Questions for Discussion, Chapters 6-8

Chapter 6

1. After she was raped, Eva became silent. Why? Explain how Eva reacted to the event.
2. What did Eva get for her birthday and what did she feel about it? What did others feel about her getting the gift? Be specific.
3. Who moved into Eva’s home after the group returned from Smith Island? Why?
4. Why did Joshua tell church members to stay in the house at all times? Explain what he might be thinking, based on what you know about this situation.
5. How did Joshua’s sermons change after the group returned from Smith Island? Give details.
6. Eva begins a campaign to get Papa to join the church. Why is this important to her?
7. What extreme personal action did Papa take when he joined the church? Explain what he did.
8. People in the church begin burning things. What sorts of items do they burn and why? What do they believe the fire is doing for them? How do you know?
9. What do the townspeople do in response to the fire?
10. Sophie tells Joshua about a fire that she and her mother had. What does she say happened at her house as a result of this fire? Who is concerned about their behavior and what might happen?
11. What item does Eva decide to throw into the fire after she sees Esther tossing in buttons from her bodice? How does Maud react to Eva burning this item?
12. What does Maud suggest that Eva throw into the fire? What does Eva do in response? How does it make her feel? Explain.
13. What does Maud tell Esther to throw into the fire? What does Esther say about this item? What does she do with it?
14. At the end of the chapter, who is Joshua watching. What do you think this means?

Chapter 7

1. How does Eva learn that Esther has been chosen as the Second Mother? How did Eva feel when she learned about this?
2. Crowds of townspeople return to Eva’s house and are angry. What do the newspaper stories say that the church group has been doing? Are the accusations true, according to Eva?
3. What do some of the angry townspeople do to the church building? What does Joshua tell the church members to do in response? How does Joshua feel about the townspeople?
4. Joshua introduces a new ceremony that involves Esther lying on a pallet. Describe this ceremony and what part Joshua and church members play in it.
5. Who shows up to stop the ceremony that involves Esther? What charge does this person bring against Joshua?
6. What happens to Joshua at the courthouse? What does the judge advise Joshua to do? What rumors are circulating about what the townspeople would like to do to Joshua? What does Joshua decide to do—leave or stay?
7. What happens to Esther and Nell after the Mitchell brothers come from Portland?
8. Who is confined to the Boys and Girls Aid Society and what is the reason that is given?
9. Whose house does Joshua want to expand and why? What does the owner of the house say to the proposed expansion?
10. Papa has a change of mind; what does he do? How does Eva respond to her father’s change and what does she start to think about her father? What does Eva mean at the end of the chapter when she says, “Except he didn’t really *have* a family anymore, did he?”

Chapter 8

1. Where does Joshua begin to meet with his group members?
2. Cora Hartley and Sophia are “kept under lock and key” at the beginning of this chapter. What does this mean?
3. What do men from the town do to Joshua?
4. What happens to Joshua by the end of this chapter? How does this outcome differ from Joshua’s announcement in the early chapter when he did not take the judge’s advice?