

Youth messenger

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Faithfulness in Little Things

BY ELLEN G. WHITE

As the children of God, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are here on trial, and that we are ourselves deciding our own destiny for everlasting happiness or for eternal death. We have everything to gain or to lose. We each have a work before us. We must cooperate with God in reaching the Bible

standard, in conforming to His will. In these precious hours of probation, God desires that we shall form such characters as we shall wish we had perfected, when Christ shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Christ has given Himself for His church “that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26, 27).

The apostle Paul says: “I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all



utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:4-8). There is need to cultivate every grace that Jesus, through His sufferings and death, has brought within our reach; for that grace alone can remedy our defects; Christ alone can transform the character. And God would have us manifest this grace, so richly provided, in the little as well as the large things of life.

If you would skillfully cultivate and train your flowers, you must consult a gardener; for he understands the work, he trains them to grow how and where he will. He gives them plenty of water, sunshine, and air, and digs about their roots. Day by day he works, not by violent efforts, but by little acts constantly repeated, until he can train shrub and flower into perfect form and beauty. Thus the grace of Christ works upon the human mind and heart as an educator. The continued influence of His Spirit trains the soul, molding the character after the divine Model.

Our entire life is God's and must be used to His glory. His grace will consecrate and improve every

faculty. Let no one say, I cannot remedy my defects of character; for if you come to this decision, you will certainly fail to obtain everlasting life. The impossibility lies in your own will. If you **will** not, then you cannot overcome. The real difficulty arises from the corruption of unsanctified hearts, and an unwillingness to submit to the control of God.

Some youth are much opposed to order and discipline. They do not respect the rules of the home by rising at a regular hour. They lie in bed some hours after daylight, when everyone should be astir. They burn the midnight oil, depending upon artificial light to

supply the place of the light that nature has provided at seasonable hours. In so doing they not only waste precious



opportunities, but cause additional expense. But in almost every case the plea is made, "I cannot get through my work; I have something to do; I cannot retire early." Thus they are sleeping soundly when they should be awake with nature and the early rising birds. The precious habits of order are broken; and the moments thus idled away in the early morning set things out of course for the whole day.

Our God is a God of order, and He desires that His children shall *will* to bring themselves into order and under His discipline. Would it not be better, therefore, to break up this habit of turning night into day, and the fresh hours of the morning into night. If the youth would form habits of regularity and order, they would improve in health, in spirits, in memory, and in disposition.

It is the duty of all to observe strict rules in their habits of life. This is for your own good, dear youth, both physically and morally. When you rise in the morning, take into consideration, as far as possible, the work you must accomplish during the day. If necessary, have a small book in which to jot down the things that need to be done, and set yourself a time in which to do your work. If it is the work of the bedrooms, see that the rooms have a proper airing, that the bedclothes are separated, and that the entire room is freshened with air and sunshine. Allow yourself a certain

time in which to perform this work. Do not sit down while it is yet unfinished to read any paper or book that may interest you but say, I must do this work in the given time.

Your room may contain many little ornaments placed there for admiration; but if you would have an eye single to the glory of God, you would do well to pack away these little idols. In handling, dusting, and replacing them, many precious moments are spent that might be employed in needful work. But if these trinkets are not to be stored away, then you have another lesson to learn. Be expeditious. Do not dreamily take up every article and keep it in your hand, as though loath to lay it down. It is the duty of those who are slow in their movements to improve in this respect. The Lord has said, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). In preparing the meals, make your calculations, giving yourself all the time that you know by experience you will require in order to cook the food thoroughly and place it upon the table at the proper time. But it is better to be ready five minutes before the time than to be five minutes late. In washing dishes, also, the work may be done with dispatch, and yet with care and thoroughness. Slow, dilatory habits make much work out of very little. But if you will, you may overcome these fussy, lingering habits. The exercise of the will power will

make the hands move deftly.

When I have been searching for a girl to help with my housework, certain young persons have been recommended to me. But when I inquired of those who had previously employed them, the reply was, concerning one: "She will not suit you; she is very slow. You will have to pay your money for having your work done in a slovenly manner, and you will feel that it is money wasted." Of another it was said: "She has no method; she has not cultivated caretaking. She needs someone beside her; for she has not breadth of mind enough to comprehend the situation, to understand how one thing after another should be done, nor to use tact in her housekeeping." I was warned against employing another because, while everything was in disorder, she would sit down in the midst of her unfinished work, and with newspaper or book in hand, forget all about her duties. Of still another who I thought would please me, I learned that she was untidy. Another was disrespectful. For persons to whom she took a violent fancy, she would show great consideration, going to any lengths in order to receive their

approbation and flattery. But she had no reverence or even respect for anyone else. "But," I reasoned, "if she is a Christian, she will surely take counsel." An expression of sorrow came over the countenance of my friend as she replied: "I am afraid you will be disappointed in her. If you insist upon having things done as you wish, if you plainly set before her the mistakes she is making, instead of correcting them, she will say that she does the best she can and will take upon her the air of one who has been much injured. She does not respect those in authority but will have a sneer in her mind, which, if not revealed to you in words, will be manifest in her expression. Her opinions, too, are not kept secret but expressed freely to




others. I have myself been compelled to live over this experience, to my sorrow." Another will spend not only minutes but hours of the day, in needless talk, and thus squanders much precious time.

These matters have been looked upon as little things and almost unworthy of notice. But many are deceived as to the importance of these little things. They bear strongly upon the great whole. God does not regard anything as unimportant that pertains to the well-being of the human family. He gave His only begotten Son for the body as well as for the soul, and all is to be consecrated to Him.

Let there be a determined purpose to overcome and to cultivate those habits that are desirable. This work requires ceaseless watchfulness, and steady, persevering effort. But this adherence to right practices in little things is a discipline of self that will become less difficult in proportion as the heart is sanctified by the grace of God. Earnest, persevering effort will place you on the vantage ground of victory.

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). Can you, dear youth, look forward with joyful hope and expectation to the time when the Lord, your righteous Judge, shall

confess your name before the Father and before the holy angels? The very best preparation you can have for Christ's second appearing is to rest with firm faith in the great salvation brought to us at His first coming. You must believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, and that He was once offered to bear the sins of many; that His love, abiding in your soul as a living, active agency to correct, refine, and purify your ways and practices, may save you from your errors.

The Lord is not pleased to have His children disorderly; to have their lives marred with defects, their religious experience crippled, and their growth in grace dwarfed by hereditary and cultivated deficiencies. These defects will be copied by others and thus be reproduced and multiplied. Listen to the words of God, spoken through His servant John, coming down through the ages to our own time: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). Great truth can be brought into little things; practical religion must be carried into the lowly duties of daily life. And in the performance of these duties, you are forming characters that will stand the test of the Judgment. Then, in whatever position you may be placed, whatever your duties may be, do them nobly and faithfully, realizing that all heaven is beholding your work.—*The Youth's Instructor*, January 28, 1897. 

OPTIMIZE

your online experience!

BY ALEX GURDUALA


The *Strength In Scripture* short studies walk you through the Bible and provide a greater understanding of God's plan of salvation and major biblical themes related to it.

Recently, the youth at the SDARM church in Temple Hills, Maryland—USA, have begun an online project. The project's main objective is to lead others, especially other young people, toward a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The description on the *Strength in Scripture* Youtube channel states:

"Understanding and applying the Word of God in our daily life is what *Strength In Scripture* is all about. We love the Bible, and we know that the more we understand God's Word the more equipped we are to live a life that honors God as God desired for us, thus living a more fulfilled life."

So far, we're off to a great start with an introductory video explaining the project and discussing the importance of the Bible. Some topics have already been produced as well—intriguing subjects such as "The Amazing Book" and "The Origin of Evil."

This project definitely has potential as a tool for outreach. You may have young friends or acquaintances who might not necessarily take the time to read a pamphlet or magazine, but they could be willing to watch a short video on YouTube. So you can support this project by visiting the *Strength in Scripture* channel, watching the videos, and sharing them with others. Check it out at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCO8-94QN9WkbVknUuVu-QJQ> 

STRENGTH IN SCRIPTURE

I would love to be able to genuinely say that in every single phase of my life I have had the deepest desire to read my Bible every day. But if I am to be honest, that hasn't always been the case. If I am to be honest, I have to own up to having gone days without reading my Bible.

True, I may have read the Bible from cover to cover before, but just like my physical body, my soul also needs consistent feeding, and the Bible is one of the most precious sources for my daily bread. I know all of this, as I am sure you do, too.

Most of the time, the hardest part of reading the Bible isn't being convinced it is a habit we need. Oftentimes the hardest part is forming the habit of taking the time to read. Every day the to-do list gets longer and longer, and setting aside time for devotions gets pushed lower and lower on that list. Other times, we just don't feel like reading the Bible anymore.

Then when we finally do sit down to read, we're faced with not knowing where to begin!

While it makes sense to start at the beginning, Genesis, it doesn't always have to be that way. In my experience in delving back into the Bible, I have come across 5 books that have helped me restore my Bible-reading habits, and I'm sharing them below in no particular order. Who knows, maybe they'll provide a place for you to start, too.



It was probably quite predictable to see the psalms in this list, wasn't it? The book of Psalms is filled with the most heart-wrenching cries for help that I have found often echo my own worries and despair:

"I will say unto God my rock,
Why hast thou forgotten me? why

5 BOOKS TO WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL

go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" (Psalm 42:9).

The psalmist struggled with lack of faith and the weakness engraved in our humanity, and his psalms often begin with statements declaring his anguish. But the beauty of the book of Psalms is that in the same chapter the psalmist will finish with hope, praising God for His continual mercy, grace, patience, and understanding towards humanity.

Don't be discouraged; while the book itself may be long, the chapters provide concise, relatable, and uplifting "pick-me-ups" for the soul.

"Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (verse 11).

"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Psalm 73:26, emphasis added).



Reading Esther has always been a spiritual experience for me, because as a child I always felt Esther was included in the Bible just for me. It was the perfect love story, with elements of comedic irony, and a satisfying amount of description.

Every time I would begin to read Esther and was met with the detailed descriptions, I felt as if the book were a love letter from God just to me.

It felt like proof that He knew how much I enjoy narratives, and He inspired each word just for me. I always read Esther in one sitting. It is a book that warms my heart and inspires my spirit. Who isn't inspired to pursue the faith it takes to make Esther's words, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16) his or



READ

BY LARISSA TENORIO

LIKE READING THE BIBLE

her own when it comes to keeping God's commandments?

Esther may not have the same effect on you. The point is to substitute here any book with which you have connected in the past. Perhaps when you first began reading the Bible, it was one of the Gospels that made you feel closer to God.

When we feel like reading the Bible the least, that's when we need it the most. Sometimes it can be easier to read something familiar. Your favorite book is a good place to start.

If you don't have one yet, start with mine and keep reading; you'll find yours soon.



Oftentimes, the fact that I don't want to read the Bible is a sure sign that reading it is exactly what I need to do. It's usually a sign of wavering faith. Hebrews feeds faith. Chapter 11 is a well-known chapter dubbed the "Faith Chapter." However, all of Hebrews talks about God's efforts to personally address His people, to the point He sent down the greatest form of communication of love—His Son.

Hebrews, like the rest of the Bible, is a book with so much underlying meaning that it can be read over and over again, and

it will grow deeper and deeper in meaning with each read.

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts)" (Hebrews 3:7, 8).



First John is often one of the first books we suggest to those unfamiliar with the gospel, and with good reason. It's a letter whose theme is that of the Father's love. It simultaneously exhorts the reader to forsake the world and cling to the Saviour, while giving the best reason to do so—divine love.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1, emphasis added).



James is about putting things into perspective. It is about realizing that temptations mean we are growing in faith, and that one of our greatest battles will be the battle against self. It's about realizing our full dependency upon God.

"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little

time, and then vanisheth away”
(James 4:14).

There is another strong theme throughout James—that of love in the community. The entire book is addressed to a church body, and it serves as a reminder to each of its members to love, respect, and refrain from judging one another, and that even the most unassuming member has an important role to play. James also places an important emphasis on love through actions, which speak to true character.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world”
(James 1:27).

There you have it—my 5 books to read when I don’t quite feel like reading the Bible. However, there are also two key things to


remember before reading and making Bible-reading a habit:

Always pray before reading so that God may guide you and your understanding.

Set apart a time that you know will work for you. For instance, for many people it works to read in the morning before they begin their daily activities. For me it’s the opposite. I can focus better when my day is winding down. Find what works for you and stick to it.

Of course, the most important thing is to read and engage in communion with Christ. The books I mentioned may have given you a place to start, but there’s no rule on which book to read first. After all, there are messages in all of them just waiting to find their way into your heart.

God bless. 🍷



"The word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"

(Psalm 119:105)

the Adventures of Daniel

PART 2

BY TOBIAS L. STOCKLER

After overcoming many nations, Nebuchadnezzar the king spent his time, effort, and riches in improving Babylon. He built temples to heathen gods, expanded the city, and built magnificent walls. On the roof of one building he planted many varieties of trees and plants.

One evening Nebuchadnezzar was wondering what the future held. While he slept, God spoke to him in a dream. Alas, the next morning he could not remember what he was shown. He called his counselors, but they were unable to tell the dream or its meaning. The king became angry because of the hypocrisy and lies of those who claimed to know about dreams. So, Nebuchadnezzar ordered for all the wise men to be killed. This order included the Hebrew students. Daniel must die for the failure of his teachers!

Calmly, Daniel requested time and promised to tell the king the meaning of the mysterious dream. But he did not try to come up with

some answer of his own. Instead, he humbly trusted God. With his three friends, Daniel asked God to explain what the king had forgotten, and God rewarded the prayers of his servant. Then “Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation” (Daniel 2:24).

Dear reader, how do you react when someone happens to threaten you? Are you as calm as Daniel was? Do you know that God will answer your prayers? In 1 John 5:14, 15, He promises to hear your prayers, “And we have an assured confidence that whenever we ask anything in accordance with His will, He listens to us. And since we know that He listens to us, then whatever we ask, we know that we have the things which we have asked from Him” (Richard F. Weymouth, *The New Testament in Modern Speech*).

When Daniel was brought before the king, he said, "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and beheld a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the

How do you react when someone happens to threaten you? Do you trust that God will answer your prayers?

summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall

be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these [divided] kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Daniel 2:27-45).

How many symbols do we find here? Six:

1. The head of gold.
2. The chest and arms of silver.
3. The belly and thighs of brass.
4. The legs of iron.
5. The feet and toes of iron mixed with clay.
6. The stone that destroys the image.


How many empires do we find in history and prophecy since Nebuchadnezzar? Six:

1. Babylon.
2. Followed by Medo-Persia.
3. Followed by Greece.
4. Followed by Rome.
5. Followed by the ten divisions of the Roman Empire.
6. Followed by the kingdom of God "which shall never be destroyed." Then the Lord will recreate this planet, so that His kingdom can fill it. The symbols, explanation, and history all agree.

God wanted to tell Nebuchadnezzar three things:

1. That poorer nations would rule the civilized world after him.
2. That God gives various nations the opportunity to worship and serve Him and help others, but if they do not use the opportunity wisely, He will destroy them and give the opportunity to someone else.

3. That whatever each nation might do with God's blessings, in the end God would rule over all. God is giving you the opportunity to worship and help others also. If you use this opportunity wisely, you will live forever; if not, you will be unhappy and finally be destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar, what choice will you make?

Reader, what choice will you make? 

The Statue of Daniel 2

BABYLON

MEDO-PERSIA

GREECE

ROME

**DIVIDED
NATIONS**



PHOTOS FROM



THE GC



GENERAL CONFERENCE IMPRESSIONS

*Thoughts from the spiritual meetings of the 22nd
General Conference delegation held in Virginia, U.S.A.*

BY SERBAN IONITA

The place was enormous, the lights were bright and beaming and—as I stepped into the building—I just realized that for the first time in my life I was attending the spiritual meetings of a General Conference session. This was an opportunity to see friends that I hadn't seen for years, meet new ones, and have a new experience with the Lord. And what an experience it was!

The amount of people at the GC was staggering. Never before had I seen so many of our brethren and sisters in one place. Persons, young and old, from all over the world gathered

together. I met brethren from the east coast of the United States, brethren from Brazil, and sisters from Germany that happened to share my Romanian heritage. Yet despite all the differences of language and origin, we all shared one thing: We had all come together to praise the Lord and learn from Him. This singleness of purpose brought us all together, and long chains of newly-formed friendships occupied the lunch tables as everyone was enjoying each other's company and fellowshiping in harmony. The sacredness of the music that soon followed clearly demonstrated



the singularity of the group, as voice combined with voice, and instrument joined instrument to bring us closer to the divine.

The holy atmosphere projected by the orchestra and choir merged in song was absolutely marvelous. I was given the privilege to sing in the choir, and the solemn messages of our melodies were not only for the audience but were actually God's words to all of us as we united to give Him praise. "Christ Is All, and in All" was not only the emphasis of the spiritual meetings, but it became a reality as His holy presence could be felt in our midst ministering to our hearts, and bringing us all closer together to become as one.

One of the biggest blessings of the General Conference was reuniting with someone I had not seen for more than ten years. As a young boy in Romania, I often went with my dad to the church in Bucharest where he was ministering. Brother George, a young university student who was there at the time, was like a mentor to me. Now after more than a decade, I had the momentous opportunity to see him again. I recognized him as soon as I laid my eyes on him, and he had not changed one bit. Though the wheels of life had turned, and he had gotten married and become a worker for the church, his face still glowed with the same kindness, brilliance, and zeal for the Lord that I remembered. As a child,



I dreamed to be just like him when I grew older, and now here I stood, all grown up and meeting him once again. I realized that time is one of the most important talents with which God blesses humanity. It is up to us to use it to do good, to develop our character, and to enrich our Christian experience as we broaden our daily walk with God.

Much like my friend who retained the same brilliant and compassionate spirit over the years, I realized that God never changes. Throughout my entire life, God has been patiently and kindly waiting and working to bring me closer to Himself. Through all my ignorance and resistance He has penetrated the hardness of my heart to help me realize His infinite love and abounding grace. By His grace I live, by His providence I attended the General Conference, and by His hand we all shall be victorious. This is my wish and prayer, that the glorious motto of the GC shall forever be a reflection of reality. May Christ be all and in all! Amen! 🙏

At the _____

2015 GENERAL CONFERENCE PUBLIC MEETINGS

BY EUNICE BRAIDMAN

It was an overcast Thursday afternoon, and a pleasant gentle breeze was blowing as I stepped out of our rental car onto the pavement of the parking lot belonging to the Salem Civic Center—the impressive building hosting the General Conference public meetings. I had waited for this day for practically 22 years—since the last GC I had been able to attend when I was 6 years old in 1999—and had looked forward to it for 3–4 years after being told the 2015 GC session would be held in the U.S. The year 2015 had seemed so far away; but time had flown, and the day was finally here. As we approached the building, I felt much joy and excitement. Upon

entering the stadium where the meetings were to be held, I gazed at all the rows of seats and glanced at all the believers milling about in preparation for the first meeting and worship. I was happy to be there. A warm peaceful feeling came over me as I listened to the beautiful strains being played by the orchestra until the program was underway. As we sang the first hymn, I looked around at all the faces—some familiar and many others new. It felt as if it were a large family reunion; in reality, it was. Brethren and sisters of like faith from many parts of the country and of the world had come together to one place to enjoy spiritual refreshment and

the friendship of like believers.

Thursday evening was soon over and gave way to Friday morning. We were up bright and early for morning worship and breakfast. By now the Salem Civic Center already felt like a familiar place and a temporary



home. After our souls had received some spiritual nourishment to begin the day, everyone made his or her way to the dining area for breakfast. The line was a bit long, as was to be expected. But it was a great opportunity to glance around in search of familiar faces. How wonderful it was to catch sight of a dear friend we hadn't seen in one year, perhaps two. In other cases, someone we had not seen in as many as 15 years. And regarding those faces we had not seen before, wherever we would see them—whether in line, in the hallway, in the dining area, or in the meeting place—one would still feel a bond and a connection with them, and it seemed that they were already a friend although one had not met them before. Why? Because we all were happy members of God's family and were bound together by our love to God and to one another as well as by our purpose for being there in that place. As the event progressed, it was a blessing to hear brethren who were servants in the Lord's vineyard and laboring in distant lands, share truths and important messages. And each time we would sing a hymn or hear the choir or orchestra play and sing, I couldn't help but wonder what it will be like when, by God's grace, we make it to heaven and sing and



play with all the saints and angels. That moment, that beautiful sound, no one can imagine.

Time was fluttering its wings far too quickly for my liking, and before I knew it, Sabbath had arrived. Sabbath is always a wonderful day, but this Sabbath was even more special. What a big Sabbath School there was! Even the youth class was almost overflowing with youth from all over the country and even from other countries. How beautiful it was to see so many youth together in one place to study God's Word on His holy day. There was no other better place they could be. After an inspiring sermon and a hearty, delicious lunch, the rest of the Sabbath day was enriched with the presentation of other profound messages by different brethren and also by many beautiful and elevating musical items. There were many times when I wished I could stop the time if even for a short while. The days were passing too quickly and I was enjoying it all so much. Throughout the

program, ministers and workers of different countries also gave their reports and shared the missionary work that had been done in their respective fields. It was wonderful to see the fruits of their labor and to know of all of the souls that have been led into the fold in those countries by the grace of God. Yet at the same time, one could not help but realize how small the number of converted souls was in comparison with the total inhabitants of each country. It was sobering and saddening to see how much more work is yet to be done for countless souls who are perishing in sin throughout all the countries of the world! May God help us.

It was Sunday morning far too soon. I looked forward to another day to fellowship with all the brethren and sisters and to feast upon the gems of truth as well as on the heavenly music. But on the other hand, I knew it was also the last day of this much-awaited event. It was with these

thoughts and mixed feelings that I made my way to the Salem Civic Center that morning. I tried to savor each moment even more than I had the previous days—if that were possible. Breakfast was as delicious and wholesome as usual, and as I looked across all the tables and at all the brethren eating heartily, I wondered if they were as sad as I was that the GC 2015 public meetings would soon be over. Sunday's program included the delivery of the last messages and more musical items. A few brethren had already begun leaving, but many remained to the very end. And during lunch or breaks, nearly everyone used the opportunity to have last conversations and spend time with friends, both old and new. During the last meeting, I was sitting in one of the side rows of the stadium. I looked down and around at everyone there. I still couldn't believe the GC was happening and that, in reality, it was already almost over. The



theme song “Christ Is All, and in All” was sang for the last time as well as the moving hymn “God Be With You Till We Meet Again,” and the final words were spoken by ministers and brethren. More than once I felt the urge to shed a tear. Everything was over. The orchestra played the Hallelujah Chorus and everyone joined in to sing. As the final notes died away, I wondered when I would see everyone again, or even who I would see again. I knew I would miss everyone, even those who I never actually spoke to or those who I had only smiled at in the hallway or wished a Happy Sabbath in passing. The good-byes soon began, and the crowds slowly began to disperse, instruments were put away, and the atmosphere took on a slight melancholic feeling. As the last words were exchanged and embraces given before parting and going separate ways, I thought of that heavenly reunion that will take place that blessed day. As I stepped out into the night air and

directed my steps towards the vehicle that would take us to our lodgings where we would spend our last night in Virginia, I couldn't help but think how wonderful it will be when we never again have to say good-bye and will be able to praise the Lord together forever throughout all eternity. In reality, to me the 2015 GC meetings were a faint glimpse, a small foretaste of that glorious day when all of God's children from all parts of the world, from all walks of life, and from all ages of history will be reunited in that eternal reunion where no tears will ever be shed and no farewells ever uttered. May we strive each day to be a part of that glorious reunion as well as prepare others to also be there. And by God's grace, may we one day be able to say like Paul: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7). May God then say to us: “Well done, good and faithful servant. . . . Enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:23). 🚫



A Miracle for Bobby

BY JESSICA BROWN

A few years ago, my family and I had been in New Zealand for a few months with relatives. We had to get some close friends to look after our animals while we were away—and that included our two big dogs, Bobby and Charlie.

When we came back, we got all our animals back and started settling back to our normal life. It all started early one morning, the day after we got our dogs back. My younger brother

had taken the dogs for a walk on our 5-acre property. Since we had not been home for a while, the grass had not been cut, so it was very long. My mother, sisters, and I were just getting out of bed, when we heard Matthew, my younger brother, calling, “Something is wrong with Bobby.” Immediately we were all out of the house to see what the problem was. When I saw Bobby, he was foaming at the

mouth, his head was swollen, and his back legs were

becoming paralyzed. By now we knew something was very wrong. From what we could tell by the symptoms, he had been bitten by a snake.

Trying to think of something that might save our dog, the only thing I could think of was activated charcoal. I ran back

to the house and got some charcoal and milk. We tried to give Bobby some of the charcoal, but by now he





could not swallow. He was totally paralyzed, He could not move at all. There was nothing else we could do. The vet was too far away (since we live in the country), so my mother said we would have to say good-bye to our dog. We were all in tears. . . .

That's when my youngest sister, Jasmine, who was only 5 at the time, said to my mother, "Mummy, we should pray" so we all said a heartfelt prayer for our dog, asking God if it would be His will, to let our dog live. After we prayed, Bobby started moving his head a little. At first we just thought it was the sign of the end, but then Bobby started moving his front feet. Within just a few minutes, Bobby started moving his whole body. That was when a spark of hope was in our hearts that God

had answered our prayers. . . . Within about 10 minutes, Bobby was walking around like nothing had happened! Still to this day we have our dog, and we thank God daily for this miracle.

The story does not finish there. A few days later, my father and brothers found a 2-plus-meter (about 7-foot), Eastern Brown snake caught in some wire fence. For a little knowledge on the Eastern Brown snake, it is the second most poisonous snake in the world. Most humans and animals do not live if they are bitten by this snake. It is a miracle that our dog is still alive today. Every time I look at Bobby it reminds me of that day and how much God loves and protects us—and answers even our little prayers! 🍷

The Sour Side of Vinegar

The term “vinegar” is derived from the French *vin aigre*, which literally means “sour wine.” Traditionally, it was fermented over a period of several weeks or longer, thus producing acetic acid bacteria. Different colors of vinegar occur as a result of whatever produce has been fermented. Apple cider vinegar, for example, is derived from rotten apples—although it is often touted as a health remedy.

Popular remedies come and go, but whatever we decide about them, our first priority must be to check the Spirit of Prophecy to see whether or not the latest health fad is in harmony with the principles kindly provided to us by our all-knowing Creator. Let’s see:

“[When] salads are prepared with oil and vinegar, fermentation takes place in the stomach, and the food does not digest but decays or putrefies. As a consequence the blood

is not nourished but becomes filled with impurities, and liver and kidney difficulty appear. Heart disturbances, inflammation, and many evils are the result of such kind of treatment, and not only are the bodies affected, but the morals, the religious life, are affected.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 2, pp. 143, 144.

What advice did Ellen White give to a friend struggling with the habit of indulging in vinegar—practical advice which can apply to all types of vices pertaining to appetite?

“Discard everything that would cause you to do halfway work in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Put away every indulgence that would hinder you in the work of overcoming. Ask for the prayers of those who can comprehend your need of help.


“There was a time when I was in a situation similar in some respects to yours. I had indulged the desire for vinegar. But I resolved with the help of God to overcome this appetite. I fought the temptation, determined not to be mastered by this habit.

“For weeks I was very sick; but I kept saying over and over, The Lord knows all about it. If I die, I die; but I will not yield to this desire. The struggle continued, and I was sorely afflicted for many weeks. All thought that it was impossible for me to live. You may be sure we sought the Lord very earnestly. The most fervent prayers were offered

“If you will determine to overcome, the Lord . . . will give you strength to resist every temptation.”

for my recovery. I continued to resist the desire for vinegar, and at last I conquered. Now I have no inclination to taste anything of the kind. This experience has been of great value to me in many ways. I obtained a complete victory.

“I relate this experience to you for your help and encouragement. I have faith, my sister, that you can come through this trial, and reveal that God is the helper of His children in every time of need. If you determine to conquer this habit and will fight it perseveringly, you can obtain an experience of the highest value. When you set your will resolutely to break off this indulgence, you will have the help you need from God. Try it, my sister.

“As long as you acknowledge this habit by indulging it, Satan will retain his hold on your will and bring it into obedience to himself. But if you will determine to overcome, the Lord will heal you and will give you strength to resist every temptation. Ever remember that Christ is your Saviour and Keeper.”—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 484, 485. 

Bible ABC's

M

Joseph's firstborn
(Genesis 41:51).

A prophet during the reigns of
Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
(Jeremiah 26:18; Micah 1:1).

The priesthood order for the
New Dispensation (Hebrews
5:8-10).

The original name of Meshach,
the Hebrew worthy (Daniel 1:7).

An evil king of Judah who used
taxation to keep Assyria away (2
Kings 15:17-20).

A prophet in the time of
Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:7-14).

Jonathan's son to whom
David showed kind-
ness (2 Samuel 9:3, 6, 7).

Saul's daughter given to be
David's wife (1 Samuel 18:27).

The son of Enoch (Genesis 5:21).

Hadassah's elder cousin who
adopted her (Esther 2:5-7).

The following quiz will test your knowledge of certain Bible names and places which begin with the letters M and N. 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 Bible concordance or the 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!

N

A Syrian captain miraculously cured and converted (2 Kings 5:1-14).

A prophet whose reproof David humbly accepted (2 Samuel 12:1-13).

Abigail's ornery husband whom God struck dead (1 Samuel 25:2-38).

Jesus heard this man's prayer from afar (John 1:47-49).

A son of Aaron destroyed for irreverence (Leviticus 10:1, 2).

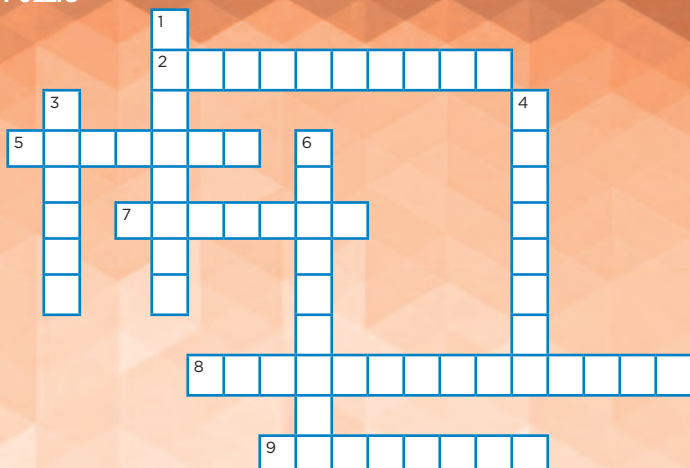
A proud king who was finally humbled and converted (Daniel 4:1-37).

The mother-in-law of Ruth (Ruth 1:1-4).

A reformer that helped restore Jerusalem (Ezra 2:1, 2).

The second son of Bilhah, Rachel's maid (Genesis 30:7, 8).

One of the sons of Cush and a founder of Babel (Genesis 10:8-10).



ACROSS

2. The holy _____ projected by the GC orchestra and choir was described as marvelous.
5. Bobby was probably bitten by a deadly _____ Brown snake.
7. We need to _____ everything that would cause us to do halfway work in seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
8. _____'s dream depicted six world empires in prophecy.
9. The close of the GC spiritual meetings made one think of the _____ reunion that will take place someday.

DOWN

1. Not wanting to read the Bible is a sure sign of _____ faith.
3. It is the duty of all to observe strict rules in their _____ of life.
4. Let there be a determined purpose to _____, and to cultivate those habits that are desirable.
6. The youth at Temple Hills have started an online ministry called Strength in _____.

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from Ordinary to Outstanding

“I can’t wait until. . . .” (You fill in the blank!)

Such is the recurring theme of youth. After all, the academics and chores of daily life can seem so dull while trudging along to some higher goal. How many young people gaze pensively at the walls of a classroom, eagerly awaiting that graduation day when they can finally be free from school.

. . . How many eye that handsome vehicle to be purchased someday as wheels to roll to the perfect job. . . . How many ponder that gorgeous palace to be the dream home for their newly established family. . . . The list goes on. . . .


Sure, it’s good to aim high. Yet meanwhile, the Owner of everything still declares, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matthew 6:33, 34).

As we submit to our Creator and seek to honor Him, allowing His Holy Spirit to develop His best potential in us, we will be different from the general population. Our priorities will be different. We are ordinary people in ordinary places, receiving extraordinary power from Heaven to be uniquely

outstanding in this world.

Remember the prophet Daniel. He was a victim of adverse circumstances—taken captive to slavery in a heathen nation. Yet his priority to serve God made him extraordinary. In this disappointing situation, he shined forth as a slave who could be trusted. Then, instead of just being promoted to become an ordinary bureaucrat amid the infidels, through God he rose to becoming a noble statesman, highly respected and well appreciated by royalty.

Who had placed Daniel in Babylon? “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon” (Jeremiah 29:4).

Yes, the whole scenario was in God’s hands. He allowed it. So while you “can’t wait” for that next step, seek to honor the Lord during this step, right now, here today. Honor Him in the boring little things you have to do. Cherish His holy Sabbath. Take your firm stand with the church that seeks to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And your ordinary life of service to God and humanity will become outstanding through His glory. And life will be far richer with an eternal goal in view! 

Beneath the Stars

All day the pressing care of busy life,
Its petty ills, perplexities, and strife
Have claimed me; but as now at night I stand,
And note the shadows deepen o'er the land,
Earth's weary noise and turmoil seem to cease;
All things are touched with dews of heavenly peace
 Beneath the quiet stars.

Gate after gate of glory swings aside,
Revealing starry vistas open wide;
The heavens seem by feet of angels trod,
And all the universe instinct with God.
Ah, who would think that one could cherish aught
Impure or base, either of deed or thought,
 Beneath those twinkling stars?

O awe-inspiring, deep, majestic night!
The things of time and sense fade from my sight;
Mysterious voices float with far-off sound,
Infinity seems opening all around;
And face to face with the Eternal One,
My soul in reverence says, "Thy will be done,"
 Beneath the solemn stars.

—*Viola E. Smith*