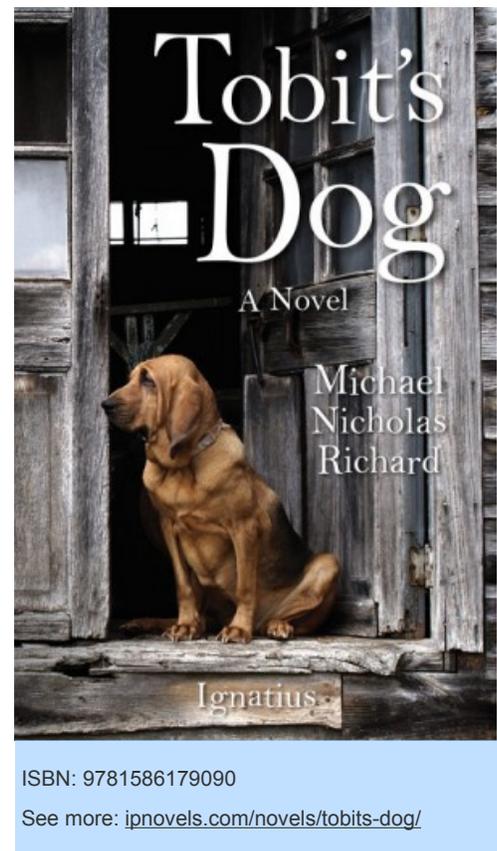


## Discussion Questions for *Tobit's Dog*

1. In the opening scene how do you see the dynamic between the dog, Okra and his master, Tobit reflecting that between human beings and God?
2. In what way does Tobit Messenger's background and family history isolate him even from the African-American community in which he lives?
3. How might Tobit's isolation in *Tobit's Dog* reflect that of Tobit in the Book of Tobit?
4. How might the character of Francis "Crafty" Forgeron reflect the Judaic concept of "Righteous among Gentiles"?
5. What connections can you see between the events following the death of Jamie Farmer and the conflict within the Book of Tobit?
6. In what manner might Sarah's tribulation mirror that of Tobit?
7. In what manner, mostly through the perceptions of Okra, Frank Forgeron, and Sister Charlotte, does the author emphasize that there is more to the character of Ace Redbone than meets the eye?
8. Throughout *Tobit's Dog* characters are given chances at redemption. How does Chief Deputy Del Gaines's interaction with Fredric Forgeron reflect the Chief Deputy's choice to be redeemed?
9. How might the events of Sheriff Charles Oliver's life have wounded him and brought about his depraved nature? In what ways might Oliver have turned aside from possible redemption? Does the influence of Charles Oliver's father elicit some element of sympathy for the Sheriff?
10. What hints does the author give us concerning the nature of Amos Asher?
11. In what way is the true nature of Mama Ann revealed?
12. What connection can we see between Tobias's defense of Sarah and St. Michael the Archangel's great battle cry, "Who is like God?"
13. The author has stated that he was determined that the character of Ace Redbone would never lay his hands upon anyone in anger. How might that relate to Ace's true nature?
14. In scholarly considerations of the Book of Tobit it has been suggested that the twice mentioned dog might have represented some sort of guardian angel. Near the end of *Tobit's Dog*, Ace Redbone says Okra can go back to being just a normal dog. What might the author be suggesting about the way God works in our lives?
15. In speaking of *Tobit's Dog*, the author has said his greatest challenge was to keep a balance between subtlety and transparency so as to avoid preaching but spark greater consideration of its themes. Where and how, in the novel, might this subtlety have worked for you? Where might you have preferred more transparency and why?
16. Which characters did you find the most intriguing, enlightening, or enjoyable? Which scenes



might you have found most moving and why? Did the novel, *Tobit's Dog*, increase your appreciation for the Book of Tobit? How so?