

Mark Your Calendars

Come join us for Study & Worship Saturday mornings at 10 a.m., Prayer meetings on Wednesday at 7 p.m. and for the following.
Sep 24 Sat 11:00 a.m./2:00 p.m. Training Seminar
Sep 29 Thu 6:30 p.m. Seasonal Decorating: Fall
Oct 1 Sat 2:30 p.m. Helping Hands Project
Oct 8 Sat Young Adult Sabbath

Oct 8 Sat 6:30 p.m. Setup Night for Health Expo
Oct 9 Sun 9:00 a.m. Health Expo
Oct 10-22 Evangelism Outreach
Oct 15 Sat 1:00 p.m. Additional Potluck
Oct 23 Sun 8:00 a.m. Church Work Bee
Oct 27 Thu 6:30 p.m. Church Board Meeting
Oct 29 Sat 4:00 p.m. Healthy Resolutions Walk
Nov 5 Sat 11:00 Communion Sabbath
Nov 5 Sat 2:30 p.m. Helping Hands Project
Nov 13 Sun Women's & Men's Ministries End-of-

Year Luncheon
Nov 17 Thu 6:30 p.m. Church Board Meeting
Nov 19 Sat 1:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Potluck
Nov 20 Sun 8:00 a.m. Church Work Bee
Nov 19-20 Sat/Sun Thanksgiving Baskets Prep/Distribution
Nov 26 Sat No Potluck
Dec 1 Thu 6:30 p.m. Church Sanctuary Decorating
Dec 3 Sat 2:30 p.m. Helping Hands Project
Dec 3 Sat 6:30 p.m. Riverside Concert Band

Dec 10 Sat 11:00 a.m. Christmas Cantata
Dec 10 Sat 5:00 p.m. Christmas Party
Dec 17-18 Sat/Sun Christmas Baskets Prep/Distribution
Dec 18 Sun 8:00 Church Work Bee
Dec 19-20 Mon-Tue Young Adult Winter Retreat
Jan 5 Thu 6:30 p.m. Seasonal Décor removal

September 2016

Coming Up!



Our church has volunteers visiting the **Helping Hands Pantry** warehouse on the first Sabbath of every month. October 1st is the next opportunity to serve our neighbors. Meet our church and other helpers there at 2:30 p.m.



Bring your hard hat and a willing heart to the next **Work Bee** on Sunday, October 23. Carlos Lemos always has big plans for maintaining and beautifying our church campus.



One of our biggest annual outreach ministries is our **Health Expo**. Tell your neighbors and friends to come for free health screening and other health information on October 9 beginning at 9:00 a.m. For more information see Shirley.



Reserve time in your schedule for October 10-22 for our **Evangelism Outreach**! This is a special time to open our doors to seekers. Begin praying now for this ministry and for the Lord to show you who to invite. See Pastor Mataafa for more information or to volunteer.

Luncheon

November 13 will be the **End-Of-Year Luncheon** sponsored by the Women's and Men's Ministries. Plan to bring a friend to introduce to our church in a less "churchy" environment.



Community Services will be giving out baskets of food for Thanksgiving. It's time to start thinking about what you can contribute to the basket at well as plan to help **Prepare and Distribute the Baskets** on November 19 and 20.

I Hate That Story

About 20 years ago I decided to read the Bible through from cover to cover. As I read the familiar stories I had heard for years, I ran into a story which greatly upset me. As a matter of fact, I disliked it so much that I dreaded ever reading it again. This was not included in Uncle Arthur's Bedtime stories. I had never heard a pastor speak about it and I had never read any type of commentary on it. This only confirmed my opinion that this story was without a doubt terrible. I questioned why God would allow it in His word; and even more how could He have allowed this terrible thing to happen.

I encourage you to read the story in totality but I will summarize it here. The story begins in Judges 19 but it sets in motion events which carry through to the end of the book of Judges in chapter 21. Three chapters full of sexual sin, revenge and utter chaos. Chapter 19 begins rather mundanely. There is a Levite man whose wife/concubine has run home to her father. There is no explanation as to why she "played the harlot" or even if she really did, but as we read the story it is clear her father would rather she not leave with her husband. The rest of the story is reminiscent of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Unable to find proper lodging in a city of the Israelites in the tribe of Benjamin, the man, his wife and his servant prepare to sleep in the city courtyard. An old man offers hospitality to the group and they are soon engaged in peaceful fellowship. The peace is broken by the "perverted men" of the city demanding to have sex with the man. Just as Lot did, the host of the home offers his virgin daughter to the group of sex crazed men. However, the virgin daughter is not given, but the wife of the traveling man. His wife is given to be gang raped all night which leads to her death. It's easy to see why this story had not been presented in a children's bedtime story or even preached about from the pulpit or included in any



publications I had read. It is a truly disturbing story.

Chapter 20 is no better! We find the man cutting the woman up into 12 pieces and then sending the pieces to each of the tribes of Israel. This man decided he wants justice, yet he had done nothing to prevent this act.

In response, God's people are completely livid because of this sin and thus a civil war begins. Yet it isn't really the men responsible for the act who suffer but thousands of men on both sides who die. But more upsetting to me is they again use women as pawns in this story. As a matter of fact, all the women and children are completely destroyed from the tribe of Benjamin. Now the tribe of Benjamin is in threat of extinction. The other tribes

have vowed to never give their daughters in marriage to a Benjaminite. To fix this problem, in Chapter 21, they kill off an entire town except the virgins who are then given to the men as wives. Unfortunately this is not enough women, so it is decided that the remaining single men will kidnap women from the city of Shiloh.

I disliked this story so much, it actually de-railed my personal devotions for several years. I just didn't want to read it again. Even now as I read it for this article I am filled with many emotions! However 20

years of time has given me time to accept a few ideas as to why this story is told.

What can we learn from this terrible sequence of events? The first thing I realized is not every story in the Bible is in keeping with God's will. This is, of course, obvious! The Bible never would have been written if the people

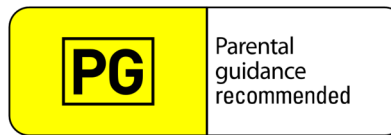
of earth always did God's will. The history of earth would be vastly different if Adam and Eve had never left God's will in the garden. We know we are caught within a battle of good and evil and in this battle

often people make terrible choices which affect the lives of others.

But this story is so disgusting! Why include it at all? Judges 21:25 says, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Right in his own eyes. This story graphically displays what happens to a society when it no longer looks to God for truth and right conduct. Still, this was not enough for me; why did God include it in His holy word.

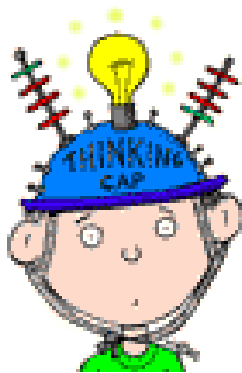
Next I realized that God, of course, is a honest God and will not portray His people through rose colored glasses. God allowed this story because it is accurate to history. But still I just felt there had to be more to this story. Where is God here? He is mentioned, He even spoke to the army who was avenging this act. He told them to continue to battle but it took the third battle before the avengers completed justice. Notice they

never asked God about how to secure a future for the Benjaminites; that was a fully human solution, to kill and destroy to find wives for the remnant of Israel.



Although I am grateful that God is always honest in the portrayal of history, I still wanted to know where is Jesus in these stories. We often hear theologians discuss the "types of Jesus" in the old testament. These are people who exemplified the character of Christ before he walked the earth as a man. Moses, Joseph and others have character traits which prefigure the life and character of Jesus. But I am convinced there are also types of Satan in the Bible as well. Ahab, Jezebel, Athaliah, Manassah, Absalom and many more personify what it is to be fully like Satan. I believe in this story the man who offered his wife to evil men is a personification of how Satan treats individuals and churches within his power.

I also learned that many times throughout the Bible a woman or wife is used to represent the church. The book of Hosea is a living parable of the adultery of a woman who signifies the adultery of Israel against God. Other books of the Old Testament also use both faithful and unfaithful women to demonstrate God's people in their relationship with God. Jesus used the story of the ten virgins waiting for the bridegroom to



represent His church. (Matt. 25) Revelation has probably the most visual display of the use of women to portray both the true church and the apostate church. There is ... “a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a garland of twelve stars.” (Rev. 12:1) This is God’s righteous church. But in contrast there is also ... “a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications.” (Rev. 17:3, 4) This represents a church within Satan’s power.

How does this relate to our story in Judges? I believe the husband in this story represents Satan and how he treats those who follow him (the wife). In this story the man does not try to protect his wife but offers her to evil acts. Then when the woman dies he blames the people of God for her demise. Satan hates the church, yet will act as though he cares, only to bring it to ruin. Then he is more than willing to further the destruction by blaming those he led to accomplish the destruction. Satan is loyal to no one but himself. Any church or person that wanders from truth is then within Satan’s control and he will, and does, destroy them.

When I read the fateful last verse of Judges, “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” I felt overwhelmed with the despair of it all. And then my eyes turned to the

next book of the Bible – Ruth. The book of Ruth is all that human love should contain: faithfulness, resourcefulness, kindness and a redeeming love. The character traits demonstrated in the characters of Ruth and Boaz are ones we would like to display in ourselves and to pass down to our children. And even if we don’t live up to the standard presented in these individuals we certainly hope someone, everyone, will treat us as well as Boaz treated Ruth. In Ruth we find how Christ deals with individuals and churches. Boaz is a type of Christ and Ruth represents the church. Ruth had nothing and could offer nothing to Boaz. Yet Boaz loved her. In this true to life Cinderella story we find a woman who is in every way marginalized. She is a widow, a foreigner (and not just any foreigner but from a group of people who were long-time enemies of Israel), she is childless and of course dirt poor. Yet she had love for others and her loving service to Naomi brought her to Boaz who solved all her problems.

Jesus promises to never leave us nor forsake us. (Deut. 31:8) Even though He knows we have nothing to offer Him, but our love, it is all He wants and in return He will “supply all our needs.” (Phil. 4:19) Jesus is the perfect husband to His church, protecting it, nourishing it and loving it. Just as He loves the church with an unending love He loves each of us, individually, with the same passion.

The last stories of Judges and the story of Ruth provide a contrast of the characters of Satan (a terrible husband) and Jesus (a perfect husband). In the battle between good and evil and clear understanding of the sides is crucial if we hope to make the right choice of sides.

After 20 years God finally gave me enough understanding of His word so I can deal with this story. I now more fully understand

that not every story in the Bible is within God’s will. I acknowledge the great controversy is waging and in the war people are hurt. It is not the way God wants it to be, but in His great wisdom He does allow it, because He always protects the free will of His children. I see that when we don’t ask for God’s

wisdom, bad situations only get worse. I am grateful for an honest God who depicts His people accurately and meets them where they are. If He didn’t meet me where I am, where would I be! And finally I understand there is always a spiritual lesson to be learned from His word if we dig deeper and use the symbolisms used elsewhere to shed light on troubling passages.

Kristi Cruise



Book Review

The Seventh-day Ox and Other Miracle Stories of Russia by Bradley Booth

By God’s power an ox teaches a whole Siberian prison camp about the Sabbath. In this story of faith Pastor Nikolai Panchuk is repeatedly punished for Sabbath observance for 2 years, yet God provides an amazing affirmation of Nikolai’s faith through an ox. This story will undoubtedly make you reevaluate your own commitment to the Sabbath and at the same time increase your faith in the faithfulness of God.

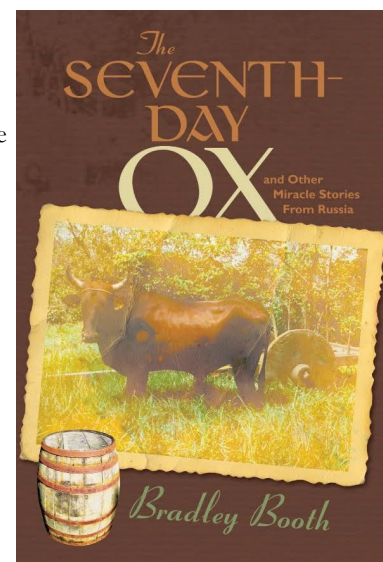
Two dogs and 20 valuable books in a locked room overnight and you have “Bibles For Breakfast”. How can God answer the prayers of Alexander and Natasha to save them from financial catastrophe?

An atheistic prison warden learns about God’s care for a faithful Christian pastor, a prisoner of conscience. You will be surprised at how God supplies, “Bread from Heaven.”

You will find yourself laughing at how God can use the most unusual animals to reveal Himself to even the most stubborn of unbelievers.

If you would like to borrow this book contact Rob Cruise.

Cruise Family



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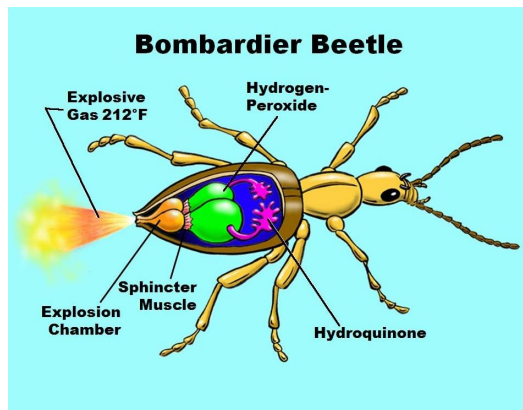
We're on the Web!

coltonadventist.adventistfaith.org

My Father's Amazing World - Weird Names part 5

The name bombardier beetle brings to mind fighter pilots but actually this beetle never leaves the ground. They live everywhere in the world except Antarctica. They get their name from the ability to spray a complex substance from its rear end. Unlike a simple stink bug this fluid is highly irritating to the eyes and respiratory system and is at a boiling hot temperature. Spray, is not an accurate description, it actually combines hydrogen-peroxide and hydroquinone in the explosion chamber of its body. Yes, explosion chamber, the mixing of these chemicals along with a special chemical within the explosion chamber causes an explosion of the fluids which then exit it's bottom. Able to repeat this process up to 20 times the onslaught is enough to kill a smaller predator or truly annoy a larger one. Fortunately for this little guy he has a sphincter muscle that keeps the explosion from tearing him apart as well. As Wikipedia puts it, "The unique combination of features of the bombardier beetle's defense mechanism—strongly exothermic reactions, boiling-hot fluids, and explosive release—have been claimed by creationists and proponents of intelligent design to be examples of irreducible complexity." Who new something so small could make such a big testimony to its Creator.

Kristi Cruise



Distribution Dates

The Newsletter will be published once a month on the last Sabbath of the month, except December and July.

October 29
November 26
January 28, 2017

February 25
March 25
April 29

May 27
June 24
August 26

If you would like to contribute please submit at least 7 days in advance of distribution date. Please send via e-mail at jrkljrcruise@sbcglobal.net.