

I Need a Nap (Sleep and Rest)

Part One of Two

“The subject of temperance, in all its bearings, has an important place in the work of salvation.” *Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, p112.1* God's word declares: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” *1 Corinthians 10:31 NKJV*

In a simple dartboard target, there are a series of concentric rings around a central circle. The central circle is the bullseye. Hitting the bullseye results in the greatest number of points—the greatest benefit for your effort. Hitting succeeding rings outside the central circle result in lesser number of points—less benefit for your efforts. The greatest benefit for your efforts results from accumulating the greatest number of points—the greatest reward for your efforts throughout the period of play.

In a similar manner, “hitting” the bullseye in our lifestyle results in the greatest benefit. So, in our Health and Temperance time together, we will look at what our God has told us has the greatest benefit for both our short lives here on earth AND our future eternal lives with Jesus in Heaven.

The central bullseye is that which God first told Adam and Eve immediately following their creation. ‘And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.” ‘ *Genesis 1:29 NKJV*

In health and in sickness, pure water is one of heaven's choicest blessings. Its proper use promotes health. It is the beverage which God provided to quench the thirst of animals and man. Drunk freely, it helps to supply the necessities of the system and assists nature to resist disease. *Ministry of Healing, p237, E.G. White*

In a similar manner, “hitting” the bullseye in our lifestyle results in the greatest benefit. So, in our Health and Temperance time together, we will look at what our God has told us has the greatest benefit for both our short lives here on earth AND our future eternal lives with Jesus in Heaven. Our topic today is “Sleep and Rest.”

“Neither a borrower nor a lender be” From where does this common sense saying come? The Bible? Proverbs? What reminder are we given about borrowing money? It's in the Bible, Proverbs 22:7, NIV. "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."

Be cautious about countersigning loan notes. It's in the Bible, Proverbs 22:26–27, TLB. "Unless you have extra cash on hand, don't countersign a note. Why risk everything you own? They'll even take your bed!"

What does the Scripture say about repayment of loans? It's in the Bible, Romans 13:7–8, NIV. "Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law."

“Neither and borrower nor and lender be. For loan oft loses both itself and friend, and borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.” But this saying is not in the Bible. It is found in Shakespeare’s Hamlet from 1602 spoken by the character Lord Polonius.

“A house divided against itself cannot stand.” Who said this?

Abraham Lincoln used this quote when he was running for the United States Senate seat from the state of Illinois. He, at that time, was referring to the divide in our country over the legality of enforced slavery.

But, Abraham Lincoln was quoting from the Bible which records Jesus saying in Mark 3:25, “And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.”

Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise. Benjamin Franklin (1821), “Essays and Letters”, p.80

Fatigue is the best pillow.

“When there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, and your country, be up by peep of day! Let not the sun look down and say, ‘Inglorious here he lies!’”

Benjamin Franklin had other sayings that applied to our manner of sleep and rest but we should seek to listen first to the Word of God.

Sleep is spoken of in three ways in the Bible: (a) to speak of natural sleep, (b) to refer to moral or spiritual inactivity, and (c) to refer to death. But, here today, I am only speaking of natural sleep.

I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. *Psalm 4:8 NKJV*

A gift from God providing necessary rest, usually at night, for the restoration of mind and body. It is sometimes denied, sometimes used by God for his purposes and sometimes abused by people.

Several statements in the book of Psalm rebuke the lack of discipline of life shown in the undue love of sleep.

“It is vain for you to rise up early,
To sit up late,
To eat the bread of sorrows;
For so He gives His beloved sleep.” *Psalm 127:2 NKJV*

Also in the book of Proverbs:

⁹ How long will you slumber, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?
¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep—
¹¹ So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler,
And your need like an armed man.

Poverty sneaks up on the person who sleeps too much. *Proverbs 6:9–11 NKJV*

And, in Daniel chapter 7 and verse 25:

He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then the saints shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time. Daniel 7:25 NKJV

We most often apply this verse in Daniel to the change of the Sabbath Day but it also can be applied to several other aspects of time keeping that we need to understand.

- Day of the week for worship: Sabbath versus Sunday

- Length of month: Thirty days versus variable length
- Start of the new year: Moon AND plant biology versus New Year
- Start of the new day: Sundown versus artificial Midnight

When are we to sleep? “For those who sleep, sleep at night . . . 1 *Thessalonians 5:7 (first part) NKJV*

The vast majority sleep at night time. What is “night time?” The period of darkness between evening—when the sun goes down—and morning—when the sun rises. For most people, this is a quiet time for daily activities to cease and for sleep to be enjoyed without interruption or disturbance. The darkness of the night is also a period when the wicked prowl thinking that no one sees them. Because of this, our location for our sleep needs to be secure. In our quietness and in security is an optimal opportunity for contemplation of the goodness of God and for prayer to praise Him.

To receive the most benefit from our sleep periods, they should be regular—beginning at the same time each night and ending at the same time each morning. Forming this habit can make our ability to fall asleep easier and give us the ability to awake refreshed at the planned time each morning.

How prevalent is the habit of turning day into night, and night into day. Many youth sleep soundly in the morning, when they should be up with the early singing birds and be stirring when all nature is awake. *Child Guidance, p111, Ellen G. White*

It should also be noted that, during our periods of sleep, our bodies build stronger muscles and bones and replenish those parts of our bodies that are worn.

Regularity in Eating and Sleeping—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. *Child Guidance, p363, Ellen G. White*

Continuing in *Child Guidance*: 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.

This habit of regular hours of sleep is especially important for those in school. Many a student, after staying up late into the next morning to “cram” for a test, has found his body and mind incapable of performing as desired.

Nature will restore their vigor and strength in their sleeping hours, if her laws are not violated. *A Solemn Appeal, 62; Healthful Living, 46 Ellen G. White* The time we spend in peaceful sleep is the period when nature restores both vigor—the natural ability for growth—and strength.

From *Gospel Workers, p422 by Ellen G. White*, “for vigor of mind depends largely upon vigor of body. Proper periods of sleep and rest and an abundance of physical exercise are essential to health of body and mind.” Proper periods of sleep and rest and an abundance of physical exercise are essential to health of body and mind.

To be continued in Part Two.