

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

Acts 8:26-39

Sunday, August 13, 2017

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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. Before Philip met him, in what ways did the eunuch indicate that he wanted to obey God?

The eunuch travelled a long way from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship God. He acquired a scroll of the prophet Isaiah to read and study. He wanted to

understand what he read, and he even read as he rode in a chariot on a wilderness road (which would have been difficult). He seemed to be spiritually hungry to know God and more about God.

2. In what ways did Philip prepare himself to help the eunuch come to faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized?

Philip read and studied enough of the Hebrew scriptures (the Old Testament) to recognize what others read and what the scriptures taught about Jesus the Messiah. He did whatever he could to preach the Gospel and teach about Jesus wherever he was at every opportunity (for example, when persecution led him to Samaria, he preached and baptized in Jesus' name). He was willing to learn how to do ministry better; for example, he learned to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit after Peter and John went to Samaria to learn more about those he was leading to faith in Jesus and baptizing. When he recognized that the angel who came to him was sent to him from God, he obeyed immediately. Obeying God immediately had become a habit for him, which enabled him to be at the right place to meet the eunuch's chariot at the right time.

3. In what ways did the angel and the Holy Spirit help Philip and the eunuch?

The angel and the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and told him what to do. Probably the Holy Spirit guided the reading and understanding of the eunuch as he read Isaiah (perhaps even in choosing Isaiah to read). He probably inspired the timing of everyone, the question of the eunuch and the answers of Philip to help the eunuch come to faith in Jesus Christ. God may have even arranged for the water to be where they found it, specifically so the eunuch could be baptized at just the right time.

4. How important is reading and studying the Bible for both believers and unbelievers in Jesus Christ? Give a reason for your answer.

Unbelievers who read the Bible may be helped to believe when others help them understand the Bible and answer their questions. Believers can come to know God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit better (and the Bible better), come to follow Jesus more closely, and be better prepared to help others (believers and unbelievers) know the Bible better and the meaning of faithful living.

5. When the eunuch returned to Ethiopia, do you think he taught others in Ethiopia about Isaiah the prophet and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and about the importance of repentance and baptism? Give a reason for your answer.

Yes, for he would have been so joyful and so transformed by his faith in Jesus Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit, so full of understanding regarding the prophet Isaiah, that he could not help but give a reason for his new birth and faith. Others would see such a difference in him they would ask him to give a reason for his faith, and with the help of the Hebrew scriptures and the Holy Spirit many would come to saving faith and a church would be born in Ethiopia.

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