

Study Hints for Thinking Further

International Bible Lessons

Exodus 15:1-3,19,22-26

Sunday, January 29, 2012

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Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Five 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 Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be answers to the discussion questions, but hints a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. Read Exodus 15:2 again. Moses gives praise to God for many reasons. How many of these truths about God can you affirm from your own experience? What additional truths can you affirm about God from both the Bible and your experience?

Ask the class members about times they believe God has given them (or someone they know) the strength to do what they did not believe would be easy or even possible for them to do. Ask the members of the class if they have ever experienced a time when God saved them from a sickness, an accident, death, or other problem. Ask what it means to have accepted the salvation that God offers people by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Ask how they felt and what they did after they were saved in the variety of ways mentioned. Did they feel like singing? What did they think about God and the kind of Person God is? Ask what their experiences and their study of the Bible has taught them about God. Finally, what are some actions parents can take to help their children believe in the God of the Bible, so they can say someday that their God is the God of their father and/or mother.

2. How do your beliefs about God from the Bible and your experience make a difference when you face various challenges, opportunities, and problems in your daily life?

The Bible shows how God often did what is humanly impossible in saving individuals and groups, in tearing down and in building up. The Bible also records many promises of God and how God has kept them, and prophecies and how God has fulfilled them (with still more to be fulfilled). From what God has done to help us in the past and from what the Bible teaches, we know we can trust God to help us and stay with us through any situation. We know that God hears our prayers and we can trust Him to do what is right and best.

3. How do you think most people outside of the church would feel (or would respond) if you told them that your faith in God included the fact that “The LORD is a warrior”? How might people inside the church feel or respond if you told them you believed this fact about God?

They might reply, “Well, my God is a God of love and peace.” Many in the church might say the same thing. Others might see how we need God as a warrior to defeat all of His and our spiritual enemies and all those who hate God and His people.

4. Do you think it is still important to think of God as a warrior and teach about God ruling the universe as a warrior? Compare this fact about God with the words of the hymn “Onward, Christian Soldiers.” [Since the words to this hymn may not be easily available to you, I have printed them below.]

Yes. Only God can bring lasting and total peace into our world. He brings peace to many through faith in Jesus Christ and the transformation He works in people’s lives. Whole cities and states have known substantial peace, a decrease in crime, and the ending of many different types of abuse when almost everyone in the city or state has chosen to follow Jesus Christ and His teachings. However, some are enslaved to Satan and so committed to evil that no peaceful means will lead them to turn to God and the peace that God offers. Only God as a warrior can bring the peace to our world that we long to enjoy (see the Book of Revelation). The hymn recognizes that Christians are in a variety of battles daily against their spiritual and other enemies, and they must stand strong in faith and march with God in Jesus Christ wherever He leads them to do battle in God’s way and in His armor.

5. What should church members say or do when they think God or their leaders have not lived up to their expectations?

They need to pray for their leaders to trust in and follow God and the Bible’s teachings. They need to avoid complaining against their leaders and God. They need to remember that God always does what is perfect according to His perfect timing. They need to remind or teach their leaders what the Bible teaches, if their leaders seem to have forgotten or never learned some truths about God. They may need to seek new, Biblical leaders who follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They may need to prayerfully walk away from a bad leader and prayerfully seek a Biblical leader.

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