DAILY BIBLE READINGS
for February 1973

A lamp to my feet
A light to my path

(Including and supplementing the daily Bible readings of the Uniform Series of Bible Lessons published in "The Helping Hand."

A New Heart and Spirit
1—Thurs. The Lord Cleanses and Rebuilds. Ezekiel 36:23-28
2—Fri. "They Shall Be My People." Ezekiel 11:14-21
3—Sabbath. Blameless Before God. Psalm 15
Haggai: God's House and Yours
5—Mon. A Call To Build. Haggai 1:7-15
6—Tues. The First House of the Lord. 1 Kings 6:1-10
7—Wed. Splendor of Solomon's Temple. 1 Kings 6:14-22
9—Fri. The Promises of the Lord. Haggai 2:10-23
10—Sabbath. "Let Us Return to the Lord." Hosea 5:15-6:6
Zechariah: More Than Human Power
12—Mon. A Vision of Prosperity. Zech. 1:7-17
16—Fri. Sincere Worship and Work. Zech. 7:1-10
17—Sabbath. What the Lord Requires. Micah 6:6-12

The Shape of Things To Come
20—Tues. "Love Truth and Peace." Zech. 8:14-23

This is God's World
27—Tues. Ascribe Glory to God. Psalm 29
28—Wed. The Lord Reigns. Psalm 97

A Prayer from Germany
Lord Jesus, you were born of a Hebrew mother, you rejoiced in the faith exhibited by a Syrian woman and a Roman soldier, you welcomed Greeks who sought you out, you let an African help carry your cross. Help us to bring together peoples of all races and nations as co-inheritors in your kingdom. — Lutheran Bishop Herman Dietzfelbinger of Munich, West Germany.

—EBPS

OWM Budget Figures
This is the issue that would normally carry the OWM receipts for December and the totals for 1972. Due to a necessary delay in closing the books, Treasurer Gordon Sanford was not able to get the figures to our office before we went to press. Those financial figures will probably be printed in the February 10 issue, since all this space in the February 3 Sabbath Recorder is spoken for—special issue for outside distribution.
INTRODUCTION

This issue is written for you. Those who have taken the time to put words the feelings of their hearts desire to share with you the experience of joy as it ought to be for everyone who knows the love of God. Like rain that covers the earth as a blanket of freshness, joy is that Christian experience of life that covers our hectic uncertain lives with a blanket of freshness and hope. God gives joy. He opens the floodgates of His love to each and every person who comes to Him and asks for His love. And knowing that God loves us and desires the best for us in His care, we find a joy that is virtually unexpressible. Those who write the articles included here know the joy that is to be found in Jesus Christ and in our experience with God, and we desire to share it with you. May God’s love reach out to you, and may the experience of joy—joy that is like the rain—cover you and envelope you with a newness of life that meets your needs. We pray that God will “restore to you the joy of His salvation, and uphold you with a willing spirit” (Psalm 51:12, paraphrased).

THE SABBATH RECORDER

First Issue June 13, 1844
A Magazine for Christian Enlightenment and Inspiration
Member of the Associated Church Press
Herbert E. Saunders, Editor
Rev. LEON M. HAILBY, Managing Editor

Terms of Subscription
Per Year $5.00 Single Copies 15 cents
Special Issues
Single copies 15 cents; 8 copies $1; 100 copies $9.

Postage to Canada and foreign countries 50 cents per year additional. Published weekly (except August when it is published bi-weekly) for Seventh Day Baptists by the American Sabbath Trust Society, 510 Watchung Ave., Plainfield, N. J. 07062
Second class postage paid on Plainfield, New Jersey. The Sabbath Recorder does not necessarily endorse signed articles. All communications should be addressed to the Sabbath Recorder, Plainfield, New Jersey.

PLAINFIELD, N. J. February 3, 1973
Volume 194, No. 5 Whole No. 6,555

Herbert E. Saunders, the editor of this special issue of the Sabbath Recorder is the pastor of the Plainfield, N. J., Seventh Day Baptists Church. He is a graduate of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, N. Y., and the author of the book The Sabbath: Symbol of Creation and Re-Creation. He and his wife, Barbara have three children, Brian, Peggy Sue, and Michael.

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Cindy Rudolph, the artist for this special issue of the Sabbath Recorder is the daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Albert N. Rogers. She lives with her husband Steven in Braintree, Mass. For several years she served as club director for Army Special Services in Germany. She is a graduate of the University of Denver in the field of Art.

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Lisa Cudahy of Little Genesea, N. Y., is a freshman at Milton College, Milton, Wis. She is studying music and has always been interested in journalism and writing. Her poem on the back page of this special issue is a deep expression of her joy.

The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy. — Romans 14:17

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room, And heav’n and nature sing. —Isaac Watts. Psalm 98, Stanza 1

What is blessing, but an experience of true joy felt as a result of God’s favor? We are constantly seeking to find that joy—to find that unique experience of peace with our Father. And yet, God’s promise for each of us, is outlined in the book of Isaiah where it says “enjoy the Sabbath.” There is something in our relationship to God’s holy Sabbath day that brings a wellspring of joy and peace to our hearts amid the tumult of everyday living. There seems to be a moment of hesitation as the world becomes not quite so hard on us and we are refreshed and renewed. God gave us the holy Sabbath day—the seventh day of the week—for reflection and re-creation. He built within it the experience of joy and wonder. He made it holy. As we recall Jesus’ saying: “The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27). It was given to each of us as a gift—a wonderful gift with the specific purpose, to give us time to be renewed, to be changed, to find peace, to remember God.

What does the Sabbath mean to you, today? Is there that quality of life that transcends the barriers of your hectic world and brings newness and freshness to your experience? Does the Sabbath offer you the blessing of joy? God made it for that purpose and promises that if we take delight in it we will “ride upon the heights of the earth.” God’s promises never fail—His word is good. Accept God’s Sabbath, rejoice in it, and know the wonder of His joy.
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Joy is what? The Family?
This collection of human beings with widely differing dispositions, interests, needs, and talents? A typical page from the log of some families would paint a picture of anything but joy. Perhaps for some people this is rue. All right, let's change the hypothesis slightly: "Joy can be the family."

If joy is not your family, then let me hint that perhaps you are to blame. Also, may I be so naive as to suggest that the space-age pace at which we race constantly is not conducive to an aura of cheer surrounding each member of the family. How many times have we heard the older generation wishing for the return of the "good ole days" when people stayed home more and life wasn't so hectic. In this century it takes perhaps more effort on the part of each member of family to make it joy.

The first essential is to have something besides blood ties which unite a family. The most powerful and effective uniting influence is Jesus Christ. A personal relationship with Him for each individual is necessary. The ideal situation, of course, is that the family begin with husband and wife who are not only one in the flesh, but one in Christ. Then as each of the children reaches the age of understanding, let these parents lead them to a personal encounter with Christ. But, you say, what if they won't accept Him? To which they reply, "good ole days"

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None of the fruits of the Spirit, lest it be love, is more emphatic in nature than joy! Appearing first only after love in the Galatian listing, joy assumes a high and unique position among those character traits which demonstrate the Spirit-filled life. Contagious in nature, joy flows from heart to heart in the community of believers, spontaneously transforming sorrow into happiness, inertia into enthusiasm, lethargy into inspiration; enabling the Church (the body of Christ) to radiate with the warmth of Christian commitment.

That joy is empathy was beautifully expressed by Jesus Christ in His discourse on the vine and the branches: "These things I have spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

The spiritual philosophy of inter-abiding, which is empathy, had been vividly demonstrated in His earthly life. Though He was indeed "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," yet He was also One who glowed with the joy of the Father. How else can we explain the fact that little children flocked about Him of the message of reconciliation? That my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." His expressed purpose in so speaking of the abiding life principle and experience was that He might impart His joy to them, and that their joy might thus be full. Joy is empathy.

He had expressed to His disciples the importance of inter-abiding: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." His expressed purpose in so speaking of the abiding life principle and experience was that He might impart His joy to them, and that their joy might thus be full. Joy is empathy.

He had lived a life of complete obedience to the will of the Father, and this was His joy. "I came to do the will of Him that sent me," was not only the expression of His lips, but the testimony of His life. Every word He spoke, every deed He accomplished, every miracle He performed was in perfect accord with the will of His Father, and a means of making His joy complete; and with empathic significance He passed the torch of service to His disciples and to all who would follow in His name. "If you love me, keep my commandments," He said, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If you keep my commandments you shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. —That my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be complete."

That joy is empathy is also testified to in the experience of the early Church and her converts. Paul had labored diligently to impart to the Jews the universality of the message of reconciliation, but the word

By FRANCIS D. SAUNDERS

(Continued on page 14)
Many of us probably were introduced to our knowledge of God through our parents and friends that we knew as a child. This was the case with me. I had seen people turn to God; so my natural reaction was to do the same. When I was a small girl one of my favorite songs went something like this: “There are some things I may not know, there are some places I can’t go; but I am sure of this one thing that God is real for I can feel him deep within.” I used to sing this song over and over because it really made me feel good inside.

The words to this song have carried me a long way, because I do know that God is always with me wherever I am—“deep within.” I never had a drastic conversion experience like Paul on the road to Damascus but it was a calm and quiet assurance that God cared about me enough to be there when I needed Him and He has always been just that! Praise the Lord!

We all feel good to know that we have someone who cares about us and who will talk to us. In fact, one of the happiest times in our lives is when we finally discover that “Mr. or Miss Right” for us. A similar feeling of joy comes over me every time I realize that I have a friend beside me at all times who cares about every detail of my life—that friend is God!

PEG VAN HORN

Peg Van Horn is the secretary in the office of the General Conference. She served one year in the office on dedicated service before becoming employed. She lives with her husband Phil in Plainfield, N. J., and is an active member of the Plainfield Seventh Day Baptist Church.

He’s not a hard friend to get to know. Anyone can know Him as well as he knows his best friend. Just recognize His presence, take the time to learn as much about Him as possible, and talk to Him as you go about your daily tasks. I’ve found Him to be one of the most consistent and patient listeners I know. He’ll always give you the answer you need.

You will find that joy is not only knowing of God but it is more knowing Him personally and talking with Him that brings you joy. Once you have found this relationship to God, others will know it. You won’t be able to hide it. Share your joy and enthusiasm with others and see what it can do for them.

If you have no joy in your religion, there’s a leak in your Christianity somewhere.—W. A. (Billy) Sunday

Desire joy and thank God for it. Remember it, if need be, for others’ sake. That’s joy beyond joy.—Robert Browning
Joy is growth — growth in size or in accomplishment, academic or vocational growth, growth in personality or in character, financial or spiritual growth. It matters little whether growth is slow and steady or comes in sudden spurts. Just so it happens. Growing is fun because growth is vitality, a sign of life and of health.

What joy in childhood to see oneself growing, to see the evidence of trousers and shirt sleeves getting too short and feeling the shoes getting too small. To see curbs and steps and fences getting smaller, and shirt sleeves getting too long. Growing is growth in size or in accomplishment, academic or vocational growth, growth in personality or in character, financial or spiritual growth, growth in size or in accomplishment, academic or vocational growth, growth in personality or in character, financial or spiritual growth.

What a pleasure to stand back to back with father—or mother and measure our growth against those standards of adulthood. Remember the thrill of one day finding oneself actually taller than mother and not much shorter than father. What a pleasure to stand back to back with any standard and see the progress of one’s life, to sense achievement and accomplishment and to know, without a doubt, that there has been growth.

What joy to find one’s strength growing, to match muscles with one’s peers without shame. To flex one’s biceps and see there is actually something one can see and feel. To lift weights that yesterday wouldn’t budge. There is always a sense of elation and satisfaction in pitting one’s strength against unfavorable odds, to feel the stress and the resistance — but to prevail and to know that a victory has been achieved and that one has grown.

There are aspects of growth which bring excitement tinged with wonder and concern as the body changes from a childish to the adult form. Feelings change and interests change. At times manhood predominates and suddenly the child asserts itself again and one feels confused and uncertain. But through it all is the awareness that something wonderful is happening, that life is broadening and unfolding.

Similarly, how often a person finds himself in an ambivalent situation producing conflicting emotions. The desire for new experience with new horizons and the finding of new potentials is in conflict with the desire for the safety and the security of the status quo. The inertia of the past is pitted against the potential of a possible new future. Anticipation and excitement are tempered with concern and apprehension — to grow or not to grow! Growing is freedom. What joy! To do things, to make choices, to be responsible, to do as one likes and not to be told. Breathes there a youth with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said — “I’m on my own, I’m my own boss.” Every young person looks forward to freedom from the restrictions of home, of school, and even of the community. At first freedom is an urgent goal but it becomes a commodity to be used with caution and restraint. Freedom and responsibility are twins but responsibility assumes the dominant role as one grows.

Joy is growth in freedom, but a greater joy occurs with that growth that no longer demands or needs freedom. Maturity brings the freedom that allows one to be bound — bound to a cause, a purpose, a person or an organization. What a joy when one finds that he has finally become free of the demands of self and he can freely choose a binding allegiance to something greater than himself, to be a part of a greater whole. This is the freedom that brings teamwork, to be content to block instead of carrying the ball in every play. Freedom from selfish interests so that one can be happy while remaining on the tracks instead of jumping the tracks and digging down in the morasses of life.

At what stage of life does growth cease to be joy? Only when growth has stopped. To many great souls growth and life are synonymous. There are other weaker souls who, in effect, hibernate mentally, vocationally, and spiritually and spend a long winter of their lives scarcely existing, without growth and without joy.

Living is growing — and I love life!

Joy is distinctly a Christian word and a Christian thing. It is the reverse of happiness. Happiness is the result of what happens of an agreeable sort. Joy has its springs deep down inside. And that spring never runs dry, no matter what happens. Only Jesus gives that joy. He had joy, singing its music within, even under the shadow of the cross. It is an unknown word and thing except as He has sway within.

— Samuel Dickey Gordon

The interior joy we feel when we have done a good deed, when we feel we have been needed somewhere and have lent a helping hand, is the nourishment the soul requires. — Albert Schweitzer
Joy Is Empathy

fell on hearts hardened in the cement of traditionalism so that Paul felt impelled to rebuke them: “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you; but seeing you have put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; and their evangelistic impact will manifestly be upon the world! And the Gentiles were glad and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Tradition and form, however, are not put in their proper place without some re-percussion; and “the Jews stirred up devout women and chief men, and expelled the disciples out of their coasts. In spite of the persecution and the put-down, the disciples were “filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit.” That’s the way it is with serving the Lord: It may bring persecution, it may bring trial, but it is full of joy, and joy is contagious, joy is empathy.

We too, in the twentieth century church are called upon to serve, and true service issues in joy, and joy is empathic in nature. There is something vitally wrong when joy does not beam from the coming church are called their proper place without some re-percussion; in the minds of our posterity the idea expressed by the boy from the city, getting his first glimpse of the mule on the farm: “You must be a great Christian—you have such a long face.” In doing the Father’s will Jesus was full of joy, and we in our obedience are inheritors of the same.

In expressing the unparalleled fellowship enjoyed by the Christian with his Savior and with the Father, John the beloved of Jesus, told of his purpose in writing his letter: “These things we write unto you that your joy may be full.” The revelation of God in His word is joy! The abounding love of the Savior is joy! The fellowship and communion of the saints is joy! Joy is empathy! “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands; serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord, He is God; it is He that hath made us and not we ourselves.” With these words the Psalmist sets the tone for worship and service, and the joyous expression in each is empathy itself.

Joy Is Celebration

is a better place because at least some of its people are not afraid to die. “To me life is Christ, and death is gain” (Philippians 1:21). No wonder His followers are such a joyous bunch! God’s love is sure and everlasting. People who are open to His love are filled to the brim with joy. They truly find cause for celebration. The words “celebration” and “worship” are becoming virtually synonymous, and rightly so. A worship service, the celebration of God’s love and goodness, ought to be at least as joyful as the celebration of New Year’s, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, or somebody’s birthday. As we gather together in worship, we express our faith, hope, love and joy in the Lord, through singing, listening, speaking, reading, praying, and giving.

Celebration is also a good synonym for “devotion,” as in daily devotions. Since God’s love and compassion are “new every morning,” we have occasion to celebrate every day, even though the Sabbath is God’s special time for it. “When a person realizes that it is still God’s world, that he can have daily, frequent fellowship with God through the Spirit, then that person becomes excited over the fact that life is more than ordinary; it becomes extraordinary!” —Wilson Weldon

Joy Is Family

When you know you are living within the will of God for your life, it will show in the life of the, whole family. In our family, for example, since Myron has been in evangelistic work, to which he had felt God calling him for years, he has been extremely happy. “When you obey me you are living in my love, . . . you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your cup of joy will overflow! . . . and no one can rob you of that joy!” (from John 15:10, 11; 16:22 LB). This joy affects the whole family.

Perhaps you are wondering how there can be real joy when this type of work calls Myron away from home so much. Yes, it is hard to have him gone, but the emptiness that his absence creates is filled by the satisfaction which God gives him in this work and, thereby, gives to the family, too. I never would have believed that this could be true before I was placed in this situation. But now, I know that this time he spends at home is all the richer and joyous because of the assurance that it is God’s will. And, oh, the joy of being able to go with him at times and share, as a family, the challenge of telling others about our Jesus!

The second essential to the experience of joy as a family is “togetherness.” When at all possible, do things together. It is so important to talk together. If the lines of communication are always up and open, many problems will be averted. If that boy plays football, take the whole family to see at least a few games. Work together! How often I have found that the children gladly do an otherwise unpleasant task if I am helping or at least working in the same room with them. Travel together. Play and exercise together. If possible, sing together, no matter how it sounds. What better way is there to “make a joyful noise unto the Lord?” We have found that if we take time to enjoy the children, they respond with joy. Most important, of course, is to talk to God and read His words together. “Your words are what sustain me; . . . they bring joy to my . . . heart” (Jeremiah 15:16 LB). Let God be so real in your life that you are not afraid to talk with Him as you go. If the children hear you say, “Thank you, Lord,” or “Show me what to do, Lord,” as naturally as you talk to them, they will know He is real and will be encouraged to commune with Him in the same way. Such communion with God will inevitably bring joy.

Lord, thank you for the joy of my family; For the love and faithfulness of a husband dedicated to sharing the claims of Christ with others;

For the lonely hours when he is away, which teach me the more to trust You;

For these lively, lovely, noisy, normal children, ever expressing love and trust in me and in You;

For the endless chores that signify a life filled with blessings and opportunities;

For the sheer joy of sharing in all their lives and knowing that You look down with love and joy as we look to You;

Yes, Lord, JOY IS THE FAMILY!

Joy Is Salvation

that this was really happening to me. When, gradually, the joy began to flood my heart as I was realizing victory over the sins which had controlled and dominated my life. I felt so close to God that I was rejoicing all the time. I had absolutely no more desire for the worldly habits that had enslaved me — and still don’t have to this very day! The Lord Jesus Christ gave me complete victory and I praise His Name for it.

There is true joy and happiness in the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ. Do you have this joy? Do you have this knowledge of salvation? If you don’t have, you know you are missing the one ingredient that will make your life complete!

Since my own personal encounter with the Living Lord, I have wanted to “Pass It On.” In the words of songwriter Kurt Kaiser:

I wish for you my friend, this happiness that I’ve found; You can depend on Him, it matters not where you’re bound; I’ll shout it from the mountaintop, I want my world to know; The Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.”
Real Joy!

There is joy in extremes.
The cozy warmth of a bed
Is best appreciated
Against a cold room.
A clear, sunny day exhilarates;
A crashing thunderstorm promises excitement.
But a drizzle only makes you sneeze.
To dislike with conviction,
To love with all your heart,
To live with exuberance,
To die with hope —
These are the extremes,
The head-over-heels,
cry-until-it-hurts,
blessed realities of the life God gave us.
Anything in between
Is not life at all:
That’s just being here.
Real life is an extreme . . .
Real life is real joy.

by Lisa Cudahy