

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

Acts 12:1-11

Sunday November 1, 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. 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. Why do you think James was executed by Herod?

Though some might say James lacked faith or the Church had not prayed hard and long enough for him, I believe James had fulfilled God’s plan for his life and God was ready for him to come to his heavenly home. Satan and his followers may have thought they had won a battle or victory, but God is Lord over all, over all human

governments, and the King of the universe. God did not forsake James. Jesus and the Holy Spirit remained with James as Jesus promised; then, Jesus came and took him to be with himself.

2. Why do you think Peter escaped execution by Herod?

God wanted to show His Lordship over all, that God could release anyone from prison or save anyone from any human peril. Peter had not yet fulfilled God's plan for his life.

3. When something seems impossible, why do you think it is important for the Church to pray anyway? Give a reason for your answer.

With God all things are possible. Until the Church knows the answer to their prayers they need to keep praying to God for God to do what seems humanly impossible, always praying for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. The Church can pray for people to see the opportunities to serve God and others even in the midst of what appears to be impossible human and physical situations.

4. What are some opportunities Peter would have had while in prison?

He had a captive audience when the guards were chained to him. He could show Christian love and interest in the guards and their families, and have prayed for God to meet their needs. He could pray for their salvation; they would soon die.

5. What are some specific requests of the Church in prayers that may have helped Peter see and take advantage of his opportunities while in prison?

They could pray for his release. They could pray for King Herod and the religious leaders to come to faith in Jesus Christ and change their intentions. They could pray for the guards to open their hearts and minds to hear and believe the good news of Jesus Christ as Peter talked to them. They could pray for Peter to know what to say to each guard specifically, and for the Holy Spirit to help him as he spoke to each one. No guard would have come to faith in Jesus Christ without learning the truth of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit. They could pray for Peter to be able to speak to other prisoners about Jesus and saving faith.

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