

# midtown

## M E S S E N G E R

Volume 4, Issue 49

December 5, 2021

## Keep Moving Forward

By Jesse Moser

“Do not say, “Why were the former days better than these?” For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.” (Ecclesiastes 7:10)

Have you ever thought, “I miss the old days?” Or, “Remember them good ole days?” Sometimes we get caught thinking about how good our past was and forget to continue looking forward. This problem has been around for many years. For example, consider the nation Israel. They were in bondage under Egypt and were taken out by the powers of God. Led by Moses, they were making their way to the Promised Land, and all along the way they had something to complain about. In a time of rejoicing because of the blessing of the future, they were stuck remembering how good they had it in Egypt. They were without food and water for many days in the wilderness and remembered how they were provided for in Egypt. They had food, water, and shelter, but they also were slaves. They were oppressed by Egypt and forced to work in a harsh environment. Yet they would rather be in Egypt than in the wilderness. They forgot to look forward to the blessings to come and continued looking back. This hindered the people from growing and angered the Lord. The people tried to overthrow Moses’ authority and were punished for their disobedience. God had a plan for them and they neglected to realize it and disregarded the blessings in front of them because they looked back (Book of Exodus). Solomon tells us with heavenly wisdom not to look back “Do not say, “Why were the former days better than these?” For you do not inquire wisely concerning this.” (Eccl. 7:10). We are not

wise when we look and dwell on the past. The concept of looking back happens many times in the Bible, but we are only going to look at a few examples and what we can do to avoid the same mistakes.

Jesus uses three words to express this idea of not looking back perfectly, “Remember Lot’s wife” (Luke 17:24). The story of Lot’s wife was well known to the Jewish people. The reference to her name was all it took for Jesus to get His point across to the people. God, in the days of Lot, was going to punish the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Their sins condemned them to divine judgment, but Lot and his family were saved because of Abraham. As Lot and his family were leaving, God told them to leave and not look back or they will be destroyed. They left and Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, but “his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt” (Gen. 19:26). God gave Lot and his family a chance to escape judgment, but because for some reason not given, Lot’s wife looked back and was destroyed. This does not mean that we can not look back on the past for remembrance.

The children of Israel, as they were crossing the Jordan to enter the promised land in the book of Joshua, placed pillars of rocks on both sides of the Jordan River. They were commanded by God to place the pillars up so they would remember and tell their children the wonderful work God had done for them.

“That this may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, ‘what do

these stones mean to you?' Then you shall answer them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossover the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. And these stones shall be for a memorial to the children of Israel forever" (Joshua 6:6-7).

The children of Israel were told to remember their past and the blessing God gave them. This was to help them move forward. Giving them confidence in God's promises.

We have seen two different examples of looking back. One ended in destruction, the other in forward progress. This serves as an example for us today. When we do look back, what is it for? Are we remembering selfish things not glorifying God? Or are we remembering what God has done for us so that we can continue serving Him? The question posed in Ecclesiastes 7:10 is, "Why were the former days better

than these?" The answer is, they are not. The book of Hebrews deals with the Jewish Christians turning back to Judaism. They were tired of being persecuted for turning from the Law of Moses. They thought, if we go back this would stop, but what they failed to realize was it all pointed to Jesus. Since it pointed to Jesus they would end up at the same conclusion. This means the old days are not better, because without Christ we have no hope in eternal life. Our goal in life is to glorify God and make it to heaven. We can not do this if we are going back to the old way. Not just going back to the Law, but the life we lived before Christ. We can not think our lives were better in sin. While we are in sin, we are separated from God, but if we are in Christ we have salvation, "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10). So, instead of looking back at the "good ole days," look to a future in heaven. Remember God's blessings, but only to continue forward, not to fall backward.

## How Long, Lord?

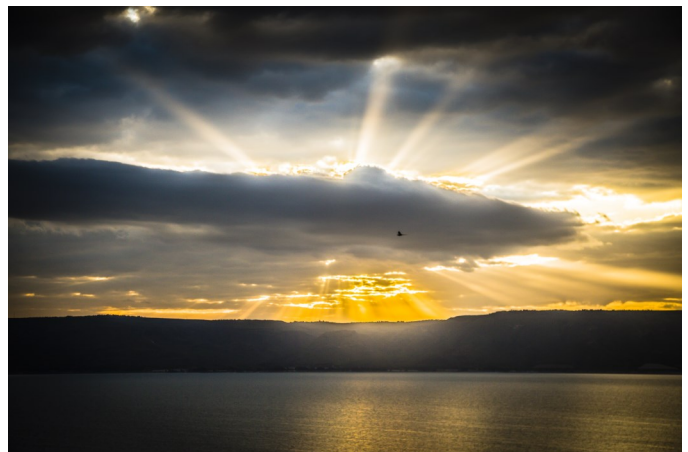
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The prophet Habakkuk cried out to the Lord in a fashion that may sound like something we might say to Him. "O Lord, HOW LONG shall I cry, and You will not hear? WHY do You show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble?" (Hab. 1:2-3). From the people's perspective (that's key), God was allowing evil to go unpunished and unchecked in Judah. "How long will you remain idle, God?" Have you ever thought, "HOW LONG, O Lord, are you going to continue to let this happen? WHY do You not do something?" That's OUR perspective.

Notice what God said in response to Habakkuk. "Look among the nations and WATCH—Be utterly astounded! For I WILL WORK a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you. For indeed I AM RAISING up the Chaldeans..." (1:5-6).

God told His people what "I WILL" do for you (future). God told His people what "I AM" doing

for you (present). May God help us to trust HIS perspective and to WATCH what He WILL and IS already doing to help us!



Upcoming Events

TODAY!– Monthly Potluck luncheon after morn-  
ing worship with a 1pm afternoon service.

Mon. Dec. 6– Teen Bible Basics @6:30pm at the  
building.

Thurs. Dec.9– Teens Takeaway Thursday @  
6:30pm at the Scherffius home.

Sat. Dec. 11–Kids Gingerbread house decorating  
at 10am at the building.

Sun. Dec. 12– Youth Devo after evening services  
at the home of the Scherffius’.

Dec. 19–White Elephant gift exchange at the  
building after evening worship services. Please  
bring a gift for the exchange.

Dec. 31–New Year’s Eve fellowship at the build-  
ing @ 7pm. Please bring games and finger foods.

Registration for the Southwest Youth retreat at  
Camp Hensel has begun.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests

Naomi Flonnory who had medical testing done  
last week.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Les Daltry, Scott DeDear, Ken and  
Sandra Marie, Ann Pantel, Veronica Serenil,  
Clark Withers, Dee Gilpatrick, Faye Henderson,  
Sandy Malone.

Food Helpers for the month of December - Team B.  
There is a list of teams on the bulletin board.

Service Roster

Week of December 5, 2021

Sunday Morning

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran  
Scripture Reading.....Fred Scherffius  
Song Leader ..... Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer..... Lupe Escojido  
Closing Prayer..... Steve Randle

Lord’s Supper & Offering

Bread.....Mike Atkinson  
Cup..... Rick Bass  
Offering..... Ken Dorries  
Assist.....Fred Scherffius  
Assist..... Kirk FitzSimmons  
Assist..... Leon Morales

Sunday Evening

Announcements..... Kevin Sheeran  
Song Leader .....Fred Scherffius

Opening Prayer..... Bryant Siegel  
Closing Prayer..... Lupe Escojido

Lord’s Supper & Offering..... Ken Dorries &  
Rick Bass

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Ronnie Scherffius  
Song Leader ..... Ken Dorries  
Devotional .....Jesse Moser

Other

Usher.....Allen Clifton  
Prepare Communion ..... Randles

Congregational News

Birthdays

Georgeann Savoie .....Dec. 7  
Therisa Gant ..... Dec. 8  
Ron White..... Dec. 8  
Deann York..... Dec. 8  
Naomi Flonnory ..... Dec. 9

Anniversaries

George & Therisa Gant ..... Dec. 11

If you have any prayer requests or upcoming  
events to be announced, please contact our  
secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030.

## Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons  
Ronnie Scherffius  
Ron White

## Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism  
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence  
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

## Our Preacher

Ronnie Scherffius

## Weekly Reading

*“Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.” Proverbs 17:5*

## Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.  
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.  
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.  
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

## Attendance Records

Week of November 28, 2021

A.M. Bible Class.....56  
A.M. Worship.....74  
P.M. Worship.....57  
Wednesday Bible Class.....46

Offering week of November 28, 2021.....\$2,588

## Supported Works

Mani Pagidipalli *India*  
John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*  
Anthony Scherffius *Southwest School of Bible Studies*



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