

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further
International Bible Lessons

Zephaniah 3:1-8
Sunday, June 12, 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. What do you think it would be like to live in a city today similar to Jerusalem as described by Zephaniah?

It would be like living in a city where most of the residents were oppressed by powerful and threatening people, even by evil business, political, and religious leaders. It would be like living in a city where more and more people openly practiced more and more immoral behaviors contrary to the Bible’s teachings. It would be like living in a city where more and more leaders and people disobeyed good laws, and where almost everyone ignored or ridiculed the efforts and warnings by those who trusted in the true God to change their behavior and turn to an obedient faith in God.

2. What do you think it would be like to live in a city today where almost all the ministers in most of the churches denied the Bible was true, ignored the teachings of Jesus, and were unprincipled, treacherous and similar to the prophets and priests as described by Zephaniah?

It would be difficult to find a church to attend or take your children to attend. It would be disheartening to see the ministers and churches simply going along with and/or promoting the decadent culture and immoral leaders in church and government.

3. Why do you think the unrighteous in Jerusalem ignored God and the preaching of Zephaniah?

They were not ashamed of their behavior (see Zephaniah 3:5). They did not believe that God had really punished Israel and other nations, so God would not punish them. They thought they could do very well ignoring God and those who love God who warned them.

4. Consider the city or town where you live, can you believe that God is righteous within the city or town where you live?

Yes. Only because the Bible tells me that was the case with Jerusalem, and our righteous God is everywhere present. I do see some examples of God dispensing justice.

5. When you think about what you see on television or read in the news, do you see examples of some people who are “eager to act corruptly in all they do”? Without Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior in your life, how might you act?

Yes. Unhappily, the same or similar. All sinners need Jesus to save them from the consequence of sin and continuing to sin.

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