

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further ***International Bible Lessons***

Jonah 2:1-10

Sunday, May 14, 2017

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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 Discussion and 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. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class so they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible class.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. If you had been Jonah, when would you have started praying to the LORD and when would you have stopped praying about your experiences inside the fish?

I would have started praying before I was cast overboard and not stopped. I would not have stopped praising God and praying for quite some time after I had set foot on dry land again. Then, I would begin praying about my obedience and journey to Nineveh.

2. If you had been Jonah, what vows to the LORD would you have made?

Vows to obey the LORD in the future, whatever He asked. Love, appreciation, and respect for the LORD should motivate me to keep these vows.

3. How might Jonah’s three days and three nights in the belly of the fish have expanded his knowledge of the true God?

He probably learned more about God’s awesome creative and sovereign power as the Creator and Ruler over land and sea. He probably learned that even though he was a prophet of God, he could not disobey God without the consequence of God’s discipline if he continued on his path of disobedience. He learned more about the truth that God’s will will be done in spite of what others do or refuse to do. God is sovereign over all.

4. Remembering what you have learned about Jonah's experiences so far, when did Jonah have opportunities to repent for running away from doing God's will? When do you think he should have repented?

Before he paid his ship's fare to Tarshish. Before he boarded the ship. Before he went below deck to sleep. Before he went above deck to see the sailors and the storm. Before he was cast into the sea. Before he was swallowed by the big fish. He should have repented the moment he first turned away from God; before taking one step toward Tarshish.

5. In what verses did Jonah say he prayed toward the LORD's holy temple? From those verses, what might have prompted Jonah to pray toward the LORD's holy temple? Why do you think he mentioned these prayers with the added fact that he had prayed toward the LORD's holy temple?

Verse 4: When he felt banished from God.

Verse 7: When he felt his life was ebbing away.

To indicate that he was not praying to the worthless idols of pagans or to the worthless idols in the Kingdom of Israel. He was praying to the LORD in Solomon's temple in Jerusalem, where everyone knew the LORD, the true God, abided. To teach that if we feel banished from God or our life ebbing away that we can find help only in the LORD.