

Sabbath Recorder

For the Lord is God,
and he created the heavens and earth
and put everything in place.
He made the world to be lived in,
not to be a place of empty chaos.

—Isaiah 45:18

July/August 2022
A Seventh Day Baptist Publication

Your promise revives me;
it comforts me
in all my troubles.

—Psalm 119:50



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A special THANK YOU to our guest editor Rick Crouch who wrote and designed the article on page 8!



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Sabbath Recorder

A monthly journey into the mind and heart.

July/August 2022
Patricia Cruzan, Editor

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication

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WHO ARE SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired Word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

THE SEVENTH DAY

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

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Holy Procrastination

By Johnmark Camenga

I want to commend to you holy procrastination.

Let me explain.

It is asked of procrastinators, “Why put off until tomorrow what can be done today?” This is often asked with an air of derision and superiority. “Look at me and how much I’ve gotten accomplished today. Why haven’t you done all of the things that I’ve done?”

Look, I get it. Society has done a great job of tying procrastination to laziness, a lack of ambition and drive, and unproductiveness. That negative connotation is even built into the modern definitions of the word.

Merriam-Webster defines “procrastinate” this way: “to put off intentionally and habitually OR to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done.”

Cambridge Dictionary defines “procrastinate” this way: “to keep delaying something that must be done, often because it is unpleasant or boring.”

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You can listen to the way in which the word is defined in these two examples and hear how it is reflective of the way the word is often used today. And I get it—delaying the doing of something that needs to be done is not a good way of going about life. Doing things when they need to be done is critical to the functioning of society.

However...

...it seems that this modern definition of procrastination undermines an important aspect of what the word originally conveyed.

Oxford Dictionary defines “procrastinate” this way: “delay or postpone action; put off doing something.”

There’s little to no judgment built into that definition. Take note Merriam-Webster.

Importantly, Oxford Dictionary goes further in providing some basic etymology explaining that the word is a combined form—taking “pro” which means forward and “crastinus” which means belonging to tomorrow—creating a word that conveys the idea of forwarding that which belongs to tomorrow.

...that which belongs to tomorrow.

After Jesus’ instruction in Matthew 6 that we should seek first His Kingdom and that in doing so all the things we need will be supplied, He says, “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

Let’s not pretend that Jesus was talking about procrastination here, but let’s also not pretend that He’s talking about productivity. Instead, what he’s talking about is the importance of trusting him with both the present and the future as we go about dealing with what is in front of us in the moment; that we would deal with today what belongs to today and leave for tomorrow what belongs to tomorrow.

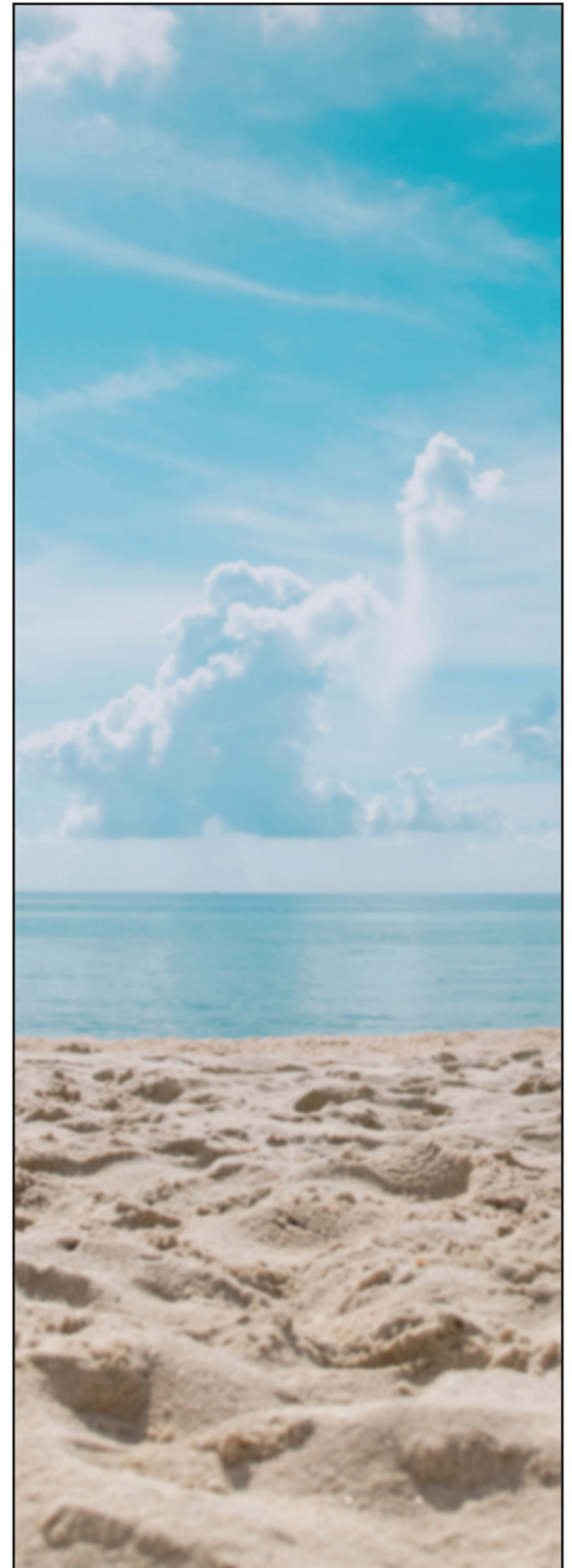
Work? Yes.

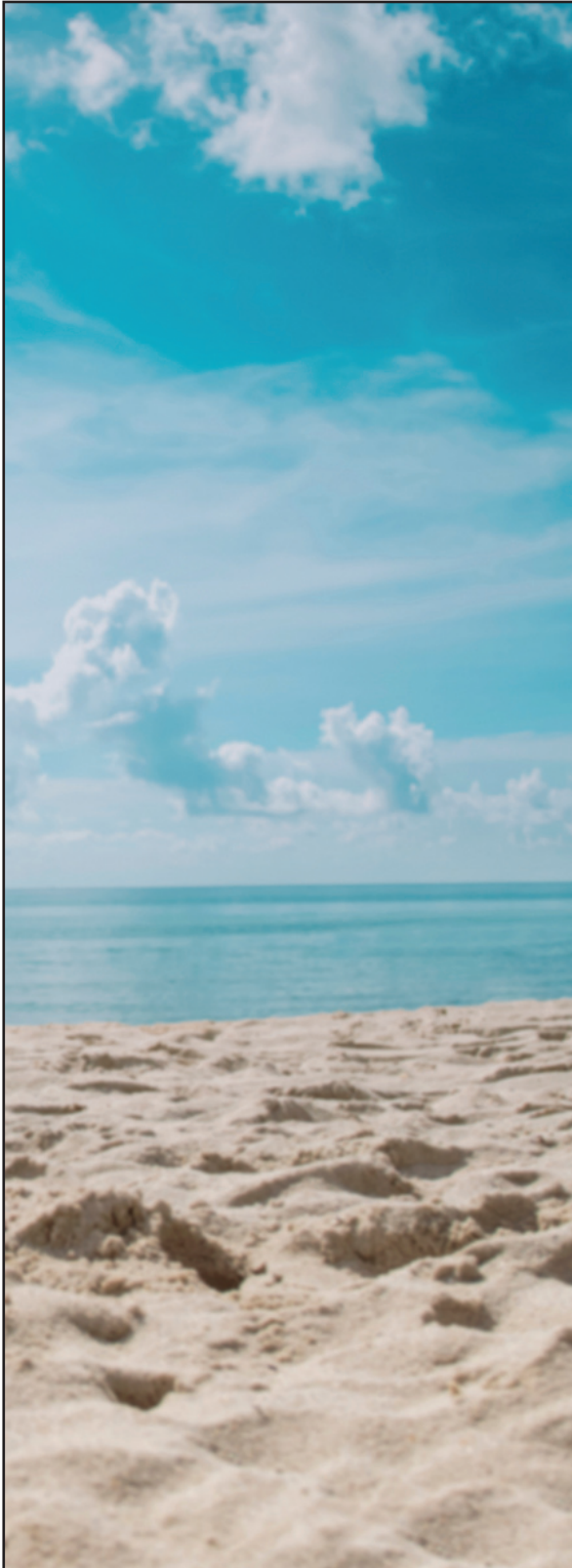
Plan? Sure.

But, how much time do we as a culture steal from today by taking on responsibilities that belong to tomorrow?

Holy procrastination, then, is discovered by asking a slightly different question of yourself: why do today that which **SHOULD** be done tomorrow?

How do you know if you should procrastinate?





Odds are there is work in front of you as you read this that you can do. Odds are there are things you could work on well into the evening. Odds are that you have often done those tasks and opted to continue to work, never even considering that by doing so you are offering up your peace, your sleep, your children, your marriage, and your joy on the altar of productivity.

Ask yourself if the work you're doing is more valuable than that which you're not doing.

Look at that picture of your son, or that card from your spouse, or that email from an old friend and ask yourself if what you're doing is more important than playing catch with your son or going on a walk with your spouse or picking up the phone and calling your old friend.

How much time are you stealing from your life—how many blessings are you leaving on the table—by taking up responsibilities that belong to tomorrow?

Are you disciplined enough to step away from the altar of productivity with your offering of time and to instead invest that time in the blessings that are in front of you today?

I want to commend to you holy procrastination.

It isn't about laziness; rather, it's about recognizing the unrelenting trap of productivity and coming to grips with the fact that no matter how much you accomplish tonight, there will be just as much waiting for you in the morning.

It isn't about a lack of ambition and drive; rather, it's about measuring your ambition against your blessings and asking yourself if the potential gain is worth the actual cost.

It isn't about unproductiveness; rather, it's about realizing that your worth isn't tied to what you produce.

At the risk of pushing a step too far, I'll say this: You will be forgotten at your job at the conclusion of the next payroll cycle and the person who takes your job will do it better than you ever did.

You are replaceable everywhere except in the lives of your family and friends. That is where your investment of time matters most but that is also what your focus on productivity costs.

Procrastinate now before it's too late. [SR](#)

Johnmark is pastor of the Lost Creek, WV, SDB Church.

Ask yourself if the work you're doing is more valuable than
that which you're not doing.

Don't Play with Glitter

By Rick Crouch

Note: This sermon was delivered on March 23, 2020,
near the beginning of the pandemic.

One of my least favorite inventions of all time is glitter. The reason that I dislike glitter so much is that it is impossible to contain. No matter how careful you are with it, it escapes and clings to every surface. It ends up on your clothes, your skin, your furniture, and your floors, and it is very hard to clean up. No matter how many times you wipe a surface, little pieces always remain, sparkling at you and taunting you.

Unfortunately, despite my best efforts to isolate myself from glitter, it still finds ways into my life. Just recently Grace and the kids got some craft items on sale at Walmart, and when they got home they discovered that part of what was included in the package was glitter glue. Grace assured me that the kids would be careful and that I didn't have anything to worry about. I don't doubt that they were very careful, but when they were done, there was glitter on the table, on the chairs, on the floor, on their hands, on their clothes and who knows where else. I saw it on different surfaces for days afterward.

As I've been following the news and the spread of COVID-19, I've begun to picture the virus as glitter that is being spread from person to person. I imagine that someone in China was playing with it in a lab trying to come up with a way to rid the world of glitter, and it mutated into something deadly that could replicate itself. And even though he tried his best to wash it off before he left the lab, he missed some of it and now millions of people around the world have this glitter virus.

Since glitter is impossible to wash off, the only way to try to contain this virus is to isolate people, and try to prevent it from being spread from person to person. Isolation may work for slowing down the spread of glitter or the spread of other physical diseases, but isolation is not so good for spiritual health.

God, in His wisdom, instructed His people to have holy convocations every week on the Sabbath and also annually at appointed times for His feasts. These set apart times are intended for our benefit so that we can be strengthened and encouraged by corporate worship and Bible study with fellow believers.

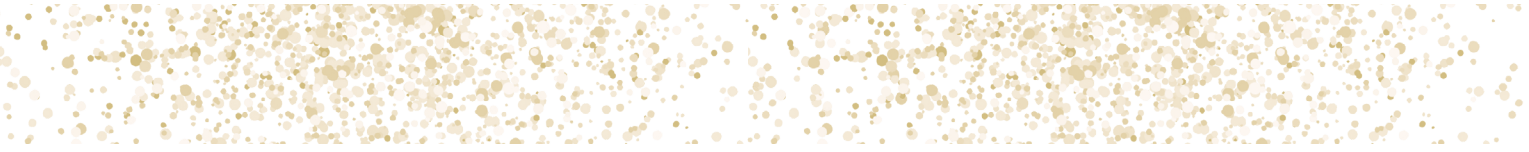
We all know from experience that there is a difference between being in the same room with each other as we worship and study and sitting at home by yourself watching it on Facebook Live. I am thankful for the technology that allows people in isolation to participate and to feel like they are a part of things, but I think that everyone who is watching a service online would rather be there in person.

Fortunately, the groups that we meet in don't have to be large groups. I don't know how the experts in the Trump administration came up with the number 10 as the recommended limit for public gatherings, but according to Scripture two or three is enough.

In Matthew 18:20, Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (NKJV).

I am thankful to have Jesus among us today because we are living in extraordinary times. When the media first started covering COVID-19 I never would have imagined that so many businesses across our country would be forced to close, or that entire states would be put on lockdown. I didn't think that our constitutional right to peaceably assemble could be so easily taken away.

These extreme precautionary measures are only temporary. They are only supposed to be in effect until the curve flattens out, but when the curve flattens and the number of new cases starts to decline, that doesn't mean that the glitter virus is gone. Glitter never goes away completely.



Everyone who lives long enough will eventually get glitter on them. I don't think that there is a single person alive today over the age of one who has not had the flu, or has not had the common cold. This glitter virus is worse than either of those two, so I'm not comparing them in that sense. My point is that they haven't gone away. This virus will never go away either, so eventually every one of us will get some form of it if we live long enough.

I understand that our governments are trying to keep everyone from getting it at the same time so that our hospitals don't get overwhelmed and so that we have enough medical supplies to help everyone. I'm not saying that precautions aren't necessary, but I am concerned about what kind of a world we'll be living in when the dust settles, and I wonder what the end results of our actions will be.

But regardless of what happens during this time of forced physical isolation, it is even more important that we don't become spiritually isolated. Our physical lives will end at some point whether it is from an illness, or an accident, or some other cause. And when our lives end, our physical bodies will either decay or be incinerated, but our spirit will remain. And what happens to our spirit will depend on our spiritual health at the time of our death. God will examine our hearts and separate the wheat from the chaff, the sheep from the goats, or sticking with today's analogy, the glitter-free from those infected with glitter.

The blood of Jesus is the only substance that can remove glitter from our hearts, but Satan wants us to believe that there are other cures. He wants us to believe that we can be careful enough with the glitter that we won't spill any on the table, or on the floor, and he wants us to believe that we can wash it off all by ourselves and that no one will ever know that we were playing with the glitter. He will even blind us to glitter stuck to our hearts or lie to us and convince us that it is not there.

Satan is constantly tempting us with spiritual viruses, disguising them as shiny, sparkling, glitter. So we need to put on our full armor every day and keep the glitter from infecting our hearts. Jesus is the only

one who ever successfully resisted every temptation, so it would be wise of us to find out how He did it.

Satan's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness is covered in detail in both Matthew and Luke, but I will be using Matthew 4:1-11 as a reference. As I look at this passage the first thing I notice is that this interaction between Satan and Jesus was part of God's plan. Matthew 4:1 says, "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (NKJV).



It is with good reason that Jesus would later teach us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," because Jesus was literally led by the Holy Spirit to go into the wilderness for the specific purpose of being tempted by the devil. We should never desire to be tempted and we should try to isolate ourselves as much as possible from situations where we might be tempted, but there may be times when God wants us to face temptation just to see how we'll respond. In those "Have you considered my servant Job" moments where we get to play the role of Job, it is important that we follow Jesus' example.

We're not told why Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights prior to His encounter with Satan, but we can be sure that He was led by the Holy Spirit to do it. It is important that we also follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as we prepare ourselves for spiritual battle.

Fasting is one way that we can humble ourselves before God, acknowledge our dependence on Him, and focus our attention on Him. But if we're not

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being led by the Holy Spirit to fast, then we might just be making ourselves hungry for no reason. God may want us to prepare for battle in other ways.

Satan's first tempting offer is found in verse 3. He says, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread" (NKJV). Or in other words, if You think You're so great, then prove it. This is the same line that he uses in the second temptation as well.

We've probably all been asked to prove ourselves at some point in our lives. I remember many times growing up when one kid would taunt another kid with, "Oh, yeah, prove it." Sometimes I was the kid being taunted, and sometimes I may have even been the kid doing the taunting.

This kind of behavior continues into adulthood, but we usually don't hear the words spoken out loud because the words are coming from the enemy who is whispering in our ear, "If you're such a great employee, then prove it. If you're such a good wife, then prove it. If you are such a good father, then prove it."

You hear the world screaming at you to prove your worth by meeting the world's standards of success and the temptation is to believe the lies that you're hearing. You begin to believe that if you don't make a certain amount of money, then you're worthless. If you don't keep the house in perfect order, then you're a failure. If your kids aren't perfect, then you're doing a terrible job of raising them.

The lie presented to Jesus was, "If You don't turn these stones into bread, then You're not the Son of God." Satan knew that Jesus was hungry and could sure go for a nice loaf of bread fresh out of the oven with some butter melted on it and some honey drizzled over it. But Jesus knew that His position as God's only begotten Son wasn't dependent on meeting the enemy's demands, and it wasn't dependent on fulfilling any fleshly desires. Satan's opinion did not determine His identity, and it shouldn't determine ours either. Scripture defines who we are, not Satan.

Jesus turned to Scripture in response to the

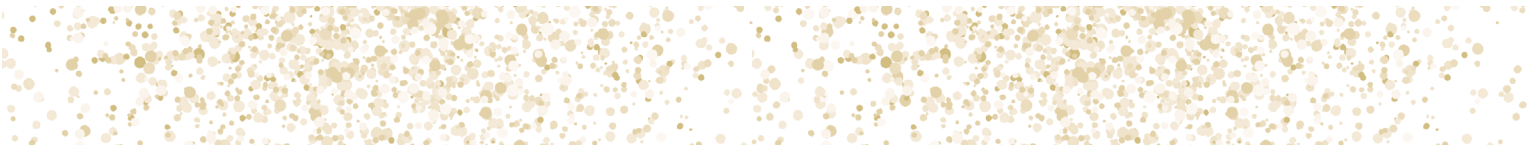
temptation. He quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, but here is what it says in verses 1-3 to give a little bit of the context. It says, "Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD" (NKJV).

I have known for many years that Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3 in response to the first temptation and I have read Deuteronomy 8 many times but I never realized how closely it paralleled today's passage until I was preparing this message.

Notice what it says beginning in verse 2, "And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness." Remember how I pointed out earlier that Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and that he fasted for forty days, but I wasn't sure exactly why?

Let's look again to what it says in Deuteronomy 8:2-3. "And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD" (NKJV).

That sounds exactly like the reason why Jesus was tempted and the reason why we are also. God wants to know what's in our hearts. He wants to know if we will obey Him. He wants to know if we truly believe that He is sufficient to meet all of our needs.



In Matthew's account, the next temptation for Jesus is to prove that He is the Son of God by jumping from the top of the temple and trusting that God will protect Him. This time Satan even throws in a quote from Scripture to maybe give the impression that it is God's will for Jesus to do it.

The quote is from Psalm 91:11-12, but if you read all of Psalm 91 you'll see that there is nothing in the passage that would lead one to think that jumping off of the top of a tall building is a good idea. Jesus responds with another quote from Deuteronomy. This time it is a short quote from 6:16 which says, "You shall not tempt the LORD your God" (NKJV).

If you read the quote in the context of Israel's exodus from Egypt and their wilderness experience, you'll see that Israel had tempted God to give up on them many times during those 40 years because of their seemingly constant complaining. The quote from Jesus is short, but He is saying a lot by referencing that passage, and Satan knows everything that Jesus is saying in just those few words. God repeatedly proved Himself to Israel throughout the exodus and the whole wilderness experience. Israel had no reason to question God's power, and Satan has no reason to question it either.

Satan's final temptation is to offer Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will fall down and worship him. Jesus tells Satan to go away and quotes Deuteronomy 6:13 when He says in Matthew 4:10, "You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve" NKJV).

The context for that quote is that Moses is telling Israel not to forget everything that the LORD did for them in freeing them from slavery and he is warning them not to go after other gods lest God destroy them from the face of the earth.

Sometimes it is tempting for us to forget all that the LORD has done for us. We may run out of toilet paper and lose our minds and be willing to worship the first person that comes along and offers us an unlimited supply of soft, two-ply toilet paper, forgetting that God is our provider, not the person with the toilet

paper. God will never ask us to do something contrary to His Word for any reason, but especially not in order to have our needs met.

Satan tried to trick Jesus into worshipping him by offering him power, but Jesus knew that His power came from the Father through the Holy Spirit. And Jesus knew that He had the power and authority to tell Satan to leave.

In the name of Jesus, we have that same power. If you read the book of Acts, you'll see the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of the apostles and other believers. We have access to the same Holy Spirit through our faith in Jesus.

As I said earlier, it will be interesting to see what condition the world is in when this COVID-19 crisis is over. Life as we have known it may be permanently changed, and changed in ways that we aren't happy about.

The enemy may try to tempt us to compromise our faith in order to have our physical needs met, or we may be tempted to forsake the assembling together of ourselves and to allow ourselves to become spiritually isolated from people who can strengthen and encourage us. If this crisis drags on and there seems to be no end in sight, we may be tempted to become discouraged and lose hope.

But it is in dark times like these that our lights have the opportunity to shine the brightest. Man cannot live by bread alone, and neither can we live by toilet paper alone. We need Jesus and the salvation that is available to us through faith in Him. We need the truth of His word, and we need the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to avoid getting glitter on our hearts. So let us pray that God will not lead us into temptation, and let us pray and trust that He will deliver us from the evil one. [SR](#)



Working Outreach Into the Budget

By Ellen Olson

With the majority of pandemic restrictions behind us, the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church has resumed its dedication to frequent outreach programs. Since December 2021, we've sponsored monthly outreach events in addition to two weekly Youth Fellowship programs, often on a small budget.

Passion & Planning

When it comes to outreach, the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church focuses on two core principles:

- **Outreach Is a Priority**

Brainstorming outreach ideas and bringing them to fruition is a focal point of the Berlin church's Advisory Board, and a large chunk of our yearly budget is assigned to outreach. Thanks to generous financial and material donations from constituents who aren't able to be physically involved in outreach programs, we aren't always successful in spending our entire outreach budget—but that doesn't mean we don't try!

Anyone who visits the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church can easily see that outreach is our passion—one that was strengthened by our church's commitment to the PULSE Process. Outreach programs are frequently talked about from the pulpit; invitation cards, informational signage, and post-event pictures can be found on the Welcome Table and posted to bulletin boards; and attendees (members and non-members alike) are invited to support outreach programs in various ways, from inviting family and friends to using their gifts and talents at an outreach event.

- **Plan According to Strengths and Resources**

Many in our church are called to work with youth, bringing them the truth of the Gospel and helping them grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. As such, a large portion of our church's outreach programs center around kids. Because our church members are called to work with youth, God has blessed them with the gifts and talents necessary for programs such as our yearly Backpack Ministry and Summer Camp as well as our weekly Youth Fellowship programs (we host two!). And making use of church members' gifts and talents greatly reduces the costs associated with those outreach ministries.

The Berlin congregation also is blessed with a large sanctuary, fellowship hall (with moveable walls), and outdoor space, giving us the opportunity to conduct outreach by simply opening those facilities to community use—free of charge to those who sign up on a calendar in the church foyer; commit to a no alcohol policy; and take out their own garbage/clean up after themselves. At virtually no cost to us, we've reached out to the Berlin Rescue Squad; the local bus drivers' union; the Census Bureau; dog training and exercise classes; our local school district; and attendees of countless baby showers, birthday parties, and funeral services—merely by allowing them to use our buildings and grounds.

Outreach Ideas

Following is a list of outreach programs conducted by the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church in recent months. My hope is that they will serve as a source of ideas and encouragement for other SDB churches:

- **Community Member Recognition**

In conjunction with Valentine's Day, we asked church attendees to nominate community members whose service had been a blessing during the previous year. Each nominee received a Thank You card as well as bottled water, gift cards for coffee, and snacks; larger groups, such as employees of the school district's Transportation Department, were treated to a delivery of coffee and donuts for everyone. While the cost of this program was not as small as other outreach initiatives, the feedback from recipients was incredible (Pastor Matt and the church were mentioned on the Facebook pages of the local volunteer ambulance and the school district.)

- **Egg Hunt**

In April, we posted signs around town and created a Facebook event to advertise an Egg Hunt at our church. To accommodate children at various age levels, we hid eggs in three different areas (one for each age group), and each child was given a paper bag as well as a picture of the six colored eggs and one bonus golden egg they were tasked with finding. After collecting their eggs, the attendees traded them in for prizes, with a special prize given to those who found a golden egg. To help with costs, the plastic eggs, pre-packaged candy, and prizes were purchased *via* discount retailers such as the local Dollar General store; the golden egg prizes were books and devotionals purchased on sale *via* Christian Book Distributors. Although just 12 children attended this event, they were the happiest, most prize-laden kids you've ever seen, some of whom are unchurched.

- **Happy Birthday Jesus Party**

This mid-December event included crafts and games (with prizes) as well as cake and drinks. The event was advertised *via* Facebook as well as paper invitations provided to church attendees. Approximately half of the attendees were un- and under-churched individuals from our community.

- **March Madness Tournament**

For this event, church attendees were asked to invite an un- or under-churched friend or relative to join them for a two-on-two tournament, complete with drinks, snacks, and prizes. Because this event was held in our fellowship hall, we used miniature hoops and miniature basketballs made of foam. Inexpensive vintage trophies were purchased online, and the hoops were given as a prize to the top two teams. While attendance was not as high as we'd hoped, many were invited and therefore gained an awareness of our church's outreach mindset. In all, our church spent less than \$300 on this event, and everyone who attended had a blast.

- **Mother's Day Paint-and-Sip**

Although not our original plan (we'd hoped to hire a company that specializes in traveling to various locations with Paint-and-Sip supplies and instructions),

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this event was completely orchestrated using the efforts and talents of those within our church. We were able to purchase painting kits (brushes, canvas, and paint) on sale *via* the craft store Michaels, as well as lemonade, soda, and water to serve as the “sip” portion of the event. One of our church attendees is an accomplished artist who agreed to lead the group of nearly 30 attendees through a step-by-step painting of a sunflower, at no cost to those in attendance. A few last-minute cancellations resulted in leftover materials, all of which will be donated to the Art Department at our local Junior/Senior High School, serving as a further form of community outreach at no additional cost.

• Testing Facility

Due to a lack of space at the local school, two groups of students and their test proctors were welcomed into our fellowship hall for the administration of Advanced Placement tests. Each student (many of whom are unchurched) was provided with a table and chair as well as snacks, water, and writing utensils. We placed a large sign of encouragement on the snack table, letting students know we were praying for them. Before they left, the students used a sheet of copy paper to write and sign a note of thanks to the church.



Final Thoughts & Words of Encouragement

The Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church has hosted events where an impressively large number of adults and children walked through our doors. We’ve also hosted events with only a handful of attendees. We’ve seen a small financial investment work to reach a multitude of people, but we’ve also seen a large financial investment go toward a program that reached just a few. No matter the number of people in attendance or the amount of money spent, what’s most important is that people within our community tell us we are the church that is doing things.

I will make an effort to follow up with news of more outreach initiatives here at the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church so you can be encouraged and get your ideas flowing. In the interim, remember: When you conduct outreach programs, your reputation and representation of Jesus Christ are being built up—and you often are successful in ways that aren’t obvious. Don’t let a small turnout discourage you, and don’t think about the amount of money spent per person. The effort and money put into outreach are seeds being scattered for the Lord. Amen. SR

Ellen Olson is the wife of Pastor Matthew Olson. They have served the Berlin Seventh Day Baptist Church together for nearly thirty years.

By Carl Greene
Executive Director



The Treasure of Commensality

We treasure lots of things in life. We value material things which eventually wear out or break. (I still mourn the loss of my childhood cowboy hat that had an amazing wide brim and exuded coolness when riding my tricycle). We treasure memories of family vacations or adventures we have gone on with friends—while we count the financial cost and the number of vacation days we have left. Yet, there are some treasures that we experience but are not our own—things of great value that are the possession of another.

Our missional purpose as individual churches and as a Conference of churches is a treasure that we steward. We are called to join God in His work of actively advancing His Kingdom—we are stewards of the work that He has called us to. In the words of Leslie Newbigin, we are called to be a “sign, instrument, and foretaste of the reign of God.”¹

We are called to be a sign of God's Kingdom—demonstrating that God's reign and rule is active in history and the present. We do this through **Gospel Saturation**. We point people to God through our public witness. We proclaim the gospel with Word and demonstrate the gospel through deed.

We are called to be an instrument of God's Kingdom—where we participate with God in bringing His rule and reign to broader groups of people and into more dimensions of daily life. We do this as a General Conference through **Church Planting** as God opens doors. We participate as an instrument through **Leadership Development** where we discover, develop, and deploy emerging leaders ready to engage in missional work.

We are also called to be a foretaste of God's Kingdom—where we provide a taste of what the fullness of God's Kingdom will be like. This is sort of like taste testing ice cream—we give an idea of what the amazing flavor is—yet know

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¹Newbigin, Lesslie. 1995. *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Continued from previous page...

that the best is yet to come when we will one day receive the entire bowl. We live this out through **Church Revitalization** in which we increasingly live as Kingdom Family. We experience a taste of Kingdom fullness as we increasingly experience unity through diversity.

The Journey Ahead.

Here is what I believe that God is calling us to in the months ahead. Commensality. I happen to love the word. Webster describes it as “the practice of eating together” pointing to the idea of sharing a common meal. While all of us enjoy the physical benefit of commensality, there is something about sitting together to eat and enjoy conversation together. This is a beautiful practice that is repeated many times in Scripture. In fact, the Lord’s Supper is something of a practice of commensality. The question that arises is, who is at the table?


In the realm of social science, commensality is studied for its effects on social health and individual well-being. It is also a fitting picture for us to consider in regard to those who hunger for belonging. A prayer for us as a Conference of churches and individual Seventh Day Baptist churches is that we will set the table and welcome people to the banquet that our King is calling us to. While it is God Who provides the food and sustenance, we do have decisions to make when it comes to the place settings and making people comfortable at the table. What we must not forget is that the table is not ours to offer—we are stewards inviting people to a place at God’s banquet table. This is true for us in our individual churches—and as a Conference of SDB churches.

Kingdom Family

We are using the phrase “Kingdom Family” as an identity marker of Seventh Day Baptists. I love to close my eyes and picture the heavenly banquet table set and prepared for us to gather around when the fullness of God’s Kingdom is experienced. I pray that we will offer a taste of that Kingdom banquet table in the here and now—not just saying that we are “like family” but living as Kingdom Family practicing figurative commensality.

Our Kingdom Family celebrates the privilege of joining God in His missional work. Gathering together is not an insular party for our group—it is commensality in the presence of our King. As we take Kingdom Risk while actively advancing God’s Kingdom, we are increasingly shaped into the Kingdom Family that God is calling us to live out.

While Conference Week 2022 has been canceled, we will be engaging in a number of Kingdom Family opportunities over the upcoming months. As these in-person and virtual gatherings are announced, may we savor our time together at the table—while inviting many more to gather with us there.

Want to be sure that you do not miss Kingdom Family opportunities? Here is the link to sign up for the blog by email so that you stay informed on all that is happening in our Conference: seventhdaybaptist.org/contact. Simply scroll to the bottom of the screen and sign up! 



We do have
decisions to make
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How Great Is Our God!

Next Time We Meet

By Charlotte Chroniger, Conference President

One of my favorite Christmas cantatas is “He Started the Whole World Singing” by Bill and Gloria Gaither (Gaither Music, 1983). One song in the cantata is “Next Time We Meet.” It talks about God’s people yearning for the time when they can return to Jerusalem and be reunited with their families and friends. Some of the words are:

*Some will have died, most will have cried,
All will have felt the touch of pain.
Wherever we go, there’s one thing we know.
Love conquers everything.*

*Next time we meet, there’ll be no more tears,
Next time we share the bread and the wine.
Maybe tomorrow, maybe next year,
We will be one next time.*

God’s people displayed hope in the future that God would one day let them return to the Promised Land.

As Seventh Day Baptists, many of us had hoped that 2022 would be the year that we could meet together at our annual Conference meetings after a two-year absence. It was not to be.

So now we hope that maybe next year, maybe in 2023, we will be able to meet together as our SDB family. I’ve agreed to serve one more year as Conference President, so I will be available to visit your church if you’d like. The theme and program for 2023 will remain basically the same: *How Great is our God!* Continue to pray that many of us will be able to travel to our 2023 Conference site. Start saving some funds for the week’s expenses. Let’s see what God has planned for us in 2023!

As I thought about the excitement we will eventually have when we are able to meet together as a Conference, I was reminded of the excitement I felt when Don and I went back to Iowa in 2019 for my 50-year high school class reunion. I hadn’t seen any of my classmates since the 10-year reunion. We had a great time reminiscing, learning about what everyone had been doing the past 40 years, sharing how God had been a part of many of our lives, celebrating joys and sympathizing with sorrows and

challenges. We were saddened to learn that 7 out of our 50 classmates had died. We decided not to wait for another decade or two to get together again, but set our next gathering for 2024.

The Bible has some stories of family reunions:

Genesis 33:1-20—Jacob and Esau reunite after many years.

Genesis 45:1-15—Joseph and his brothers were reunited in Egypt.

Genesis 46:29—Jacob is overwhelmed to be reunited with his son Joseph, who he thought was dead.

Luke 15:11-31—The Father welcomes home His prodigal son after a long absence.

The ultimate reunion of God and His saints (believers like us) is described in Revelation 21:2-4:

I saw the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God...And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

Is there anyone in our SDB family that you’ve missed seeing or talking with? Give them a phone call, drop them a note, make an in-person visit if it’s possible. Let’s keep the connections we already have. Make some new connections through Association meetings, through our denominational camping programs, through Vacation Bible School and other summer programs.

Pray for General Council as they make decisions about our future. Pray for our executives as they consider future plans and challenges. Pray for our churches as they continue to minister to their communities and church families. Let’s see what God is doing and going to do! SR

Plugging the Hole in the Biographical Bucket



There's a children's song that was popular when I was younger around a fictional bucket with a hole in it. In the song, one character asks another to plug a hole in the bucket. This leads into an infinite regress of lacking the necessary supplies to repair the bucket. Finally the first character suggests that the second character use the bucket to fetch water to serve the process—at this point the second character reminds the first that there's a hole in the bucket. Those singing the song then realize they've wasted their time and usually despair. Amusement results in about equal measure.

While nothing like that despair grips me as I sit down to write this month, the problem of the holey bucket is very much on my mind. The work of history presents plenty of opportunities to temper despair as we realize that God remains in control, even when difficult situations arise. More often than feeling despair, however, historians do feel a sense of freneticism around making sure that the right information is being documented among the many thousands of bits of information flying around in our world. There are some things which obviously need to be saved, however.

One such clear opportunity for historians is in the preservation of good biographical information about important people. In the CEC's work of preserving history, this keeping of good biographical information is part of our legacy. Shortly after the Conference's Historical Committee was formed in 1863, the habit of keeping track of obituaries began in 1865 in a tradition that we have carried out as a Conference ever since. It is right and fitting that we do this, not only for historical reasons, but for reasons of Kingdom family—a family should remember when its members die to facilitate both celebration of the lives of our loved ones and to aid us in our communal grief when loved ones are separated from us.

By Nicholas J. Kersten
Director of Education and History

Biographical information has been kept a few ways by our Conference recently. One of the ways has been through obituaries submitted to this publication which were printed. This information was voluntary and relied on churches and families to submit information. This information then also became the basis for the Conference's Obituary Coordinator's report to General Conference. In addition, files on some of our Conference leaders were kept if they submitted information like Pastor Profiles. Church records also contain some references to leaders. What we have discovered recently, however, is that there has been a hole in the bucket with respect to how much of this information was being submitted to the *Recorder* and being kept otherwise. We have a real gap in our biographical information—a hole in our biographical bucket.

To address this concern, the Council on History created a Biography Committee, with Judy Parrish as the chairperson, to proactively work to seek out biographical information—not only on those who have already gone home to be with the Lord, but also to those who are still with us—so that our files are complete and maintained with the necessary information. Donna Bond, who has served as the Conference's Obituary Coordinator for the past several years, is also a member of the committee. We are producing three distinct kinds of biographical information at this point:

- Death notices for publication in the *Sabbath Recorder* for all members of SDB churches and those who are SDB adjacent;
- Short obituaries for use in our Conference remembrances for those who hold leadership roles in SDB churches;
- Historical sketches on SDB pastors, missionaries and Conference workers in the style of the biographical sketches *Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America, Volumes 1-3*.

In addition to the production of these three distinct types of biographies, we are also keeping a file of obituaries for those who may be interested. So far we have been very pleased with our ability to find more information than what we were previously receiving. We believe that our Conference's work to remember appropriately all SDBs has improved as a result.

But our work together will continue to improve only if we have your assistance in helping us to plug the hole in our bucket! If you have information about someone the Conference should be taking note has passed away, please send the information to biography@seventhdaybaptist.org, so that the committee can continue its work! SR



By Eric Bofinger

In the Great Commission, we are called to obey God's commands, but also to disciple and baptize the nations. Inclusive in this task is to build up the temple; that is the holy body of believers. As we look through the history of the Jewish nation under the old covenant, we realize that the temple was destroyed not only once but twice primarily due to an unwillingness to put God above self. With the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Most Holy Place was brought to the common believer through the promises in the new covenant. Through the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb, we were cleansed from all unrighteousness and were given direct access to God through the mediator, Jesus Christ. He isn't one way to the Father—He is the only way.

During the time of the Old Covenant, YHWH dwelt among his people. When Solomon's Temple was completed around 957 BC (2 Chronicles 7:10-11), YHWH had a physical home in the holy city. As was the trend through most of the Old Testament, God's chosen people rejected Him and His Law. Despite his wisdom, Solomon aligned himself with the worldly nations and Israel lost favor with God. (1 Kings 11:1-8)

After a downward spiral for several centuries, God sent King Nebuchadnezzar to sack the city and eventually destroy the Temple in 586 BC. (2 Kings 25:8-9) Israel then went to Babylon in exile (as prophesied by Jeremiah) for a period of 70 years. (Jeremiah 25:11-12) During this time, we see four righteous men arise who refused to bow the knee to earthly kingship, rather only to the true God of creation. In Daniel 3, we see Hananiah (whose name means "Yah is gracious"), Mishael (meaning "who is what God is"), and Azariah ("Yah has helped") refuse to submit to the king and be sentenced to death in the fiery furnace. While in the furnace they are met by one like the "son of god" who some argue is the pre-incarnate Messiah. God delivers those that follow His commands!

We see this again in Daniel 6, when Daniel (meaning "God is my judge") continues to pray in direct defiance to King Darius' injunction. His disobedience to the civil magistrate led Daniel to the lion's den. Daniel only feared God and knew that he was only accountable to God and His Law, so was delivered from the pit by the grace of God. "Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fear relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed."

Throughout the book of Daniel, we see allusions to a restoration of Israel and another temple in Jerusalem. The capstone to this occurs in Daniel 9, when Daniel petitions God for his people to be brought out of exile. As an answer, God sends His messenger Gabriel to deliver the message of the coming Messiah, which would take place within seventy weeks of years after the call to rebuild Jerusalem. Remarkably, Israel went back into the land after exactly seventy years of exile as foretold by Jeremiah. After the call to rebuild the city, the Messiah showed up exactly in the sixty-ninth week of years in his role as the King of Israel as foretold and recorded in Daniel 9. Not only were we given a vision of a restoration of a new temple but were given a vision for its destruction as well. "And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed." (Daniel 9:26)

And now we flash forward about five centuries. Prior to the baptism and anointing of Jesus, the forerunner John the Baptist announces to a crowd, "repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2) A little later we see John using serrated language with the Pharisees and chief priests about the coming judgment of the covenant-breaking people. "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7) During Jesus' three-and-a-half-year ministry, He cleanses the temple twice (John 2:13-16 & Matthew 21:12-17) as was His priestly Levitical duty. (Leviticus 14:33-55) Immediately after Jesus cleansed the temple for the second time, He cursed the fig tree, delivered the seven woes to the Pharisees, and then gave the Olivet Discourse. (Matthew 24) It's important to note that God in human flesh departed the temple toward the Mount of Olives exactly as YHWH's glory departed the first temple prior its destruction. (Ezekiel 10:18-19) Despite Herod's temple being a beautiful and magnificent building, it was no home for God, as it was diseased, it was an abomination, and it was a "den of robbers." (Matthew 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46, Jeremiah 7:11)

Jesus addressed His disciples and a crowd of people by saying, "You see all these" (the buildings of the temple), "do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." (Matthew 24:2) Jesus then spoke privately with His disciples and referenced the time for when these things were

to take place. "So, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place, then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains... For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be." (Matthew 24:15-16, 21) Luke interprets this for us and says, "but when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near." (Luke 21:20) We know from the writings of Josephus that the prince who came to destroy Jerusalem was the military general, Titus, the son of Caesar Vespasian of Rome.

Interestingly, according to Rabbinic Jewish sources, both the first temple, in 586 BC, and the second, in 70 AD, were set ablaze on the same day of the Hebrew calendar, Tisha B'Av (the 9th day of the 5th month). The physical, old covenant temples were destroyed by the will of God as an outpouring of wrath on the covenant-breaking people.

The old covenant law was fulfilled by Christ who died a violent death on the cross that we might be saved. On that day, the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom allowing direct access to God through the blood of the lamb. (Matthew 27:51). "But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Hebrews 9:26). The literal tearing of the curtain symbolizes the shift from a brick-and-mortar temple to an indwelling by the Holy

Spirit in the followers of Christ. "Do you know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy and you are that temple." (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

Just as both physical temples became an abomination, how often do we let our own temples become the same? "For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power." (2 Timothy 3:2-5) It's time to throw off the sin that so easily entangles (Hebrews 12:1) and fill our temples with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-24).

In the great commission, Christ commands us to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:18-20) As we seek to follow all that God has commanded while we are within our workplace, communities, and churches, please remember that "in him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord." (Ephesians 2:21) Let us be the temple God has created us to be. SR

Building up the Temple

Once again the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be putting on its annual Gospel Feet 5k to raise funds for missions. Our theme for this year is 'Building Up the Temple.' Since we are not meeting in person for Conference this year, this event will be virtual in some sense; however, we are hold a community run/walk on Sunday, July 31. Our goal is to have 150+ runners participate throughout our conference and raise a record setting \$8,000 towards two large building projects within our denomination.

The areas of need include the churches in Nicaragua and Rwanda. The construction in Nicaragua has been on a larger worship center. Over the past two years, the foundation has been laid and now the walls are going up. They are now at the point where construction is slowing with the rising cost of materials needed to finish the job. The situation in Rwanda presents a different scenario. Multiple smaller worship centers have been closed due to a failure to meet the country's building codes. Funds directed towards the Rwanda church will be used to update things like bathrooms in these gathering places to meet the codes needed to reopen.

The cost to participate in the Gospel Feet 5k Walk / Run is \$25 for adults. We also have a 1 mile fun run for children,



In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.
Ephesians 2:21

which costs \$10. Once you have registered there is the option to purchase a t-shirt for around \$15, which includes shipping. We are heavily encouraging you to leave an extra donation to help the Missionary Society raise the funds needed to tackle both rather large projects. Registration and donations can be made using the link: runsignup.com/race/events/wiljanesvillewilgospelfeet5k

"In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21). SR

The Book of Revelation: The Seven Seals

Part 1



Study Lesson 17 by Dennis Coleman,
Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, NJ

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

–Romans 3:21-22

Because Jesus prevailed over sin and death, He is worthy to take the scroll from the Father's hand and to open its seals (Revelation 5:5). Last month we witnessed the church, all of Heaven and all creation acknowledge that the Lamb is worthy. We had the honor of joining in worship as our Savior takes the scroll and begins a series of events on which all of the rest of the vision that is Revelation rests.

Remember how we saw our prayers represented as the elders hold golden bowls of incense which are the prayers of the church? Our prayers do reach Heaven and it's time for us to pray for understanding as we move forward in the vision revealed to John and to us.

Prayer Time

Father, thank You for the reminder in Revelation 5:8 that the prayers of the saints do reach Your throne. Please prepare our hearts and teach us as we seek to understand the visions which You gave to John, who wrote them down for us.

We Interrupt This Program With An Important Message from Romans 3:22-26

Before I move into Revelation 6, I think there are some important concepts that we need to know before the seals are opened:

- All have sinned (Romans 3:23)–This includes both our sin nature which we picked up from Adam and the fact that we all have done something wrong at one point or another. From God's point of view this fact is not one that's up for debate. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
- We are justified (Romans 3:24)–Simple explanation: We are declared righteous in God's record book.
- This justification comes to us freely–it does not cost us anything and we did nothing to receive our justification. God gives to us and He is not stingy about it.
- It is given by God's grace–God wants us to have it because He loves us. We do not deserve it but He freely gives it to us anyway.

- Redemption that is in Christ Jesus—(Redemption: To compensate for the faults or bad aspects of something: To gain or regain possession of something in exchange for payment.) He redeemed us from our bondage to sin and guilt and that redemption is only available through the person of Jesus Christ.

- Whom God set forth as a propitiation (Romans 3:25) —Propitiation is a word that we must be very careful in how we apply it when speaking of the God of the Bible. Normal definition: to appease, giving us the idea that we must somehow pacify God. This comes from other religions where there is an angry deity who must be made happy. I believe there are all kinds of wrong in looking at it this way.

1. It ignores the fact that there is nothing we can do to “appease” God. This wrong view puts the focus back on man, making it about us doing something to change God. But these verses tell us that God set forth this propitiation (not man) and that it is by Jesus’ blood (not man’s sacrifice). In fact the only thing we are to do is believe.

2. It gives us the idea that God is angry with us and might even hate us and therefore needs to be “appeased.” 1 John 4:10 tells us that God loves us and because He loves us He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

3. It uses the wrong definition of “appease.” Appease can mean to pacify. It can also mean to satisfy. Biblical appeasement is about satisfying God’s justice system. In a way, God had a dilemma. By law, the payment for sin is death (Romans 6:23). If God did what is required we would all die in our sins. If He simply ignored our sins, He Himself would be committing sin by going against His own sense of justice. So He sent His Son to pay the price we could not pay. In so doing He satisfied (appeased) His sense of justice in the most loving way possible.

- Jesus’ blood is the payment. Biblically, blood represents life. (Leviticus 17:11) Christ’s life is poured out for your sins.

- We are called to believe. It is by faith that each of us personally acknowledges the payment made by Jesus and by faith we each receive the fruits of Jesus’ labor.

- God’s righteousness is revealed. He did not do anything unjust; He did not change the system. He satisfied both His sense of justice and His love for us.

- In His forbearance (patience), God passed over our sins.

Remember in Exodus how death visited Egypt? Moses warned everyone of the coming judgment, explaining

the choice they each faced at the time. Those who believed the warning avoided death by painting the blood of a lamb on their doorpost. Those who chose not to believe went to bed that night without the blood and woke to a horrible (and avoidable) nightmare.

I believe that what we are about to see in Revelation 6 and 7 is the beginning of the Passover on a worldwide scale. This time Moses and the people of Israel are those who have faith in Jesus and in His gift of salvation. We have the blood of Christ (the Lamb) painted upon the doorposts of our hearts. Seeing this, the angel of death passes over just as he did in Exodus. Egypt is now anyone who rejects God’s gift of salvation through His Son. Because they do not believe they choose not to paint the blood on their doorposts. Their guilt is no different than in Exodus.

When Jesus takes the scroll in Revelation 5, this Passover begins:

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”

Revelation 6:1

Each seal is accompanied by a vision representing what God has declared in the scroll. I’ve read differing points of view as to if these visions are literal descriptions of what will happen or, if they are similar to hieroglyphics, pictures representing something that will happen. Either way, something will happen and with wisdom we will be able to link these things to what we see described in Revelation.

As the first seal is opened, one of the four living creatures calls John over to see someone sitting on a white horse. As pointed out in Ellicott’s Commentary, a white horse was used by ancient Rome to represent victory. This shows the confidence God has in Christ’s victory. White also represents the purity of the Gospel. Matthew Henry’s Commentary points to how Jesus sent His disciples out in the purity of the Gospel at the very founding of the Christian religion on earth.

This Conqueror is given a crown further representing victory as he goes out conquering (currently winning) and to conquer (will always win). His weapon in this battle is a bow with which he sends out judgment upon those who reject the Word of God (according to Ellicott’s Commentary).

What we see then with the opening of this first seal is a simple but powerful fact:

Jesus and His church will win today and in the future. SR



SDB Missionary Society

Andrew Samuels
Executive Director

MOZAMBIQUE

When our mission team consisting of my wife Kay, Pastor George Lawson and me arrived in Nampula, Mozambique, we were greeted by an elaborate entourage of Seventh Day Baptist leaders and congregants. There were two small trucks full of people, in addition to another vehicle which provided our transportation. What lay in store for us were three days of active, intense, pulsating ministry.

The Mozambican network of Seventh Day Baptist churches consists of 101 congregations, comprising over 6,500 members. These congregations are situated in three of the ten provinces of Mozambique. While our ministry centered in Nampula province, we have churches also in Zambezia and Tete provinces.

At the SDB provincial headquarters church in Muchaia, Nampula, we had the privilege of sharing on evangelism and stewardship with pastors and leaders. Kay was given the opportunity to lead a session with an enthusiastic contingent of women and children.

On Sabbath, the following day, we had the privilege of visiting three churches, conducting a brief worship service in each place, including the dedication of a new church facility. The day after that, the church visits extended to seven, over a 300km distance one way. Again, in each location, a brief worship service was part of the routine. Pastor George Lawson and I both had multiple opportunities to practice and seek to master our 10-minute sermon repertoire. For every single church visit, the two open back truck loads of people accompanied us and became a core part of each congregation. The phenomenon of a portable congregation was a new experience and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. By the time we had visited all 11 churches in the three days, many faces were much more familiar and our bond in Jesus Christ felt a lot stronger.

Our Mozambican brethren are doing well with the concept of planting churches where people are. Many of their churches are situated in remote locations, but the reality is that people live in those remote places. So, the church becomes a source of ministry to those communities. One unique and interesting phenomenon that we encountered was the sight of people bringing their own chairs to church. The seating facility in many of the churches is limited, so typically a plastic chair is brought from home by a church attendee, and that becomes the supplemental seating arrangement for those people. At the end of the worship service, the person takes up his/her chair and returns home with it.

It was our observation that very few Bibles were present in the churches that we visited. It did not appear that many people own a Bible. Upon inquiring of the leaders, it was confirmed that our observation was accurate. We further learned that the current literacy rate in Mozambique is about



People taking their own chairs to and from church



One of the trucks carrying some of the people who traveled to the 11 churches with us



One of the congregations visited



Kay Samuels giving thanks for the offering at one of the churches visited



Another congregation visited

60%. Adult literacy rate is percentage of people ages 15 and above who can both read and write with understanding, a short simple statement about their everyday life. Our mission team believes it will be a worthwhile project to furnish our Mozambican brethren with a supply of Portuguese Bibles, and facilitate a program of literacy education using the Bible as the textbook. In that way, the people will learn to read and write, and also simultaneously learn the teachings of the Bible. We enlist prayers and other support for such a ministry.

Prayers are also appreciated for the success of the Mozambique SDB Conference to become registered with the government of the country. In the past, they have had setbacks which have prevented that very important achievement from taking place. Now, most of the requirements are accessible to our Conference leaders, or they are in the process of acquiring the additional prerequisites. When that task is completed, it will be a big step towards that Conference having a sense of legitimacy in their country.

We were delighted to share a few days with energetic, joyful, generous and Jesus-loving Seventh Day Baptists in Mozambique. SR



Pastor George Lawson sharing with children

DEATH NOTICES

The Sabbath Recorder publishes death notices for those who are members or have previously been members of SDB churches. Priority in publication of these notices will be given to those sent by local churches. If churches and families wish to submit obituaries for historical purposes, they are welcome to send those to the Biography Committee of the Council on History at biography@seventhdaybaptist.org, where they will be processed and saved according to library and archival policy. We encourage those looking for full obituaries to search the internet for them using the information provided in these notices. Submitted death notices should include the full name of the deceased, where they were living when they died, a summary of roles they occupied in their local church(es) and the General Conference, the day they died, and their age when they died.

RANDS—Alyssa M. (Lotts), member of Freedom Community Church (New Auburn, WI, SDB); resided in New Auburn; died April 1, 2022, at the age of 33; burial in New Auburn.

MILLER—Joseph B., member of First Hopkinton (Ashaway), RI, SDB Church; resided in Westerly, RI; died April 3, 2022, at the age of 78.

BARBER—Barbara Anne (Waite), deaconess of Pawcatuck SDB Church (Westerly, RI); resided at Dunn's Corner, Westerly; died at Dunn's Corner, May 28, 2022, at the age of 86.

NEW MEMBERS

BATTLE CREEK SDB CHURCH

Battle Creek, MI
Tim Smothers, Pastor

By Testimony
Jacob Fick



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Put your hope in the Lord.
Travel steadily along his path.

—Psalm 37:34a NLT

Periodicals postage paid
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Sunday, July 31, 2022

Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society's

Gospel Feet 5K

"Building Up the Temple"



In him the whole building is joined together and rises to
become a holy temple in the Lord.

Ephesians 2:21