

I Need a Nap (Sleep and Rest)

Part Two of Two

The title of today's Health and Temperance presentation is "I Need a Nap!" This part two is a continuation of the prior presentation by the same title.

"The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep." *Ecclesiastes 5:12 NKJV* Toil, hard work, accomplishment of the desired tasks; all these provide an excellent night of sleep—even if he should eat too little or eat too much. However, the worry over excessive wealth and possessions often intrudes on the sleep of a rich person.

"There is no peace," says the Lord, "for the wicked." *Isaiah 48:22 NKJV* And the wicked must always worry that their sins may be discovered and that, tomorrow, their peace, prosperity and happiness may be taken away.

Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, And an idle person will suffer hunger. *Proverbs 19:15 NKJV* Those who embrace laziness—seeking to avoid effort or work of any kind—will (and should not) have food to eat.

"Insures Restful Sleep—Mothers should take their daughters with them into the kitchen and patiently educate them. Their constitution will be better for such labor, their muscles will gain tone and strength, and their meditations will be more healthy and elevated at the close of the day. They may be weary, but how sweet is rest after a proper amount of labor! Sleep, nature's sweet restorer, invigorates the weary body and prepares it for the next day's duties." *Adventist Home, p289, Ellen G. White* Children should be taught to work—even at simple household tasks—so that they may grow stronger and enjoy a sound sleep that restores and grows the body to be ready for more work on the next day.

"Let the youth be taught to labor in tilling the soil, and let them sleep the sweet sleep of weariness and innocence." *Adventist Home, p137, Ellen G. White* Whether working in the home, outdoors in farming, or in employment for another; our labor provides a restful and peaceful sleep comfortable that we have done our best.

"A wrong course of eating or drinking destroys health, and with it the sweetness of life. O, how many times has a good meal, as it is called, been purchased at the expense of sleep and quiet rest! Thousands, by indulging a perverted appetite, have brought on fever or some other acute disease, which has resulted in death. That was enjoyment purchased at an immense cost." *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, p49, Ellen G. White* A full stomach produces a troubled sleep. The internal organs have to work while the rest of the body is attempting to sleep undisturbed. This practice of indulging in a large evening meal can even bring on disease or body fever that can threaten, not only the peacefulness of sleep, but even the very life itself.

Even late snacks eaten close to bedtime can cause this distress from the continuing process of digestion during the period in which the body and mind are to be sleeping. "Late "Snacks" a Pernicious Habit—Another pernicious habit is that of eating just before bedtime. The regular meals may have been taken; but because there is a sense of faintness, more food is taken. By indulgence this wrong practice becomes a habit and often so firmly fixed that it is thought impossible to sleep without food." *Child Guidance, p389, Ellen G. White*

"But though the stomach works constantly, its work is not properly accomplished. The sleep is often disturbed with unpleasant dreams, and in the morning the person awakes unrefreshed and with little relish for breakfast. When we lie down to rest, the stomach should have its work all done, that it, as well as the other organs of the body, may enjoy rest. For persons of sedentary habits late suppers are particularly harmful. With them the disturbance created is often the

beginning of disease that ends in death.” *Child Guidance, p389, Ellen G. White* As a result of eating late suppers, the digestive process is continued through the sleeping hours. But though the stomach works constantly, its work is not properly accomplished. The sleep is often disturbed with unpleasant dreams, and in the morning the person awakes unrefreshed and with little relish for breakfast.

When we lie down to rest, the stomach should have its work all done, that it, as well as the other organs of the body, may enjoy rest. For persons of sedentary habits—like the work sitting down at a computer all day—late suppers are particularly harmful. With them the disturbance created is often the beginning of disease that ends in death.

“I have written this to give you some idea of how we live. I never enjoyed better health than I do at the present time, and never did more writing. I rise at three in the morning, and do not sleep during the day. I am often up at one o'clock, and when my mind is especially burdened, I rise at twelve o'clock to write out matter that has been urged upon my mind. I praise the Lord with heart and soul and voice for His great mercy toward me.”—Letter 73a, 1896, *Counsels on Diet and Foods, p489, Ellen G. White*

Ellen G. White commented, in 1896 at the age of 69, that she was in the habit of arising from sleep at three o'clock in the morning and, at that age, did not need any naps during the day.

Myself, I learned as an early teenager to habitually go to bed at an early hour, nine o'clock, and rise at the early hour of five o'clock in the morning. This allowed me to walk to the YMCA about a mile away for my springboard diving practice, a shower, a walk back home for breakfast, before walking to school which was also about a mile away. Later in my life, when in college, I moved my bed time earlier to eight o'clock and arose regularly at four o'clock. This routine served me well throughout my schooling and career.

“God has no use for lazy men in His cause; . . . Active exertion will do our preachers good. Indolence is proof of depravity. . . . Men who will unnecessarily take the hours of daylight for sleep, have no sense of the value of precious, golden moments....” *Gospel Workers, p277, Ellen G. White*

God has no use for lazy men in His cause. He wants thoughtful, kind, affectionate, earnest workers. Active exertion will do our preachers good. Indolence is proof of depravity. Every faculty of the mind, every bone in the body, every muscle of the limbs, shows that God designed our faculties to be used, not to remain inactive.... Men who will unnecessarily take the hours of daylight for sleep, have no sense of the value of precious, golden moments....

Wow! Indolence—laziness— is proof of depravity!

“When sleep will not come, pray” *The Retirement Years, p124, Ellen G. White*

Sometimes, sleep is not easy to accomplish—due to the stress of trials or temptations. Since trials and temptations are “allowed” by God for our learning and testing, the best we can do to seek the peacefulness of sleep is to take these trials and temptations to God—in prayer.

Like children in their early years, those of advanced years also need a little more sleep than that of an adult in the middle years of life. So, for those of us in our later years, take solace in the counsel that an occasional afternoon nap is not inappropriate.

“Dear Brother [S. N.] Haskell,”

[Elder Haskell was 73 and Ellen White was 79 when this letter was written.]

“I urge you not to work above that which you are able to do. You should have less constant, taxing labor, that you may be able to keep yourself in a rested condition. You should take a sleep in the daytime. You can then think more readily, and your thoughts will be more clear and your words more convincing.” *The Retirement Years, p125, Ellen G. White*

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- SLEEPING rooms should be well ventilated.

This was written before our homes had forced air circulation from electric fans. However, rooms with hot water or electric baseboard heating should take note that the windows should be left open at least a little bit during the hours of sleep.

- No person should sleep on feathers.

I do not know what to make of this in our present time. Were feather beds too soft and unsupportive? Were they full of dust or mites?

- Clothing worn in the day, should not be worn at night.

The clothing worn during the day of work—especially strenuous hard work—is contaminated with the excrement of the sweat and the dirt of the day.

- When taken off, it should be thoroughly aired otherwise effete matters remain in it.

“Effete”—exhausted of vitality, force or effectiveness.

- Sleep is the best restorer of the Nervous system.
- One hour of sleep before midnight is worth two after it.

All of this seems to be important advice but who said it? James White in “Health or How to Live” page 334.

Now, if you will pardon me, I need a nap.