

## **Bible study for this week** 2/09/09~2/15/09

**\*February09(Monday),2009**{ [Joshua 2:1~14](#)}Key: The woman took the two men and hid them. (Joshua 2:4)“*Unexpected Help*”Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 6~7; Matthew 25:1~30](#)

In 1803, Thomas Jefferson commissioned Lewis and Clark to lead an expedition across an unexplored America to the Pacific coast. The expedition was called “Corps of Discovery”—and it lived up to its name. It cataloged 300 new species, identified nearly 50 Indian tribes, and traversed terrain that had never been seen by Europeans.

They were joined along the way by a French fur trader and his wife Sacajawea. They soon found her to be invaluable as an interpreter and guide.

During the trip, Sacajawea was reunited with her family. Her older brother had become the tribe’s chief, and he helped them acquire horses and a map of the uncharted West. Without Sacajawea’s and her brother’s unexpected help, the expedition may not have succeeded.

The Bible tells of an expedition that also received unexpected help. The Israelites had sent spies into Jericho, a city in the land promised to them. Rahab agreed to ensure their escape in exchange for her family’s protection when Jericho fell. In this way the sovereign God of grace used her to prepare the way for a victory in Israel’s conquest and settlement of the Promised Land.

Are you in the middle of a challenge? Remember, God can provide help from unexpected sources.

***Meditate:***When trials seem impossible And we can’t face the day, The Lord extends His helping hand And makes for us a way.

***Aphorism:***When there seems to be no way, God can make a way.

**\*February10(Tuesday),2009**{ [Ephesians 5:1~13](#)}Key: Lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted Word. (James 1:21)““*Garbage Mary*””Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 8~10; Matthew 25:31~46](#)

She dressed in rags, lived in a tenement house amid mounds of garbage, and spent much of her time rummaging through trash cans. The local newspaper picked up her story after the woman who was known in her neighborhood as “Garbage Mary” had been admitted to a psychiatric hospital. Astonishingly, in her filthy apartment police found stock certificates and bankbooks indicating she was worth at least a million dollars.

This woman’s condition was heartbreaking. But from God’s point of view there are even more tragic examples of “wealthy” people who subsist on “garbage.” If Christians are controlled by lust, hate, envy, pride, impatience, or bitterness, they’re actually choosing to live off the refuse of the world.

This might be understandable if they had no resources to draw from. You’d expect that kind of behavior from people without faith in Christ. But that’s not the case for believers. We have the Word of truth and the help of the Holy Spirit. We have no excuse for groveling in the dirt of sin when the power of God is at our disposal. Father, forgive us for eating “garbage” when You’ve prepared a banquet for us. Help us to “lay aside all filthiness” (James 1:21) and to feast on Your goodness.

***Meditate:*** Choose not the lowly paths of sin When lofty heights before you rise; God freely gives the power to win The victor’s crown, the heavenly prize.

***Aphorism:***One taste of God’s grace can make us lose our hunger for the world.

**\*February11(Wednesday),2009**{ [John 1:9~14](#)}Key: We beheld His glory. (John

1:14)“*Inner Beauty*”Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 11~12; Matthew 26:1~25](#)

The tabernacle in the wilderness was a tent where the glory of God dwelt. The structure was made of badger skins and was plain on the outside. But inside it was exquisitely beautiful (Exodus 25–27).

We can compare the tabernacle with Jesus’ human form. John said, “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). The word *dwelt* means He “pitched His tent with us,” the same word that ancient Greek versions of the Old Testament used for the tabernacle.

Jesus looked like an ordinary man: He had “no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isaiah 53:2). No one gave Him a second look. Yet John “beheld His glory,” the glory of God Himself. Occasionally, the tent flap was lifted and he caught a glimpse of Jesus’ inner beauty and majesty.

We are tabernacles too, made of skin, made to contain God’s Spirit. Most of us are very plain, not like the made-up actors we see in the movies or the air-brushed models we view in the ads. But God is even now—at this moment—in the process of making us radiantly beautiful within.

We may be very plain and ordinary on the outside—but as we allow God’s Spirit to work within us, the beauty of God’s indwelling presence will shine from our faces.

So, is the world seeing Jesus in you?

***Meditate:***Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me, All His wonderful passion and purity; O Thou Spirit divine, all my nature refine Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.

***Aphorism:***A righteous heart is the fountain of beauty.

\*February12(Thursday),2009{ [Exodus 15:1~21](#) }Key: I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! (Exodus 15:1)“*One More Miracle*”Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 13; Matthew 26:26~50](#)

If you are looking for a praise and worship pattern, look no further than Exodus 15. There you find the Israelites heaping honor on God. The people were just hours removed from one of the greatest rescues in history. The Lord had protected them from the rampaging Egyptians, and their praises reflected the renewed trust in God that this event brought them.

It’s appropriate to pour out our unbridled praise on God when we see Him work in great and miraculous ways. But those aren’t the only times He deserves our adoration. Too often we wait for God to perform a big answer to prayer before we feel like singing His praises.

But think about this: God doesn’t owe us any miracles. He doesn’t need to do anything to prove His greatness. He has already given us an incredible display of His power in His creation. He has made the ultimate sacrifice to purchase our redemption. Through His power, He has conducted the most miraculous transaction known to mankind—He brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Waiting for a miracle? God’s done plenty of them already. Recalling what He has done and echoing the praise in Exodus 15, let’s give God our unconditional worship.

***Meditate:***Sing praise to God who reigns above, The God of all creation, The God of power, the God of love, The God of our salvation.

***Aphorism:***Praise flows naturally from a grateful heart.

\*February13(Friday),2009{ [Galatians 5:16~26](#) }Key: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16)“*A Lesson From The Oak Tree*”Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 14; Matthew 26:51~75](#)

Have you ever noticed that in winter some oak trees retain their crisp, dry leaves long after the maples, the elms, and the walnuts have become bare skeletons? Even the strong winter winds and the early spring rains do not completely strip the oak branches of all their old leaves. But as springtime progresses, warmer winds blow and something wonderful begins to happen. Tiny buds start appearing at the tips of the twigs, and the dried remnants of the preceding season fall off. New life replaces the old.

At times, old habits cling to our lives with the same tenacity as those oak leaves. Even the winds of adversity do not remove all the lifeless leftovers of our fallen human nature.

But Christ, who dwells in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, is at work. His life within us continually seeks to push off the old habits—renewing us when we confess our sins, steadying us when we falter, and strengthening us to do His will.

When every effort to cast off an old sinful habit ends in failure, remember the mighty oak. Thank God for His Spirit who lives in you. Keep saying yes to His gentle urging to be kind, loving, compassionate, honest, and faithful. Those “lifeless old leaves” will eventually drop off.

**Meditate:** When stubborn sins tenaciously hold to their former place, we must rely on Jesus’ strength and His unfailing grace.

**Aphorism:** To get rid of a bad habit, start a good one—trust God.

\***February 14 (Saturday), 2009** { [1 Corinthians 13:1~13](#) } Key: Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13) “*The Greatest Thing In The World*” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 15~16; Matthew 27:1~26](#)

Well-known scientist and writer Henry Drummond (1857–1897) conducted a geological survey of South Africa and wrote what was then the definitive work on tropical Africa. But he is best remembered for his book about love, *The Greatest Thing In The World*.

Drummond wrote, “As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those round about you, things too trifling to speak about . . . And these seem to be the things which alone of all one’s life abide.”

Paul warned that impressive gifts and spectacular deeds may be little more than empty noise (1 Corinthians 13:1). Our best efforts—if bereft of love—ring hollow. “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, . . . but have not love, it profits me nothing” (v.3). The smallest loving act can hold eternal significance.

No matter our age or status in life, we all can strive to love others as God loves them. We may accomplish great things in our life—gain fame and fortune—but the greatest thing is to love. For of all that we have done, or ever will do, only love endures. We depart, but love abides.

**Meditate:** We love because He first loved us, He gave so we can give; We love because He first touched us, He died so we can live.

**Aphorism:** Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. —1 Corinthians 13:13

\***February 15 (Sunday), 2009** { [Colossians 1:24~29](#) } Key: I . . . fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ. (Colossians 1:24) “*Band Of Brothers*” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 17~18; Matthew 27:27~50](#)

Of all Shakespeare’s great plays, *Henry V* may rank as the most heroic. In one stirring scene, the English army stands fearfully before superior French troops. King Henry challenges his men to take heart. Because the battle will be fought on “the feast of Crispian,”

their victory will be remembered in its yearly celebration. The king tells his men, “This day is called the feast of Crispian . . . . We in it shall be remembered; we few, we happy few, we band of brothers.”

Today, the US Marine Corps refers to itself as a “band of brothers.” There is something about interdependence and personal sacrifice while under fire that binds people together for life.

Christians facing opposition can also have such a bond. Paul wrote, “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ” (Colossians 1:24).

Did Paul believe Christ’s suffering on the cross was insufficient? No, His atonement was completely adequate for all our sin. What Paul meant was that as we complete Christ’s work on earth amid painful opposition, we share in His sufferings. Jesus suffered for obeying the will of God, and so must we. But like Paul, we can find joy as we draw closer to our Lord and our band of brothers and sisters.

***Meditate:*** Oh, how we need support in times Of suffering and despair—Upheld with love by saints of God Who understand and care.

***Aphorism:*** Suffering can be a magnet that draws the Christian close to Christ and fellow Christians.