

## **Bible study for this week** 2/16/09~2/22/09

\***February 16 (Monday), 2009** { [Psalm 46:1~11](#) } Key: Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! (Psalm 46:10) “*Be Still And Know*” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 19~20; Matthew 27:51~66](#)

In February 1946, the world's first general-purpose electronic computer was introduced at the University of Pennsylvania. The Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) filled a 30-by-50-foot room, weighed 50 tons, and used enough electricity every second to power a typical home for a week. Today, a pocket calculator contains more computing power than ENIAC did.

A decade ago, one observer noted that computers and other hi-tech gadgets have “snuck up on us and we don't realize it.” He went on to speak of how wonderful it is to go where there are no computers, phones, or radios, or to go to the beach and listen to the waves.

Undisturbed stillness has become more elusive and therefore more necessary than ever to seek. The Lord God said, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” (Psalm 46:10).

A respite from activity allows us to focus our thoughts on the majesty of God. A quiet place helps us to listen to Him. Away from voice-mail and e-mail, we turn from our daily schedule to His eternal plan.

In our fast-paced world, we need to be still and acknowledge that God is in charge.

*Meditate:* Take time to be holy, The world rushes on; Spend much time in secret With Jesus alone.

*Aphorism:* Spending quiet time with God will bring quiet rest from God.

\***February 17 (Tuesday), 2009** { [John 20:11~18](#) } Key: We love Him because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19) “*Daddy, I Found You!*” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 21~22; Matthew 28](#)

In his book *Jesus Among Other Gods*, Ravi Zacharias tells a story about a girl who became hopelessly lost in a dark and dense forest. She called and screamed, but to no avail. Her alarmed parents and a group of volunteers searched frantically for her. When darkness fell, they had to give up for the night.

Early the next morning the girl's father reentered the forest to search for her and spied her fast asleep on a rock. He called her name and ran toward her. Startled awake, she threw her arms out to him. As he picked her up and hugged her, she repeated over and over, “Daddy, I found you!”

Applying this story to Mary Magdalene's search for Jesus in John 20, Zacharias comments: “Mary discovered the most startling truth of all when she came looking for the body of Jesus. She did not realize that the person she had found was the One who was risen, and that He had come looking for her.”

We who believe on Jesus sometimes speak of “finding” Him. But why did we seek Him in the first place? Because, like the shepherd who went out into the darkness to find one lost sheep, God seeks us. He is waiting for us to realize our lostness and reach out to Him. He will pick us up, embrace us, and give us His peace.

*Meditate:* What is the nature of God's love, and how can we embrace it?

*Aphorism:* When we find Christ, we discover that we were the ones who were lost.

\***February 18 (Wednesday), 2009** { [Ephesians 4:25~32](#) } Key: [Jesus] said, “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.” (Mark 7:20) “*Inside Out*” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 23~24; Mark 1:1~22](#)

While giving a sermon, missionary Hudson Taylor filled a glass with water and placed it on a table in front of him. As he was speaking, he pounded his fist hard enough to make the water splash onto the table. He then explained, “You will come up against much trouble. But when you do, remember, only what’s in you will spill out.”

That’s worth thinking about, isn’t it? When we are mistreated or misunderstood, how do we respond? With loving words, patience, and kindness? Or are we inclined to retaliate in anger?

In Ephesians 4:25~32, we see the contrast between what a person is before he is saved and what he is afterward. When we live under the control of the Holy Spirit, we will show it by the way we react to the jolting trials and temptations of life. How we respond to trying, embarrassing situations that are suddenly thrust upon us is a good test of how much we have grown in grace.

It is possible to suppress frustration and anger, and to appear undisturbed to people around us. But if our heart is full of the Savior’s love, we will respond to the jostling of an unexpected trial with genuine patience and kindness. Like a full glass of water, what’s inside of us will spill over on the outside.

**Meditate:** Lord, help me flee all sin and shame, Lest I disgrace Your holy name; And may I live so others see The Savior’s love revealed in me.

**Aphorism:** When trouble grows, your character shows.

\***February 19 (Thursday), 2009** { [Psalm 103:11~22](#) } Key: You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations. (Psalm 102:12) “**He Never Changes**” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 25; Mark 1:23~45](#)

Photographer David Crocket of Seattle’s KOMO-TV knows that solid mountains can move. On May 18, 1980, he was at the foot of towering Mount St. Helens when it erupted. For 10 hours he was nearly buried by the falling debris. As the atmosphere cleared, a helicopter pilot spotted him. He was dramatically rescued and flown to a hospital.

Writing about his horrendous experience, he said, “During those 10 hours I saw a mountain fall apart. I saw a forest disappear. . . . I saw that God is the only one who is immovable. . . . I feel somehow that I’m being allowed to start over—whatever is in His master plan for me.”

Nothing in our world, not even a mountain, is absolutely indestructible. God alone is absolutely unchangeable—He endures “forever” (Psalm 102:12). He “has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all” (103:19).

When we trust ourselves to God’s keeping, we are forever secure. He removes our sins from us “as far as the east is from the west” (103:12). And His mercy toward us is “from everlasting to everlasting” (v.17). He holds us in His almighty hands, and nothing can pry us loose from that omnipotent grip (John 10:28~29).

**Meditate:** I do not rest on shifting sand, Or fear the storm that rages; For calm and sure, I stand secure Upon the Rock of Ages.

**Aphorism:** Our world may crumble around us, but God never changes.

\***February 20 (Friday), 2009** { [Psalm 73:23~28](#) } Key: By faith Jacob . . . worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff. (Hebrews 11:21) “**My Staff**” Bible In One Year: [Leviticus 26~27; Mark 2](#)

An antique rack in the entryway to our home holds the canes and walking-sticks of several generations of our family. My favorite is a slender staff with a gold-plated knob

engraved with the initials “DHR.” It belonged to my wife Carolyn’s great-grandfather, Daniel Henry Rankin. Curiously, his initials are the same as mine.

In my study is another collection: my father’s peeled, apple-wood walking stick, among others. And in a barrel in our garage there’s an assortment of cross-country ski poles, wading wands, and trekking sticks I’ve gathered over the years. One of these days, I’ll trade them all in for a walker. I’ll always need something or someone to lean on.

I’m reminded of the old patriarch Jacob, once strong, now humbled and utterly dependent on God. When he was dying, by faith he “worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff” (Hebrews 11:21).

As I grow older, I’m learning to lean more on God and His faithfulness. Over the years, He has “held me by my right hand.” He is guiding me with His counsel, and afterward He will “receive me to glory” (Psalm 73:23~24).

Shakespeare said it well: God is “the very staff of my age, my very prop.”

*Meditate.* Our vigor is fleeting, our best years are brief, Our youth passes quickly—time’s ever a thief; But hope yet becomes us—death’s sting holds no power; We have a Redeemer—an unfailing Tower.

*Aphorism.* Learning of our weakness teaches us to lean on God’s strength.

**\*February 21 (Saturday), 2009** { [1 Corinthians 9:24~27](#) } Key: I discipline my body and bring it into subjection. (1 Corinthians 9:27) “*Grooves Of Grace*” Bible In One Year: [Numbers 1~3; Mark 3](#)

A man was traveling in Canada one springtime when frost and melting snow made it nearly impossible to drive farther. He came to a crossroads and saw a sign that said, “Take care which rut you choose. You will be in it for the next 25 miles.” That’s a wise warning for all of us—and not just when we’re driving in rough road conditions. Whenever we come to a crossroads in life, what choice do we make? In other words, in what direction will we travel and what habits—which ruts of routine—will we establish?

A habit is a pattern of behavior that we follow consistently. We need to decide prayerfully what habits we will practice. Will our habits be mere ruts of routine? Or will they become “grooves of grace”?

Paul referred to his life’s journey as a race. He learned that the only way to stay the course was to “discipline [his] body and bring it into subjection” (1 Corinthians 9:27). That implied establishing a consistent pattern of godly behavior.

Good health habits are important, but spiritual disciplines are far more important. Are we choosing to develop consistent habits of prayer, Bible reading, and kindness? A habit is just a rut of routine. But good spiritual discipline can transform our ruts into grooves of grace.

*Meditate.* Lord, keep me in Your groove of grace, The chosen path for me; Your will I daily will embrace Until eternity.

*Aphorism.* In the beginning we make our habits; in the end our habits make us.

**\*February 22 (Sunday), 2009** { [John 10:25~39](#) } Key: I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. (John 10:28) “*No Snatching*” Bible In One Year: [Numbers 4~6; Mark 4:1~20](#)

In the mid-1950s, General Motors displayed more at their auto shows than just cars. At one show in Miami, GM featured a display of a million one-dollar bills, as well as the Hope Diamond (the largest blue diamond in the world).

One afternoon a thunderstorm came through the city, lightning flashed, and the lights went out. Immediately truckdrivers with their flashlights rushed to the special display and formed a circle around the armed guards who were already there. The diamond and the cash were now safely guarded with two levels of security.

In John 10, Jesus described the security of His people: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand” (v.28). When we know Jesus as Savior, we’re secure in His hands; we cannot lose our salvation. But there’s another level of security. Jesus continued, “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” (v.29).

The Hope Diamond and the large sum of cash were quite safe with their two levels of security. How much more are we eternally safe in the hands of Jesus and His Father, the Almighty God!

*Meditate:* What is the basis for our security in Jesus? Get some answers by reading [Safe And Secure](#).

*Aphorism:* Christ’s work makes us safe; God’s Word makes us sure.