

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Deuteronomy 6:10-19 & Matthew 4:1-11

Sunday, May 4, 2014

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be the answers to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Read Deuteronomy 6:10 again. What difference would it have made if Moses had told the people, “If the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your ancestors . . .”? What difference would the word “If” have made?

It would have made a great deal of difference because Moses would have been expressing doubt about whether or not God would keep His sworn promise to their ancestors and to them. Moses’ words expressed no doubt that God would do what He promised, and history shows that God kept His promise and Moses was right to trust in God. The word “If” can express a lack of faith in God when God has given explicit promises.

2. What can happen to a people when they “forget the LORD”?

They can also forget God’s law and how to obey God’s law. They can forget what is good and right in the sight of God. They can become disobedient, and forgetting the LORD is disobedience. They can forget what is true and right, and they can lose touch with reality. They can begin to believe in lies, in false gods and false religions and superstitions. They can begin to suffer from forgetting God and if they do not repent and begin to remember the LORD in the ways they live each day, they can face God’s punishment (as the Israelites eventually did).

3. Should new Christians, who may be preparing to be baptized or join a church, be warned that the devil may tempt them to doubt God, Jesus, the Bible, and the fact that they are children of God?

Yes, at some point new or potential Christians need to be warned that the future may be difficult for them and they may die a martyr’s death for their faith in Jesus. However, they also need to be encouraged and remember that Jesus died for them and has forgiven their sins and has granted them eternal life, that Jesus is preparing a place in eternity for them in a kingdom far greater than any worldly kingdom or nation. They

need to be taught and remember that their temptations and tests may be preparation for their future effective and faithful ministry. They need to be taught many promises from the Bible; such as, “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

4. What are some excuses that people give when they disobey God? If Jesus had chosen to sin when the devil tempted Him, could He have used any of these excuses?

I was tired. I was hungry. I didn’t get much sleep last night. I wasn’t thinking straight. The devil made me do it. I’m human.

No. There can be no good excuse for disobeying God.

5. What are some means or ways that believers can use to overcome temptations or tests of their faith?

Know the Scriptures and their right application and interpretation. Commit yourself to worshiping and serving only the Lord God and obeying the commands of Jesus no matter what the temptation or personal cost. Deepen your love for your heavenly Father and His only begotten Son, Jesus, by appreciating all they have done and do for you and others. Pray, trust in God, believe the Bible, ask Jesus and the Holy Spirit for specific help when tempted or tested, look for the way of escape that God can give you.

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