

Revival & REFORMATION

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Making a Deal with God

By Andrew McChesney

Dmitry Bagal, a student from Russia, ran out of money several months after enrolling in the master's in theology program at Friedensau Adventist University in Germany. His options seemed limited. He could work on-campus or in a nearby retirement home, but the income would only partially cover his tuition. As a foreigner, he could not take out a state loan like the German students. But he could apply for a scholarship, which was smaller than the loan but did not require repayment.

As Dmitry prayed over the dilemma, he felt impressed to make a deal with God. "Lord," he prayed, "if you bless me with this scholarship, I promise to set aside a second tithe to support mission work."

Dmitry applied for the scholarship and, to his joy, it was approved. He began setting aside a second 10 percent of his gross income for mission work. As the semesters rolled by, he was approved for the scholarship again and again, and he kept giving a second tithe to mission work. Despite the second tithe, he still somehow always had enough money to cover tuition and other expenses. He even was able to set money aside for an emergency.

Then Dmitry's five-year-old laptop began to act up as he worked on his master's thesis. Twice he had to buy spare parts to self-repair it. One day, he found that he could no longer close the laptop's screen. The hinges refused to budge. A new laptop was needed if he hoped to finish his thesis, and he was glad to have the small emergency fund.

But as he prayed about the situation, he remembered a friend, also from the former Soviet Union, who was serving with his family of five as missionaries in the South American jungle. High humidity had ruined his friend's tablet, and a robust device was desperately needed to continue his work. Dmitry couldn't understand why he was thinking about his friend in South America when he was the one in need of a laptop to graduate. But he bought a waterproof, dustproof laptop and mailed it to his friend.

Shortly after sending the package, an online advertisement popped up on Dmitry's laptop screen that offered the very hinges that he needed for the laptop. He ordered the hinges and, after installing them, the screen opened and closed like new. Amazingly, the laptop still works today, eight years later. Dmitry has no doubt that God blesses those who put mission first. "The Lord has prolonged the life of the laptop," Dmitry says. "Truly it is written in the Bible, 'Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done' [Proverbs 19:17, NIV]."

Andrew McChesney is editor for Adventist Mission.

World Church Prayer Requests

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- Pray for the students at Friedensau Adventist University in Germany, that they will be lights for Jesus in our darkening world.
- Pray that we each would have the heart to give generously to missions and to minister to the poor and those in need.
- Pray for the Bhoi in Nepal. There are no Christians in the Bhoi community. Please pray that this people group of 149,000 come to know of Jesus and His eternal love for them.
- Pray for South Africa and the Covid health crisis. Pray that God would heal us of our diseases.