

Small Group Discussion

Week 18



Chapter 18 – Exile and the Promise of Redemption

Remember, teach what you learn and share life, not just information.

Coaching Conversations:

As we approach the period in Scripture where God is seemingly silent, it seems appropriate for us to talk about silence during group discussion. It can be unsettling as a leader when you encounter silence during your group time. While it can be uncomfortable, don't be afraid of silence during discussion; rather, embrace it! In a long chapter like this one where there is a lot of information presented, it's not unlikely that your group members will need a little extra time to process your questions in their own minds before sharing their thoughts. We are easily tempted to fill the empty space in conversation by talking or re-stating the question. They will let you know (verbally or via facial expression) if they need the question clarified. Rather than "fill the space," give your group members the freedom to process their thoughts in the silence. It may even be helpful to preface a thought-provoking or vulnerable question with, "Let's take a few minutes to think about this, and then respond..." to introduce and validate the silence. In becoming comfortable with periods of silence, you may find that the Holy Spirit will draw out some responses from your group members that will greatly impact your discussion.

How HIS-story becomes My Story:

GOD'S STORY - God promises that a new covenant is coming in the person of Jesus Christ.

OUR STORY - As believers, we are able to experience the unconditional blessings of the New Covenant.

MY STORY - Because I'm a recipient of the new covenant, my obedience is no longer a condition for salvation, but an expression of gratitude.

Starting the Conversation:

At this point we've seen a continuous pattern of Israel's disobeying God and God's repeatedly offering mercy when His grace was undeserved. Rather than calling attention to the Israelite's apparent ignorance, ask your group members if they have observed a similar pattern of ignorance and disobedience in their own lives. In the midst of that pattern, have you seen God offer you grace and mercy?

Life Group Questions

1. Read Deuteronomy 28. Based on what we have studied in the previous sessions, how did the blessings offered in verses 1–14 become a reality in the life of Israel?
2. Summarize the judgments in verses 15–68 that God said would come upon Israel if they disobeyed.
3. Read 2 Kings 17:1–23. This passage describes Israel’s being taken into exile. The author did not simply describe the event; he included a theological explanation for what happened. According to this passage, why was Israel sent into exile?
4. In light of Israel’s persistent rebellion, why do you think it still grieved God to send them into exile?
5. Read Ezekiel 36:16–38. Why was God promising to restore Israel? Why is this significant?
6. Look closely at verses 25–27. God promised to cleanse His people, to give them a new heart, and to empower them by His Spirit. What is the significance of these promises?
7. Read Ezekiel 36:25–27 and Jeremiah 31:31–34. What makes this new covenant so unique and important?
8. As the Old Testament comes to a close, we see that God promised to send a King in the line of David and to make a new covenant with His people. How should these promises affect our lives today?

Additional Recommended Resources:

- “Why was Israel divided into the Southern Kingdom and Northern Kingdom?” – GotQuestions.org article
- “What were the 400 years of silence?” - GotQuestions.org article

Prayer Assignment:

Ask God to address the sin in your heart and to give you a heart that loves Him and submits to His rule. Thank Him for His promises of redemption and for the amazing reality of the new covenant established in the blood of Jesus.