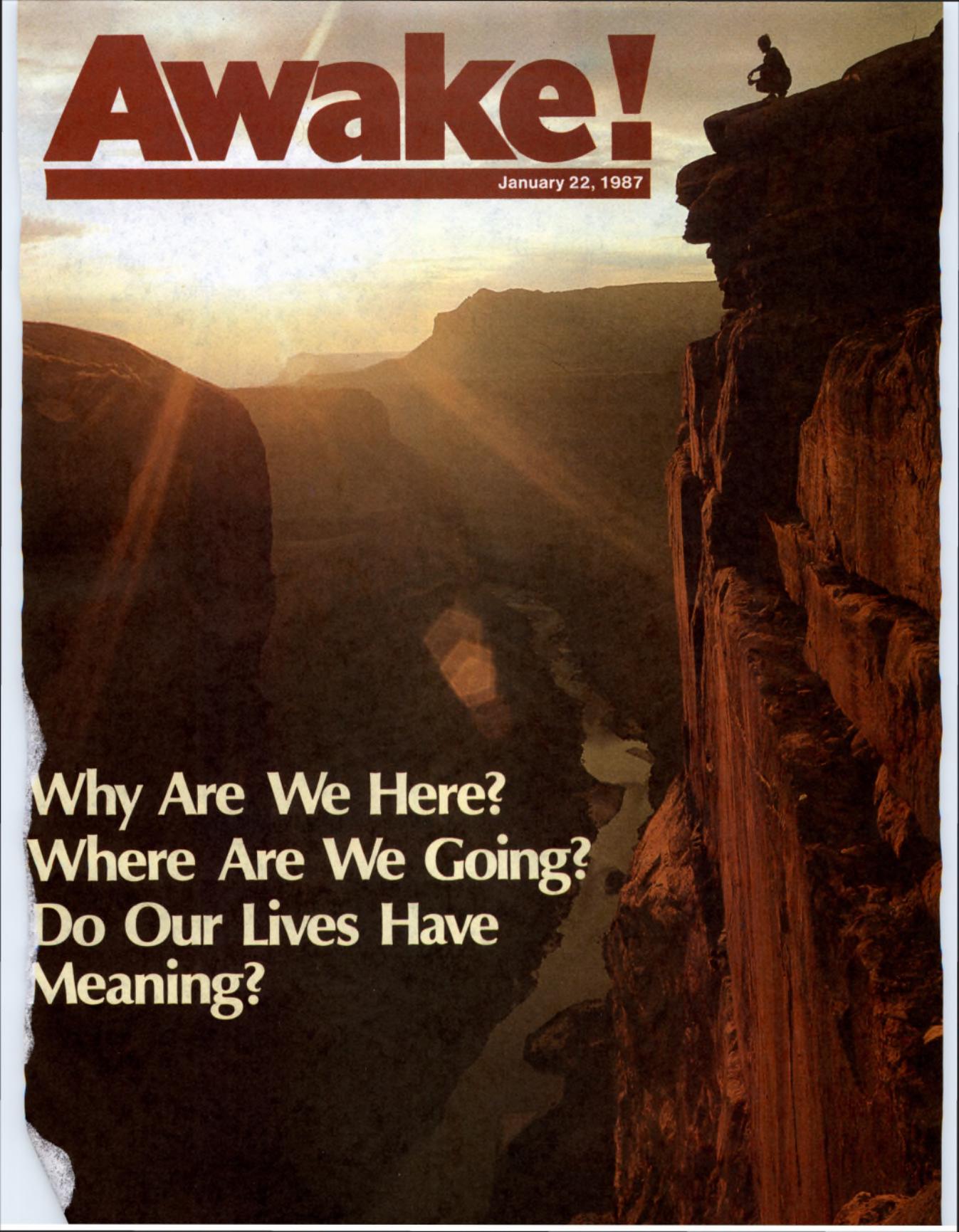


Awake!

January 22, 1987



**Why Are We Here?
Where Are We Going?
Do Our Lives Have
Meaning?**



Where Are They Going?

It's spring, and these Canada geese are returning to summer in Canada. Their striking V formation is more than just eye-catching, it is also wise. It saves energy. As each bird flies, an upward spiraling eddy is created at the wing tips. The bird behind flies above this eddy and gains lift from it.

Why Are They Here?

Six reasons—to bring forth these goslings. The female builds a nest of grasses and mosses, lines it with down from her breast, and lays her eggs. As the goslings emerge from the shell, each one makes eye contact with the mother. Bonding takes place. In due time the gander leads the family on an outing.



The Ultimate Questions Deep Within Us

Why are we here? Where are we going? Do our lives have any meaning? For that matter, how did we get here in the first place?

THE EARTH teems with life. From the darkest depths of the sea to the tops of the highest mountains, life is there. From the frozen polar regions to the steamy tropical jungles, it flourishes. Life's presence in the grasslands is rivaled by its abundance in the "pastures of the sea." It survives in water hundreds of degrees Fahrenheit above boiling and in cold a hundred degrees Fahrenheit below freezing. It thrives in the thin air miles above earth as well as in the ocean's seven-mile-deep Mariana Trench, where flat fish swim under a pressure of seven tons per square inch.*

Life also goes to extremes in size, ranging from an invisible bacterium to a blue whale a hundred feet long and a hundred tons in weight—its tongue alone weighs as much as an elephant! But what bacteria lack in size they make up for in numbers. In one teaspoonful of fertile topsoil, there may be five billion bacteria. It is bacteria by the billions inside the digestive tracts of termites and cows that enable them to digest the cellulose of wood and grass.

It has been estimated that more microbes

live on and in one of us than there are people on earth. "The total mass of microbes on Earth," one scientist says, "has recently been estimated to be a good 20 times greater than the mass of all earthly animals."

Truly, life on earth reaches into numbers beyond the counting.

Yet neither the bacteria nor the whales, nor any of the uncountable trillions of creatures in between, ask the ultimate questions: Why are we here? Where are we going? Do our lives have meaning? How did we get here?

But people do. They ask. Over and over again down through the centuries, they have been asking. Why? Because people are different. Their needs are different. There is an impassable gulf separating people from all other creatures on earth. The very fact that they alone ask the questions proves it. Peter Medawar in his book *The Limits of Science* says that the fact that science has a limit is "made clear by its inability to answer childlike elementary questions having to do with first and last things—questions such as 'How did everything begin?' 'What are we all here for?' 'What is the point of living?'"

Yet these ultimate questions keep returning, they refuse to be silenced, they cry out for answers. We have a built-in hunger for answers. Scientists attempt to give the answers. Do they have the key to open the door to Medawar's first ultimate question: How did everything begin?

* 1 mi = 1.6 km; 1 sq in. = 6.5 sq cm.

** 1 ft = 0.3 m.

How Did Life on Earth Begin?

One man's search for the answer

EARLY in life I knew the answer. God created it. My parents taught me that from the Bible. As I grew older I observed life around me. It fascinated me. My heart was filled with the wonder of it all.

The flowers of summer died in the fall but left behind seeds that brought back their colorful displays in the spring. The sap in the trees went underground but months later returned to clothe the bare limbs in spring green. The woodchucks in the fields curled up in their holes and slept through the winter but were out again with the return of the warm sunny days. The pair of bluebirds that nested in the hollow iron post in our backyard flew south in the fall but returned to the same post in the spring to raise another family. I gazed up in awe at the V formations of geese flying south and listened fascinated to their continuous gabblings—and wondered what all this chatter was about.

The more I learned about life, the more design I saw. And the more design I saw, the more I saw the need for the Master Designer my parents had told me about.

No Designer Needed?

Then in high school I was told that no designer was needed: 'It all just happened. Chemicals in earth's primitive atmosphere

were shattered by lightning and ultraviolet rays, their atoms recombined to form ever-more-complex molecules, finally a living cell appeared. As it multiplied, random changes occurred, and thousands of millions of years later life in its myriads of forms covered the earth. Man is its latest production.'

They made evolution sound so simple. Maybe too simple. I clung to my belief in creation, but I didn't want to be gullible. I wanted to be logical, to keep my mind open, to know the truth. I began to read science. I learned many things. My eyes were opened wider than ever to the wonders of nature. The more I learned the more I marveled. But the more design I saw, the more my mind balked at believing that random change and blind chance could create what brilliant men in their laboratories could not duplicate—not even the tiniest bacterium, much less the flowers, the bluebirds, the V's of geese.

During my years of study at both high school and university, I exposed myself to all the science I could get—chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics. Thereafter I continued to read books and magazine articles by evolutionists. It was still unconvincing. The evolutionary statements flowed so glibly, too glibly in view of the assertions that accompanied them.

That was years ago. This is the 1980's. Maybe now there is more proof and less assertion. Maybe it's time for another look. I focused on one aspect—how life got start-

ed on the earth. After all, if evolution cannot make a case for the first living cell, how can it sustain its claim to produce living creatures with trillions of cells—and you and me with our one hundred trillion each?

For my investigation I selected recent books by scientists with impeccable credentials—all evolutionists. I would adopt Jesus' way of dealing with the false religionists: "By your words you will be declared righteous, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matthew 12:37) My research limited itself to evolution's major steps en route to life: (1) a primitive atmosphere, (2) an organic soup, (3) proteins, (4) nucleotides, (5) nucleic acids called DNA, and (6) a membrane.

Assumptions About Early Atmosphere

First needed, an atmosphere on early earth that, when bombarded with lightning or ultraviolet rays or other energy sources, would produce simple molecules necessary for life. In 1953 Stanley Miller reported on just such an experiment. He selected a hydrogen-rich atmosphere for early earth, passed an electric spark through it, and produced 2 simpler amino acids of the 20 required to make proteins.¹ No one knows, however, what the early earth atmosphere was like.² Why did Miller choose this one? He admitted prejudice in favor of it because it was the only one wherein "the synthesis of compounds of biological interest takes place."³

I discovered that experiments are often rigged to give the desired results. Many scientists acknowledge that the experimenter can 'manipulate the outcome profoundly,' and 'his intelligence can be involved so as to prejudice the experiment.'⁴ Miller's atmosphere was used in most of the experiments that followed his, not because it was logical or even probable, but

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because "it was conducive to evolutionary experiments," and "the success of the laboratory experiments recommends it."⁵

Nevertheless, evolutionists hailed Miller's feat as a great breakthrough. Many experiments followed, using various energy sources and different raw materials. Through much manipulation and doctoring, and ignoring the conditions existing in a natural environment, scientists in their rigidly controlled laboratory experiments obtained additional organic chemicals relevant to life. They made a Mount Everest out of Miller's molehill. It opened the way for an organic soup of life's building blocks to accumulate in the ocean. Or did it?

The Organic Soup Is a Myth

Miller's molehill was flawed, and with its demise their Mount Everest collapsed. Miller used a spark to break up the simple chemicals in his atmosphere to allow amino acids to form. But this spark would even more quickly have shattered the amino acids! So again Miller rigged his experiment: He built a trap in his apparatus to store the acids as soon as they formed, to save them from the spark. Scientists claim, however, that in the early earth the amino acids would have escaped the lightning or ultraviolet rays by plunging into the ocean. Thus evolutionists seek to save the soup.

But for several reasons, to no avail. Amino acids are not stable in water and in the ancient ocean would exist in only negligible quantities. If the organic soup had ever existed, some of its compounds would have been trapped in sedimentary rocks, but in spite of 20 years of searching, "the earliest rocks have failed to yield any evidence of a prebiotic soup." Yet "the existence of a prebiotic soup is crucial." So "it comes as . . . a shock to realize that there is absolutely no positive evidence for its existence."⁶

The Chances of a Protein Forming

Allow the soup that nature disallows. Millions of amino acids in the soup, hundreds of different kinds, roughly half of them in a left-handed form and half right-handed. Would the amino acids now connect up in long chains to make proteins? Would only the 20 kinds needed be selected by chance out of the hundreds of kinds in the soup? And from these 20 kinds, would chance select only the left-handed forms found in living organisms? And then line them up in the right order for each distinctive protein and in the exact shape required for each one?⁷ Only by a miracle.

A typical protein has about one hundred amino acids and contains many thousands of atoms. In its life processes a living cell uses some 200,000 proteins. Two thousand of them are enzymes, special proteins without which the cell cannot survive. What are the chances of these enzymes forming at random in the soup—if you had the soup? One chance in $10^{40,000}$. This is 1 followed by 40,000 zeros. Written out in full, it would fill 14 pages of this magazine. Or, stated differently, the chance is the same as rolling dice and getting 50,000 sixes in a row. And that is for only 2,000 of the 200,000 needed for a living cell.⁸ So to get them all, roll 5,000,000 more sixes in a row!

By now I felt that I was beating a dead horse. But I continued. Assuming that the soup did give us proteins, what about nucleotides? Leslie Orgel of Salk Institute in California has indicated nucleotides to be "one of the major problems in prebiotic synthesis."⁹ They are needed to make the nucleic acids (DNA, RNA), also called an overwhelming difficulty. Incidentally, proteins cannot be assembled without the nucleic acids, nor can nucleic acids form without proteins.¹⁰ It's the old riddle in



Which Came First?

The egg comes from a chicken, but the chicken comes from an egg

Proteins can't form without nucleic acids, but nucleic acids can't form without proteins

A membrane can't form without a protein synthetic apparatus, but this apparatus can't form without a membrane

spontaneously. Water happily attacks large biological molecules. It pries nucleotides apart from each other, breaks sugar-to-phosphate bonds, and severs bases from sugars."¹¹

The final step of the six listed at the outset: a membrane. Without it the cell could not exist. It must be protected from water, and it is the water-repellent fats of the membrane that do this.¹² But to form the membrane a "protein synthetic apparatus" is needed, and this "protein synthetic apparatus" can function only if it is held together by a membrane.¹³ That chicken-and-egg problem all over again!

chemical garb: Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

But let's set that mountain aside and have evolutionist Robert Shapiro, professor of chemistry at New York University and a specialist in DNA research, dispose of the chance formation of nucleotides and nucleic acids in early earth's environment:

"Whenever two amino acids unite, a water molecule is released. Two molecules of water must be set free in assembling a nucleotide from its components, and additional water is released in combining nucleotides to form nucleic acids. Unfortunately, the formation of water in an environment that is full of it is the chemical equivalent of bringing sand to the Sahara. It is unfavorable, and requires the expenditure of energy. Such processes do not readily take place on their own. In fact, the reverse reactions are the ones that occur

Molecular Biology Sounds Its Death Knell

The evolutionists' dream was discovery of a supersimple first living cell. Molecular biology has turned their dream into a nightmare. Michael Denton, specialist in molecular biology, sounded its death knell:

"Molecular biology has shown that even the simplest of all living systems on earth today, bacterial cells, are exceedingly complex objects. Although the tiniest bacterial cells are incredibly small, weighing less than 10^{-12} gms, each is in effect a veritable micro-miniaturized factory containing thousands of exquisitely designed pieces of intricate molecular machinery, made up altogether of one hundred thousand million atoms, far more complicated than any machine built by man and absolutely without parallel in the nonliving world."

"Molecular biology has also shown that



Hundreds of thousands of chemical reactions are happening simultaneously in each living cell —without a traffic jam!

the basic design of the cell system is essentially the same in all living systems on earth from bacteria to mammals. In all organisms the roles of DNA, mRNA and protein are identical. The meaning of the genetic code is also virtually identical in all cells. The size, structure and component design of the protein synthetic machinery is practically the same in all cells. In terms of their basic biochemical design, therefore no living system can be thought of as being primitive or ancestral with respect to any other system, nor is there the slightest empirical hint of an evolutionary sequence among all the incredibly diverse cells on earth.¹⁴

Not surprising, then, that Harold Morowitz, a Yale University physicist, has calculated that the chances of getting the simplest living bacterium by random changes is 1 in 1 followed by 100,000,000,000 zeros. "This number is so large," Shapiro said, "that to write it in conventional form we would require several hundred thousand blank books." He charges that scientists committed to the chemical

evolution of life ignore the increasing evidence and "have chosen to hold it as a truth beyond question, thereby enshrining it as mythology."¹⁵

One scientist specializing in cell biology says that millions of years ago "just a single cell could make weapons, catch food, digest it, get rid of wastes, move around, build houses, engage in sexual activity straightforward or bizarre. These creatures are still around. The protists—organisms complete and entire, yet made up of just a single cell with many talents, but with no tissues, no organs, no hearts and no minds—really have everything we've got." She speaks of a single cell percolating with "those hundreds of thousands of simultaneous chemical reactions that are life."¹⁶

What an unbelievable maze of chemical traffic within the confines of a microscopic cell, *yet without a traffic jam!* Obviously, this demands a Master Designer of supreme intelligence. The information content coded into a speck of DNA weighing "less than a few thousand millionths of a gram" is enough "to specify an organism as complex as man."¹⁷ Even the information content of a single cell, "if written out, would fill a thousand 600-page books."¹⁸

How awesome! Intelligence far beyond our powers of comprehension is an absolute must to start life on earth.

My conclusion after all of this: Without the right atmosphere, no organic soup. Without the organic soup, no amino acids. Without amino acids, no proteins. Without proteins, no nucleotides. Without nucleotides, no DNA. Without DNA, no cell that reproduces itself. Without a covering membrane, no living cell. And without intelligent design and direction, no life on earth.

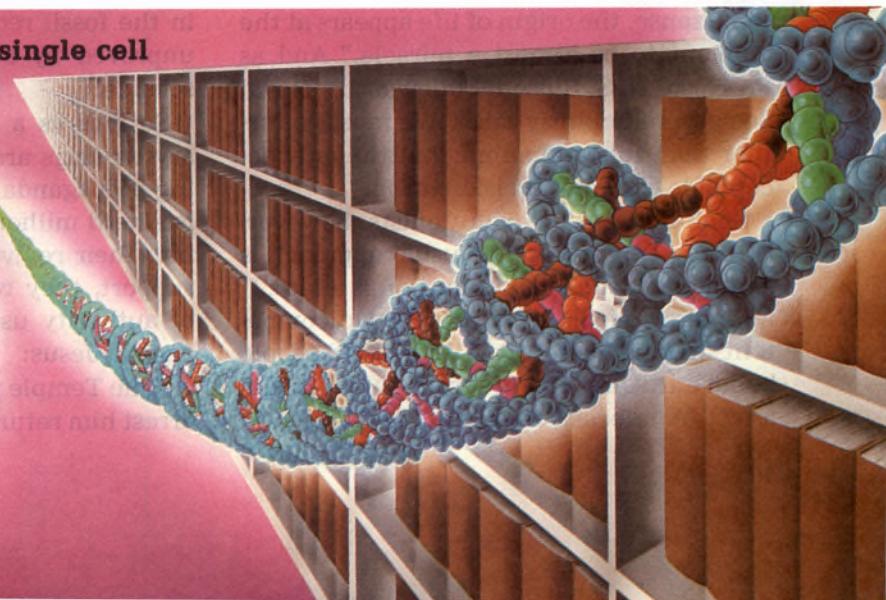
But scientists have rendered a great service to believers in creation. Their discoveries about life are a powerful reinforcement of my faith in creation, and I now read with deepened appreciation Romans 1:20, 21, 28: "Ever since God created the world his everlasting power and deity—however invisible—have been there for the mind to see in the things he has made. That is why such people are without excuse . . . They made nonsense out of logic and their empty minds were darkened . . . In other words, since they refused to see it was rational to acknowledge God, God has left them to their own irrational ideas and to their monstrous behaviour."—*The Jerusalem Bible*.

My search convinced me that what my parents taught me is true: Jehovah God alone is "the source of life." (Psalm 36:9)
—By an *Awake!* staff writer.

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The information in a single cell would fill a thousand 600-page books



The Other Questions Answered

The answer to how we got here determines the answers to the other questions: Why are we here? Where are we going? Do our lives have meaning?

BY ITS very nature, evolution proceeds willy-nilly, without purpose or goals. If we arrived through evolution, we are here for no reason, we are going nowhere, and our lives are meaningless.

Fortunately for us, evolution is not true. It never got started, much less reached down to us. The scientific evidence is unanimous: A living cell packed with thousands of purposeful functions could not originate by undirected, accidental changes. When reason prevails over evolutionists' desires, this is obvious. As Francis Crick said: "An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle." And as Professor H. S. Lipson, Fellow of the Royal Society, reluctantly said: "We must go further than this and admit that the only acceptable explanation is *creation*."

Such honesty by evolutionists, however, is rarely expressed. The usual approach is dogmatism, such as: 'Evolution is a fact. It no longer needs to be proved. No competent scientist doubts it. All educated people believe it. Only the ignorant reject it.' On a NOVA telecast, Stephen Jay Gould said

that science "often reflects the largely unconscious biases of those who do the work." Two minutes later he demonstrated his own bias when he

said that Darwin did more than any other human to "establish the fact of evolution."

Darwin believed that life was "originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one." His belief in evolution by inherited gradual changes is collapsing. The fossil record he relied on for proof has failed him. Gould himself has abandoned all these positions of Darwin because they are not founded on fact. To rescue the theory, Gould has switched from slow changes to big fast jumps to get from one form of life to another. There is no basis for this. It is an arbitrary maneuver to eliminate the need for the intermediate fossils that are lacking in the fossil record. Not only is evolution unproved by science, it is disproved by science.

So it is as a last resort that evolutionary writings are peppered with intimidating propaganda. By such tactics evolutionists herd millions of brainwashed converts into their revivalist tent. Lacking factual support, they resort to the same tyranny of authority used by desperate Pharisees against Jesus:

"The Temple police who had been sent to arrest him returned to the chief priests and

Pharisees. 'Why didn't you bring him in?' they demanded. 'He says such wonderful things!' they mumbled. 'We've never heard anything like it.' 'So you also have been led astray?' the Pharisees mocked. 'Is there a single one of us Jewish rulers or Pharisees who believes he is the Messiah?'" When one of their own number protested, they derided him: "Are you a wretched Galilean too?" (John 7:45-52, *The Living Bible*) Similarly, evolutionists today brand as incompetent any scientists that reject evolution and heap vitriolic ridicule upon them if they dare to espouse creation!

Creation is far more scientific than is evolution. It accounts for the purposeful design we see in heaven and on earth, in plants and animals, in our own bodies and in our amazing brain. The information content we see in DNA certainly testifies to an awesome intelligence at work. Einstein never liked the God of Christendom's religions, but he was profoundly impressed by "the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection."

Creation also opens the way to answer the ultimate questions.

Why Are We Here?

Jehovah told why when he created the first pair of human creatures. "Let us make man in our image," God said to the Logos (who later came to earth as Jesus), "according to our likeness, and let them have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and the domestic animals and all the earth and every moving animal that is moving upon the earth." God also made a garden in Eden and "proceeded to take the man and settle him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to take

care of it." Moreover, he gave a mandate to the first pair in Eden to "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth."—Genesis 1:26, 28; 2:8, 15.

As offspring of Adam and Eve, we are here to populate the earth, to care for and cultivate it, and to exercise a loving stewardship over its plants and animals. We are equipped by God to do this by being made in his likeness—not in any physical appearance but in being endowed with certain attributes of his, such as love, wisdom, power, justice, and a desire to do purposeful work and feel achievement. It is being in the likeness of God in this way that sets us apart from all animals and causes us to ponder the ultimate questions that never occur to any other earthly creatures.

Atheists, however, contend that we are not created in God's image but that we created God in our image. Not so. The gods created by men are in the image and likeness of sun, moon, stars, trees, thunders, lightnings, mountains, animals, rulers, money, sex, belly, plus whatever else man is pleased to deify. (Romans 1:25; Philippians 3:19) Man's image does not reflect God's attributes in balance. Rather, in our fallen state we are urged to return to his image. (Colossians 3:9, 10) Evolution does not explain the tremendous gulf between man and animal, nor would it produce or preserve as useful our inner urge to raise the ultimate questions. Being in God's image and likeness does explain this.

Where Are We Going?

No animal raises this question. Animals have no conscious sense of time, past or future. But man does. God made this additional gulf between man and animal, as stated in Ecclesiastes 3:11: "He has also set eternity in the hearts of men." (*New International Version*) Man is therefore

aware of the millenniums past and knows that future time will continue on. It concerns him. What will happen to him when he dies? Does he have an immortal soul that will live on? Will he go to heaven's bliss or to hell's torment or to the grave's oblivion? Or will he perhaps transmigrate to another life?

He certainly does not wish to face the thought of his extinction. It is devastating for him to think that time will continue on endlessly without him, the earth and people continuing on without him, while he is consigned to eternal oblivion. To avoid this unacceptable thought, he clings to the idea of an immortal soul—a doctrine taught nowhere in the Bible.—Ezekiel 18:4.

The Bible does say that when man dies he returns to the dust. "In that day his thoughts do perish." He is "conscious of nothing at all." (Psalm 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5) But there is to be a resurrection for billions: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." Those who then love God and neighbor will hear the words of the King Jesus Christ: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world."—John 5:28, 29; Matthew 25:34.

From the beginning it was Jehovah's purpose for the human family to dwell on earth forever in a paradise. Now the time draws near for obedient mankind to inherit that Kingdom. It is described in Revelation 21:3, 4: "Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."

That is where obedient mankind is going.

But the incorrigibly wicked will be going to sleep forever. "Just a little while longer," the psalmist writes, "and the wicked one will be no more; and you will certainly give attention to his place, and he will not be. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Psalm 37:10, 11; Romans 6:23.

Do Our Lives Have Meaning?

There are billions of galaxies in the universe and billions of stars in each galaxy. In the vastness of space our solar system is reduced to a speck, and the earth becomes microscopic. The five billion humans on earth shrivel to less than nothing. But it is not simply our smallness in space that makes us feel insignificant. Our fleeting existence in the eons of time also makes us feel that our lives lack meaning. Nevertheless, our minds demand meaning. We were created to feel this way.

We may seem less than microscopic in this vast universe, and we may be as a fleeting moment in the endless stream of time, but our position on earth is unique, and our lives are involved in the most meaningful issue in the whole universe. Not only were we put here by Jehovah God the Creator of the universe but we were given work to do: Fill the earth, take care of it, exercise loving dominion over its plants and animals. And even more meaningful than this—we may share in declaring Jehovah's Kingdom under Christ that will cleanse the earth of wickedness, vindicate God's name and Word, and remove demonic rule from the earth.

Lives lived like this have meaning. They will last forever. God's people are as the pupil of his eye. (Deuteronomy 32:10) They are at rest, for the ultimate questions deep within them have been answered.



When It Touches On Science, the Bible Is Scientific

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) Scientists teach a beginning, the Big Bang.

"He is . . . hanging the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) The Egyptians said it was supported by pillars; the Greeks said by Atlas; others said by an elephant.

In the eighth century B.C.E., Isaiah wrote of Jehovah's "dwelling above the circle of the earth." The Hebrew *hhug*, translated "circle," can also mean "sphere," as Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies shows. Hence, Moffatt's translation of Isaiah 40:22 reads: "He sits over the round earth."

The Bible states: "Star differs from star in glory." Scientists now know that there are blue stars, yellow ones, white dwarfs, neutron stars, and others.

—1 Corinthians 15:41.

Centuries before naturalists were aware of migration, Jeremiah wrote (seventh century B.C.E.) "The stork in the sky knows the time to migrate, the dove and the swift and the wryneck know the season of return." —Jeremiah 8:7, The New English Bible.

A thousand years before Christ, Solomon wrote in figurative language about the circulation of the blood. (Ecclesiastes 12:6) Medical science did not understand it until the 15th century C.E.

The Mosaic Law (16th century B.C.E.) reflected awareness of disease germs thousands of years before Pasteur.—Leviticus, chapters 13, 14.

The creation account of Genesis is accurate biology—testified to by the fossil record and by modern genetics—when it says that each family kind was to reproduce "according to its kind."—Genesis 1:12, 21, 25.

The genetic blueprint in the fertilized human egg cell contains programs for all the bodily parts before any hint of their presence. Compare Psalm 139:16: "Your eyes [Jehovah's] saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writing, as regards the days when they were formed and there was not yet one among them."

"Speaking of Working Together"

Recently Jehovah's Witnesses in Tiverton, Rhode Island, erected a quickly built Kingdom Hall. Under the above title, a local clergyman reported on his visit to the building site. The substance of it follows.

'SEVERAL strange reports came to me about a church being built on Fish Road. It was reported that 500 people were building a church in two days. I went to Fish Road to check this story out. There were some 1,500 people there working—carpenters, plumbers, electricians, lath workers, glaziers, landscapers, plasterers, heating men, bricklayers, cement finishers, and hundreds of laborers and helpers.

'Open trucks were all over the grounds, three acres [1.2 ha] in all. One sign read "Lost and Found." If a person lost a tool, he could go to this truck and find it returned. If you arrived in clean clothes and wanted to work, there was a truck with work clothes and hard hats available. A first-aid truck if anyone got hurt or needed medical attention.

'A large circus tent was set up out back where men and women fed 1,500 people in 15 minutes. I saw women

going around with cans of water to dampen down the soil just to keep the dust down, and that's all they did all day. As boards were nailed in place, painters were on hand to paint the wood. It was a sight few of us had ever seen.

'General contractors in the area said it couldn't be done. But it was done, and I went there and saw it with my own eyes. Who were these people? Jehovah's Witnesses, and the church was a Kingdom Hall. The foundation was done earlier, but the rest of it was built in two days! I didn't hear a cuss word. No arguments. A very strange group to behold indeed. Very quietly they went about their business. Their hands were where all the action was—not their mouths!

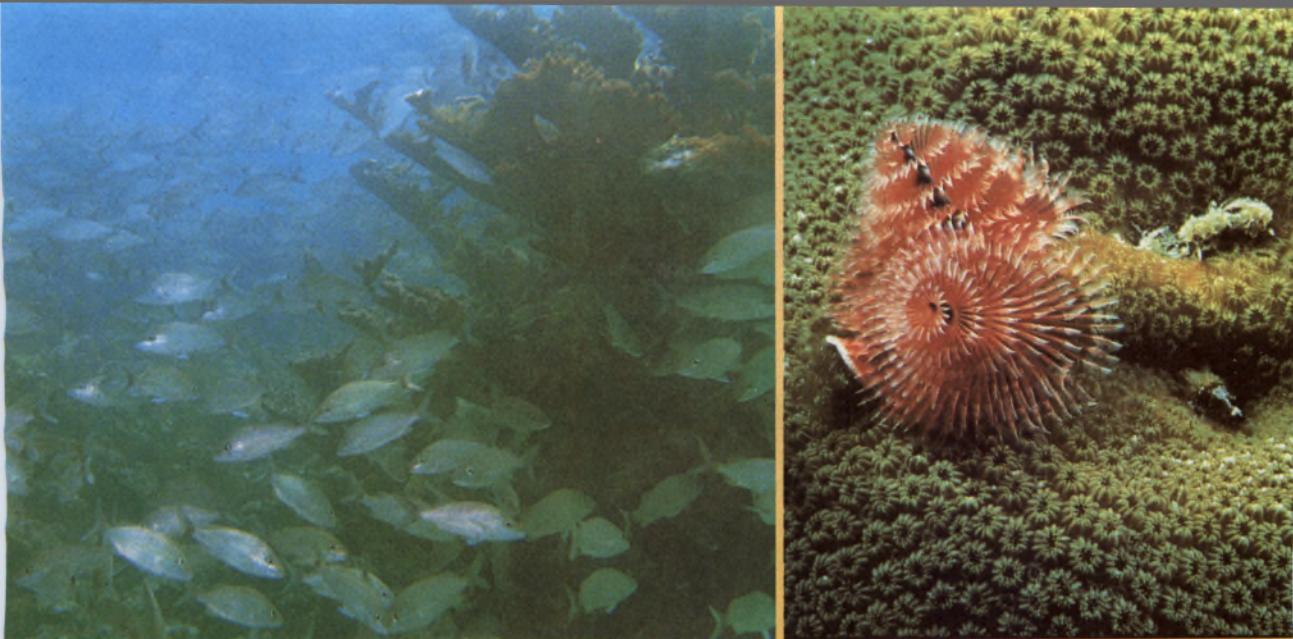
'You know one thing we have been concerned about in Unitarian-Universalist circles is why we are not attracting more blacks and more interracial and nationality

groups. Here I saw lots of black people and mixed racial groups all working together as a family. The people here were from all over New England and beyond. A mixed racial group mostly of young people with lots of enthusiasm.

'I have never learned a lot about these people due to poor press and poor word-of-mouth reports, but what I saw was all good. I've never cared for those people who come knocking at my door over the years, but be assured I'll greet them with a lot more respect and admiration.

'It's occurred to me that many of us close our minds to ideas and new approaches because of ignorance and pre-judgment. I think we all have to sit up and take notice when they pass us by in the race. Ignorance and fear do a job on us long before we've started to listen. But especially when they are doing such a good job of growing and generate a lot of enthusiasm.

'If they had contracted this building out—cellar and all—it would have cost about \$500,000 or more. I wondered whether we in Unitarian-Universalist circles and in our formal New England ways would ever try anything like this. Think about it—especially those of you who are lovers of committee meetings and lots of talk. Yes! Think it over!'



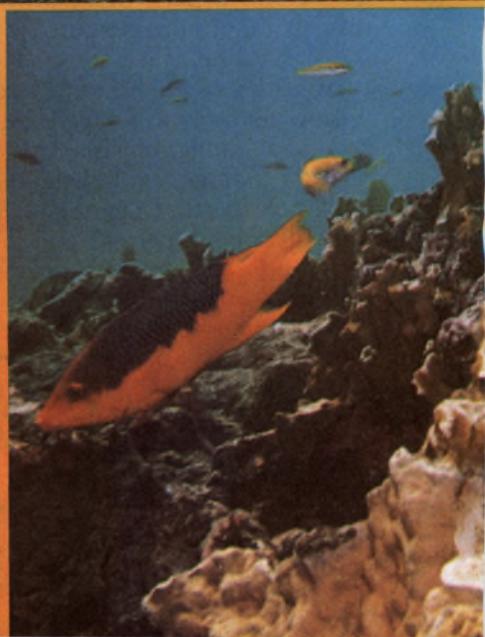
Florida's Looe Key, a Sanctuary for Beauty

YOUR boat is chugging out from Big Pine Key into the open ocean. The gentle breeze ruffles the water and makes it sparkle in the morning sunlight. For seven miles you luxuriate in the fresh air, warm sun, and open water. What a respite from the hub-bub of New York City!

Then you see a scattering of yellow buoys riding the waves. You have arrived at Looe Key, a protected nation-

al marine sanctuary. But you don't see it yet. First you tie up at a buoy, and then you look over the side—and gasp in disbelief! Thirty feet below is a canyon with white sandy bottom, craggy elkhorn, fan coral, and schools of fish. You rush to the other side of the boat. Just three feet down lies an underwater coral garden—the splash of brilliant colors takes your breath!

Quickly you don snorkel and

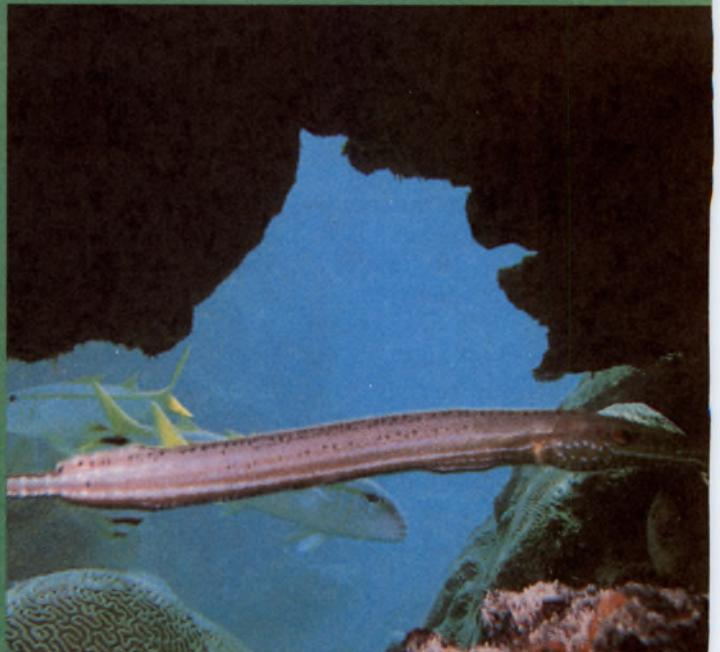


flippers and let yourself down into another world. You gaze enthralled as with slow kicks of your flippers you propel yourself out over this fantasyland. You glide over corals of many shapes, sizes, and colors—elkhorn, staghorn, fan, gorgonian, and others nameless to you. In among them move brilliantly colored fish in great variety. You feast on the exquisite beauty and smile in wonder—and suddenly realize that you don't smile underwater with a snorkel in your mouth!

Floating out over the canyon, you see 30 feet beneath you an impressive stand of craggy elk-horn coral. Holding your breath, you upend yourself to dive down for a closer look, and find resting beneath its heavy spreading antlers a school of 60 or more grunts. Nearby a huge purple fan coral perched on the side of the cliff waves lazily in the water.

You surface again to the shallow reef to see a pink squirrelfish with a big eye fixed on you. You hear the crunching of a parrot fish as it dines on some stony coral, creating as it does sand that settles to the bottom. Two yellow butterfly fish wiggle by. You spot a long, pinkish stick—it's a trumpet fish lurking in a dark hole. Next, a pugnacious little damselfish patrolling its coral turf indignantly chases off an intruder twice its size. You smile in amused delight, forgetting the lesson you had learned previously and paying for it with coughing and spluttering.

A blue cloud of fish moves





quickly past you, intent on some business elsewhere. You resolve to go to the library to identify them (and later learn that they are blue tang).

You take a swing out over an expansive sea-grass meadow that adjoins the reef. The tall green grass sways just beneath you—a home for crabs, shrimps, clams, conchs, grazing fish, and other thousands.

Now your diving partner beckons you back to the coral reef. She has found a vicious moray eel. Only it isn't vicious. It's very shy. Its head barely shows out of its hole. But the offer of the leg of a spiny lobster entices it out for quick bites followed by hasty retreats. Out and back it slithers until the leg is gone. A parrot fish has noticed, and now it comes to nibble on a second leg that's extended to it. A four-foot shark is found resting under a ledge—quite harmless.

The hours slip by unnoticed. You hate to leave, but schedules are dictators. You find yourself back in the big city, in crowds and traffic, assaulted by noise, stress building again, fearful of being out on the streets after dark.

But the lovely memories of Looe Key you have carried back with you. In quiet reverie you once again glide under the spreading antlers of the elkhorn, smile as the damselfish chases the intruders, hear the parrot fish making sand, and again the shy moray slips quickly out and back to dine on lobster.

Lovely Looe Key, a sanctuary for beauty. And for you.



How Can I Get Over a Crush?

I'VE written him letters expressing my feelings," the young woman says. "Whenever I ask him how he feels—he always denies having any feelings for me. But I can tell by the way he looks and acts that this isn't true."

Reality means little to one wearing the blindfold of infatuation. The young man in question has tried to be kind in expressing his disinterest, even enlisting the aid of Christian elders. But the young woman just won't take no for an answer. Even innocent words and actions on his part are seen as veiled signs of affection for her. Thus her fantasy feeds on itself.

Perhaps you, too, find yourself craving a relationship with someone who does not share the same feeling or, worse yet, doesn't even know you exist. All your efforts to attract his or her attention have fizzled. In fact, you may even have embarrassed yourself trying to do so. Yet you desperately hope that somehow things will change.

For some, terminating a crush is painful

If so, more than likely you are experiencing a youthful infatuation, or crush. This is a counterfeit love based, not on a reasoned acquaintance with someone, but on pure fantasy. Indeed, among young people, the object of infatuation often is someone clearly out of reach—a movie star, a popular singer, a teacher, or an older acquaintance.* Fortunately, most simply outgrow these crushes. But for some, terminating a crush causes painful

* See "Young People Ask . . . Who Says It's Just a Crush?" appearing in the January 8, 1987, issue of *Awake!*



withdrawal symptoms. Is there any way to ease the pain?

You Are Not Alone

First of all, take comfort in the fact that you are not the first to experience unrequited love. Solomon, one of the wisest men who ever lived, fell desperately in love with a charming Israelite girl. He poured upon her some of the most beautiful poetry ever written. He told her she was "beautiful like the full moon, pure like the glowing sun"—and got absolutely nowhere with her!—Song of Solomon 6:10.

You will therefore likely find that many of your peers—and even your parents—have been through the same thing. So there's not necessarily anything abnormal about how you feel. But while infatuations are common, they can also get out of hand.

The Bible, for example, tells of a young man named Amnon who developed such an overpowering infatuation for a young woman "that he felt sick." (2 Samuel 13:1-14) Similarly, one infatuated girl confesses: "I can't eat. . . . I can't study anymore. I. . . daydream about him. . . . I'm miserable." Yes, your health and emotional well-being can be adversely affected by a crush. How, then, can you regain control of the situation?

Facing Reality

"He that is trusting in his own heart is stupid," says the Bible. (Proverbs 28:26) This is particularly true when you are caught up in a romantic fantasy. You tend to put on emotional blinders and see only what you want to see. However, the proverb continues: "But he that is walking in wisdom is the one that will escape." This means seeing things the way they are.

"How do you tell legitimate hope from unfounded hope?" asks Dr. Howard Hal-

pern. "By looking carefully and coldly at the facts." Consider: How much of a chance is there of a real romance developing with this person? Is he or she already married? Certainly romantic fantasies toward such a one are vain—and most improper. Is the person some celebrity? Then the odds are you will never even meet this person, much less start a romance! Your chances are also dim when some older person, such as a teacher, is involved.

If someone has thus far failed to show interest in you, is there any *real reason* to believe that things will change in the future? Remember, 'the heart is treacherous.' (Jeremiah 17:9) Reading romantic interest into innocent words and actions often amounts to 'pulling the wool over your own eyes.' It is a waste of time and emotion. Incidentally, in most lands it is customary for men to take the initiative in romance. A young girl can humiliate herself by aggressively pursuing someone who simply isn't interested.

Finally, face up to your own limitations as a young person. What would you do if the person actually returned your affections? Are you ready for the pressures and responsibilities of marriage? If not, then "remove vexation from your heart" by refusing to dwell on fantasy. There is "a time to love," and in your case that might be years later when you are older.—Ecclesiastes 11:10; 3:8.

Analyzing Your Feelings

'But what about these feelings I have now?' you ask. Take a hard look at what and how you feel. For example, Dr. Charles Zastrow observes: "Infatuation occurs when a person idealizes the person she or he is infatuated with as being a 'perfect lover'; that is, concludes that the other person has *all* of the characteristics desired in a mate."

However, no such "perfect lover" exists. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," says the Bible.—Romans 3:23.

So ask yourself, How well do I really know this person I have set my heart on? Are my feelings based on knowledge, or am I in love with an image? Am I 'looking at things according to their face value'? (2 Corinthians 10:7) Do I clearly see this person's flaws, or am I blind to them? One objective look at your dream lover may pull you out of romantic stupor!

Examine, too, the kind of love you feel. The Bible says: "Love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, . . . does not look for its own interests." (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5) Is this the kind of love you feel? Or is it what writer Kathy McCoy refers to as "immature love"? Says McCoy: "*Immature love* can come and go in a moment . . . the focus is on you, and you're simply in love with the idea of being in love . . . *Immature love* is clinging, possessive, and jealous. . . . *Immature love* demands perfection."

It can be painful to realize that you have wasted emotion on a mere dream. However, Dr. David Elkind makes this observation: "These shocks of disillusion can be useful learning experiences in helping young people to differentiate between physical attraction and personal compatibility."

Getting Him/Her Off Your Mind

Admittedly, all the reasoning in the world does not entirely erase how you feel. But there are a few things you can do to get your mind off your hurt. First of all, *avoid feeding the problem!* Reading steamy romance novels, watching TV love stories—or just listening to certain kinds of music—can worsen your feelings of loneliness. So refuse to dwell on the situation. "Where there is no wood the fire goes out."—Proverbs 26:20.

Try developing some real friendships. A fantasy romance is no substitute for people who really love you and care for you. Do not 'isolate yourself.' (Proverbs 18:1) You'll probably find that your parents can be quite helpful, especially if they are Christians. "They're the *last* ones I would tell about my crushes," said one young man. But for all your attempts to conceal your feelings, they have probably already discerned that something is eating away at you. Why not approach them and 'give your heart to them.' (Proverbs 23:26) A mature member of the Christian congregation may also prove to be a good listening ear.

"Keep busy," exhorts teen writer Esther Davidowitz further. Take up a hobby, do some exercise, study a language, begin a Bible research project. Staying engrossed in useful activities can ease the withdrawal symptoms quite a bit.

Getting over a crush is not easy. But with the passage of time, the pain will subside. And you will have learned much about yourself and your feelings. Perhaps these lessons are well worth the pain of experiencing a heartbreaking crush.

In Our Next Issue

- *Phobias—The Fears of Millions*
- *As a Lawyer,
I Put God to the Test*
- *What Do Clothes Mean to You?*

Does It *Really* Come Back?

**By "Awake!"
correspondent in
Australia**

MAURICE lives in Huonville, Tasmania, an island-state southeast of mainland Australia. He has the rare skill of being able to throw a boomerang so that it returns to him. Demonstrating this art sometimes clinches a sale in his retail business. Most of his customers are tourists visiting Hobart, Tasmania's capital city, and among them are many Japanese seamen. When first introduced to the boomerang, the seamen usually are skeptical and often ask: "Does it *really* come back?"

"I find that an actual demonstration is the best way to overcome their doubts," says Maurice. "Often to satisfy the skeptics, I have thrown the boomerang from the wharf around the front of their ship. The boomerang disappears from sight, only to reappear, curling around the back of the ship's superstructure, to land on the wharf nearby."

Those still not convinced accompany Maurice to a nearby park or playing field to try the boomerang themselves after a little instruction. Can you visualize what follows? "The next minute, a group of normally inscrutable Japanese are laughing and scampering around the field like children, cameras clicking to record the amusement,

surprise, and thrill of their first throw—especially when they get the boomerang to return somewhere close to them."

What Is a Boomerang?

A dictionary describes a boomerang simply as "a hard-wood missile used by the natives of

Australia, shaped like the segment of a circle and so balanced that when thrown to a distance it returns towards the thrower." Of course, as a verb "boomerang" refers to a scheme that backfires and harms the perpetrator. But let's concentrate on the throwing type.

Today, boomerang-throwing is mainly a sport. Some who take it quite seriously have formed clubs. One of these is the Mudgeeraba Creek Emu-Racing and Boomerang-Throwing Association in Queensland, Australia. But it was not always a sport. The boomerang was developed as a hunting instrument and a weapon of war among the Australian aborigines.

But do not think that the boomerang is solely an Australian weapon. Boomerangs have been found in ancient Egyptian tombs. Some had their tips covered with gold, presumably to increase their range. What their ancient name was is not recorded, but the modern name "boomerang" is from the term *bou-mar-rang* in the language of the Turawal tribe of aborigines who lived on the banks of the Georges River, near Sydney.

Throwing sticks closely resembling the boomerang have been found in Holland,

Denmark, Germany, northeast Africa, India (where they were made of steel or ivory), and among the Hopi Indians of Arizona in the United States. Whereas the boomerang was generally superseded by the bow and arrow, among the Australian aborigines this ancient weapon has been in common use up to modern times.

Its Use in the Hunt

Come with us and witness the use of the boomerang as a hunting weapon. Notice that the aboriginal hunters have carefully strung nets between suitable trees. The birds they are pursuing have settled in a position directly facing the nets, and the aim is to force the birds to fly low and get entangled in the nets. If they rise above the trees, all will be lost.

Look! Several hunters spring to their feet. With careful aim they hurl boomerangs toward the prey. The rotating missiles climb rapidly into the air, skim over the trees, and circle just above the birds. Those whirring blades must sound like hawks. The birds keep low. Notice how the hunters add to the illusion by making hawklike cries. The panic-stricken birds crash into the waiting net. The hunt is a great success.

Meanwhile, each of the spinning boomerangs has completed a full circle. As if by command, each one has returned, either to be caught by its thrower or to fall at his feet.

For a boomerang to return to the thrower, however, it must be relatively small and light. So most are about 30 inches (75 cm) long. This makes them too light to inflict serious damage on larger animals such as kangaroos and wallabies. Such a boomerang might bring down a bird in flight or wound a small animal if the thrower's aim is exceptional. But apart from the kind of

hunting just described, the returning boomerang was really used for little more than throwing-practice or recreation.

A Nonreturning "Boomerang"

The instrument used mainly as a weapon in hunting and warfare was the kylie, or killer stick. It was made in the same shape as a boomerang but was much larger—up to 4 feet (1.2 m) in length and weighing about 1 1/2 pounds (0.7 kg). However, the kylie would not return when thrown. It was a far more deadly weapon than its smaller counterpart, and its spinning action enabled it to travel much farther. The kylie could be aimed with greater accuracy than a spear, and because of the swath of its 4-foot spin, the kylie's killing power was spread over a much larger area than just a point, as is the case with a spear. Some accurate throws of up to 660 feet (200 m) have been recorded, and it would have been easy to get within that distance of an unsuspecting kangaroo or wallaby.

Aerodynamic Design

The throwing stick, the boomerang, and the kylie all follow aerodynamic principles of design, enabling them to stay aloft for a longer time than any other thrown object. Their "wings" are comparable in shape to those of an airplane or a soaring bird. In flight, the rounded edge of the boomerang pushes through and "splits" the air, causing it to pass above and below the "wing." The air above the "wing" races across its surface and causes a lifting action. A thrower can add to this lifting action by a flick of the wrist as the boomerang leaves his hand.

An outstanding feature of the boomerang is called the skew, one end being twisted upward and the other downward. It is amazing that the aborigines learned the



need for this without any aerodynamic training. One method used was to heat the boomerang in hot ashes until it was pliant. Another was to soak it in water until the wood was soft enough to be twisted to the desired shape.

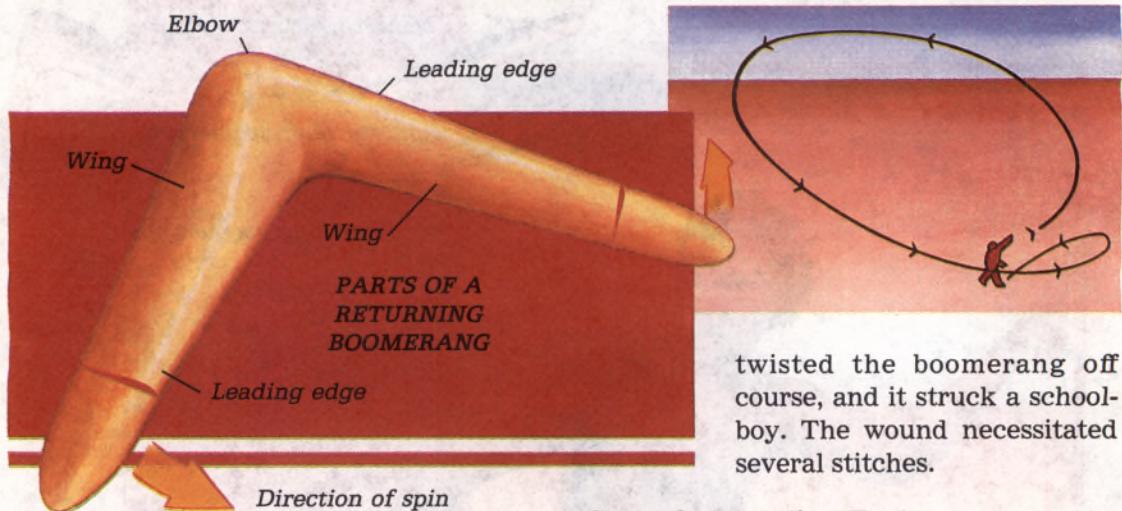
Throwing for a Good Return

Those adept at getting the boomerang to return claim that this is not difficult and requires only patience and practice. The "elbow" of the boomerang should be away from the thrower, and it should be held in a vertical, not horizontal, position. (See the illustration.) In their book *All About Boomerangs*, Lorin and Mary Hawes claim that if the boomerang is thrown correctly, it does not matter which end is held in the thrower's hand. The boomerang will always return if it is thrown with plenty of spin. They state:

"The action of throwing a boomerang is

not so much a matter of opening the hand and turning loose the boomerang as it is giving a snappy throw with the hand closed —so that, in leaving, the boomerang has to pull itself free and pivot round the hooked index finger, thus gaining a lot of spin as it does so. . . . The throwing motion of the arm is not unlike the action of cracking a whip. The hand starts its throw at a point behind the shoulder and ends with a snap, straight in front, where it usually stops about an arm's length from the shoulder. Most of the throwing force is transmitted by bending the elbow. There should be no conscious pulling back of the hand before the end of the throw, but rather a smooth follow-through action."

If thrown from the right hand, apparently the boomerang travels straight ahead for about 30 yards (27 m), then inclines to the left. As it inclines, it lays over to the horizontal position, rises high into the sky, and



makes from one to five circles before returning to the thrower. On its return after a good throw, a boomerang can be deftly caught by the thrower or may fall at his feet.

There Are Some Dangers

Throwing a boomerang is probably the only sport in which the thrower is aiming at himself, because he is his own target. But there is also danger for spectators or anyone passing nearby. The effect of the wind also has to be taken into consideration. In fact, many experienced throwers caution against throwing at all if the wind is more than a gentle breeze. Wind speed can be determined by dropping light pieces of grass or leaves and noting their drift.

Inexperienced throwers need to be extremely careful and should throw only in wide, open spaces. Serious injury or even death could result from an unfortunate accident. To illustrate: An aboriginal senator from Queensland is a recognized boomerang thrower. But once, when he was giving a demonstration of the art at a school centenary celebration, a sudden gust of wind

twisted the boomerang off course, and it struck a schoolboy. The wound necessitated several stitches.

Some Outstanding Feats

Ben Ruhe of the Smithsonian Institution is World Registrar and Co-ordinator of Boomerang Activities. He has compiled some impressive feats achieved by modern boomerang-throwers in various parts of the world.

- **Greatest Distance Thrown:** 480 feet (146.3 m).
- **Accuracy:** Eleven straight catches without moving either foot.
- **Most Courageous Throw:** A thrower in Parramatta, Australia, regularly threw a boomerang while blindfolded, standing motionless, and allowing the boomerang to hit an apple on his head.
- **Best Double Throw:** In Balby, England, a thrower is reported to have thrown a right-handed and a left-handed boomerang together for landings, one on top of the other, between his feet.

The boomerang is rapidly becoming as popular with tourists visiting Australia as are the koala and the kangaroo. And although you personally may have little chance to throw one, you can be assured that when it is thrown correctly the boomerang *really does come back!*

The Creation Book Goes to School

I am 12 years old and attend 7th grade at Hazel Park Junior High School in St. Paul, Minnesota. When my science teacher mentioned our next unit would be on animals and where they come from, she suggested we would be discussing evolution. I thought it was a perfect opportunity to take to school our book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*

When she looked at it, the illustrations caught her eye. She asked if she could take it home and look it over. It so happened we had a two-week break. When she returned to school, she asked if there was a way she might purchase this book. Of course, I said. It is only \$2.50.

She said this book would help her because of a law prohibiting teaching religion in school. She could now

make information on creation available to her classes without teaching religion herself. Many times in the classroom she would hold the book up and point out illustrations suitable to what she was teaching that day. After referring to the book many times in this way, she invited the students to check the book out whenever they wanted. She also made available a copy of the Bible, so the students could read the Genesis account of creation.

When our unit was almost complete, I looked at the list to see how many checked the new Creation book out. I was so surprised to see how many of the students I go to school with really cared about whether we evolved or were created. My teacher said she has read our literature before, but she really liked this book.—A. P., United States.

"Evolution Is a Religion Which Masquerades as Science"

"An Associated Press-NBC News poll discovered that 76% of Americans believe that both the theories of evolution and creation ought to be taught in public schools. Only 8% wanted the evolution theory alone and only 10% wanted just the creation theory taught. Six per cent were unsure. . . .

"The central argument against teaching the creation theory in public schools is that it is religion masquerading as science. But according to Dr. Carl Sagan, evolution is a religion which masquerades as science. . . .

"No theory, whether scientific or political, can be sustained if a wall must

be built to keep adherents in and opponents out. If the bondage which flows from a flawed political ideology like communism can be denounced, should not the wall surrounding the citadel of evolution be torn down and the opponents allowed to do battle on an equal basis? . . .

"Evolutionists don't want to fight. They have already declared victory and view any assault on their domain as pretension. Could it be that the reason they want to avoid a fight is because they evolved from chickens?"

—Cal Thomas' column in the New York Daily News, Friday, August 22, 1986.

Now I Play a Different Tune

AS A ten-year-old the countries I heard of around the Mediterranean were in my childish imagination remote exotic places wrapped in mystery. Their strange music had chords with mystic associations and ancient sounds that fascinated me. I never imagined that as an adult I would get to see many of these countries. Yet later, as a musician in a Spanish dance-band, I played in Morocco, Ethiopia, Greece, Libya, the Sudan, Egypt, and others.

I was born in the village of Cervera del Río Alhama of the famous wine region of La Rioja, in northern Spain. Since childhood, my father had forced me to study the trumpet; my mother made sure that I got a strict religious upbringing. She taught me to go to Mass every Sunday and on the holy days.

This custom was so strongly rooted in me that years later as I traveled I always looked for a church so I could go to Mass.

A Different Instrument

In 1959 I signed up to play in the Spanish Five (*Los Cinco de España*) orchestra. On one occasion while playing in Cyprus, another musician asked me what I liked to read. My answer was, "Sacred history." "If you like sacred history," he said, "I know someone who can teach you."

I never got to meet that person, but he left me a Bible. What an unexpected gift! I began to read it avidly. It became like a new instrument to me—a magnificent instrument. But in my hands it was like a professional accordion in the hands of a beginner.

Later I arrived in Libya and met a Greek

called Panos. He was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Purely by chance we shared the same bedroom. The first day, when I unpacked, I pulled out my illuminated crucifix that I plugged into the wall. Then I took out some pictures of "saints" and spread them out on the table. In the case, I still had four more crucifixes that I had bought for my sisters back in Spain. I also wore around my neck my own crucifix on a gold chain. The last thing I took out was the Bible I had been given in Cyprus.

Panos observed me, but he made no com-



Now the Bible is my instrument, and the Kingdom message is its melody

ment. A few days later the subject arose and a discussion ensued. I was very impressed at how Panos could handle the Bible. He spoke about Exodus chapter 20, verses 1 to 7, and Deuteronomy chapter 7, verse 25.

I read them. "What's this?" I asked. "You must not make a graven image nor a form like anything in the heavens or earth . . . You must not bow down to them nor be led to serve them." And, "The graven images of their gods you should burn in the fire. You must not desire the silver and the gold upon them."

I looked at my illuminated cross, the pictures of "saints," my gold crucifix. I thought of the churches full of images where I had attended Mass—for me those were objects of worship and adoration!

Several days passed after that conversation. I meditated on what the Bible said and finally made my decision. I did not waver. I took a heavy stone and smashed those images and threw the pieces into the sea. A regular study of the Bible with the help of that Greek musician did away with my doubts.

A Different Tune

Before returning to Spain, I began to write to my family about my newfound faith—sometimes not too tactfully. When I got back to my hometown, I collected all my symbols of worship and smashed and burned them.

One night I brought together about 80 of my neighbors and friends and gave them a witness. Someone warned me that I would pay dearly for my zeal. In those years, prior to 1970, religious freedom for Jehovah's Witnesses did not exist in Spain. I was even told that in a neighboring town, they had prepared a stake from which to hang me. But I viewed it as an idle threat. The impor-

tant thing was that I was acquiring ability in using the instrument of instruments—the Bible.

As I used it more and more, it became easier to prove points with texts: Exodus 20:1-5, God disapproves of the use of images in worship; Ezekiel 18:4, 20, the soul is not immortal; John 1:1, 18, Jesus is the Son of God, not God himself. From a simple solid basis, I could prove my faith.

Playing in a Better Cause

Later, during a concert tour of Holland, I was baptized on May 19, 1968.

That represented for me the beginning of a new career. I returned to the Rioja region, where my sister and my niece had also got baptized. They were the firstfruits of my early, impetuous preaching. During this period I was arrested while preaching with a circuit overseer in Soria. This was prior to the 1970 legalization of Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain. After 12 hours of interrogation, I was jailed for three days. I used that time profitably preaching in prison. One of the prisoners, from Seville, became interested in the truth. On his return to Andalusia, he accepted a Bible study and in time got baptized.

Now dedicated and baptized, I decided to go into the full-time ministry. In 1970 I was appointed as a special pioneer minister, and in the years that followed, I preached in many different areas of Spain. In all these assignments, people responded to the melody of the good news of God's Kingdom by Christ. Strong congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are active where 20 years ago there were only tiny groups or nothing at all.

It has been my privilege to play a small part in that expansion, not with my trumpet, but with God's Word, the Bible. (Psalm 9:11)—*As told by José María Peláez.*

From Our Readers

Hope for the Mentally Ill

I have just read the issue on "Hope for the Mentally Ill" and wish to compliment you for doing such an excellent job. (September 8, 1986) I am sure that some of your objectives in such articles were to be understandable, accurate, informative, and to be helpful and encouraging to those with a mental illness. In my professional opinion you have achieved your objectives.

J. T. C., M.D., United States

The Unborn Child

I have just read "A Letter From the Mother of an Unborn Child." (July 22, 1986) It seemed as though the person was actually writing about me and describing my feelings. I also trust that the blood of Jesus Christ will purify my serious sins, but the memory of what I have done is always present. Keep on writing such articles so that others may be helped to avoid doing such a bad thing.

A. M. L., Italy

I have just read "A Letter From the Mother of an Unborn Child," and "From Our Readers" in the issue of October 22, 1986. I think this was good for young ones just entering high school. I am 13 years old and will be entering high school next year. If the girls now in the higher grades could read this material, at least a few of them would change their minds about sex and abortion. When I read the letter I cried. Sometimes sad things get the point across. Thank you for publishing that letter.

D. W., United States

Recovering From Drug Abuse

Thank you for your article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Recover From Drug Abuse?" (July 8, 1986) For eleven months I have been suffering from a confused mind, the result of regularly taking LSD. The last time I took LSD, I took several other things as well. The combined effect was incredibly frightening. When I woke up the next day, I thought I was dead and believed this for three months. When I slowly came to realize that I was still very much alive, I decided to find out, before it happened, what would happen to me when I died. Jehovah's Witnesses helped me to study the Bible and find the truth on this subject. It was not until I was shown God's view on this matter from the Bible that I finally found the incentive that has enabled me to give up my long-term habit of smoking cannabis. My life has improved greatly, though I continue to have problems identifying my emotions. Having read your article, I realize that the way I feel is normal for recovering drug abusers and I feel much better. When things don't go too well, I reread the article, as it gives me real encouragement to keep fighting.

J. H., England

Like an Encyclopedia

Thank you for the wealth of information that we have learned through your magazine. The bound volumes of past issues are like encyclopedias of knowledge on just about any subject. And it's all upbuilding material that points us to the hope of a bright future, even if we face so many problems in this world today.

F. L., United States

Watching the World

Population Dilemma

According to population experts, Europe now has a dozen nations that are getting close to a demographic growth rate of zero (the point where births are equal to the level of deaths), notes *El Universal*, Mexico City's daily newspaper. The average world growth is said to have declined to about 1.6 percent and seems to be decreasing slowly each year. "That is not enough," claims Werner Fornos, president of the Population Institute in Washington, D.C. Why? Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute explains that despite the fact that the percentage of population growth is decreasing on a world level, the total number of persons on the globe keeps growing. The year 1950 saw a net increase (births minus deaths) of 35 million in world population. In 1970 it grew by 70 million. In 1986 it is expected to grow by 82 million. This means that the world population is increasing by 2.6 persons each second, 9,360 each hour, and 224,640 each day! At this rate, it is predicted that there will be six billion persons on earth by the end of this century.

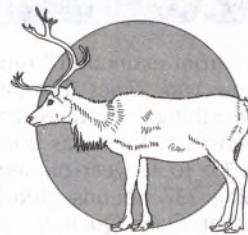
Crime Increasing

A recent FBI report revealed that serious crime in the United

States increased by 8 percent during the first half of 1986, compared to a 5-percent jump during the previous year. Some major cities have experienced over a 15-percent increase. Crime in Dallas, Texas, however, skyrocketed 19.5 percent! Cited as potential links to crime's increase are drug use, financial problems, and America's appetite for violence. Commenting on the latter, Jerald Vaughn of the International Association of Chiefs of Police explained: "Violence has become an accepted way of life in America—we seem to thrive on it."

Reindeer Killing

At least 38,000 reindeer in Norway and Sweden have been



scheduled to be killed as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The animals, worth \$225 to \$300 each, are unsuitable for eating because of their high levels of radiation after grazing on contaminated lichen. "This will

be a blow to the Lapp people who herd more than 600,000 reindeer in the Arctic wasteland," reports *The Sunday Times* of London. The strongly flavored meat is popular in Scandinavia and is exported to countries such as the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan. "This is a threat to our entire livelihood," a reindeer herder commented.

Immorality by Computer

When "minitels," small computer terminals linked up with the telephone system for consulting data banks, were instituted in France, they gave access to a host of useful information. Railway timetables, bank information, and games were among the many features accessible to users. However, the minitel has also opened up new commercial horizons in the field of pornography. The French daily *Le Monde* reported that among nine hundred services offered to minitel customers, "three hundred . . . are opening the door to convivial message systems," an expression that more often than not means conversations of a pornographic nature. The article added that these "convivial" conversations can end up soliciting minors, inciting to immoral behavior, or even opening the way to the prostitution network."

Kidney-Stone Breakthrough!

A new technique for destroying kidney stones by laser has just been tried by two British scientists. According to the French weekly magazine *L'Express*, a laser beam can break up stones already in the ureter, a duct leading from the kidney to the bladder. Stones cannot be crushed at this stage by the use of ultrasonic waves. However, by means of an endoscope "the laser device—a long flexible tube with a quartz fiber head of a quarter of a millimeter [0.01 in.] in diameter—is introduced into the ureter. At the rate of five shots a second, it takes 2,000 pulses to destroy an average sized stone. The stones are progressively broken up as if by a pneumatic drill. Reduced to tiny particles like tiny grains of sand, they are . . . eliminated simply and painlessly when urine is passed."

Baby's Best Friend

A newborn infant abandoned in a "weed-choked, bottle-strewn alley in 60-degree weather" was kept alive by a stray German shepherd, reports the *Detroit Free Press*. According to one of the police officers who discovered the infant, the animal had "curled [itself] around a baby that was holding onto a little twig. And the baby was being licked by the dog." This bizarre discovery came about three hours after the officers had learned that a woman suffering from severe bleeding due to childbirth was admitted to a hospital. When no baby was found and the woman claimed she had never been pregnant, the police went to her apartment and followed a trail of blood to the alley where the child had been abandoned. The six-pound,

four-ounce baby boy is listed in stable condition after suffering from hypothermia.

Record Distribution

Information supplied by the United Bible Societies reveals that by May of last year the Bible had been translated into 1,829 languages or dialects. This represents an increase of 21 languages within a year! Only a few Bible books, however, are actually translated into that number of languages. The whole Bible is currently translated into only 293 languages, some of which are no longer spoken.

New Panda Cub

"The birth of a giant panda Aug. 10 at a center run by China and the World Wildlife Fund is a major step in efforts to save the



species from extinction," reports *The New York Times*. The panda cub, weighing only three and a half ounces (99 g), was born to Li Li, a 15- to 18-year-old female weighing 237 pounds (108 kg). The father, Quan Quan, is a male 6 1/2 to 7 years old who weighs 198 pounds (90 kg). Because the center tries to create conditions similar to the pandas' natural habitat, it is said that pandas being cared for there can be returned to the wild more easily than those born in zoos.

Dissension Growing

The Vatican's recent penalizing of two Catholic prelates in the United States because of their liberal views on birth control and other sexual issues has increased the discord among American Catholics, says Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland of Milwaukee. According to Weakland, continued disciplinary action taken against Roman Catholic leaders in the United States may cause many ordinary Catholics to drift away from the church and "begin pursuing their faith privately in their own fashion," notes *The New York Times*. Comparing present church conditions in the United States to the church in the Netherlands, Weakland pointed out that it was possible that the American church would follow the path of the Dutch church. In what way? "Dutch Catholics are among the most liberal in the world, and many in the church there have distanced themselves from Rome and its teachings," reports the *Times*. It should be noted, however, that "liberal" teachings often go contrary to Bible teachings.

Memory Metal

A unique metal alloy that was developed by the U.S. military nearly 25 years ago is now available to consumers. What makes the alloy unique? Its ability to "remember" its original shape when heated. For example, *Time* magazine notes that the Beta Phase company of California has produced a pair of frames for eyeglasses that can be restored to their original shape when exposed to a temperature of 130 degrees Fahrenheit (54° C.). The Memory Wire bra, made by Japan's Wacoal Corporation, that is currently sold in the United States was also cited as a product containing the unique metal.



Our Beautiful Earth

and man's responsibility toward it:

To preserve its beauty, which he hasn't.
To care for its plants and animals, which he hasn't.
To fill it with righteous offspring, which he hasn't.
To love his neighbor, which he hasn't.
To love its Creator, which he hasn't.

While mankind has failed in his responsibility toward it,
will we as individuals show appreciation for it and its
Creator?

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