

## Reading Group Guide

# Iscariot

### Topics & Questions for Discussion

1. Before reading this book, what did you know about Judas Iscariot? Where did you get your information about him?
2. Had you ever thought about what Judas might have been like as a boy or a young man? Does picturing Judas as a child have any effect on your feelings toward him?
3. Name some personality traits that Judas exhibited as a child in the novel. How did these traits play into his story as he grew to adulthood and affect his actions as an adult?
4. What drove Judas to become a perfectionist about the Law...or to believe he could never perfectly keep it?
5. What observations did you make about his passion to overthrow the Roman government? How did his motives differ from the motives of his contemporaries?
6. Why did Judas find Jesus so compelling? Why did he choose to follow him?
7. What did Judas sacrifice in order to follow Jesus?
8. Do you think Judas felt disappointed or let down by Jesus? If so, when and why?
9. According to the story, the events surrounding Judas's handing over of Jesus did not go as planned. What do you think Judas expected to happen?
10. The author poses the question: Would you have done the same? In the context of this story, do you believe you might have?
11. The story opens and closes with a regret-filled Judas reflecting on his life. If he were given a cosmic do-over, do you think he would make the same choices? If so, what do you believe he might do differently?
12. Do you think Judas was truly repentant at the end of his life? Why or why not?
13. At the end of the book Judas says, "I, who denied [Jesus] and delivered him to his enemies. I, who die with him. My name will be synonymous with 'traitor.' But he has loved his enemies. He has loved me." Do you think that this love of Jesus saved Judas from what has traditionally been considered his ultimate fate? Discuss.
14. Has reading this book changed how you think about the character of Judas? If so, how?
15. What new questions or insights do you feel you may have about the person of Jesus after reading the novel?
16. Do you think some readers might feel threatened or unsettled by this fictional account of the life of Judas? Why or why not?