

# Youth messenger

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# Lessons From a

By Alex Gurdiuala

# Life

Part 2 of 3

“Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: but if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity” (Ecclesiastes 11:7-10).

In our previous issue of the *Youth Messenger*, we began this series on the life of Solomon. We read about how Solomon began his reign as king in the fear of God and that the Lord greatly blessed him with wisdom, wealth, and widespread influence.

But what happened to this once-honored man of God? We read that “King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites.”

“Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh’s daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about” (1 Kings 11:1-3; 3:1).

“Pride, ambition, prodigality, and indulgence bore fruit in cruelty and exaction. . . . From the wisest and most merciful of rulers, [Solomon] degenerated into a tyrant. Once the compassionate, God-fearing guardian of the people, he became oppressive and despotic.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 55.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SOLOMON AT THIS POINT?

“The Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice” (1 Kings 11:9).

“So complete was [Solomon’s] apostasy, so hardened his heart in transgression, that his case seemed well-nigh **hopeless.**”—*Ibid.*, p. 75. [Emphasis supplied.]

## WHAT DOES SOLOMON SAY ABOUT HIS ACHIEVEMENTS?

“I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me” (Ecclesiastes 2:4-7).

“From the joy of divine communion, Solomon turned to find satisfaction in the pleasures of sense.”—*Ibid.*, p. 76.

We had mentioned in our previous *Youth Messenger* article that the first two reasons for Solomon’s downfall were

- *Women (promiscuity).*
- *Business transactions made without the fear of God.*

Now let us look into the third reason:

- Indulgence,
- pride, ambition, and
- self-confidence.

## WHAT IS GOD’S ATTITUDE TOWARDS SELF-EXALTATION?

We are told in Scripture that we are to be “casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every

thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled” (2 Corinthians 10:5, 6).

It must be more than ironic that it was Solomon who wrote that there is pride before a fall. “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18).

Yet “all the drinking vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon” (2 Chronicles 9:20).

“The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined. . . . The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts” (Psalm 10:2, 4).

Solomon knew the theory of humility; he had written much about it in the book of Proverbs. But Solomon and pride go together. From God’s law he knew the theory of the greatness of the Almighty and humanity’s inability to please the Lord by works.

## ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF PRIDE

Pride was the cause of Lucifer’s downfall.

“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that

dweldest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave some grapes? How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!" (Obadiah 1:3-6).

### PRIDE OF AMBITION

This problem has existed since the dawn of human history in the experience of Adam and Eve:

"When the woman saw that the tree [which was in the midst of the garden] was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:6, 7).

When our first parents sought to be like gods to know (*i.e.*, experience) the difference between good and evil, pride blinded their hearts and eyes as

they listened to the voice of Satan and ate of the forbidden fruit—and by this sin of pride and rebellion they threw the whole human race into chaos.

Again we see this pride of ambition in the lives of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram as recorded in Numbers 16. When blinded by the sin of pride, they aspired to have the office of the high priest. God destroyed them in His wrath by opening the earth and they went down alive and perished. Oh, what a sin pride is that it makes a human aspire for that which God in His sovereignty has withheld from him or her!

Do you aspire to a great place in life, motivated by the pride of your depraved heart? "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 45:5). Cry unto God to break this pride of ambition and seek the face of God in repentance.

### PRIDE OF POSITION

The Bible also speaks of the pride of position which is sin against God. In the time of the exodus, the proud king of Egypt, Pharaoh, said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2).

Pharaoh's arrogant defiance of his Creator is revealed in his demanding question: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?"

The human race in all its pride is saying the same thing today:

- a. Who is God that I should obey His voice?
- b. Why should I bow to His authority?
- c. Why should I deny self anything?
- d. Why should I ask for help?
- e. I don't need God!

Oh, what a sin pride is, that it makes you stand out against God and say you will not bow to His supreme authority.

Not only does pride lead to rejection of God—often we do not even realize that it is controlling us. Gradually pride takes over until it conquers without us even being aware of our slavery to our own ego.

“As inclination gained the ascendancy over reason, self-confidence increased, and [Solomon] sought to carry out the Lord’s purpose in his own way. He reasoned that political and commercial alliances with the surrounding nations would bring these nations to a knowledge of the true God; and he entered into unholy alliance with nation after nation. Often these alliances were sealed by marriages with heathen princesses. The commands of Jehovah were set aside for the customs of surrounding peoples.”—*Ibid.*, p. 54.

Like their king, Judah was filled with pride and self-sufficiency, as later described.

“Thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots: their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: and the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan” (Isaiah 2:6-13).

While this passage condemns Israel for their pride, it describes the actions of Solomon as king. Let us take a warning from seeing how subtle and destructive this form of pride can be! 🚫

# A Wake-up Call

*A compilation from the writings of Ellen G. White*

**N**othing is more treacherous than the deceitfulness of sin. It is the god of this world that deludes, and blinds, and leads to destruction. Satan does not enter with his array of temptations at once. He disguises these temptations with a semblance of good. He mingles with amusements and folly some little improvements, and deceived souls make it an excuse that great good is to be derived by engaging in them. This is only the deceptive part. It is Satan's hellish arts masked. Beguiled souls take one step, then are prepared for the next. It is so much more pleasant to

follow the inclinations of their own hearts than to stand on the defensive, and resist the first insinuation of the wily foe, and thus shut out his in-comings. Oh! how Satan watches to see his bait taken so readily, and to see souls walking in the very path he has prepared. He does not want them to give up praying and maintaining a form of religious duties; for he can thus make them more useful in his service. He unites his sophistry and deceptive snares with their experiences and professions, and thus wonderfully advances his cause. The hypocritical Pharisees prayed and fasted, observed the



forms of godliness, while corrupt at heart. Satan stands by, taunting Christ and His angels with insults, "I have them! I have them! I have prepared my deception for them. Your blood is worthless here. Your intercessions and power and wonderful works may as well cease; I have them! They are mine! for all their high profession as subjects of Christ, for all they once enjoyed the illuminations of His presence, I will secure them to myself in the very face of Heaven, which they are talking about. It is such subjects as these that I can use to decoy others." Solomon says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Proverbs 29:26); and there are hundreds of such to be found among professors of godliness. Says the apostle, "We are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11). Oh! what art, what skill, what cunning, to lead to a union with the world, to seek for happiness in the amusements of the world, under the delusive idea that some good is to be gained! And thus they walk right into the net, flattering themselves that there is no evil in the way. The affections and sympathies of such are wrought upon, which lays a foundation for their illy-built confidence that they are the children of God. They compare themselves with others, and settle down satisfied that they are even better than many true Christians. But where is the deep love of Christ shining forth in their lives, its bright rays blessing others? Where is their Bible?

and how much is it studied? And where are their thoughts? upon heaven and heavenly things? It is not natural for their minds to go forth in that direction. The study of God's word is uninteresting to them. It does not possess that which excites and fevers the mind, and natural, unrenewed hearts will prefer some other book, to the study of God's word. Their attention is engrossed in self. They have no deep, earnest longings for the influence of the Spirit of God upon the mind and heart. God is not in all their thoughts. How can I have it that most of the youth in this age will come short of everlasting life? Oh that their sound of instrumental music may cease, and they no more while away so much precious time in pleasing their own fancy! Oh that they would devote less time to dress and vain conversation, and send forth their agonizing prayers to God for a sound experience! There is a necessity for close self-examination, and to closely investigate in the light of God's word, Am I sound, or am I rotten, at heart? Am I renewed in Christ, or am I still carnal at heart, with an outside, new dress put on? Rein yourself up to the tribunal of God, and see as in the light of God if there is any secret sin, any iniquity, any idol you have not sacrificed. Pray, yes, pray as you have never prayed before, that you may not be deluded by Satan's devices; that you may not be given up to a heedless, careless, and vain spirit, and attend religious duties

to quiet your own conscience. It is inappropriate for Christians in every age of the world to be lovers of pleasure, but how much more so now, when the scenes of this earth's history are so soon to close. Surely the foundation of your hopes of everlasting life cannot be made too sure. The welfare of your soul and your eternal happiness depend upon whether your foundation is built upon Christ. While others are panting after earthly enjoyment, be ye panting after the unmistakable assurance of the love of God, earnestly, fervently crying, Who will show me how to make my calling and election sure? One of the sins that constitute one of the signs of the last days is that professed Christians are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Deal truly with your own souls. Search carefully. How few, after a faithful examination, can look up to Heaven and say, "I am not one of those thus described. I am not a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God." How few can say, "I am dead to the world; the life I now live is by faith on the Son of God. My life is hid with Christ in God, and when He who is my life shall appear, then shall I also appear with him in glory." The love and grace of God! Oh precious grace! more valuable than fine gold. It elevates and ennobles the spirit beyond all other principles. It sets the heart and affections upon Heaven. While those around us may be engaged in worldly vanity,

pleasure-seeking, and folly, the conversation is in heaven, whence we look for the Saviour; the soul is reaching out after God for pardon and peace, for righteousness and true holiness. Converse with God and contemplation of things above transform the soul into the likeness of Christ.—*The Review and Herald*, May 11, 1886.

"In the days of his flesh . . . [Christ] offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death" (Hebrews 5:7).

While you pray, dear youth, that you may not be led into temptation, remember that your work does not end with the prayer. You must then answer your own prayer as far as possible by resisting temptation, and leave that which you cannot do for yourselves for Jesus to do for you. . . .

I would remind the youth who ornament their persons . . . that, because of their sins, the Saviour's head wore the shameful crown of thorns. When you devote precious time to trimming your apparel, remember that the King of glory wore a plain, seamless coat. You who weary yourselves in decorating your persons, please bear in mind that Jesus was often weary from incessant toil and self-denial and self-sacrifice to bless the suffering and needy. He spent whole nights in prayer upon the lonely mountains, not because of His weakness and His necessities, but because He saw, He felt, the weakness of your natures to resist

the temptations of the enemy upon the very points where you are now overcome. He knew that you would be indifferent in regard to your dangers and would not feel your need of prayer. It was on our account that He poured out His prayers to His Father with strong cries and tears. It was to save us from the very pride and love of vanity and pleasure which we now indulge, and which crowds out the love of Jesus, that those tears were shed. . . .

Will you, young friends, arise and shake off this dreadful indifference and stupor which has conformed you to the world? Will you heed the voice of warning which tells you that destruction lies in the path of those who are at ease in this hour of danger?

Many of our youth, by their careless disregard of the warnings and reproofs given them, open the door wide for Satan to enter. With God's word for our guide and Jesus as our heavenly Teacher we need not be ignorant of His requirements or of Satan's devices. . . . It will be no unpleasant task to be obedient to the will of God when we yield ourselves fully to be directed by His Spirit.—*God's Amazing Grace*, p. 166.

God does not bid the youth to be less aspiring. The elements of character that make a man successful and honored among men—the irrepressible desire for some greater good, the indomitable will, the strenuous exertion, the untiring

While you pray,  
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perseverance—are not to be crushed out. By the grace of God they are to be directed to objects as much higher than mere selfish and temporal interests as the heavens are higher than the earth. And the education begun in this life will be continued in the life to come. Day by day the wonderful works of God, the evidences of His wisdom and power in creating and sustaining the universe, the infinite mystery of love and wisdom in the plan of redemption, will open to the mind in new beauty. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). Even in this life we may catch glimpses of His presence and may taste the joy of communion with Heaven, but the fullness of its joy and blessing will be reached in the hereafter. Eternity alone can reveal the glorious destiny to which man, restored to God's image, may attain.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 602. 

## Another Kind of

# RACE

Part 3 of 4

By P. J. Stemmler

**W**e read in the previous issue of the Youth Messenger that the writer has now embarked on a different kind of race than she had done before—the Christian walk whose finish line is eternity!

Off I went, beginning a race that I thought would have been much shorter in length than it has been. I realized today as I thought about the length of the course, that it is not the same for everyone. The course is specially designed for each one individually. It is not just to test our strength and endurance, though it often does feel like it. The course is designed to change us! The course of this different kind of race is to make our character reflect that of our Creator and that doesn't happen overnight!

My instant thought is that it should. Why shouldn't, why couldn't our powerful God just zap us with His power so that we think, act, and react differently to all of life's circumstances and

challenges? Well, I have had a few years to contemplate this one. I have realized that what we are, who we are, is a composite collection of genetics, upbringing, and daily choices, plus some programming from education, media, and peer pressure. If we are going to be changed, there is a process of deleting and disk defragmenting that must go on in our brain computer in order to think and act differently, to act in accordance with the character of our loving Father in heaven.

How can all of this happen? I am glad that you asked.



## THE TRAINING PROCESS

As in a physical race, there is a training process, a scheduled, disciplined program of exercise and temperance which are designed to produce the strongest, fittest body and mind possible for that person in that time.

So it is in the spiritual race. There is a disciplined program of exercise and temperance which are designed to change us to be more like Jesus.

Peter talks about it in the Bible. Paul speaks about it too. In fact, you will find these principles sprinkled throughout the Holy Word of God. These principles, understood and implemented, will make us strong to do wonderful things and give endurance to finish the race.

In the first chapter of 2 Peter there is the illustration known as Peter's ladder. There are different qualities described in a step-by-step process. How important are they? Totally! Can you skip some? Absolutely not! So what are they? I am glad that you asked.

Just a note: For those who are unfamiliar with Bible reading, there is something that needs to be understood when beginning to study it. The Bible, inspired by God, written by men, uses differing terminology, illustrations, and forms to be able to convey spiritual principles, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a

God promises to give us of His divine power to live godly, and He does this through His promises.



little, there a little. It is not like the owner's manual for your printer or phone. You have to be in a seeking frame of mind. You need to be thinking about how it can apply to yourself, and you have to read more than one place or one sentence. The following passage is called Peter's ladder, but nowhere it mentions a ladder. It is a brief description of what the Lord desires to do in the life and the steps of how to get there. Others have termed it a ladder. Let's read.

Verses 2-8: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence,

add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This is like a recipe. First we see that God gives us grace, which is His power, and peace through a knowledge of Him and of Jesus Christ. He promises to give us of His divine power to live godly, and He does this through His promises. His promises are not like our promises to one another. First, He always means what He says. Second, He has the power to fulfill them. Third, there is actual power in the promise itself. If



we will believe what He has told us, there is spiritual power to be changed by it.

So, the ladder is:

1. Know God—not know about Him, but know Him, accept Him, ask Him to be your Lord, to dwell in your heart, to live in your life. Believe His promises which are sprinkled abundantly all throughout the Bible.
2. Have diligence to do His will in your life, having faith in Jesus and His power to help you. Virtue received from Him to be worked out in your life is another term for goodness.
3. Knowledge of God, His character, His will, His love.
4. Temperance is being moderate in good things, and abstaining from anything harmful, anything that would hinder the race.
5. Patience is another word for endurance. You know the kind of endurance that you need when you want to stop running, stop trying, stop working, stop being fought against. It means to keep going on!
6. Godliness is to be like Jesus in how you think and act towards others and yourself. It is reflecting His plan in your own life.
7. Brotherly kindness is being nice, being close, heartwarming, and caring to others.
8. Charity goes beyond brotherly kindness. It is loving people no matter how they are and what

they have done. This takes the power of God in our hearts and lives!

If we will have these things, we will bear the fruit that Jesus wants us to bear in the life. We will reflect His character in our own life. This takes discipline, effort, trust, faith, and self-denial, not self-exaltation. This is a different kind of race.

When it is in your heart and in my heart to serve the Lord, when we have said and meant that we want to give the whole life to His control, the race begins. Mine began in my twenties. At that time I was married and had one child, but I was just a baby in my understanding of the Bible and spiritual things. But I knew one thing. I wanted to live for the Lord. I didn't understand how, I didn't understand the challenges that would come, I didn't even understand the goal or the prize, but I did understand that He had filled my heart with peace and joy and purpose. Life was worth living and living well.

### ALONG THE WAY

I began to be hungry. Not for food, but for learning more of what my Creator wanted to teach me. I went to the "Owner's Manual"—the Bible, and began to read and read and read. Much of it didn't make much sense to me at the time. But as I continued to pray and read, bits of the puzzle of God's Word began fitting together in my mind. I started to

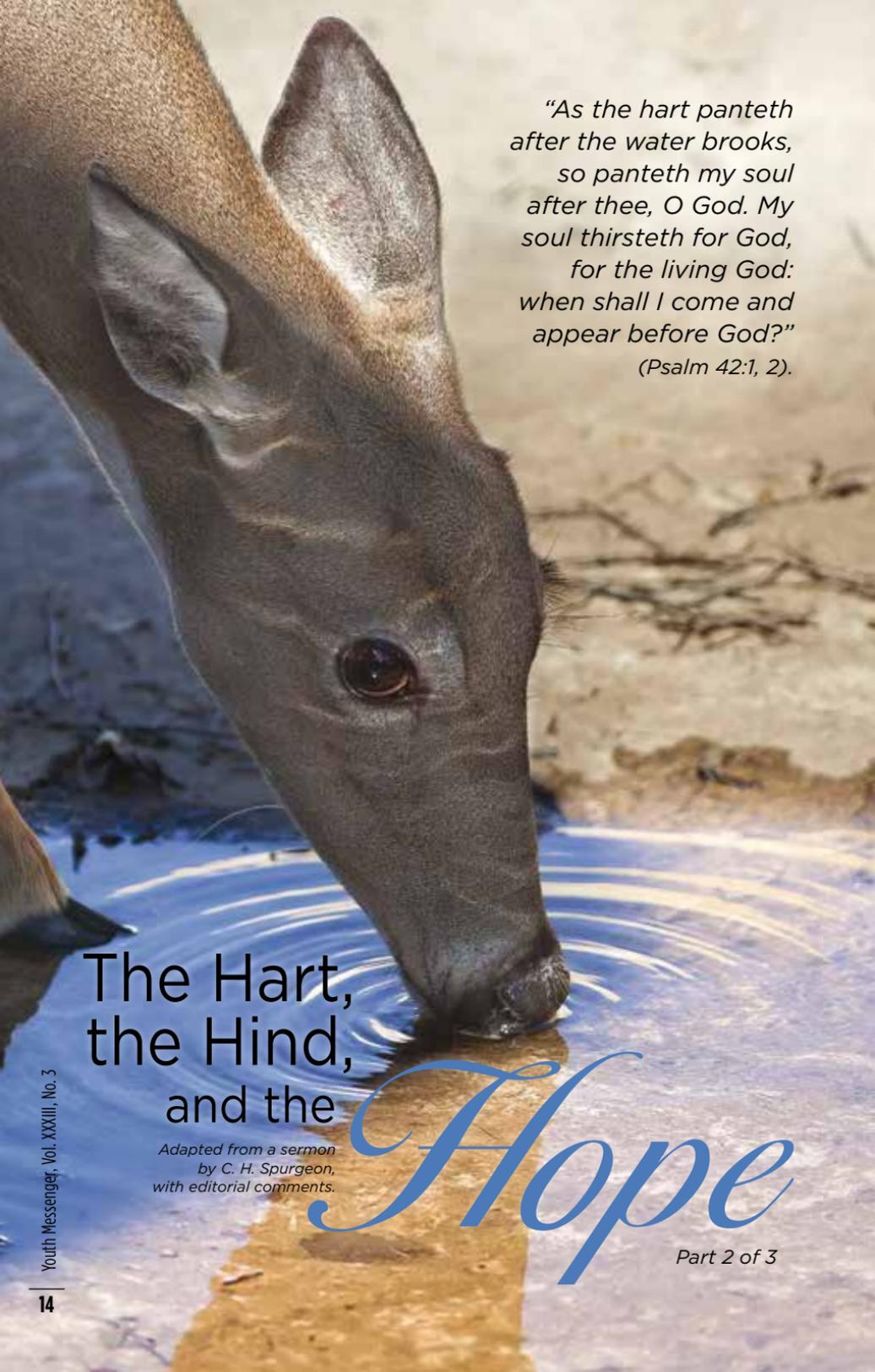
**I began to be hungry. Not for food, but for learning more of what my Creator wanted to teach me.**

see a bigger picture, wherein the smaller details fit.

I knew that each day I needed to, I wanted to, ask the Lord to direct my steps and my understanding. Did I make mistakes? Yes! Did I stay there? No! The Lord gives us inspiration and power to get back up on our feet and to move forward.

Did all my friends and family do the same? Absolutely not!

My husband didn't seem to understand, but neither did he try to stop me. My children were young and willing to follow mom. My neighbors thought it was a little strange to see the changes I was making. My extended family reacted strongly. To them this was too strange, too fanatical, too different. They were uncomfortable and made it known to me and to anyone who knew me. This was one of my early opportunities to exercise trust and faith. I needed to know what the Lord was asking of me, and I needed His strength to go forward in the race, without buckling under the pressure of others to give in, to give up and just go back to conforming to what others thought I should do and be. 



*“As the hart panteth  
after the water brooks,  
so panteth my soul  
after thee, O God. My  
soul thirsteth for God,  
for the living God:  
when shall I come and  
appear before God?”  
(Psalm 42:1, 2).*

# The Hart, the Hind, and the

*Adapted from a sermon  
by C. H. Spurgeon,  
with editorial comments.*

# Hope

Part 2 of 3

**A**s it was mentioned in the previous *Youth Messenger*, the Hebrew verb here referring to the “hart” alludes to the feminine form of the hart—the hind.

Thunder so terrifies the timid hinds that often they prematurely bring forth their young (Psalm 29:9). The time and place of the foaling is well hidden from humanity, but not from God.

“Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve? Canst thou number the months that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows” (Job 39:1-3). The mother hind is very watchful over her young; as hunters can testify, she is much more vigilant and alert than the male of her species.

“Who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and setteth me upon my high places” (Psalm 18:31-33).

High places? What brings us to these high places? Normally we cannot go upward without exertion—without making an effort to climb. This involves determination—there must be a strong desire to motivate us to action.

## WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS DESIRE?

### 1. Directness

In Psalm 42:1, David compares himself to a stag tormented with thirst. The comparison brings out, first of all, **directness**. The deer pants—what for? You need not repeat the question or pause for a reply. Everybody can see by its smoking flanks, uplifted head, its palpitating heart, its rolling eyes, its thrust-out tongue, that it is panting for the water brooks. So with David—he is ill at ease, but it is no question with him what he needs in order to have rest of heart—“So pants my soul after You, O God,” he says, and so he goes at once to the point. He knew where he was—there was no beating about the bush, no pacing to and fro. He directs his arrow straight at the center of the target: “My soul thirsts for God, for the Living God.” Beloved, it is a great mercy when you and I know what we need, for ungodly people do not know; they thirst, but like fussy toddlers they know not what they are crying for; they long, and they pant, and their question is, “Who will show us any good?” But you and I know that our great need is the light of God’s countenance, and we have come to this. We will stand to this and we will hold to this—that we

will never cease pleading till we really see that Face which makes the Heaven of angels, and that is all the Heaven we desire.

Now, is your desire as distinct and direct towards God as was the desire of David in the text? If not, chide yourself; chide yourself that you should be hovering in circles while the straight line is so much better. Bring out in plain words your soul's desire. Let it well up from the lowest depths of your spirit, "I need; I need my God! I do not

languish for that which others are fascinated with; I do not crave what others are ambitious for, but my God, my God, let me serve You, and

enjoy You forevermore! Why have You forsaken me? Return unto me now! Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation; say unto my soul, "I am your Salvation." Reveal Your Son in me, and be Yourself my ever-present Friend."

## 2. Unity

Notice next the **unity** of the saint's desire. The deer longs after nothing else but the water brooks. There may have been other times when the poor stag had other natural desires; he may have desired the grassy plains or the shady woods; but now, hunted,

wearied, steaming, panting, it must drink or die. It has but one thought—the water brooks, the cool, rippling rills, the refreshing pools. Now, if you are about to get a blessing from the Lord, you will have but one desire—your God, your God! You will have gathered up all your affections into **one** affection, and they will all be ascending towards your Lord; you will make no conditions, no stipulations with Him. If He will but come, even though He brings

a rod with Him, you will be contented if He will but come; if you may but have His company, you will accept poverty, or the weary bed of sickness, or bereavement,

or anything and everything which He may allot to you, if you may but have fellowship with Jesus! Let others ask for the bursting wine vat, or the barn that is filled with corn, but for you it will be enough if you find your Beloved, and may but hold Him and not let Him go, for this is the one and only all-absorbing longing of your hungering and thirsting spirit—that you may find your God, and be comforted with His eternal consolation. Have you ever seen a little child that has lost its way, crying in the streets for "Mother"? Now, you shall give that

This is one and only all-absorbing longing of your hungering and thirsting spirit—that you may find your God.



if so it should please Him, if I could but be with Him—no other desire or longing could ever cross my soul. I know it is so with all the family of the Lord our God; their love to Him makes His presence there all in all. See that dove just taken from the cage to be set free? Tempt it to remain with you; cast down the seeds it loves to feed upon—no, it will not dwell with you! It mounts, it makes a few circles in the air, and then having turned its eye to the dear familiar dovecote, it is all wing for home. What can stop its flight? Call to it, allure it as you will,

child what you will, but it will not stop its crying for “Mother.” It has lost her, and cannot be content; take the little wanderer into your house; show it many toys, give it many sweets, but all are of no avail, it wants “Mother,” and its little heart will burst unless it finds her! Now just show the little one its mother, let it fly into her bosom, and what more does it want? How perfectly content it is to be there.

And so have I felt that if I might but sob myself to sleep on the bosom of my dear God, if I must have all else taken away from me,

straight as an arrow it flies to its own beloved home, and rests not its weary wings till it rests in the house of its love. Even so it is with the believer’s soul; let him but go free and have his desire; unbind him of his corruptions; strip him of his cares; liberate him from his unbelief; let him have his freedom, and he will fly at once to his Lord Jesus, and nothing can tempt him to linger or find solace save in that blessed bosom of Infinite Love!

A saint must have Christ to abide with him as the one thing necessary—like Mary, to leave all of Martha’s cares to sit at Jesus’ feet. 🍎



# Sweet, Sound Sleep

By Barbara Montrose

“Why do I feel so sleepy sometimes?”

According to research provided by the National Sleep Foundation and other sources, hormonal changes occurring in your body may involve a shift in the body clock by around 2 hours when you are going through adolescence. What does that mean? Basically, it can cause you to feel the need to go to bed later and get up later than the rest of society.

But, unfortunately, most of civilization does not operate on that time clock! Due to your various commitments, you are usually expected to arrive at places early in the morning. So somehow, you’ve got to figure out a way still to get the 8.5–9.25 hours of sleep for each night that people your age really need in order to feel their best—at least

until their circadian rhythm re-stabilizes at adulthood. But be patient and don’t worry—maturity will occur sooner than you realize. Meanwhile, what information can help you live with this situation as smoothly as possible?

## UNDERSTANDING MELATONIN

There’s a lot of talk these days about the benefits of melatonin to promote sound sleep. What is melatonin, anyway?

Melatonin is a natural hormone produced by the pineal gland—a small, pine-cone-shaped endocrine gland in the brain.

Melatonin is manufactured from another hormone, serotonin, which is most widely known in its role as one of the “feel good” hormones. Increased levels of serotonin are associated with feelings of happiness and

relaxation, while lowered levels are linked with weakened immune function and depression.

In essence, serotonin is converted to melatonin when the lights go out. Melatonin is inhibited by light and permitted by darkness—and its peak production occurs within a few hours after you fall asleep.

You may have noticed sometimes that by 9:00 p.m. (or a little later for most youth), you feel very sleepy—but you don't want to go to bed yet. So, you force yourself to stay awake and later find that you have lost your sleepiness—and then you can't seem to get to sleep anymore. That forcing of your body to stay up for the “second wind” is actually pushing against nature and suppressing your melatonin production. Try instead to go to bed when your body first asks you



**Two hours' good sleep before twelve midnight is worth more than four hours after twelve midnight.**

to do it—regardless of the artificial lighting available to let you stay up until midnight or later.

Jet lag can also cause people to produce less melatonin. But since airline travel cannot be avoided at times, what's the solution?

#### INCREASING THE BODY'S PRODUCTION OF MELATONIN

Food sources associated with naturally boosting the body's own melatonin production include cherries, bananas, and oatmeal. Yet more and more people are actually taking straight melatonin as a packaged dietary supplement—and caution should be exercised when considering that particular approach.

Brent A. Bauer, M.D., of the renowned Mayo Clinic, reminds us that melatonin is a hormone, not a food—and any form of hormone-replacement-therapy basically works by “tricking” the body's natural processes—and this can have a downside. Side effects of heavy or continuous melatonin supplementation can include daytime sleepiness, dizziness, headaches, and even nightmares. Melatonin supplements can also interact negatively with various medications.

# Ten tips for getting a good night's sleep

**1** Don't eat or drink too close to bedtime.



**2** Make the room totally dark at bedtime—and try to avoid exposure to bright light during the last few hours before going to sleep.

**3** Avoid scheduling intense, difficult homework just before bedtime—try to ease your way into rest.



**4** Keep the temperature of your sleeping quarters comfortable—not too hot, and especially not too cold. Wearing socks to bed can be relaxing and it helps a lot of people rest better.



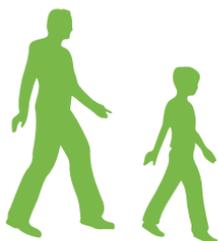
**5** Try to have a reasonable bedtime at the same hour, every night of the week.

**6** Avoid the radiation and stimulation of television or videos in the bedroom.



**7** Reading in bed can be helpful before you go to sleep if it's something spiritually comforting. And of course, pray before you go to sleep. Having a clean conscience before God is essential to real peace.

**8** If you get insomnia in the middle of the night, don't watch the clock and let it stress you. Worrying doesn't help. Just take your burdens to the Lord in prayer and rest in His care.



**9** Some physical exercise during the day is essential to a good night's rest. "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much" (Ecclesiastes 5:12).

**10** Studies show that "morning lark" scholars (early risers) score higher in their exams than "night owls" (late-to-bed folks). Benjamin Franklin claimed that "early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." The Spirit of Prophecy confirms at least the healthy part to be true—which of course will promote the wealth and wisdom, too.

"The importance of regularity in the time for eating and sleeping should not be overlooked. Since the work of building up the body takes place during the hours of rest, it is essential, especially in youth, that sleep should be regular and abundant.

"In regulating the hours for sleep, there should be no haphazard work. Students should not form the habit of burning the midnight oil and taking the hours of the day for sleep. If they have been accustomed to doing this at home, they should correct the habit, going to bed at a seasonable hour. They will then rise in the morning refreshed for the duties of the day."—*Child Guidance*, pp. 363, 364.

"Sleep is worth far more before than after midnight. Two hours' good sleep before twelve o'clock is worth more than four hours after twelve o'clock."—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 7, p. 224.

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2). 🌙

**Pleasant dreams!**

# Excerpts From Acres of Diamonds

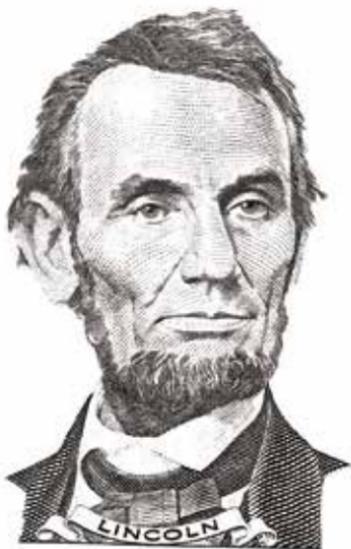
Part 2

By Russell H. Conwell



**W**ho are the great inventors of the world? . . . This lesson comes before us. The great inventor sits next to you, or you are the person yourself. "Oh," but you will say, "I have never invented anything in my life." Neither did the great inventors until they discovered one great secret. Do you think it is a man with a head like a bushel measure or a man like a stroke of lightning? It is neither. The really great man is a plain, straightforward, everyday, common-sense man. You would not dream that he was a great inventor if you did not see something he had actually done. His neighbors do not regard him so great. You never see anything great over your back fence. You say there is no greatness among your neighbors. It is all away off somewhere else. Their greatness is ever so simple, so plain, so earnest, so practical, that the neighbors and friends never recognize it. . . .

[For example,] Abraham Lincoln's principle for greatness can be adopted by nearly all. This was his rule: Whatsoever he had to do at all, he put his whole mind into it and held it all there until that was all done. That makes men great almost anywhere. He stuck to those papers at that table and did not look up at me, and I sat there trembling. Finally, when he had put the string around his papers, he pushed them over to one side and looked over to me, and a smile came over his worn face. He said: "I am a very busy man and have only a few minutes to spare. Now tell me in the fewest words what it is you want." I began to tell him, and mentioned the case, and he said: "I have heard all about it and you do not need to say any more. Mr. Stanton was talking to me only a few days ago about that. You can go to the hotel and rest assured that the President never did sign an order to shoot a boy under twenty years of age, and



never will. You can say that to his mother anyhow.”

Then he said to me, “How is it going in the field?” I said, “We sometimes get discouraged.” And he said: “It is all right. We are going to win out now. We are getting very near the light. No man ought to wish to be President of the United States, and I will be glad when I get through; then Tad and I are going out to Springfield, Illinois. I have bought a farm out there and I don’t care if I again earn only twenty-five cents a day. Tad has a mule team, and we are going to plant onions.”

Then he asked me, “Were you brought up on a farm?” I said, “Yes; in the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts.” He then threw his leg over the corner of the big chair and said, “I have heard many a time, ever since I was young, that

up there in those hills you have to sharpen the noses of the sheep in order to get down to the grass between the rocks.” He was so familiar, so everyday, so farmer-like, that I felt right at home with him at once.

He then took hold of another roll of paper and looked up at me and said, “Good morning.” I took the hint then and got up and went out. After I had gotten out I could not realize I had seen the President of the United States at all. But a few days later, when still in the city, I saw the crowd pass through the East Room by the coffin of Abraham Lincoln, and when I looked at the upturned face of the murdered President I felt then that the man I had seen such a short time before, who, so simple a man, so plain a man, was one of the greatest men that God ever raised up to lead a nation on to ultimate liberty. Yet he was only “Old Abe” to his neighbors. When they had the second funeral, I was invited among others and went out to see that same coffin put back in the tomb at Springfield. Around the tomb stood Lincoln’s old neighbors, to whom he was just “Old Abe.” Of course that is all they would say.

[In contrast] did you ever see a man who struts around altogether too large to notice an ordinary working mechanic? Do you think he is great? He is nothing but a puffed-up balloon, held down by his big feet. There is no greatness there. 🍎

# Memoirs From a Missionary

*Adapted from experiences told by Neville S. Brittain*

*Part 1 of 2*

“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:53, 54).

In these verses we find the real meaning of the Christian’s experience. To some, it may take a long time to understand what this means; yet others comprehend it readily. To me, it took quite a while. I would like to share with you how I came to understand its meaning so that you may also turn your eyes upon Jesus. I would first like to begin this story by telling how my family became Seventh-day Adventists. My father was working as a postal officer, sorting mail on the trains out of Perth, West Australia. One day, some people came into town and put up a tent near the Perth Station. On his way home, he used to stop at this tent and listen to the meetings. Eventually, he found out that they were Adventists. One

night, after he had attended most of the meetings, he said to his wife, “I think we ought to join these Adventist people because what they say makes sense.”

She turned around and said, “O, Wally, you can’t join them; you smoke; and you know they don’t smoke.”

“We’ll see about that,” he said. He took his pipe out of his mouth and his pouch out of his pocket and put them in the fire—and that was it. He never smoked again in his life after that. People say that they can’t give up smoking, but he did it just like that. Later he became a colporteur and then a Bible worker and minister, traveling the Australian continent and New Zealand. Eventually he resigned from the work because his wife was ill and felt she couldn’t take any more transfers; but he still kept his credentials as a minister. Later on, she died.

Some years later, he married my mother, Beatrice Louisa. That’s when I come into the picture. I was born in Victoria, Australia, and when I was about seven, my father died. My mother

worked hard to support us financially and spiritually, and we and a few other families accepted the message of the SDA Reform Movement while in Victoria.

The Second World War was still on and many things were rationed. Just at that time, the brethren of the Union Conference were planning to start a missionary school. I had just started work in a factory when it was suggested that I go to the Hebron Missionary Training School.

### AT HEBRON

The school property had several old buildings and these were adapted for our use. We set up a sawmill to make cases for the fruit, and we even sold many to other fruit farmers in the area. On Sabbath afternoons, we would often walk out into the woods and have our afternoon meeting right in the quiet of God's creation. Sometimes, after Sabbath, Bro. Macdonald—who noted my

interest in health—would teach me massage. This was my first introduction to the health work.

We really had some fun with all the hard work and study. The Colo River almost surrounded the property, and it was almost one hundred yards wide in places—of course swimming was the favorite recreation. I don't have space here to tell you about all the fun times we had.

Bro. Harry Weymark and I were farm boys. We would mostly pick and pack fruit, cultivate the orchard, look after the vegetable garden, and irrigate and spray the orchard. When it was spraying time, we would wear the same clothes for the whole time till the end of the spraying season—not even washing them, as the spray was terrible stuff. When the season was over, the clothes were so stiff with the spray that they could almost stand up in the corner—so we burned them.

On the farm, we began to work with organic principles under the direction of Bro. W. L. Searle. One of the clearest lessons we learned of the benefits of more natural agricultural practices was the time we grew cabbage. We had a good crop; but when market time came, we found that everyone else



had a good crop, too, which drove the price so low that it was almost a giveaway market. But someone had the bright idea that maybe the Melbourne market might be better. So we cut half a load in the morning and then made up the balance from the crop of another farmer who had used only artificial fertilizer on his cabbage. That same evening, Jack Wiseman and I began the long 700-mile journey. We traveled all that night, all Monday, and arrived in Melbourne in time for Tuesday's market. When we removed the tarpaulin, there was a clear difference between our cabbage and those of our farmer friend. Ours were still nice and green while the others were yellow, and a large percentage of them had begun to rot. Best of all, ours brought a better price.

At the end of the first year with Bro. Nicolici as our teacher, there came the time for exams. The Union executive committee came that Sunday morning and sat around the big table with smiling—but to us grim—faces. We were allowed only our Bible under our arm. On the table was a bowl with individual questions in it. One by one we came into the room, and after greeting the brethren, we took one question from the



bowl; we had to give our answer using only the Bible.

During the second year, things changed a bit. Bro. Stewart became our teacher, as Bro. Nicolici had too many other responsibilities. We had to be up and ready for worship at 5:30 a.m. The rising bell was at Bro. Stewart's home, and he usually rang it early enough for us to be on time for worship. Sometimes we were too sleepy to hear it—until we heard him coming up the path. Then there would be a sudden scramble, but we usually managed to get ready in time. I was organist for worship and the possible silence of the organ was a real incentive to me to be in place for the opening hymn.

Near the end of the first year, Bro. Nicolici had called me into his study and said, "You know, Neville, you have been here for some time now. Have you ever thought that perhaps you should be baptized?"

“Yes,” I replied. “Well, is there anything that you don’t understand?” I had one question about the Laodicean message, which he explained. Seeing I understood, he said, “Do you then agree that you should be baptized?” I agreed; and a few weeks later, three of us were the first to be baptized at the Hebron school.

### STILL SOMETHING MISSING . . .

Some years later, I saw that at that previous time I had known nothing of repentance and true conversion, the real meaning of baptism, nor the meaning of a full commitment to Jesus. I knew I wanted to do what was clearly right, and I had a desire for better things and to work for the Lord. I was beginning to have a better idea of the doctrines of the church, but that was not enough. And I am afraid that this same thing has happened to others who have been baptized without really knowing the real meaning of baptism. I know now that I was unconverted; I had come to the place of the old hymn “Some of Self and Some of Thee” [Reformation Hymnal, #355]. Even though I was a good church member and carried many responsibilities in the church, I did not really know Jesus. I did not have that personal experience that is the right and blessing of the true Christian. And because I was only half converted, I was a real legalist. As far as I was

concerned, everything was cut and dried. Everything was right because the law said so and by extension, because the church said so. I was a real Pharisee.

I do not suggest that Bro. Nicolici was negligent, for I had been brought up in an Adventist home—my father had been an Adventist minister. It was expected that I would know better. Bro. Nicolici knew and understood the message “Christ Our Righteousness.” Maybe you have read his book: *The Lord Our Righteousness*. You will know that his presentation is not at all lopsided as are some today. The mistake that was made with me was the same as in the early days of the third angel’s message. The believers had originally come from the Sunday-keeping churches who labored much for the conversion of the people as it was then understood; and when they became Adventists, the brethren did not realize how thorough a preparation was needed for newcomers.

I tell this part of the story, not because of the lack in the beginning of my experience, but because of the experience I made later when I began to know my need and how the Lord brought me to begin to know Him, not only as Saviour and Redeemer, but also as my Friend and Companion. 🍎

# Bible ABC's

## D

False god of the Philistines (Judges 16:23).

An insolent church "boss" (3 John 9, 10).

The capital of Syria (1 Kings 19:15).

A woman known for her good works (Acts 9:36).

The famous prophet exiled in Babylon (Daniel 5:11, 12).

A territory east of the Jordan (Matthew 4:25).

The sweet psalmist of Israel (2 Samuel 23:1).

A famous woman judge (Judges 4:4).

A heathen goddess of the Ephesians (Acts 19:28).

The woman who betrayed Samson (Judges 16:4-21).

The following quiz will test your knowledge of certain Bible names and places which begin with the letters D and E. Some answers are easy, others are more challenging. After you go through them all, pick out the ones you could not answer. Look up the verse prayerfully and read the entire context, asking God to give you greater spiritual understanding from what you find.

Try to discover more about that subject and about God's love shining through it by using a concordance or Spirit of Prophecy index. It may take a bit more time, but this is what turns what might have seemed as only trivia, into richer spiritual treasure. Enjoy!

The prophet whom Jezebel sought to kill (1 Kings 19:2).

The city where new converts to Christ burned their books on magic (Acts 19:17-19).

A son of Joseph (Genesis 41:52)

The twin brother of Jacob (Genesis 25:24-26).

A queen who risked her life for God's people (Esther 4:15-8:17).

**E**

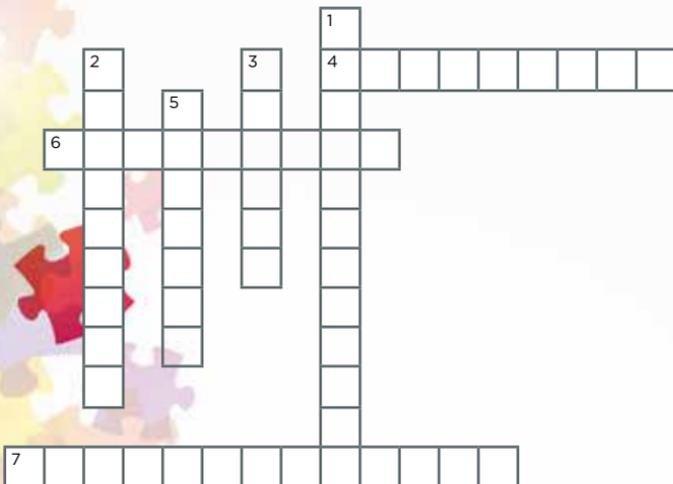
The place where an old witch lived (1 Samuel 28:7).

A man who fell out of a window at a late-night meeting and was restored (Acts 20:9).

A great reformer who led the Jews out of captivity in Babylon (Ezra 7:1-13).

The mother of Timothy (2 Timothy 1:2-5)

The name of a sorcerer in Cyprus (Acts 13:8).



DOWN

- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ is to be like Jesus in how you think and act towards others and yourself.
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_ is a natural sleep-promoting hormone produced by the pineal gland.
- 7. Nothing is more treacherous than the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin.
- 1. One of the clearest lessons learned at the missionary school was the benefit of more natural \_\_\_\_\_ practices.

ACROSS

- 2. Abe Lincoln's principle for \_\_\_\_\_ was to put his whole mind to something and stick to it until it was done.
- 3. The deer longs for nothing else but the water \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5. A \_\_\_\_\_ spirit goes before a fall.

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# “When I Get Big”



In 1968 the Ford Motor Company had a famous advertising slogan, “Ford has a better idea.” Such a slogan brings to mind the very essence of the human spirit—especially in youth.

“When I am big and free to do as I please, I’ll do things differently!” many a young person declares.

Great goal. Most of us would surely like to do things better than we or others around us do—and in matters to which we have put some significant thought, often we can indeed come up with a better way. But it will never be better than God’s way.

Ironically, the Ford Motor Company has had to come up with numerous slogans over the years, so evidently the “better idea” had to be replaced by a better idea—as early as 1969, just one year later. That is not to disparage the company’s advertising agents of course—it just means that part of growth and creativity involves coming up with better ideas all the time, not just once.

We all like to flatter ourselves that we are innovative trend-setters, yet how humbling it is to realize that “there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us” (Ecclesiastes 1:9, 10).

So, while I’m on the way to “getting big,” my chief aims really should focus on being watchful about my particular weaknesses and overcoming my sins in striving for eternity. Others have made blind mistakes before me—so who is to say that I am immune to that syndrome?

“God does not bid the youth to be less aspiring. The elements of character that make a man successful and honored among men—the irrepressible desire for some greater good, the indomitable will, the strenuous exertion, the untiring perseverance—are not to be crushed out. By the grace of God they are to be directed to objects as much higher than mere selfish and temporal interests as the heavens are higher than the earth.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 602.

John the Baptist’s motto regarding Christ was, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Was that a good way to be? The Lord of heaven gives the answer: “Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist” (Luke 7:28).

So what’s not only the better—but the best—way to be when you “get big”? “Walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous” (Proverbs 2:20). 

# TWO LEAVES

JOHN 15:4

Two beautiful leaves hung side by side;  
 One proudly thought 'twas two strongly tied  
 To the tree that its very life supplied.

It twisted and twirled and was never still;  
 It murmured, complained, and sighed, until  
 It was free to follow its own sweet will.

Awhile it floated in balmy air;  
 The butterflies said it was very fair,  
 The soft winds tossed it here and there;

Then it fluttered down from sunny skies,  
 A faded, forgotten thing, to lie  
 Alone on the cold, damp earth, and—*die*.

The other leaf was content to be  
 Where it was placed on the parent tree,  
 Knowing, though *bound*, 'twas most surely *free*.

So it lived and grew, in sweet content  
 Doing each day's work, 'till, the summer spent,  
 With autumn fruitage the boughs were bent.

The fruit was golden and fair to see,  
 And the leaf rejoiced exceedingly,  
 For was not the leaf *a part of the tree*?

Shall I read the moral, O soul, to thee?  
 Christ says, "Ye cannot fruitful be,  
 Except, by faith, ye *abide in Me*."

—*Grass Valley Methodist*, ST Vol. 12, No. 4.