

## February 2:

The ultimate purpose of man is to show forth the worth, the greatness, the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). One of the primary ways in which this is carried out is by trusting God for provision and salvation—which shows His sufficiency and our insufficiency (Psalm 50:15; Romans 9:14-23; Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14). This is why faith is such a vital part of what it means to know and follow God (Hab. 2:4; Romans 1:17; Heb. 11:6). All four of the readings in **THE ONE YEAR BIBLE** today deal in one way or another with faith.

In Exodus 15:19-17:7 God demonstrates His faithfulness to His covenant with Israel in several ways: He turns undrinkable, bitter water into drinkable (15:22-27); He supplies a bread-like substance (manna) from heaven each morning and quail at night—both to provide food and to show His goodness, presence, and blessing with His people (16:1-36); and finally, He provides water from a rock (17:1-7). God is not only demonstrating His greatness along with teaching and training His people to trust in Him (cf. 16:4, 6, 12), He is also teaching His people what the coming Savior, the Messiah will be like. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:4, 6; Col. 2:16-17) These events demonstrate the Father will always take care of those who are His—and the ultimate way this will happen is through His Son. Yet, the real question for Israel in that day was whether or not they would trust God (Exodus 16:4). They repeatedly failed the test by quarreling with and also complaining against Moses and God (Exodus 15:24; 16:2-3, 8; 17:2, 7). This continual lack of faith and faithfulness eventually resulted in the affirmation by Jeremiah that God would make a new covenant with His people—one not like this old one—for in the new one He would write His Law upon their hearts (Jeremiah 31:31ff.), thus changing them from the inside out (cf. Ezek. 36:26-27).

Of course this New Covenant came through Jesus Christ. One of the reasons the good news of this covenant went beyond the borders of Israel was because so much of Israel rejected their Messiah, though He came to them. In other words, they would not repent and trust in Him. We see this lack of faith exemplified in the New Testament reading for today, Matthew 22:1-33. In the parable of the wedding feast (a frequent picture of the fellowship of God's people with God [cf. Ps. 23:5; Is. 25:6; Rev. 19:9]) Jesus reveals that those initially invited (Israel) have rejected the invitation, so others have been invited. Next, both Pharisees and Sadducees respectively try and entrap Jesus with difficult questions. In each case Jesus not only aptly answers them, but also teaches vital lessons: there is a place for government, yet it is not to usurp the authority of God; Jesus believed the Scriptures to be plain in their understanding and also that one's grasp of them was crucial; and finally He affirms our future bodily resurrection. As with the Exodus reading, so here, readers are challenged to trust in the Savior. That faith or lack thereof is decisive.

When we trust in the Savior and His Word, there will be two other results we can speak of from our remaining two readings: There is no need to fear man, even our enemies (Psalm 27:1-6); and we will listen to parents and mentors as they teach us God's wisdom, which will guard us from being sucked into the destruction of sexually loose people and pornography (Proverbs 6:20-26). This last reading is a reminder to parents and mentors

that laying a foundation for our children and mentees to be pure is not just about teaching them to abstain from sexual sin. It is also about teaching them the whole council of God.