

Into the Light: Lesson Two Study Guide

Pray the prayer on page 21

Answer the three questions on the bottom of page 21:

- What situation(s) in the world and in your life are worthy of lament today?
- When have you seen communities of faith in neighborhoods, cities, nations, the world come together to lament? What did these gathered groups ask of God in their laments?
- If you are unfamiliar with lament as a practice in your congregation or community, how could lament be helpful where you are?

Read Psalm 137 (page 22)

The people of Israel have been removed from their beloved Jerusalem and taken into exile in enemy territory. How do you see them grieve (lament) in this Psalm? What do you learn from their lament?

How do you handle the last disturbing verse (verse 9)?

This Psalm is called an imprecatory Psalm, which calls curses upon the enemy. It is quite common in the OT. Try to understand this Psalm in your group. Why are imprecatory Psalms important?

If you are alone and are struggling with this Psalm, listen to Diane's video. Also search this verse online and read other people's commentary on it.

There are communal laments and individual laments. Psalm 137 is a communal lament. Read Psalm 3 for an example of an individual lament.

Think of examples of contemporary laments in our world, either individual or communal. What happens to a community when the lamenting is over? In some of your examples, the lamenting may not be over. What good will come out of these laments?

If you are in a small group, write a communal lament using these elements (if your group is large, you may want to divide the group into smaller groups, and then have each group read their lament):

- Address it to God.
- Name the complaint
- Ask God to act.
- Conclude with a statement of assurance

Think of someone you disagree with on an issue or situation. Maybe find two people in your small group who disagree on an issue. Think past the issue differences and find common ground in a lament. Or, you may want to try one of the examples given in the *Suggestions for Leaders* under the “Lamenting Together in Hope” section.

End by praying together the prayer on page 26.