Home in Exile – Discussion Guide

A story of faith, family, and finding your voice when home no longer feels like a place where you truly belong.

Welcome

This book isn't just about one family. It's about all of us—anyone who's ever struggled to speak up, to belong, to stay grounded when the world around you starts shifting. Whether you're reading this in a classroom, church, living room, or small group halfway around the world, Home in Exile invites you into a deeper conversation about identity, courage, and compassion.

You don't need to be an expert in cross cultural engagement, Indian politics, or religious history to enter this conversation. You just need a willingness to listen—first to the story, and then maybe, to where God is leading you.

How to Use This Guide

Use this guide for:

- University classroom discussions (global studies, theology, literature)
- Church small groups or book clubs
- Interfaith or cross-cultural dialogue
- Organizational DEI conversations

Each section includes themes, gentle reflection questions, and suggested actions—with no pressure to “get it right.” The goal is real connection.

✨ Session Themes & Questions

1. Home, Roots, and Memory

Themes: Belonging, intergenerational memory, the sacredness of place

- What place or person has most shaped your sense of home?
- Have you ever felt like an outsider in a place that was supposed to be familiar?
- What “trees” (memories, places, traditions) anchor your story?

Try This: Invite participants to share photos or stories of a place that feels like home.



2. Faith and Family Tension

Themes: Spiritual legacy, family loyalty, unspoken pain

- Have you ever disagreed with your family about something important but didn’t know how to speak up?
- How do you carry both love and disappointment in family relationships?
- What does it mean to carry a legacy with integrity?

Try This: Write a letter to a past generation—or to a future one. What do you want to carry forward?



3. Speaking Out vs. Staying Safe

Themes: Courage, betrayal, silencing, truth-telling

- Have you ever been afraid to tell your story honestly? What stopped you?
- What risks do people take when they speak up in their communities?
- The author says, “I’m not a victim. I’m a victor.” What does that mean to you?

Try This: In pairs or journaling: “A time I spoke up…” and “A time I stayed silent…”



4. Faith as Bridge or Weapon

Themes: Religious nationalism, spiritual resilience, interfaith love

- What does “faithful presence” look like when religion is politicized?
- Have you seen religion used both to harm and to heal? What made the difference?
- The book says, “Religion at its truest is meant to be a bridge.” What does that look like where you live?

Try This: Create a group list: “Ways we can practice bridge-building where we are.”



5. Legacy, Inheritance, and Letting Go

Themes: Generational healing, memory, forgiveness, power

- What have you inherited that feels like a gift? What feels like a weight?
- When do legacies become burdens instead of blessings?
- What would it mean to carry forward love—and lay down fear?

Try This: Reflect quietly: “What do I want to hold on to? What is mine to release?”



For Deeper Exploration

These themes can be expanded into full sessions or papers:

- The rise of Hindutva and global religious nationalism
- Post-colonial identity and indigenous Christian witness
- Faith and resistance: How prayer sustains action
- Trauma and recovery in intergenerational families
- Media, misinformation, and the cost of truth-telling



Scripture & Sacred Text Connections

This book is rich in spiritual depth. Here are a few anchoring scriptures:

- Isaiah 61:3 – “To bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes…”
- 1 Corinthians 13 – Love that doesn’t seek its own, that always perseveres
- Matthew 5:10–12 – “Blessed are those who are persecuted…”
- Micah 6:8 – “Act justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly.”
- Romans 12:15 – “Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn.”

Ask: Where do you see these lived out in the book? In your life?



Closing Reflections

Finish each session with one or more of these prompts:

- What moved you in this chapter?
- What surprised you—or made you pause?
- What part of your story is waiting to be told?

And one final question for every session:

What does it look like to live with courage and compassion in this season of your life?



Bonus Ideas for Engagement

- Invite a speaker from another cultural context, or someone with interfaith or persecution experience
- Host a dialogue night between people of different traditions
- Facilitate a prayer walk or vigil for justice and healing
- Pair this with another book and/or film: The Book of Forgiving (Tutu), The Sound of Music, Persepolis, or The Namesake



Final Word

The land remembers. So do our hearts.

In telling this story, we don’t just remember what was—we reimagine what could be.

Let this book open doors for healing conversations, new friendships, and brave next steps.