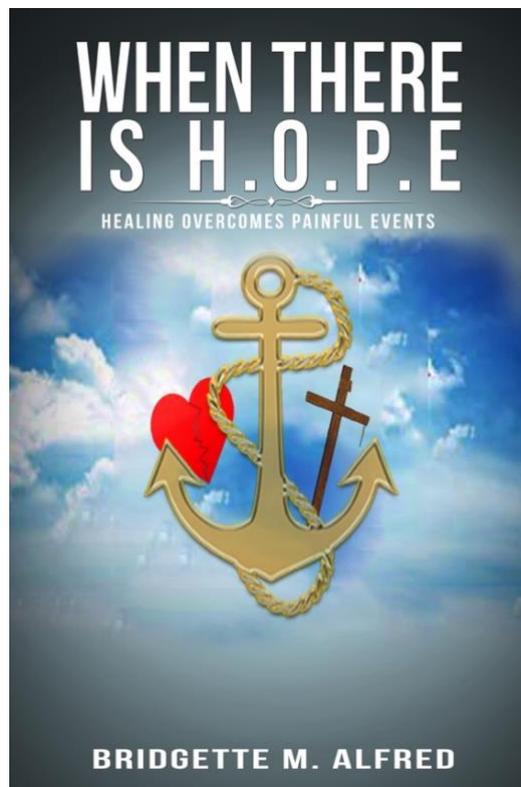


# **When There Is H.O.P.E. (Healing Overcomes Painful Events)**

**BIBLE STUDY GUIDE - Week Two,  
Thursday, June 24, 2021**



**Raynelle & Esther**

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## RAYNELLE

**Raynelle had hope in her parents to provide safety and security throughout her life. The following excerpt is when she meets her mother again after several years of separation:**

Aunt Lottie gave me an envelope with my name written on it. I recognized Papa's handwriting.

I stared at the envelope for a long time before I opened it. He had written:

*My dearest Ray, if you are reading this letter it means that I am no longer with you. I am so sorry Ray! I'm so sorry that I'm not there to keep my promise to always protect you. I'm mostly sorry for keeping your mother from you. If Aunt Lottie has followed my instructions, your mother should be there with you as you read this letter. Ray, it's not your mother's fault that she hasn't been in your life these past five years. Your mother came back to D.C. a year after we did. She wanted me to take her back and said that she was ready to be the best wife and mother on earth. Ray, I didn't want to take the chance of her hurting you again. I felt that I couldn't give her the chance to abandon us again.*

*Your mother had nothing when she came back to Washington. I helped her find a place to stay and also paid her college tuition so she could become a dentist. I did all this as an agreement that she must never try to contact you in any way. Now that I'm no longer with you, everything must change. Uncle Claude and Aunt Lottie are older now. They have earned the right to start a new life in New Orleans. Always remember, Ray, I will love you forever. Please, Ray, forgive your mother and go live with her.*

With tears in my eyes, I kept reading Papa's letter over and over. I could hear his voice speaking to me from the letter. Somehow the last sentence stuck most in my mind. *Go live with her!* Here is déjà vu.

By another person's selfish act, I suffered the consequences. I had lost everything I loved in one moment. My papa, my uncle, my auntie, and now the only place I knew as my home.

I didn't want anything more to do with God because Papa died and I had to go live with the woman who had abandoned her only child for another man.

Aunt Lottie saw the expression on my face and took me by the hand into another room. She put her loving arms around me and said, "A lot of things we will go through we will not understand on this side of Heaven. But God did hear our prayers and healed my papa, but not on this earth." Usually, her words comfort me, but this time she was very far from the mark.

It hurt for a long time that my mother hadn't left New Orleans to come back with my father and me. What helped me to get over the abandonment was that I had my father all to myself. I was also happy there was no more intense arguing every day.

**Reflection:** How might a situation where someone hit rock bottom be considered a blessing in disguise?

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# ESTHER

**Read Esther 2:1-4, 8**

**Reflection:** Can you imagine how Esther felt forced into a culture that she knew nothing about?

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**Read Esther 2:17-18**

**Reflection:** Can you remember a time of disappointment in your life and then realize God had a holy-designed outcome?

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**Reflection:** Describe how Raynelle and Esther's lives are similar.

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