

**Seventh-Davy Adventists**  
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Recently, I was looking at the board information for a particular Church organization and noticed that one of the members was identified as an official of an administrative unit “of Seventh-Davy Adventists.” I am aware of several kinds of Adventists. Organizationally, there were or are Millerite Adventists, Second Adventists, Evangelical Adventists, Spiritualizer Adventists, Age-to-come Adventists, Primitive Adventists, Reform Adventists, Davidian Adventists, Church of God Adventists, Creation Adventists, True and Free Adventists, United Adventists, and, of course, Seventh-day Adventists. Groups among the latter include historical Adventists, conservative Adventists, liberal Adventists, progressive Adventists, fundamentalist Adventists, charismatic Adventists, etc.

However, I have never before heard of Seventh-Davy Adventists. Of the two modifying elements, one suggests that the expression is somehow related to a person named David. That, of course, could simply refer to one of the organizations noted above, i.e., the Davidian Seventh-day Adventist Association or Shepherd’s Rod founded by Victor Houteff in 1929 or to the derivative Branch Davidians, once led by David Koresh. More likely, it refers to a person or place, past or present – wow, what alliteration! – that may have some connection to the history, development, or characteristics of Adventists.

If we start with “Davy,” the options are rather limited, e.g., Davy Crockett (d. 1836), the American folk hero and frontiersman; Davy Jones, whose mythical locker lies at the bottom of the ocean and receives the bodies of drowned sailors or is the early stage name of the British singer-songwriter better known as David Bowie; Davy Sound, a place in Greenland, Davy, a town in West Virginia, or Davy, a small crater on the moon at the edge of Mare Nubium; *Davy*, a post-apocalyptic science fiction novel by Edgar Pangborn or Davy, a type of safety lamp; William Davy, the vicar of Winkleigh, Devonshire, who in the late eighteenth century wrote the six-volume work, *A system of divinity, in a course of sermons, on the being, nature and attributes of God; on some of the most important articles of the Christian religion, in connection; and on the several virtues and vices of mankind* or John Davy, the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century English musician and composer of London stage music, including a favorite, “May we ne'er want a Friend.”

Although the expression “Davy Adventist” is not likely related to any of these, it is at least plausible that it could describe a person who (1) has a particular view of death, alongside other such distinctive Adventist doctrines; (2) focuses on the moon-related elements of Adventist eschatology; (3) takes a science-denying ecclesiastical stance like the one found in the fictional writing of a twentieth century, Hugo Award-winning novelist; or (4) sees a particular kind of lamp as helping to characterize the Church’s foundational interest in the Shut Door theology, based on Matthew’s Parable of the Ten Maidens.

If a direct reference to the word “Davy” is not likely, what about the Davidian derivative “Dave,” i.e., Adventism that has some link to a person typically known by that nickname? I can think of a few well-known Daves both outside and inside Adventism. The former includes two standup

comedians, American Dave Chappelle and the late Irishman Dave Allen, and one late, great jazz pianist, Dave Brubeck, none of whom have had any significant identity with or influence on Adventism. However, the same cannot be said of two contemporary, West Coast Adventists, Dave Larson of Loma Linda University and Dave Thomas of Walla Walla University. Although I have never heard them called “Davy,” I suppose that it is plausible that some of their disciples might think of them that way and identify themselves as “Davy Adventists.”

The most remote connection would simply be to “David,” from which both the words “Davy” and “Dave” derive. Of course, although improbable, it does present an enormous number of potential referents, from the ancient Israelite king to one of my own sons. Outside the Church there are entertainers (David Attenborough, David Foster, David Frost, David Hasselhoff, David Letterman, David Niven, David Schwimmer), athletes (David Beckham, David Duval, David Justice, David Ortiz), politicians (David Lloyd George, David Duke), religious figures (David Jaffe, David Miscavige), and a philosopher (David Hume). While these are unlikely referents, several Davids within past or present Adventism could possibly fit the bill: David Hewitt, first SDA convert in Battle Creek, MI; Francis David Nichol, editor of the Review and Herald for four decades; David Bieber, last president of LSC and first president of the combined LLU; David Taylor, retired LLU religion professor and Church administrator; David Geriguis, LSU administrator; and David Trim, director of the GC Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

Remote as it is, I suppose it is possible that one or more of these Adventist Davids has become so associated with a characteristic of Adventism or a specific movement within it to have his name in diminutive form identified with it. Accordingly, their connections could be the following: Hewitt – historic Adventism; Nichol – apologetic Adventism; Taylor – civil rights Adventism; Geriguis – financial Adventism; and Trim – statistical Adventism. Although these connections are very plausible, the fact that they are known as “David” and not “Davy” ultimately eliminates them as referents in the expression “Davy Adventists.”

Of course, this is further complicated by the presence of the other modifier – “Seventh,” i.e., “Seventh-Davy Adventists.” Whatever “Davy” means, it seems certain that there has been a succession of at least seven of them. In fact, Davy the seventh seems to be either the latest, i.e., the current, “Davy,” or the best, i.e., the most perfect embodiment of whatever “Davy” represents.

So, what in the world are “Seventh Davy Adventists”? When all is said and done, I have absolutely no idea. Maybe it was simply a typo!