

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Ezekiel 43:13-21

Sunday, November 9, 2014

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **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.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Why do you think God gave such detailed directions for building the new temple and altar and for performing proper sacrifices?

Because God wanted everything done correctly and to teach that we must come to Him, obey Him, and worship Him in His way for He is holy, and we are not to worship Him as the pagans did with child sacrifices and in other immoral ways. God wanted temple sacrifices to ultimately point to the ultimate sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins to make us holy and wholly acceptable to God.

2. Think of one practical reason why the steps to the altar were to face east?

So the priests could work in the bright sunlight instead of in the shadow of the temple throughout most of the day. The sunlight would help their eyesight as God’s light shows us the truth of reality and the lights our spiritual path.

3. How did what the Levites did before their exile in Babylon have an effect on their children?

Only the family of Zadok could draw near to God in performing proper worship because their parents had remained true to the LORD when the levitical priests turned to idolatry (Ezekiel 44:10-16). It appears only the family of Zadok raised their children in the admonition and nurture of the LORD; so only their children were prepared to obey God rightly if the new temple was constructed according to Ezekiel’s vision.

4. Why did God want a bull for a sin offering?

God does not give us the exact reason in the Bible, but He expects us to obey Him whether we understand the exact reason for what He commands or not. Perhaps God wanted them to use a bull for a sin offering because those who worshiped idols often worshiped idols in the form of a bull. When they killed the bull they were renouncing the bull as a symbol for an idol, but they would use the blood of the bull to consecrate the

altar to God, because the LORD was the Lord over all creation and far greater than a bull or an idol represented by a bull.

5. Where was the bull of the sin offering burnt? Why do you think this place was chosen?

The bull was to be burnt outside of the sacred area and in an appointed place belonging to the temple grounds. Perhaps because the bull represented a sin offering, the bull as a sin offering could not be offered to God on His altar, which would not be fully consecrated to Him until after seven days of dedication offerings. On the eighth day, the priests could begin to offer burnt offerings and offerings of well-being on the newly consecrated altar.

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