

## Lesson 6—“Looking to the future”

**For leaders**—This lesson allows you to review all that you have studied and discussed in the *Beyond Disaster* booklet. It may be good to encourage members to continue to review the booklet and what they have learned as they continue through the crisis.

**Opening**—Prayer and song

### **Looking back**

- Invite members to share their laments or drawings with the group.
- Ask members for feedback about how they felt when writing the lament
- What was the hardest part?
- What was something that they learned through the exercise?

### **Leading the lesson**

- Choose different members to read through the lesson.
- Read the Scripture verses together.
- Discuss things they have learned about themselves through this booklet.
- Discuss what the group might want to do going forward: continue meeting for support and prayer, do another book study together, or do *Healing the Wounds of Trauma: How the Church Can Help* with a trained facilitator. This book is best done three to six months or more after the crisis has passed.
- **Discuss the “For Reflection” questions.**

**Before you close**—Encourage members to share the booklet or parts of it with their family, friends, and neighbors. Although it is designed for believers, non-believers have been experiencing the same situation and trauma that they have. The booklet could open the way to share the gospel.

**Closing**—Prayer and song

## Next steps

When this current crisis is past, your church members may still have many ongoing family, financial, emotional, and spiritual issues that may take a long time to work through.

If you need more information about the Trauma Healing Institute and its programs for adults, children, and teens, please visit the website [traumahealinginstitute.org](http://traumahealinginstitute.org), or contact your local facilitator or [traumahealing@americanbible.org](mailto:traumahealing@americanbible.org).

May God bless you as you lead and support members of your church during this season. May the information provided in the *Beyond Disaster* booklet help you all begin the process of healing your heart wounds individually and as a church.



## 6. Looking to the future

### Continuing to heal

Your recovery from the trauma of the disaster will take time and go in stages. When you are in the middle of difficult times, it may feel like things will never get better—that the grief and problems will go on forever. Remember that in this world things are always changing, and changes can lead to something better.

Keep reviewing the list in the “Start Here” section at the beginning of this booklet (page 6). You may discover things that are helpful to you that you can add to the list.

When things have settled down, you can reflect more deeply on your experience. Consider joining a trauma healing group. If there's not a group in your area, invite others who have come through the disaster to form a small group. You might meet only once or set up a regular meeting schedule. You can help each other continue to heal when you share your experiences and ask each other the listening questions in Section 4 (page 50). If you organize a group, be careful not to wear people out with long meetings or by having participants share so much detail that it upsets others. Healing comes little by little over time.

**Whatever happens to you, God will be  
with you through it.**

*God is our shelter and strength,  
always ready to help in times of trouble.  
So we will not be afraid,  
even if the earth is shaken  
and mountains fall into the  
ocean depths;  
even if the seas roar and rage,  
and the hills are shaken by  
the violence.*

**PSALM 46:1–3**

During difficult times, look for the ways God provides shelter and strength. Take time to remember the small and large ways God has helped you in the past. And remember that one day, God will wipe away all tears and remove all suffering.

*He will wipe all tears from their eyes,  
and there will be no more death, suffering, crying, or pain. These things of the past are gone forever.*

**REVELATION 21:4 CEV**



Until that day, God invites you to express your feelings to him. He is always listening.

Over time, your prayers may change, from prayers of lament to prayers of praise. And you may find yourself praising God one minute and lamenting to him the next. That's okay.

This song of praise from the Bible may inspire you to write your own.

*I love the LORD, because he hears me;*

*he listens to my prayers.*

*He listens to me*

*every time I call to him.*

*The danger of death was all around me;*

*the horrors of the grave closed in on me;*

*I was filled with fear and anxiety.*

*Then I called to the LORD,*

*"I beg you, LORD, save me!"*

*The LORD is merciful and good;*

*our God is compassionate.*

*The LORD protects the helpless;*

*when I was in danger, he saved me.*

*Be confident, my heart,*

*because the LORD has been good to me.*

*The LORD saved me from death;*

*he stopped my tears*

*and kept me from defeat.*

*And so I walk in the presence of the LORD*

*in the world of the living.*

*I kept on believing, even when I said,*

*"I am completely crushed,"*

*even when I was afraid and said,*

*"No one can be trusted."*

*What can I offer the LORD*

*for all his goodness to me?*

*I will give you a sacrifice of thanksgiving*

*and offer my prayer to you.*

**PSALM 116:1–12, 17**

## For Reflection

What has helped you the most since the disaster?

What is the most painful part of life since the disaster?

What is one thing you can do to continue to recover from the disaster?

## MORE RESOURCES

Additional resources on disaster response and disaster planning are available for survivors, first responders, and churches.

*Online:* Visit **DisasterRelief.Bible** or **ABS.US/disaster**

*Phone:* In the U.S. call **1-800-32-BIBLE** and mention “Beyond Disaster.”

- Order additional copies and find digital downloads of this resource.
- Request Bibles for adults and children.
- Connect with trauma healing programs and disaster relief services in your area.