

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further
International Bible Lessons

Zechariah 7:8-14
Sunday August 23, 2015
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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.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Give some reasons for a study of Zechariah.

The word of the LORD came to Zechariah. The Spirit of the LORD spoke through him. He affirmed what other prophets preached. His book is in the Bible that God has given us for good reasons (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17). We can learn what to do and what not to do. We can learn some of the possible consequences of not listening to God. We can learn what can happen if we harden our hearts against God and His words. We can learn from the experience of others so we do not need to repeat their sins and experiences.

2. How can we administer true justice with kindness or mercy and compassion?

Pray for God’s help and try to do what God does when He must administer true justice, for He is our best example. Try to pronounce a just judgment based on what we know, and do so with kindness instead of in a way that would be hateful and unjust and unnecessary. Show compassion toward the victims of injustice and care for them; help them receive justice from someone who has treated them unjustly.

3. What are some of the sins that other prophets condemned as well as Zechariah? How serious do you think God considers these sins?

The sins of oppressing the widow, the orphan or the foreigner. The sin of plotting evil against anyone. Very serious, since God condemned them more than once through several prophets and then eventually punished those who would not stop doing these wicked things.

4. How did the ancestors of Zechariah’s listeners respond to the words of God spoken through His true prophets?

They refused to listen; they turned their backs; they stopped their ears; they hardened their hearts; they continued to disobey God.

5. Name one way the punishment of the Kingdom of Israel differed from the Kingdom of Judah.

When they were defeated by the Assyrians and sent into exile, the Israelites disappeared as a people and became the ten lost tribes of Israel. When they were defeated by the Babylonians and sent into exile, a remnant remained and the Judeans were freed after seventy years and returned to repopulate Jerusalem and Judah, a portion of the Promised Land.

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