

FIRST DAWN
Freedom's Path Series
Judith Miller

Study Questions

1. Why do you think the concept of the “all colored” town appealed to some African Americans during this time period?
2. Do you think the concept was a good one? Why or why not. Do you see any relevance or place for such communities in this century? Or, do you believe we have segregated communities even now? Why or why not?
3. Both Ezekiel Harban and Samuel Boyle decided they wanted to move to Kansas though their families objected. Both of them could have remained in Kentucky without changing their lifestyle. Evaluate each man and his reason for leaving. Do you believe either or both of them was justified in the decision?
4. Do you believe Moses should have informed Carlisle of his heritage while still on the train. If not, should he have insisted upon informing the Boyles prior to leaving for Hill City? Why or why not? Was withholding this information a lie of omission? Once you discovered Moses was white, did you perceive him as deceitful for withholding the information?
5. Were you surprised by the attitude of the new settlers when there was talk of hanging Mr. Hill? Do you believe they were justified? If so, how do you justify your position? If not, how should they have handled their situation?
6. What about the attitude of the settlers toward Thomas when he is delayed returning from Ellis? Were they justified in their fears? Should they have sent someone other than Thomas? Why or why not?
7. How do you believe African American towns and people contributed to settlement of the west?
8. Do you believe the African American townships and settlers encountered hardships that were not encountered by white settlers? If so, what? Do you think of remedies they didn't use that might have helped to overcome any such difficulties?
9. Miss Hattie points out to Jarena that she keeps trying to take control instead of trusting God. Think of times in your life when you've said you were turning something over to God and then took it back. Did you ever completely

relinquish that matter back to God. If so, did your obedience and the result please you?

10. Many of the settlers who arrived later turned around and left Nicodemus. Were you surprised they didn't possess the stalwart attitude of the earlier arrivals? How would you have felt toward them? Would you have remained or departed? Why?
11. What did you think of Dr. Boyle's offer to hire one of the Harban girls to help at his home in Hill City? Did you view it as: 1) an act of charity on his part; 2) a selfish act to fill his family's need; 3) a combination of both; 4) a totally different reason—if so, what? Explain the reasoning for your choice.
12. There were comparisons drawn between the African Americans coming to Nicodemus and Moses leading the Israelites to the Promised Land. Compare and discuss the application of this concept—the expectation, journey, arrival, and other similarities or differences.