

# ***Study Hints for Thinking Further***

***International Bible Lessons***

**2 Kings 8:1-6**

**Sunday, July 22, 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. Why was the woman's obedience to God's word through Elisha essential to God saving her from the coming seven years of famine?**

God planned for the famine to cover a certain restricted geographic area to discipline or punish the disobedient people living in that area. God did not give the woman the alternative to prepare prior to the famine (as he gave Joseph and the Egyptians time to prepare for a seven year famine. If the Egyptians had not obeyed God and Joseph, they would have starved.). God did not give her the option of having rain fall only on her field while it did not fall on the fields of those being punished. Her only option was to move away from her home. She would need to obey and move or suffer the consequences of remaining where she was. Neither God nor Elisha said to her, "You can do this or you can do that, what do you want to do."

### **2. How is obeying God a sign of faith in God?**

When a person obeys God, they are demonstrating by their actions that they believe in God and they believe what God says. They believe God will tell them to do what is best for them and all concerned. They have faith in God's character and power, so they will obey God and leave the consequences that follow from their obedience in the hands of God. Daniel showed his faith in God when he obeyed God and the king threw him in the lion's den and God saved him. When Stephen showed his faith in God and when he obeyed God, the religious leaders killed Stephen, but he saw Jesus and went to be with Jesus in paradise that very hour.

### **3. Why does true faith in God always lead to obeying God?**

The Bible says that demons believe God exists, and they tremble. They believe God exists, but they will not obey God. Many people believe God exists, but they do not all obey God or even think they need to obey God. True faith will lead people to obey God with a loving, willing heart. People with true faith trust in God as God has revealed himself in the Bible and in the life and ministry of Jesus, His Son. They trust in God's wisdom and power, and they also trust in God's character to always do the best and right things. True faith leads to appreciation, praise, love, and thankfulness for who God is

and for what God does. True love for God motivates believers to want to make God happy by the way they live each day, and they can make God happy when they trust and obey Him. They may not obey God perfectly; they may even disobey God when overcome by temptations, but these times of disobedience are exceptions to the rule of their lives. If they disobey God, they quickly repent with sorrowful hearts and ask the Father to forgive them and Jesus to cleanse them and the Holy Spirit to empower them to obey God in the future. They pray for Jesus to help them take the way of escape that He provides if they are tempted again to disobey God.

**4. Do you think God still works providentially in the lives of His people today? Can you think of any examples of God's providential working in your own life or in the lives of others? Would you like to share your experience or experiences of God's providential working in your life with others?**

Yes. Every time my family and I have moved God has made circumstances take place before and afterwards that confirmed where He wanted us to go and that He was leading.

**5. What might happen to someone who settles someplace with the resolve never to move no matter what? What might you say to such a person who says this.**

They will miss some blessings that God wants to bestow upon them in a new place. They might suffer afflictions and even death by staying someplace when God is trying to lead them to move. I might tell someone these things, and also the story of the widow who obeyed God when the prophet Elisha warned her. She not only received her home and her land back, but God also gave her the money that her crops had earned in her absence.

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