**AGORA. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.**

1. The movie makers wanted to make several points in this film in addition to introducing Alexandria and Hypatia. These include:

1) the repression of women in the Medieval society that was developing out of the ruins of the pagan culture;

2) the loss of knowledge that resulted from the destruction of the Greco-Roman civilization and its books and scrolls;

3) how much the assumption that the circle was the perfect shape and that therefore the celestial bodies had to move in circles, made it difficult to comprehend the true structure of the Solar System.

Could you explain these points in connection with the movie?

2.   There are many reasons for the loss of the traditions of philosophy and the knowledge of the Greco-Roman civilization. This film highlights several of them. What are they?

3. One of the themes in this movie is a criticism of communal strife and of intolerance toward others with different beliefs. The film shows intolerance of Christians by Pagans, intolerance of Pagans by Christians, intolerance of Christians by Jews, and intolerance of Jews by Christians. Which scenes in the movie show this? What is the message of the film regarding intolerance?

4. The Parabolani as portrayed in this film bear a striking resemblance to the "morals police" or similar radical Muslim enforcers who operate in places like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Taliban controlled Afghanistan and Pakistan. In addition, the intolerance shown by the character portraying Cyril and his sexist interpretation of the biblical quotation (1 Timothy 2:8 - 2:12), seem to be similar to the intolerance and sexism of some fundamentalist Muslims operating in those areas. The portrayals in the movie were reasonably accurate. Identify some reasons for these similarities or make the case that it is a false analogy.

5. Describe any aspect of the film that showed something you hadn't seen before, caused you to think in a new way, or helped you understand something more thoroughly than before. In addition, describe how it changed your thinking.

6.   At times the camera pulls back to show the entire Earth as the camera were in outer space. What are the filmmakers trying to say in these scenes?

 7.   During the siege of the Serapeum by the Christians the camera shows ants along the wall of the temple complex. What are the filmmakers trying to do by showing us the scene of the ants?

8. Is Hypatia a female role model for modern women?

9. Were the Pagans and their cults in Alexandria in the 4th and 5th centuries deserving of being treated with respect. Were the early Christians wrong to destroy the Pagan temples?

10.  If you generally believe that other cultures should be treated with respect, how do you respond to those who say that the beliefs of theTaliban deserve no respect because they prohibit women from getting an education, permit honor killings, and require women to wear the Chadour and be clothed from head to foot?

11. The Industrial Revolution started in about 1760 CE, a little more than 250 years ago. Some scientists say that had the knowledge of the Great Library of Alexandria not been lost, the Industrial Revolution would have occurred a thousand years earlier. That's about the year 760 CE. Write up a thought experiment containing ideas about how our lives would have been different and what would have changed in history, if we were living in the tenth century of the Industrial Revolution rather than the third.

<http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/agora-files/>