

Star of Light Study Guide

About the author

Patricia St. John (1919-1993) was an English author who spent over 25 years of her life as a missionary in the Middle-East.

Her first book, *Tanglewood's Secret*, was published in 1940 and other books include *Treasure of the Snow* and *Twice Freed*. In 1983 she received the Children's Book Award for her book *Nothing Else Matters*.

Star of Light tells of her own experiences as a missionary in Tangier, Morocco. This story is about true events and people she has known. She spent her last years in England serving as president of Global Care, a foundation that helps children in impoverished nations.

Summary

Star of Light tells the story of Hamid and Jenny, two children from two very different worlds, whose lives are changed through the ministry of a missionary nurse. Out of necessity, Hamid's mother has become the number two wife of a cruel and greedy man. They are a people who worship idols and live in fear of evil spirits.

Hamid is a loving son and brother who is saddened to learn that his beloved baby sister, Kinza, is blind. When his stepfather learns of this, he makes arrangements to hire Kinza out as a beggar and eventually decides to sell her to the beggar.

Remembering a kind missionary nurse who had once befriended her, Hamid's mother entrusts him with taking Kinza to the nurse where she knows she will be well cared for. After a tiring journey full of adventure, Hamid comes to the nurse's house and leaves Kinza on her doorstep. He returns to Bible classes taught by the nurse in order to receive food and also to keep an eye on Kinza.

Many miles away, a much spoiled and petted little girl, Jenny, is recovering from a serious illness. Her parents have been advised to take her away to a warmer climate. Her mother remembers her old friend, known to Jenny as "Aunt" Rosemary, and it is decided to visit her in Northern Africa.



Jenny is charmed by Aunt Rosemary's adopted blind child and immediately wants to help Aunt Rosemary in her work. As she serves alongside her aunt, she begins to sense that something is missing from her own life.

The climax of the story is reached when Kinza's stepfather kidnaps her, and Aunt Rosemary and Hamid rush to her rescue. Hamid and Jenny find the answer to the hunger they feel in their hearts.

Study Questions

Chapter 1

1. Who is the first character introduced, how old is she, what is her stature and why?
2. Who are the other members of Rahma's household?
3. Can you describe some things about the area where they live?
4. What is Zohra hiding about her baby and why?
5. How should babies (even with handicaps) be treated?

Chapter 2

1. What type of home do they live in, what does Hamid do, what does Rahma do, and what do they eat?
2. How does the older wife Fatima treat Zohra and her children, and why?
3. Who tells Si Mohamed that Kinza is blind, and how does he react?
4. How did Hamid react to the news that Kinza would be loaned out to a man for begging?
5. How can our family encourage older children to help and protect younger children?

Chapter 3

1. What did Kinza enjoy about life?
2. How old was Kinza when she had to start begging, and how did she do that?
3. What did Kinza hate about having to work for the beggar in the marketplace?
4. How did Hamid try to help Kinza in that horrible situation?

Chapter 4

1. What is the village temple called where Hamid lives, for what religion is that, and how do they pray?
2. What did Si Mohamed decide to do about getting more money from Kinza's begging and how did the family members react?
3. When Hamid brings Kinza a leathery ring of fried dough and carries her home that day, what are some things which happen along the way?
4. What was the family's mealtime like that night?

Chapter 5

1. In this chapter, what two tasks do we learn that Zohra performs for her family?
2. What were some of the details included in the story Zohra tells Hamid about his younger brother?
3. What did Zohra tell Hamid to do with Kinza?
4. How did Hamid feel about this and what did he do?
5. How do you think Zohra must have felt about her decision to risk never seeing Kinza and Hamid again in order for Kinza not to suffer as a beggar child?

Chapter 6

1. What were some of the hard things Hamid had to endure on his journey with Kinza?
2. What kindnesses did Hamid show toward Kinza by the little stream?
3. What happened after Hamid was finally able to rest in the field?
4. What happened when Hamid finally woke up?

Chapter 7

1. When Hamid reached the top of the mountain ridge, how did he feel?
2. What place was he trying to avoid and who did he almost collide with?
3. What kind of shelter and food supply did Hamid find for him and Kinza on the mountain?
4. Who discovered them and how?

5. Hamid often lied, but he decided to tell the truth to the goat owner who took compassion on him so her husband was willing to help them get to the town of the missionary nurse. What does the Bible say about telling the truth?

Chapter 8

1. The day that Hamid arrived in the town of the missionary nurse, what had made his day successful?
2. How was the land they now crossed different from his hometown?
3. How did Hamid find the missionary house and what did he do with Kinza?
4. Who was going in and out of the missionary house and why did that make Hamid think the nurse wouldn't want Kinza?
5. Why was it so important to Hamid that the missionary house looked and felt safe, with laughter and singing?

Chapter 9

1. When Hamid woke up the next morning after the nurse took in Kinza, what did he do and how did he feel?
2. What did Hamid do to solve his hunger problem?
3. While Hamid was working for Sillam, who did he see and what were they doing?
4. What happened after Hamid was paid for his work?
5. When we see a homeless person, what should we as Christians do to help?

Chapter 10

1. What did the gang of boys do each day and into the night?
2. Why did Hamid hesitate to go into the mission house?
3. What book did the nurse show the gang between singing and eating and what did each page mean?
4. When the gang had all left, what did Hamid talk to the nurse about and what did she show him?

Chapter 11

1. What did Hamid do to earn money and food so he could stay in the mission town?

2. Where did Hamid sleep, go on hot days, and do in the evenings 6 days a week?
3. What did Hamid learn about how Jesus died and where He is now?
4. What did Hamid steal from the nurse and what did she do when it was found out?

Chapter 12

1. On a cold, snowy winter day when the boys arrived at the mission, what had the nurse done for them and why?
2. How had Kinza changed when Hamid observed her, and how had Hamid changed as the nurse observed him?
3. What story did the nurse show in pictures on the wall and how did it make Hamid feel?
4. After Hamid left the mission house that night, what did he find and take back to the nurse and why?
5. Why is it important for Christians to feed hungry children, give them good gifts, help them have warm clothes, treat them kindly, and share with them about Jesus Christ?

Chapter 13

1. What are some details of the other Christmas party under different stars?
2. What were the faces like of the blind children at the party and why?
3. What was Jenny thinking about during the party?
4. What was Jenny thinking about in her bed at home, and to where was her family going to travel?
5. How does your family celebrate Christmas and what traditions do you have which might include helping others?

Chapter 14

1. What was the nurse thinking about during the morning of her guests' arrival and what were some preparations she made?
2. What were some concerns that the nurse had about her guests' visit?
3. How did Jenny and Elizabeth react to Kinza and the people where the nurse lived?
4. How did Jenny and her parents react to the sick baby, what did the nurse have Jenny do, and what did the nurse talk to the baby's mom about?

Chapter 15

1. Why did some of the babies in the area grow up with weak chests?
2. When Jenny told her Aunt Rosemary that she wanted to be a missionary, helping her with the babies, what important thing did the nurse tell her had to happen first?
3. How did Aunt Rosemary compare light in a lantern to knowing Jesus?
4. When the Swifts treated Aunt Rosemary to supper at their hotel, what did Jenny suggest could be done for Kinza?
5. Aunt Rosemary wanted a few days to pray and consider such a big decision. What big decisions might we have to make in life that require prayer and God's guidance?

Chapter 16

1. In the spring, what did Hamid see in the square one market day and how did he react?
2. Why did Hamid think that Kinza would be safe?
3. What happened to Kinza when she was left with Jenny?
4. What caused Jenny to delay telling her mother and Aunt Rosemary about Kinza missing; what happened then?
5. Why is it important to tell adults immediately when something bad has happened, even if someone might get into trouble for it?

Chapter 17

1. Why did Hamid hide in the mountains, then not want to tell the nurse what he knew about Kinza?
2. What did the nurse do to help Hamid trust her to tell?
3. After Hamid told the nurse everything he knew, what did she do with him so he wouldn't be afraid to take her to his village to find Kinza?
4. When the nurse explained to the Swifts about the situation and how she needed their help with driving to Kinza's hometown, what did the nurse then talk to Jenny about?

Chapter 18

1. How did Jenny and Hamid each feel about the car journey to rescue Kinza?
2. Why was Hamid no longer afraid?

3. What happened so that Hamid and his mom see each other and what did Hamid promise her?

4. In our culture, do we ever pay for a child's safety and why was it okay for the nurse to pay Si Mohammed for Kinza?

Chapter 19

1. While the nurse and Hamid were rescuing Kinza, how did Jenny spend the day?

2. What did Jenny decide to do?

3. Once reunited, what did everyone do at the Swift's hotel?

4. The next morning when Hamid went to the nurse's home, what did they talk about?

5. Why is it important for everyone to learn to read the Bible?

Chapter 20

1. As their visit was drawing to its close, what did they all do together?

2. What secret was Jenny hoping to talk to Aunt Rosemary about and why didn't she?

3. What was special about the next day and why couldn't they go to church?

4. What special thing did Jenny think of to celebrate Easter with the nurse, and what did they talk about?

Chapter 21

1. What did the nurse decide was best for Kinza?

2. How did the nurse feel about that and why?

3. Why did the nurse encourage Jenny to read her Bible faithfully and regularly every day?

4. Had Jenny told her parents about her decision to invite Jesus into her heart, and what did the nurse encourage her to do about it?

5. Like Hamid did at the end of this story, what are some things we can do to grow in our Christian faith?

Book Review

1) Plot - *the action that takes place in a story*

Was it predictable?

Was it hard to believe?

What was the climax? Was it interesting?

What were some major events?

How did the story end? Were you surprised at the ending?

2) Characters - *the people in the story*

Make a list of the characters and describe them.

Did any of them change in the story? How?

3) Setting - *where the story takes place*

Was the setting important to the story?

Why or why not?

What did you learn about this part of the world?

Draw a map and find the probable route taken by Jenny and her family from England to Morocco, (North Africa).

4) Themes - *what the author wants to teach through the story*

These could include things like greed, courage, love, self-sacrifice, faith, etc.