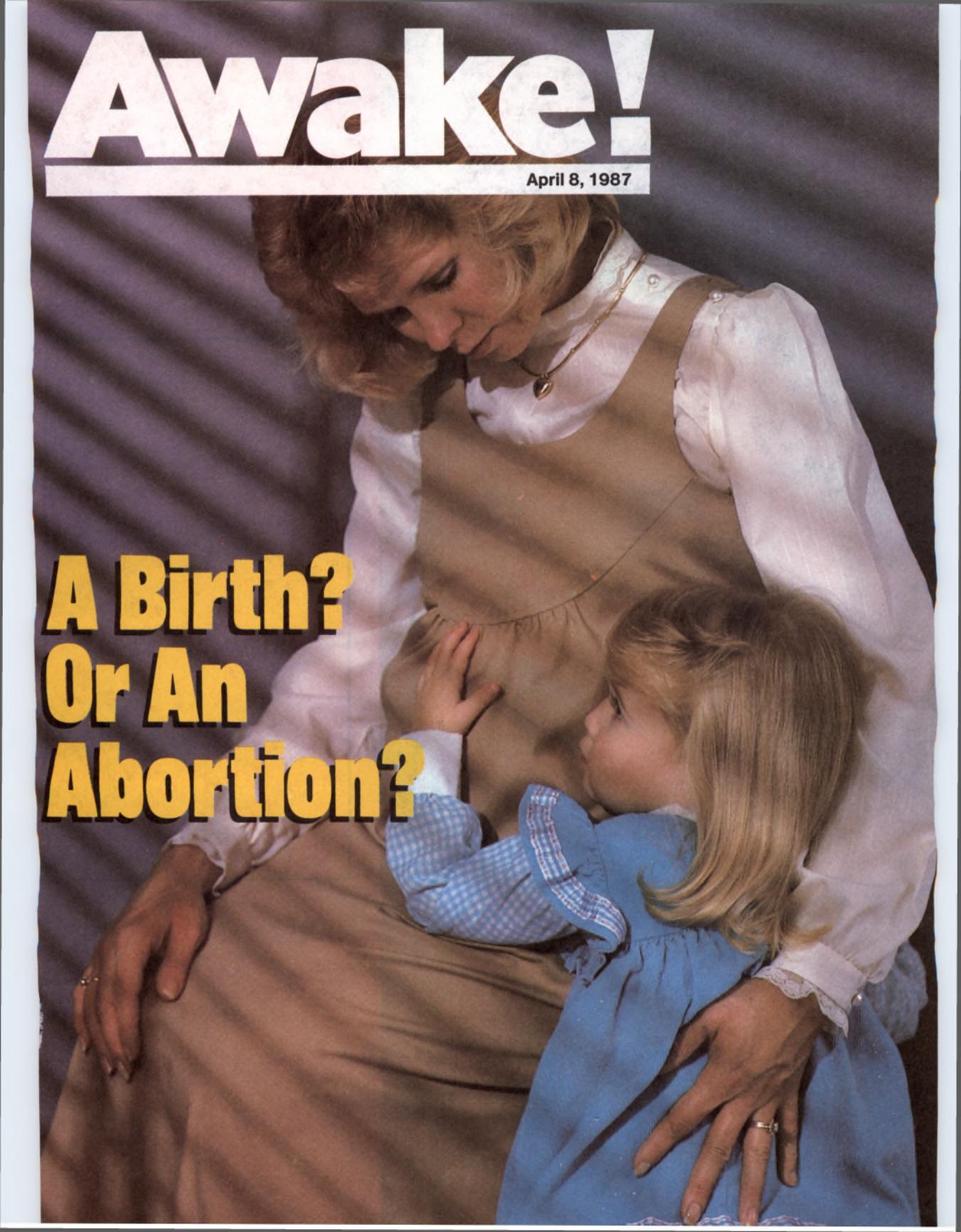


Awake!

April 8, 1987

A black and white photograph of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a light-colored blouse and a brown apron, holding a small child in a blue dress. The woman is looking down at her belly. The child is looking up at her. The background is dark.

**A Birth?
Or An
Abortion?**

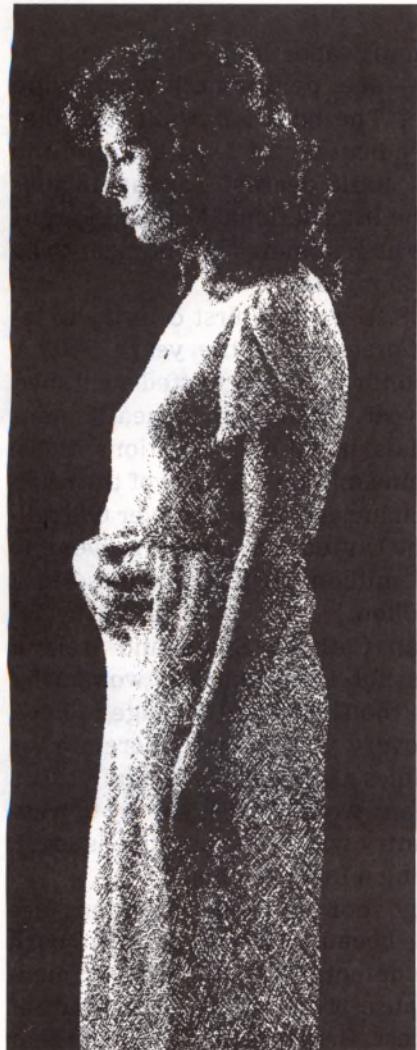


Each year, millions of pregnant women are faced with the agonizing decision: 'Should I have my baby, or should I have an abortion?'

How do people all over the world view this question? What price is being paid emotionally if an abortion is chosen? Is there a right and a wrong in this matter?

Abortion

—Who Is Right?



TWO top specialists tell you that your baby has a mere 0.1-percent chance of survival. If it is born alive, it will have serious abnormalities and could die within a few days. What will you do? Take that chance? Or have an abortion?

An unlikely situation, you may feel. But it can happen, and did happen, in London, England. Happily, the hospital backed the parents' decision to continue the pregnancy. "At no stage were we told we should have an abortion," the father explained. They now have a baby son, born without any unusual physical defects whatever.

"We are obviously delighted," said one of the medical consultants, adding: "The difficulty is that nothing in biology is 100 per cent." True, but a doctor's (or a parent's) misjudgment is only one aspect of today's abortion dilemma.

Conflicting Factors

The medical and ethical issues for and against abortion are charged with emotion. Pressure groups from both sides raise sincere voices to be heard and understood, and the debate is often bitter. Who is right?

The parents mentioned earlier obviously made the correct decision. But what if the doctors had been accurate in their diagnosis? Under those circumstances, would it have been right for the mother to have an abortion?

If you find that question difficult, or impossible, to answer, you are not alone. There are, however, guiding principles to help, as we shall see. But first consider the worldwide enormity of the abortion problem.

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Abortion

—A World Divided

HOW many abortions—legal and illegal—are performed worldwide every year? The book *Abortion* says that the number may be "at least equal to the number of adult deaths"—about 45 million. But the International Planned Parent Federation has estimated the number to be as high as *55 million*!

The U.S.S.R. was the first country to legalize the practice, in the year 1920. A recent unconfirmed report listed about five million a year. According to health ministry officials in China, abortions there approach nine million—a third of the number of pregnancies. Japan has over two million, and the United States reports over one and a half million. Britain has close to a quarter million.

In Roman Catholic Spain and Ireland abortion is not legalized. Yet women by the tens of thousands still manage to have abortions every year. How? There are, of course, clinics that operate illegally. But the ploy many women use is simply to travel to a country where the practice is legal, Britain being a favorite choice.

Obviously, not all these abortions are performed because babies may be born with some defect, either physical or mental, or because pregnancies are a result of rape or incest. British figures indicate that



H. Armstrong Roberts

barely 2 percent of abortions are on these counts. Why, then, are there so many? There are two basic reasons.

The Basic Issues

Population control in ancient times was not a problem. Tribes and nations welcomed numerical increase, and women seldom had reason to limit the size of their families. Any abortions were usually illegal and a consequence of adultery or fornication.

In contrast, today a policy of abortion may be government sponsored. By this means the birthrate can be kept in check in countries where there is danger of a population explosion.

Although such a danger does not exist in many Western nations, the number of abortions is still rising. Why? "If we believe in women's freedom," stresses a spokes-

"We have to believe that women have the right to make their own moral choices," many state

woman of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights in New York City, "we have to believe that women have the right to make their own moral choices."

But once a woman has conceived, does she have an incontestable right to choose to reject the role of mother, to abort her baby? Is such a course acceptable? This is the focal point of today's debate for and against abortion. What is the answer?

So much hinges on definitions. What is life? When does it begin? Does an unborn child have any legal rights?

Alternative Designations

Supporters of abortion often prefer to be referred to as pro-choice campaigners, just as those who oppose the practice often call themselves pro-life workers. In these articles, simply for the sake of clarity, the expressions pro-abortion and antiabortion are consistently used.

When Does Life Begin?

When the male sperm unites its 23 chromosomes with a like number in the female ovum, a new human life is conceived. From this time of conception, the sex and other personal details are immutably established. The only change will be in growth during the nine-month term of pregnancy. "It is a statement of biologic fact to say that *you* once were a single cell," writes Dr. John C. Willke. So does life begin at the moment of conception? Many simply answer yes. For those who think this way, abortion at any time is tantamount to murder.

Others maintain that 'life begins about 20 weeks *after* the initial conception.' Why do they view the matter this way? Because it is at about this time that the mother will begin to feel the fetus move. This period is sometimes referred to as the "quickenings." Live births can take place from the 20th week, and abortions are usually performed any time up to the 24th week of pregnancy, a time factor generally accepted. Is this, then, the time when a baby is legally considered to be alive?

In Britain the law does not recognize an unborn child as a human being. Under such circumstances no abortion can *legally* be termed murder. But once a child has left its mother's body, even if the umbilical cord remains intact, to kill that child is a criminal offense. At that time the child has legal rights. Legally, then, from this standpoint, life begins at birth.

The Jewish view, as expressed by Britain's Chief Rabbi, agrees. Life does not "begin until the moment of birth," he says, adding: "We do not regard destruction of the unborn child as murder."

What then of the fetus, the baby growing in the womb? In *Marital Relations, Birth Control and Abortion in Jewish Law*, Rabbi David M. Feldman of New York stated: "The fetus is unknown, future, potential, part of 'the secrets of God.'"

Conflict in Thinking

From this it is easy to reason that abortion is religiously acceptable. But not all religions think the same way. Consider the official Roman Catholic viewpoint.

Pope Pius IX in 1869 extended punishment of excommunication for the abortion of an embryo at any age. In 1951, Pius XII restated the principle, saying: "Every human being, even the child in the mother's womb, receives its right to life directly from God, not from its parents." Speaking in Kenya in 1985, John Paul II bluntly declared: "Actions such as contraception and abortion are wrong."

Many Catholics today, however, maintain that such an attitude is out of date and must be revised. As a result, Roman Catholics are divided over the issue. Here are some facts.

The Roman Catholic Dilemma

Cardinal Bernardin, chairman of the American bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities, asserts that abortion is a moral wrong and that the official stand of the church is binding on all Roman Catholics. Again, Roman Catholic professor of moral theology at Notre Dame University in the United States, James T. Burtchaell, wrote in 1982: "My argument is straightforward. Abortion is homicide: the destruction of a child." Yet, four years later, priest Richard P. McBrien, chairman of the theology department of the same university, took pains to explain that abortion is not a de-



Many women are outspokenly antiabortion

cording to *The New York Times*, she mocked the suggestion that her support for the right to abortion could lead to her excommunication from the Roman Catholic Church.

The Church of Rome is finding it increasingly difficult to resolve such conflicting views within its ranks.

Dangers of Illegal Abortions

To pass laws and edicts is one thing. Yet, even with the best of motives, for any authority to try to enforce a ruling on abortion is quite another matter. People are involved, intimately and personally. Under pressure, people can be unpredictable.

If an antiabortion lobby succeeds, either in preventing a government from legalizing abortion or in repealing existing legislation, what then? Does that solve any problems? "A woman will find a way [to have an abortion], sometimes at the expense of her own life," commented Marilyn Waring, a pro-abortion Member of Parliament in New Zealand, "and there is nothing politicians, or laws, can

fined doctrine of his church.* According to this view, Catholics who subscribe to abortion cannot be excommunicated, even though they may be viewed as being disloyal.

On account of this ambiguity of church authority, many prominent Catholics are outspokenly pro-abortion. Included among them in the United States are some priests. Also a number of nuns, some of whom endorsed a controversial abortion newspaper advertisement for which they were threatened with expulsion from their orders.

Additionally, lay Catholics now form an active pro-abortion lobby. "I am in the mainstream of Catholic lay thought," asserted Mrs. Eleanor C. Smeal, president of NOW, the National Organization for Women, at an abortion rally in Washington, D.C., U.S.A. At the same time, ac-

* A "defined doctrine" is one viewed as infallible as promulgated by the Roman Catholic Church under papal authority.

do to stop her." And therein lies a powerful argument. 'Which is preferable?' ask those who advocate abortion.

Where abortion is legalized, even though there are still some deaths, the practice is under strict medical supervision. Illegal, "back street" abortions, on the other hand, have a shocking mortality rate, as they are often performed by unqualified personnel under unsanitary conditions. In Bangladesh, for example,

it is estimated that every year 12,000 women die as a result of such abortions.

But in all of this, there is another human factor to be considered. How do doctors and nurses feel about handling abortions on an assembly-line basis? What kind of physical, mental, and emotional toll does having an abortion exact from the prospective mother—and father? These are questions we will next consider.

Abortion —At What Price?



Justitz/Zefa/H. Armstrong Roberts

IN GLASGOW, Scotland, two nurses had "horrific nightmares" and suffered sleepless nights, reported *The Daily Telegraph*. Why? Because they took part in an operation to abort a baby boy of 24 weeks. Unexpectedly, he lived "for a short time."

In Detroit, U.S.A., a 29-week-old fetus, supposed to have been killed by an injection into its mother's womb, was dumped into a stainless-steel bucket in a hospital abortion ward. But it survived. Its cries were heard, and this baby girl was rushed to the intensive-care unit, just in time.

It is now possible for premature babies to survive because of advanced medical techniques

The aborting of viable fetuses is a growing problem as the number of abortions increases. Advancing medical techniques provide better care for premature babies, so that at 26 weeks it is now possible for a healthy infant to survive—something that would have been very difficult a few years ago. As a result, nurses in some countries have the legal right to refuse, on grounds of conscience, to participate in abortions.

But what about the doctors? How do they react?

The Business of Abortion

"To be publicly identified as an abortionist is the kiss of death," confided Dr. Phillip Stubblefield in an interview with *Newsweek*. In fact, public pressure has caused many doctors in the United States to cease the practice entirely. A number of bombing incidents have destroyed abortion clinics, and "all over the country, we have clinics that can't get medical directors because doctors are afraid of what the community will do," Dr. Stubblefield explained.

Nevertheless, abortions are still being performed in increasing numbers. And one reason is perhaps not too difficult to find. It is a profitable business.

In Paris, France, for example, parents paid the equivalent of £1,000 (\$1,400) for

A Conflict of Loyalties?

The Declaration of Geneva was adopted by the General Assembly of the World Medical Association at Geneva, Switzerland, in September 1948. It is based on the ancient Hippocratic oath. The following is an extract from this Declaration:

"At the Time of Being Admitted as Member of the Medical Profession: I solemnly pledge myself to consecrate my life to the service of humanity. . . . I will practice my profession with conscience and dignity. . . . I will maintain the utmost respect for human life, from the time of conception; even under threat, I will not use my medical knowledge contrary to the laws of humanity."

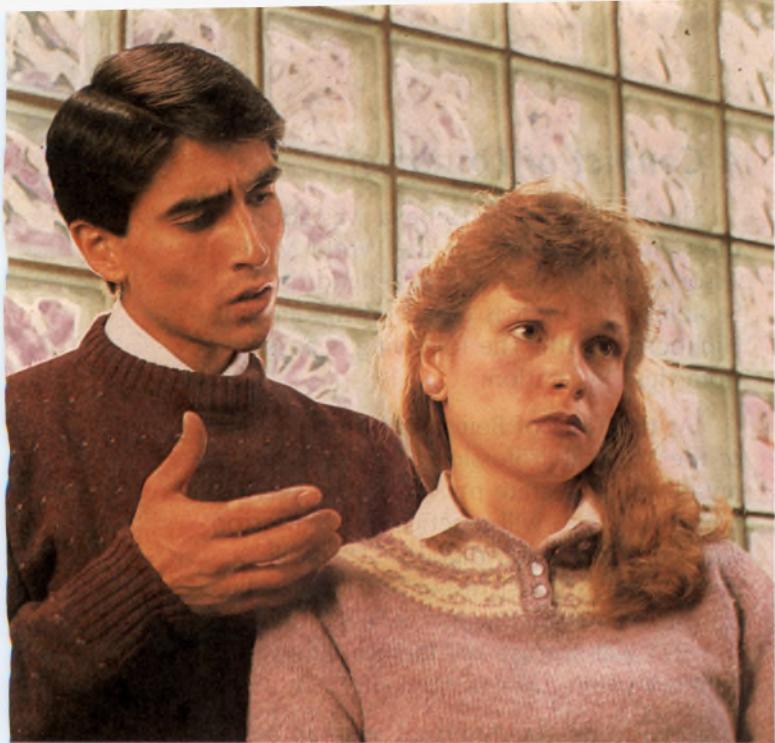
How do doctors interpret such an oath? Here are two conflicting views. Which do you share?

DOCTOR I. M.

"I can never look at the tissues I have removed during the termination of a pregnancy without revulsion. It may be a jelly, but it is, after all, human life that I am destroying."

DOCTOR V. A.

"I don't think abortion is ever wrong. As long as an individual is completely dependent upon the mother, it's not a person."



Few people give much thought to the feelings of the child's father

Even so, many doctors are becoming increasingly unhappy about the whole affair. At the opening of the abortion era in Britain, the *Daily Mail* reported Professor Ian Morris as saying: "If I were just beginning my career knowing what I know now about abortions, I would never choose gynaecology." He added: "I detest the operation. It is a complete reversal of all my medical training. The whole aim is to save life, not perform this particular form of homicide." Strong words, indeed, and not every doctor will agree with them. But they do convey some idea of the revulsion to the practice some doctors instinctively feel.

To Abort—Whose Choice?

When a woman faces the issue of abortion, few people, perhaps even the woman herself, give much thought to the father. The decision to have an abortion is often made by the woman alone, drawing on the support of close friends and relatives. But "men also go through the grieving, the sense of loss," reports *The New York Times*, "and may also experience a lot of the ambivalence that women do about becoming a parent."

Some fathers feel strongly that their

their teenage daughter to have a private abortion, according to a report in the medical magazine *Pulse*. Some London clinics, says the same report, charge up to £2,000 (\$2,800) for every abortion they perform.

In 1982, two of Britain's largest abortion agencies had a combined income of £4.5 million (\$6.3 million). Reporting this figure, *Human Concern* comments: "Abortion is a lucrative business." In Japan the government refuses to legalize the birth-control pill. "The ban," reported *The Sunday Times* of London, "is due to lobbying by doctors, who make a fortune from abortion." Wherever you look in the world of abortion, money surfaces.

This is hardly surprising. When faced with a sudden traumatic situation, like that of an unmarried, pregnant teenager, many parents will consider any price a reasonable one to resolve the situation, especially if an abortion can be done safely, speedily, and in strict confidence.

wishes should be taken into account, too, that they should have more say before the mother decides to abort their child. "Men wanted to share, not impose, the decision making," says sociologist Arthur Shostak following a ten-year survey of the problem. Surely such thinking is not unreasonable.

Coping With Reaction

Yet, in making the decision, the woman, unlike the man, has to cope with the *physical* shock to her whole system if her gestation period is suddenly terminated. Just what is involved?

Even after an early abortion, it is usual for a woman to feel weak and tired. Cramps, sickness, and possible bleeding are common too. When an abortion is performed much later on, the signs of the terminated pregnancy can last up to a week or more as the hormone level drops. Soreness of the breasts and a feeling of depression are additional factors to face. Yes, having an abortion can be a painful experience, as only the woman knows, and it is seldom an easy choice.

Of greater importance is the fact that, emotionally and mentally, the effect of an abortion can be devastating. The problem is that whereas a physical reaction can be immediate and expected, the mental and emotional wounds appear later and take longer to heal, if ever they do. "Speaking as someone who professionally has to deal from time to time with patients who have had abortions, they are often greatly disturbed many years after the clinical event," writes a correspondent to *The Times* of London. How big is this problem?

"It now seems that the size of the hidden problem is greater than previously thought," commented *The Sunday Times*. The effects of depression and emotional

disturbance are often so great that "half the unmarried women who have abortions for therapeutic reasons end up needing psychiatric help." These findings have been borne out by a study at London's King's College Hospital. This study reveals, according to *The Times*, that "couples who decide to have a pregnancy terminated can face acute grief reactions" and that they find their grief "difficult to cope with."

The Japanese have an unusual way of handling this human problem. Tiny statues, made of plastic, plaster, or stone to represent aborted children, are placed in temple grounds. There they are committed to the care of Jizo, the Buddhist guardian of children. Parents, as they pray to the

Abortion Techniques

The dangers of an abortion for the mother are directly related to the age of the fetus. They should not be underestimated.

For first trimesters it is usual for the embryo to be sucked out by vacuum pump.* This is usually done in a clinic in a short space of time. For second trimesters the dismembering of the fetus to extract it from the mother, or induced abortion brought on by injection, are usual procedures. A short stay in a hospital is normal. For any third trimesters a major operation, such as a hysterotomy, may be the only option.[#]

* The nine-month period of gestation is sometimes divided medically into three three-month terms called trimesters.

[#] Hysterotomy is a cutting of the uterus, or womb, to remove the developing child. Not to be confused with hysterectomy, a removal of the uterus itself.



Emotionally and mentally, the effect of an abortion can be devastating

deity for forgiveness, can thus give vent to their feelings of shame, sorrow, and guilt. But they are not alone in feeling the need to do this. Consider the following personal experiences.

"I Soon Became Ashamed"

By the time she was 22, Elaine had had three abortions. She recalls: "I was told that it was not wrong or criminal to do it at only six weeks' gestation, since a baby had not been formed by then, only if it was three months or more. After that, when I heard people passing bad remarks about unwed mothers, I became happy I had terminated my pregnancy. Two years later I repeated the same procedure twice, becoming increasingly happy I had found a way of not bringing children into this world."

Soon after this, Elaine entered the nursing profession, working in midwifery. "It was a delight," she recalls, "to see the birth of a baby and to experience the joy such

Janet, a mother now 39 years of age, relates her feelings following an abortion: "The only way I coped was by brainwashing myself into believing that it never really happened to me. I convinced myself for many years that I couldn't have done it, that it was some horrible nightmare."

Nineteen-year-old Karen confides: "I did my best to pass off what I had done, but I cried when I saw a baby or a pregnant woman. I was so depressed. Then milk started to come out of my breasts to remind me. The nightmares I had made me wake in tears, hearing babies crying. I became so bitter over it all."

To view an abortion as a simple operation of convenience is misguided. Once the step has been taken, it is irreversible. The immediate problem may go away, yet its effects, as we have seen, can be far reaching and long lasting. But what about when an abortion is recommended by a doctor?

"You Ought to Abort the Child"

That was the straight advice given to Sue by her doctor. Why? Sue already had two young children, and no sooner had she realized she was pregnant than one of them caught rubella, or German measles as it is more commonly called. "It was inevitable that I should catch it, too, as I had never had it before," she says. Sure enough, soon she was quite ill herself.

Medical experience has established that rubella, when contracted by a woman early in pregnancy, can cause distressing deformities to the growing embryo. It was with this fact in mind that the doctor spoke as he did. "He told me bluntly," Sue recalls, "that the baby would be deformed and that I would never be able to cope with it. At his clinic he insisted that if I ignored his advice, I would have to sign a letter accepting full responsibility, absolving him." Sue signed it. "In all fairness, I must say in his defense that he was genuinely worried about me, especially since I am an epileptic," she added.

Sue's husband, although naturally very concerned, left the decision to his wife, and she made arrangements to have her baby. In due time a daughter was born. Tests were immediately carried out on the child, but apart from slight anemia, there was nothing wrong with her at all. The doctors were surprised, however, to find antibodies in the baby's blood that her mother did not have, indicating that the developing child had certainly been affected by the rubella.

Coping With Deformity

Even though in that case the outcome was a happy one, the fact remains that many children are born deformed, in need of special care. It is easy to say that it is humane to prevent cripples' coming into the world, but who is in a position to judge the quality of life of another? Are there not

people with varying degrees of mobility in every community, enjoying life to the extent they are able and contributing, in turn, something for the good of mankind?*

Sue viewed things this way. But she also had another source of strength upon which to draw—her faith. When her doctor first intimated that her baby would be deformed, she told him that even if this were so, she knew she could count on strength from God to help her cope. Also, she had no right to deprive a crippled child of the "wonderful hope of a cure of all physical sicknesses in God's new system of things," under the rule of his Kingdom. (Revelation 21:1-4) Such faith has its own rewards.

The Crucial Choice

"Birth? Or Abortion?" Faced with the choice, which will it be?

Sue reasoned: "My baby hadn't asked to be conceived, so what right had I to terminate that little life before it had a chance to see life?"

Her question is simple enough. How would you answer it?

* The care of a Down's syndrome baby was discussed in the February 8, 1986, issue of this magazine.

In Our Next Issue

- Religion in Politics—Is This God's Will?
- Finding the Right Army
- Why Do I Lose My Temper?

Abortion

—And “the Source of Life”

TODAY, with modern technology, doctors can easily determine the sex of a fetus. But who can determine its disposition? Who can see its potential as a living, human soul? (Genesis 2:7) Only Jehovah God can, since he is “the source of life.” (Psalm 36:9) Consider the following Scriptural examples.

The patriarchal laws of inheritance related to the primacy of the firstborn. Yet, when Rebekah, Isaac's wife, was pregnant with twins, God told her: “The older will serve the younger.” The lives of their two boys, Jacob and Esau, testified to Jehovah's understanding of their personalities long before their birth.—Genesis 25:22, 23.

Centuries later, an angel told Zechariah the priest that his wife Elizabeth would have a son who should be named John. It was the privilege of this son, later known as John the Baptizer, to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah. Humility of mind was an exacting requirement for this commission, as God well knew.—Luke 1:8-17.

The Human Fetus—How Precious?

King David acknowledged: “You [Jehovah] kept me screened off in the belly of my mother. . . . Your eyes saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writing.” And that is just as true of any one of us.—Psalm 139:13-16.

Every human pregnancy is precious to “the source of life,” Jehovah God. Just how precious, the Mosaic Law makes clear at Exodus 21:22, 23: “In case men should struggle with each other and they really hurt a pregnant woman . . . , if a fatal accident should occur, then you must give soul for soul.”

Some Bible translations make it appear that in this law the crucial matter was what

A Happy Conception

In 1973, *The Watchtower*, the companion magazine to *Awake!*, carried a short article discussing the Bible's viewpoint on abortion. Two young students read it. The girl was pregnant, and she and the father had agreed on an abortion. But the article made them think. As a result, they decided to have their baby.

Recently the man was again contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses, and he said: “I have the highest esteem for your Bible literature. It is because of that jolting article that my wife and I are the proud parents of a lovable 13-year-old daughter today!”

It was certainly rewarding for them to take the Scriptural course.



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happened to the mother, not the fetus. The original Hebrew text, however, refers to a fatal accident to either mother or child.

Early Christian Thinking

Following the death of Jesus Christ's apostles in the first century, many men expounded on their teachings. These writers were not inspired as the Bible writers were, but their comments are of interest, for they reflect the religious thinking of their time on this crucial issue. Here are some excerpts.

The Letter of Barnabas, chapter 19:5 (c.100-132 C.E.)

"Thou shalt not slay the child by procuring abortion; nor, again, shalt thou destroy it after it is born."

***The Didache, or The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (c.150 C.E.)**

"This is the Way of Life: . . . You shall not kill the child in the womb or murder a new-born infant."

Tertullian: Apology, chapter 9:8 (c.197 C.E.)

"But with us murder is forbidden once and for all. We are not permitted to destroy even the foetus in the womb, as long as blood is still being drawn to form a human being. To prevent the birth of a child is anticipated murder. It makes no difference whether one destroys a life already born or interferes with its coming to birth. One who will be a man is already one."

***Basil: Letter to Amphilius* (347 C.E.)**

"She who has deliberately destroyed a foetus has to pay the penalty of murder. And any hair-splitting distinction as to whether the foetus was formed or unformed is inadmissible to us."

The Christian View

A spontaneous abortion or a miscarriage may result at any time from human imperfection or from an accident. A deliberately induced abortion, however, simply to prevent the birth of an unwanted child, is a different matter. According to the Scriptures, as we have seen, it is a willful taking of human life.

Who is "the One laying out the earth and its produce, the One giving breath to the people on it, and spirit to those walking in it"? It is not man but the Source of all life, Jehovah God. (Isaiah 42:5) Our God-given ability to pass life to our offspring is a precious privilege for which, as in all things, "each of us will render an account for himself to God."—Romans 14:12.

Abortion

—Knowledge Brings Responsibility

DO YOU always speak when you *know* something is right? It is good to do so, especially when the welfare of others is at stake. After reading an article on the subject of abortion in an earlier issue of this magazine, a mother in England wrote as follows:

"I have just read the 'Letter From the Mother of an Unborn Child' in the July 22 [1986] issue of *Awake!* and it broke my heart.

"I have never experienced an abortion, but when I was four months pregnant with my first child, my sister-in-law was two months pregnant with her third child. She had just got her two little girls off to school and had found herself a well-paying job. There were things she wanted: furnishings, videos, a new car, plants for the garden. But a baby would have put an end to the job and thus to the income to buy all these things. So she decided to have an abortion.

"As the day of the abortion closed in, she felt excitement. But I grew sicker and sicker at the thought of it. I was by this time just beginning to feel my baby kicking within me, and I used to think of the baby within my sister-in-law growing too.

"The eve of the abortion came, and I kept hoping my sister-in-law would change her mind. I could visualise her baby, snug and

safe in her womb listening to the soft and relaxing beat of its mother's heart. Then my mind would recoil at the thought of that little child torn away from its safe little world and destroyed. I would cry deeply at the thought. The abortion took place. My little daughter will never know the cousin she could have grown up with, their ages being so close.

"What of my sister-in-law? She lost her job but found another, and she has had several since. She got her videos, her new car, her plants, new clothes, etc., but she went through a stage of depression and left her husband and children, then returned home after a few days. But she isn't happy. When she visits me, her two little girls play with my daughter and my son of 11 months, and they say of my daughter: 'Isn't she lovely, Mummy? I wish we had a little sister or brother.' It's at these words that I steal a glance at her expression. I feel I want to comfort her because at the time of her abortion she didn't really realize what she was doing. But my sister-in-law chose money above the life of her child, and it is for this reason I feel she now regrets it.

"However, this leads to my asking myself a very serious question. I might think of myself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, although not yet baptized. But I can see I yet have a long way to go, for true Witnesses are like Jesus, feeling love and compassion toward all, no matter what others have been or done. I long for the day when I can truly say I feel as they do toward others and carry Jehovah's name proudly. Perhaps if I hadn't sat on the fence so long, I could have had the courage to witness to my sister-in-law, and the baby might have been saved."

It is the sincere hope of the publishers of *Awake!* that this present series of articles may serve that very purpose.



The League of Nations Staggers to Its Death

THE League of Nations was a sickly child from its very birth. Historian H. Gatzke says its first meeting in 1920 was "less a world confederation of nations than it was a conference of major European powers pursuing national interests, intent upon making the League serve their own political purposes." Until nationalistic thinking could be eradicated, the child's life would be in constant danger.

During the early 1930's, many of the League's members were plainly dissatisfied. Italy, for example, felt it was not getting its

fair share of the world's raw materials and that it was being denied access to world markets and investment possibilities. So in 1935, in pursuit of national interests, it invaded Ethiopia. Japan, with similar grievances, moved into China in 1937. In both cases the League was powerless to intervene.

Clearly, the League, not yet 20 years old, was not the strapping, healthy teenager its supporters wanted it to be. Its terminal illness was causing concern as early as 1936 when, according to historian Hermann Graml, "the atmosphere [at the League's headquarters] in Geneva was like that at a funeral." No wonder, faced as the League was with the audacious behavior of Italy and Japan, not to mention that of a man named Adolf.

"Hitler's Favorite Subject"

Yes, Germany, too, was dissatisfied. It was struggling hard to regain a position of European leadership. General Hans von Seeckt, head of the German armed forces in the 1920's, 'held that a renewed ascent of Germany was unthinkable without a new war,' says a German textbook; nor did Hitler rule out the possible need of military action. That is why, according to a German military history research organization, "all the regime's important measures [between 1933 and 1939] served, either directly or indirectly, the purposes of rearmament."



War sounded the death knell of the League

As Hitler saw it, "the German 'masses' were composed of 85 million people forming a unified 'racial nucleus.' Hitler's pseudo-Darwinistic approach required that this 'racial nucleus' conquer its 'territory.'" So as Gerhard Schulz, professor of modern history at the University of Tübingen, explains: "The violent conquest of new territory was Hitler's favorite subject."

Actually the League of Nations helped Hitler decide where to begin. At the end of World War I, the Saarland, a region between France and Germany, tossed back

and forth between them for centuries, was placed under the administration of the League of Nations. But a provision was made whereby Saar citizens would later decide by vote whether to stay under League control or to become part of either France or Germany. A plebiscite was scheduled for 1935.

At that time Hitler was very popular. Young students were sometimes given dictation, being told to write, for example: "As Jesus liberated mankind from sin and hell, so Hitler saved the German nation from ruin. Jesus and Hitler were persecuted, but whereas Jesus was crucified, Hitler was elevated to the chancellorship.... Jesus built for the heavens, Hitler for the German earth."

Far from displaying Christian neutrality, religious leaders became actively involved in plebiscite politics. Predominately Catholic, Saar inhabitants took to heart what their bishops told them: "As German Catholics, we are obligated to support the greatness, the prosperity, and the peace of our fatherland." And the Catholic trade unions warned: "He who is unfaithful to his fatherland will not be faithful to his God."

Of course, not everyone agreed. A renowned author of the time, Heinrich Mann, warned: "If you vote for Hitler, you will prolong his life and will share responsibility for his misdeeds . . . , even for the war that he makes inevitable." But such warning voices were few. This led journalist Kurt Tucholsky to write that the Saar had been "deserted by England, by France, by the League of Nations, by international labor unions, and by the pope."

Given these circumstances, Hitler's victory in the plebiscite was a foregone conclusion. An overwhelming 90.8 percent voted for becoming part of the new German Reich.

After this first major foreign policy victory, Hitler was encouraged to press on. The League of Nations, already on its deathbed, was too weak to interfere when, in violation of the terms of the Versailles Treaty, Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland in 1936. In 1938 no one prevented him from occupying Austria or later that year from annexing the predominately German-populated Sudetenland part of Czechoslovakia, preliminary to invading the rest of the country in 1939. There were loud protests, to be sure, but nothing more.

Dress Rehearsals—For What?

Up until then, Hitler's war of aggression had proceeded without bloodshed. Not so the above-mentioned conflicts in which Italy and Japan had become involved. "Fascistic Italy's attack on Ethiopia," says the Italian reference work *L'uomo e il tempo*, "was prepared down to the minutest detail and was executed with a tremendous expenditure of material and with the support of an enormous propaganda apparatus." That war began in 1935, and the occupation of Ethiopia was completed in 1936. The world was shocked to hear about bombing raids and the use of poison gas.

In Asia, Japanese militarists had become so powerful that when China was charged with trying to bomb a South Manchurian Railway train in 1931, Japan was able to seize upon this as an excuse to move troops into Manchuria. In 1937 they advanced into China proper, capturing large sections of land, including the cities of Shanghai, Peking, Nanking, Hankow, and Canton.

Meanwhile, in Europe the Spanish civil

war had broken out in 1936. Hitler and Mussolini saw in this an opportunity to try out their newest weapons and methods of warfare. Like the wars in Manchuria, China, and Ethiopia, it served as a dress rehearsal for something larger in the future. According to one authority, more than half a million persons were killed in the Spanish conflict. No wonder it caught world attention. And if the dress rehearsal merited headlines, what about the main performance that was yet to come?

Lightning Strikes in Europe

The democracies, observing developments on the world stage, were concerned. Great Britain introduced military conscription. Then in August 1939 Germany and the Soviet Union caught the world by surprise by signing a nonaggression pact. In reality it was a secret agreement to divide Poland between them. Gambling that once again the Western democracies would not intervene, Hitler moved his troops into Poland at 4:45 a.m. on September 1, 1939.

But this time he was mistaken. Great Britain and France declared war on Germany two days later. On September 17, Soviet troops invaded Poland from the east, and by the end of the month, for all practical purposes, the Polish question was settled. World War II had begun, launched by a swift military campaign worthy of the German expression *Blitzkrieg*, meaning "lightning war." In the glow of victory, Hitler offered to make peace with the Western powers. "Whether he was serious about this," writes German historian Walther Hofer, "is a question that cannot be answered with any certainty."

The first few war years were characterized by surprise attacks, carried out lightning fast and with destructive results. The Soviets quickly forced Estonia, Latvia, and

Lithuania into allowing Soviet troops to be stationed on their soil. Finland, when asked to do the same, refused and was invaded by the Soviets on November 30, 1939. Finland sued for peace under Soviet terms the following March.

In the meantime, however, Britain and France had contemplated going through neutral Norway to help Finland. But when Finland sued for peace, the Allies, no longer having any pretext for doing so, postponed those plans. Preliminary to a later landing, they started mining Norwegian waters on April 8, 1940. The next day, while the Norwegians were preoccupied with protesting this mine-laying operation, the Germans unexpectedly landed troops in both Norway and Denmark. Less than a week later, British troops landed in Norway, but after several victories, they were forced to withdraw because of unsettling reports from the south.

For months the question there had been: When and where will Germany make its move against France? Time elapsed with most military action confined to naval battles. On land all was quiet. Some journalists began speaking of a "phony war," no longer a blitzkrieg, but rather a sitzkrieg, meaning literally a "sit-down war."

However, there was

**European expansion
of the Axis powers up
till 1940**

nothing phony about the sudden attack by the Germans on May 10, 1940. Bypassing the Maginot Line, the defense line that guarded France at its border with Germany, they struck through the Low Countries, sped through Belgium, and reached the French border on May 12. By May 14 the Netherlands had fallen. Then sweeping down through northern France, German troops trapped thousands of British, French, and Belgian soldiers with the English Channel at their backs. Far from being a sitzkrieg, this was full-scale blitzkrieg!

On May 26, at Dunkirk, France, one of the most spectacular rescue operations in the history of warfare began. For ten days naval vessels, and hundreds of civilian boats, ferried some 340,000 troops across the English Channel to safety in Britain.



Other Items That Made the News

- 1935—Over 200,000 persons killed in China in flooding along the Yangtze River
- 1936—The *Queen Mary* ocean liner crosses the Atlantic in record time of 95 hours, 57 minutes
Hitler infuriated when black American Jessie Owens wins four gold medals at Berlin Olympic Games
- 1937—DuPont patents a new product known as Nylon
After trans-Atlantic flight, German dirigible Hindenburg catches fire during mooring in New Jersey, killing 36
- 1938—Vatican recognizes Franco regime as official Spanish government
Scientists Hahn and Strassmann discover that neutrons can be used to split uranium
So-called *Kristallnacht* (Crystal night) when Jewish shops in Germany are plundered and destroyed
- 1939—Tens of thousands killed in Turkey earthquake
Development of first airplane jet engine and construction of first helicopter
- 1940—British make use of newly developed radar in air war

But not everyone escaped. Within three weeks the Germans took over one million prisoners.

On June 10, Italy declared war on Great Britain and France. Then four days later, Paris fell to the Germans. Before the month was out, a Franco-German armistice had been signed. Britain now stood alone. As Hofer describes it: "At a blitzkrieg tempo that even he himself had not thought possible, Hitler had become master over Western Europe."

Contrary to what Hitler expected, the British did not sue for peace. So on July 16, he ordered

plans for "Operation Sea Lion," an invasion of the British Isles. Britain braced itself for the lightning that was due to strike again.

And Now What?

For years Jehovah's Witnesses had publicly been foretelling the demise of the League of Nations.* Now the lightninglike outbreak of World War II had ended its agonizing struggle for life. A long overdue funeral could be held. The body could be laid to rest in the abyss of which Revelation 17:7-11 speaks and on the basis of which scripture the Witnesses had foretold its failure.

But after death, now what? Would the war possibly lead to something bigger, perhaps to "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" called Armageddon? (Compare Revelation 6:4; 16:14, 16.) Although eager to see how the war would further develop, Jehovah's Witnesses were determined not to get personally involved. They would maintain Christian neutrality, even though this would subject them—in both totalitarian and democratic countries—to bans, imprisonment, court action, and mob violence. Although numbering fewer than a hundred thousand in that war year of 1940, they pushed forward in spreading the message of real hope, the message of God's established Kingdom.

And hope is exactly what "Nations in Anguish, Driven by Fear," needed. This is the title of our next installment, Part 4, in this series, "The World Since 1914."

* For example, *The Watchtower* of April 1, 1922, page 108, said: "Satan . . . now attempts to establish a universal empire under an arrangement designated a league of nations or association of nations. . . . This alliance is an unholy one and will be dashed to pieces shortly."

Speaking in Tongues —Is It From God?

"DIRECTLY, there came into my hands a strange feeling, and it . . . began to surge! It was like a thousand—like ten thousand—then a million volts of electricity . . . I spoke in a language I could not understand for about two hours."

This experience typifies one of the most debated practices that many associate with Christian worship today: speaking in tongues. This matter has been of particular concern to Pentecostal groups and charismatic movements in other churches.

Dr. Vinson Synan of the Pentecostal Holiness Church stressed the dilemma sincere worshippers face concerning the role of speaking in tongues. He said: "Speaking in tongues is an embarrassment to us." Why? Dr. Synan noted that tongues today may not seem to make sense to us. "Embarrassing as it may be," he continued, "glossolalia [speaking in tongues] is the gift that God has chosen at *strategic points in history* to expand and renew the Church." —Italics ours.

One such 'strategic point' was a most unusual occurrence some 1,900 years ago.

Why Tongues?

It was Pentecost of the year 33 C.E. A change was due. A new covenant was to replace the ancient Jewish Law covenant. For what reason? To open up a better way to worship Jehovah God. How could people see that God's blessing was upon this shift in worship? He would use an outburst of miraculous events, including the

speaking in tongues, to move the hearts of righteously disposed people. These would see that the almighty God of their forefathers was indeed now conferring his approval upon Jesus' disciples.

The gift of tongues served another purpose at Pentecost. In Jesus' day, printing and broadcasting did not exist, and written records were not common among the ordinary people. Hence, the good news of God's will and purpose would have to be carried forth on the tongues of believers. Worshipers of Jehovah had come to the Festival of Pentecost in Jerusalem from over a dozen lands in Africa, Asia, and Europe, and they spoke several different languages. About 120 of Jesus' disciples also assembled in Jerusalem. Empowered with God's holy spirit, the disciples started to speak with different tongues. What a banquet of good news was served to a multitude of worshipers! These were able to "hear them speaking in [their own] tongues about the magnificent things of God."—Acts 2:5-11.

How effective was this miracle? Three thousand listeners became believers that same day! (Acts 2:41) Returning to their far-off homes, these new converts then bore witness about true worship "to the most distant part of the earth."—Acts 1:8.

Only a little more than two decades after Pentecost, Paul served notice that the gift of tongues would eventually cease. (1 Corinthians 13:8) Why would this be reasonable? Because the miracles at Pentecost, as a confirmation of

early Christianity, had served their purpose well and were no longer needed.

We can similarly view the case at Mount Sinai over 1,500 years earlier. Here God caused spectacular supernatural signs in order to impress upon the assembled people that the Law covenant was of divine origin. Once this new arrangement had been accepted by the people, these particular miraculous signs ceased to be seen.—Exodus 19:16-19.

Tongues Today?

Today many feel that they are assisted by God's holy spirit to speak in tongues. How can we reconcile this with Scriptural evidence that the gift of tongues has passed away?

Speaking in tongues usually amounts to highly emotional outbursts of sounds that no one understands. So it cannot be from God. Jesus said that religious hypocrites would try to attach his name to such "powerful works," but he rejected these "workers of lawlessness." (Matthew 7:21-23) And Paul prophetically

First-century Christians were given the gift to witness in foreign tongues



warned of a future time when there would be fraudulent miracles, or "lying signs and portents." Thus, "every unrighteous deception" is a specialty of the archdeceiver, Satan the Devil.—2 Thessalonians 2:8-10.

Did you know that speaking in tongues was a part of certain pagan religions of Greece in Paul's day? Their rites mixed speaking in tongues with practices such as the cutting of the flesh and frenzied nude dancing. Such historical examples clearly show that speaking in tongues can occur under influences that are most unholy.

Reason Speaks Out

If you are still uncertain about the origin of the ecstatic speaking in tongues today, ponder over 1 John 4:1, which says: "Beloved ones . . . test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God." Yes, test by a sober study of God's Word, with prayerful petition for help. (Acts 17:11) See if those religions that speak in tongues today are really guided into "all the truth."—John 16:13.

When Christians spoke in tongues in the first century, it edified the listeners. The inspired message was to be clear and intelligible.—1 Corinthians 14:26-28.

Those who now honor Bible truth are uttering expressions that surpass the speech that came forth from inspired tongues on that day of Pentecost long ago. Why so? Because they are announcing God's Kingdom rule by Christ for all obedient mankind to a larger audience and in a permanent form. Their message is part of the Bible's written record, and unlike the first-century Christians' speaking in tongues, the Bible, in whole or in part, is available in some 1,800 languages.

crossword puzzle

Clues Across

3. King Saul's grandfather (1 Chronicles 8:33)
4. To move along the surface of the body with pressure (Ruth 3:3)
5. This Greek Christian worked along with the apostle Paul (Galatians 2:1)
6. A court official, such as the Ethiopian man to whom Philip preached (Acts 8:27)
7. Freshly made (Mark 2:22)
11. Real (1 Kings 18:39)
12. Father of the Shuppim and the Huppim (1 Chronicles 7:12)
15. Except for Lot, all of them in Sodom were wicked (Genesis 19:4, 5)
16. Her son Jabal became the founder of nomadic herdsmen (Genesis 4:20)
17. It scattered the Jerusalem congregation, except for the apostles (Acts 8:1)
19. "--- without a word" (1 Peter 3:1)
20. It was transmitted by angels (Acts 7:53)
23. A son of Gad (Numbers 26: 15, 16)
25. When one blind person guides another, both fall into this (Matthew 15:14)
26. What Adam and Eve were forbidden to do from "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad" (Genesis 2:17)
27. Jesus miraculously walked on it (John 6:19)
29. Compensated (Romans 11:35)
31. City assigned to the tribe of Asher (Joshua 19:24, 26)
32. Mutual hatred (Genesis 3:15)
34. To change direction (Exodus 10:19)
36. Interjection of scorn (Isaiah 17:12)
38. Babylonian god (Jeremiah 50:2)
40. He and Aaron supported Moses' hands so as to attain victory over the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-13)
41. The 5th of Jacob's 12 sons (Genesis 30:6)

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Clues Down

1. This part of the harvest offered to Jehovah (Leviticus 23: 10, 11)
2. Floor covering (See Judges 5:10.)

Young People Ask... .



Can I Beat Stress?

HAVE you ever kicked a chair that you stumbled over? Or have you been so sick of your homework that you just threw all your books down? Then you have experienced how stress can trigger foolish actions that you later regret. Are there better ways to beat stress than by kicking and smashing? Yes, but first you need to know something about stress.

"Broadly defined, stress is what happens to the body when it is exposed to anything—nervous tension, disease, cold, heat, injury, and so on," say the authors of *Teenage Stress*. In "anything" they include even good things. "Some of your happiest moments can also be your most stressful," they say.

How does stress affect you? You know what happens when you get nervous and frightened: heart pounds, palms sweat, hands shake, face blushes, stomach gets knotted up, and mouth dries up. A lot of things take place in your body to cause these effects.

Glands begin dumping powerful hormones, such as cortisone and adrenaline, into your bloodstream. Your liver adds more sugar to your blood. All of this stimulates heart contractions, constricts blood vessels, increases blood pressure, and causes muscle tension.

Teenagers Are Stress Targets

Teenagers are naturally exposed to much stress. Puberty causes your body to under-

go a number of changes. And we live in an ever-changing world. (Compare 1 Corinthians 7:31.) Adults, though, may gloss over this, saying, 'You are young, you are free from care, you should be happy.' But perhaps they have forgotten what it is like to be young. After all, you do have worries—about your appearance, sex, health, parents, friends, teachers, grades, money, the world situation, death. Why, being young is probably the most stressful time of your life! But do not panic. There is hope.

For one thing, a little bit of stress can be good for you. How? Consider the matter of taking a test. "According to experts, a little



stress keeps your mind alert and your juices flowing," writes Judith Kelman in the youth magazine *Seventeen*. Concert pianist André-Michel Schub, a winner of the prestigious Van Cliburn Competition, was once quoted as saying: "Every performer feels some degree of stage fright. . . . It's a way of having extra energy and extra intensity, of focusing so you communicate better." So stress should not be avoided at all costs.

The Young Take Stress Best!

Moreover, youths are usually equipped with a good supply of energy and a hopeful attitude to counteract pressures. The Bible says: "The beauty of young men is their power." (Proverbs 20:29) "Young people . . . are able . . . to recover from the ill effects of excessive stress more rapidly than older people," say the authors of *Teenage Stress*. Twenty-three year old Vincenza from New York is an example of this. She tells:

"When I was in my teens, my mom died of cancer. Eighteen months later, my dad suddenly died of a heart attack. I was left alone with my two younger brothers. Then I met this guy and became his girlfriend. But after a couple of months we broke up. Sometimes I wondered, 'Should I kill myself, or go crazy, or end up in a madhouse?'" Could Vincenza survive this most stressful situation? Says she: "Now when I think of it, I can't believe I lived through it. But I did! And I learned a lot."

Additionally, Vincenza learned from her aunt, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, about the Bible hope that the dead will be resurrected in a future paradise on earth. (John 5:28, 29) "Although a Catholic at the time, I put all my trust in this newfound Bible hope. It helped immensely," she says. —Compare 2 Corinthians 1:9.

You Cannot Beat All of It

Nevertheless, one can never really get rid of all stress. "We are always in stress," writes the author of *Childstress!* "When there is no more, we are dead." Way back in Bible times people were also under stress. We read about Hannah, who for years often wept and refused to eat because she desperately wanted a child but was barren. (1 Samuel 1:7) Similarly, young Jeremiah was hesitant when God wanted him to preach to the nations. (Jeremiah 1:6) Job, after losing his property, his family, his health, wished he had never been born. (Job 3:10) On one occasion, Jesus was in such agony that his sweat became as drops of blood.—Luke 22:44.

So no one can escape stress. What will you do, then? Learn to handle it. You need to do that because excessive stress can make you physically ill and emotionally depressed. It can create mental confusion and spur you to say and do things that you will regret. It can cause wear and tear on your

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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mind and body. Here, then, are some ways to handle stress:

1. Reduce irritants. A dripping tap, a creaking door, a wobbling table can cause irritation. Small irritants add to your total load of stress. Do something about them. Get things tightened, oiled, and repaired. Have within reach things that are often needed. Organize. Experts say we spend 20 to 30 percent of our time just looking for things. Rearrange, tidy up, and decorate. Make it comfortable. Do not become a perfectionist, though. Perfectionism is a stressful burden for anyone to bear.

2. Organize and limit your activities. There's a saying that if you try to catch two hares at the same time, you will miss both of them. List what you have to do each day, and do one thing at a time. Work out a schedule with your parents about when and how to care for duties at home. Then do these willingly and cheerfully. Do not join in reckless, stressful activities that bring you into situations that cause you anguish and fright. It might be exciting for the moment but destructive in the end.

3. Lessen fear of failure. School tests can really put stress on anybody. You can lessen fear of failure, though, if you prepare well, get everything in order the day before, go to bed early, and sleep well. Do not take stimulants. They might put you on edge—not give you one. Relax, but do your best. Remember, one test seldom makes or breaks a person for life. If you fail, there will be other chances. Do not give up. At Proverbs 24:16 the Bible encourages a positive attitude: "The righteous one may fall even seven times, and he will certainly get up."

4. Talk to somebody. Steam boilers need escape valves. We humans even more so. When you feel anxiety and concern all bottled up in you, you should talk to some-

body—a friend, a parent, a brother, or a sister. Sometimes you need to talk with somebody who can help you apply God's righteous principles, such as an elder in the Christian congregation. Feel free to do that.—Proverbs 12:15.

5. Use prayer. Think of the four Bible characters mentioned earlier, Hannah, Jeremiah, Job, and Jesus. What helped them most to handle heavy stress? All of them talked with Jehovah God about their problems. Hannah did, and Jehovah blessed her with a son. (1 Samuel 1:11, 20) Jeremiah did, and God made him a strong and fearless prophet to the nations. (Jeremiah 1:6-10) Job did, and Jehovah compensated him abundantly for his loss. (Job 42:10-17) Jesus did, and Jehovah strengthened him so that he could rise and continue his sacrificial course.—Luke 22:44-46.

What happened to Vincenza after having lost her mother, father, and boyfriend? She tells: "I had to find someone that I could not lose. I had to love someone that I knew was never going to leave me. Then I thought: 'God, of course! He is always there. He must become my Father. He is the Creator of the Universe.' So I prayed: 'If you, Jehovah, are the real God, the Creator of the Universe, I am one that wants to serve you. Please, come and tell me that.' Later, one of Jehovah's Witnesses came to my door and she said: 'I'm here because somebody loves you.'" Vincenza accepted a Bible study. She learned to do what is said at 1 Peter 5:7: "Throw all your anxiety upon him [God], because he cares for you." She is now teaching others to do this.

So let us repeat: You cannot eliminate stress. But you can learn to lessen it, control it, and throw your anxiety on God. Then stress will never beat you.—Psalm 55:22.

From Our Readers

Young People Ask . . .

Your articles on "Young People Ask . . ." are fantastic. Not only do they help young people face up to life in the best way possible but they help many parents, including my sister who has a daughter, to find the right words when talking to children about the problems they have to face, such as drugs, sex, religion, finding a job, violence, school, communication with parents, teenage parents. Unfortunately there are many young people who have difficulty in communicating with their parents on these subjects, and others lack the courage to do so. But I believe that with the help of these articles many are doing so now.

S. F., Italy

Getting Along With Teachers

A week ago our Afrikaans teacher told the class to write an essay on the subject of our choice. I immediately knew what I wanted to write about. An article that had struck me was "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Get Along With My Teacher?" (October 22, 1985) There are 31 pupils in my class, and many, especially the boys, are rebellious and don't get along with some of the teachers. When we got our essays back, the teacher said to the class, "I want to read a good essay to you." Then she read my essay to the class, all listening attentively. Some shook their heads, some looked guilty, and others even turned pale. To me *Awake!* is of great value. I use it constantly at school to help me with my essays, oral parts, and projects.

I. B., South Africa

Recovering From Drug Abuse

Thank you for your article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Recover From Drug

Abuse?" (July 8, 1986) My husband is a recovering drug abuser, and the article helped tremendously in my understanding of what he is going through. We soon realized how true it is that negative attitudes are easily formed if he becomes too hungry, angry, tired, or lonely. I am better equipped to care for him now because I understand more than I thought possible.

A. S., United States

Bodybuilding?

Thank you for the fine material on bodybuilding. (December 22, 1986) You see, I had been thinking about spending an hour a day on muscle development, but the material you published was a great help to me. I now appreciate that body image is not the all-important thing; rather, people should like me for what I am. Also, God doesn't look at the body but searches the heart. So I have decided to give attention to developing my mind.

D. M., Brazil

Getting a reasonable amount of exercise that contributes to a healthier body is likely a good thing, as the article showed, but striving for improving the mind and cultivating godly devotion should be our first goal. See the article "Good Health Is Good for Business." (February 22, 1987)—ED.

The Stutterer's Challenge

I read with interest your article "Understanding the Stutterer's Challenge." (November 8, 1986) Being a stutterer myself, I found it interesting to read what other sufferers of this disposition experienced in their daily lives. I thank you for bringing this somewhat neglected subject into the open.

G. E., Wales

Watching the World

Religious Confidence Declines

According to a 1986 Gallup poll, Americans have more confidence in the military than they do in organized religion, reports *The New York Times*. Confidence in the military was indicated by 63 percent of those interviewed, but only 57 percent had confidence in religion. The latter figure marks a 9-percent drop from the 66 percent polled in 1985 who had confidence in religion. Why the sharp change in the public's trust? *The Times* reports that Andrew Kohut, president of the Gallup organization, "attributed the decline to the increased involvement of churches in controversial issues." He said: "Increasingly, religious figures and institutions have become controversial and more political."

Eat Your Oatmeal!

Mother said it was good for you, so, like it or not, you ate it. Was she right? New research shows that evidently she was. Scientists have found that by adding small amounts of oatmeal to low-fat diets, people who must regulate their fat intake can experience an even greater reduction of cholesterol levels. Reporting on the results of a study involving 208 patients, the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* noted that after six weeks on a low-fat diet, cholesterol was reduced

by 5.2 percent. However, adding oats to the same six-week diet brought an added 2.7-percent reduction for those using oat bran and a 3.3-percent reduction for oatmeal eaters.

More Blood Risks

Stored blood carries the risk of being contaminated by fungus that has developed in plastic containers. This came to light recently in Brazil when the National Secretariat of Sanitary Vigilance took



steps to halt the production of the plastic containers because of lack of hygiene, asepsis, and quality control on the part of certain manufacturers. The governmental action was considered appropriate and long overdue. The Secretariat's president, Mr. Luiz Felipe Moreira Lima, raised the question: "How can it be that for all these years nobody saw this?" How many thousands of people have been transfused with fungus-contaminated blood is anybody's guess.

Unusual Measures

Fear of AIDS has led to some new and unusual measures for preventing the spread of the deadly disease in Italy. *La Tribuna*, an Italian newspaper, reports that prostitutes in Pordenone and Treviso have been given printed tracts that explain in clear terms how AIDS from sex can be avoided. The tract, however, which is published by the Committee for Civil Rights of Prostitutes, is not intended for their use but for the use of prospective clients who may be potential carriers of the disease. The tract explains that it is the prostitute who fears contracting the disease and who will refuse a client if appropriate protective measures are not taken. AIDS cases in Italy have been doubling every eight months.

Pollution Kills

About 30 tons of chemicals from a Swiss chemical plant were accidentally washed into the Rhine River last November. The *International Herald Tribune* reported that an estimated 500,000 fish of 34 different species were killed. But the disaster was not limited to fish. According to the French daily *Le Figaro*, many water birds died as a direct result of the river's chemical pollutants. "Dozens of dead herons and grebes were picked up. Diving ducks that feed on shellfish have been

poisoned, as well as herbivorous swans. All of this proves that pollution affects nature at all levels." It has been estimated that it will take ten years for the Rhine to recover its ecological balance.

Mimicking TV Violence

Shaka Zulu, a controversial television series, has caused the days of the spear and shield to be relived by South Africa's youths, notes an article that appeared in a supplement to the *Natal Witness*, a South African newspaper. "Both black and white boys—and girls—are crazy with the new game" of acting out the TV series *Shaka Zulu*. "Before it hit the screens, kids were already playing . . . violent games," explains Khala Mkhize, author of the article, but now "groups of young boys and girls 'attack' each other with make-do spears and cardboard shields the same way the actors do." The result is a growing list of injured people. Regarding the effects of TV violence on today's youths, one official noted: "As they grow to adulthood they will have been trained to be society's Shakas and Rambos."

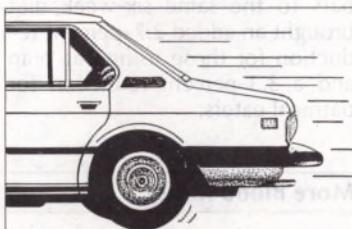
Drinkers' Health Costs

"Almost 10% of Ontario's health care budget" of about \$10 billion (Canadian) is related to alcohol, reports the Canadian periodical *The Journal*, published by the Addiction Research Foundation. Other reported statistics are: 84 percent of Ontarians drink occasionally, and 49 percent of all drinkers imbibe "five or more drinks at a sitting," which is an amount "detrimental to physical, social, or mental well-being, or all three." A sobering statistic is that in a two-year period "6,300 deaths in Ontario—close to 10%

of all deaths—were alcohol-related," concludes the article.

Too Fast

In the Federal Republic of Germany, some 23,000 road-maintenance workers have complained about irresponsible drivers. "Drivers shoot past road-work sites at 170 km (105 mi) per hour without a care in the world," said



Josef Hilgers, chairman of their association, in Cologne. Ten workers were killed last year and several dozen injured, reports *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. This, together with other hazards, such as high noise levels and air pollution, prevents almost all workers from staying on until retirement age.

Other European countries also agree that fast driving is a serious problem. A new law in Italy stipulates fines of about \$575 (U.S.) for motorists and approximately \$1,150 for truck drivers who exceed speed limits by more than 10 km (6 mi) per hour!

Ledger of Crime

The ethics of a 46-year-old homeless man arrested for riding a stolen bicycle baffled the Tokyo police. His seemingly minor offense mushroomed when police discovered two notebooks the man was carrying. *Asahi Evening News* says the notebooks were "meticulously detailed and neatly handwritten" by the thief himself

and listed some 100 thefts that netted over 1.5 million yen (\$9,400, U.S.). Explaining the reason for logging his crimes, he said: "When I was arrested once before, I couldn't remember all the details of what I'd done and caused inconvenience to the police officers in charge. I vowed, there and then, not to let that happen again."

Germany's Aged

Are there many people still living who were born before 1914? Although their numbers are dwindling, consider figures from just one European country. West Germany has 1.8 million people over 80 years of age and 146,000 over 90, according to a 1986 study by Professor Ursula Lehr and published in the German magazine *Aktiver Lebensabend*.

Infection Fighter

Why is cranberry juice effective in fighting urinary-tract infections? Dr. Kathryn Schrottenboer, writing in *Family Circle*, explains that it was formerly thought that the chief effect was to inhibit the growth of bacteria by acidifying the urine. However, studies at the Youngstown State University in Ohio have shown that, in addition, it actually prevents bacteria from affixing itself to urinary-tract tissue. While its healing properties may not be as effective as antibiotics in cases of acute infection, microbiologist A. E. Sobota claims that drinking 12 to 15 ounces (0.3 to 0.4 L) of juice daily will help to "wash out" bacteria in the urine. In support of Sobota's findings, Dr. Schrottenboer suggests that drinking two or three glasses of cranberry juice a day "may ward off recurrent attacks of cystitis."



Where Did It Start?

IMAGINE my surprise when I heard the strange sound of tinkling bells, a violin, and people dancing outside an ancient inn in the Cotswold village of Broadway, England. As I drew closer, I saw groups of dancing men dressed in white, wearing straw hats bedecked with flowers and ribbons, with little bells tinkling harmoniously from their shins. They were Morris dancers. I was watching a custom that goes back hundreds of years. Intrigued, I decided to find out more about this strange all-male dancing.

One source says the name Morris comes from the Spanish *morisco*, meaning "Moorish." Some believe it was developed from the *morisco* dance, or Spanish fandango. Although in England it goes back at least to the time of Henry VII (1457-1509), it became popular in village festivities during the reign of Henry VIII (1509-47). Similar dances are common in other parts of Europe, the Middle East, India, and areas of Central and South



America. But what do the Morris dances represent?

The New Encyclopædia Britannica explains that a common feature of many of them is a group of dancing men "attendant on a pagan god who celebrates his revival after death. Often the dancers wear white clothes and dance with bells fastened to the legs or body. A feeling that the dances have magic power or bring luck persists wherever they are traditionally performed."

A variation of the Morris dance is the horn dance held annually at Abbots Bromley in Staffordshire, England. The same encyclopedia explains: "This dance-procession includes six animal-men bearing deer antlers . . . a man-woman, or Maid Marian, and a fool, both carrying phallic symbols."

Although for many Morris dancing may seem to be an innocent pastime, it is wise for conscientious Christians to be aware of its origin.—*Awake!* staff writer.

Snow birds in love

every day, beginning with the arrival of the first birds in January, and continuing through the spring and summer months until the last bird departs in October. This is a time of great activity for the birds, as they search for food, mate, and raise their young. The birds are most active during the day, especially in the early morning and late afternoon, when the temperatures are cooler and the air is clearer. They are also more active at night, particularly during the full moon, when the light is brighter and the insects are more abundant. The birds are most active during the day, especially in the early morning and late afternoon, when the temperatures are cooler and the air is clearer. They are also more active at night, particularly during the full moon, when the light is brighter and the insects are more abundant.

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