

Mystic



✓ Prepare in Advance

Facilitator: In advance of the session:

- Provide 3x5 cards, pens for people.
- Have a two pieces of poster board with markers available.
- Have the *Bible Background Video* ready for viewing.

✓ Learning Together

Have someone ready Isaiah 40:1-11 out loud.

Show the *Bible Background Video*.

✓ Group Discussion

- Make a list of all the different thoughts/feelings/situations/people that the Jews might have been “carrying” at this point in the exile. (guilt, hopes, sorrows, dreams, circumstances, desires, etc.) Be as specific as possible in your imagination. Print the group’s responses on poster board paper.
- Make a second list of what you hear God saying to his people in this text. Print the group’s responses on another sheet of poster board paper.

✓ Personal Prayer Reflection

Facilitator: Give all the following instructions before sending people off to pray—it may be easier to demonstrate.

Give people about 25 minutes to reflect privately about all the thoughts/feelings/situations/people they are currently “carrying” in their lives.

Invite people to write down their concerns – one per 3x5 card

Invite people to offer their concerns to God in the following way:

- Invite God to share the time with you. If you wish, imagine that you are meeting God in some comfortable place.
- Take the first card and hold it with both hands closed over it. Reflect on the concern written there. What are the hopes, fears, questions, struggles that accompany this concern?
- Next, bring your hands close to your heart. Hold the card/concern there. Wait in God’s presence until you are ready to open it up to God. (Note: You may not want to open it up to God yet, or you may want

to ask God to help you to be ready. Either desire is okay.)

- If you get to a place where you can offer the concern to God, bring your hands and the card from your heart to just in front of you, with palms open. Stay in that “place” and let God “move” to receive what you are opening up to God. You might want to rest your open hands in your lap, or lift your hands up in the air “towards” God.
- If you cannot offer the concern to God yet, continue to hold it close to your heart and tell God as honestly as you can, what you are thinking and feeling.
- Pay attention to what is happening in your prayer. What, if anything, do you sense from God? What is your response? Rest in the moment with whatever your prayer experience has been.
- Repeat the prayer sequence as many times as you need to cover all the concerns/cards you have brought to prayer today.

✓ Closing Prayer

Gather back in the large group

Invite the group to pray for each other—“holding” each other in their hands, “holding” each other close to their hearts, and then offering each other up to God.

By Joy Yee

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