

# Illustrated Bible Life

## We Know How the Story Ends

On June 14, 1940, the world was stunned to hear of the German invasion of Paris. It was an event that most thought impossible at the time. The French government had vowed that Germany would never take Paris, but when the Germans drew near, the French government packed up and left for the south, where it was believed they could hold out against the Germans.

When the French government pulled out, many in the city also fled. By June 13, the roads out of Paris were so packed with refugees that traffic moved forward only inches at a time. Two women who were in this crowd of vehicles were an American widow named Etta Shiber and her good friend Kitty Beaurepos, a British citizen, who had been sharing an apartment in Paris since the death of Etta's husband a few years earlier.

Before they could go far, they ran into German forces. Ordered to return to Paris, Etta and Kitty reluctantly complied, stopping at an inn along the way in search of food. When the innkeeper found out they spoke English, he persuaded them to speak to a British pilot who was trying to avoid capture, hoping to find a way to return to England to rejoin his unit.

Realizing the young man was on his own with no real hope of escape, the two women formed a daring plan to get him to Paris. Their success opened the door to an amazing adventure participating in the first "underground railway" by which British soldiers escaped from the Nazi occupiers of Paris. Ultimately, the women were imprisoned by the Germans, and the story ends with Etta on her way home to America after being traded for a German spy, and Kitty still a prisoner of the Gestapo, condemned to death.

In those first hours of freedom, Etta determined to tell her story and the resulting book, *Paris Underground* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), was published in 1943.\* In the book's prologue, she explains that she had to tell this story so that the Allies would understand what they were fighting for and why it was so important to carry on, even though they could not know how it would all end.

We sometimes feel this way in life. Events unfold, twists and turns open up to what we had thought was a clear path ahead, and life moves in a different direction from where we started. Our journey as Christians is like this. We cannot know the intricacies of our future with any certainty, but we have a hope we can be sure of: We know how the story ends.

The apostle Paul knew how the story would end as well, so he traveled the ancient world, preaching the gospel and writing long letters telling the story so that believers could understand the importance of carrying on. As we read Paul's letter to the Romans this quarter, may we find encouragement to forge ahead on our paths.

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\* A Kindle version is available on Amazon.com if you'd like to read the whole story.