classic work of Christian fiction and it continues to be one of the industry's top-selling titles year after year.

Since REDEEMING LOVE, Francine has published numerous bestselling novels with Christian themes --- including THE MASTERPIECE, BRIDGE TO HAVEN and A VOICE IN THE WIND --- and she has continued to win both industry acclaim and reader loyalty around the world. Her Christian novels have been awarded or nominated for numerous honors and in 1997, after winning her third RITA Award for Inspirational Fiction, Francine was inducted into the Romance Writers of America's Hall of Fame. In 2015, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from American Christian Fiction Writers (ACFW). Francine's novels have been translated into over 30 different languages, and she enjoys bestseller status in many foreign countries.

Francine and her husband live in Northern California and enjoy time spent with their grown children and grandchildren. She uses her writing to draw closer to the Lord, and she desires that through her work she might worship and praise Jesus for all He has done and is doing in her life.

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