Son of Hamas

Introduction–Chapter 4

1. Before picking up this book, how much did you know about the situation in the Middle East? What questions did you have about the Arab-Israeli conflict? What stereotypes?

2. How does Mosab describe the soldiers who captured him as an eighteen-year-old? Can you think of other examples of people being “at the mercy of something merciless” (see page 3)?

3. What is Mosab worried about when he is captured? What would you be worrying about if you were unexpectedly detained?

4. Mosab describes how his family background affected his life. Where did you come from? In what ways would you say your background affects your beliefs, words, and actions?

5. Why do you think death intrigues Mosab as a child?

6. How are Mosab’s views affected by those around him? Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

7. How does the first Intifada begin? How does this type of uprising complicate the peace process?

8. How is Mosab’s father different from most men in his culture? What difference does this make—to his community, to his family, and to Mosab in particular?

Chapters 5–9

1. How does everyday life for the Palestinians change as a result of the Intifada? Discuss the Intifada’s impact on the Palestinians’ political system.

2. What are the main difference between the PLO and Hamas? What do they have in common?

3. What does Mosab mean when he says he and his neighbors were “living in a jungle” (pg. 40)? Do you think he is right? Why or why not?

4. People admire and respect Mosab’s father. What happens when Mosab’s father is in prison? What about when he is released?

5. In August 1990, Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait, which triggers a real war. Why are the Palestinians, Mosab included, upset when it is over?

6. What turns Hamas into a full-blown terrorist organization? How does Mosab describe the transition?

7. When Mosab thinks back on how his father reconciled his humanitarian aims with the violent approach of the other Hamas leaders, what Scripture passage comes to mind? What does that say about his father’s culpability for Hamas’s terrorist activities?

8. Whom does Mosab feel hatred toward? Does he embrace this hatred? If so, how?
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Chapters 10–14

1. What effect do you think the Leonard Cohen song has on the prison scene? Why do you think Mosab includes this detail?

2. What is the “offer” that the chapter 11 title refers to? Does Mosab take this offer? Why or why not?

3. How is this prison different from the one where Mosab was put when he was first captured?

4. At first, Mosab feels free at the prison in Megiddo. What changes that?

5. Describe the tension Mosab observes between the attractive and the cruel sides of Islam. Why is this tension there?

6. Mosab is gone from home for a year and a half. What kinds of things would you miss most if you were in his shoes? What things would you most want to do when you got back home?
Chapters 15–19

1. How and why is Mosab’s worldview changing as a result of working with the Shin Bet?

2. When reading the New Testament he is given, what strikes Mosab the most?

3. What is the significance of the gate where Mosab meets the British Christian?

4. What starts the second Intifada?

5. What does Mosab mean when he says life isn’t cheap (see page 145)? Is there more meaning to that than what is on the surface?

6. What does Mosab see as “the only real way to stop the bloodshed” (see page 148)? Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

7. Though the Palestinians’ fight with Israel over land captures the headlines, what does Mosab say is an even more pressing issue in the day-to-day life of Palestinians? How does his work with USAID intersect with this issue?

8. When interviewed about his suicide bomber son, Mr. Hotari says, “I hope that my other three sons will do the same” (see page 155). What do you think of this perspective? What makes someone view suicide bombings this way?

9. What is unique about Mosab’s position during this time? How does it help protect him?

10. How does Mosab open a new communications channel with Damascus? Does his plan work?

Chapters 20–24

1. What moral dilemma does Mosab describe in chapter 20? Do you think he makes the right decision?

2. Has the book changed your views at all on terrorism or 9/11? If so, how?

3. Why does Mosab threaten that he may stop helping the Shin Bet?

4. How is Jesus working on Mosab’s heart as he considers whether to stop working with the Israelis?

5. What is the “game” Mosab has to play (see page 180)? Do he and the Shin Bet win?

6. Discuss some of Mosab’s observations about the Shin Bet. After reading about his experiences, how have your perceptions on Israel’s internal security changed?
7. Why does the military use pigs as guards instead of dogs? What is the irony in this?

8. Even as he continues to work with Shin Bet, Mosab feels a sense of supernatural protection. Describe a time when you’ve felt this.

9. Why doesn’t Mosab feel bitterness toward the soldiers who tortured him in the past?

10. Describe the brief reunion between Mosab and his father (see page 204). Why does he find it difficult to leave both his father and the Shin Bet officers when he is transferred to Ofer Prison?

10. How have Mosab’s attitude and perspective changed since the first time he was in prison?

11. What moves Mosab to free two mice from a glue board? Why is that significant?

Chapter 25–Postscript

1. What does Mosab mean when he describes Hamas as a ghost?

2. Describe Mosab’s final and most important operation for the Shin Bet.

3. Mosab’s father has an epiphany while in prison. What is it?

4. What finally makes Mosab decide to get baptized?

5. What does Mosab mean when he says, “Our enemies are ideas” (pg. 236)? Do you agree with the statement? Why or why not? How does this realization help convince Mosab to end his association with the Shin Bet?

6. How does Mosab persuade the Shin Bet to let him go to the United States? Why does he want to go there?

7. Describe his family’s reactions to Mosab’s move and his other life choices. How have you responded when a family member has made choices you don’t agree with?

8. Why did Mosab write this book? What are his main points? How has your perspective changed as a result of reading *Son of Hamas*?

9. What does Mosab say is the only solution for the Middle East? Do you agree with him? Why or why not?