

Sleep is Overrated

Short Sleepers, Simple Eaters, &
The Quest for Greatness



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Insights shared in this book often draw upon the writings of others. When they do, it is clearly stated where the ideas are coming from. The ideas are also summarized in my own words, and my added commentary is clearly distinguished in separate paragraphs beginning with “Note:...” I’ve also selected excerpts from those writings which are particularly meaningful to me, and as such my notes here do not represent book summaries so much as highlights of parts I liked.

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Introduction & Precautions to Sleep Overrated



To the secular humanist, sleep is one of the most important things ever. We overly emphasize health while other things of importance take a back seat. I'm not saying we shouldn't be reasonable and that there's not seasons of more and less sleep but I am saying we don't worship sleep we don't worship our bodies. We have work to do, children to bear, books to write, and the gospel to preach. And yes, many of us have lost

our health, and work must be done to find healthy lifestyles in general.

I think there can be a big difference in a life that is casual and emphasizing sleep versus a life that is hard working and every now and then not sleeping enough. It seems like we can get by with a little less than a lot of people think we can, and that may be part of a good life well lived. This life is short, this life is a test, it's exciting and we should have a sense of urgency about it. We should never be bored.

Let us remember not only scientific laboratories but wisdom from the ancients and insight from inspired individuals that can give us information on matters of importance. To ignore historical and prophetic wisdom at the expense of focusing in the laboratory, or the opposite, to leave the laboratory to just listen to leaders and wise men, is to put oneself at risk of assuming radical or uninspired views which will not lead to desired outcomes.

This is a collection of teachings on and examples of the prophets and other inspired individuals about sleep. We must serve God, and we look up to those

who have gone before to help us be inspired about ways we can offer our whole souls as an offering to God. Sometimes this balance of service and self-care can involve less sleep. We will frequently consider as we review these teachings that there is more to life than sleep, and that much of what must be done can indeed be done on less sleep.

Seek the Lord while he is near. This means look past schedules, just get on the study mode, and run with it. It often means nights, early mornings, or long hauls.



Cautionary note: There is a time to rest. Joseph Smith told one man who had given much for the kingdom of God that he must rest and take it easy a while. The man said, “I cannot”. Joseph said, “then you will die.” Well, the man did die a premature death, and Joseph spoke at his funeral.

God gives us permission, nay, encourages us, to push toward the blessings he offers. It's not always pretty or easy. The key is to not fear.

Don't fear sickness, that comes and goes in life no matter what. Don't fear being tired tomorrow, only live now, work now, save yourself now, get your work done now.

As great ones like Benjamin Franklin have said, don't leave for tomorrow what can be done today. Franklin also said early to bed, early to rise, but in his life he often didn't follow that counsel, and worked into the night.) Let every man accomplish that which the Holy Spirit has put into his mind and heart, without the arbitrary constraints of calendars, clocks and the like.

There are also certain stages of life which may require less sleep than others, with more deadlines and urgent projects. But I suspect that learning to live on less sleep is a skill to be cultivated.

Let's also note from the onset that President Russel M. Nelson has urged us to not use harmful

stimulants. When we live right, we can find energy not from commercial products. Remember the D&C 84 Oath of the Priesthood which promises a ‘renewal of the flesh.’

In a recent General Conference address, Elder Scott said get a reasonable amount of sleep. Along those lines, in another recent General Conference address Elder Holland said we must pay for health if not now then later.

Researchers are now questioning whether it’s bad to have more or less than 8 hours of sleep (see medical lies article from Ioannidis found by Ann Tracy.)

Age plays a role in the amount needed. Young missionaries get 8 hours.

Have goals and go by their completion rather than a clock

One nurse told me, when it comes to staying away on night shifts, to eat healthy with no sugars if you want power to stay awake longer. By no sugars of

course she was referring to junk sugars, not healthy ones found in vegetables grains and starches, which are the staff of life, and give great energy without negative side effects.

Economist Harold Douglas Morris says with sleep/late nights, that there comes a point of diminishing returns. AKA eventually getting less sleep does more harm than good.

Let Holy Ghost be your guide on this topic as in all things.

When it comes to making decisions on this topic, remember, **SOME THINGS ARE SIMPLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN IDEAL HEALTH AND COMFORT!**

BYU Study Finds Teens Need 7, Not 9, Hours of Sleep

In related news, a BYU News recent study showed

students with 7 hours of sleep do better than those who get 9 hours of sleep.

<https://news.byu.edu/news/high-school-students-test-best-seven-hours-rest>

[High school students test best with seven hours of rest - BYU News](#)

August 12, 2019 - A new Brigham Young University study found that **16-18 year olds perform better academically when they shave about two hours off that recommendation.**

“By age 16, youth do better on 7 hours of sleep instead of the currently recommended 9 hours.”

“But more sleep isn’t always better. As they report in the *Eastern Economics Journal*, the right amount of sleep decreases with age:

- The optimal for 10-year-olds is 9 – 9.5 hours

- The optimal for 12-year-olds is 8 – 8.5 hours
- The optimal for 16-year-olds is 7 hours”

[Teens need less sleep to test well than thought, BYU study says - Deseret News](#) - February 17, 2012 – “While federal guidelines say teens need nine hours of shut-eye a night, the Brigham Young University researchers found that **teens 16-18 do their best work on standardized tests when they get seven hours of sleep.**”

“The study included **1,724 students ages 10-18 from across the country** who were given four basic test like simple reading comprehension and basic math skills. It showed that 10-year olds need 9-9.5 hours, while 12-year olds need an hour less. **At 16, the need has dropped to seven hours.**”

Sleep Causes Depression: Debunking the “8 Hours Sleep” Medical Myth with Dr. John McDougal

Dr. John McDougall, in his Maximum Weight Loss health book (emphasizing a word-of-wisdom friendly diet of primarily vegetables), says 8 to 10 hours of sleep for children, but for adults, that much will make you depressed!

The scientific literature shows that more sleep is associated with more depression. They actually call sleep ‘depressogenic,’ meaning causing depression!

Many people think they need 8 to 10 hours, and the more sleep the better; that’s what they’ve been told, but this makes us depressed!

He has seen many patients, and their depression has been cured when they go on a sleep schedule of 5 to 7 hours. The first thing

he has a depressed person do is sleep less, and it usually works miracles.

Many adults only need 5 or 6 hours of sleep each night, and many older people only need 3 or 4.

For many people, the morning hours are more depressing because they're still coming out of sleep.

People who sleep too much will get insomnia as the body's attempt to compensate for the excess sleep.

If you've been sleeping too much or are otherwise depressed for some unknown reason, a single night of no sleep can get you back out of depression. Partial sleep deprivation once every 2 to 5 days can relieve most people of sleep-induced depression. Even a 4-hour sleep will help, you don't need to do a whole night of no sleep.

If you are depressed, sleep a few less hours each night and see what happens after a few days.

If you're too fatigued, add a half-hour of sleep, and if you're too depressed, take away a half-hour of sleep. Find what works for you.

Those who eat a carbohydrate-rich diet need less sleep.

Note: It's harder for the body to process meats than vegetables and grains.

Sleep deprivation for health works best when combined with a high-carbohydrate diet and regular exercise.

Note: Remember that wheat is the staff of life, and animal products should only be used sparingly. Thus, a high-carbohydrate diet is excellent for health, assuming you're getting healthy carbohydrates like vegetables and grains.

Scriptural Direction on Not Over Sleeping

D&C 58:26–29 (God Doesn’t Command in All Things. Don’t Be Slothful.)

26 For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward.

27 Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

28 For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.

29 But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.

D&C 107:99–100 (Slothful are Unworthy)

99 Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence.

100 He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy

to stand. Even so. Amen.

Abraham 3 the Lord spoke to him face to face in the night. So don't worry too much about night study, God can talk to you at night.

D&C says go to bed early and wake early, but what are the specifics?

Here is the debate finisher on sleep from D&C
123: WEAR OUT YOUR LIFE!

“12 For there are many yet on the earth among all sects, parties, and denominations, who are blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it—

13 Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven—

14 These should then be attended to with great earnestness.

15 Let no man count them as small things; for there is much which lieth in futurity, pertaining to the saints, which depends upon these things.

16 You know, brethren, that a very large ship is benefited very much by a very small helm in the time of a storm, by being kept workways with the wind and the waves.

17 Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed.”

This is the key! We are to exhaust ourselves in this intense focus on finding & sharing truth!

Surely this verse implies that as we “don’t run faster than we have strength,” we must check ourselves, and see what we are really made of. So much of our “tiredness” is psychological, and we can learn to push through much of it.

My Collection of Examples of Short Sleepers

The following is an extensive collection I've kept over the years on the topic of heroic examples of pushing past normal sleeping habits to accomplish great things. If you have more stories for me to add, please share them with me!

I remember a talk by Henry B. Eyring where he was working under the direction of President Hinckley, and late at night when Eyring finally laid down to bed after a long hard day, the phone rang in his hotel room, it was Hinckley, who said to Eyring something to the effect of, 'What are you doing in bed, when we have more work to do on this report?' (I can't find the talk, but I remember it clearly.)

Henry B. Eyring was also known for saying, "I can't be a perfect servant every hour, but I can give more effort than I thought I could."

(<https://www.thechurchnews.com/2011/10/1/23226305/president-henry-b-eyring-i-need-your-help/>)

Thomas Jefferson bought books lavishly and filled his days with reading. His studies were self-directed. To prepare to be a lawyer he studied 15 hours a day. His schedule was to **rise at 5am, read until 8am** books on ag botany zoology chem anatomy religion; **8-12 read law, 12-1 read politics, afternoon read history** then run a mile and back, **evenings read** rhetoric language oratory. (His entire schedule was all based on reading!) As a young man he studied Latin, Greek, music, science, religion, law, politics, history, etc. Evenings were for classical literature, language, poetry, etc. He would run a mile or so in the evenings for exercise. He became a lawyer at age 24. (From the Thomas Jefferson Biography documentary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtU6fGjJJYk&t=2344s>)

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anything funny as the great desert is of grass.” -
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Harold B Lee had **problems so difficult that he had to pray all night** about them. (From Truman G Madsen lecture series on presidents of the church.)

Harold B Lee told Ludlow to get the curriculum done by the beginning of the year and said if you need more motivation to do this just **consider that you would be shot if you don't**. So Ludlow took a sleeping bag and stayed at the Church offices for 30 days and got it done.

Spencer W Kimball was legendary for his work ethic. If working hard could make up for his inadequacies, he would. He **slept only a few hours each night** and became a master of sneaking away every now and then for a **15-minute cat nap**. He was then ready to get back into action. (From Truman G. Madsen on Spencer W Kimball in his Presidents of the Church Lectures)

At 2am the lights were often still on at the Kimball home. He would be writing in his journal

and responding to letters and thanking them for any bit of faith they had in such letters. In his journals he not only wrote of the things of the day, but he opened his heart. There are 33 black binders of these journals he kept.

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BH Roberts was in disagreement with the rest of the brethren about whether one of them in the high council of the church had to get permission from the others before running for public office.

Everyone said yes except him. They told him he would have to leave the council if he could not come to terms with this. He walked around all night and finally decided to come to terms with it. He told them it took him all night to come to that, and they responded, JFS being one of them, that

they hadn't left the room, and had been praying all night for him. (From Truman G. Madsen on Spencer W Kimball in his Presidents of the Church Lectures)

Heber J Grant's mother wept at the idea of him going off to school at the prestigious universities he was offered to attend. He prayed all night about

it and thought it would be a good thing. In the morning he saw that his mother's eyes were bloodshot, she had been crying all night at the idea. He decided not to go but to **stay and take care of his mother who needed him** there. (From Truman G. Madsen on Spencer W Kimball in his Presidents of the Church Lectures)

Heber J Grant one time **offered his life if it could somehow save the credit of the church. He prayed all night.** One person came through and saved the banks. (From Truman G. Madsen on Spencer W Kimball in his Presidents of the Church Lectures)

Heber J Grant became paralyzed on one side. The doctor told Heber that there was nothing he could do to heal it. Heber said, "Is there really nothing I can do?" The doctor said, "I suppose you can take a sponge and try squeezing it." That day, Heber had someone go get a sponge for him. They put it in his hand and it rolled off. He said "again" over and over all night long. By trying this, he was able to get the movement back. (From Truman G. Madsen on Spencer W Kimball in his Presidents of the Church Lectures)

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John Calvin: When urged to rest, he said, “What, **would you have the Lord find me idle when he comes?**”

He said all his ailments muster like troops against him. 8 days before his death he continued preaching. He was carried in a chair to preach when he couldn't walk. On his deathbed he finished a bible commentary.

For monks morning prayer and start of day was 6am.

Napoleon had his desk moved into his bedroom so he can study in the middle of the night. It would also read in the bath.

Kent Hovind says he hasn't taken a day off for many years because the Bible says no rest for the wicked and he is wicked so that means no rest.

Gandhi had a 1st class ticket on a train as a young man in British run South Africa, and one

complained that he should be 3rd class due to his race, he resisted, and the conductor literally threw him off the train. He sat and thought about what to do the rest of the day. He soon determined to fight for the rights of his people. When thrown off the train, he sat and thought all night about how to get justice. He said of **his contemplation that night in the cold, that it the most creative moment of his life**. The next week he organizes an Indian group for resistance. (From documentary 'Mahatma Gandhi: Pilgrim of Peace by Gandhi Media,' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0EcBYwnuWE&t=1635s> and GandhiMedia.org)

Gandhi woke at 4am (at least at certain stages of his life). He said, "It is for us to make the effort. The result is always in God's hands." (From documentary 'Mahatma Gandhi: Pilgrim of Peace by Gandhi Media,' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0EcBYwnuWE&t=1635s> and GandhiMedia.org)

Boyd K. Packer said, "A few days ago, President Lee asked me to substitute for Elder M. Russell Ballard, who is recovering from heart surgery and

is doing very well. President Lee urged me to reminisce about my years of association with Brigham Young University. **My preparation, of necessity, has been limited to small blocks of time pried open in an already solid schedule—mostly when you were asleep.** I have been shaken by the thought that my presentation this evening might bring you to that same condition! President Harold B. Lee told me once that inspiration comes easier when you can set foot on the site related to the need for it. With a very sincere desire to be guided in preparing what I should say to you, early Sunday morning, before you were about, I stood in the Maeser Building, and I found that President Lee was right!" (Boyd K. Packer's BYU speech "The Snow-White Birds" <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/boyd-k-packer/snow-white-birds/>)

See the fathers of Faith essay from the parent book it talks about one who would tell their kids 'the sun is up so should you be.'

Francesca Cabrini was asked why she didn't rest more, particularly in view of her health problems

requiring it. It was said if she rested longer her life would be extended. She didn't rest more. She often worked in the middle of the night. She said being awake working helped her feel like she was getting another day of life, whereas resting made her feel like death was near.

People were always asking her to slow down and rest to this she replied I have eternity to rest -Book mother Teresa in her own words.

Benjamin Franklin famously wrote "early to bed early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." Franklin would sometimes work very late into the night and show up quite late to work, but he got tons done in those late nights.

Dr. Kent Hovind spoke some 800 times in one year he says it's better to burn out than to rust out and a lot of Christians are rusting out

Cleon skousen in his book of Mormon class said spiritual rebirth is the best alarm clock. He also says put ammonia under your nose when

you need to stay up to get work done

Brigham Young said the man who honors his priesthood will be exhausted and that he wants us to wear out our lives for the gospel cause

Isaac Newton: “Truth is the offspring of silence and unbroken meditation. I keep the subject constantly before me and wait 'til the first dawnings open slowly, by little and little, into a full and clear light.”

When in the throngs of important research, he ate and slept little. Once he went without sleep for 5 days (though it resulted in a mental breakdown).

Cleon Skousen would stay up till 4 to get what the Lord wants you to do done. Assignment from apostles while aware of his many duties . From fave speeches vol 2 on Constitution and prophecy.

Chemist accountant Antoine Lavoisier spent **3 hours in his chemistry lab before going to work** as an accountant each day, then returned to work in

his lab after work.

Brigham Young 4 hours of sleep on average per night only going home one day a week and they were getting Temple work in the Navoo temple before they had to leave.

“President David O. McKay was inclined to awaken at 4:00 a.m., skim read up to two books each day, and then commence his labors at 6:00 a.m. He could quote 1,000 poems from memory...He referred to the grand masters of literature as the “minor prophets.”” (Your Refined Heavenly Home by Douglas L. Callister, A BYU speech given September 19, 2006, <https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/douglas-l-callister/refined-heavenly-home/>)

Gerald Lund in his book on hope relates that he had a habit of snoozing the alarm for years. He tried to wake early to study the gospel, but without success. Eventually he prayed for help and began to wake a minute before his alarm, feeling refreshed. He got better at this and went from success a few days a

week to eventually everyday, and didn't even need to set an alarm anymore.

Joseph Smith – The Lord comforts us by means of our dreams, even when they don't make sense.
(Note: It's also been said by modern psychologists that dreaming is critical to our mental health.)

Reportedly Hugh Nibley said he would rather get up at later and write good books than get up at 6am and write bad books. This shows how and when you sleep isn't really the key to success, it's just a minor and negotiable component which can't be enlarged more than other more crucial components. There appears to be seasons of rest, seasons of little rest, etc., depending on the dictation of the Holy Ghost, our spiritual attunement to recognize that dictation, and our moral courage to answer the promptings of the Holy Ghost, as we tread the path toward become holy ourselves. He that is commanded in all things is not a slothful and not a wise servant the revelation says.

“Give me that mountain to climb” said President Kimball. President Kimball and his wife were sick

with a very high temperature fever, he was nevertheless the first ready in the morning, and went to all his meetings that day, and looked to the needs of others throughout the day. Though his various cancers and other serious Job-like health trials, we have never heard him complain. President Kimball didn't expect those around him to keep up with him and work at his pace. He did expect people to do their best. He had a sign on his desk that said, "do it". They couldn't get President Kimball to rest before the long series of meetings of the day. He said that if they knew what he did, they would understand why he did what he did. There were gaps in the schedule, President Kimball pointed out the gaps and asked Elder Hales "what are these? Why am I not attending meetings in these times?" Elder Hales said "those are rest periods." President Kimball said, "Are you tired, Elder Hales?" Elder Hales would express his **concern to his companions about the health of President Kimball considering how he could get Kimball to rest, his companions said, "you can try"**. When others would try to help him rest, he would tell them, **"I know you're trying to save me, but I don't want to be saved, I want to be**

exalted.” (“Examples from the Life of a Prophet” by Elder Robert D Hales, about President Spencer W Kimball, Gen. Conf. Oct. 1981)

Joseph Fielding Smith all his life was up by 6am and in his office by 8am. And Spencer W Kimball was usually in his office by 7am. (see book ‘In the Company of Prophets by D. Arthur Haycock)

Spencer W Kimball didn’t sleep much. If working hard could make up for his inadequacies he would. So he slept only a few hours each night and became a master of sneaking away every now and then for a **15-minute cat nap, then was back in action. At 2am the lights were often still on the Spencer Kimball home.** He would be writing in his journal responding to letters and thanking them for any bit of faith they had in such letters. In his journals he not only wrote of the things of the day, but he opened his heart. There are **33 black binders of these journals** he kept. He said that **in journals don’t put your sins in neon but write you have weaknesses and quickly get on** to the good stuff, to the inspired. (see Truman G Madsen book on the Presidents of the church)

“When I served with President Kimball, I never worked so hard in my life.” (see book ‘In the Company of Prophets by D. Arthur Haycock pg. 90)

“I have learned that the best time to wrestle with major problems is early in the morning. Your mind is fresh and alert. The blackboard of your mind has been erased by a good night’s rest. The accumulated distractions of the day are not in your way. Your body has been rested also. That’s the time to think something through very carefully and to receive personal revelation. I’ve heard President Harold B. Lee begin many a statement about matters involving revelation with an expression something like this: “In the early hours of the morning, while I was pondering upon the subject,” and so on. He made it a practice to work on the problems that required revelation in the fresh, alert hours of the early morning... I counsel our children to do their critical studying in the early hours of the morning when they’re fresh and alert, rather than to fight the physical weariness and mental exhaustion at night. I’ve learned that the dictum “Early to bed, early to

rise” is powerful. When under pressure—for instance, when I was preparing this talk—you **wouldn’t find me burning the midnight oil. Much rather I’d be early to bed and getting up in the wee hours of the morning, when I could be close to Him who guides this work.**” (Elder Boyd K. Packer, 1975 BYU Devotional “Self Reliance”, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/boyd-k-packer_self-reliance/)

Brigham Young said the man who honors their Priesthood will be exhausted. (Hugh Nibly, BofM/PoGP class referenced)

Brigham Young said he felt his bones in him would consume lest he preached the gospel once he had found it, and left all temporal things so to do. He said he is not bound back by wife and child or nothing, but is living for the gospel. He said “I want you to ware your selves out (for the gospel cause).” (Hugh Nibly, BofM/PoGP class referenced)

Elder Jeffrey R Holland said missionaries (etc.) collapse into bed at the end of the day “delightfully exhausted”

“Eight hours work, eight hours sleep, and eight hours recreation – Brigham Young” (Susa Young Gates and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Life Story of Brigham Young* (1931), 251) (also referenced in *Ensign* 2003 *A Rock-Solid Foundation for Marriage* By Brent A. Barlow <https://www.lds.org/ensign/2003/06/a-rock-solid-foundation-for-marriage?lang=eng>)

“it is harder for the Spirit to shine in and through our physical bodies when we are dozy and dull from foolishly going to bed at 1:30 A.M. or 2:30 A.M. or later night after night after night (see D&C 88:124).” (By Elder David A. Bednar Area Authority Seventy From a devotional address given at Ricks College on 11 January 2000. Published also in the *Ensign*, September 2001 see <https://www.lds.org/ensign/2001/09/ye-are-the-temple-of-god?lang=eng>)

Note that the very late nights are often from foolish behaviors like dulling entertainments and senseless parties.

Pres. McKay read 4-5 books a week. He would only sleep 4 hrs. per night, bed at 12am up at 4am

President Boyd K Packer said that when he has a large project that must be done, rather than staying up late to do it, he will rise early to do it. He says he prefers this method so that he can do the task “with the Lord”.

When I took classes from BYU Biblical Hebrew professor and prolific author Dr. Donald Parry, he would sometimes speak to us of how he would at times wake very early, sometimes even at 2am, he would pray for the Lord to let him rest a little more, and the answer would come that no, it’s time to get up and get to work.

Cleon Skousen was asked a project by the First Presidency, they knew he had what today is 5 full time jobs; he to complete the assignment had to stay up till 4 or 5 AM some days.

Brigham Young would only get 4 hours of sleep when he was involved in a great project temple work etc.

Joseph Fielding Smith thought it immoral to be in bed past 6am.

Brigham Young said don't use stimulants to stay awake. President Russel M Nelson has echoed this council.

Joseph Worthin got up early to have 2 hours of gospel study each morning.

President Spencer W Kimball would often go home after work then go back to work after that to finish things when things were not done.

Julie Preece, the student management professor of BYU, says stay at work till work done, then go home.

President Thomas S. Monson **says burn the midnight oil** to get good grades.

Professor of Greek at BYU Steven Bay says go off only 5 hours sleep if it means getting your studying in.

At times President Henry B. Eyring prays all night.

Jesus rose before others in the morning to go pray.

Jesus and other prophets have gone without food for 40 days and still been able to learn much in that time.

Jesus prayed all night when trying to choose which to call as the 12 Apostles.

President George Albert Smith would rise at 3 am to go help a poor bum not commit suicide.

The Holy Ghost quickens and strengthens all things in your body.

The D&C teaches that we are expected to follow the righteous desires of our hearts and do much good of our own will.

Napoleon Bonaparte was asked how many hours sleep people need, he is said to have replied: “Six for a man, seven for a woman, eight for a fool.” <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22084671>

The prolific inventor Thomas Edison slept **three or four hours** at night, regarding sleep as a waste of time, “a heritage from our cave days.” <http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/m/maas-sleep.html?scp=63&sq=sleep&st=Search>

There are many sources which suggest that Einstein, Tesla, Leo Da Vinci and many other past century geniuses did sleep for only a few hours per day or they took several naps of few minutes each, per day. <https://www.quora.com/Did-Einstein-sleep-for-three-hours-a-year>

Leonardo **da Vinci's sleep** schedule included 20-minute naps every four hours. **Da Vinci** followed an extreme form of a **polyphasic sleep** schedule called the **Uberman sleep** cycle, which consists of 20-minute naps every four hours. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/>

[14-bizarre-sleeping-habits-of-super-successful-people-a7002076.html](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/14-bizarre-sleeping-habits-of-super-successful-people-a7002076.html)

Every day at 5 p.m., the prime minister would drink a weak whiskey and soda before taking a two-hour nap. Churchill said this short “siesta” allowed him to get 1 1/2 days’ worth of work done every 24 hours. Churchill would often work through the night and became known as quite the night owl. Because of his irregular sleep schedule, he was said to hold War Cabinet meetings in his bath. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/14-bizarre-sleeping-habits-of-super-successful-people-a7002076.html>

The 19th-century novelist and poet Emily Bronte suffered from insomnia, and she would walk around her dining room table until she felt tired enough to fall asleep. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/14-bizarre-sleeping-habits-of-super-successful-people-a7002076.html>

Inventor Nikola Tesla got more out of the day with his limited sleep schedule. Like Da Vinci, Telsa

also followed the Uberman sleep cycle and claimed to never sleep for more than two hours a day. He once reportedly worked for 84 hours straight in a lab without any rest. “I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success ... Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything,” he said.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/14-bizarre-sleeping-habits-of-super-successful-people-a7002076.html>

I have a sibling who maintained heavy credit hours in heavy subject matter with a 4.0 throughout high school, college, and graduate school. At least 1 semester he reported to sleep 4 hours a night on average. I asked him, “you have a legendary semester when you slept 4 hours on average. What are some things you did during that time to not go crazy and stay focused? I know you don’t use caffeine (which actually disables focus and endurance etc.)” His response, “If by “legendary” you mean horrible... The best advice is don’t do it. My health/habits are still wrecked from it. Who

says I didn't go crazy? Who says I successfully focused? And any time I could, I slept. 4 hrs. just isn't enough sleep. I don't think I have any pointers on how to make it less miserable, since it was making me pretty miserable. And it definitely can't be done very long term." He also reported that you can do anything you put your mind to. He had a general rule that you don't go to sleep until your homework due the following day is done, that way you have time to work into the night on it if needed.

Some monks or something get average of 2 or 3 hours, having trained their bodies such.

Dr. Hugh Nibley says to stay up until 2am doing studies, and laments how the lights don't burn late at BYU. Nibley speaks of taking school more seriously. President Dallin H Oaks, Elder Neil A Maxwell, and others have spoken very highly of Hugh Nibley.

When I took Biblical Hebrew classes from Dr. Stephen Ricks at BYU, he reported that he studied long and hard when in school, and that as a professor, he planned to remain teaching until he

drooled. He and Dr. Donald Parry, another BYU Hebrew Professor, reportedly have a little game of who gets to campus earliest. They are usually there by 6am at the latest.

Joseph Smith says wear out your lives in bringing hidden things to light

LDS hymn more holiness give me says 'more USED would I be.'

President Packer says when he has a big project to do he goes to bed early and wakes up early to do it so he can be with the Lord.

The scripture says early to bed early to rise and cease to sleep longer than is NEEDFUL.

If you feel bad continually about your current pattern, go get another one.

We must work out our salvation, and do so until we feel that the Lord is satisfied with our efforts (and we find that out from the Lord by scripture study

and especially prayer). Until then, it's hand to the plow.

It's reported that the 12 Apostles work harder than anyone, why should this be? Indeed, they have instructed that we ought not wait for some big calling to come to us to give our all-in service.

The latter-day saints are long known for their industry.

President Kimball went through many health trials, perhaps from wearing himself out, and this shows life is more than meat; that truly there are more important things to accomplish.

Do the commandments like caring to the poor despite all.

Elder Scott in a recent Conf. Report (2013?) Said that scripture study is more important than sleep

Use the opportunities only available to an American.

Less than 8 hours of sleep can, for a young person, cause them to not retain what they were learning the day prior; (but one may have duties to do, and not need remember everything.)

Having constant headaches could be very bad for the health

Men are responsible for providing for their family, preaching the gospel, giving their family a nice home, fixing it up, etc.

My pathophysiology professor Mary Cook wakes up at 4am each day, and doesn't respond to late night or late evening emails.

Alzheimers is related to the toxins that build up in the brain from not getting sleep. But perhaps its more tied to foods eaten.

Song: "I could have danced all night" from "My Fair Lady," when she finally unlocks the power of speech and knowledge.

Thomas Edison & Sleep:

"Sleep was a scarce article in those days" said Edison

His idea of a good time was a night in the laboratory.

He took naps on the floor in his suit.

He had a cot in the back of his lab for cat naps.

Routinely put in 80 hour weeks at the lab.

In his 60s everything burned, but he started over.

At times they would spend all night experimenting, and sleep till noon the next day.

"You can often gauge a man's ambition by whether he hates his alarm clock or considers it his best friend." Thomas Edison

"Dilligence is the mother of good fortune, and God gives abundantly to industry. So ply deep while the sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep." Benjamin Franklin

“I am wondering what would have happened to me if some fluent talker had converted me to the theory of the eight-hour day and convinced me that it was not fair to my fellow workers to put forth my best efforts in my work... If my life had been made up of eight-hour days I do not believe I could have accomplished a great deal.” Thomas Edison

“Don’t be fooled by the calendar. There are only as many days in the year as you make use of. One man gets only a week’s value out of a year, while another gets a full year’s value out of a week.”
Charles Richards

Thomas Edison kept records on how many hours he would spend IN A ROW on a project, and he would try to beat his last record.

“A man who is young in age may still be old and experienced, if he has lost no time.” Sir Francis Bacon

“When we do upon some great occasion will probably depend on what we already are; and what

we are will be the result of previous years of self-discipline.” Henry Louis Liddon

It was said that Edison used the words "work" and "working" the way that others used the words "prayer" and "religion".

[End of Thomas Edison on sleep.]

Bruce R. McConkie on sleep:

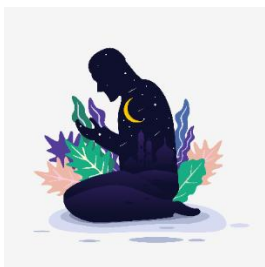
Bruce R McConkie as mission president was up consistently at 5 or 5:30 says the Bruce R McConkie biography. (Not sure if this was his general practice or more particularly on the mission. Sounds like a good general practice, living with a mission, with things that have to get done.) (Paraphrased from Bruce R McConkie biography, ‘The Story of Bruce R McConkie’ by Joseph Fielding McConkie, 2003)

Bruce R McConkie always was asked where he finds time to write; he used evenings, holidays, and the occasional free time. He said “There is no such thing as maintaining continuity of thought or hope

of project completion unless one maintains a rugged wearisome routine. There are many 12 hour days with an occasional 14-hour stretch thrown in for variety.” p423 of Bruce R McConkie biography.

McConkie never left an assignment unfinished; what could be done tomorrow, he did today. (‘The Bruce R McConkie Story p329) There are many who could fulfill various callings. “The one called is entitled to inspiration, and if he seeks to magnify his calling to the full, he will come off triumphant in the work assigned.”

[End of Bruce R. McConkie on sleep.]



Jesus & Other Bible Figures Who Sacrificed Sleep: A Generated List

This introductory list of Bible figures who sacrificed sleep was generated on ChatGPT. (Note that these generated lists are not always completely accurate, but for our purposes here, they do serve a purpose.)

Jesus' Examples

1. Jesus Prays in Solitude Frequently

- **Mark 1:35** — *“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”*
 -  Early morning
 -  Remote place
 -  Solitary prayer

2. Jesus Withdraws to Lonely Places Often

- **Luke 5:16** — *“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”*
 -  Habitual practice
 -  Remote solitude

3. Jesus Prays All Night Before Choosing the Apostles

- **Luke 6:12–13** — *“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them...”*
 -  Mountainside (remote)
 -  All-night prayer

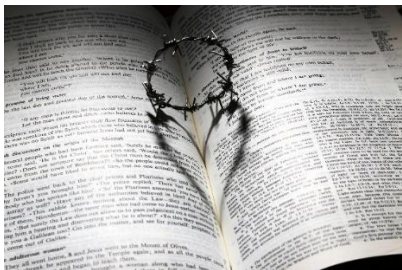
4. Gethsemane – Jesus Prays in Deep Distress

- **Matthew 26:36–45, Luke 22:39–46**
 - Jesus goes to the **Garden of Gethsemane** with a few disciples.
 - **Prays alone in agony**, while the disciples fall asleep.

- Returns multiple times, finds them sleeping during the night.
- ☒ Night
- ☒ Garden
- ☒ Repeated and prolonged prayer

5. Jesus on the Mountain at Night

- **Matthew 14:23** — *“After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone.”*
 - ☒ Mountainside
 - ☒ Night
 - ☒ Solitary



Old Testament Examples

6. Moses on Mount Sinai

- **Exodus 34:28** — *“Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments.”*

- ☒ Remote mountaintop
- ☒ Extended solitude
- ☒ Prayer and writing/study

7. David's Night Prayers

- **Psalm 63:6** — *“On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night.”*
- **Psalm 119:147–148** — *“I rise before dawn and cry for help... My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.”*
 -  Nighttime meditation and prayer
 -  Early morning devotion
 -  Introspective and personal

8. Elijah Fleeing to the Wilderness

- **1 Kings 19:4–9** — Elijah flees into the wilderness, sits under a broom tree, and later goes to Mount Horeb where he experiences God.
 -  Wilderness isolation
 -  Fasting, prayer, and revelation

New Testament Followers

9. Paul and Silas Pray at Midnight in Prison

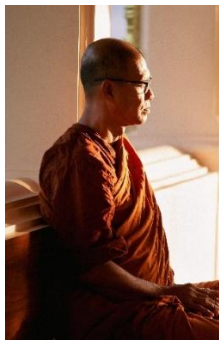
- **Acts 16:25** — *“About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.”*
 -  Midnight prayer and praise
 -  Under persecution

10. Paul's Nighttime Prayers

- **2 Timothy 1:3** — *“I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day.”*
- **Acts 20:7–11** — Paul continues speaking and teaching late into the night.
 -  Deep commitment to study and exhortation
 -  Night vigils

Summary Themes

Person	Setting	Time	Activity
Jesus	Mountain, garden, solitary place	Early morning, night	Prayer, fasting, choosing apostles
Moses	Mount Sinai	40 days/nights	Prayer, receiving commandments
David	In bed, alone	Night, early	Meditation, prayer, psalms
Elijah	Wilderness, Mount Horeb	Extended solitude	Prayer, encounter with God
Paul & Silas	Prison	Midnight	Singing, praying
Paul	House gatherings	Late night	Teaching, breaking bread



Historic / Influential Short-Sleepers: A Generated List

This introductory list of famous figures who report very limited sleep was generated on ChatGPT. (Note that these generated lists are not always completely accurate, but for our purposes here, they do serve a purpose.)

I. Service-Oriented Figures (Leaders, Reformers, Religious Workers)

1. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) – Military and Political Leader

- **Reported Sleep:** 2–4 hours per night.
- **Reason:** He believed sleep was a waste of time and detracted from leadership responsibilities.
- **Quote:** “Six hours’ sleep for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool.”
- **Notes:** He often took short naps ("polyphasic sleep") between campaigns.

2. Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013) – Prime Minister of the UK

- **Reported Sleep:** 4 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Felt a duty to serve and lead with constant vigilance.
- **Quote:** "Sleep is for wimps."
- **Notes:** Her staff attested to her extraordinary work hours and mental endurance.

3. Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) – Nurse and Reformer

- **Reported Sleep:** 4 hours or less per night.
- **Reason:** Devotion to caring for wounded soldiers and improving medical standards.
- **Notes:** Often worked into the early morning hours; her health later suffered, possibly due to chronic fatigue.

4. Nikola Tesla (1856–1943) – Inventor and Engineer

- **Reported Sleep:** 2 hours per night, with frequent naps.
- **Reason:** Driven by a desire to serve humanity through technological advancement.
- **Quote:** "I do not think you can name many great inventions that have been made by married men."

- **Notes:** Claimed his work was more important than rest, often working 20+ hour days.
-

II. Study-Oriented Figures (Philosophers, Theologians, Writers)

5. Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) – Polymath

- **Reported Sleep:** Used a polyphasic schedule (e.g., 20-minute naps every 4 hours).
- **Reason:** Wanted more time for scientific studies, painting, and invention.
- **Notes:** It is debated whether he consistently followed this pattern, but he praised disciplined time use.

6. Thomas Edison (1847–1931) – Inventor

- **Reported Sleep:** 3–4 hours per night, with naps.
- **Reason:** Believed sleep wasted productivity.

- **Quote:** “Sleep is a criminal waste of time and a heritage from our cave days.”
- **Notes:** Maintained sleeping cots in his labs for short breaks.

7. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) – Philosopher

- **Reported Sleep:** 5 hours per night, very regimented life.
- **Reason:** Committed to disciplined routine and daily philosophical work.
- **Notes:** Famous for his consistent daily schedule; neighbors reportedly could set their clocks by his walks.

8. Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) – Polymath and Statesman

- **Reported Sleep:** ~5 hours/night.
- **Reason:** Valued industriousness.
- **Quote:** “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”

- **Notes:** Kept a daily planner focused on maximizing productivity and virtue.
-

III. Spiritually-Oriented Figures (Saints, Mystics, Religious Reformers)

9. Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) – Theologian

- **Reported Sleep:** 3–4 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Tireless writing, teaching, and contemplation of divine truths.
- **Notes:** Often wrote entire theological treatises in very short time spans.

10. Martin Luther (1483–1546) – Reformer

- **Reported Sleep:** 4–5 hours/night.
- **Reason:** Driven by the urgency of reform and translating scripture.
- **Quote:** “I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer.”

11. Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582) – Mystic and Reformer

- **Reported Sleep:** 2–3 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Long hours of prayer and service to her nuns.
- **Notes:** Known for intense periods of spiritual ecstasy and contemplation.

12. John Wesley (1703–1791) – Methodist Founder

- **Reported Sleep:** 4 hours per night.
 - **Reason:** Early rising for prayer, preaching, and travel.
 - **Quote:** “Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit.”
-

IV. Additional Service-Oriented Figures

13. Winston Churchill (1874–1965) – British Prime Minister

- **Reported Sleep:** 5 hours at night + nap.
- **Reason:** Needed rest to sustain war effort leadership.
- **Quote:** “You must sleep sometime between lunch and dinner... Don’t think you will be doing less work because you sleep during the day.”
- **Notes:** Combined biphasic sleep with massive energy for leadership during WWII.

14. Donald Trump (b. 1946) – U.S. President

- **Reported Sleep:** 3–4 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Claims he gets more done than others.
- **Quote:** “How does somebody that's sleeping 12 and 14 hours a day compete with someone that's sleeping three or four?”

- **Notes:** Known for high-paced activity, social media, and meetings throughout the day and night.

Note: Also known for throwing back tons of Coke sodas every day haha.

V. Additional Study-Oriented Figures

15. Voltaire (1694–1778) – Writer and Philosopher

- **Reported Sleep:** 4 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Devoted to writing and correspondence.
- **Notes:** Prolific author, claimed coffee helped keep him awake and alert.

16. Isaac Newton (1643–1727) – Mathematician and Physicist

- **Reported Sleep:** 3–4 hours when engaged in work.

- **Reason:** Deep focus on physics and alchemy.
- **Notes:** Often forgot to eat or sleep when absorbed in study.

17. René Descartes (1596–1650) – Philosopher and Mathematician

- **Reported Sleep:** Slept irregularly but claimed 10 hours daily when not working, then almost none during intense study.
 - **Notes:** Preferred thinking in bed in the mornings and sometimes worked through the night.
-

VI. Additional Spiritually-Oriented Figures

18. Saint Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) – Mystic and Saint

- **Reported Sleep:** As little as 1–2 hours per night.
- **Reason:** Long hours of prayer, fasting, and charity.

- **Quote:** Claimed she was sustained by divine grace.
- **Notes:** Often reported to be in states of ecstasy during her vigils.

19. Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) – Spiritual and Political Leader

- **Reported Sleep:** 4–5 hours/night.
- **Reason:** Discipline, prayer, and public service.
- **Quote:** “Each one has to find his peace from within.”
- **Notes:** Slept lightly, often on the floor, focused on simplicity.

20. Brigham Young (1801–1877) – LDS Church Leader

- **Reported Sleep:** 4–5 hours on average.
- **Reason:** Oversight of migration, church governance, and community-building.

- **Notes:** Described as tireless, often up at dawn giving instructions.
-

VII. Modern Notables (Study/Service Mix)

21. Elon Musk (b. 1971) – Entrepreneur

- **Reported Sleep:** 5–6 hours/night (sometimes less during launches).
- **Reason:** Running multiple companies (Tesla, SpaceX, etc.).
- **Quote:** “If other people are putting in 40-hour workweeks, and you're putting in 100-hour workweeks, you will achieve in 4 months what it takes them a year to achieve.”

22. Barack Obama (b. 1961) – U.S. President

- **Reported Sleep:** 5–6 hours/night.
- **Reason:** Quiet nights for reading and letter-writing.

- **Quote:** Said he used nighttime to reflect and prepare.
 - **Notes:** Read deeply and consistently despite presidential workload.
-

VIII. Unique Cases of Minimal Sleep

23. Buckminster Fuller (1895–1983) – Futurist, Architect

- **Reported Sleep:** Used Dymaxion schedule: 30-minute naps every 6 hours (2 hours/day total).
- **Reason:** Maximize waking creativity and productivity.
- **Notes:** Maintained the schedule for 2 years before reverting due to practical constraints.

24. Salvador Dalí (1904–1989) – Surrealist Painter

- **Reported Sleep:** Short naps, no set schedule.

- **Reason:** Tapped into the hypnagogic state for artistic inspiration.
- **Notes:** Practiced "slumber with a key" technique—woke at the moment between sleep and wakefulness.

#	Name	Sleep	Orientati on	Motivation	Notes / Quotes
1	Napoleon Bonaparte	2–4 hrs	Service	Military leadership	“Six hours for a man... eight for a fool.”
2	Margaret Thatcher	4 hrs	Service	National duty	“Sleep is for wimps.”
3	Florence Nightingale	<4 hrs	Service	Nursing wounded soldiers	Often worked late nights

#	Name	Sleep	Orientati on	Motivation	Notes / Quotes
4	Nikola Tesla	2 hrs + naps	Service / Study	Inventing for mankind	Worked 20+ hours daily
5	Leonardo da Vinci	Polyphasic (20 min/4 hrs)	Study	More time for learning & art	Unverified long-term
6	Thomas Edison	3–4 hrs + naps	Study	Productivity focus	“Sleep is a criminal waste...”
7	Immanuel Kant	5 hrs	Study	Disciplined routine	Life run like clockwork
8	Benjamin Franklin	~5 hrs	Study	Virtue and efficiency	“Early to bed...”
9	Thomas Aquinas	3–4 hrs	Spiritual	Writing theology	Tireless scholar

#	Name	Sleep	Orientati on	Motivation	Notes / Quotes
1 0	Martin Luther	4–5 hrs	Spiritual	Urgency of reform	Prayed for 3 hrs/day
1 1	Teresa of Ávila	2–3 hrs	Spiritual	Prayer & mysticism	Often in ecstatic states
1 2	John Wesley	4 hrs	Spiritual	Evangelism & order	“Never in a hurry...”
1 3	Winston Churchill	5 hrs + nap	Service	War leadership	Advocate d power naps
1 4	Donald Trump	3–4 hrs	Service / Business	High energy, competitiven ess	“I don’t need much sleep.”
1 5	Voltaire	4 hrs	Study	Writing and letter-writing	Depende d on coffee

#	Name	Sleep	Orientati on	Motivation	Notes / Quotes
1 6	Isaac Newton	3–4 hrs (during work)	Study	Obsession with discovery	Often forgot to sleep
1 7	René Descartes	Irregular	Study	Deep concentration	Thought while lying in bed
1 8	Catherine of Siena	1–2 hrs	Spiritual	Fasting and prayer	Said to be sustained by God
1 9	Mahatma Gandhi	4–5 hrs	Spiritual / Service	Simplicity, discipline	Slept lightly on the floor
2 0	Brigham Young	4–5 hrs	Spiritual / Service	Church and pioneer work	Tireless frontier leader
2 1	Elon Musk	5–6 hrs	Service / Study	Tech and business demands	Worked 80–100 hrs/wk

#	Name	Sleep	Orientati on	Motivation	Notes / Quotes
2	Barack	5–6 hrs	Study / Service	Time for reading & reflection	Night owl presidenc y
2	Obama				
2	Buckminst	2 hrs (Dymaxi on naps)	Study	Creative focus	Abandon ed after 2 years
3	er Fuller				
2	Salvador	Short naps	Study / Art	Access subconscious for art	Used "slumber with a key"
4	Dalí				



Latter-day Saint Short Sleepers: A Generated List

Again, this is a ChatGPT generated list of internet findings on the subject, this time showing latter-day saint leaders with short sleeping habits. (Note that these generated lists are not always completely accurate, but for our purposes here, they do serve a purpose.)

LDS Prophets and Figures with Short Sleep Habits

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
Joseph Smith	Prophet (1805–1844)	~3–5 hrs	Revelation, translation, leadership	Often worked late receiving revelations; Emma and others noted he was often up at night.
Brigham Young	Prophet (1801–1877)	4–5 hrs	Organizing migration, church leadership	Known as tireless; early riser, busy until late evening.
Heber C. Kimball	Apostle / 1st Presidency	~4 hrs	Church service, missionary work	Said to rise very early and frequently work long hours.
John Taylor	Prophet (1808–1887)	Uncertain, but long work hours	Managing persecuted	Often stayed up writing responses to

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
			church, writing	critics of the church.
Wilford Woodruff	Prophet (1807–1898)	4–6 hrs	Journal keeping, temple work	Kept meticulous daily journals, often late into the night.
Spencer W. Kimball	Prophet (1895–1985)	4–5 hrs	Service, early rising for scripture study	Staff observed he kept a punishing schedule even in old age.
Ezra Taft Benson	Prophet (1899–1994)	Reportedly 4–6 hrs	Scripture study, public service	During time as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and later Prophet.
Thomas S. Monson	Prophet (1927–2018)	4–5 hrs (anecdotal)	Ministering, writing talks and letters	Often called individuals late at night to offer

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
				encouragement.
Russell M. Nelson	Prophet (b. 1924)	~4–5 hrs (from talks/interviews)	Disciplined early routine, exercise, study	In interviews, emphasized early rising and strict routine.

Prominent LDS Scholars and Leaders

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
Hugh Nibley	Scholar, Apologist	~3–4 hrs	Intense study, writing, spiritual zeal	Often up late translating and reading. Family and students said he worked nearly nonstop.

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
Neal A. Maxwell	Apostle	4–5 hrs	Writing, spiritual reflection	Known for his prolific writing and language mastery.
Bruce R. McConkie	Apostle	4–5 hrs	Scripture study and doctrinal writing	Produced major works like <i>Mormon Doctrine</i> on short rest.
James E. Talmage	Apostle, Scholar	3–4 hrs	Writing <i>Jesus the Christ</i> and other works	Slept very little while writing in the Salt Lake Temple.
Boyd K. Packer	Apostle	~4 hrs (when working on talks/books)	Writing, spiritual preparation	Reportedly kept irregular sleep during conference preparation.

Name	Role	Reported Sleep	Reason / Motivation	Notes / Quotes
President David O. McKay	Prophet	5–6 hrs	Ministering, writing, public service	Known for early rising and continued outreach even in old age.



Notable Quotes and Accounts

- **Hugh Nibley's daughter** wrote that he often went to bed late and rose early, sometimes **living on 2–3 hours of sleep**, reading books under a lamp into the early hours.
- **James E. Talmage** spent **many nights in the temple** writing *Jesus the Christ*, often resting only briefly.
- **Wilford Woodruff's journals** record his **habitual early rising**, sometimes between **4–5 AM**, and extensive writing and spiritual labor.

SOURCES, EVIDENCES, & QUOTATIONS :

◆ LDS PROPHETS

Joseph Smith

- **Source:** *History of the Church*, *Joseph Smith Papers*, and *Emma Smith: My Story* (Emma describes late-night activities)
- **Evidence:** Numerous reports of Joseph translating the Book of Mormon or receiving revelations well into the night. For example:
 - *D&C 76* (Vision of the degrees of glory) was received late at night.
 - **Emma Smith** said: “He would work and study late into the night, sometimes staying up until dawn.”

Brigham Young

- **Source:** *Journal of Discourses*, biographies like Leonard Arrington's *Brigham Young: American Moses*
- **Evidence:** Frequently noted rising early and working late. Described as relentless in his administrative work.
 - Quote: "My rest is to do the work of the Lord."

Wilford Woodruff

- **Source:** *Wilford Woodruff Journals*, edited by Scott G. Kenney
- **Evidence:** Woke early, wrote in his journal daily (over 30 years), often late-night temple work.
 - Ex: Entry from March 27, 1877: "Arose at 4 a.m. Wrote in my journal until dawn..."

Spencer W. Kimball

- **Source:** Edward Kimball's biography *Lengthen Your Stride*

- **Evidence:** Up by 4–5 a.m. for scripture and journal writing. Worked through illness and surgeries.
 - Edward Kimball: “Even during his recovery, he rose early to write in his journal and compose talks.”

Russell M. Nelson

- **Source:** Interviews, conference addresses, and *Insights from a Prophet’s Life: President Russell M. Nelson* by Sheri Dew
- **Evidence:** Maintained a strict, early-morning schedule even as a surgeon and apostle.
 - Quote: “My schedule has always been very full. Sleep is important, but it must be managed.”

◆ **LDS SCHOLARS & APOSTLES**

Hugh Nibley

- **Source:** *Sergeant Nibley PhD, Approaching Zion*, and recollections by his daughter Martha Nibley Beck
- **Evidence:** Slept 3–4 hours, sometimes less.
 - Martha Beck: “He would disappear into his study with a stack of books and come out 12 hours later, not having eaten or slept.”

James E. Talmage

- **Source:** *The Talmage Story* by John R. Talmage (his son), LDS Church Historical Department
- **Evidence:** Slept very little while writing *Jesus the Christ* in the Salt Lake Temple.
 - Quote: “He would often write through the night, returning home only to nap briefly.”

Bruce R. McConkie

- **Source:** *Bruce R. McConkie: Highlights from His Life and Teachings* by Joseph Fielding McConkie
- **Evidence:** Wrote *Mormon Doctrine* in record time, maintained intense study habits.
 - Joseph McConkie: “He studied and wrote through much of the night during major projects.”

Neal A. Maxwell

- **Source:** *A Disciple's Life* by Bruce C. Hafen
- **Evidence:** Wrote hundreds of talks and essays, reportedly kept a tight study and work schedule.
 - Hafen: “He would often go to bed long after midnight and rise before dawn to finish drafts of talks.”

◆ Additional Supporting Scripture and Teachings

- **Mosiah 2:41:** King Benjamin rising early to serve his people.
 - **D&C 88:124:** “Cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated.”
 - **General Conference** talks often reference early rising as a principle of self-mastery and spiritual discipline.
-

Suggestions for Further Study

If you want **firsthand quotes or journal entries**, here are recommended primary sources:

- Joseph Smith Papers
- Wilford Woodruff's Journals

- *Insights from a Prophet's Life: President Russell M. Nelson* by Sheri Dew
- *A Disciple's Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell* by Bruce C. Hafen
- *The Talmage Story* by John R. Talmage
- *Lengthen Your Stride* by Edward L. Kimball
- *Approaching Zion* by Hugh Nibley

Quotes on Persistence

“It is better to undertake a large task and get it half done than to undertake nothing and get it all done.”
W. Marshall Craig

“I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving: To reach the port of Heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it – but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor.”
Oliver Wendell Holmes

“You have powers you never dreamed of. You can do things you never thought you could do. There are no limitations in what you can do except the limitations as to what you cannot do. Don’t think you cannot. Think that you can.” Darwin P. Kingsley

“A goal is nothing more than a dream with a due date.” Joseph Fielding McConkie

“All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” Edmund Burke

“When we do upon some great occasion will probably depend on what we already are; and what we are will be the result of previous years of self-discipline.” Henry Louis Liddon

“Some men can get results if kindly encouraged, but give me the kind that do things in spite of hell.”
Elbert Hubbard

“Emotional maturity is the ability to stick to a job and to struggle through until it is finished;” Edwin A. Strecker

“Adversity is the midwife of genius.” Napoleon Bonaparte

“Progress in any age results only from the fact that there are some men and women who refuse to believe that what they know to be right cannot be accomplished.” Russell W. Davenport

“These are ties that try men’s souls. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered: our consolation is that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.” Thomas Paine, 1775

“You must have long-range goals to keep you from being frustrated by short-range failures.” Charles C. Noble

“An obstacle is often an unrecognized opportunity. When a man wages war against his weakness, this is the most holy war he can ever enter...and the joy of accomplishment is the most exquisite.” Marion G. Romney

“Follow through: stopping at third base adds no more to the score than striking out.” Alexander Animator

“Dilligence is the mother of good fortune.” Miguel de Cervantes, author of the great Spanish novel Don Quijote.

“From the eternal perspective, it’s not whether I win the battle or not that counts – it’s the way I kept on fighting.” Spencer W. Kimball

“Whosoever acquires knowledge, and did not practice it, resembleth him who ploughed and did not sow.” Saadi

“[Thomas] Edison once was asked how he accomplished so much. He said, “It is deceptively simple. You and I have eighteen hours in a day in which we do something. You spend that eighteen hours doing a number of unrelated things. I spend it doing just one thing, and some of my work is bound to amount to something.” Recounted by Sterling W. Sill

Thrill of The Night - A Great Time to Study

Night is when we are already awake. There's no guarantee you'll wake early, but you already have the night right there.

In the morning comes going to work, but in the night you have all the world before you.

This doesn't mean stay up all night, it means you can get a lot done in the night, even if it's an hour or two more than typical. And that adds up.

The night is when the toils of day are done, and quiet has come.

Cease to sleep longer than is needful. Perhaps we do not realize this can mean on the front (evening/night) end as well as the morning side.

Some bodies, and some stages of life, are more prone to become tired early, others late, and both need the same amount of rest. The late-night person is more tired when he goes to bed early.

Scripture says go to bed early, so yes we aren't staying up all hours of the night, but we must not be going to bed too early, particularly if we aren't getting up too early.

We are told to seek the Lord while he is near. If you're on a roll, keep on studying, and nevermind that accursed clock! Many sages have shown that hours of the night are the most practical time to really dig in to important studies and the like!

Food is Overrated: Introductory Thoughts

From a movie about telephone inventor Alexander Gram Bell, "We will starve!" Bell's assistant said. Bell replies, "Maybe you will, but not me. Not yet. Not until I have made the telephone!" These men had very little money, yet they plugged on at the work. He couldn't even afford paper. He scrimped and sold what he had for a quarter here and a quarter there to get parts he needed for his experiments. They often lived off of cheese and apples.

In a Hebrew class, professor Stephen Ricks told us of a journey he was on in a foreign land. He had enough money to get a meal as he had not eaten in a considerable time, or to purchase a rare dictionary to donate to the BYU library. Ricks said "I had the choice to eat or get the dictionary and starve. I starved." It was a glorious moment when this tale was told! Bravo professor! He went on to the local mission home and there begged for food.

Hugh Nibley spent weeks in his apartment living off of carrots and milk while writing his master thesis (or something like that), not coming out at all.

Eastern countries generally are healthier than the west. What do they eat in the east? Mostly rice, other grains, and veggies. Simple foods are a key to good health and energy.

Religions around the world give a united witness that fasting is holiness to the Lord and uplifts a person physically and spiritually. Those fasts don't need to be complete fasts, but perhaps they can be from fancy foods for certain seasons, or just a humbler lifestyle in general. Fasting is to change our attention from menial things to free up time to focus on higher things. As renown church scholar Hugh Nibley put it, we should always be fasting!

Food is Overrated: A Generated List

The following is a ChatGPT generated list of historic figures who lived by a minimalist approach to eating in their heroic life quests. (Note that these generated lists are not always completely accurate, but for our purposes here, they do serve a purpose.)

Thinkers, Inventors, Writers

1. Nikola Tesla – Inventor, Electrical Engineer

- **Habits:** Ate very little; preferred a strict diet. Often forgot to eat during experiments.
 - **Quote:** “I do not think you can name many great inventions that have been made by married men.”
 - **Story:** Lived largely on milk, bread, honey, and vegetable juices. Tesla believed in moderation and claimed overeating dulled the mind.
-

2. Alexander Graham Bell – Inventor of the Telephone

- **Habits:** Ate mostly **apples and cheese**, often in an attic while inventing.
 - **Story:** Obsessed with sound and speech, he frequently skipped meals. His wife noted his long periods of fasting or distracted eating.
-

3. Sir Isaac Newton – Physicist & Mathematician

- **Habits:** Forgot to eat while working. Ate little even when reminded.
 - **Quote:** “I keep the subject constantly before me and wait till the first dawnings open slowly, by little and little, into the full and clear light.”
 - **Story:** Would often eat a boiled egg—if he remembered.
-

4. Franz Kafka – Writer

- **Habits:** Extremely restricted diet due to tuberculosis and personal beliefs.

- **Quote:** “I have hardly anything in common with myself.”
 - **Story:** He was obsessed with purity and health, at times subsisting on raw vegetables and milk.
-

5. Steve Jobs – Entrepreneur

- **Habits:** Practiced extreme diets; would fast for days, or eat only apples or carrots for weeks.
 - **Quote:** “Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.”
 - **Story:** Inspired by Eastern spirituality, he believed fasting enhanced mental clarity.
-

Religious Leaders & Mystics

6. Jesus Christ – Religious Leader

- **Habits:** Fasted for **40 days in the wilderness** (Matthew 4:2).
- **Quote:** “Man shall not live by bread alone.”

- **Story:** Used fasting as spiritual preparation and demonstration of mastery over the flesh.
-

7. Mahatma Gandhi – Political & Spiritual Leader

- **Habits:** Frequently fasted for **political protest** and **spiritual discipline**.
 - **Quote:** “To him who has no food, God can only appear as bread.”
 - **Story:** Survived on **goat’s milk, fruit, and nuts**, sometimes just lemon water with honey.
-

8. St. Catherine of Siena – Christian Mystic

- **Habits:** Ate almost nothing for years, subsisting solely on the Eucharist.
- **Story:** Her extreme fasting was considered miraculous by some, pathological by others.

9. Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) – Founder of Buddhism

- **Habits:** Practiced extreme asceticism for years before adopting the "Middle Way."
- **Quote:** "To force oneself to believe and to accept a thing without understanding is political, and not spiritual or intellectual."
- **Story:** Lived on one grain of rice a day at one point before nearly dying.

Political & Military Leaders

10. Napoleon Bonaparte – Military Leader & Emperor

- **Habits:** Ate very little, sometimes only one meal a day. Often skipped meals before battle.
- **Quote:** "An army marches on its stomach." (Despite his own light eating.)
- **Story:** Had little interest in food—his meals were short and perfunctory.

11. George Washington Carver – Agricultural Scientist

- **Habits:** Practiced extreme frugality in food.
- **Quote:** “Fear of something is at the root of hate for others, and hate within will eventually destroy the hater.”
- **Story:** Lived in a small room, often skipping meals, surviving on simple plant-based foods.

12. Henry David Thoreau – Philosopher, Naturalist

- **Habits:** Ate very simply—bread, rice, and seasonal plants.
- **Quote:** “I believe in living a simple, uncluttered life.”
- **Story:** While living at Walden Pond, he grew his own food and avoided “luxury” eating.

✂ Other Notables

13. Blaise Pascal – Mathematician & Theologian

- **Habits:** Practiced voluntary suffering and austerity.
- **Quote:** “All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone.”
- **Story:** Wrote *Pensées* while battling physical ailments and practicing spiritual self-denial.

14. Simone Weil – Philosopher and Mystic

- **Habits:** Restricted food out of solidarity with the poor.
 - **Quote:** “Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity.”
 - **Story:** Died at 34—some say due to intentional malnutrition during WWII.
-

Summary Table

Name	Field	Habit	Key Quote/Note
Nikola Tesla	Inventor	Ate little, strict diet	“Moderation ...”
Alexander Graham Bell	Inventor	Apples & cheese in attic	Lived like a starving genius
Isaac Newton	Physicist	Forgot to eat	One egg meals
Franz Kafka	Writer	Sparse vegetarian diet	Obsessed with purity
Steve Jobs	Entrepreneur	Fasting & fruitarian diets	Mental clarity from fasting
Jesus Christ	Religious	40-day fast	“Man shall not live by bread alone”

Name	Field	Habit	Key Quote/Note
Gandhi	Political/Religious	Fasted frequently	Lived on goat milk, fruit, lemon water
St. Catherine of Siena	Mystic	Lived on Eucharist	Extreme fasting
Buddha	Spiritual Leader	Starved to near death	Found middle way
Napoleon	Military Leader	Skipped meals before battle	Ate quickly, lightly
George Washington Carver	Scientist	Very simple meals	Ascetic lifestyle
Thoreau	Philosopher	Self-grown food, rice, beans	“Simplicity!”

Name	Field	Habit	Key Quote/Note
Blaise Pascal	Thinker	Voluntary suffering	Lived like a hermit
Simone Weil	Philosopher	Ate little, solidarity with poor	Died from malnourishment

More Thinkers, Inventors, Writers

15. Leonardo da Vinci – Artist, Inventor

- **Habits:** Ate small, plant-based meals; abhorred overeating.
- **Quote:** “He who does not value life does not deserve it.”
- **Story:** Allegedly a vegetarian. Lived simply and with great focus, believing heavy meals dulled the intellect.

16. Pythagoras – Philosopher & Mathematician

- **Habits:** Lived on a strict vegetarian diet.
- **Quote:** “As long as man continues to be the ruthless destroyer of lower living beings he will never know health or peace.”
- **Story:** Taught vegetarianism as a philosophical principle. Followers practiced asceticism, including fasting.

17. Søren Kierkegaard – Philosopher

- **Habits:** Ate extremely sparingly, often a single biscuit and cup of coffee for meals.
 - **Quote:** “People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use.”
 - **Story:** So focused on writing that he barely ate, often described as gaunt.
-

18. Immanuel Kant – Philosopher

- **Habits:** Ate once per day, precisely at 3:30 PM.
 - **Quote:** “Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life.”
 - **Story:** Lived a hyper-disciplined, minimal life with structured habits—food included.
-



Ascetics, Saints, and Religious Founders

19. St. Francis of Assisi – Catholic Saint

- **Habits:** Practiced extreme fasting and poverty.
 - **Quote:** “It is in giving that we receive.”
 - **Story:** Would go days without food while in prayer and self-denial.
-

20. John the Baptist – Biblical Prophet

- **Habits:** Ate locusts and wild honey in the desert (Matthew 3:4).
- **Story:** Lived in the wilderness in ascetic simplicity, rejecting normal comforts.

21. The Desert Fathers – Early Christian Monastics

- **Habits:** Lived in the Egyptian desert on minimal rations—sometimes a few dates and water for days.
- **Quote:** “A man who keeps death before his eyes will at all times overcome his cowardice.”
- **Story:** Practiced silence, solitude, and extreme fasting for spiritual purification.

22. Ramana Maharshi – Indian Sage

- **Habits:** Ate sparingly; often fasted.
 - **Quote:** “The mind is only a bundle of thoughts.”
 - **Story:** Focused on meditation, lived off simple ashram food with no personal possessions.
-

Political & Military Figures

23. Abraham Lincoln – U.S. President

- **Habits:** Ate very little, usually one simple meal per day.
 - **Quote:** “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt.”
 - **Story:** Described as gaunt and melancholic. His wife worried about his frequent refusal to eat.
-

24. Thomas Jefferson – U.S. Founding Father

- **Habits:** Preferred vegetables; practiced moderation.
 - **Quote:** “The sovereign invigorator of the body is exercise, and of all the exercises walking is best.”
 - **Story:** Advocated a near-vegetarian diet for health and economy.
-

25. General Robert E. Lee – Confederate General

- **Habits:** Ate sparingly; preferred plain food like cornbread and buttermilk.
 - **Quote:** “Duty is the sublimest word in our language.”
 - **Story:** Known for self-discipline, even during war and high stress.
-

26. Marcus Aurelius – Roman Emperor & Philosopher

- **Habits:** Lived stoically, practicing restraint in all things including food.
 - **Quote:** “You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.”
 - **Story:** As a Stoic, believed indulgence weakened virtue.
-

Modern Spiritual Teachers & Minimalists

27. Paramahansa Yogananda – Indian Yogi

- **Habits:** Lived on small vegetarian meals. Taught fasting and breath control.
 - **Quote:** “You may control a mad elephant; you may shut the mouth of the bear and the tiger; ride the lion and play with the cobra... but control of the mind is better and more difficult.”
 - **Story:** Advocated fasting and meditation to gain mastery over body and soul.
-

28. David Blaine – Magician & Endurance Artist

- **Habits:** Has fasted for 44 days with only water.
 - **Quote:** “I think everything I do is normal, not superhuman.”
 - **Story:** Performed extreme fasting as mental experiments and art.
-

More Thinkers, Writers, Scientists

29. Ludwig van Beethoven – Composer

- **Habits:** Ate frugally, obsessed over details like his morning coffee (60 beans counted out).
 - **Quote:** “Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and philosophy.”
 - **Story:** Known to skip meals while composing. Lived in relative poverty much of his life.
-

30. Emily Dickinson – Poet

- **Habits:** Lived in seclusion; extremely minimalist lifestyle including diet.
 - **Quote:** “Saying nothing... sometimes says the most.”
 - **Story:** Family letters suggest she skipped meals often and focused almost entirely on writing.
-

31. Johannes Kepler – Astronomer

- **Habits:** Poor health and obsession with his work led to irregular and sparse eating.

- **Quote:** “I am merely thinking God's thoughts after Him.”
 - **Story:** His attention to astronomy and mathematics often outweighed bodily concerns.
-

32. Nikolaas Tinbergen – Nobel Laureate in Medicine

- **Habits:** Practiced intermittent fasting and minimalism in lifestyle.
 - **Quote:** “The study of instinct is in essence the study of survival.”
 - **Story:** Lived simply to focus on research and ecological balance.
-

More Saints, Mystics, and Religious Devotees

33. Teresa of Ávila – Catholic Saint & Mystic

- **Habits:** Fasted extensively; lived on minimal food during long prayers.
- **Quote:** “God alone suffices.”

- **Story:** Combined intense fasting with mystical experiences and long periods of prayer.
-

34. St. Benedict of Nursia – Founder of Western Monasticism

- **Habits:** Created rules for monks including frequent fasting and simplicity in food.
 - **Quote:** “Idleness is the enemy of the soul.”
 - **Story:** Lived in a cave before forming monasteries with strict ascetic practices.
-

35. Meher Baba – Indian Mystic

- **Habits:** Ate only what was necessary; lived simply and silently.
- **Quote:** “Don't worry, be happy.”
- **Story:** Fasted frequently during his spiritual retreats. Took a vow of silence for 44 years.

More Political & Military Figures

36. Winston Churchill – British Prime Minister

- **Habits:** Though known for cigars and alcohol, he ate very little, especially during WWII.
- **Quote:** “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”
- **Story:** Skipped meals during wartime; wrote and governed late into the night on little sustenance.

37. General George S. Patton – U.S. WWII

General

- **Habits:** Ate lightly, focused on discipline.
 - **Quote:** “Accept the challenges so that you can feel the exhilaration of victory.”
 - **Story:** Believed in the warrior ethos, including restraint in food and luxury.
-

38. Simón Bolívar – Latin American Liberator

- **Habits:** Frequently ate little while leading military campaigns.
 - **Quote:** “To die for one’s country is to live forever.”
 - **Story:** Slept outdoors, ate what the soldiers ate, often very little.
-



More Ascetics, Fasters, and Minimalists

39. Milarepa – Tibetan Buddhist Saint

- **Habits:** Lived in a cave, subsisted for years on **nettle soup alone**.
 - **Quote:** “In horror of death, I took to the mountains... I have made real the teachings of the guru.”
 - **Story:** Body turned green from nettles. Considered one of the greatest yogis in Tibetan tradition.
-

40. Swami Vivekananda – Hindu Monk and Philosopher

- **Habits:** Ate sparingly; often fasted while traveling and teaching.
 - **Quote:** “You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual.”
 - **Story:** Lived with intense discipline, traveled the world without much money, food, or rest.
-

41. Diogenes of Sinope – Ancient Greek Cynic Philosopher

- **Habits:** Lived in a barrel, ate only raw vegetables or scraps.
 - **Quote:** “He has the most who is most content with the least.”
 - **Story:** Rejected societal norms, including culinary indulgence.
-

42. St. Anthony the Great – Father of Christian Monasticism

- **Habits:** Lived alone in the desert; fasted for days at a time.
 - **Quote:** “The more you abandon your own will, the more God will dwell within you.”
 - **Story:** Ate only once per day at sunset, usually bread and salt.
-

Thinkers, Writers, and Inventors (Continued)

43. Baruch Spinoza – Philosopher

- **Habits:** Lived in near poverty, grinding lenses by day, eating little.
 - **Quote:** “The more you struggle to live, the less you live.”
 - **Story:** Rejected wealth and comfort; known to eat sparse meals while focusing on philosophy.
-

44. Arthur Schopenhauer – Philosopher

- **Habits:** Ate minimal, simple meals; daily routine strictly regimented.

- **Quote:** “Compassion is the basis of morality.”
 - **Story:** Was known for his solitary habits and avoidance of indulgences, including elaborate food.
-

45. Blaise Pascal – Mathematician & Philosopher

- **Habits:** Practiced bodily mortification, denied himself many comforts including rich food.
 - **Quote:** “Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed.”
 - **Story:** Attributed physical suffering as part of spiritual discipline and clarity.
-

46. Mary Shelley – Author of *Frankenstein*

- **Habits:** Periods of grief, illness, and creative intensity often meant long periods of poor appetite.

- **Quote:** “Nothing contributes so much to tranquilize the mind as a steady purpose.”
 - **Story:** Lived simply while focused on her writing, sometimes barely eating while grieving the loss of children.
-

More Religious Figures and Mystics

47. Ignatius of Loyola – Founder of the Jesuits

- **Habits:** Early in his conversion, fasted excessively and lived in a cave for a year.
 - **Quote:** “Go forth and set the world on fire.”
 - **Story:** Nearly died due to extreme fasting before later advocating more balance.
-

48. John Wesley – Methodist Founder

- **Habits:** Ate a spartan diet (bread and water) and fasted twice weekly.
- **Quote:** “Do all the good you can...”
- **Story:** Encouraged his preachers to fast weekly as a spiritual discipline.

49. St. Rose of Lima – Catholic Saint

- **Habits:** Ate nearly nothing during fasts, lived in a hut she built in her garden.
 - **Quote:** “Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.”
 - **Story:** Known for extreme fasting and asceticism from a young age.
-

50. The Stylites (e.g., St. Simeon Stylites) – Christian Hermits

- **Habits:** Lived on pillars, eating only tiny rations lowered up by followers.
 - **Story:** Spent decades atop stone columns in Syria, fasting and praying continuously.
-

More Political, Military & Cultural Leaders

51. Robert Owen – Social Reformer

- **Habits:** Ate very plainly, advocating for communal meals of minimal luxury.
 - **Quote:** “Man is the creature of circumstances.”
 - **Story:** Promoted worker health with simple, healthy eating—not indulgent.
-

52. Mohandas Desai – Indian Politician & Activist

- **Habits:** Follower of Gandhi’s fasting and diet regimen.
 - **Story:** Practiced fasting as moral purification and political resistance.
-

53. Clara Barton – Founder of the American Red Cross

- **Habits:** Neglected meals while working in war zones; ate only when time allowed.
- **Quote:** “I may be compelled to face danger, but never fear it.”

- **Story:** Often lived on hardtack and coffee during the Civil War.
-

54. Booker T. Washington – Educator & Leader

- **Habits:** Lived through extreme poverty, trained himself to eat simply and teach restraint.
 - **Quote:** “Character, not circumstances, makes the man.”
 - **Story:** Even when successful, maintained humble meals focused on practicality.
-

✂ More Warriors and Strategists

55. Miyamoto Musashi – Samurai & Philosopher

- **Habits:** Practiced asceticism, lived off battlefield rations and wild plants.
 - **Quote:** “Do nothing which is of no use.”
 - **Story:** Spent years in cave meditation and study, eating only essentials.
-

56. T.E. Lawrence (“Lawrence of Arabia”) – British Officer

- **Habits:** Lived among Bedouins, ate as they did—dates, rice, goat milk.
 - **Quote:** “All men dream, but not equally.”
 - **Story:** Sought humility and spiritual strength through hardship and abstinence.
-

57. Geronimo – Apache Leader

- **Habits:** During long campaigns, lived off sparse foraged food and small game.
 - **Quote:** “I was born on the prairies where the wind blew free and there was nothing to break the light of the sun.”
 - **Story:** Known for surviving on minimal food during long resistance campaigns.
-

58. Julius Caesar – Roman General

- **Habits:** Known for self-discipline; lived simply while campaigning.
- **Quote:** “I came, I saw, I conquered.”

- **Story:** Ate the same sparse rations as his soldiers.



Minimalist Eaters Summary Chart

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
1	Nikola Tesla	Inventor	Lived on milk, bread, honey; often forgot to eat	“Moderation...”
2	Alexander G. Bell	Inventor	Apples & cheese in attic; neglected meals	Obsessed with invention over eating

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
3	Isaac Newton	Scientist	Forgot to eat; lived on eggs and light meals	Intense focus on work
4	Franz Kafka	Writer	Sparse vegetarian diet	Health, purity obsessed
5	Steve Jobs	Entrepreneur	Extreme diets; fruitarian, fasting	Believed fasting improved clarity
6	Jesus Christ	Religious	40-day fast	“Man shall not live by bread alone.”
7	Mahatma Gandhi	Spiritual/Political	Lived on goat milk, fruit, lemon water	Frequent fasting for protest and purity

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
8	St. Catherine of Siena	Mystic	Lived on Eucharist alone	Mystical fasting life
9	Buddha (Siddhartha)	Religious	Near-starvation, rice grain per day	Found "Middle Way" after asceticism
10	Napoleon Bonaparte	Military	Skipped meals before battle	Focused on strategy over eating
11	George W. Carver	Scientist	Simple vegetarian diet	Prioritized spiritual/moral development
12	Henry D. Thoreau	Philosopher	Beans, bread; homegrown food	Simple life at Walden
13	Blaise Pascal	Mathematician	Voluntary suffering;	Mortification for clarity

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
			ate very little	
1 4	Simone Weil	Philosopher	Starved in solidarity with the poor	Died from refusal to eat during war
1 5	Leonardo da Vinci	Artist/Inventor	Small vegetarian meals	Believed meat dulled creativity
1 6	Pythagoras	Philosopher	Strict vegetarian, ascetic	Ethics tied to simple eating
1 7	Kierkegaard	Philosopher	Biscuits & coffee; ignored meals	Lived in deep solitude
1 8	Kant	Philosopher	One meal daily, always at 3:30 PM	Rigidly structured life

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
1 9	St. Francis of Assisi	Saint	Extreme fasting; food as spiritual temptation	“It is in giving that we receive.”
2 0	John the Baptist	Prophet	Locusts and wild honey	Desert ascetic
2 1	Desert Fathers	Early Christian Monks	Dates and water; fasting life	Emphasized purity and discipline
2 2	Ramana Maharshi	Indian Sage	Lived on simple ashram food	Focused on meditation and truth
2 3	Abraham Lincoln	President	One simple meal per day	Known for gauntness and neglect of food

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
2 4	Thomas Jefferson	Founder/Thinker	Light vegetarian meals	“Walking is best exercise.”
2 5	Robert E. Lee	Military	Cornbread & buttermilk	Spartan habits
2 6	Marcus Aurelius	Emperor/Stoic	Minimalist food lifestyle	Stoic control over desires
2 7	Yogananda	Mystic	Fasting and breath control	“Mastery over mind is key.”
2 8	David Blaine	Performer	Fasts up to 44 days	Mind-over-body philosophy
2 9	Spinoza	Philosopher	Ate little, lived alone in poverty	Sought mental clarity

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
30	Schopenhauer	Philosopher	Sparse, disciplined meals	“Compassion is the basis of morality.”
31	Mary Shelley	Writer	Grief and writing interrupted eating	Wrote <i>Frankenstein</i> in intense solitude
32	Ignatius of Loyola	Religious Founder	Starved in cave; later rebalanced diet	Fasting as spiritual refinement
33	John Wesley	Minister	Fasted twice weekly	Disciplined Methodism
34	St. Rose of Lima	Saint	Nearly no food	Sought mystical union with God
35	Stylites (e.g., Simeon)	Christian Hermits	Ate scraps while atop pillars	Lived decades in fasting prayer

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
3 6	Robert Owen	Reformer	Basic meals for communal simplicity	Taught diet simplicity as moral good
3 7	Morarji Desai	Indian PM	Follower of Gandhi; fasting tradition	Self-purification through restraint
3 8	Clara Barton	Nurse/Reformer	Warzone diet, often skipped meals	Humanitarian above personal comfort
3 9	Booker T. Washington	Educator	Simple meals, even when successful	Promoted discipline and strength
4 0	Miyamoto Musashi	Samurai	Lived on field rations and wild herbs	Warrior-monk discipline

#	Name	Domain	Food Habit Summary	Notable Quote or Note
4 1	T.E. Lawrence	British Officer	Bedouin diet; goat milk, rice	Chose hardship and simplicity
4 2	Geronimo	Apache Leader	Survived on minimal wild food	Fought on little sustenance
4 3	Julius Caesar	Roman General	Ate soldier rations	Shared burdens with troops

To Sleep, or Not to Sleep? That is the Question.

Sleep is overrated in the quest for greatness! This book highlights the lives of religious and civic leaders who have shown how, contrary to popular belief, self-care isn't the top priority in life!

While we must be wise and prudent in our approach, there is a magic to learning to use the wee hours of night and morning to do things often on a higher plane than the labors of the day. Let us remember not only scientific laboratories but wisdom from the ancients and insight from inspired individuals that can give us information on matters of importance. We also demonstrate that the scientific laboratories are showing we don't need so much sleep as has been thought.

As great ones like Benjamin Franklin have said, don't leave for tomorrow what can be done today. Franklin also said early to bed, early to rise, but in his life he often didn't follow that counsel and worked into the night.

The Lord, through his prophet Joseph Smith, urged us to diligence when he taught in D&C 123, “13 Therefore, that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; and they are truly manifest from heaven— 14 These should then be attended to with great earnestness. 15 Let no man count them as small things; for there is much which lieth in futurity, pertaining to the saints, which depends upon these things.”

Enjoy this fun, fascinating, and encouraging look into what inspired people around the world throughout history have done, and begin to explore what you can do! As Henry B. Eyring said, “I can't be a perfect servant every hour, but I can give more effort than I thought I could.”