

The Hiding Place Study Guide

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom

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Contents

The Hiding Place Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Chapter 1.....	3
Chapter 2.....	4
Chapter 3.....	5
Chapter 4.....	6
Chapter 5.....	8
Chapter 6.....	10
Chapter 7.....	11
Chapter 8.....	13
Chapter 9.....	15
Chapter 10.....	16
Chapter 11.....	18
Chapter 12.....	19
Chapter 13.....	21
Chapter 14.....	23
Chapter 15.....	24
Characters.....	26
Objects/Places.....	28
Themes.....	31
Style.....	33
Quotes.....	34
Topics for Discussion.....	36



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary and Analysis

The novel opens in January in Haarlem, Holland. Corrie rejoices as she sees a rare, sunny day to celebrate the centennial of the watch shop her family runs. The reader learns much about Corrie in the opening chapter, including her lack of fashion sense, which she shuns in favor of practicality. She explains that, at 45 and unmarried, she lives in a home called the Beje with her father and sister, above the watch shop that the family owns.

All day, flowers and well-wishers fill the shop. One wealthy, though ugly, man, Pickwick, nicknamed by the Ten Boom women from the popular Dickens work, arrives to congratulate Casper Ten Boom. Despite the festivities, however, the household operates by its normal schedule, with breakfast followed by Bible reading for all family members and employees. The old clock repairman, Christoffels, arrives late and is dressed in new clothes for the first time since he began working for the shop. Corrie describes the running of the shop. Casper calls Mr. Kans, the owner of the watch shop across the street, a colleague, though Kans frequently undersells Casper. Though kind hearted, Casper is often a poor businessman.

When Corrie's brother, Willem, arrives, he brings a Jewish friend, who was attacked by young boys in the street. While some foresee evil, others remain in denial, hoping Holland will remain neutral in this war, as they did in the previous one. Corrie wonders how she could have seen, in all that joy, the horror that was ahead for her family.

The ugliness of their capture is only more obvious against the complete and simple joy at the shop's anniversary celebration. Chapter one serves as a contrast to the rest of the novel. It is this life that Corrie strives to return to during the rest of her journey.

The author uses obvious foreshadowing in chapter one. She sees the joy of her family and all they gave up to do the work of helping the Jews. Looking back, Corrie asks her earlier self if she would make the same sacrifices had she seen the future.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary and Analysis

In chapter two, Corrie flashes back to her childhood. In 1898, she was six years old, and living with her older sisters in the Beje. Betsie, the eldest, already suffers from anemia. The family lives a simple life, preferring to help others, though the watch shop makes little money. Aunt Jans lives with Corrie, her siblings and parents. Jans lives a devoted, religious life. She eschews all new fashion and insists upon the same for the girls. Nollie rebels against such ideas when she chooses to wear a new style of hat for the first day of school. Corrie dreads her first day of school. At first, she tries to come up with a plan to stay home permanently. Her father gently convinces her to go to school.

Another dear memory from Corrie's childhood is travelling to Amsterdam by train with her father to check the time of the official clock at the Naval Observatory. There, he would deal in watch parts with Jewish businessmen, with whom he would argue religion. On these trips, Corrie had the opportunity to talk about many deep subjects with her father. She even brings up sex on one such trip, which her father explains, gently, as information too heavy for such a young girl. Such an answer satisfies Corrie for the time being.

Other pastimes in Haarlem in Corrie's childhood include listening to concerts outside the concert hall or in the cathedral, which boasts an organ that Mozart had played. The Ten Booms also help the many needy in their neighborhood. When they take food to a young mother who recently lost her baby, Corrie sees a dead body for the first time. That night, when young Corrie becomes anxious for the safety of her own family, her father's practical wisdom comforts her once again.

The memoir now flashes back in time even further. The author gives important details about the Ten Boom family. She also establishes the character of key people in the plot. The reader meets the aunts, who offer not only their love and support to the Ten Boom children, but also the influence of their old-fashioned values. Mrs. Ten Boom also establishes the family's habit of helping those in need, no matter what burden that may be to the family. Finally, Casper Ten Boom shows himself, early on, a disciplined man who leads the family in their spiritual thoughts and habits.

The advice of Corrie's parents shines in this account of her childhood. Casper Ten Boom, in particular, seems undaunted by even the hardest questions. He and Corrie share an open relationship out of character with their religious zeal. The faith that Corrie shows in her father and the strength she gains from that faith stand in stark contrast to the responsibility she shoulders for the family later in the story.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary and Analysis

Time passes quickly, and, in chapter three, Corrie's older brother, Willem, goes away to college. Corrie quickly falls in love with Willem's friend, Karel. However, she admits that she frequently falls for the boys her age. She simply does not possess the confidence in herself that others, such as Nollie, do. When Nollie and Corrie visit Willem and Karel at college, Corrie becomes too tongue-tied to talk.

At the Beje, Aunt Bep and Mrs. Ten Boom are both ill. A new doctor arrives bringing a curious invention, a blood pressure cuff. They also learn that Aunt Jans suffers from diabetes. Corrie learns to test Jans' blood sugar. In January, the blood test for Jans brings a negative result. The doctor gives her three weeks to live, which Jans accepts calmly, despite her long-time infatuation with death.

Willem graduates from seminary and marries. The family travels to hear his first sermon, even though Mrs. Ten Boom's health wanes. Corrie looks forward to seeing Karel. When they meet after Willem's sermon, Karel compliments Corrie and expresses a desire to write to her. However, Willem seeks Corrie and warns her that Karel's family wishes for a higher-class marriage for him and will never bless a serious relationship between Karel and Corrie. Yet, Corrie writes Karel everyday. At first, he writes often as well, though after a while the letters become less frequent. Corrie makes excuses for him. After a few months of friendship, Karel brings his fiancée to meet Corrie at the Beje. At first, she suffers from heartbreak. Once again, her father offers advice for dealing with her broken heart.

As she grows up, Corrie faces many situations that prepare her for her life ahead. Her father's advice on death, no doubt, rings through her mind while she lives in the concentration camp. She and Betsie's practical view of single life begins at the end of chapter three. For the first time, Corrie deals with pain and loss, showing that her life has not been always been easy, though such everyday heartaches do not compare to what she will later endure. Corrie's love for Karel does help the reader relate to Corrie more as a real person. Therefore, readers may more easily put themselves into the story and consider their own actions in such situations.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary and Analysis

It is 1918 at this chapter's opening and World War I ends. Mrs. Ten Boom suffers from a cerebral hemorrhage, which leaves her in a coma for two months. The family can only watch and pray. She awakens from her coma, but cannot speak. When Nollie marries, the girls' spinster aunt, Anna, must give Nollie the ritual thirty-minute talk about sex. Betsie, barren from her long-term illness, decides not to seek marriage. At twenty-seven, Corrie also remains happily single. At Nollie's wedding, her mother sings one hymn aloud. Four weeks later, she dies.

Betsie also takes ill. Because of Betsie's illness, Corrie must take over the bookkeeping for the shop. She discovers that she enjoys the work very much. When she confesses this fact to Betsie, Betsie confesses that she enjoys running the household, which she does with a mastery missing since their mother's death. After the successful duty swap, Corrie learns many aspects of the watch business. She becomes the first licensed, female watchmaker in Holland.

The family continues to thrive. Casper Ten Boom takes in ten foster children after the loss of his wife. Between Willem and Nollie, they also enjoy the visits of ten grandchildren. As a gift to Casper, the townspeople pitch in to buy the family a large radio, the first they own. Casper's habits gradually change, as they hear the tones of Big Ben over the radio every hour. For a while, he stubbornly continues to travel to Amsterdam. After some time, however, he admits that the radio is accurate and begins to set his clocks by Big Ben. Technology affects other aspects of the business as well; the heavy auto traffic in front of the shop throws off the time of the astronomical clock, which has always been accurate up until now.

The end of chapter four catches up with the beginning of the novel. Many of those in Haarlem continue to ignore the truth about the Germans. Casper hires a young German man, Otto, who is a proud member of the Hitler Youth. Otto criticizes the Jews and even the Ten Booms, when they read from the Old Testament. Casper strives to teach tolerance by example, but he eventually fires Otto for mistreating the older employee, Christoffels.

The simultaneous flashbacks in this chapter show what the times were like when Nollie receives a sex talk the night before her marriage. The sex education at the time was a thirty-minute talk on the eve of one's wedding, normally given by one's mother. Nollie, however, gets even less of the important information, as her single aunt must deliver the speech. In her reminiscing about such times, Corrie sees the folly of such practices, though she does not condemn them; she merely expresses joy that times and thoughts have progressed.



Technology begins to affect life in the Beje. First, the entrance of the radio brings entertainment to their quiet evenings. It broadens their world significantly, bringing music and concerts from all over Europe. It also alters Casper's habits, giving him a more convenient way to set his time. At first, he resists change, but practicality wins in the end.

Corrie's work in the shop illustrates her independent nature. The strength she exhibits later, during her imprisonment, already shows in her pride at becoming the first licensed female watchmaker in Holland.

The hiring of Otto illustrates the presence of the evil of Nazi doctrine even in innocent places such as Haarlem. Casper shows his generous spirits when he keeps Otto on after concerns arise. However, Otto's eventual expulsion shows that not even Casper will tolerate for a long time, the hatred taught to the Hitler Youth.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary and Analysis

The family stays up one evening to listen to the Prime Minister of Holland address the nation over the radio. He vows that Holland will once again remain neutral. Casper Ten Boom, however, predicts war. Five hours later, an air raid begins. Betsie and Corrie awake at the sound of the bombing, and they pray for their country. Betsie, always the generous-hearted one, prays that the Germans will see the error of their ways.

The occupation quickly moves into Haarlem, though, at first, life is not disturbed too much. Everyone must carry identification and use ration cards. None of the media carries real news, only that which the German government wants to be told. Radios are confiscated. Corrie lies to the authorities when she only turns in their one, smaller radio. They hide the larger, more powerful radio under a stairwell. Corrie is surprised and disturbed that her first blatant lie was so effortless.

One night, when Corrie cannot sleep, she sits up to drink weak, rationed tea with Betsie; upon returning to bed, she finds a deadly piece of shrapnel in her bed. The Nazi doctrine quickly spreads, sweeping up many young Dutch people in its wake. The Jews around Haarlem begin to wear the required stars on their clothing. Finally, Jews begin to disappear, some flee for their safety and others are taken by the Germans. Casper says that he pities the Germans for their hateful ways.

After it becomes clear that Jews are leaving the city for safety, Corrie learns that Willem is involved in finding safe hiding places for them. German authorities raid friends and neighbors of the Ten Booms. Kik Ten Boom hides Weils, a Jewish businessman on the same street. A man only known to them as the Bulldog appears without his similarly-looking pets. He confesses to Casper that he feared capture. He poisoned his dogs to spare them a life with no one to care for them. Other Jews leave sacred texts and other valuables with the Ten Booms. Corrie, seeing the need Jews have for help, decides to help them, along with her father and sister.

As the war takes hold of Holland, Betsie's faith takes a greater role in the story. Corrie always holds her older sister up as a greater example of faith and devotion. Though all the family makes a habit of putting others first, Betsie does so in ways that even Corrie resists. Betsie also serves to keep Corrie grounded, encouraging her not to ponder "what ifs" when Corrie returns to bed one night to find shrapnel on her pillow.

The underground appears in the novel for the first time in this chapter. It would seem, at first, that Willem, a minister, would be an unlikely participant in such a deceptive practice. However, many members of the underground believe in a "steal from the rich and give to the poor" mentality. Corrie points out that Willem has always been an ineffective missionary to the Jews, not converting many to Christianity, but helping them live more comfortable lives as Jews. Everyone in the Ten Boom family becomes

involved in hiding the Jews, showing the selflessness the family established in Corrie's childhood.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary and Analysis

Life continues to be difficult for the natives of Haarlem. It is now a crime to sing the Dutch national anthem. Yet once, when the Ten Boom's go to hear their nephew, Peter, play the organ at a local cathedral, he plays the national anthem. While some are proud of his resistance, Corrie worries that trouble will find him. Nollie, Peter's mother, hides two Jews for Willem. Peter's anthem playing is discovered, however, and he is sent to prison for illegally playing the national anthem.

Three more Haarlem Jews come to the Beje for help. Corrie recognizes that the city is too dangerous for them. When she seeks Willem's help, he urges her to find her own sources. She seeks the aid of a man in the ration's office, who steals one hundred ration cards, with plans to renew them every week. No family can afford to take in a Jew without a proper ration card.

Corrie is not involved in relocating Jews for long before Kik introduces her to a sophisticated underground that operates throughout Holland. Pickwick, their long time friend and customer, runs much of the operation, though all of the men involved go by Mr. Smit. Pickwick tells Corrie that Peter's release from prison for playing the Dutch national anthem is near. He sends a man to create a secret room at the Beje. They condemn the hiding place for the valuables as too obvious. Instead, men build a small hiding place in Corrie's room. When finished, the brick wall, smuggled in just a few bricks at a time, looks just as old as the rest of the Beje. The builder instructs Corrie to hold regular drills for hiding in the secret room.

More and more Jews seek out the Ten Booms for safety. The Ten Booms clearly see such work as a call from God, however, and respond with aid. Seemingly, the family's faith never falters, though Corrie herself sometimes harbors secret doubts. Friendships and acquaintances that they made in the "normal" life proves invaluable now in finding homes and supplies for the Jews and young boys that must be hidden.

The action of the story continues to fly along as it did in the opening chapters. The reader may marvel over the coincidences that occur for the Ten Booms, though the family sees them as answers to their fervent prayers. The dedication and sacrifice of those involved in the underground causes them to seek others to help, such as the Ten Booms. Such actions are only logical, when one considers the risk these people take to be part of the underground movement. The hardships squelch selfish or halfhearted attempts to help.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary and Analysis

The razzia, or search for young men of working age, makes it unsafe for any young men to appear in public. Such a raid comes through Nollie's neighborhood as Betsie and Corrie visit there one day. Nollie insists on telling the truth, no matter what. Corrie silently disagrees with Nollie's faith on this issue.

Throughout the countryside, safe places for the Jews begin to disappear, as families are either overcrowded or discovered. On woman, Mrs. DeBoer, houses eighteen young Jews. She agrees to take in the Bulldog and his wife when the authorities raid their shop. The face of the city begins to change, as citizens cut down trees in parks for firewood. Christoffels dies from the severe winter cold. When the young Jews at DeBoer's house cannot take the claustrophobia anymore, they leave the house, causing a raid in which authorities capture everyone but Bulldog's non-Jewish wife.

Sympathizers are often found in unusual places, however. Rolf, a Dutch policeman in Haarlem, seeks Corrie's help for the son of the cleaning lady at the courthouse. Due to the worker drafts, or razzia, young men hide just as the Jews do, some even dressing as girls if they must go out during the day. To take such a person, many families require not only the ration cards, but also a fee. Corrie arranges for the cleaning woman's son. The grateful woman vows to repay Corrie someday.

As Corrie's network, one she calls God's underground, grows, so does her need for resources. Pickwick arranges to have telephone service restored, which the Germans revoked earlier in the occupation. One year after Corrie had begun her work with the underground, her resources are low. One hundred ration cards are no longer enough. When a woman with her baby, only two weeks old, arrives, Corrie frantically tries to enlist the aid of a rural preacher. When he refuses, Corrie must send the mother and baby to a farm that had already been raided by the authorities in the past. Within weeks, the Germans once again take every Jew from the farm, and Corrie never learns their fate.

Corrie develops a code for telephone communication in which all of the conversations seem to involve watch repair. Such contact brings to the Ten Boom residence a new problem—those Jews who are too dangerous to place for one reason or another. Meyer Mossel is one such Jew, whose features easily give away his Jewish heritage. The family decides to hide him at the Beje, renaming him Eusie. Due to waning supplies, he even consents to eat pork soup. Jop, a young man working for the watch shop, also moves into the Beje, as it is too dangerous for him to travel to and from work with the worker drafts throughout the city. Leendart and Henk also move into the Beje; Leendart installs a whole house alarm that will warn the Jews to seek shelter in the secret room should authorities appear. The family practices such drills until they can erase all evidence of their presence of the illegal guest in seventy seconds. Despite their grave

situation, the residents of the Beje strive for lightheartedness, with such as Eusie's jokes and Betsie's evening cultural activities.

Corrie's system evolves as their needs change. Though one may assume that a devious and creative person would be required to develop such an elaborate, anti-government scheme, Corrie shows that a simple person with pure intentions can run a complicated network of undercover agents. When the razzia begins to seize young men for work duty, the need for hiding places escalates. Corrie remembers that one hundred ration cards seemed like an unbelievable large amount in the beginning. Now, however, they are not nearly enough.

Life in the Beje proves to have enjoyable moments, despite the gravity all around them. Betsie continues to have a positive outlook and organizes activities to keep the spirits of her housemates up as well. They use their time indoors after curfew to share what they learn, such as learning Hebrew from Eusie.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary and Analysis

For one and a half years now, Corrie and her family have led their double lives. Daily, Corrie fears a mistake on someone's part. First, authorities raid Nollie's home. They arrest her for housing a Jewish girl as her maid. Sticking to her vow to always tell the truth, Nollie admits that the woman is a Jew. From prison, Nollie tells Corrie that God will honor her honesty. In fact, before they take Annalliese away, sympathizers of the Jews raid the holding area and Annalliese escapes. Mietje, the cleaning woman that Corrie helped, frequently takes messages between Corrie and Nollie. Through her friends in the underground, Corrie learns that the doctor who cares for the prisoners in Nollie's prison can sometimes be sympathetic. She visits him, complimenting his dogs, and finally pleading for her sister's freedom, citing the need of Nollie's six children, omitting that they are all grown.

Not sure how the doctor received her plea, Corrie returns to the Beje. The family continues to live in fear of discovery. One day, during dinner, a man appears to be washing their windows uninvited. Eusie quickly breaks into a birthday song. When Corrie questions the unwelcome window washer, the man claims to be at the wrong store, but the family could not be sure. To further protect their safety, Corrie also begins sleep drills, in which the men of the house demand answers from her while she sleeps. At first, she always answers truthfully, but, after much practice, she develops the habit of denying knowledge of the underground. The household grows as they take in Mary Itallia, a ninety-one-year-old woman, whose asthma makes her difficult to hide.

The watch shop receives an unexpected and unwelcome visit from Otto, who now works for the German police. Such a test of their secrecy goes well, until Otto questions their ability to have real tea long after it has been available to the public. Corrie insinuates an affair with a German officer, and Otto leaves, having completed his mission to torture his former employer.

As the Christmas of 1943, nears, Corrie regretfully states that every family in Haarlem has a member in jail or in hiding. The prison doctor, however, releases Nollie. The residents of the Beje celebrate not only Christmas, but also Hanukkah, until a neighbor warns Corrie that her Jews are singing too loudly. Shortly after that, the chief of police summons Corrie. She packs a bag in case of imprisonment. Though she fears discovery and punishment, the chief makes it clear that, though he knows of the underground, he is supportive of Corrie's work. In fact, he seeks someone to kill a German spy in the neighborhood. Corrie informs the chief that no one in her network does that kind of work, though she offers to pray for the situation. She decides to keep such information from her father. It is then that Corrie realizes that her secret underground is not much of a secret. Shortly after, Rolf warns Corrie that one of her hideouts is about to be raided. When she sends Jop to warn them, the German authorities capture him. They worry about his ability to keep silent under torture.



In a few action-packed chapters, one and a half years have passed. Nollie's imprisonment, however, tests the family's dedication. It would appear on the surface, that Nollie was not as dedicated to the cause. She, after all, offered up the information about the Jews she was hiding without any coercion. However, the situation proves to be a test of her personal convictions about honesty. She does not expect her family to forsake their cause. Corrie uses Annaliese's release to prove the wisdom in Nollie standing by her convictions.

At the end of 1943, a premonition settles over the Ten Boom family. Corrie has shared visions of leaving from Haarlem on more than one occasion. She constantly fears discovery. The tension of the plot rises at Jop's capture. It seems that not even a devoted person such as Corrie can keep the elaborate scheme under wraps indefinitely. In her practical wisdom, she realizes this even now.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary and Analysis

On February 28 of 1944, authorities raid the Beje for real. Corrie, sick with the flu, has been in bed for two days. The four Jews hide safely in the secret room, though Corrie must leave without the bag she packed for just such an event, because it lies directly in front of the door to the hiding place. When the soldier takes Corrie to the kitchen where the family assembles for questioning, she sees that they, in fact, found the hiding place of the valuables right away. Betsie and Corrie are both beaten for information about the underground, though neither divulges any details. In fact, after the beating, Betsie tells Corrie that she feels sorry for the soldiers and the hate they feel.

The family arrives at a facility to be processed for prison. As they await transport, Rolf directs them to the bathroom facilities, where he instructs them to discard any incriminating evidence. As Corrie rides out of town with her father and siblings, Nollie, Willem, and Betsie, she sees the fulfillment of a vision she had when she began work in the underground. She saw a cart haul away her whole family, just as the Germans did now.

It is after their capture that the Ten Booms seems to meet with providential protection, such as Rolf's advice to discard any incriminating evidence. Corrie lays such occurrences out in detail as she recounts the story of her imprisonment. Where the reader may assume that the story is ending, Corrie's selfless ministry to others has just begun.

The vision Corrie has mentioned comes true, the cart symbolizing the buses take the prisoners from Haarlem to The Hague. Haarlem represents home and peace to the Ten Booms, even in the midst of the war. For the rest of the novel, Corrie strives to return there.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary and Analysis

Buses transport prisoners to The Hague. Casper Ten Boom, now quite aged, is offered release if he promises not to cause more trouble. When he vows to remain helpful to all the needy of the city, they imprison him along with his daughters. In line after line, officials question the prisoners about their vital information and their crimes. Finally, they arrive at the federal prison; authorities separate the men and women. Officials confiscate all valuables, including their mother's wedding ring that Corrie wears. No two women from Haarlem live in the same cell. Corrie, still ill, enters a small cell already inhabited by four other women. One of her cellmates, Frau Mikes, has made a deck of cards from her daily ration of toilet tissue. At first, the games of solitaire elevate Corrie's mood and she wonders why her father never allowed cards at the Beje. After a while, however, Corrie is disturbed at the effect her luck at cards has on her mood. Dissatisfied with her new pastime, she gives it up.

Corrie's health continues to deteriorate until a car takes her to a hospital with two other ill prisoners. When a nurse befriends her there, she pleads for a Bible and a needle and thread. The doctor diagnoses her with pleurisy with effusion, pre-tubercular. Upon leaving the hospital, she receives a small package from the nurse. Back at her cell, she opens it to find soap, safety pins and small editions of the gospel books.

Two days later, Corrie is placed in solitary confinement due to her illness. She splits her treasures with the women in her former cell. Once in solitary, Corrie becomes too weak to feed herself. When a young man appears daily to give her medicine, she begs for news of her father. The young attendant does not offer any news, confessing that such conversation would spell trouble for them both. Showing her ever-present optimism, Corrie rejoices that her new cell has a window through which she can view the sky. She passes time reading her small portions of the Bible. At first, she also sings, though the guard reprimands her for such noise.

On April 15, Corrie's birthday, she is still in solitary confinement, though she is recovered from her illness. Finally the guard takes her to a large shower room, where the women enjoy a shower for the first time in weeks. That same week, the guards all leave to celebrate Hitler's birthday. Without those who normally keep them quiet, they pass message along the corridors of the prison. Betsie passes a message to Corrie, "God is good." She learns that Nollie and Toos have been released; in fact, only Betsie and Corrie remain in prison from the raid on the Beje. No news reaches them in women's prison about Casper.

Shortly after learning of Nollie's release, Corrie receives a package from her. Delighted, she opens the package to find a blue sweater and red towel; she revels in the bright color in her otherwise grey world. Carefully peeling the stamp from the package, Corrie



also receives a hidden message, which Nollie reveals that all those hidden in the secret room of the Beje are safe.

A German officer visits Corrie to question her about the underground. Thankfully, Corrie cannot give him any names, nor confirm the names on his list, as everyone went by Mr. Smit. She hopes that soon she will have her hearing and receive her official sentence. On May 3rd, Corrie receives a sad letter from Nollie, informing her that Casper Ten Boom died ten days after entering the prison. To her desperate pleas for help, Corrie receives a sedative, but no sympathy. Alone in her cell, she pictures her parents together again.

The separation from her family proves to be Corrie's undoing. Symbolically, her health deteriorates once she and Betsie must separate. This occurrence illustrates Corrie's frequent assertion that Betsie possesses an angelic spirit that brightens all those around her.

Time takes on a new meaning for Corrie. The passage of time is something she guards; a watchmaker stripped of her timepiece symbolizes a desperate woman. Always resourceful, she improvises a calendar system on her cell wall. Such actions serve to give her accounts credibility.

Mr. Smit, the name that Corrie never really understood, but accepted as a fact in the underground, proves to be her redeeming feature when questioned about what she knows. It soothes her soul that she can honestly answer that she does not know the people they question her about. Such foresight on the part of the workers in the underground saves Corrie and Betsie from a harsher sentence.

In one way, the German officers represent all the hate that the Nazi doctrine extols. Rarely is an official of the German government shown to have any soft feelings. They are caricatured as mean and unfeeling. Corrie first, then Betsie, recognize the brainwashing required to make a person that way. Betsie dreams about the rehabilitation centers Corrie will run after the war.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary and Analysis

After three months in prison, much of that in solitary confinement, a guard leads Corrie to Lieutenant Rehms for her hearing. She finds him to be a gentle man, though she is suspicious of his pleasant manner, fearing it is manipulation. In the course of his questioning, Corrie shares her faith with Lieutenant Rehms. He soon dismisses her. Soon, though, she meets with the Lieutenant again. He desires to learn more about Corrie's religion, hoping to escape the darkness that surrounds his life. When Corrie asks to see Betsie, Rehms seems generally concerned, though he claims he does not have that kind of power. He does arrange, however, for Corrie to see Betsie in her cell as the guard escorts Corrie back to her cell.

Weeks later, all of the Ten Boom progeny arrive at Rehms' office for the reading of Casper's will. Such a meeting is purely construed, as the will was simple and to the point, leaving the Beje and all belongings to Betsie and Corrie. Willem, Corrie is sad to discover, has taken very ill while in prison. His son, Kit, has been captured while working for the underground along the coast. Nollie sneaks a bible to Corrie, and, before they all leave, Willem prays for Rehms, expressing thanks for his kindness.

Rehms, the lieutenant in charge of Corrie's hearing, is a true Godsend for the family. It is first with Rehms that Corrie realizes what she views as her calling while in prison. She attempts to share her doctrine of love and light with Rehms, who seems interested, but without hope. Corrie's thoughtfulness despite her situation is not unrewarded, as Rehms arranges for the family reunion for the reading of the will. The importance of her faith and her dedication to her beliefs has only begun to be tested.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary and Analysis

Shortly after the meeting in Rehms' office, the prisoners receive orders to prepare for evacuation. Many hours later, the prisoners are bused out of The Hague and taken to a location further south in Holland. In boarding the train, Corrie manages to find Betsie, and the two stick close together. They fear the transport will lead to Germany and are relieved to arrive near Brabant, at a prison called Vught.

Corrie and Betsie nickname the stern woman in charge at Vught "The General." After two weeks of hard labor in Vught, Betsie and Corrie receive pink slips. A young man working nearby tells them that such slips mean release. Excited about such prospects, they divide all their material goods, meager though they are, among their fellow prisoners, saving only the bible given to them by Nollie. The two sisters proceed through a full day of processing, in which they receive their valuables back. In the final line, the authorities collect their valuables once again and lead them to yet another compound within the prison. It is at this point that a new idea seizes Betsie. She vows to minister faith and religion to those she meets in prison.

Though thoroughly discouraged, the women seek joy from the smallest items. They rejoice at receiving their first new clothes since their capture. The guard assigns Betsie to make uniforms, and Corrie receives a job fabricating radios for the military. Her supervisor admonishes her, though, when her works proves too good. He insists that less of her radios actually work and gives the workers much free time, to keep production down.

Both women embrace Betsie's dream to minister to the prisoners. They begin to hold nightly prayer meetings. Corrie realizes that, though she is grateful to no longer be in solitary, she now must share the griefs of all those around her. Such compassion nearly suffocates at times; many of the women know men on the other side of the camp. Daily, executions ring out from the men's side, and the women worry about their loved ones.

Corrie learns that six months is the typical sentence for her crime. She has faithfully kept track of the passage of time since her capture and sets September first as their day of release. Betsie, however, seems content in the prison, where she finds fulfillment in her ministries. As the date nears, however, explosions are heard near the prison, and the women become hopeful that help is arriving. Corrie's supervisor explains, though, that the explosions are most probably the Germans blowing up bridges and railways to slow the progress of the allied troops. Days after the day, Corrie hopes to return home; the Germans execute every male prisoner. They then march the women back out of the facility and onto freight trains. With the cars packed to double capacity, many women faint. Slowly, the trains make the dreaded trip into Germany. In the wretched conditions, Betsie falls ill.

Briefly, during their transfer to Vught, the prisoners fear transfer to the horrible concentration camps of which they have heard rumors. The transfer proves to be a blessing for the Ten Boom sisters, however, as they manage to find one another, allowing them to remain together for the rest of the time they have.

The government resistance they have been involved in proves to reach even into the prison walls. The supervisors, involuntary workers just as the prisoners, do not strive to be productive for the occupying forces. The Germans are shown as clueless rulers, not realizing the amount of time wasted in the prison factories.

The bible smuggled to them by Nollie comes to represent their faith in a tangible way, as they are able to keep it despite repeated searches, even strip searches. It is under Betsie's direction and encouragement that the sisters begin their bible studies in the barracks at Vught. Such clandestine meetings encourage the hearts of the Ten Boom sisters, as they are able to feel that they are helping the prisoners that so desperately need hope. Corrie's faith sees some of these prayer and bible meetings as a last hope for those around them, as death is a frequent visitor during the entire time of their imprisonment.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary and Analysis

After two days on the crowded, dirty train, the women arrive in Germany, nearly too weak from hunger and thirst to stand. Guards order them to march to Ravensbruck, a notorious, women's concentration camp. At the sight of the incinerator, dread fills Corrie. The women rush for the water spigots, but guards quickly drive them back. No sign of nature exists in the camp.

The women arrive at a tent, where they collapse onto beds of straw, only to find them full of lice. Weeping, the sisters take turns cutting one another's hair. Betsie sings them to sleep, as they lay in the straw, filthy with lice and black ash from the incinerator. After three nights in such conditions, they are processed.

Fearfully, they crowd into rooms where they strip and don a meager gown and pair of shoes. Corrie manages to smuggle in the blue sweater and the bible. Once in their barracks, they must sleep five to a bunk, which are teeming with fleas. That night, as Betsie and Corrie study the Bible together, the Bible seems more real to them than ever before. Betsie prays, thanking God even for the fleas. Corrie admires her sister's devotion.

Corrie describes the routine of life in Ravensbruck. Once a week, medical personal order them to strip for inspection, which proves to be a farce. During long, grueling roll calls, they are addressed only by their numbers. The cramped, dirty sleeping quarters built for 400 now house 1400. The toilets overflow and food runs out as prisoners from many camps in Eastern Europe arrive in Germany. Few of the women speak the same language. When such conditions begins to breed animosity, Betsie seeks to make peace. Her sweet spirit brightens the barracks noticeably.

Corrie and Betsie receive Siemens duty, unloading heavy handcarts. Though the work is laborious, they rejoice in the daily walk outside the camp. They also begin to hold two daily bible meetings in the barracks, where supervision is limited. Betsie and Corrie take turns reading the Bible in Dutch and translating to German. Other women translate to languages they know as well. The sisters also rejoice as their vitamin drops, essential to Betsie's weakened body, last despite their obvious overuse. The very day they run out, a prisoner who works at the infirmary smuggles them some vitamin pills. Betsie's health declines as winter sets in. When her fever reaches 104, she enters the infirmary.

The arrival at the concentration camp brings an almost palpable discouragement to all the women, Corrie included. Only Betsie seems to see some unseen benefit in the situation. Corrie describes the environment of the death camp in painful detail. The conditions and the routine almost turn the prisoners into the animals that the Nazis believe them to be.



Once again, Corrie looks to her older sister for inspiration and guidance when the environment of the barracks seems to be more than Corrie can handle. Betsie keeps a positive attitude, serving as a role model for Corrie.

One may quickly guess that the hospital in the concentration camp represents little hope for the ill. The Germans gas and cremate those who grow severely ill. Miraculously, Betsie gets better after only a few days of rest in the hospital. Such a change illustrates the toll the horrible living conditions and lack of proper food have on the bodies of the prisoners, especially older women such as the Ten Boom sisters.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary and Analysis

Mien, the same woman who smuggled vitamin pills to Corrie, tells her how to get into the hospital to visit Betsie. She finally gets up the courage to sneak into the bathroom at the back of the facility. She is appalled, however, to find it filthy and stacked with dead bodies. She quickly visits Betsie and returns to work. After five days, Betsie returns to the barracks, though she never saw a doctor. She receives knitting duty in the barracks with the weakest of the women. At this time, Betsie learns there is little supervision within the barracks because of the fleas. Therefore, Betsie points out that the fleas are what make the Bible studies possible. Corrie marvels at her sister's positive spirit.

Betsie begins to dream of life after their imprisonment. She desires to open a rehabilitation home for survivors of the concentration camps. Furthermore, she wants to rehabilitate the guards. She describes the facilities in detail to Corrie.

Corrie continues her hard labor, leaving Betsie at the barracks to her knitting duty. One day in December, authorities inspect Corrie's brigade for transfer to facilities with better provisions. Corrie purposely fails the physical exam so that she can remain with Betsie. Now without a work assignment, Corrie joins the knitting brigade. Betsie's spirits remain high, though Corrie confesses that depression always threatened, especially as they watched the old and infirm loaded for the crematorium. Corrie also struggles with guilt over what she perceives as her selfishness. Actions such as struggling to stand in the center at roll call or hoarding Betsie's vitamin pills were actions she repented of as un-Christianlike.

Roll call becomes deadly in December as winter takes hold. Many fall over dead. Betsie's illness returns, and she soon suffers from paralysis. She dreams and mumbles incoherently. The Snake, the woman in charge of the knitting brigade, grants Corrie a pass to visit Betsie. There, Corrie sees her sister's body after she dies and observes that Betsie looks young and peaceful again. The blue sweater so precious to them must be burned to prevent spreading the disease.

Betsie's dreams of rehabilitation homes encourage Corrie. She views them as proof that Betsie will get better. Corrie feels that the God they have put so much faith in will not allow Betsie to expire before Betsie see her dreams fulfilled. Such hope proves false, however, when Betsie dies at the camp just before Christmas. Such a loss is emotionally catastrophic for Corrie. It tests her faith, though she manages to keep hope alive. In fact, her sister's death serves as motivation to continue, if only to keep Betsie's dreams alive.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary and Analysis

Three days later after Betsie's death, Corrie almost does not respond when she hears her name at roll call. She learns of her release, pending inspection. Due to edema in her feet, she must stay in the infirmary, waiting for the swelling to dissipate. On Christmas Day, she is in the hospital, pleading with a gypsy woman for the bedpan for another in need.

Finally, she is released. She must sign a statement that the care in Ravensbruck was good, and then she receives some meal vouchers and her valuables. By train, Corrie reaches Berlin on January 1st, 1945. She realizes that Betsie's dream as correct. They were both free of the death camp by the New Year. Corrie, so severely institutionalized, can barely function. Her money, she learns, is no good here. German looks like a wasteland from so many years of war.

When she finally reaches Holland, she stays at a hospital in Groningen. She learns that further travel into the country is prohibited. For days, she stays at the hospital, enjoying luxuries such as hot baths and beds with sheets.

Eventually, she manages to stow away on a food truck and make it to Willem's house. She is disheartened to learn that they have no news about Kik. Furthermore, Willem appears to be dying from the illness he contracted while in prison. Still, Corrie longs for her home at the Beje. Pickwick arranges to transport her back to Haarlem.

There, she sees that Toos has run the shop in her absence. Nollie and her nieces meet her there, where they share a tearful reunion. She opens the Beje to those she calls the feeble-minded, who also hid during the war. The Nazis view these people as useless.

Feeling lost and useless, Corrie rejoins the underground, though she finds that much of her reactions are not as sharp. She begins to share her story about the concentration camps. A Mrs. Bierens desires to help Corrie with Betsie's dream of a rehabilitation center. She offers the use of her large home. Corrie is delighted to discover that it is just as Betsie pictured the home to be. In May of 1945, allied troops liberate Holland. In June, the home takes in its first resident, Mrs. Kan. In 1947, they begin to receive Dutch prisoners from Japan. Corrie learns that the hardest to forgive are one's own neighbors, who betrayed one another. Corrie transforms the Beje into a home for those of the NSB, or Nazi party, who wish to leave that lifestyle. She runs both homes with few rules. She offers supplies for gardens to those who need healing, which Betsie had said would help the healing process.

Corrie also seeks to forgive those in her past. She realizes the need when she meets a guard from the prison in Munich during a speaking engagement. When she cannot shake his hand, though he claims to be a Christian as she is, Corrie realizes that her

lack of forgiveness poisons her own life. While Corrie is on speaking engagements throughout Germany, a man seeks her help in rebuilding a concentration camp, Darmstadt, into a home for the many needy of Germany. Thus, another of Betsie's dreams comes true. In her public speaking, Corrie calls the story of her experience and survival as Betsie's story.

Corrie suffers from the same culture shock many prisoners suffer from when released from a concentration camp. She unquestioningly signs the false statement about her care while in the camp. From there, she stumbles home, both literally and figuratively. For some time, she cannot seem to make decisions for herself. She welcomes the care of the nurses at the Dutch hospital even after she recognizes that many of them are young men dressed as female nurses to escape recruitment.

The reader soon learns that upon returning to Haarlem, Corrie dives back into helping with the underground. She recognizes, though, that she can no longer operate in a way safe for all those involved. Instead, she pursues Betsie's dreams for rehabilitation homes. When more than one of Betsie's visions about the appearance of the facilities comes true, Corrie adopts the dreams and plans as her own. She zealously seeks help and takes in those in need of emotional healing.

Corrie never loses the selfless nature she learned in childhood. Her love for her sister, even after death, is almost like that of a widow. She illustrates the theme of the persistence of love in her dedication to Betsie's cause, despite all her suffering.



Characters

Corrie Ten Boom

Casper Ten Boom

Betsie Ten Boom

Willem Ten Boom

Nollie Ten Boom

Mother Ten Boom

Pickwick

Toos

Christoffels

Peter

Tante Jans

Tante Bep

Tante Anna

Karel

Kik

Mr. Smit

Mrs. Deboer



Rolf van Vliet

Mary Itallie

Meyer "Eusie" Mossel

Frau Mikes

Lt. Rehms



Objects/Places

The Beje

The Beje is the home of the Ten Booms in Harlem. The front of the lower level houses the watch shop. The back and upper three levels serve as living quarters for the family and various guests. It is on the top floor, in Corrie's room that builders make the secret hiding place.

Germany

Germany represents a place of hopelessness. During their early incarceration, the women fear a transfer to Germany, assuming that would mean their deaths. Even after the war, Germany is a place of little opportunity and much destruction. It is there that Corrie helps to turn a former concentration camp into a home for the needy.

Holland

Holland is home to the Ten Booms. Once the women arrive at Ravensbruck, Corrie longs to be home. Simply crossing the border back to Holland brings hope and aid to her when she needs it most.

In the First World War, Holland remained neutral, and many had hoped that the second war would be the same. However, neutrality is not possible after the German troops invaded and the Queen left the country.

Clocks

The clocks of the shop show the present hope of the future. They are delicate and intricate, but they faithfully keep time for the family. When the authorities arrest the family, Casper mentions that someone needs to keep the old grandfather clock wound. The first thing Corrie does upon entering the Beje once again is to set her father's old clock.

Naval Clock

For many years, the Naval Clock in Amsterdam represents a reliable constant. However, progress soon makes it obsolete, as the time is broadcast over the radio. As is often the case, people resist change at first, but eventually accept it, and they no longer need the trip to Amsterdam, in which Corrie enjoyed so many talks with her father.



Haarlem

Haarlem, where the Ten Booms live, is a city of many faces. The Beje sits in an old part of the town, where the sky disappears between the buildings. Neighborhoods such as Nollie's, however, provide much more open views.

Bartjeljurisstraat

The Beje is on this street. Other shops, including another watch shop, line the street, with homes above the shops. Once automobiles begin travelling the streets, the astronomical clock can no longer keep accurate time.

Gorte Market

The Gorte Market is a central place of trade for Haarlem. Corrie sees a vision of her family leaving town on a cart through the Grote Market. This dream comes true when they upon their arrest.

The Underground

The underground is an elaborate network of various workers, seeking to not only help the Jews, but also resist the German occupation. Many members of the underground help Corrie minister to the Jews. All the members go by the name "Mr. Smit."

Ration Cards

Ration cards are a hiding Jews only hope. A family cannot afford to take someone in without a valid ration card. The cards are hard to fake because the occupying government reissues them every month. Only the initial card is required, though, and Corrie manages to obtain one hundred from the man who used to be her meter reader. Therefore, he can renew them every month, making it possible to house one hundred Jews outside the city.

The Hiding Place

A man from the underground builds a false wall in Corrie's room of the Beje. He brings bricks into the house a few at a time in briefcases. When it is complete, the wall looks original to the old house, complete with a used shelf and water stains. Four people hide in the hiding place when authorities raid the Beje, and none are discovered.



Alpina Sign

To show that it is safe to enter the Beje for help, the Ten Boom place an Alpina watch sign in the kitchen window. If it is not safe, the sign remains hidden. The German officers that arrest the family quickly recognize the signal and place it in the window, intercepting any who come for help.

Blue Sweater

When Nollie is first imprisoned, she asks Corrie to send her a blue sweater. Then, during Corrie's solitary confinement, Nollie sends Corrie the same sweater. The sight of such a brilliant color in the drab environment does much to lift Corrie's spirit. Later, they smuggle the sweater into the concentration camp to provide a little extra protection for Betsie from the elements. Corrie sees the sweater once more, just after Betsie dies, but the nurse insists that they must burn it for health reasons.

Bible

Nollie smuggles a small Bible to Corrie when they meet in Rehms' office. The book brings hope to Corrie and Betsie, and they go to much trouble to keep it during their entire imprisonment. They share its message with all they can, holding regular Bible studies in the barracks. Just before Corrie's release, she finds a woman who can read the Dutch words and passes the forbidden tome on to her.



Themes

Unconditional Love

Betsie, in her Christlike manner, exhibits an unconditional love that even Corrie admires. Their father, likewise, shows compassion even to the German officials who load up the first Jews at the Grote Market. Casper vowed that to suffer for aiding the Jews would be an honor for his family.

Such a belief in the love for the most evil characters of history must stem from an unearthly belief that there is good in every person. Betsie asserted that, since the Germans could teach the young people to hate so completely, they can also love. She expounded this belief until Corrie believed it as well, so much so that Corrie opened a home in the Beje for young people of the Hitler Youth who desired to learn to love.

People who feel such love for those who hate them will obviously show intense love for those closest to them. The Ten Boom family supported one another through very tough times. They upheld one another's ambitions and dreams.

Religion

Early in Corrie's life, religion played an important role. It was her family's faith that inspired them to help others, even when it was not convenient for them. It was also their faith that caused them to open their home to many needy people, from their own relatives to orphans in need of a loving family. Finally, they opened their home to Jews who no one else would take in.

While in prison, Corrie frequently seeks guidance from her faith. She seeks comfort from her Bible. She looks to the beliefs of her family to encourage her to continue to hope. The promise of a peaceful, final resting place comforts Corrie when her father dies in prison. Though she is heartbroken over the death of her sister, Corrie pictures Betsie as finally free, in a better place.

The peace that comes from such devotion is something that the Ten Boom sisters feel the need to share. They not only try to tell those in prison with them about the truth of their faith, they also try to live it in every way. Betsie seeks to spread peace and understanding in the barracks of Ravensbruck. They share everything about themselves, not only their ideas, but their medicine and their blankets. Such actions serve to make their religion more real than any ritual could do.

Love vs. Hate

Betsie sees the connection between the attitudes of love and hate. She believes that the emotions come from the same place in a person, and that the ability to feel hate



signals an inherent ability to feel love. She desires to help those whose ability to love have been hampered by the Nazi doctrines.

Corrie recognizes the poisonous nature of hate. She sees it in the severe beatings of the women at Ravensbruck over the smallest infraction. As she travels across Germany after her release, she sees the devastation that such a hateful war has wreaked upon the countryside.

When Corrie faces one of her prison guards, though, she is shocked to find such hate within herself. She turns to her faith to deal with the emotion and find forgiveness to the man, who previously had treated her so poorly, but now claims to have the same faith she does. She turns her love to those in her rehabilitation homes, encouraging them to forgive those who betrayed them, by turning them into the authorities causing the destruction and even death of their family and friends. Corrie recognizes that, when forgiveness takes its course, hate leaves, allowing room for compassion and love.

Style

Perspective

Corrie Ten Boom recalls the story in first person point of view. She tells the story as she looks back over important events in her life. Though she now possesses much more knowledge than she did as the events happened, some events remain unexplained, such as the whereabouts of Kik. Though she shares the horrors of her time in the concentration camp, ultimately Corrie intends to encourage her reader with the story of her survival. She expresses her never-ending hope that all things happen for a reason.

The story is a poignant memoir of the author's life during World War 2 in Holland. It is a true story, based on the facts as Corrie recalls them. The fact that she keeps records of the passage of time while in prison gives credibility to her recollections. Records also back up many of the events. Others, though, may be colored by the passage of time.

Tone

Corrie speaks very candidly. Though her outlook on life remains objective, due to her religious beliefs, she tells the story in a subjective and personal manner. Doing so serves to draw the reader into her story. Her treatment of difficult situations and personal feelings gives her story credence, however. Corrie's testimony maintains a feelings of honesty and full disclosure.

In the beginning, the author uses a lighthearted mood. The joy about the birthday party in chapter one continues through much of the flashback of Corrie's childhood. Moments of foreshadowing, however, cast a dark pall over the joy in the Ten Boom household.

The reader may be surprised, however, at Corrie and Betsie's attempts to stay positive even after their imprisonment. They find many things to celebrate. For example, after their father dies, they rejoice that he no longer suffers in the prison.

Structure

The book is written in fifteen chapters, each named for a significant place, person or object from the chapter. Time passes at a fast, but even, pace. Chapters 1 through 15 cover the span of time from 1898 to 1945.



Quotes

"Oh Father! Betsie! If I had known, would I have gone ahead? Could I have done the things I did?" p. 12

""Some knowledge is too heavy for children. When you are older and stronger, you can bear it. For now you must trust me to carry it for you.""

""And our wise Father in heaven knows when we're going to need things, too. Don't run out ahead of Him, Corrie. When the time comes that some of us will have to die, you will look into your hearth and find the strength you need—just in time." p. 33

""Happiness isn't something that depends on our surroundings, Corrie. It's something we make inside ourselves."" p. 37

""Whenever we cannot love in the old, human way, Corrie, God can give us the perfect way."" p. 48

"This was evil's hour: we could not run away from it. Perhaps only when human effort had done its best and failed, would God's power alone be free to work." p. 123

""Father! I cried suddenly." God be with you!" ... "And with you, my daughters," he said. / I turned and followed the others. Behind me the door slammed closed. *And with you! And with you! Oh, Father, when will I see you next?*" p. 139

"It was Father's train case once again. Such cruelty was too much to grasp. Too much to bear. *Heavenly Father, carry it for me!*" p. 171

"Wasn't she telling me in her gentle way that I was as guilty as Jan Vogel? Didn't he and I stand together before an all-seeing God convicted of the same sin of murder? For I had murdered him with my heart and with my tongue." p. 176

""Do you know what I am thankful for? Betsie's gentle voice startled me in that squirming madhouse "I am thankful that Father is in heaven today!" p. 182

"The children especially seemed wonderful to me, pink-cheeked and health. They returns my stares with wide-eyed interest; I noticed, however that the adults did not look at us but turned their heads away as we approach." p. 185

"But Betsie needed that sweater! She needed the vitamins! Most of all, we needed our bible." p. 187

"He hung naked on the cross. I had not thought... "Betsie, they took *His* clothes too." Ahead of me, I heard a little gasp. "Oh, Corrie. And I never thanked Him." p. 191

"And so we stood between piers of bunk and gave thanks for fleas. But this time I was sure Betsie was wrong." p. 194



"How was it possible, packed so close, to be so utterly and miserably alone?" p. 201

"Side by side, in the sanctuary of God's fleas, Betsie and I ministered the word of God to all in the room." p. 206

"The real sin I had been committing was not that of inching toward the center of a platoon because I was cold. The real sin lay in thinking that any power to help and transform came from me." p. 209

"The beauty of Betsie's face sustained me over the next days, as I went from one to another of the women who had loved her, describing to them her peace and her joy." p. 215

"For an instant, I stood stupidly where I was. I had been Prisoner 66730 for so long that I almost failed to react to my name." p. 215

"Even in the other patients I saw that stony indifference to others that was the most fatal disease of the concentration camp. I felt it spread to myself: how could one survive if one kept on feeling!" p. 217

"*There are no "ifs" in God's kingdom.* I could hear her soft voice saying it. His timing is perfect. His will is our hiding place." p. 218

"It was New Year's Day, 1945. Betsie had been right: she and I were out of prison." p. 220

"And the day he said, "Those people you spoke of—I wonder if they'd care for some homegrown carrots," then I knew the miracle had taken place." p. 230

"And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world's healing hinges, but on His. When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself." p. 231



Topics for Discussion

Is it ever right to do wrong? How does this book address that struggle?

Which character(s) are you most like? Explain.

In what ways does the Beje become a character in this story?

Discuss one or two of the internal struggles of Corrie Ten Boom.

Discuss the symbolism of the watches in the story. How is Corrie like one of her father's clocks?

Besides Corrie, which character is most important to the plot? Explain.

How did Corrie and Betsie's presence affect the barracks at Ravensbruck?

How do the women work to keep hope alive while in the concentration camp?

What event is the climax of the story? Explain.

If Corrie Ten Boom were a young person today, in what kind of work would she be involved?