

LIFEgroups

## talk it over | week 4

discussion | study

Where is God in Israel's Darkest Hour? 1 Samuel 30:1-19 Joel Rosenberg

Joel gave us an update about what is happening in the world in regards to the Israel and Gaza conflict. Feel free to discuss thoughts and feelings about what was shared.

Below are 10 questions to help us more personally answer the question "Where is God in MY Darkest Hour?"

*THE GOAL: To understand that the love of God transcends even our most acute experiences of pain and suffering.*

*SUGGESTED ICEBREAKER The purpose of the Icebreaker questions is to get everyone to share something personal. This first question is intended to be answered by everyone in attendance. You may find it beneficial to send this question out to the group members in advance, so they can think about their answer.*

What is one of the worst injuries you've had in your life? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever wondered how an all-loving and all-powerful God would allow so much suffering in the world? If He loves us so much and He has the power to prevent suffering, why would He not? How have you tried to make sense of this tension?
2. If someone told you that suffering proves that there is no such thing as an all-loving, all-powerful God, how would you respond?
3. What are some situations that come to mind where suffering is appropriate? When might pain be a good thing?
4. If every experience of pain and suffering had a reasonable explanation, how might that change the way someone understands the relationship between God & pain?
5. When was a time you experienced pain and suffering that seemed to have no explanation? How did you feel about God in the midst of that suffering?

**\*\*\*Have someone read from Isaiah 55:8-9 & Romans 11:33-34\*\*\***

6. How do these passages impact the way we experience unexplainable suffering?

7. What effect does the free will of people to reject God and His goodness have on suffering in the world? If God were to anyone from ever doing anything that might cause another person to experience suffering, how would that affect your life?

**\*\*\*Have someone read Romans 8:31-32\*\*\***

8. What does the fact that God didn't even spare His own Son from suffering tell us about our suffering? How does Jesus' willingness to enter into our pain impact how you see your suffering?

9. Is anyone struggling to trust God in the midst of current struggles or suffering? What are you dealing with? Does anyone want prayer for difficulties that you're currently facing?

***Take some time to pray for anyone who needs prayer***

10. What might we be able to do for each other to help us remember the hope that we have even in the midst of difficult seasons?

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### **Passages to help you pray for the Hostages**

People are praying all over the world for the huge number held hostage in Gaza. There are children, babies, those with disabilities and dementia, autism and serious health conditions, all of which are held captive by merciless terrorists. It hardly bears thinking about. But we can't look away and we need to pray. We may be powerless to help, but God isn't. He is an expert at freeing captives.

Pray for God to comfort and save, to reveal Himself to those in deep darkness and grave danger there in Gaza. Pray for freedom for the captives. We believe in miracles.

Praying passages of Scripture is a great way of lining up with God's heart and His will. Here are some passages you can pray over the hostages, declaring God is mighty to save. He can redeem and rescue. That is His nature, and nothing is impossible for Him. Join us in praying through these passages today.

Isaiah 49:24-25

*Can the prey be taken from the mighty,  
or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?*

*For thus says the Lord:*

*“Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken,  
and the prey of the tyrant be rescued,  
for I will contend with those who contend with you,  
and I will save your children.”*

Luke 4:18-19

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

Jeremiah 30:10, also repeated in 46:27

*“Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the Lord,  
nor be dismayed, O Israel;  
for behold, I will save you from far away,  
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.  
Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease,  
and none shall make him afraid.*

Psalm 142

*With my voice I cry out to the Lord;  
with my voice I plead for mercy to the Lord.  
I pour out my complaint before him;  
I tell my trouble before him.*

*When my spirit faints within me,  
you know my way!  
In the path where I walk  
they have hidden a trap for me.  
Look to the right and see:  
there is none who takes notice of me;  
no refuge remains to me;  
no one cares for my soul.*

*I cry to you, O Lord;  
I say, "You are my refuge,  
my portion in the land of the living."  
Attend to my cry,  
for I am brought very low!  
Deliver me from my persecutors,  
for they are too strong for me!  
Bring me out of prison,  
that I may give thanks to your name!  
The righteous will surround me,  
for you will deal bountifully with me.*

Zephaniah 3:16-20

*"Fear not, O Zion;  
let not your hands grow weak.  
The Lord your God is in your midst,  
a mighty one who will save;  
he will rejoice over you with gladness;  
he will quiet you by his love;  
he will exult over you with loud singing.  
I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival,  
so that you will no longer suffer reproach.  
Behold, at that time I will deal  
with all your oppressors.  
And I will save the lame  
and gather the outcast,  
and I will change their shame into praise  
and renown in all the earth.*

*At that time I will bring you in,  
at the time when I gather you together;  
for I will make you renowned and praised  
among all the peoples of the earth,  
when I restore your fortunes  
before your eyes," says the Lord.*

**Start Praying & Start Doing.** Check Prayer Requests, & pray.

Talk to your group about (1) creating profiles on the Calvary App so your group can create a group chat on the app. Let Pastor Josh know so he can set your group up for you. (2) Encourage your group to read ahead. (3) Please remember to fill out the LIFEgroup meeting assessment form after your meeting. Here is the link:  
<https://bit.ly/LIFEgroup-Assessment>