

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

1 Kings 3:16-28, 2 Chronicles 9:8

Sunday, July 15, 2012

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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 answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What might you say to someone who said that prostitution as a profession must be okay, because in the case before King Solomon the Bible does not condemn these women for being prostitutes and King Solomon admitted them into his throne room or court?

The Bible has established a moral code, and God revealed to Moses the moral code He expected people to obey. In Exodus 20:14, God said, "You shall not commit adultery." The Old Testament condemned harlots; however, harlots could repent and come to faith in the true God and receive forgiveness (as did Rahab, an ancestor of King Solomon and Jesus Christ). In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus preached against sexual immorality. From what the Bible teaches throughout, and the Bible even compares rebellious Israel to a harlot, we know that prostitution is not approved of by God. The Bible does not need to point out the facts about what God explicitly forbids with every disobedient or immoral practice that the Bible history reports.

2. What might you say to someone who asks questions that you do not know the answer to or questions that the Bible does not appear to answer?

You might admit that you do not know the answer, because you are a Bible student as well as a teacher, so you will ask someone who may know the answer, and you will do research to try to find the answer, and you will report the results of your research next week in class [carefully write down the question exactly as it is asked and clarify what you have written with the person asking the question]. You do not need to be an expert or know everything about the Bible to be a Bible teacher.

You might remind the person that over time and with continued study many truths in the Bible will become more clear and understandable and many answers will be found through diligent and prayerful study. Remind them that the Holy Spirit will help them understand the Bible's teachings if they pray for help. Remind them as well that what the Bible teaches is true, and the Bible teaches us enough about God that we have good and sufficient reasons to trust God without knowing all of the answers to all of our questions or having "acceptable to us" explanations of everything we read in the Bible.

3. Why should rulers or leaders in business, churches, government, and other organizations work to establish both righteousness and justice among the people they rule or lead?

Righteousness concerns living right according to the moral law of God; which is to love God and our neighbors according to the Scriptures. When people live righteously, they do not harm one another, but they love and serve each other; they seek to promote the well-being of all concerned. Justice concerns fairness in relationships with others. Justice, when rightly administered, will seek decisions based on the moral law of God, as revealed through nature and the Bible. A just leader or ruler will encourage (and enforce where necessary) the truthful and right application of the moral law: that people should not murder, steal, bear false witness, etc.

4. Why do you think King Solomon contrived a test with a sword, and threaten to kill the living boy, when he probably knew from observation, from hearing the women speak, and from the Holy Spirit who the real mother was?

The king had to demonstrate conclusively to others in his kingdom who the real mother of the baby boy was in order to prove he was ruling justly and not just choosing who he wanted to be the mother of the live baby. He proved he was both wise and just.

5. Why do you think Jesus declared that He was greater than King Solomon?

People admired King Solomon for his wisdom, but Jesus was wiser still. Jesus was the Son of God who came down from heaven to reveal the truth of God and God the Father to people. He came to die a sacrificial death in behalf of sinners and lead people back to God and not away from God to idol worship as King Solomon misled people. If the Queen of the South (the Queen of Sheba) would travel a great distance to see and hear King Solomon's wisdom, people should be willing to travel great distances and listen carefully to Jesus' wisdom because He was greater than King Solomon. Jesus declared the truth about himself, and in fact He was greater than King Solomon (as history has demonstrated conclusively).

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