

MIGHTY CHAMPIONS

(ECCLESIASTES 12:1)

"REMEMBER NOW YOUR CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF YOUR YOUTH, BEFORE THE DIFFICULT DAYS COME, AND THE YEARS DRAW NEAR WHEN YOU SAY, I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN THEM."

Just for Teens

REDEEMING THE TIME



**MIGHTY CHAMPIONS MAGAZINE
SUMMER 2015 VOLUME 1 ISSUE 3**

Just for Teens

Mighty Champions Summer Edition

2015

BUT THOSE WHO WAIT ON
THE LORD, SHALL RENEW
THEIR STRENGTH; THEY
SHALL MOUNT UP WITH
WINGS LIKE EAGLES,
THEY SHALL RUN AND NOT
BE WEARY, THEY SHALL
WALK AND NOT FAINT.

MIGHTY
CHAMPIONS

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We, the magazine staff, have a mission regarding you, the reader: to encourage you on your Christian walk and to strengthen you through articles, answers, and more about God's very special plan for you.

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Getting the Most Out of Summer

By Miryam Nessim



Although our summer days are filled with fewer activities, alarm clocks, and responsibilities, we sometimes find ourselves feeling more emotionally exhausted at the end of the day. While summer is a time to relax from the burdens of these responsibilities, the Holy Bible warns us, “The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich,” (Proverbs 13:5). There are many activities that will help us feel fulfilled this summer, while still enjoying life without heavy school demands!

As we were in the Apostle’s Fast, the prophet Isaiah reminds us of what we should be doing when we fast, “Is this not the fast that I have chosen...to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked that you cover him...?” (Isaiah 58:6-7). St. James also encourages us, “Pure

and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world,” (James 1:27). The Bible offers us many suggestions on how to use our extra time for service and offering true fasting. There are many places that you can spend time volunteering—with the permission of your parents—such as shelters and food banks, and even in collecting items from your family and friends to donate. We can also ask our priests if there is anyone in the congregation, especially widows as St. James suggests, that might need an encouraging visit.

Just as you have likely attended summer camps that have taught you much, it might be time to pay it forward and see how you can help! “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). The Bible encourages us to start when we are young in being an example to others, so helping out at church would be a great way to do that.

Finally, we can also use this time to store up spiritual knowledge that we might neglect during the school year due to our educational readings. St. Mark the Ascetic encourages us by saying, “Through the light of spiritual knowledge you will expel the destructive darkness of ignorance; and through your true ardor for all that is good you will drive out the godless laziness that enables evil to root itself in the soul.” There are many spiritual books for all ages and about many different topics from which we can learn. Asking your servant or priest for a suggestion can be a great place to start!

Teach Us to Number our Days

By Jeremiah Soliman

Time Management is an aspect of life that, if perfected, will affect all other aspects of life in a positive way. To start off, here is a story: There were two baseball players, who were discussing life after death and whether or not there would be baseball up in Heaven. After many hours of arguing over the idea, they made an agreement. Whoever died first would go to heaven, come back and tell the other if indeed there was baseball up in heaven. Few months later one of the players died and just like he promised he came back and said to his friend, "I've got good news and bad news. The good news is that there is baseball in heaven, the bad news is that you're scheduled to pitch next Thursday."

A famous analogy regarding time management talks about a bank account that every morning deposits \$86,400 into an account. The one requirement is that the account holder has to spend it all that day. At night, when he/she goes to bed, any money left will be taken away. The wise action would be to spend every cent. You will find a way to use up everything. Why waste it? That is exactly what God does with you every 24 hours. He gives you 86,400 sec. God says, "You can use this any way you want to use it." But at the end of the day, any that is unused or misused is lost. Time is one of the most valuable commodities that we have. Queen Elizabeth the First of England, on her death bed, said that she would give up her entire kingdom for just one more day.

Since life is a gift from God, and life is time, then we need to take a good look at the way we use our time. If we are stewards of God, then we need to learn how to manage our life, or manage our time. What does it mean to "redeem the time?" The letter of Ephesians contains the warning or counsel to "[Redeem] the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16). The word "redeeming" in the Greek can mean "to buy up, ransom, or rescue from loss." We need to rescue from loss the time that remains in our life. We can only redeem today and plan to redeem tomorrow, for

yesterday is history. We alone are responsible for using what God has given to each of us, time to prepare for our spiritual vocation. We are going to be rewarded in heaven, and this will be determined by how faithful we were with what we were given here on earth. In other words, are we faithful with the trust we have been given? Our time, our money, our abilities, our intelligence?

The Bible says in Ephesians 5 that it is a mark of wisdom if you can make the best use of time, "live not as unwise but as wise." (Ephesians 5:15) The problem is not that we do not have enough time, the problem is we do not use it wisely. We make poor choices. And poor choices become the source of stress and strain in our life. The Bible stresses the fact that God has given us the freedom to choose, as St. Paul mentioned in Galatians 5:13, "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature." We all have the exact same amount of time. So the people who are more effective than you, the people who are more successful, the people who get more done than you, what is the difference? Do they have more time? No, rather, they make better choices.

With constant prayer and Bible reading we will feel God directing us to manage our time successfully. Let us pray with Moses the archprophet and ask the Lord to "Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)

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Laziness: A Spiritual Pitfall

His Grace Bishop Youssef

We must beware of spiritual laziness. If you feel you are not growing spiritually as you should perhaps you have become what the writer of the New Testament Holy Book of Hebrews refers to as lazy and "dull of hearing". Many confess to infrequent prayer times, lack of motivation to read each night from the Holy Bible, and having a general lack of interest in quality spiritual time.

How can one avoid these spiritual pitfalls and ensure their spiritual growth? In the Holy Book of Hebrews there are four points made to assist us to grow spiritually.

The first is to repent of laziness. "of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food" (Hebrews 5:11,12). We realize as Christians we are encouraged to continually grow spiritually striving toward perfection. Growth is a sign of spiritual life within each of us.



St. James said, "Whoever knows what is right to do and fails to do it, for him it is a sin" (James 4:17). This was written concerning a lapsed believer nearing the point of death, "Falling sick he continued three successive days dumb and senseless. Recovering a little on the fourth day, he called his grandchild to him and said 'Hurry, I entreat you, and absolve me quickly. Summon one of the presbyters to me.' The boy ran for the presbyter. But it was night and the presbyter was sick and was, as a result, unable to come. However, I had issued an injunction those persons at the point of death, if they requested it should be absolved in order that they might depart this life in cheerful hope. So the presbyter gave the boy a small portion of the Eucharist, telling him to steep it in water and drop it into the old man's mouth" Dionysius of Alexandria (c.262).

The point was to confess your shortcomings in nurturing your spiritual life timely without delay. In confession do not give yourself excuses such as too tired, not enough time, or spiritual time is not stimulating as it once was. Confess your laziness and adhere to the advice of your spiritual father.

The second step toward spiritual growth is exercising one's spiritual senses, in particular those of doctrinal matters. "For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the Word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:13,14).

Irenaeus (c.180) taught, "A sound mind that is devoted to piety and love of truth will eagerly meditate upon those things that God has placed within the power of mankind and has subjected to our knowledge. Such a mind will advance in the knowledge of those things by means of daily study. I am referring to those things that fall under our observation and are clearly and unambiguously set forth in the sacred Scriptures in clear terms."

The Holy Bible surpasses all written material for personal devotional study. Nothing should be read in substitution of the Holy Bible. Additional spiritual readings should compliment those found within the Holy Bible. "Blessed is the man whom You instruct, O Lord, and teach out of Your Law" (Psalm 94:12).



We should read the Holy Bible first and then in the time remaining Coptic religious books of our choosing. In this day and time the amount of published religious literature is enormous. There is not enough time to read everything published. The best method to discern what to read in addition to the Holy Bible is to read Coptic religious material. Commentaries on the Holy Bible, Divinity, Doctrine, Church History, and Saints abound. There is something Coptic suitable for any reader.

The third step is to diligently do well in all things such as service to others. "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, and that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:10-12).

Service is given great honor in Heaven and also on earth. "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor" (John 12:26). Father Bishop Kamel said, "Those who serve diligently, with hearts full of joy and hope never despair, and have strong faith, the Lord will appear to them in the end."

Tertullian (c.200) spoke to serving the Lord, "Shall you escape notice when you sign your bed or your body? When you blow away some impurity? When even by night you rise to pray? Will you not be thought to be engaged in some work of magic...Render to Caesar, indeed money? Render to God yourself. Otherwise, what will be God's if all things are Caesar's?"

Fourth, steadfastly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil [Heaven]" (Hebrews 6:19). Through faith we attain the virtues of life. With faith we can progress toward perfection. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen" (Hebrews 11:1).

Clement of Alexandria (c. 195) wrote, "Faith, so to speak, is a comprehensive knowledge of the essentials. And knowledge is the sure and strong demonstration of what is received by faith. It is built upon faith by the Lord's teachings."

Cyprian (c.250) said, "The Kingdom of God is not in the wisdom of the world, nor in eloquence, but in the faith of the Cross and in virtue of living."

Justin, the martyr (c. 160) discouraged spiritual laziness and said simply, "Let it be understood that those who are not found living as He taught are not Christians-even though they profess with the lips the teachings of Christ."

May we all be found spiritually striving to live as He taught.





Food for Thought

I Have a Question:

I hope you can advise me while I am in school. I have been having a hard time to keep up my grades. My issue is that I have a hard time trying to manage my time with every class. I know how to study, but the issue is when. I even have a hard time trying to attend church on Friday when we have our youth meeting.

Answer: PG 14

Doing the **JOB** of Job

By Sara Dawoud

“Behold, God is great, and we do not know Him; nor can the number of His years be discovered” (Job 36:26)

One of the most substantial things that differentiates Christianity from all other religions is the emphasis that we place on the importance of suffering to achieve virtue, and thus, eternal life. Previously, we spoke about accepting God’s will through trials and overcoming such trials with unwavering faith in His promises (see the articles entitled, “The Curious Case of the Talking Stone” and, “Faith Over Mind and Matter”). Let us now take a look at these concepts biblically, and what better person can we see this in but the righteous Job?

Job is the epitome of one who accepts God’s will even when God’s will seems harsh, unfair, or even unreasonable. However, the Bible did not embellish Job’s virtues. Job was very much a person like you and me with both good and bad features. For example, in Job Chapter 1, when Satan attacked Job’s children and property, it was said of Job that he, “did not sin nor charge God with wrong.” However, in the next chapter, when Job was attacked in his health, the Bible says, “In all this Job did not sin with his lips.” Clearly, by the second chapter, Job’s mind was spinning; he was thinking, “Why, Lord? Why are you doing this to me?!”

The next thirty or so chapters feature one of the greatest debates of the Bible: If Job was such a righteous person, then why would God allow such calamity to befall him? Job's friends, although not what we may coin as being "bad" friends, were certainly misled. They were convinced that Job must have committed a grave sin for such terrible things to happen to him. This caused Job to defend himself vehemently- and with a pinch of pride.

It wasn't until the young Elihu brought about the ultimate conclusion. He tells Job, "Take heed, do not turn to iniquity, for you have chosen this rather than affliction" (Job 36: 21) and, "Behold, God is great, and we do not know Him; nor can the number of His years be discovered" (Job 36:26). With these wise words, God Himself speaks to Job, and quizzes him on the intricacies of creation. Can Job command the morning to begin (Job 38:12)? Has he fathered the rain? (Job 38:28). Can he provide food for the raven? (Job 38:41)?

What Elihu was saying and what God Himself reiterated is the following: it does not matter why bad things happen to us sometimes. We cannot question God's ways. We cannot go into His mind and figure out His intentions. Therefore, we must bear our afflictions with patience when afflictions do come. This is the cross that each Christian is **COMMANDED** to carry.

By the end of God's beautiful monologue, Job says, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You." (Job 42:5) This is the true happy ending of the book of Job, NOT that he was compensated with more property and children than with what he started. And this is the happy ending intended for each and every single one of us when we are faced with a harsh trial in life. It is when we bear our crosses and accept pain with patience that we get to know God (who Himself is

long-suffering) more intimately than ever. That is the secret as to why many of the saints accepted tortures and injustices and illness with joy and gladness.

I categorize the book of Job in the same list as Isaiah and Song of Solomon as being, "one of those Old Testament books that belong in the New Testament." Job's friends had the Old Testament mindset of, "God is swift to anger and strikes the wicked with many plagues." However, the New Testament teaches us something very different. Afflictions and suffering in the New Testament is God's way of bringing us closer to Him. He even allowed His Only-Begotten Son to suffer and die unjustly both for our salvation, and that He may be an example to us in trials.

May the Lord grant us all the patience and long-suffering to do the job of Job by bearing our crosses and trials with patience and gladness. To Him be all the glory forever and ever, Amen.



Golden Anecdotes

By: His Holiness Pope Tawadros II

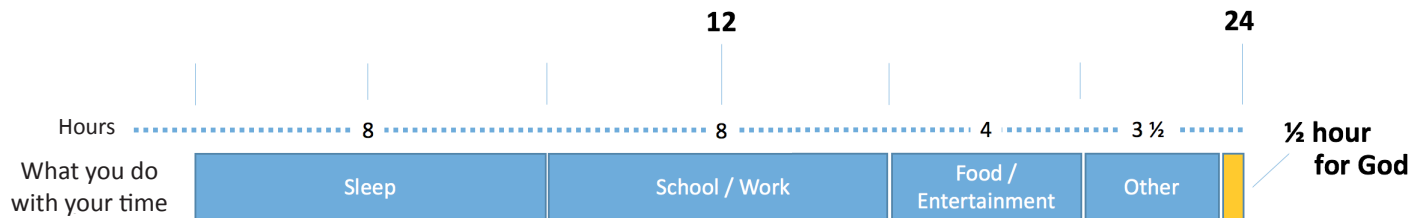


After a couple had married by about 3 years, he purchased some fish and asked her to fry. She cut the fish a bit in from the tail, and a bit in from the head, only leaving the middle part. When she prepared the food, he asked her, "Why do you cut the fish this way?" She answered, "Believe me, this is the way my mother used to fry it." He went to ask his mother-in-law, "I asked my wife, and she said she cuts off part of the fish because this is what you do. Why do you do this?" She answered him, "Believe me, this is the way my mother used to make fish." To his good fortune, his grandmother-in-law was still alive, so he went to ask her: "They say you cook fish this way. Why do you cut off part of the fish?" She answered him, "Believe me, my son, your grandfather-in-law had purchased me a tiny pan..." Her grandmother's pan was tiny; his wife didn't think to buy a larger pan instead of losing half the fish! This is a closed mind.

My beloved, we need to be open-minded. What does that mean? It is always being rational and taking into consideration the current era. It is a dialoguing mind, giving and taking in debate. It is a mind concerned with repairing the community. It is a realistic mind, not only concerned with theoretical viewpoints. It is a creative mind. It is a mind that considers the future. To sum up, the open-minded person is led by God.

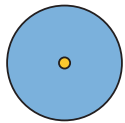
REDEEMING THE TIME GOD HAS GIVEN YOU

By: John Habib



The Bible tells us,

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **redeeming the time**, because the days are evil.”



WHAT IF you spent **30 minutes every day** dedicated to focusing on God?



That would equate to about **7.5 days in a year**



After 18 years, you would have only spent **just over 3 months** dedicated to God



After 80 years, less than **2 of those years** would have been dedicated solely to God

After your life ends, what will you have offered to the Lord of Hosts out of all the time the Lord has given you?

And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground.... But his lord answered and said to him, “You wicked and lazy servant ... you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. So take the talent from him ... and cast the **unprofitable servant** into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”





Answer

Time management requires examining the following about yourself and developing consistent strategies:

- ❖ Prayer - Begin your studies with a brief prayer.
- ❖ Determination - You must be determined to succeed.
- ❖ Effort - Don't just depend on your intelligence.
- ❖ Procrastination - You must study and review daily in order to learn, retain, and recall a lot of new information.
- ❖ Stamina - How much can you endure at one time?
- ❖ Structure - Develop a system that works for you ... e.g., 2 hours studying 15 minute break, etc.
- ❖ Location - What circumstances produce your most and best study habits and what doesn't?
- ❖ Feedback - Learn from your mistakes.
- ❖ Achievers - Study or spend time with other high achievers.
- ❖ Setbacks - Do not give up easily.

If you cannot attend your youth meeting weekly, try to attend biweekly or even monthly. As much as possible, try to keep your Sunday mornings for the Lord so you may attend church and partake of Holy Communion. The result will be a great blessing for you throughout the week.

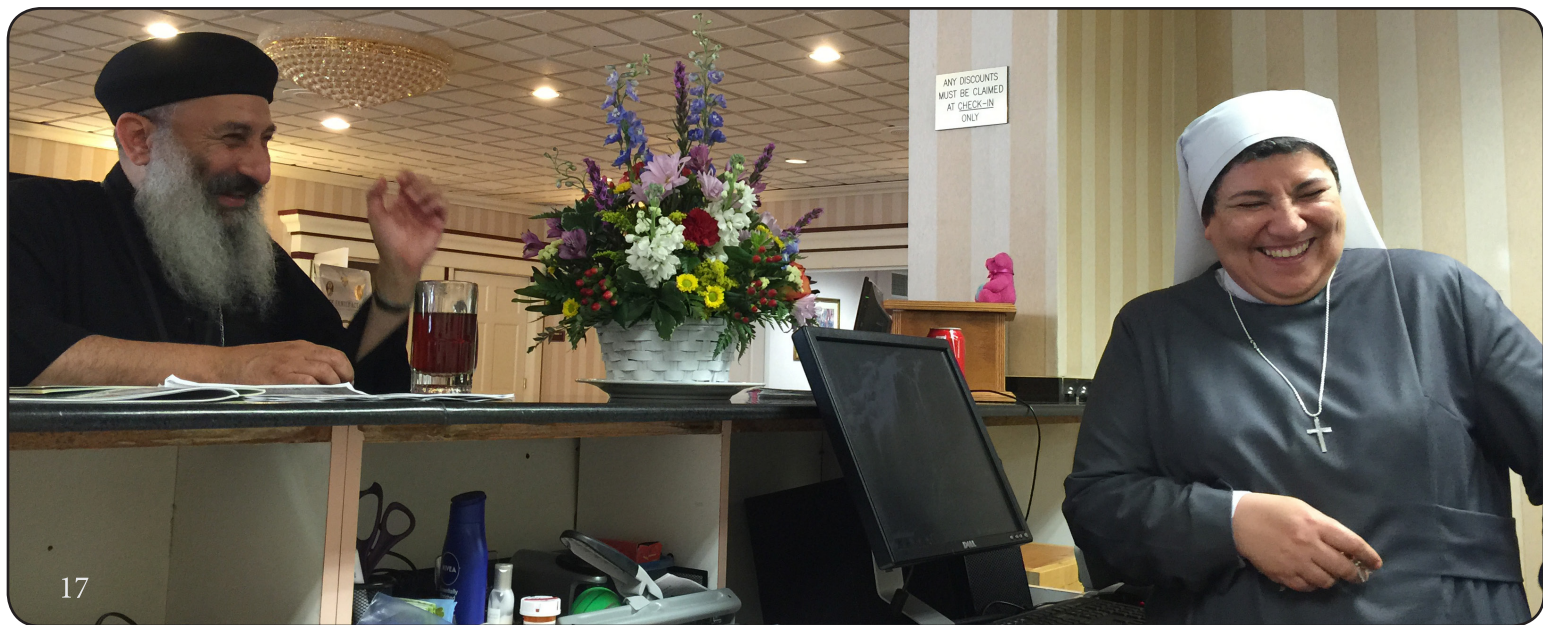
Question: PG 9



2015 Ethiopia



Attitudee Middle School Convention





Tasony Sarah Consecrated Sister Ordination at St. Stephen Christian Retreat & Conference Center, Titusville FL

The Ordination of Fr. Daniel

On behalf of His Grace Bishop Youssef and the Mighty Champions Magazine staff, we congratulate our Associate Editor, Tasony Freda Tyab, on the ordination of her husband, Reverend Father Daniel Tyab, to the priesthood. May the Lord bless his service, his family, and all the congregation.





5th Annual SUS Diocese ARM Convention 2015 (Archangel Raphael Ministry ~ Special Needs)



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Ethiopia Mission Trip 2015



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