

## August: *The Postcard* by Beverly Lewis

*The Postcard* is the story of a weary big-city journalist and a New Order Amish woman whose lives come together over a mysterious postcard.

1. The morning he passes away, Jacob tells Rachel, "We always miss what we don't have." These words prove prophetic in Rachel's life. Can you think of some things in your own life you didn't fully appreciate until it was too late?
2. When Esther and her husband hear of Rachel's loss, they come "to help, to bear your sorrows." What are some ways in which we can help bear another's sorrows?
3. Esther asks Rachel to consider that God might have preserved her life "for a special purpose." Do you think God preserved Rachel's life? Why or why not?
4. In what ways does an Old Order Amish funeral differ from the funerals you have attended? How is it similar?
5. Rachel keeps Aaron's black shoes as a token of remembrance. Why do you think she chooses her son's shoes over something of her husband's?
6. Contrast the response of Bird-in-Hand Plain community to widows like Rachel with that of the modern, outside world. What do you like or dislike about each approach?
7. Following the accident, Rachel resigns herself to her blindness. Why? What do you think was going on in Rachel's mind and heart?
8. Philip seems to fear halting his hectic schedule long enough to seriously consider the direction of his life, claiming he functions best when busy. Would you agree that it is generally easier to stay with the status quo than to pause, reflect, and possibly change?
9. Susanna assumes that keeping Rachel busy will help her heal. Contrast this approach with Philip's overly busy life.
10. At one point, Philip muses on some of the qualities he finds desirable in a spouse. What do you think of his list? What would be on your list?

11. Susanna ponders the unusually close relationship Rachel and Jacob shared, thinking how much easier it is to confide in another woman, someone who truly understands how you feel, how you think, etc. Do you agree with Susanna? Why or why not?
12. Before reading *The Postcard*, had you given thought to the idea of "generational sins," as Esther describes them?
13. Gabriel means, "God is my strength," a name his father says fits because God is the only possible source of strength such a scrawny boy could have. Can you think of other ways in which the name suits Gabriel?
14. What do you think of the healing techniques embraced by Blue Johnny and the other hex doctors? Are these health practices spiritually questionable?
15. In what ways is Rachel like her great-uncle Gabe? In what ways is she like Adele?
16. Adele sees the long-lost postcard as "a reminder of God's faithfulness to me--though I allowed great disappointment to rob me of my faith." What can we learn from Adele? Have you ever had a "postcard" moment when you've been reminded of God's hand on your life?