Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Zephaniah 1:4-6, 14-16 & 2:3

Sunday, June 5, 2016

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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. Do you think God still stretches out His hand against evil or disobedient nations today? Give a reason for your answer.

Yes. God is the LORD over all the earth and God is the Supreme Ruler or Governor over all nations and peoples. God is the Just Judge, who has shown His grace and mercy through His Son, Jesus Christ. The LORD is the same morally perfect God today as He was in the Old Testament; salvation is still by faith in God, revealed supremely in Jesus Christ and through the New Testament. When they persisted in rebellion and refused to repent in spite of numerous warnings over decades, God judged Israel, Judah, and the nations around them, and He has told us in the New Testament that He will do so again.

2. What are some of the events in the life of a nation or people that might indicate God's hand is against them?

As in the Old Testament, God can use drought, famine, pestilence, floods, and war to punish people and nations for their persistent rebellion. These events in a nation's life may indicate God wants the people and the nation's leaders to repent and turn to Him.

3. What are some contemporary idols that some who practice going to church might serve?

Money, Power, Sex and whatever they think will give them what they want, and they will often sacrifice their children, their families, their health, their future, and their souls. They know God will not give them what is wrong, so they turn to other powers that will.

4. What are some ways Christians can truly "seek the Lord and inquire of Him"?

They can humble themselves; they can pray; they can sing songs of praise and worship to God; they can study the Bible; they can obey all they learn from the Bible as the Holy Spirit helps them; they can read good Christian literature and biographies that will help them follow Jesus better; they can consult true Christians and faithful leaders.

5. What are some of the efforts God made (and makes) before the Day of the Lord to help people avoid the horrible judgment that He brought (and will bring) that Day?

God has sent prophets. God has sent good leaders; such as King David and King Josiah. God has given examples from history when people and leaders refused to repent. God has sent His only begotten Son, Jesus the Messiah, to teach and warn people. God has sent apostles. God has recorded and preserved His Word in written form for people to read and repent and to trust in Him, so these believers could then teach and warn others before the Great Day of the Lord when Jesus Christ returns.

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