**Intuition**

**I foretold the former things long ago,**

**my mouth announced them and made them known;**

**then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.**

 ***(Isaiah 48:3)***

**On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell conducted the first successful experiment with the telephone. During the experiment, Bell used the phone to speak these now-famous words to his assistant in the next room: “Mr. Watson – come here – I want to see you.” That same day, Bell wrote his father of his “great success” and speculated that “the day is coming when telegraph (phone) wires will be laid on to houses just like water and gas – and friends converse with each other without leaving home.” *(Library of Congress)***

**In an Italian stained glass window, crafted around 1580, is a crude but identifiable form of a bicycle carrying an angel on a cloud. You and I know the bike only dates back a couple of hundred years. So how did that glass artist come up with it? *(L. M. Boyd)***

**In 1947, Bob Petersen, ex-gas-station attendant, acted on his hunch that there were lots of guys like him who loved to soup up and talk about cars. He and a partner risked everything they had -- $400 – to convert that enthusiasm into a slim magazine called Hot Rod. Petersen lugged copies of the magazine to California car races and sole them for a quarter. The Petersen Publishing empire now produces 23 automobile and hobby magazines, and Petersen’s personal fortune is estimated at over $350 million. *(Ralph Kinney Bennett, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Winston Churchill saw the future in history. In 1943, in the middle of World War II, Churchill stayed up late one night, talking to a young aide, Harold MacMillan, about British history. The subject turned to the 17th century and Oliver Cromwell. He was a great man, Churchill explained, except for one grave fault: all Cromwell’s concern had been with Spain, when Spain in fact was declining and France was about to assume leadership in Europe. “Now I know what Churchill meant,” MacMillan recalled many years later. “He’d lost interest in the Germans. All our staff were planning battles against them, but he knew they were finished. He was interested only in the next wave that might threaten the world – Soviet Russia.” Knowing what had happened to the world in the 17th century, Churchill knew what might happen in the 20th. *(Lynne V. Cheney, in The Value of the Humanities)***

**In the late 1600s, Edmond Halley proposed that the comets of 1531, 1607 and 1682 were actually the same comet. He predicted that the comet would return in 1758. Halley died before his prediction came true, and the comet was later named Halley’s comet. *(Jeff Harris, in Shortcuts)***

**Lucky people know the difference between risky and rash, between an informed hunch and a vain hope. Author Max Gunther defined a hunch as “a conclusion based on facts stored on some unconscious level.” Successful people are constantly tucking away such information to enhance their intuition. That’s what Robert Frost meant when he noted, “All the best things a poet ever uses are things he didn’t know he was getting when he was getting them.” *(Ralph Kinney Bennett, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Child: “I’m watching this interesting documentary on E.S.P. Care to join me?” Grandma: “No thanks, but let me know when it’s over. I can sense there’s a good ballgame on cable soon.” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**Tom Fuller, a slave brought to America when he was fourteen years old, could tell the exact number of seconds in any given length of time. Once, when asked to give the precise number of seconds in seventy years, he obliged in less than one and a half minutes. Yet Fuller could neither read nor write. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 121)***

**Sir Stafford Crtipps, the British ambassador to Russia, forecast the date of the German attack on Russia with uncanny accuracy. On April 23, 1941, he predicted that the Germans would attack on the morning of June 22, which they did. German documents captured after the war show that Hitler did not set the date until April 30. Albert Purdue, on May 4, 1945, in Chicago, predicted the war in Europe would end on May 8 at 8 p.m. He was right. *(Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 303)***

**Good instincts usually tell you what to do long before your head has figured it out. *(Michael Burke)***

**Hotel man Conrad Hilton owed his monumental success partly to a finely tuned hunching skill. Once he was trying to buy an old hotel in Chicago whose owner was selling to the highest bidder. All the sealed bids were to be opened on a certain date, and several days before the deadline Hilton submitted a $165,000 bid. He went to bed that night feeling vaguely disturbed and woke with a strong hunch that his bid was not going to win. “It just didn’t feel right,” he said later. Acting on this strange intuition, he submitted another bid: “$180,000. It was the highest bid. The next one down was $179,800. Hilton’s hunch could have welled up from stores of facts in the recesses of his mind. Ever since he bought his first hotel as a young man in Texas, he had been gathering knowledge about the business. Moreover, in bidding on that Chicago hotel, he undoubtedly knew much about the likely competing bidders – knew it without being able specifically to articulate it. When his conscious brain assembled known data and produced a bid, his subconscious was rummaging in a huge dark warehouse of other facts and concluded that the bid was too low. He trusted the hunch, and it was magnificently right. *(Max Gunther, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A moment’s insight is sometimes worth a life’s experience. *(Oliver Wendell Holmes)***

**One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar. *(Helen Keller)***

**Grandpa: “You want to know what I’m thinking?” Grandma: “Not really.” Grandpa: “No? You used to always want to know everything I was thinking.” Grandma: “We’ve been married a long, long time. I already know what you’re thinking. Dinner will be ready in about ten minutes.” Grandpa: “Darn, you’re good." *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**Charles Lindbergh’s solo flight across the Atlantic in a single-engine plane was hailed as a feat of incredible daring. “Lucky Lindy” became one of the century’s great heroes, but luck had very little to do with it. A thoroughly experienced pilot and mechanic, Lindbergh started with a hunch “that airplanes had advanced to a point where such a flight was practicable.” *(Ralph Kinney Bennett, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Most fans who marvel at the heroics of San Francisco 49ers quarterback Joe Montana have no idea of the hours he has spent memorizing game plans, poring over films, studying opposition defenses. His uncanny ability to extricate himself from difficult situations, his legendary last-quarter passing feats, all belie his painstaking approach to the game. “I don’t take chances unless the situation calls for it,” he says. When Montana acts on a hunch that, say, a zone defense has a weak spot, the effect can be breathtaking. But it is the result of constant brain work that provides what he calls “recognition – the experience to see everything on the field.” *(Ralph Kinney Bennett, in Reader’s Digest)***

**In Gulliver’s Travels Jonathon Swift described the two moons of Mars, Phobos and Deimos, giving their exact site and speeds of rotation. He did this more than a hundred years before either moon was discovered. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 90)***

**In his 1994 best-selling fictional novel, A Skeleton in God’s Closet, Dr. Paul Maier named the successor to Pope John Paul II as Benedict XVI, the 265th Bishop of Rome. In his sequel to the novel, More Than a Skeleton, published two years ago, Pope Benedict plays a larger role. Then this April, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger followed John Paul II as the 265th Bishop of Rome and chose the name Benedict XVI. Now Maier, professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University and second vice president of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, is being called “Paul the Prophet.” “Hardly!” Maier chuckles. “I’d like to think that Cardinal Ratzinger read the German edition of my books and liked the sound of Benedict XVI. But just chalk it up to coincidence!” *(The Lutheran Witness, September, 2005)***

**The Suez Canal does not have locks. But did you know Napoleon wanted to dig that canal? His advisors argued against it, saying the Mediterranean and Red seas have different levels. He junked the notion. His advisors were wrong. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**People like William Paley, Walt Disney, or Edwin Land never waited for a printout to see if they should launch a network, a fantasy world, or a technological wonder. *(Joe Griffith, in Speaker's Library of Business, p. 107)***

**In addition to his many other predictions, is it true that Nostradamus foresaw his own death? Michel de Notredame, aka Nostradamus (1503-1566), seems to have done so. On July 1, 1566, his assistant rose to leave him for the evening, saying, “Tomorrow, master,” to which Nostradamus said, “Tomorrow at sunrise, I shall no longer be here.” The next morning he was found dead from an attack of dropsy. *(Barbara Berliner, in The Book of Answers, p. 256)***

**Only intuition can protect you from the most dangerous individual of all, the articulate incompetent. *(Robert Bernstein, publisher)***

**Several important film directors looked at the script for Rain Man, but concluded that the story of an autistic middle-aged man and his younger brother was too much of a downer for a mass audience. Barry Levinson, director of Tin Man, and, recently, Avalon, saw terrific potential – if the writing and performances exploited the humor as well as drama in the interplay between the brothers. Levinson told Dustin Hoffman, “Let’s not be gun-shy” in depicting Raymond Babbitt’s handicap. His instincts proved right. Hoffman’s bravura performance captivated audiences worldwide, and the film grossed over half a billion dollars. *(Ralph Kinney Bennett, in Reader’s Digest)***

**If someone is said to have a sixth sense, then they seem to have an intuitive power that grants them uncanny knowledge. We are taught that humans have five senses: touch, hearing, taste, smell, and sight. As early as 1712, English theologian and mathemetician William Whiston, a believer in the supernatural aspects of Christianity, wrote about a sixth sense. He identified it as "Prescience" and "Foreknowledg" (sic), traits that he believed were possessed by the Biblical prophets. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Members of the Dogon tribe in Mali, Africa, for many centuries worshiped a star known today by astronomers as Sirius B. The Dogon people knew its precise elliptical orbit, knew how long it took to revolve around its parent star, Sirius, and were aware that it was made up of materials not found on earth – all this centuries before modern astronomers had even discovered that Sirius B existed. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 169)***

**How do you know whether to trust a hunch? Says one successful huncher, a retired stockbroker, “I ask myself: Is it conceivable that I’ve gathered data on this situation without realizing it? Have I found out all I can about it, done all the work I can? If the answers are yes and if the hunch feels strong, I tend to go with it.” *(Max Gunther, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Two warnings: One, never trust hunches about such things as lotteries and slot machines. There is no possibility that such a hunch can well up from some hidden pool of facts inside you, because there are no facts. And two, never confuse a hunch with a hope. A lot of bad hunches are just strong wishes in disguise. *(Max Gunther, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A meteorologist tells me: “We can’t really predict the weather. We just forecast its unpredictability.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Girl: “What did you bring for lunch today? No, wait, don’t tell me. A peanut butter and jelly sandwich. You’re so predictable.” Boy: “I knew you were going to say that.” *(Jerry Bittle, in Shirley & Son comic strip)***

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