

Worship Material
You are not forgotten by God
Materials from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 4th February

Begin with an opening prayer

God of all, we praise you for your care, commitment and compassion for all life.

Your energy never runs out.

Your well of love never runs dry.

Your grace never goes stale.

Your word is always alive and fresh and lifegiving.

Thank you, God, our strength.

Thank you, Jesus, our Saviour.

Thank you, Holy Spirit, our Comforter.

Amen.

Read Isaiah 40:21-31

Bible notes

For half a century the people of Judah had lived in exile. After the horror of the Babylonian war, defeat and capture, the prophet Jeremiah told them to make a life for themselves in their new surroundings (Jeremiah 29:7), which they had done. But it wasn't home. And having done what God asked them to do, they now feel abandoned, disregarded, alone in the world. This section orbits around verse 27. A new prophet has arisen who is telling the people of Judah to lift their eyes and look. Something extraordinary is about to happen. God is coming to deliver them and set them off on a journey home. But how can this be? Babylon is, like all empires, impregnable and disregards the Judahites even more than God. But the wheels of history are turning, Assyria is rising and Babylon is about to be swept away. When that happens, these sorrowing exiles need to be ready to make the long journey home. How can this be? Because of who God is. God is the all-powerful creator who brings empires to dust and stoops to rescue God's people. So, the prophet tells them to get ready: God will strengthen them for the journey if they look to God. The great words of verses 29-31 will be true of them and a new chapter of their history will open.

Prayer

A prayer of praise

After each line: And we praise you.

Almighty God,
you show your strength by lifting up the weak;
you show your compassion by supporting the helpless;
you show your tenderness by reaching those in darkness;
you show your faithfulness by remembering all your children.
Wherever we are, night or day, in wonder and gratitude.
Amen.

A prayer to conclude

The Lord builds up his people; (*one hand on the other*)
he gathers the outcasts. (*make a gathering gesture*)
He heals the broken-hearted, (*hands on heart*)
and binds up their wounds. (*grip biceps*)
The Lord lifts up the downtrodden; (*raise hands*)
thanks be to God.