

Book Two, *Hopes on the Horizon*, Discussion Questions

1. Lily, Phila, Ollie, Hugh, and Dan struggled with Self-Pity, Shame, Doubt, and Pride. What inner voices come at you like mosquitoes in late summer?
2. Who are the antagonists (you know, those bad guys/gals) in *Hopes on the Horizon*? Who might really be behind their mischief or attempts to defeat the protagonists (the good gals/guys). How does that help you understand your enemies better, and what can you do about it?
3. Discuss whether Todd was playing straight with Phila. How did Desire for Prince Charming impact her judgment?
4. Fergus taunted Ollie mercilessly, leaving such an indelible impression that even when his brother wasn't around, Ollie could still hear those devastating insults. "*You don't really think a big, fat elephant like you can compete with the likes of a normal man, do you?*" Without using names, whose words haunt you? Whose voice can you pay attention to instead that will help you overcome lies and fears?
5. In what ways have Insecurity and Guilt broadsided you like the torpedoes they fired at Hugh? How does your conscience play into such voices?
6. Fear and Anxiety caused Lily to struggle with moving toward her dream of becoming a fashion designer. In what ways have they prevented you from making choices that might take your life in the direction of your dreams.
7. When God disappointed Dan, Pride pushed his childhood beliefs toward a cliff. How has disappointment made you struggle with God, and if you've overcome those doubts, how did you do it?
8. When Lily's family and Dan's career were taken away, they both became angry at God. Was their anger wrong, justified, or understandable? How might their relationship with God have grown, if they'd decided to trust Him while they were experiencing intense pain?
9. How did Lily and Dan try to find comfort without God? Were those efforts beneficial?
10. Reason convinced Lily that she didn't need God. "*So, you see, there is no God. God had nothing to do with the railway crash. If there is no God, he's not punishing you. You are the shaper of your own destiny.*" What reasonable arguments make you question your beliefs? What reasonable arguments refute those doubts?
11. What methods, successful or otherwise, have you used to fight those ferocious inner battles for your soul? What are some weapons you can use to gain victory in the future?

Tips for dealing with THE VOICES

Start by identifying who they are and where they come from. Then:

- Slam the door on the world and invite Jesus in. Quiet the noise. The stimulation of the world's audio and video seduces us from thoughts of the Lord. The noise drowns out the Spirit's whispers. Welcome the silence and listen. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27
- Give no heed to Satan's voice. Command him in Jesus's name to be silent. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7
- "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Ephesians 6:11

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Ephesians 6:16

The world, the flesh, and the devil are like quicksand exerting a tremendous pull to suck us into the depths of darkness. God's intention is for us to rise above the temptations and soar to reach dreams beyond our expectations. We can only succeed if we focus heavenward and keep our eyes on Jesus.