

# SEMINARY STARTS AT SEVEN

By Dean B. Clement

**5:44 a.m.** I'm flying through crisp air over lush, green forests and endless rivers, everything peaceful all around.

**5:45 a.m.** Beep! Beep! Beep! I'm jolted awake, and a frantic hand shoots out of my cocoon of blankets to hit snooze on my first alarm clock. I barricade myself under blankets and drift back to sleep. What happened to the rivers? I try to resume flight, but to no avail. . .

**5:54 a.m.** Beep! Beep! Beep! Shocked back into consciousness, I hit snooze again. I try to open my impossibly heavy eyelids. Everything is a dark blur. Is it always this foggy in here? I have a German test today. I have to stock shelves at work tonight. . .

**6:03 a.m.** Beep! Beep!—Thud! Seminary starts at seven. I have to run eight 200-meter sprints in track today. Chad wants me to quit my job and apply where he works. . .

**6:12 a.m.** Beep! Beep!—Wham! Will Chad's store hire me if I quit my current job? Isn't there a permanent record of employment or something? I'm so tired. . .

**6:21 a.m.** Beep! Beep! No more beeping, please. Ugh, my retainer tastes like glue. That English paper is due tomorrow—500 words on *The Great Gatsby*. But what if I don't think it's so great? Has anybody ever died trying to get out of bed? I think I just might be the first. . .

THERE'S NOTHING MORE DIFFICULT THAN GETTING OUT OF A WARM BED—SO, WHY DID I TAKE EARLY-MORNING SEMINARY?

**6:30 a.m.** Buzzzzzzzz! Smack! I hit the off switch of the second alarm clock. Now I have to get up for real. I hate mornings. There's nothing more difficult than getting out of a warm bed—so, why did I take seminary at seven? I stumble out of bed and head for the shower.



**6:35 a.m.**

I'm dressed and combing my hair. How do you say, "I can't take my test today because my German skills slept in," in German?



**6:45 a.m.**

I finish brushing my teeth. My aching legs complain all the way to the truck. What if they fall off this afternoon after the sixth 200-meter sprint? Would the coaches still make me run the other two?



**6:41 a.m.** I pour a bowl of cereal. How do I go to work and tell them I want to quit? Do I want to quit?

**6:48 a.m.** I sit in the cold cab of my grumpy old truck, the engine shuddering. I can let the engine warm up until 6:52. I close my eyes, fold my arms, and bow my head. I pray silently. Sitting in the cab of the shivering truck, I pray for health, for success in my classes and sports, for the Spirit to be with me, to be kind to everyone I encounter. The shivering subsides. The cab is still cold, but I'm warmer now—at least inside—and my mind is calm.

**6:52 a.m.**

Timed just right. I glide through the traffic signals—nothing but green lights.



**6:58 a.m.** As I walk into class, the warmth I felt inside me while praying builds. My teacher greets me with a warm handshake. "Hello, there! It's good to see you this morning!" "It's good to be here!" I exclaim in return, a smile breaking through my pillow-creased face. The English paper, German test, track workouts, job, early morning blues—all my worries and anxieties—are left out in the cold. I'm certain they'll reappear after class, and that's OK; I'll be ready for them. And then I remember—this is why I chose seminary at seven. There's no better way to start the day. **NE**

*Dean B. Clement lives in Arizona, USA.*

**6:56 a.m.** I park in the lot across from the seminary building, jump out of the pickup, trot across the street, and scurry into the building.



## WHY WE CHOOSE SEMINARY

Going to school often feels like walking into battle. Before I had seminary, I would walk into school with a sick feeling and usually have a miserable day. When I started seminary, it was like I suddenly had on armor, and

I could feel the Spirit in school. I also started to notice that others around me who weren't LDS started to follow my example more. This was a testimony to me about what a blessing seminary is!

**Miranda J., Rhode Island, USA**

We often thank Heavenly Father for our seminary and the refuge it is from school. It's a holy place for us because we learn together about Christ and strengthen each other to live the commandments with love.

**Seminary class, Colorado, USA**

I stand in a holy place when I'm at seminary, soaking in the teachings and gospel of Jesus Christ. Seminary is the place that helped change my life!

**Johan H., Utah, USA**