

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

***International Bible Lessons***

**Ezekiel 34:23-31**

**Sunday, August 26, 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. If you had been with God's people in exile in Babylon, or if you feel as though you are in some type of exile today, what is one truth that you would like to learn from God?**

When I am in difficulty, I want the assurance that God still loves and cares for me. [Compare and contrast the various answers of those in your Bible study class. How different and similar were the answers?]

**2. Today, how and where can you find the assurance of the truth you would like to learn from God? [The one truth that was your answer to Question 1 above.]**

I would find the assurance that God still loves and cares for me in the Bible, and I would ask the Holy Spirit to show me this answer or truth in the Bible and help me understand and apply this truth in my situation. With respect to "how," I will more easily receive the assurance that God loves and cares for me, and more easily find the answers to my questions and the truths that I need to live by, when I pray, read, and study the Bible each day.

**3. Jesus the Messiah is King of the universe and Lord over all. How does it make you feel to know that He wants to be your Shepherd?**

Knowing these facts influences me to love Jesus even more for His wanting to personally lead me in all the right ways and to all the right places. I am grateful that the King of the universe, Who created and sustains me, cares so much about me.

**4. If you consider Jesus to be your Shepherd, what are some things you can do to show Jesus that you are one of His sheep? Why is this important for you to do?**

I can thank Jesus for leading me as a Shepherd and going before me, rather than driving me ahead of Him while He stays behind. As my Shepherd, He faces all of my enemies before I do, and He does everything He wisely can to help me face them and win the

victory; He helps me keep my faith and fight my battles faithfully, even if I suffer and die. As my Shepherd, He will lead me into heaven and into the presence of God our Father, and I will thank Him for all He does to care for me each day as my Shepherd. I will try to show Him that I love Him in every way that I can, because I do love Him. I will try to follow Jesus as closely as I can, so I can stay near to Him at all times. I will try not to wander away from Him so as to cause Him any trouble as my Shepherd.

It is important for me to do these things, to really follow Jesus as my Shepherd, because Jesus warned: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.'" (Matthew 7:21-23).

### **5. How do you know that Jesus will come again and fully fulfill God's promises through the prophet Ezekiel?**

I know Jesus will come again, because Jesus fulfilled as many of God's promises as He wisely could before His sacrificial death to save His people from their sins and the eternal consequences of our sins. I know Jesus will fully fulfill God's promises, because Jesus fulfilled so many of God's prophecies and promises when He came the first time into our world. I know Jesus is the promised Messiah from all the New Testament teaches about Jesus and how He fulfilled or will fulfill all God promised in the Old Testament. I know Jesus will return because He said He would and God never tells a lie.

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