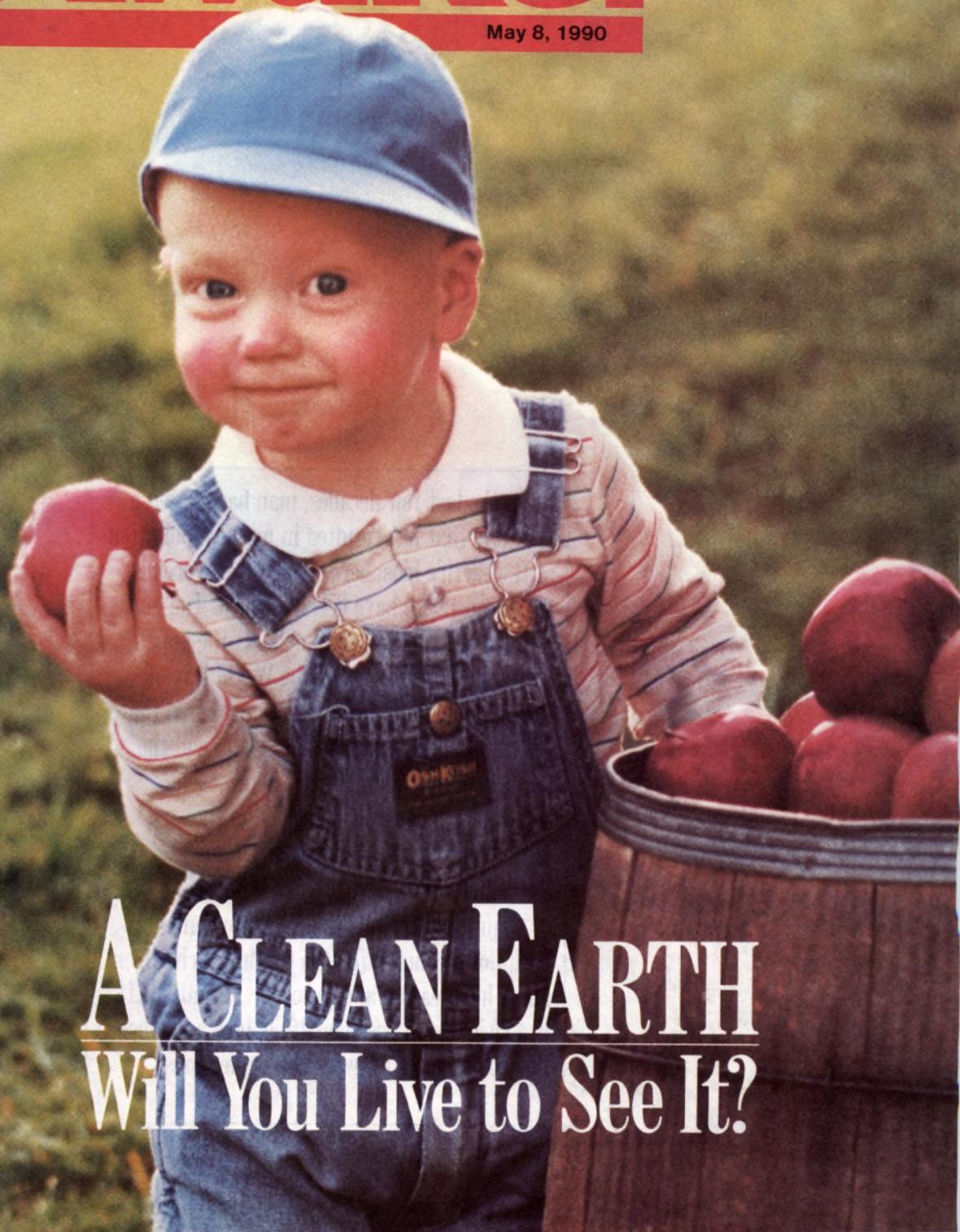


# Awake!

May 8, 1990



A CLEAN EARTH  
Will You Live to See It?



In the last few decades, man has chosen a life-style that has resulted in massive pollution of the earth's biosphere—soil, rivers, oceans, and atmosphere have been poisoned. The problem is truly international. As the pope stated in his message for the World Day of Peace (January 1, 1990): "In many cases the effects of ecological problems transcend the borders of individual States; hence their solution cannot be found solely on the national level."—*L'Osservatore Romano*, December 18-26, 1989.

Man's indifference to his future contrasts with God's concern for the earth, which, after all, is his creation and property. (Isaiah 45:18) Is a clean earth possible? If so, how and when? Our cover series answers these questions.



# A Clean Earth We Need It

By *Awake!* correspondent in Britain

**D**ID you know that London's cabdrivers are bound by law to keep their taxis clean? Failure to do so may result in their being banned from the city's streets for a period of time. Even when road conditions are bad and most cars stay dirty for days on end, the London taxicab is spotlessly clean. The vehicle's shiny surfaces evoke in the driver and his passengers feelings of pride and pleasure.

Similarly, when our home, our clothes, and our belongings are clean, that promotes in us a feeling of well-being. Woe betide the schoolboy whose mother sees him come into the house and leave a trail of mud on the carpet from his dirty boots!

In fact, good health depends a great deal on personal cleanliness. Our body requires regular care and cleaning to remove dirt that would provide a foothold for disease. Commercial companies make vast profits selling cleansers, detergents, polishes, soaps, shampoos, and disinfectants that we use to keep ourselves and our immediate surroundings clean. Surely, most people are conscious of the need for cleanliness. But if you live in a city, you know that this is not the whole story.

### **Danger—Pollution**

City dwellers are well aware of pollution and the defiled environment. They see it in uncollected garbage, in litter carelessly left on the streets, and in crude graffiti on public buildings. They smell it in the choking fumes from dense traffic and in the acrid smog that plagues some cities.

Perhaps that is why many who live in cities try on occasion to spend time in the countryside. They enjoy filling their lungs with clean air, perhaps even drinking crystal-clear water from a mountain stream. Others like to go to the beach and relax on the sand or cool off with a pleasant dip in the ocean.

Wait a minute, though! Dirt and pollution lurk there too. 'How can that be?' you ask. 'It looks so clean.' Well, let us look a little closer at that "clean" air and "clear" water.

# Pollution Who Causes It?



**Awake!**<sup>®</sup>

May 8, 1990  
Vol. 71, No. 9

**Semimonthly:** Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Yoruba, Zulu

**Monthly:** Chichewa, Chinese, Cibemba, Hiligaynon, Hungarian, Igbo, Malayalam, New Guinea Pidgin, Polish, Russian, Sepedi, Sesotho, Sinhalese, Swahili, Tahitian, Tamil, Thai, Tswana, Xhosa  
Printed in U.S.A.

**Average Printing: 11,930,000** Published in 58 languages as part of a worldwide Bible educational work that is supported by voluntary donations

For further information, please write Watch Tower, using the appropriate address below.

**America, United States of** 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

**Australia**, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565 (Georgetown), Ontario

**Canada L7G 4Y4**, Box 4100, Halton Hills

(Georgetown), Ontario

**England NW7 1RN**, The Ridgeway, London

**India**, Post Bag 10, Lonavla, Pune Dis., Mah. 410 401

**Ireland**, 29A Jamestown Road,

Finglas, Dublin 11

© 1990 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.  
Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is used.

*Awake!* (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.,  
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.  
**Postmaster:** Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

**T**HIS island is government property under experiment. The ground is contaminated with anthrax and dangerous. Landing is prohibited."\* This sign posted on the Scottish mainland opposite Gruinard Island warns off would-be visitors. For the past 47 years, since an experimental explosion of biological weapons during the second world war, this beautiful island has been contaminated by the disease agents of anthrax.

Gruinard Island is an extreme example of pollution. But milder forms of ground pollution are a problem that is widespread and growing.

### **Ground Pollution on the Increase**

One cause of this ground pollution is garbage. For example, the average British family of four, according to *The Times* of London, throws away 112 pounds of metal and 90 pounds of plastic each year, "much of which will further disfigure streets, roadside verges, beaches and leisure areas."

The French magazine *GEO* reported that at one point the vast Entressen garbage dump outside Marseilles, France, had reached a height of 200 feet and attracted an estimated 145,000 gulls. A wire perimeter fence around

\* Anthrax is an infectious disease of animals that causes ulcerous skin nodules or lung infections in man.

the dump did not prevent the wind from blowing away paper and plastic rubbish. As a result, the local authorities bought up 74 acres of adjacent agricultural land in an attempt to contain the litter problem.

It is little wonder that in organizing the European Year of the Environment—which ended in March 1988—EEC Commissioner Stanley Clinton Davis found the list of pollution troubles "infinite."\* Consequently, a campaign to encourage the reuse of waste was planned with the aim of recycling 80 percent of the Community's 2,200,000,000 tons of garbage every year.

Pollution by garbage is by no means confined to Western Europe. It is now global. According to *New Scientist* magazine, it has even been necessary to clean up the remote continent of Antarctica. Australian research scientists gathered more than 40 tons of discarded machinery and building materials that were scattered near their base. *The New York Times* (December 19, 1989) reports that Americans at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, are cleaning up 30 years of accumulated trash, including a 77,000-pound tractor that sank in 80 feet of water.

Yes, on dry land, pollution and contamination abound. But what of earth's water?

\* EEC stands for European Economic Community, or Common Market.

### **WHY "AWAKE!" IS PUBLISHED**

"AWAKE!" is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

### **Contents: Feature Articles**

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| A Clean Earth—We Need It       | 3  |
| Pollution—Who Causes It?       | 4  |
| The End of Pollution in Sight? | 10 |

### **Also in This Issue**

|                                       |    |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| The Maya Ruins                        | 13 |
| —Lonely Sentinels From a Bygone Age   | 13 |
| The Bible's Viewpoint                 | 18 |
| Prayer in Sports—Does God Listen?     | 18 |
| How I Live With Lupus                 | 20 |
| Young People Ask . . .                | 25 |
| Teen Pregnancy—What Should a Girl Do? | 25 |
| Watching the World                    | 28 |
| From Our Readers                      | 30 |
| Yosemite National Park—100 Years Old  | 31 |



### **Dirty Water—Unfit for Life**

"Britain's rivers are getting dirtier for the first time in more than a quarter of a century," said *The Observer*. "The Kattegat [sea between Sweden and Denmark] is dying. It is rapidly becoming unable to support fish life because it is so polluted and starved of oxygen," reported *The Times* of London. "Poland's rivers are fast becoming open sewers and little improvement is in sight."—*The Guardian*.

November 1986 saw a pollution catastrophe described by London's *Daily Telegraph* as "the rape of Western Europe's greatest and most charismatic waterway." A serious fire in a Basel, Switzerland, chemical plant brought in firefighters who hosed down the blaze. Unwittingly, they washed from 10 to 30 tons of chemicals and pesticides into the Rhine, bringing about the "Chernobyl of the water industry." This event hit the headlines. What is not usually reported, however, is the fact that toxic wastes are regularly dumped into the Rhine on a less dramatic scale.

Water-borne pollution is not confined to the area around its source. Miles away, its ef-

fects can be deadly. Europe's rivers that flow into the North Sea transport paint, toothpaste whiteners, toxic waste, and manure in such quantities that the Dutch Institute for the Investigation of Fishery now labels North Sea flatfish as unfit to be eaten. Surveys show that 40 percent of the flounder from the shallow areas have skin diseases or cancerous tumors.

Who is to blame for such contamination? Most point the finger at industry, whose greed for profits far exceeds concern for the environment. Yet, farmers too are guilty of polluting streams and rivers near their land. Their growing use of nitrate fertilizers can now render the runoff from silage lethal.

Individuals also use rivers as a dumping ground for junk. The river Mersey, with a catchment area in the northwest region of England, is claimed to be the filthiest in Europe. "Now, only the foolish or unaware would swim in the Mersey," commented Liverpool's *Daily Post*, adding: "Anyone unlucky enough to fall into the river is likely to be taken sick to hospital."

Raw sewage also figures prominently among the ingredients of marine pollution. The sea along one popular English holiday beach reportedly contained the equivalent of "a cupful of raw sewage in the average household bath," exceeding the EEC limit fourfold.

Then there is another danger; this one falls from the sky.

### **Acid Rain—A Worrisome Threat**

At one time, people in England used to die because of breathing the air—or, rather, the smog. Today, deaths from such pollution are rare. London's smog, which killed an estimat-

ed 4,000 in 1952, is no longer a threat. Some coal-burning power stations that contributed to the smog have been transferred to the countryside and equipped with high chimneys and, in some cases, scrubbers to remove a large percentage of the most deadly gases.

This has not, however, stopped the polluting of the atmosphere. Tall chimneys may have eliminated the danger from the immediate area. But now, prevailing winds transport the pollutants far afield—often to other countries. As a result, Scandinavia suffers from British pollution, and many people refer to Britain as the “Dirty Old Man of Europe.” In a similar way, Midwestern industry in the United States causes much of Canada’s acid rain problem.

For years, scientists have pointed an accusing finger at sulfur dioxide as the main culprit responsible for the air pollution that causes

acid rain. In 1985 Drew Lewis, a U.S. presidential envoy on Canadian-American concerns about acid rain, claimed: “Saying that sulphates do not cause acid rain is the same as saying that smoking does not cause lung cancer.” Seemingly, when it comes in contact with water vapor, sulfur dioxide produces sulfuric acid, which may acidify the rain or collect in the droplets of clouds, thus bathing upland forests with deadly moisture.

As the acid rain falls or, worse, as the acid snow melts, the soil beneath is affected. Swedish scientists who repeated a 1927 study concluded that at a depth of 28 inches, the acidity of forest soil had risen tenfold. This chemical change seriously affects a plant’s ability to take up vital minerals, such as calcium and magnesium.

What effect does all of this have on man? He suffers when lakes and rivers formerly

## Worse Than the Ravages of Time

*After years of exposure to the elements, this carved stone face presented a mere death mask. Worse than the ravages of time are the corrosive effects of air pollution. Old buildings throughout the world suffer the gnawing erosion of the acidic rain that washes them, from the City Hall in Schenectady, United States, to the famous edifices of Venice, Italy. Rome’s monuments reportedly crumble away at a touch. Greece’s famed Parthenon is believed to have suffered more damage in the last 30 years than in the preceding 2,000. Such damage is often compounded by a mixture of environmental factors including temperature, wind, and humidity, as well as by bacteria living on the building’s walls. With these consequences for inanimate objects, what must be the effect of pollution on living creatures?*



Carving on a cathedral in London

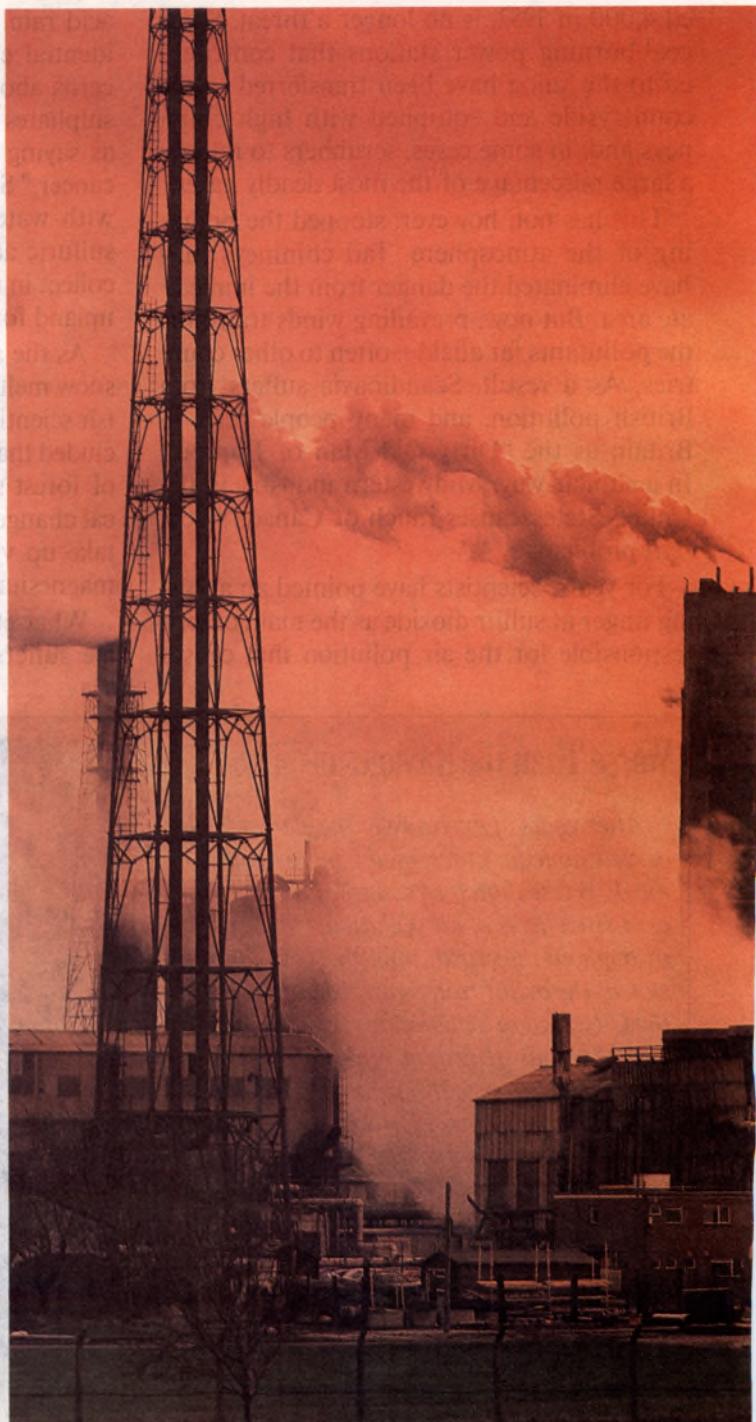
teeming with life become acidic and lifeless. Moreover, Norwegian scientists conclude from their studies that the increased acidity of the water, whether in lakes or soil, dissolves aluminum. This poses a definite health hazard. Scientists have noted "a clear relationship between higher mortality statistics and increasing aluminum concentrations" in the water. Possible links between aluminum and Alzheimer's disease and other ailments of the aged continue to cause alarm.

True, in areas like Britain's Mersey River and France's Entressen garbage dump, efforts have been made to improve the situation. However, this type of problem does not go away. It reappears all over the world. But there is yet another kind of pollution—invisible.

### ***Ozone—The Unseen Enemy***

Burning fossil fuels, whether in power stations or in domestic furnaces, produces other pollutants in addition to sulfur dioxide. These include oxides of nitrogen and unburned hydrocarbons.

Scientific opinion now places increasing blame for air pollution on these nitrogen oxides. Under the effect of sunlight, they help produce a deadly gas, ozone. "Ozone is the most important air pollutant affecting vegetation in the US," stated David Tingey of the U.S. Envi-



ronmental Protection Agency. He estimated that this was costing his country \$1,000 million a year in 1986. Europe's loss was then put at \$400 million annually.

Hence, while acid rain is killing waterways, many feel that ozone, linked ultimately to automobile exhausts, is more to blame than acid rain for the death of trees. *The Economist* stated: "Trees [in Germany] are being prematurely killed not by acid rain but by ozone. Though the death blow may be delivered by frost, acid mist or disease, it is ozone that makes the trees vulnerable." And what is happening in Europe merely mirrors the conditions on other continents. "Trees in the national parks of California are being damaged by air pollution that may be coming from as far away as Los Angeles," reported *New Scientist*.

There is, however, a worse kind of pollution defiling the earth. It is a fundamental causative factor in the physical polluting of the land, water, and air of our planet.

### **Moral Pollution**

It is easy to be deceived by people's appearance. Jesus Christ graphically illustrated this. Addressing the religious leaders of his day, he said: "Woe to you . . . because you resemble whitewashed graves, which outwardly indeed appear beautiful but inside are full of . . . every sort of uncleanness." (Matthew 23:27) Yes, a person may look clean-cut, even attractive, outside, but his speech and conduct may reveal his true degraded personality. Sad to

say, such moral pollution is widespread today.

Moral pollution includes drug abuse, which is more widespread than ever. Pop stars, stage and screen idols, and even apparently respectable businessmen, have become the objects of scandal due to their dependence on drugs. Moral pollution also includes sexual immorality, which can be the cause of broken families, divorce, abortions, as well as burgeoning epidemics of sexually transmitted diseases, including the sinister scourge of AIDS.

At the root of this moral pollution lies selfishness, which also lies at the root of much of the physical pollution

afflicting mankind. Tereza Kliemann, involved in AIDS treatment in São Paulo State, Brazil, identified the problem: "Prevention [of AIDS] implies a change in behaviour among high-risk groups and that is difficult." The vast majority of people insist on doing what *they* want to do, rather than taking into consideration how their actions affect others. As a result, literature, entertainment, and virtually the whole of human culture are riddled with moral pollution.

To thinking people, most present-day efforts at a physical and moral cleanup appear as no more than a cover-up. You may well wonder, then, whether there is any reliable hope for an earth that is clean both physically and morally. Do not be disheartened. The Bible tells us that the end of pollution is in sight!



# The End of Pollution in Sight?



**T**HE prospect of a clean earth is truly delightful. But is it realistic? Well, some countries are trying hard to improve the situation with regard to pollution. A decrease in air pollution is now reported due to stringent measures to control the lead content of automobile exhausts. In some areas, industrial pollution appears to have decreased also. This, however, is not always due to strict controls. Rather, it is at times the result of the restructuring of industry brought about by the world's economic plight.

## *Earth—Designed to Clean Itself?*

In addition, there are natural cleaning mechanisms at work. For example, phytoplankton is one of the sea's main antipollution agents, according to Dr. Aubert of the Medical

Oceanography Center in Nice, France. These tiny organisms secrete natural antibiotics that destroy infection. Unfortunately, they are being overwhelmed. In Italy, Venice and the nearby Adriatic Sea are being swamped by algae. In the Adriatic the pollution produces "algae, a stinking and slimy jelly, yellow, brown and grey, that spread southward for hundreds of kilometres" in the summer. (*The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, Canada) One contributing factor is the drainage from the river Po, "with raw sewage from more than 15 million people, waste from many of Italy's major industries . . . and the manure of more than five million pigs."

What of soil pollution? Research by a large chemical company in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Energy revealed the pres-

ence of many types of bacteria, fungi, and amoebas in the earth, some as far as 850 feet below the surface. Dr. David Balkwell of Florida State University remarked: "These deep organisms may well be purifying the aquifer [natural groundwater]." Alternatively, Dr. Balkwell hopes that genetic engineers will be able to induce these subterranean organisms to "digest specific pollutants."

Realistically, though, we must conclude that the present situation does not bode well for a speedy end to the earth's physical contamination. Yet, we can be sure that the end of pollution is in sight. Why?

### ***Removing Moral Pollution***

For the planet to be a truly clean home for mankind, its occupants must be a clean people, morally as well as physically. Humans must overcome their basic egocentrism and develop unselfish qualities, showing consideration for their fellow humans and their animal neighbors. Can this be done?

Over the decades, Jehovah's Witnesses have found that it can. They have put to the test the personality-molding power of the Bible, and they have found that this book has the power to change people, with beneficial effects on the environment. For example, stadium officials enthuse about the orderliness and the cleanliness of the crowds attending the large conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses. A frequent comment is that 'the stadium was left cleaner than when it was entered by the Witnesses.'

A staff member of a sports complex in Lisbon, Portugal, explained to one of Jehovah's Witnesses: "When people ask me what I think of you, I can't tell a lie. I tell them that Jehovah's Witnesses have very good manners, cleanliness and organization. . . . If you happen to soil one thing, you clean 99!"

The Witnesses' insistence on physical cleanliness is related to their high moral principles. What principles? Those outlined in the Bible, which is God's written Word. Concerning backsliders, the Bible says that God's ways are 'higher than their ways, and his thoughts than their thoughts.' (Isaiah 55:7-9) Yet, we can learn God's ways because God himself makes his laws available to those who wish to live by them. This divine education is vital for our future.

Millions of Witnesses today try hard to live by these clean moral standards, and they benefit greatly. For many, though, this has meant great changes in their habits and life-styles.

### ***Drugs, Beatings, and Victory***

Take the case of Marie, one of a family of 13 from a crime-ridden area in a city in England.

"My family was well-known for being tough, and just like the rest of them, I was a known bully. At 15 years of age, I had a miscarriage. Two years later, my daughter was born, and I was left to care for her on my own. My boyfriend was held in a [correctional] school. He absconded, and I became pregnant again. I tried all kinds of ways to end this pregnancy and finally succeeded, but I nearly lost my life.

"My boyfriend began smoking marijuana and became very violent to me, even though I was pregnant again. I got involved too, both in smoking and in selling the weed. By now I lived in a house full of prostitutes. I used to mind their children for them.

"When I became interested in another boy, my first boyfriend put a stop to the relationship by stabbing him eight times. For that he was arrested again. After his release from prison we married and both of us hit the drug scene in a big way."

After coming in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses and studying the Bible with them, this young person began to attend Christian meetings and gradually a change took place. Marie explains:

"I began to realize that smoking and drug-taking were wrong. After I told my husband that I was stopping all of this, he used to blow the smoke from his marijuana cigarette in my face, trying to entice me to resume drug-taking. I became pregnant yet again. Soon after, my husband began staying away from home all night.

"Eight months later he took all his things from the house and left me. I prayed to Jehovah to help me get over it, and he did. Then, after three months, my husband returned. I prayed for strength to do what was right. Once again I tried to make a success of my marriage, but within six months I was nursing 14 stitches around my eye, the result of my husband's violence; drugs were still his first love. Our house became the main drug depot for the whole area. It was full of his 'friends,' most of whom were high on drugs.

"With Jehovah's help, I summoned up courage and confronted the men. I politely asked them to go outside if they wanted to continue smoking their drugs. When my husband heard that, he lost his temper, called me into the kitchen, and started banging my head against the wall. I struggled to tell him that I was concerned for the children and wanted to give them the opportunity to grow up in a clean, wholesome atmosphere. My husband stormed back out to his friends. I waited, praying. He came into the kitchen again, and I thought he was going to kill me.

"From then on, though, things calmed down a lot. We later moved. When the drug addicts came to visit, they didn't swear or talk about their immoral lives as before. It seemed they had respect for us."

Marie's stand for clean morals and an unpolluted life touched her husband's heart, and he too eventually studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Both Marie and her husband are now baptized Witnesses and are busy helping others clean up their lives with the help of Bible knowledge. Marie says:

"When I hear my husband say a prayer, or when I hear him express his love for Jehovah, how my heart beats! The change in his appearance amazes his former friends. Now our family is truly united. Never have I felt so happy, and I have never stopped thanking Jehovah for taking us out of this polluted system of things."

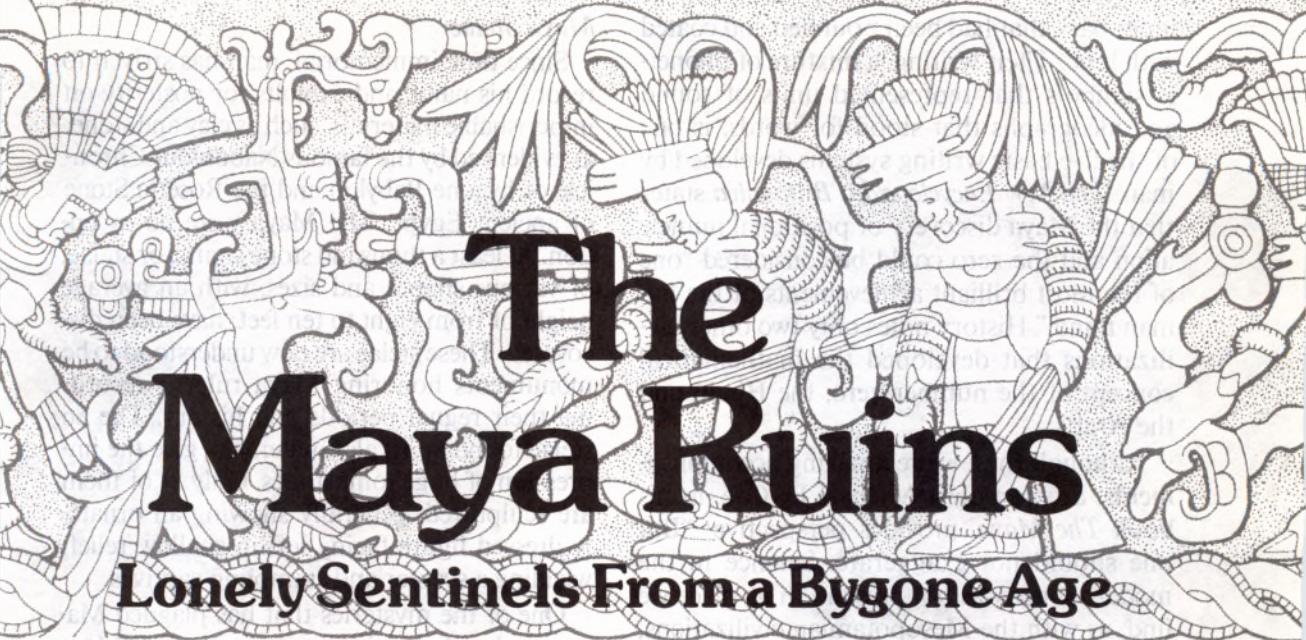
Such success in combating moral pollution reveals the power of God's Word. Moreover, it points to the hope of an early end to all kinds of pollution. What does the Bible say about this?

#### ***A Clean Earth—A Certainty***

A careful study of the Bible reveals that we are living in "the last days" of the present system of things. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) The state of the environment is just one piece of the evidence that proves this. What does this mean regarding our hope for a clean earth?

It means that God is soon going to intervene in human affairs. He will soon act in a powerful way to remove all moral and physical pollution from our planet. In the book of Revelation he promises to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Revelation 11:18.

Really, only God has the power to bring about a clean, unpolluted earth. It is thrilling to know that he intends to do just that. When he acts, in the near future, it will be as he himself says: "Look! I am making all things new." (Revelation 21:5) Then, finally, our planet will be a suitable home for clean, upright people, who will enjoy its abundance forever.



# The Maya Ruins

## Lonely Sentinels From a Bygone Age

By *Awake!* correspondent in Guatemala

FROM the warm, semiarid plains of the Mexican Yucatán down to the luxuriant, evergreen rain forests of Guatemala and Belize and on through to the hot valleys of El Salvador and Honduras in Central America is found an irregular mosaic of partially restored Maya ruins. Like lonely sentinels, they betoken a bygone age of towering temples and imposing palaces skillfully designed and decorated. Once the wonder of their world and now a fascinating archaeological enigma, they are reminders of a splendor that has vanished forever.

What made the Maya civilization, dating back over 2,000 years, so outstanding? In spite of the total absence of wheeled vehicles, metal tools, beasts of burden, and the key-stone arch, and with the problem of an ever-encroaching jungle, the Maya succeeded in developing the greatest pre-Columbian\* Indi-

an civilization ever discovered on the North American continent. "It saw the perfection of a writing system—the only true writing system ever developed in the Americas—and some notable advances in mathematics and astronomy," noted *Smithsonian* magazine. "These people had thought up the useful concept of zero and they had a calendar that enabled them to make fairly precise computations of planetary and celestial cycles."

### *The Classic Period*

The Maya ever sought to quantify and record time, and their greatest achievements were in this field. During their Classic period, from 250 C.E. to 900 C.E., they successfully measured the tropical year and accurately predicted solar and lunar eclipses and the revolutions of Venus in relation to the sun.

Records were kept by Maya scholars and scribes on paper made from the wild fig tree's

\* Prior to Christopher Columbus (1451-1506).

inner bark that had been pounded and coated with lime. Their writing, a mixture of phonetic symbols that represented units of sound and ideographs that stood for words, is one of the five basic writing systems developed by man. *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* states that the Maya discovery of positional numeration and the zero could be considered "one of the most brilliant achievements of the human mind." History notes only two other civilizations that developed the mathematical concept of the number zero, the Hindu and the Arabic.

Although these were amazing accomplishments, archaeologist Michael D. Coe, in his book *The Maya*, provides perspective: "But one should not exaggerate. Science in the modern sense was not present. In its place we find, as with the Mesopotamian civilizations, a combination of fairly accurate astronomical data with what can only be called numerology, developed by priests for religious purposes."

With an estimated peak population of 3,000,000, the Maya, in some 40 cities of over 20,000 population each, built impressive pyramids and temples. Although they lacked wheeled vehicles, they transported huge quantities of stone for these structures and shaped the blocks by means of harder stone, abrasive twine, volcanic glass, and other natural materials. Unlike the rounded keystone arches of Roman architecture, their finely engineered buildings made use of the corbel arch—formed by successive overlapping and projecting layers of masonry on both sides of an opening that were mated at the top by a capstone. Walls of buildings were elaborately decorated with sculpture and hieroglyphs. In addition, the Classic period was identified by the making of multicolored pottery and the erection of stelae, upright slabs, on which outstanding events were recorded.

### ***Maya Stelae***

Since time immemorial, man has striven to record his name and exploits for posterity on imperishable materials, such as clay and stone, as evidenced by the famous Nabonidus Chronicle of bygone Babylon and the Rosetta Stone of ancient Egypt. The Maya were no exception. At least a thousand stone shafts, or stelae, of various shapes and sizes, with an average height of from eight to ten feet, have been discovered. These stelae are now understood to be monuments honoring Maya rulers—recording their regnal periods and history. The 86 stelae found at Tikal, Guatemala, give the impression of huge tombstones. Only 21 of them are sculptured, generally showing an ornately dressed figure facing left in shallow relief, wielding a scepter and trampling captives.

One of the mysteries that has plagued Mayanists has been the interpretation of Maya hieroglyphic writing known as glyphs. How much has been deciphered? "I think we can read about 75 percent of the glyphs on the monuments now," says Maya scholar David Stuart. "And from this it seems that the Maya were mostly interested in recording the lineage of their rulers, when they took office, how many captives they took in war, and when they performed ritualized bloodletting ceremonies and sacrifices."

Three significant breakthroughs, in rapid succession, aided in the deciphering. First, in 1958, epigraphist Heinrich Berlin proved that the monuments contained "Emblem Glyphs" that either identified the Maya cities where the monuments were found or the Maya dynasties that ruled them.

The second breakthrough occurred in 1959 when Mayanist Tatiana Proskouriakoff discovered a linkage for 35 dated monoliths in Piedras Negras—purposefully erected in seven groupings—and the fact that none of the seven groupings' time span covered more than an average lifetime. Each group was



**El Castillo, largest of seven Maya structures in Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico**

shown to record real-life events in a complete regnal period. Finally, it was proved that the hieroglyphs represented a writing system having phonetic symbols and grammatical structure.

Perhaps nowhere in the Maya area are there to be found such artistic stelae as in the beautiful Copán ruins of western Honduras. Within the perimeter of this elegant Maya center are many skillfully carved monoliths of greenish volcanic tuff called trachyte—soft when quarried but gradually hardening when exposed to the elements. Superior to the limestone of Tikal, it lent itself to more sculptural freedom of expression, as evidenced by the three-dimensional effect achieved.

To some, the finest glyphs in existence are those found in quaint Quiriguá—a small, tranquil Maya center located some 30 miles to the north of Copán in Guatemalan banana country, once rain forest. While the temple

complex is unimpressive, the 12 sandstone stelae are another story. Stela "E," weighing 65 tons, is the largest Maya monument; it is 35 feet high, 5 feet wide, and 4 feet 2 inches thick.

#### **Classic Tikal**

Deep in the innermost recesses of the Petén jungle in northern Guatemala lies Tikal, the largest Classic Maya center discovered to date. The heart of this 50-square-mile city covers about 6 square miles, in which are found over 3,000 structures varying from humble abodes to tall, zigguratlike temples. The tallest, Temple IV, the towering Temple of the Double-Headed Serpent, is 212 feet high. The core of Tikal is the two-and-a-half-acre Great Plaza, with Temple I, the Temple of the Giant Jaguar, on the east and Temple II, the Temple of the Masks, on the west side.



Pyramid-temple (seventh century C.E.), the Great Plaza, Tikal, Guatemala

What was the purpose of these temples? While there is still uncertainty in this regard, Maya archaeologist Edwin M. Shook\* told *Awake!*: "These were temples in the religious sense, and they were built for that purpose. Secondarily, they were used to honor an individual by putting his remains in such a revered place. For example, Westminster Abbey was not built to house tombs. But the British honor their great by putting them in Westminster Abbey. That's exactly what you have in the whole Maya system. There are few exceptions." It was Shook who discovered and named Tikal's major causeways after former explorers—Mendez, Maudslay, Maler, and Tozzer.

\* Field director for much of the 14-year Tikal restoration project of the University of Pennsylvania begun in 1956.

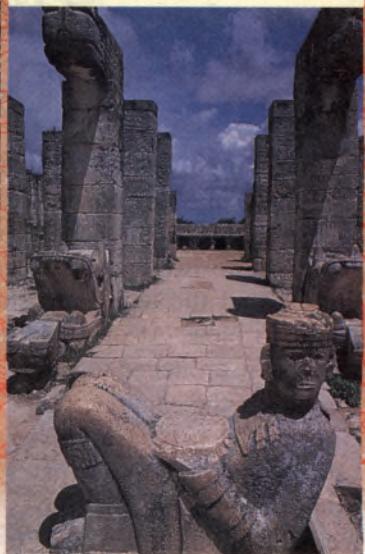
On the other two sides of the Great Plaza sit the North and Central Acropolises, believed to be palaces and administrative buildings. Close to the South Acropolis is the Triple Ball Court, which once resounded to the heavy thud of a rubber ball deflected by players dressed in protective clothing. Since Tikal is situated on a porous limestone base, through which precious rainwater easily filters, it was necessary for the Maya to construct several reservoirs, some of which were originally limestone quarries. These cisterns were lined with a special clay to prevent seepage. The South Acropolis, the East and West Plazas, the Plaza of the Seven Temples, the Central Market, the four major causeways that were used for religious processions, and the Lost World complex—recently restored by Guatemalan archaeologists—are



Ancient ball game was played in this courtyard in Copán, Honduras

Instituto Hondureño de Antropología e Historia

A Chac Mool, foreground, possibly used to receive human hearts; Temple of the Warriors, Chichén Itzá, Yucatán, Mexico



the landmarks that make up the remainder of Tikal.

### *The Demise of the Classic Period*

What brought the Classic period to its end? Theories are legion, but no one really knows. What is known is that the erection of dated stelae, palaces, and public buildings suddenly ceased. The last stela found in Tikal is dated 869 C.E. The populace abandoned the great Maya city-centers and took up living in small, scattered, agricultural villages. The jungle, previously held at bay, now surged forward. Tree saplings took root in the nooks and crannies of the host buildings and became great trees. Their roots, now several feet in circumference, cracked corners, broke limestone blocks, weakened walls, and crushed corbel vaults. Forlorn and forgotten, Tikal and its sister sites were hidden from the out-

side world to lie dormant within the jungle's choking embrace.

Would not Maya written records have shed some light? They might have had it not been for their 16th-century Spanish conquerors. "Diego de Landa, first bishop of Yucatán, in an initial burst of Catholic zeal, intensified the mystery by trying to eradicate all traces of Maya culture," noted *Smithsonian*. "He burned quantities of the codices, the native books on bark paper (only four of the Maya codices are known to survive today) that might have clarified matters and saved much later confusion."

Hence, the Maya world's mosaic of partially restored ruins in Central America is still an archaeological enigma of our world. Silently, these ruins continue to stand, lonely sentinels from a bygone age.

# **Prayer in Sports Does God Listen?**

THE air tingles with excitement as thousands of fans pour into the stadium, bellowing support for their favorite team. The players have just finished their warm-up exercises, and the whistle to start the game is about to blow. At one side of the field, the players are crouched together, and in the middle kneels the captain, who prays: "God, please bless our team, grant us victory over our opponent, and protect us from injury. Amen." The huddle breaks up with a loud shout, the players take their positions on the field, the whistle blows, and the organized mayhem of American football begins.

Individual and team prayer prior to, during, and after participation in various sports has become a common scene. But does God listen? Or as some contend, does this make a mockery of prayer?

### **"Smash Thy Neighbor"**

Throughout the world, virtually every sport is marred with violence—on the field and in the stands. One former professional football player in the United States wrote: "It is arguable that body shattering is the very point of

football, as killing and maiming are of war." He comments further: "Competitive, organized injuring is integral to our way of life, and football is one of the more intelligible mirrors . . . showing us how exciting and rewarding it is to Smash Thy Neighbor."

Smash thy neighbor? Jesus said to love your neighbor. (Matthew 22:39) It is impossible to imagine the God of love being present and blessing one of today's sporting events, with its emphasis on win-at-all costs.—1 John 4:16.

### ***Does God Attend Sports Events?***

One factor encouraging prayer in sports is the religious teaching that God is omnipresent, that God, at all times, is actually present in all existing places and things. For example, in the book *God Goes to Football Games*, clergyman and former sports team chaplain L. H. Hollingsworth says: "Every formal belief we hold about God includes the idea of His omni-presence; the idea, if you please, that He is certainly present in what we call our secular experience . . . That is to say, God goes to church, and God goes to football games."



However, the Bible does not teach that God is omnipresent. The Christian apostle Paul wrote: "Christ entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us." (Hebrews 9:24) There are two vital points this text helps us appreciate: that God is a spirit person and that he has an established place of dwelling, heaven. (1 Kings 8:49; John 4:24) So he could not be at any other place at the same time.

### ***God Hears His Friends***

Well, if God does not attend sports events, does he at least listen to the prayers? For prayers to reach the hearing ears of this God of heaven, before whom Jesus appeared, the one praying must have knowledge, knowledge of God's purposes, his personality, his qualities, his ways, and his name. (James 4:3) Emphasizing the need to know God, Jesus prayed: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God." —John 17:3.

To get to know someone requires communication. God communicates to man through the Bible, and the Bible is the means by which we get to know the God of heaven. It tells us his name, Jehovah. (Psalm 83:18) The Bible also says that God loved the world so much that he sent his only-begotten Son, Jesus, here to earth so man would have the opportunity for everlasting life. (John 3:16) As we read and study the Bible, Jehovah becomes real to us, and we are drawn to him through Jesus. (John 6:44, 65; James 4:8) Because Jehovah is real, we can develop a close personal relationship with him.

Friendship with God, however, involves two-way communication. This requires talking to Jehovah through prayer. The Bible says that God is a "Hearer of prayer" and that "he

is not far off from each one of us." (Psalm 65:2; Acts 17:27) However, this does not mean that God listens to all prayers. (Isaiah 1:15-17) Whose prayers is God willing to hear?

The psalmist David said: "The intimacy with Jehovah belongs to those fearful of him." (Psalm 25:14) In the original Hebrew, the root of "intimacy" (*sohd*) means "to make tight." Hence, this verse conveys the idea of being granted admission into the inner circle of Jehovah or into a covenant of friendship with him. Only those worshipers who show proper respect are admitted. Thus, our intimate friendship with God causes us to fear breaching that relationship by doing anything that would displease him, such as treating prayer as a good-luck charm to ensure a sports victory.

Jehovah listens to prayers of honesthearted persons seeking friendship with him, and he is not partial. He does not play favorites or honor one national group, race, or even sports team, over another. (Psalm 65:2; Acts 10:34, 35) If God did hear the prayers of sports contestants and both teams prayed to him for victory, which one should he bless? Or if a player was seriously injured during a game, would God be to blame?

Therefore, we must pray for right matters. The apostle John explains it this way: "No matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us." (1 John 5:14) Jehovah listens to prayers that are in accord with his will. We need to know his will and purposes so our prayers will be in harmony with these.

God's will and purposes and his glorious name are not associated with today's competitive and violent sports events. God is not partial. Thus, when prayers are offered at these events, is God listening? Absolutely not!

# *How I Live With Lupus*

*The scene is always the same. The doctor walks into the examining room and seats himself across from me. With a warm smile, pen in hand, he asks, "Well, Robin, how are you doing?" As I try to recall in detail the past four weeks of sheer misery, he nods his head and rapidly jots down my symptoms. The reason for these visits? I am one of many thousands who suffer from an autoimmune disorder called lupus. Are you wondering what that is? If so, let me tell you my story.*

LOOKING back, I guess I could say I had a fairly normal childhood as a girl. Born in 1958 and raised as an only child by my parents, I grew up in the northwestern United States. At an early age, my mother instilled in me one definite idea: I should always serve the Creator, Jehovah God, in whatever capacity I could.

After graduating from school in 1975, I chose part-time employment in order to devote more time to the ministry of preaching God's Word. I was content with my way of life and had no plans to change it. Unfortunately, there was going to be a turn of events that would change things for me.

## *A Turn for the Worse*

At age 21, my health began taking a turn for the worse. I started developing medical problems first in one part of my body and then in another. Some were located by doctors and eliminated by surgery. Others remained a mystery, causing the doctors to question not only their reality but my mental and emotional stability as well. Infections seemed to find the road to my body an easy one. Frustration and anxiety ran high—I was continually searching for a doctor who could pinpoint an answer to my health problem.

During one of my better health periods, I met Jack, and we were married in 1983. I felt

that once the stress and strain of the wedding and marital adjustment had passed and my life was calmer, my health would eventually improve as well.

I remember waking up one February morning with plans to spend the day taking care of household errands. But my muscles felt so strange, as if they didn't want to cooperate with one another. I felt a trembling inside, and whenever I tried to pick up anything, I would drop it. 'Maybe I am just overly tired,' I comforted myself.

As the day progressed, the feelings became even more bizarre. Cold, numbing sensations alternating with inflammatory aches ran down my neck, arms, and legs. In fact, the symptoms made me so miserable that I went to bed until Jack came home from work. By early evening I was running a low-grade fever and was so weak and light-headed I was barely able to crawl back into bed. We didn't know what to attribute it to except the flu. That seemed reasonable enough, since there was an influenza epidemic in the area where we lived.

When I woke up the next day, I felt better, at least for the first couple of minutes. But soon the aching started again, particularly down my legs and ankles. My fever was down, but I still felt extremely weak. Flu-type symptoms would alternate with those of a more peculiar nature. I remember thinking over and over to myself, 'Can this really be just a strain of flu?' As days passed, there were times when I thought I was getting better; then there were other times when I was so sick I could hardly lift my head off the pillow.

#### ***The Search for Help***

Two weeks later and eight pounds lighter, I decided it was time to see a doctor. The day of my appointment was the worst I had experienced yet. The pain was so severe that I felt

as though someone was pulling my muscles apart and jabbing me with hot knives all at the same time. Added to all of this was a veil of depression weighing heavily upon me. I just sat on the edge of the bed crying.

The first trip to the doctor brought no immediate answer. Different blood tests were run, checking for various types of infectious diseases. Only one came back positive, showing a high degree of inflammation present in the body. Several weeks later, still with no improvement, I consulted another doctor in the same clinic. Again, tests were taken, and again, only one came back abnormal, the same one that had previously been abnormal.

## ***What Is Lupus?***

Lupus is a recurring and currently incurable inflammatory disease. It is an autoimmune disorder that turns antibodies against all the body's vital organs. However, lupus is not infectious, contagious, or cancerous. How serious can it be? From mild to life-threatening. Its name comes from the Latin word for "wolf," since many patients have a red face-rash in a shape similar to the facial markings of a wolf. Its cause remains unknown.

Neither doctor had any conclusion other than thinking that it was just a bad virus.

Weeks passed, but time brought no real improvement. Finally, two months after the onset of my illness, I went to see another doctor in the clinic, one who had treated me for various minor illnesses when I was a child. I felt confident that he would pinpoint this mysterious affliction.

Much to my dismay, this doctor did not give me the treatment I was expecting. Instead of sincerely listening to my unusual symptoms, he quickly brushed me off as being a neurotic, implying that my strange complaints arose from my being newly married. I couldn't believe what I was hearing as I tried to choke back my tears of anger and hurt. However, he did agree to repeat that "positive" test. I will always be grateful for that test!

After leaving the clinic, I cried for two hours. I knew there was something definitely wrong with me physically, but it seemed as though no one wanted to take me seriously. The next afternoon, I received a call from the doctor's office telling me that my blood test came back abnormal once again. I was referred to a rheumatologist (one who specializes in arthritic diseases). I was relieved that finally someone realized that there was an actual problem, but why a rheumatologist? How could arthritis make me feel like this?

### *An Unwelcome Diagnosis*

Two weeks later I found myself sitting in the specialist's office with Jack beside me. After the initial formalities, I began my story. Much to my surprise, his conclusion was immediate, but definitely not what we were expecting. We were stunned when he said that I was suffering from a connective tissue disease, more modernly known as an autoimmune disease, and that he suspected systemic lupus erythematosus (lupus for short).

Was this to become my lot in life? The thought of always being this sick scared me.

The doctor went on to explain that although physicians are able to diagnose diseases of this nature more readily than in the past, they still know relatively little about the cause and therefore have no cure. We also learned that through some breakdown in the immune system, the body is no longer able to distinguish foreign invaders from itself. Therefore, the immune system is constantly manufacturing antibodies against body tissues. It is as if the body rejects itself. These antibodies attack and break down connective tissues as well as wage war with major organs. Unless the disease goes into complete remission, these antibodies are almost always causing symptoms of pain and discomfort throughout the system.

Because of the nature of the disease, the symptoms vary and often differ from person to person. Among the ones that plague me are muscle and joint pain, skin inflammation, rapid or intense heartbeat, shortness of breath, pleurisy pains, nausea, bladder pain and pressure, dizziness, loss of balance, and severe headaches, with subtle effects on the central nervous system resulting in decreased concentration, mood changes, and depression. There are many, many days when my whole body from head to toe feels raw and sore from internal inflammation.

Overwhelming fatigue accompanies this disease as well. Sometimes it is so severe that I wake up in the morning unable to get out of bed. Other times it will grip my body when I least expect it. The feeling is that every ounce of strength drains out of my body, making the slightest exertion, such as twisting the cap off the toothpaste tube, beyond my ability. One thing that can make my fatigue and other symptoms worse is exposure to ultraviolet light in sunlight.



## Jack and Robin today

activity once again. I was excited with the progress of my health and kept trying to do more and more. Unfortunately, that was a big mistake, for I found out the hard way that pushing myself beyond my limit meant going into a flare-up.

Stress is probably the worst enemy I have, and avoiding it is an absolute necessity. I have to say that learning to pace myself has been one of the more difficult adjustments I've had to make. Since I like to be very active, I have to set my priorities and remember that going past my limit means complete exhaustion, irritability, depression, and crying spells. I try to have set days for certain chores, but it is virtually impossible to follow a schedule when I am up one day and down the next. Even on good days, I have to rest between major jobs. I now leave certain housekeeping chores for Jack to do. It's another part of the adjustment for both of us.

### New Adjustments

I had not been able to attend any congregation meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses for two months, so my first endeavor was to try to build up enough strength so that I once again could meet with my spiritual brothers and sisters. Although it took great effort and discipline, I forced myself to exercise. Finally, with Jack's help I was able to attend at least some of the meetings. As time went on, my endurance increased to the point where I was able to care for part of the household chores and also to engage in the Kingdom-preaching

### How Others Can Help

True friends can also give comfort when one is ill. Feeling that they understand the situation can greatly lessen the stress. But people, imperfect as we are, aren't always discerning as to what the ill person wants to hear. What sounds like a compliment or word of encouragement to the giver may seem just the opposite to the person not feeling well. When people come up and ask me how I'm feeling, they almost always say something like, "Well, you sure are looking good!" Comments like this tend to make me feel that they are

doubting the genuineness of my illness or that because I look good on the outside, I should be feeling good on the inside. Unfortunately, with lupus, outward appearances can be very deceiving. Victims oftentimes look healthy; especially is this the case with women if they have their hair styled and make-up applied.

I remember someone approaching me one evening after one of the congregation meetings and saying: "It's so nice to see you. I know it's not always easy for you to come, but we're glad to see you here tonight." Words like this make me feel that people understand the situation to a degree.

It's also easy for a person battling a disease to feel excluded socially because of the up-and-down periods. The unpredictability and surprise of new symptoms popping up means most plans have to be made tentatively. The disease changes so much that oftentimes plans made only two hours ahead of time may need to be canceled at the last minute. Consequently, much of my life is spent with apprehension and anxiety.

#### ***How I Cope***

You may wonder how I cope with an illness that plays havoc with my emotions and puts

many restrictions on my life. Well, needless to say, it can be very trialsome, not only for me but for Jack as well. Not being able to engage in a lot of the activities other people may consider normal, I have really learned to appreciate the simplest of pleasures, such as preparing a special meal for Jack, spending time with my family, or just sitting and cuddling my kitty.

Because of my sensitivity to sunlight, I have to take protective measures when I engage in the preaching activity. People can always spot me; I'm the one holding a colorful parasol. I avoid being outdoors on really hot days, as the heat makes me very weak. Also, having a limited amount of energy to expend in door-to-door witnessing, I look for other avenues to talk to people about the hope for the future that is found in the Bible.

Trying to focus my attention on the positive things in life as opposed to the negative has helped to ward off the "poor me" syndrome. My biggest struggle is learning not to put excessive demands on myself and then berating myself for falling short. But even with a good outlook, depression, frustration, and the shedding of many tears do occur. When I'm having a really bad day and the veil of gloom seems to hover over me, I try to remember that it *will* pass, and with extra reliance on God, I'll get through it.

I have truly come to appreciate Jehovah God's qualities of compassion and mercy, remembering often the words at Job 34:28: 'And so he hears the cry of the afflicted one.' Yes, mankind is sick, in more ways than one. We need help that even the most skilled physicians are unable to give. I believe that soon Jehovah will fulfill the first scripture I learned as a child. Then it will be said of all people: "No resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isaiah 33:24) Doesn't that sound wonderful? It does to me!—*As told by Robin Kanstul*.

## ***IN OUR NEXT ISSUE***

### ***A World Without Guns —Is It Possible?***

### ***Five Common Fallacies —Don't Be Fooled by Them!***

### ***When Fire Threatens a Crowd***



# Teen Pregnancy What Should a Girl Do?

Teen pregnancy and abortion are problems of global dimensions. And while the majority of our readers are Christian youths who wisely abstain from premarital sex, *Awake!* is also read by millions of individuals from diverse backgrounds. The following discussion is therefore designed to help any youth facing the dilemma of unwed parenthood, while at the same time highlighting the tragic consequences that result from premarital sex.

**I** WAS 15 and pregnant," said Ann. "I didn't know what to do—get an abortion, put the baby up for adoption, or what." Ann was just one of over a million teenage girls in the United States who got pregnant that year.

While in a few tragic cases a girl becomes pregnant because of rape, teen pregnancy is usually the result of willing participation in premarital sex.\* In any event, a pregnancy confronts an unwed girl with several agonizing choices: Should she get married? Should she put the child up for adoption? Is abortion the answer? Granted, it takes two to make a baby, and by all rights the father of the child should carry his load of responsibility. (See

\* Sexual immorality is not tolerated among Jehovah's Witnesses, just as it was not tolerated among Christians in the first century. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13) Nevertheless, erring ones can gain the assistance of loving congregation elders. (James 5:14, 15) By repenting of their wrong course of conduct, such ones can enjoy the forgiveness of both God and the Christian congregation.

box.) But more often than not, it is the girl (perhaps with her parents' help) who is left to make those tough choices. And what she decides will have a lasting effect on the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of her and the child she carries.

### 'Should We Get Married?'

Many might feel that marrying the father of the child would be the perfect solution. After all, it would spare the girl and her family public embarrassment, and it would allow for the child to be raised by two parents. But marriage is not a cure-all. For one thing, only godly repentance can right the wrong in the eyes of God.\* (Isaiah 1:16, 18) Furthermore,

\* Under the Mosaic Law, God required a man who had seduced a virgin to marry her. (Exodus 22:16, 17; Deuteronomy 22:28, 29) But that law served the needs of God's people under the circumstances of that day and age. And even then, marriage was not automatic, as the father could forbid it. —See our companion journal *The Watchtower*, November 15, 1989, "Questions From Readers."

rushing into marriage could actually compound the girl's problems. Since the boy and the girl are still in "the bloom of youth," they simply may not have the emotional maturity needed to make a marriage work. (1 Corinthians 7:36) Likely the boy is not a true Christian and is thus unsuitable as a marriage mate.—1 Corinthians 7:39.

Dr. Arthur Elster further observes: "Premature parenthood frequently causes these fathers to drop out of school, and so places them at a considerable vocational disadvantage." The ensuing economic difficulties can destroy a marriage. Indeed, some studies claim a divorce rate of from 50 percent to 75 percent among marriages precipitated by a premarital pregnancy!

Marriage is a serious step and should not be rushed into. (Hebrews 13:4) After giving the matter consideration, all concerned may agree that marriage would be unwise, that the girl would fare better raising the child at home with the assistance of her family than in a problem-ridden marriage.

#### ***Abortion—The Bible's View***

One young girl said: 'I want to do so much with my life, and a baby wouldn't fit in.' Abortion is thus the choice of nearly half a million girls each year in the United States alone. But is it right or even just to abort a child's life because it doesn't 'fit in' with one's personal plans?

Note what the Bible says at Exodus 21:22, 23 regarding the life of an unborn child: "And in case men should struggle with each other and they really hurt a pregnant woman and her children do come out but no fatal accident occurs, he is to have damages imposed upon him . . . But if a fatal accident should occur [to the mother or to the unborn child], then you must give soul for soul." Yes, killing an unborn child was viewed as murder!

## **Teen Pregnancy**

### **The Consequences for Boys**

*Driven by fear—or selfish indifference—some boys who have fathered a child out of wedlock try to evade their responsibilities entirely. Said one boy whose girlfriend became pregnant: "I just told her, 'See ya' 'round.'*

*Fortunately, the majority of boys seem to want at least some involvement with their offspring. When marriage seems inadvisable (as is often the case), most offer to help out financially. Some even offer to share in the day-to-day care of the infant. But such efforts often prove short-lived, foiled by the boy's limited wage-earning ability and his acute lack of the patience and skills needed to meet the demands of a small infant.*

*Also, the girl's parents sometimes bitterly oppose letting the boy have any further dealings with their daughter, fearing that this could result in more sexual misconduct—or a premature marriage. They may deny him any share in the decisions to be made regarding the child, perhaps forcing him to stand by helplessly as the child is aborted or put up for adoption, ending any chance of his ever sharing in the life of the child he has fathered. On the other hand, a boy may indeed be allowed to develop an attachment to his child—only to have that bond cruelly severed when the girl marries and another man takes over the role of father.*

*Unquestionably, then, unwed fathers also pay a price for their irresponsible conduct. One 16-year-old unwed father says: "There are a lot of feelings you just can't deal with. It's like you pray to get back to where you were before, but there's no way you can."*

—“Teen” magazine, November 1984.

True, some doctors claim that an unborn child is merely a fetus, or fetal tissue—not a person. But God says otherwise. He views even an embryo as a distinct person, a living human! (Psalm 139:16) Could one abort an unborn life and remain in favor with God, who “gives to all persons life”?—Acts 17:25.

The book *Growing Into Love* offers another argument against abortion: “Although the consequences of conception are simplified by having an abortion, the experience of terminating a pregnancy is usually very upsetting and disturbing. . . . A teenager . . . may believe that the fetus is just that—a fetus . . . But no amount of legalistic explanations let her forget, deep within herself, that the fetus she conceived had a *potential* for life.”

One youth named Linda found this to be true. Fearing that having her baby would bring shame on her family, she had an abortion. After the operation, though, she recalls: “I started shaking so badly that I couldn’t control it. And I started crying, and all of a sudden it all hit me, exactly what I had done. I had taken the life of my unborn child, another human being!” What does Linda now think of abortion? “It was the worst mistake of my whole life.”

### ***I Can’t Give Him the Best’***

Some unwed mothers choose to give up their baby for adoption. They often feel like Heather, a girl quoted in *Seventeen* magazine, who said: “I have enough trouble handling myself sometimes, let alone a little baby. I’m really crazy about kids, and I love babies, but I knew that I couldn’t give this baby the best.”

It is true that giving a child up for adoption is better than ending his life by abortion. And admittedly, the prospect of raising an infant by herself may seem overwhelming to a young and inexperienced girl. As one unwed

mother told *Awake!*: “You take on a big, *big* responsibility that’s very lonely and trying and that requires a lot of sacrifice.” Remember, though, that God holds a parent responsible to ‘provide for his or her own.’ (1 Timothy 5:8) In most circumstances, it would be best for the girl to raise the child herself.

Ann, mentioned at the outset, therefore made a wise choice—though not the easiest. “I decided to keep the baby,” she says. “My parents helped me and still do.” Granted, being a single mother is tough. But it is not impossible, and many young mothers become competent parents. Particularly is this so if the unwed mother prayerfully resolves to raise her child “in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.”\* (Ephesians 6:4) Adoptive parents might be able to provide better materially. But will they provide the *spiritual* direction a child needs to grow up to love the true God, Jehovah?—Deuteronomy 6:4-8.

Remember, too, that while a single parent may not be able to give her child the best materially, she can give him something far more important: love. “Better is a dish of vegetables where there is love than a manger-fed bull [“the finest meat,” *Today’s English Version*] and hatred along with it.”—Proverbs 15:17.

Of course, much needless suffering can be prevented if one avoids the sin of fornication in the first place.\* But if a girl has erred in this regard, she need not conclude that her life is over. By acting wisely, she can avoid compounding her error and make the very best of her situation. Indeed, she can even obtain the help and support of God himself, who ‘forgives in a large way’ those who turn away from a wrong course.—Isaiah 55:7.

\* Jehovah’s Witnesses have helped many families set up a program of regular Bible instruction. They can be contacted by writing to the publishers of this magazine.

\* See chapter 24 of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

# WATCHING THE WORLD

## MASS FAMINE THREAT

"In Ethiopia upwards of 4.5 million people, more than four times the number wiped out by the great famine of 1984-85, may starve this year if food relief is not provided—and soon," states *Time* magazine. "In Sudan, where as many as a quarter of a million people died of hunger in 1987-88, the most dire estimates suggest that 3 million could suffer the same fate by the middle of this decade." This time the threat of mass starvation cannot be blamed mostly on drought, crop failures, or other "acts of nature." Relief supplies of food-stuffs have been pledged by wealthier nations, and distribution networks stand by to move them. But political policies and wars in the affected nations stand in the way, as the leaders "are more intent upon winning their wars than feeding the people they are supposedly fighting for," says *Time*. Starvation and disease can be used as weapons to crush rebellion.

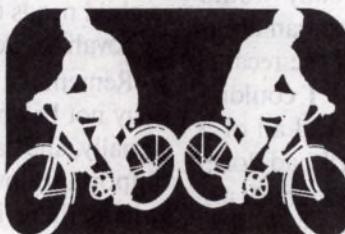
## "CAN'T COMPETE"

"With a frequency many consider alarming, Southern Baptist pastors around the [United States] are being dismissed from their pulpits," notes *The New York Times*. Over 2,100 Southern Baptist ministers were dismissed over a recent 18-month period. Why the 31-percent increase compared with a similar period in 1985? "The television evangelist has become the model pastor," says cleric Bruce Grubbs, who himself trains Southern

Baptist ministers. "The local pastor is being compared with the television preacher and, of course, he doesn't come off looking as good; nothing does, not the building, not the choir. You can't compete with Hollywood." Southern Baptists form the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, with 14.8 million members and 37,800 churches.

## NEW EXERCISE FINDINGS

Even regular, moderate exercise can substantially reduce a person's chances of dying from



heart disease, cancer, and other causes, a new eight-year study shows. Over 13,000 men and women were tested in the most comprehensive study measuring fitness yet done, to determine how physical fitness is related to death rates. And rather than just accept the word of those studied as to their physical activity, the subjects' fitness levels were continually measured. The results showed that the greatest gain came from just getting out of the sedentary category, rather than by engaging in strenuous exercise. "You don't have to be a marathoner," states Dr. Carl Casper of the U.S. Centers for

Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. "In fact, you get much more benefit out of being just a bit more active. For example, going from being sedentary to walking briskly for a half hour several days a week can drop your risk dramatically."

## MEGACITIES

"Around the world, several million people a year move to the urban centers of South America, Africa, and Asia," states the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*. "The people of the Third World are migrating toward their vision of the promised land." Few, however, find one. Without employment, many are forced to live in slums and are reduced to begging and peddling in order to survive. Half the inhabitants of Nairobi and Manila are said to live in slums. In Calcutta it is 70 percent. Often, even the employed cannot afford housing because of extremely high inflation rates. Many bureaucrats and soldiers, for instance, live in shanties in Djakarta, Indonesia. It is estimated that by the year 2000, 17 of the 20 largest cities in the world will be in the developing areas of the globe, São Paulo and Mexico City heading the list with populations of about 25 million each. And with big cities come big problems in the form of crime, corruption, water and air pollution, and lack of sanitation.

## INCONGRUITY

"Three years ago, when Pope John Paul II visited Colom-

bia, he was visibly moved by the warmth and religious fervor that greeted him in Medellín, vowing that if he ever had to relocate the Vatican, he would move it to that city," says the *Times* of London. But Medellín is also home to a drug cartel that is said to control some 80 percent of the world's cocaine traffic. And it is here that many Catholic youths, regular in their attendance at Mass and in religious veneration, make their living as contract-killers, giving Medellín the world's highest homicide rate: over 4,000 a year in a population of 2.5 million. "After carrying out a lucrative contract, the killers often pay for a special Mass to give thanks at the same time the victim's funeral Mass is taking place elsewhere." They find no conflict between their beliefs and their activity, says the *Times*.

### FROZEN ASSETS

"A scheme to store seeds of the world's most important food crops for posterity in the permafrost of the Arctic Circle is now under way," notes *New Scientist* magazine. The plan is to place "seeds of staple foods and species of unique economic importance" to each country deep within an unused mineshaft on the island of Spitsbergen, Norway, as security against natural disasters. The permafrost there ensures a temperature of less than 26° F. Under the plan, an international treaty would grant each nation the right of access to the island but only to its own storage unit. The low temperature should allow apple seeds to remain viable for 100 years, barley for 300 years, and cowpea seeds for about 800 years.

### VYING FOR AIRSPACE

"Commercial jetliners increasingly are striking birds, and airline industry executives say the resulting mechanical damage is contributing to the growing problem of flight delays," states *The Wall Street Journal*. "About 6% of bird collisions world-wide caused such emergencies as aborted takeoffs and obscured visibility." In one instance, a goose crashed through an airplane cockpit window and blinded the captain in one eye. Experts believe that bird strikes are among the "most un-



derrated and underreported safety problems facing airlines." To cope with the problem, airports usually resort to firing harmless explosive devices near their runways or to playing recorded bird distress calls. But Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport has gone a step further, reports *National Geographic*, by using falcons to frighten the birds away. The falcons "rarely kill but are sufficiently terrifying to frighten away other birds for hours," it says.

### SKY MAP

According to Sarah Law, writing in *New Scientist*, a sky map cataloging 18,819,291 bright points of light by position and magnitude has been made by scientists at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. Of these, the

report states, "approximately 15 million are stars and most of the rest are galaxies." This is 60 times larger than any previous catalog. It is hoped that such an accurate reference grid will help cut down observation time on telescopes by making it easier for astronomers to observe faint objects, such as brown dwarfs. So far, objects down to the 15th magnitude (4,000 times fainter than can be seen by the naked eye) have been pinpointed, and objects 250 times fainter still (21st magnitude) have been stored on optical disc. Work is now proceeding to include star movements in the catalog at a later date.

### FOR PUBLIC DISPLAY ONLY

"[The state of] Bihar [India] is a graveyard of stones without legacy," states the magazine *India Today*. "Camouflaged by garbage and weeds, by grazing cattle and scavenging pigs, these commemorative stones dot Bihar's landscape." What are they? Foundation stones for building projects that were never realized. One was laid in 1972 by Mrs. Indira Gandhi as a foundation for a bridge at Chittouni. Work has not yet started, and travelers are forced to detour 60 miles through Nepal. Another was to be the foundation stone for a residential complex at Patna for local municipal employees. Now, 11 years later, housewives use it to dry clothes. Sometimes there are several stones in a row, as patronage was given to various organizations but "without any fund allocation or sanction." In other cases, the foundation stones were laid and relaid by successive state ministers. "The hunger of the state's politicians to etch their names on stone is virtually insatiable," says *India Today*.

# FROM OUR READERS

**Verbal Abuse** I wish all young people like me could appreciate the benefits of putting into practice the suggestions made in your article on verbal abuse. (June 8, 1989) By applying the Bible principles outlined therein, I now have a good relationship with my unbelieving parents.

S. C., Italy

**Head Lice** I chose "Head Lice" as the subject for a school report and based it on your article. (August 22, 1989) A few days later, head lice were discovered on one of the pupils in our school. Most of my classmates firmly believed that head lice were found only on dirty people. (I thought so too until I read this article.) So my teacher read my report and dispelled their misunderstandings.

Y. N., Japan

**Astrology** I have never been very interested in astrology and therefore did not feel like reading the *Awake!* issue on that subject. (November 22, 1989) But as I started into it, I could see what a fantastic hold this satanic way of thinking has on a large part of mankind. I was deeply thrilled by the clear reasoning and felt a real appreciation for the insight it gave me.

J. A., New Zealand

**Oil** The article "Oil at Your Service—Maybe!" (November 22, 1989) was very interesting and informative. I especially liked how you wrote it from the viewpoint of a droplet of oil. It was easy to understand and got right to the point!

J. W., United States

**Blood Controversy** I read the article "Doctors Tried to Take Our Daughter Away" and could only cry with happiness for the Deskins and their daughter [who escaped having blood forced upon her]. (October 22, 1989) My daughter, Dana, suffered serious burns and had to be hospitalized. The blood issue came up. Despite my most strenuous efforts to resist, blood was forced on Dana. I can therefore truly relate to how the Deskins must have felt during their trial. They are to be commended for their faith in Jehovah God.

D. C., United States

**Discovering "Awake!"** I was waiting my turn in a barbershop when I looked for a magazine to help me pass the time. Before I realized it, I had spent several minutes reading a magazine called *Awake!* I was truly surprised to find myself deeply involved in the subtle beauty of the message contained in its variety of articles.

H. P. C., Brazil

**Special Needs** Thank you so much for the article on handicapped ones. (August 22, 1989) We have a daughter in a wheelchair, and it takes much time to get ready for Christian meetings and to get in and out of our car during our door-to-door ministry. We make it to meetings on time and enjoy the spiritual food so much, but no one really knows how much effort it takes just to be there. Jehovah gives us the strength; if he didn't, we couldn't make it.

S. A., United States

# Yosemite National Park 100 Years Old

JUST driving into the mountains from Merced, California, U.S.A., hardly prepares you for the awesome vista that greets you when you emerge from a tunnel on the highway. Immediately you are struck by the scale and dimensions of the Yosemite Valley, with huge masses and jagged peaks towering above the valley floor, which itself is

4,000 feet above sea level. To the left, El Capitan rises vertically 3,600 feet; to the right is plumed Bridalveil waterfall, with its 620-foot drop; in the distance on the right is the huge mass of Half Dome, rising to 8,852 feet. This spectacle is all so sudden and breathtaking. The words spring to mind: "The Rock [Jehovah], perfect is his

activity."—Deuteronomy 32:4.

Millions of people from all over the world have enjoyed the beauty and the grandeur of Yosemite National Park since it was declared as such by the U.S. Congress in 1890. As early as 1864, Yosemite Valley had been given by Congress to California as a public park. Nowadays, at the height of the season, Yosemite is swamped by a human invasion. But if it is solitude you seek, you can always brave the High Sierra and see the whole panorama from an eagle's viewpoint.



