

Bible study for this week 9/21/09~9/27/09

***September 21(Monday),2009**{[Nahum 1:1-8](#) }Key: The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. (Nahum 1:7)“**The Good And The Bad**”Bible In One

Year: [Ecclesiastes 7-9; 2 Corinthians 13](#)

Nineveh was in trouble with God. Big trouble! Despite the good work of the reluctant prophet Jonah, Nineveh had returned to its evil ways. The Ninevites had oppressed other countries, worshiped idols, and performed acts of cruelty.

God saw this evil, and through the words of Nahum He spoke of Nineveh’s coming destruction, using words such as *wrath* and *vengeance*. Nineveh was about to face judgment.

Why would God’s prophet tell the people of Judah about this? How could Nahum’s frightening words help those who lived in the Promised Land?

There is help for answering those questions in Nahum 1:7-8. His prophecy of the destruction of those who reject God stands in sharp contrast to God’s promise to those “who trust in Him.” The godly, rather than facing judgment, would be cared for. They would have a refuge in Him.

God is not one-sided. He provides refuge, help, and comfort for those who trust Him, and He also sends judgment against those who disobey His standards.

The message for us is the same as it was for Judah. Through trust and obedience, we can enjoy the comfort of God’s refuge—even in times of trouble.

Meditate:How oft in the conflict, when pressed by the foe,I have fled to my Refuge and breathed out my woe;How often, when trials like sea billows roll,Have I hidden in Thee, O Thou Rock of my soul.

Aphorism:Everyone must face God as Savior or as Judge.

***September 22(Tuesday),2009**{[Luke 18:18-27](#) }Key: The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. (Luke 18:27)“**Mixing-Bowl Musings**”Bible In One

Year: [Ecclesiastes 10-12; Galatians 1](#)

Countless times I’ve heard myself say, “I’m going to bake a cake.” Then one day I realized that I’ve never baked a cake in my life—only my oven can do that. I simply mix the right ingredients and allow the oven to do its part. Through that division of labor, I have the joy of seeing others taste and enjoy delicious cake.

God used my mixing-bowl musings to clarify a dilemma I once had after starting a neighborhood Bible study. It was one thing to bring my neighbors together to study the Bible, but seeing them believe and follow Christ was another. I felt powerless. Suddenly I saw the obvious. Like baking cakes, making Christians was impossible for me, but not for God. I had blended the right ingredients—an open home, friendship, love. Now I had to trust the Holy Spirit, through His Word, to do His work. When I cooperated with that division of labor, I had the joy of seeing others taste of God’s goodness.

In Luke 18:18-27, Jesus so vividly described some hindrances to saving faith that His listeners began to wonder if anyone could be saved. Do you feel that way about someone? Be encouraged by the Lord’s strong reminder that there are some things that only God can do. Saving people is one of them.

Meditate:The Lord's the only one who can.Transform a person's heart;But when we share God's saving truth,We play a crucial part.

Aphorism:We sow the seed, but God brings the harvest.

***September 23(Wednesday),2009**{ [John 7:33-43](#)}Key: He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. (John 7:38)“Finding The Flow”Bible In One Year: [Song of Solomon 1-3; Galatians 2](#)

While using a computer to edit a video presentation, a colleague and I were greeted one morning by the on-screen error message: UNABLE TO FIND THE FLOW. Whatever the software program meant by those words, it brought to mind the popular saying, “Go with the flow.” To some people that means behaving as most other people do without trying to swim against the current of the culture. To others it speaks of being more accepting of circumstances without trying to control everything that happens.

But for followers of the Lord, there's another dimension of going with the flow. Jesus said: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (John 7:37-38). Christ spoke of the Holy Spirit, who would make His home in every believer. In a very real sense, when we invite Christ into our lives, the Flow finds us and we find the Flow. From then on, we are recipients and conduits of living water—the eternal source of thirst-quenching satisfaction for our souls. The indwelling Holy Spirit carries us along by a power and purpose greater than ourselves.

As channels of God's living water, we are free to go with His flow.

Meditate:Father, thank You for Your Spirit,Fill us with His love and power;Change us into Christ's own image.Day by day and hour by hour.

Aphorism:What Jesus accomplished for us, the Holy Spirit works out in us.

***September 24(Thursday),2009**{ [Matthew 20:20-28](#)}Key: The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:28)“**Power That Disrupts**

”Bible In One Year: [Song of Solomon 4-5; Galatians 3](#)

What does it take to disrupt the good work of a church? Just one power-hungry person.

One of my college friends, a pastor, wrote to me about a disruption in his church. People had come to faith in Christ, and membership had quadrupled. The members were active in serving the church and community.

But then one man in a leadership position began to envy the pastor's influence. He felt he deserved more power, so he began to tear down the pastor—thinking that would increase his own stature. It didn't matter to him what he was doing to God's work; he wanted power and recognition. He caused such an uproar that my friend finally had to resign.

When it comes to serving Christ, we have no right to seek power. We have no calling for prestige. We have no reason to look for self-aggrandizement and recognition. How much better to serve quietly in the background, keeping in mind that Jesus, our example, “did not come to be served, but to serve” (Matt. 20:28).

Are you a pastor? A teacher? A deacon? A missionary? A church member? If you look for power, you may get it, but it will become power that disrupts the good work of your church ministry.

Meditate: Find out what God would have you do, And do that little well; For what is great and what is small. The Lord alone can tell.

Aphorism: We lose the approval of God when we seek the applause of men.

***September 25(Friday),2009**{ [Deuteronomy 15:7-11](#) }Key: Open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11)“**For The Poor**”Bible In One Year: [Song of Solomon 6-8; Galatians 4](#)

The man sits on the street corner day after day, begging for money. He’s poor and desperate for a little cash to spend on food.

He’s not alone. More than one-half of the world’s people live below the internationally defined poverty line of less than \$2.00 a day. Poverty and hunger are such a big problem in our world that it’s easy for us to feel helpless or to become hard-hearted and do nothing.

But God doesn’t close His eyes to the plight of the poor. When He gave His people guidelines for living, He included instructions on ways to care for the needy (Deut. 15:11). He told His people, “You shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand, from your poor brother, [but] open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need” (vv.7-8).

God also commanded His people not to glean the corners of their fields so that the less fortunate could gather food (Lev. 19:9-10). And Jesus showed His compassion for the poor by His words and actions.

As Christians, we cannot ignore the plight of the poor today. Individuals and churches can join with Christian organizations working to combat poverty as they spread the Word. God has a heart for the poor. Do we?

Meditate: The poor and needy everywhere. Are objects of God’s love and care, But they will better know His care. As we seek ways that love to share.

Aphorism: God gives us all we need so we can give to those in need.

***September 26(Saturday),2009**{ [Psalm 31:9-24](#) }Key: Make Your face shine upon Your servant; save me for Your mercies’ sake. (Psalm 31:16)“**No Terror**”Bible In One Year: [Isaiah 1-2; Galatians 5](#)

After the terrorist bombing in Bali in 2002, one man reacted by giving up traveling. Three years later, he finally took his family for a holiday in Bali, together with 50 tourists from Newcastle, Australia. The trip ended in tragedy when his family was caught in a suicide bombing at a café on Jimbaran Beach.

From New York to Indonesia, warnings and threats of terrorist attacks continue. Terrorism derives its sting by exporting fear. No one feels safe.

In Psalm 31, David was in the grip of surrounding threats that terrorized both his reputation and his life. He wrote, “Fear is on every side,” and said, “They scheme to take away my life” (v.13).

When everything seemed bleakest, David cried in despair, “I trust in You, O Lord” (v.14). He began to find peace when he acknowledged, “My times are in Your hand” (v.15).

In our world, perfect safety is not possible. But David’s God is our God. Though our earthly security may be threatened, we can never lose God’s eternal, unfailing love.

To those who trust in the Lord, David wrote these hopefilled words: “[The Lord] shall strengthen your heart” (v.24). When we place our times in His hand, we can exchange the fear of terror for peace and praise.

Meditate:Peace, perfect peace,Death shadowing us and ours?Jesus has vanquished.Death and all its powers.

Aphorism:Putting your faith in the living God takes the fear out of living.

***September 27(Sunday),2009**{[Galatians 6:2-10](#)}Key: Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)“**Fearing The Worst**”Bible In One Year: [Isaiah 3-4](#); [Galatians 6](#)

When I learned I needed chemotherapy, my biggest fear was losing my hair. I knew this was a vain thought and should have been a minor concern, but I rationalized that it was okay to grieve what the Bible calls a woman’s glory (1 Cor. 11:15).

I knew, however, that the loss I was grieving was not my glory but my identity. My hair, which reached to my knees, was so much a part of who I was that I was afraid of losing myself when I lost it. In the past I’d had nightmares about having my hair cut. What would happen when it was really gone? I feared the worst.

But the worst never happened. I had my hair cut short—a little anxiety but no nightmares. And then it fell out—some sadness, but no despondency.

Several weeks later my dear friend Marge said to me, “Julie, I can’t tell you how often I have grieved the loss of your hair. It’s so much a part of you.”

Suddenly I realized that Marge was fulfilling the command of Galatians 6:2, “Bear one another’s burdens.” She was coming alongside me with prayers and empathy to ease my burden.

Satan wants to defeat us with heavy burdens, but fellow believers by their love and support can minimize the suffering he causes.

Meditate:Thank You, heavenly Father, for a family of believers.who carry our burdens when we are weak. Thank You for.those who truly “weep with those who weep.” Amen.

Aphorism:Bearing one another’s burden helps make the burden bearable.