

*Wings of Refuge* by [Lynn Austin](#)

**Reading Group Guide**

1. Abby's journey to Israel sets the story in motion. What are her reasons for coming and how would you describe her reasons? Is it a pilgrimage? Running away? Do you think her mindset changes throughout the book?
2. Early on we find out that Hannah has a prosthetic leg. How does this handicap affect her? What handicaps do you think Abby has and how differently does she let them affect her?
3. One of the terms Abby uses to define herself is "passive." (see page 36) Hannah meanwhile calls herself "stubborn." (p. 100) Each of these traits has good and bad points. Do you think the women are affected by them mostly for good or mostly for bad?
4. On page 60, Hannah explains that the nation of Israel has been in constant upheaval for centuries because God chose to put them at a "crossroads." In the same way, Hannah, Abby, and (in some sense) Leah all meet at a crossroads, as well. How would you define the place they meet and in what direction is each woman heading?
5. The three primary sects of the Jewish people in Jesus' time were the Zealots, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. One fought, one compromised, and one withdrew. With which sect do you think each of the three women can be identified? Do any of these "identifications" change as you learn about them during the story?
6. Hannah explains (p. 62) that coming to know Jesus wasn't an "altering" of her faith so much as a completion. Is this the same case for the other women? Do you think Abby needs her faith altered or completed? Why?
7. Abby was driven from the church during childhood by laws/regulations much as Leah found the Pharisees abominable. What experiences do you have with the church that are similar or dissimilar to these women's. Have you had any experience with a church where grace was emphasized more than rules? How was this different?
8. The politics of Israel's nationhood are seen both through the eyes of the Jewish men and women and later through the point of view of Marwan, the Palestinian worker. Which side do you feel is "right?"
9. Pointing to the road rising from the Dead Sea, Hannah says, "Faith in God often comes by way of a hard upward road." Which of the women do you feel faced the "hardest" road? Do you think that woman has a more "authentic" faith than the others? Why does struggle point the way to God? Wouldn't a kind God remove struggles?
10. Each woman in the book is a Christian. Yet each, in her own way, knows a very different "Jesus." Describe what is most important or what drew each woman to the Messiah.
11. Leah is an amazing woman for her time. What does writing mean to her and why does she seek it so much? What has this importance to Hannah and Abby? Do they seek what they desire with such fervor?
12. Compare and contrast Gideon and Leah's view on servanthood?

13. On page 218, Abby notes for the first time the difference between Ari and Hannah. Each has been through terrible trials, yet Ari's heart has been hardened while Hannah's remained untouched by hatred. To whom is Abby linked most closely? How can she be sure that her heart does not turn to stone?

14. The mosaic Leah designs and that Hannah and Abby discover is a very important symbol of God's plan for our lives. Since we're "outside" the story can you describe what kind of mosaic God might build using the characters from this novel? What picture emerges from the pieces you've been given?

15. Through Hannah and Gideon's conversion and well as the example of Leah's life, we learn the power and importance of forgiveness. What does each character still need to forgive in others lives? What do they need to be forgiven for? Why is forgiveness such a key trait?