

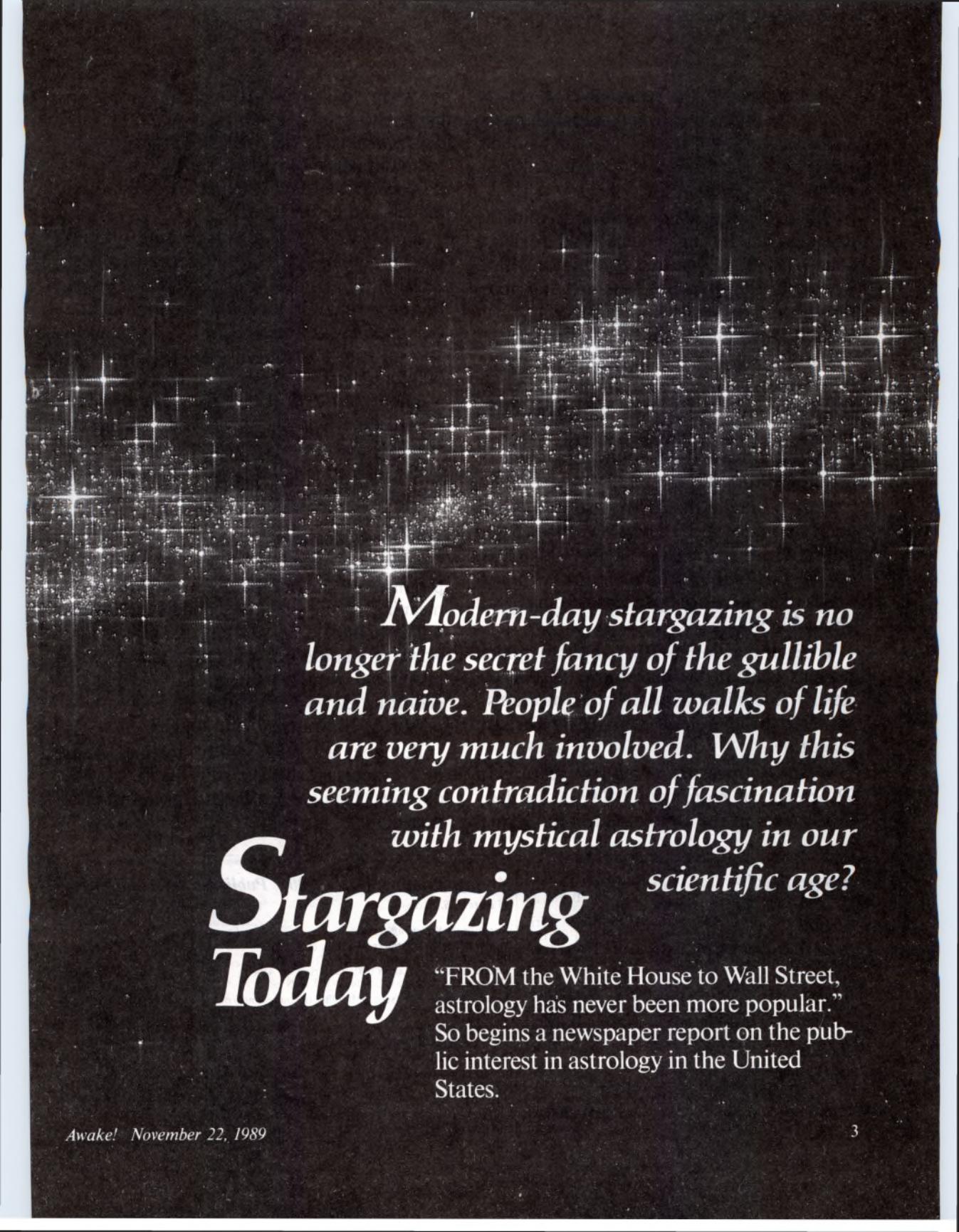
Awake!

November 22, 1989



***Do the Stars
Control Your Life?***





Modern-day stargazing is no longer the secret fancy of the gullible and naive. People of all walks of life are very much involved. Why this seeming contradiction of fascination with mystical astrology in our scientific age?

Stargazing Today

“FROM the White House to Wall Street, astrology has never been more popular.” So begins a newspaper report on the public interest in astrology in the United States.

The reference to the White House no doubt brought to the reader's mind the much publicized account by a former presidential aide. In his book *For the Record*, Donald T. Regan wrote:

"Virtually every major move or decision the Reagans made during my time as White House chief of staff was cleared in advance with a woman in San Francisco who drew up horoscopes to make certain that the planets were in a favorable alignment for the enterprise."

Whatever else can be made of that account, it certainly did much to bring into the open the vast interest in astrology among people in the Western world, where modern science is supposed to have dispelled the last vestige of astrology. Consider these facts:

■ According to the AFA (American Federation of Astrologers), there are about 5,000 full-time, professional astrologers and at least 50,000 part-time practitioners in the United States. Annually, fees paid for readings total about \$35 million.

■ "Each year in France . . . over 10 million persons consult one of the over 30,000 officially recognized astrologers or mediums," says *Toutes les Nouvelles*, a weekly Parisian magazine.

■ Horoscopes are a regular feature in 92 percent, or more than 1,500, of the daily newspapers in the United States. In Germa-

ny, when a daily newspaper, *Weser Kurier*, neglected to print the horoscope column one day, phone calls were received from readers "who did not know whether to stay home or go out for the day, whether to invest their money, and if so where."

■ More and more astrologers are turning to computers. Astro Intelligence of Switzerland, for example, can provide a 20-page horoscope analysis on computer printout at a cost of 55 Swiss francs (\$36, U.S.). One well-known British astrologer sends out over 20,000 computerized personal horoscopes a year at about £10 (\$18, U.S.) each. Even dial-a-horoscope telephone services are becoming available now in cities like New York. New York Telephone Company reports about a million calls received each month.

Why the Fascination?

In this age of self-fulfillment, anything that promises to provide better insight into the meaning of life or better understanding of self is bound to be welcomed. Thus, in the words of an observer, one of the reasons why people are attracted to astrology is that "it claims to tell you about the most important person of all, yourself."

But does astrology really do this? And, most important, do the stars really control our lives? Let us take a closer look at this phenomenon.

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Do the Stars Really Control Your Life?

"A LOT of people want to know the usual nonsense things—when am I going to make a million dollars or when will I meet Mr. Wonderful?" says a part-time astrologer. Indeed, most people approach astrology as a means of learning something about their future. And many astrologers are eager to oblige them by catering to their wish—for a fee, of course.

However, astrologers who consider themselves up-to-date disdain such a view. "That's not what I'm about," continues the part-time practitioner. "I'm about trying to help people understand their self." In what way, then, is astrology supposed to help people understand themselves?

Everyone knows that human activities are influenced by sun, moon, and stars. The sun determines the seasons and the growing cycle. The moon is the main force

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.

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Is Astrology Scientific?

Scientific discoveries in more recent times have presented formidable challenges for astrology. Consider these facts:

■ It is now known that the stars that appear to be in a constellation are not really in a group. Some of them are deep in space, others are relatively close. Thus, the zodiacal properties of the various constellations are purely imaginary.

■ The planets Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto were unknown to early astrologers, for they were not discovered until the invention of the telescope. How, then, were their "influences" accounted for by the astrological charts drawn up centuries earlier?

■ The science of heredity tells us that our personality traits are formed, not at birth, but at conception, when one of the millions of sperm cells from the father unites with the egg cell from the mother. Yet, astrology fixes one's horoscope by the moment of birth, nine months later.

■ The part of the sky through which the sun, the moon, and the planets appear to move, called the zodiac, is divided by astrologers into 12 equal portions, each with one constellation as its sign. In reality, there are 14 constellations in that part of the sky. They are not equal in size and they overlap each other to some extent. So the charts drawn up by astrologers bear no actual physical resemblance to what is in the sky.

■ The timing of the sun's journey among the constellations, as seen by an earthbound observer, is today about one month behind what it was 2,000 years ago when the astrologers' charts and tables were drawn up. Thus, astrology would cast a person born in late June or early July as a Cancer—highly sensitive, moody, reserved—because by the charts the Sun is in the constellation Cancer. Actually, however, the Sun is in the constellation Gemini, which would presumably make the person "communicative, witty, chatty."

behind the tides. The stars have long been used as guides in navigation. Is it conceivable that these heavenly bodies also play an influential role in other activities in our lives?

Astrology's answer is yes. The basic tenet of astrology is that the position of the sun, the moon, and the planets among the mystical constellations at the time of our birth plays an influential role in our character and in our life. Thus, knowing a person's time and place of birth, an astrologer can construct a chart, or horoscope, showing the positions of the stars and the planets and interpret the factors that may influence that person's actions at a particular time. What is the basis for this claim? How sound is it?

As an experiment, the French psychologist Michel Gauquelin sent the birth date and birthplace of an executed murderer to an astrologer for analysis. Then he sent the result to 150 people who had responded to his ad offering free horoscope analysis. The result? He found that 90 percent of the people said that the analysis they received was an accurate description of their personality and 80 percent said that even their friends and families agreed.

So much for objective reasoning! The truth of the matter is that astrological readings are usually couched in such vague language—and human nature is such a complex thing—that if one is bent on looking for something that fits, one will always be able to find it, no matter what the reading is based on.

The Source

All of this brings us to the ultimate issue: Assuming that the stars do play a role in influencing our life, in what way is that influence exerted on us? Of all the forces known to science, which one or ones are involved? Because the stars and planets are so far away, one scientist observed that "with respect to the effect on [a] newborn child, the gravitational tug of the attending physician, the electromagnetic radiation of the lights in the room are greater than any of the planets." If the stars do not influence us by gravitational, electromagnetic, or any other forces known to science, then what is the source of the influence?

This intriguing question is addressed by a professor of astronomy George Abell in the book *Science and the Paranormal*. After examining all the claims made by astrologers regarding the power of the stars and planets, Abell writes:

"If the planets were to exert an influence on us, it would have to be through an unknown force and one with very strange properties: it would have to emanate from some but not all celestial bodies, have to affect some but not all things on earth, and its strength could not depend on the distances, masses, or other characteristics of those planets giving rise to it. In other words, it would lack the universality, order, and harmony found for every other force and natural law ever discovered that applies in the real universe."

Astrology East and West

Astrology as it is practiced in the West ascribes special characteristics to each of the 12 constellations through which the sun appears to travel during the course of the year. These star groups were named by the Greeks, who visualized them as creatures, such as Aries the Ram, Taurus the Bull, and Gemini the Twins.

Interestingly, astrology in ancient China and Japan also divides the zodiac into 12 regions corresponding to the 12 animals of the so-called terrestrial branches—dog, chicken, monkey, goat, horse, and so on. And each of these animals is said to exert its influence according to its character over a certain period of time. Thus, corresponding portions of the heavens are designated by Eastern and Western astrology in the following manner:

Western Zodiac

Aries the Ram
Taurus the Bull
Gemini the Twins
Cancer the Crab
Leo the Lion
Virgo the Virgin
Libra the Balance
Scorpio the Scorpion
Sagittarius the Archer
Capricorn the Goat
Aquarius the Water Bearer
Pisces the Fishes

Eastern Zodiac

Dog
Chicken
Monkey
Goat
Horse
Snake
Dragon
Hare
Tiger
Bull
Rat
Pig

What do we find when we compare these two systems? Strangely, the constellations seem to work in totally different ways in the East from in the West. Thus, Western astrology predicts that a person born when the sun is in Aries, for example, is assertive, in Taurus, stubborn, and so on. But these are hardly qualities one would associate with the dog and the chicken. Yet, that is what Eastern astrology would predict. The same can be said about other pairs. Thus, depending on which system you choose, the same stars are said to possess completely different characteristics and presumably exert different influences. Is it the stars or the imagination of the astrologers that yields the control?

Science knows of no such force. If astrology works at all, it would have to work with a force, or forces, outside of the "real universe." But remembering that astrology has its roots in ancient Babylon, where the stars and planets were worshiped as gods, it should not be surprising that the source of its influence is not from the "real universe" but from the supernatural.

The Power Behind Astrology

The Bible shows that "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil, who is an invisible but powerful spirit creature capable of controlling and manipulating people and events on earth. (1 John 5:19) By maneuvering things to make certain predictions appear to come true, Satan and the demons have successfully captured the people's fancy and turned astrology into a cult.

Significantly, though, what sort of predictions are those that have supposedly come true? Are they not mostly about death, mur-

ders, assassinations, disasters—things sinister and macabre, characteristically satanic and demonic? The simple truth is that astrology is one of "the machinations of the Devil" that he uses to control and influence people to serve his purpose.—Ephesians 6:11.

What is that purpose? "The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ," answers the Bible. (2 Corinthians 4:4, *Revised Standard Version*) To that end, astrology has served its master well. Australian astrophysicist Vince Ford observed: "Astrology has become a sort of a religion but it is quite unprovable . . . All I can say is that I'm sorry those who believe in it don't take responsibility for their actions rather than blaming them on the poor old stars."

In the eighth century B.C.E., the prophet Isaiah was inspired to issue a taunting challenge to the astrologers: "Let them stand up, now, and save you, the worshipers of the heavens, the lookers at the stars, those giving out knowledge at the new moons concerning the things that will come upon you."

—Isaiah 47:13.

One who believes in astrology gives in to the fatalistic view that 'whatever will be will be' because 'it is written in the stars.' This is tantamount to denying the will of God or the responsibility of humans to act according to that will.

So rather than look to the stars for signs and omens to guide our lives, what can we learn from the stars? Yes, what can the stars tell us? The next article offers an answer.

World's oldest horoscope, probably
April 29, 410 B.C.E. It was cast in Babylon



Courtesy of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

What Can the Stars Tell You?

THE starry heavens on a clear night are truly a magnificent sight, even to the naked eye. The silvery moon, the countless twinkling stars, the glimmering Milky Way—all of them appear so serene, so mysterious. It is only natural that one wonders: ‘Why are they there? Are they trying to tell us something?’

Since time immemorial, men have been trying to find the answers to these perplexing questions. Only relatively recently, however, have scientists begun to perceive how unsearchably vast the material universe is and, in comparison, what a tiny, insignificant speck the earth is. How absurd it is to imagine that all the thousands of millions of gal-

axies of stars, millions of light-years away, are there just to spell out our life and fate! They must have something far grander to tell us.

A Clear Message

Although some, as we have seen, endeavor to read in the stars mystical signs and omens, to ever so many people, the grandeur of the starry heavens conveys a lofty and elevated message that stirs their deepest feelings of awe and reverence. “The natural laws of the universe are so precise,” observed space scientist Wernher von Braun, “that . . . these laws must have been set by somebody.” Similarly, regarding the “orderliness of the whole universe about us,” former astronaut John Glenn noted that the only logical conclusion is that “some Power put all this into orbit and keeps it there.”

However, it does not take a highly trained professional or a great scientist to perceive this. For example, an ancient Hebrew king, moved by such a sight, uttered poetically what may well summarize the natural response of most of us. He wrote:

“The heavens are declaring the glory of God;

And of the work of his hands the expanse is telling.

One day after another day causes speech to bubble forth,

And one night after another night shows forth knowledge.

There is no speech, and there are no words; No voice on their part is being heard.

Into all the earth their measuring line has gone out,

And to the extremity of the productive land their utterances.”—Psalm 19:1-4.

Just as a masterful painting tells us something about the genius and skill of the artist, so the stars, without speech, words, and voice, are telling us something. No, not that they are charmed or that they, in some way, are influencing our personality and fate. Rather, the order and design manifest in the stellar heavens convey the clear message that they are the handiwork of an intelligent and powerful Designer and Creator. As the apostle Paul put it: “His invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world’s creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship.”—Romans 1:20.

The Force That Governs All Things

By studying the material universe, scientists are learning that all matter—from the largest galaxies to the smallest atoms—is governed by certain physical laws. And we are part of that universe governed by well-defined laws and principles, including laws and principles of morality.

The 18th-century German philosopher and educator Immanuel Kant, who is well-respected for his treatises on logic and reason, wrote: “Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them: *the starry heavens above and the moral law within.*” Yes, the one who created the laws that govern the physical “starry heavens” also created “the moral law within.” (Romans 2:14, 15) That “law within,” nourished and developed by God’s Word, can guide us in our pursuit of happiness and purpose in life. It is for this reason that the psalmist, after being moved to acknowledge the glory of God from observing the starry heavens, went on to say:

“The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back the soul.

The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise.

The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice;

The commandment of Jehovah is clean, making the eyes shine.

The fear of Jehovah is pure, standing forever.

The judicial decisions of Jehovah are true; they have proved altogether righteous.”—Psalm 19:7-9.

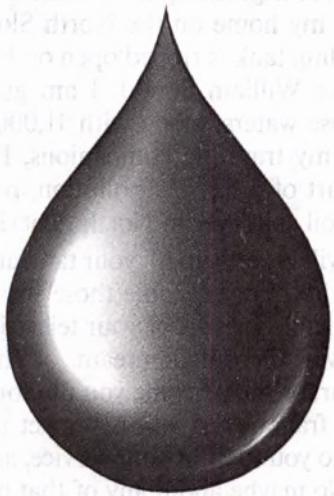
So, what do the stars tell us? That the Creator, in his wisdom and love, has provided not only physical laws to govern the intricate operations of the universe around us but also moral laws to guide us in our fast-paced and changeable society. No, God did not make us like pieces on a chessboard, whose “character” is predetermined and whose “moves” are controlled by the player. Rather, he provided us with moral laws that can help us to act wisely, but as free moral agents, it is up to us to accept and apply these God-given moral laws.

Where are these laws found? The apostle Paul tells us: “All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Yes, the inspired Word of God, the Bible, contains beneficial guidelines for all human activities. For this reason, the Bible urges us: “Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight. Do not become wise in your own eyes. Fear Jehovah and turn away from bad.”—Proverbs 3:5-7.



OIL AT YOUR SERVICE

Maybe!



WELL, there I was, relaxing, a droplet of oil, minding my own business. I had slumbered in peaceful coexistence with millions of my neighbor droplets for countless years. Then, suddenly, we were awakened by the unearthly shriek of steel grating against the walls of our home. This invader of privacy from another world turned out to be a drill bit, and it changed our life-style overnight.

How did I, an insignificant droplet of oil, become so renowned? My story goes back to the early 1960's. At that time, oil exploration was being conducted on the North Slope of Alaska. Over the years, oil companies spent millions of dollars in search of their elusive target—a commercial oil field. Finally, their efforts were rewarded. In 1968 the giant Prudhoe Bay oil field was discovered.

My ancestral home was invaded. Can you imagine the dread I felt as I was forced to give up my warm, comfortable home and was pushed up an alien steel pipe to a world I knew nothing about?

My Home Is Not a Pool

Perhaps I should spend a minute describing to you the home I was now leaving. First off, it was located 8,500 feet below sea level. What privacy! Also, the temperature was about 200 degrees Fahrenheit—just cozy for our molecular structure. Many describe my home as a pool. This might erroneously imply that I live in a large cavern filled with oil. Not so. My habitat is called an oil pool, but it is actually a sand or gravel bed that has filled up with oil and gas. If this is difficult to grasp, imagine a container filled with sand. You can still add water to it—up to 25 percent of the container's volume—without its running over.

But let me get back to the time I was being whisked away to a new life. I traveled up the pipe so quickly because of the tremendous pressure in the oil reservoir. This was initially measured at over 4,000 pounds per square inch and therefore propelled me upward at high speed.

It was the beginning of a new world for me. Some said that I would be very popular as fuel. Others felt that I would be useful in a thousand other ways—for households and industry. Where would I end up? I was apprehensive. At least I was not alone. More wells

were drilled to get more of my companion droplets out of the Prudhoe Bay oil fields.

Now, this is an expensive and potentially dangerous job. Many times, drilling rigs will penetrate a highly pressurized formation, and if you don't harness us, we can blow out and cause a tremendous explosion and much damage to the tundra and the wildlife. But I was not guilty of this. I ended up journeying along the pipeline to Valdez, en route to my destiny of serving you.

Incidentally, the pipeline carrying me there is above the tundra to prevent thawing of the permafrost. On the North Slope this permafrost averages 2,000 feet in thickness. It is 30 percent frozen water, so if the warm oil flowed underground, the permafrost would thaw, and our pipeline would easily buckle and rupture. Can you imagine the damage? What havoc thousands of gallons of spilled crude oil would wreak on the fragile tundra!

From Valdez my itinerary called for traveling by supertanker to an oil refinery far away. There I am to begin a new life. The gas and water are to be separated to go to another destination. 'Gas,' you say? 'I thought we were talking about oil.' Well, most people do not realize that where I lived, gas is always in the neighborhood. Actually, most of my makeup is gas. As a matter of fact, if they allowed me to be set free as soon as I arrived on the surface of the earth, I would expand more than one hundred times—what a noise I would make then!

Anyway, at the refinery I am scheduled to undergo a transformation. I am to be broken down into fractions, or parts, a process called fractional distillation. The crude oil is heated to a vapor and allowed to rise through a large tower. This causes different fractions to condense at certain levels and to be drawn off through valves. You might know that almost half of me is to become gasoline, and when

that happens, I will be at your service when you drive up to a pump and say, "Fill her up."

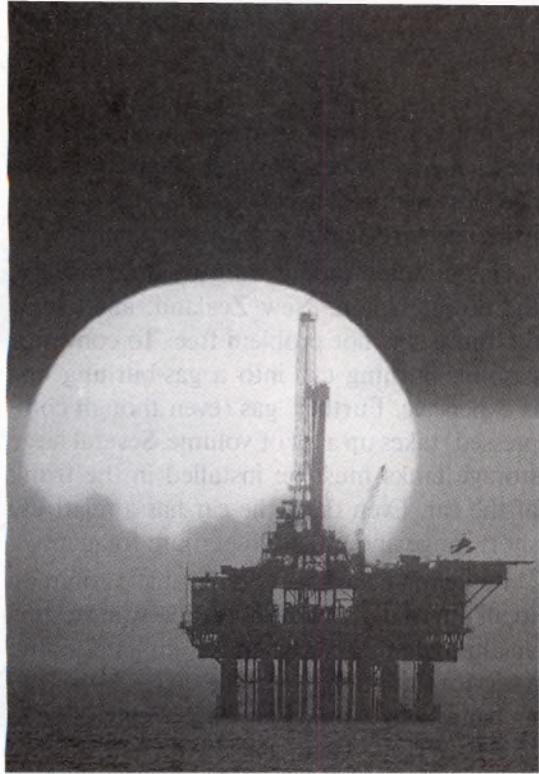
But I could also end up in many other things. We droplets may not look like much at first, but look around your room. That chair may be made of plastics, vinyl, synthetic rubber. That beautiful kitchen table may have an oil-based veneer. Your floor covering may well be a result of feedstock from a chemical plant that thrives on oil products—a thousand ways to serve you!

No Longer 'At Your Service'

But for me, none of that is to be. I start my journey from Valdez to a refinery via a supertanker named *Exxon Valdez*. Shortly after midnight there is a grating of metal against rock—far more frightening than when the steel bit invaded my home on the North Slope! Soon my holding tank is ripped open on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound. I am gushed out into those waters, along with 11,000,000 gallons of my traveling companions. I have become part of a terrible pollution, part of the biggest oil spill ever in North America!

So I will never help fill your tank at a service station. I will not become those plastic plates on your table, or part of your television set, or your favorite cosmetic cream, or the clothes you wear, or the perfume you use for that tantalizing fragrance. I will never get to present myself to you to be at your service, as I set out to do. No maybe about any of that now!

Instead, I end up polluting Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska. I shared in marring the beauty of hundreds of miles of coastline. I share in the death of thousands of birds and animals. I jeopardize the livelihood of scores of fishermen. Far better for me to have remained a droplet of oil on the North Slope at Prudhoe Bay, relaxing and minding my own business in the cozy warmth of my home 8,500 feet below sea level.



OIL. When it is spilled, it coats the sea with a slick black film that smothers and kills much of what it touches. When it is burned, it unleashes fumes that sicken lungs, wither trees, and even help to give our planet a "fever" called the greenhouse effect. Yet, today's world is deeply dependent on it. We use so much oil, in fact, that some people think we may run out of it before we finish poisoning ourselves with it.

In view of all the problems oil causes, it is no wonder that more people today are asking if we have any choice in fuels besides oil. The automobile is an appropriate focus for this question. The fastest-growing guzzler of the world's limited oil supply, it is also a champion polluter. Cars belch some 400 million tons of carbon into our beleaguered atmosphere every year. But is oil-based gasoline the only way to run a car?

No. There are other fuels. Scientists are still experimenting with solar-powered cars and

hydrogen-fueled vehicles. But there are two fuels that are already widely used in cars and trucks: alcohol and natural gas.

Hydrogen power is still in its infancy. It is not yet practical to use it as a fuel because of its cost and difficulty of storage and transport. So let's look at the alternatives that are available now.

OIL Do We Have Any Alternatives?

electric cars. But unless there is some unforeseen breakthrough, we will not see such vehicles replacing gasoline-powered ones in the near future.

Hydrogen may be a promising auto fuel. Not only would hydrogen pollute less than gasoline but it would not run out soon. It is the most abundant element in the universe. But for now, a practical hydrogen-burning car is only a possibility for the distant future, when technology may catch up with the idea.

Alcohol Fuels

What about the more immediate future? Two types of fuel that are not based on oil are already widely used in cars and trucks: alcohol and natural gas. A pure alcohol called ethanol is distilled from sugarcane. In 1987 ethanol powered over 90 percent of the new cars sold in Brazil, although in recent months that figure has slumped to 69 percent as oil prices have fallen. Ethanol is cleaner than gasoline,

and it comes from a replenishable source. We can always grow more sugarcane, or sugar beets, or cassava, or corn, to produce more ethanol.

One problem, though, is the amount of land required to grow ethanol-producing crops. The United States would have to set aside nearly 40 percent of its annual corn harvest to produce enough ethanol to fill just 10 percent of its auto-fuel needs.

Expense is another problem. By one estimate, ethanol-producing crops lose some 30 to 40 percent of their potential energy content while being converted to fuel. With the added expense of the farming and processing, some experts have concluded that it takes more energy to produce ethanol than the ethanol itself provides!

Methanol, an alcohol made from natural gas or coal, is less expensive. While some fuels give only sluggish performance, methanol gives a car more pep. In fact, racing cars often run on methanol because it is less explosive than gasoline. In June 1989, U.S. president George Bush unveiled an alternate fuels proposal calling for 500,000 U.S. cars to be fueled by methanol by 1995. The government claims that its proposal would greatly reduce auto emissions.

But methanol has its own problems. While it gives off less carbon in combustion than petroleum does, it emits another pollutant: formaldehyde, a suspected cancer-causing agent. Also, methanol cars would be harder to start in cold weather,

Natural Gas

Commonly used in domestic heating and cooking, natural gas has marked advantages as an automotive fuel. It is a simple compound—mostly methane—and it burns cleanly. It gives off little of the carbon that gasoline does

and none of the sooty, particle-laden smoke of diesel fuel. Engines burning such clean fuel need less maintenance. Natural gas is relatively inexpensive, and it is still abundant.

Gas-powered cars are already used in Italy, the Soviet Union, New Zealand, and Canada. But gas is not problem free. To convert a gasoline-burning car into a gas-burning one is expensive. Further, gas (even though compressed) takes up a lot of volume. Several large storage tanks must be installed in the trunk of the car. Even then, the car has a relatively short range and must refuel more frequently.

Refueling brings us to an obstacle common to all alternate fuels. Who would want to buy an alternate-fuel car when it is difficult to find a service station that sells the fuel? On the other hand, why would service stations provide alternate fuels when they have no assurance that people will buy them? So which will come first, the buyers of the fuel or the sellers?

One solution to this dilemma proposes that cars be made to run on two different types of fuel. Already there are cars that run on both natural gas and gasoline, natural gas and diesel, alcohol and gasoline, or varying mixtures of two fuels in one tank. While such dual-fuel cars would be easier to refuel, they might not be as clean-running or as efficient as cars designed to run on a single clean fuel.

A Hidden Oil Reserve

The most immediate way to alleviate our troubles with oil is to use it more efficiently. This would not undo the pollution that oil causes, but it might stave off drastic oil shortages while alternative fuels are developed. One U.S. senator claims that just getting American cars to average 35 miles per gallon "would save 660,000 barrels of oil a day by the year 2000. In 30 years, the same time as the expected life of an oil field, that would amount to about

7.8 thousand million barrels. That is far more than the oil industry is likely to find in Alaska." —*The New York Times*, April 15, 1989.

Yet, in the United States, where efficiency could make the biggest difference, it is most undervalued. U.S. cars travel almost as much as all the other cars of the world combined. Thus, Americans in particular have a vast, untapped oil reserve right under their very noses—or, rather, under the hoods of cars and trucks—in the inefficient gas-guzzling engines lurking there.

Is it possible to improve the mileage of cars? Yes. In fact, 35 miles per gallon is already fairly common. Cars were made more efficient out of necessity when oil prices rose drastically in the 1970's. Since then, auto manufacturers have developed cars that get vastly better mileage by using new engine designs and auto bodies made of lighter and stronger materials, and in more aerodynamic shapes. Volvo has developed a car that gets 71 miles per gallon. Volkswagen has built a car that gets 85 miles

in new fuel-saving technologies. Why? *World Watch* answers: "The consensus seems to be that part of the problem is a preoccupation with quarterly profits and stock prices at the expense of new product development." Making money now, in other words, matters more than averting a crisis later.

But self-interest is not unique to large corporations. Auto manufacturers make it a point to know what their customers want. They know full well that at present there are no easy answers to mankind's overdependence on oil. All the alternatives involve trade-offs. A car that does not pollute the air or deplete oil reserves may not have the power, pep, or luxury of the old gas-guzzler, and the fuel may not be as convenient to buy.

What do you think? Are people willing to make this kind of sacrifice in order to stave off a crisis that might not break in its full fury until their children or their children's children are driving cars? Man's treatment of this earth, his progeny's inheritance, seems to trumpet the implicit answer: "Who cares?"

In the final analysis, the problem of meeting our needs for fuel without ruining the planet involves more than finding alternatives to oil. We need alternative attitudes, alternatives to greed and shortsightedness. Man's inept mismanagement of the planet's resources, including its fuels, adds to the pile of evidence proving what the Bible long ago said—that man has neither the right nor the ability to govern himself.—Jeremiah 10:23.

But for students of the Bible, the story does not end there. The Bible assures us that in the near future, our Creator will take a more active hand in the management of human society. No doubt he will teach us how to use the planet's wealth of resources without fouling our own nest. For a future with hope, that is more than the best alternative. It is the only alternative.—Isaiah 11:6-9.

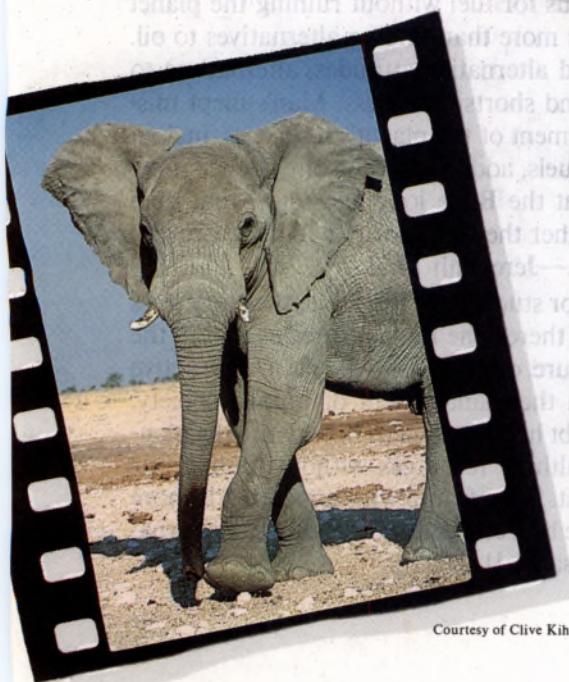
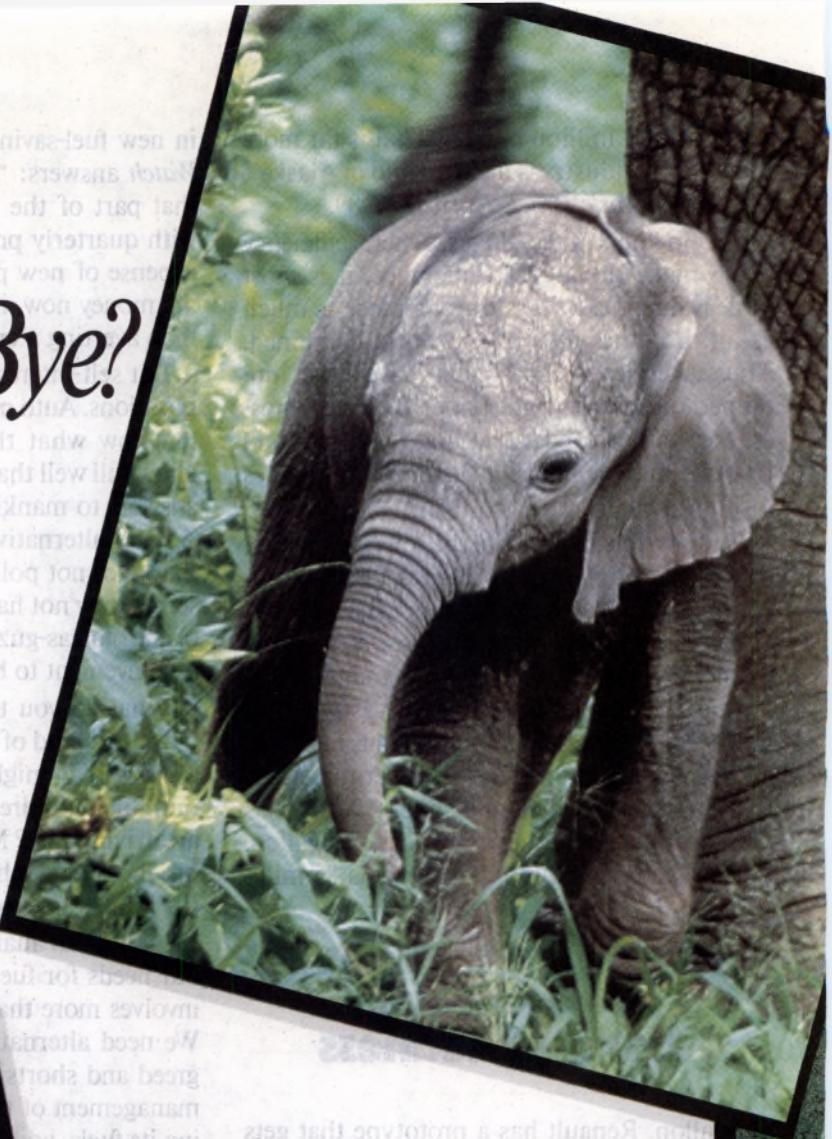
We need alternatives to greed and shortsightedness

per gallon. Renault has a prototype that gets 124 miles per gallon!

There is a catch, though. You cannot buy any of these cars; they are not being manufactured. Automakers feel that since the price of oil dropped in 1986, car buyers now are less concerned about fuel efficiency. Peugeot is holding its high-mileage car—73 miles per gallon—in reserve until oil prices rise, calling it a crisis car.

World Watch magazine notes that most U.S. auto manufacturers don't even have "crisis cars" waiting in the wings and are not investing

Is It Time to Say *Good-Bye?*



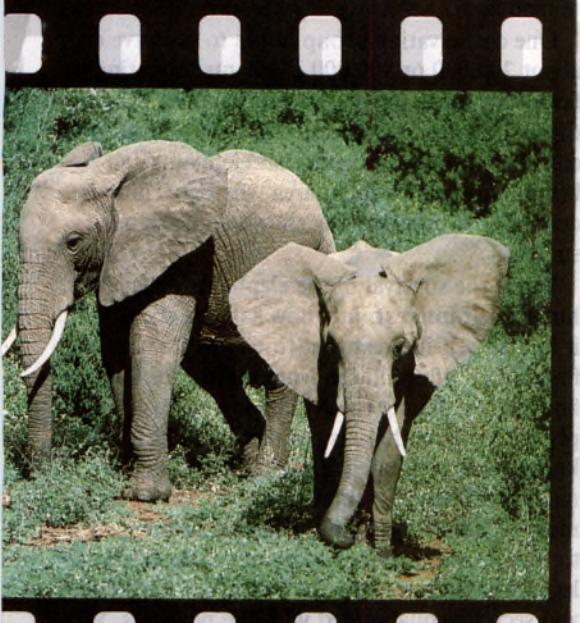
Courtesy of Clive Kihm

AN UNUSUAL war is heating up in Africa. It is not a dispute over territory, political ideals, or religious beliefs. Its toll in human lives, while tragic, has been tiny compared to most wars. Yet this battle has drawn the attention of nations around the world. It is a war over elephants.

The war pits park rangers and game wardens against poachers. Rangers and wardens are backed by the law, their governments, and conservationists. The poachers are backed by modern

... a long road ahead. The elephant population in Africa has dropped from about 1.3 million in 1979 to less than 600,000 today. The reasons are varied, but poaching is the primary culprit. In 1980, poachers killed more than 20,000 elephants in Africa, mostly for their ivory tusks. The demand for ivory is high, especially in Asia, where it is used to make jewelry and other items. Poaching is a serious problem in many countries, including Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. In some areas, poachers use firearms to kill elephants, while in others they use bows and arrows. The result is a significant reduction in the number of elephants in these countries.

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weaponry and driven by need and by greed—elephants' tusks mean money, often wealth barely dreamed of in poorer countries. Both sides are shooting to kill. Why so much concern for elephants? Is the threat against them really all that serious?

Poaching Takes Its Toll Well, consider: In the 1930's there were some ten million elephants in Africa. By 1979 there were 1.3 million. Now,

ten years later, that number has been cut in half. Estimates on the number of African elephants today stand at about 625,000. Why the sharp decline? Poaching is widely blamed. It is an ancient crime mushrooming in modern times, thanks to technology.

In times past, Africa's poachers were tribesmen armed with bows and arrows or spears, apt to run away at the sight of an unarmed warden. Today, both wardens and poachers are armed, but the poacher often more so. Years of civil unrest in Africa have left in their wake a surplus of guns, readily available to criminals. Today's poachers travel in gangs and hunt elephants with high-powered automatic weapons. Within minutes they can gun down several elephants, harvest the tusks by cutting off the front of the heads with a chain saw, and go on hunting. With ivory prices soaring worldwide, poachers can make thousands of dollars in one day; even their porters can make hundreds. As *U.S. News & World Report* puts it: "These are no local tribesmen but sophisticated, ruthless professionals running a high-stakes business."

Business has been all too good. Since 1973 elephant populations have dwindled by 85 percent in Kenya, 53 percent in Tanzania, and 89 percent in Uganda. In fact, every year some 70,000 African elephants are slaughtered for their ivory. Both Zimbabwe and Kenya have recently authorized park wardens to shoot poachers on sight. The trouble is, the poachers shoot back—and with more firepower. They have killed both rangers and civilians quite willingly. In the fall of 1988, a gang of poachers attacked a game warden's headquarters, tied up and beat the rangers, and then killed the park's five white rhinoceroses, the last of their kind in any of Kenya's parks. Of course, the poachers took only the horns. They left the huge carcasses of the rare beasts to rot.

Why Save the Elephants? Rangers are dying in their attempt to defend the elephants. Meanwhile, an international conservation effort is getting under way to stave off the extinction that may well overtake the elephants before the century is over. But many may wonder, 'Why all this fuss over elephants?' Extinction, after all, is nothing new on this planet. Dinosaurs are a

famous case in point. So why worry if elephants become extinct?

For many the answer lies in the majesty of the creature itself. It is a masterpiece of design. No doubt anyone who has watched a herd of elephants in the wild would feel a pang of loss at the prospect of their extinction. The way they train and protect their young, the amazing dexterity of their trunks, even their awesome size—all are sterling evidences of an incomparably wise Designer.

But there is more. Elephants also play a crucial role in the ecosystems in which they live. More than any creature other than man, the elephant changes and shapes its environment. Unlike man, however, elephants make the environment more habitable for fellow creatures. How? The key lies in their voracious appetite. An elephant eats some 300 pounds of vegetation every day!

In dense jungles, elephants pull down boughs and small trees, allowing more light to penetrate the dense leafy canopy. The light spurs the growth of vegetation near the ground, thus providing food for smaller animals, from forest buffalo and gorillas to bushpigs. On the broad African plains, or savannas, the elephants perform a similar service: Their foraging promotes a mixture of grasslands and woodlands, which sustain a wider variety of plant-eating creatures, from giraffes and zebras to gazelles and wildebeests, than would otherwise exist.

This complex chain of interdependence is fragile, though. It can be broken either when an area loses too many elephants or when too many of them are compressed into one area. Mankind does both—decimates elephants outside of parks and promotes overcrowding inside them. Thus, the plight of the elephants illustrates what is different about the extinctions that man causes: They are not part of a great purpose or design. Rather, they are caused by selfishness, with little regard for the consequences. They further demonstrate that imperfect and selfish man is not fit to manage this planet.

The Fight to Save Them There are those who are fighting to stem the tide of slaughter.

Conservation organizations and a dozen governments are launching last-ditch efforts to protect the elephant. But they don't all agree on how to go about it. One group has decided not to seek a ban on the international ivory trade, feeling that such a ban would only force the traffic underground and make it still harder to control. After all, the ban imposed on the trade in rhinoceros horn has done nothing to slow the rhino's headlong rush toward extinction. Nonetheless, in June 1989 several conservation groups called for an end to ivory trading. Three days later, U.S. president George Bush outlawed ivory imports. A global ban on ivory trading seems imminent.

One conservation group hopes to preserve only about 200,000 or 300,000 elephants, targeting a few dozen areas for protection. It hopes to curb the ivory trade by appeals to human self-interest, convincing local residents that elephants can bring more money to an area when poaching is curbed. The program has shown some signs of success.

But if the survival of the elephants depends on human self-interest, just how safe are they? Isn't it human self-interest that threatens them in the first place? After all, the ivory trade continues to flourish, sacrificing these giant creatures to supply the world with seals, trinkets, and knick-knacks—an estimated 80 percent of which are made from illegally obtained ivory. The government of Kenya has had to suspend or fire close to four dozen rangers and game wardens who allegedly could not resist the lure of all that money and secretly collaborated with the poachers. Who would deny that this generation has seen humanity reach new depths of self-interest? As mankind grows ever more self-obsessed, the world grows ever less secure.

Fortunately, the Bible offers a much better hope for our planet and its wildlife. It tells us that the Creator will soon restore the earth to the condition he originally intended for it—a global paradise, where peace will prevail. Man's war on the elephants, and on all the wonders of the environment, will be over at last.—Isaiah 11: 6-9.

**RELIGION'S FUTURE
IN VIEW OF ITS PAST**

Part 22: 1900 onward

False Religion Overtaken by Its Past!

"The key to a nation's future is in her past."

Arthur Bryant, 20th century English historian

BABYLON THE GREAT is what the Bible calls the world empire of false religion, likening it to the ancient nation of Babylon. (Revelation 18:2) What happened to that empire of old bodes no good for its modern-day namesake. In a single night in 539 B.C.E., Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians under Cyrus the Great. After having diverted the waters of the Euphrates River, which flowed through the city, the attacking troops were able to move in undetected over the riverbed.

Jehovah God and his Son, Jesus Christ, a king greater than Cyrus, will achieve a similar victory over unfaithful Babylon the Great. The Bible describes her as being a great harlot sitting on many waters, indicating the support she receives from "peoples and crowds and nations and tongues." But prior to destruction, this support, like "the great river Euphrates," must be "dried up, that the way [may] be prepared for the kings from the rising of the sun."—Revelation 16:12; 17:1, 15.

Evidence that such a drying-up process is occurring today would be invaluable in identifying false religion. Is there any evidence?

A Bright Outlook Dims

As the 20th century dawned, every third person on earth professed Christianity. The

outlook for Christendom was bright. In 1900, evangelist and Nobel prize winner John R. Mott mirrored optimism, publishing a book entitled *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation*.

But "the 20th century," admits the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, "has proved to be startlingly different from these expectations." Explaining that "no-one in 1900 expected the massive defections from Christianity that subsequently took place in Western Europe due to secularism, in Russia and later Eastern Europe due to Communism, and in the Americas due to materialism," it says that these and other "pseudo-religions" mushroomed "from a minuscule presence in 1900, a mere 0.2% of the globe . . . to 20.8% of the globe by 1980."

These "massive defections" have left the churches of Western Europe practically empty. Since 1970 the Lutheran Church in the Federal Republic of Germany has lost over 12 percent of its members. More than one third of the churches in the Netherlands have been closed, some converted to warehouses, restaurants, apartments, and even discos. And in Britain almost every eighth Anglican church in existence 30 years ago is no longer used. No wonder a clergyman speaking last year at a conference of European Protestant

theologians and clergymen complained that "the former 'Christian West' can no longer call itself Christian. . . Europe has become a missionary field."

However, the problem goes beyond Christendom and beyond Europe. It is estimated, for example, that throughout the world, Buddhism is losing 900,000 persons a year to agnosticism.

A Lack of Personnel

"To rouse a village first rouse its priests," advises a Japanese proverb. But what priests? In the decade prior to 1983, the number of Catholic priests worldwide decreased by 7 percent. And in 15 years, nuns by 33 percent. Meanwhile, the outlook for replacements is gloomy. In less than 20 years, the enrollment

at Catholic seminaries in the United States plummeted from 48,992 to 11,262.

Catholic orders are also suffering. At one time, the Society of Jesus, founded in Paris in 1534 by Ignatius of Loyola, practically controlled education in a number of countries. Its members, popularly called Jesuits, took the lead in missionary activity. But since 1965, membership has dropped by over one fourth.

Bad enough that personnel is dwindling; worse still is that many of them can no longer be trusted. The number of priests and nuns who oppose official church policy on celibacy, birth control, and the religious role of women is increasing. This was demonstrated in January 1989 when 163 European Catholic theologians issued a public statement—by May 1 it

Jehovah's Witnesses: Their Waters Are Not Drying Up

"As traditional religions slowly decline, their churches and temples getting emptier all the time, Jehovah's Witnesses are experiencing increased membership and are even getting former church buildings and other new facilities in which to gather their new members."—*Le Petit Journal*, Canadian newspaper.

"There are in Italy about 45 thousand . . . Today the sect has real magazines, which are nice and even interesting (they are rich with news and articles from all over the world), prints small books that are up-to-date and also answer the most expert Catholic Bible scholars, distributes Bibles translated directly from Hebrew . . . With these methods, the Witnesses have had even enormous success."—*Famiglia Mese*, Italian Catholic magazine (written in 1975; by April 1989, the number of Jehovah's Witnesses in Italy had grown to 169,646.)

"[Jehovah's Witnesses] are baptizing hundreds while we are baptizing twos and threes."—*The Evangelist*, official organ of the Evangelical Tract Distributors. (Jehovah's Witnesses baptized 69,649 persons in 1962 when this statement was made; in 1988 the number of newly baptized Witnesses was 239,268.)

"In 1962 I concluded a study of Jehovah's Witnesses with this observation: 'That the New World Society will suddenly run out of steam is doubtful.' . . . There are well over twice as many Witnesses today [1979] as then. All signs indicate the Watchtower Society will probably double again in size during the next decade."—William J. Whalen in *U.S. Catholic*. (The 989,192 Witnesses of 1962 grew to 3,592,654 by 1988.)

Since 1970 the number of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Federal Republic of Germany (and West Berlin) has increased by 38 percent. In the past 30 years, the number of congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Netherlands has increased from 161 to 317, and in Britain from 825 to 1,257, necessitating the erection of many new Kingdom Halls in both countries.—Compare paragraph 3 under the subtitle "A Bright Outlook Dims."



Religion goes largely ignored in the hustle and bustle of today's world

had been signed by over 500 more—accusing the Vatican of authoritarianism and misuse of power.

Millions in Christendom have become spiritually dead, victims of spiritual malnutrition. A U.S. churchman admitted as much when he complained: "The church [has become] a supermarket dispensing spiritual junk food to passers-by. The pastor's sermon is little more than the 'special of the week,' offered to customers at a discount of commitment."

Since 1965, membership in five mainline Protestant denominations in the United States has dropped by some 20 percent and Sunday school enrollment by over 50 percent. "Not only are the traditional denominations failing to get their message across," writes *Time* magazine, but "they are increasingly unsure just what that message is." Small wonder, in view of such a spiritual famine, that many church journals have suspended publication. Already in the mid-1970's, one of them lamented: "The era of the general church magazine . . . has passed."

An Indifferent and Unresponsive Flock

In the 18th century, English statesman Edmund Burke realized that "nothing is so fatal to religion as indifference." If alive today, he would find indifferent religionists aplenty.

For example, when interviewed some years ago, 44 percent of Lutherans in the United States said they would not talk about their faith to nonchurch families if asked to do so by their pastor. A more recent poll showed that over three fourths of U.S. Catholics feel that disagreeing with the pope, even on moral issues, does not disqualify them from being good Catholics.

In Japan, 79 percent of the population say that being religious is important. But since, according to *Religions of Modern Man*, only one third actually profess a religion, it is apparent that many are too indifferent to follow through.

Religiously indifferent adults do not generally have zealous and responsive children. A survey of 11- to 16-year-olds made by the director of the Institute of Psychology at the University of Bonn, Germany, revealed that more than ever before, young people are looking for personalities on whom to model behavior. But when asked who their role models are, the youngsters failed to mention church leaders even once.

Political Clout on the Wane

No longer does organized religion wield the political clout it once did. For example, the Vatican has been unable, even in major Catholic countries, to prevent the passage of laws on abortion, divorce, and freedom of worship clearly not to its liking. Similarly, circumstances compelled the Vatican to agree to a 1984 concordat that robbed Catholicism of its status as Italy's established religion!

What false religion formerly achieved by subtle political pressure it now tries to

accomplish by public protest movements led by its prominent clergymen, such as Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

United We Stand, Divided We Fall

A 1910 conference of Protestant missionary societies in Edinburgh, Scotland, gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. This movement has recently been intensified in an attempt to promote religious cooperation and mutual understanding, allowing "the Christian religion" to speak with one voice.

The ecumenical movement takes many forms. A significant step was taken in 1948 in Amsterdam when the World Council of Churches was formed. Originally composed of almost 150 Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox churches, the council now boasts double that number.

Although not a member of the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church seems to be inching in that direction. In 1984 at the council's Swiss headquarters, Pope John Paul joined the council's outgoing general secretary in leading an ecumenical prayer service. And in May 1989, Catholics were among the more than 700 European churchmen who conferred in Basel, Switzerland, at what one newspaper called the "largest ecumenical event since the Reformation."

Since the mid-1930's, this willingness to compromise has become more pronounced because of a growing acceptance of the idea that all "Christian" religions have an inherent God-given unity. As "proof" of inherent unity, the World Council of Churches emphasizes that all its members accept the Trinity doctrine, viewing "Jesus Christ as God and Savior."

Christendom has also pursued dialogue with non-Christian religions. According to *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, this is to find a

workable compromise "between an attitude of theological imperialism, which implies that if one faith is the truth no other faiths really have a right to exist, and a syncretism, which implies that there are not enough differences between the faiths to pose an issue and that some amalgamating of them all can create a new faith for the future."

In reality, false religion is like a cord made up of many strands, all of which are pulling in different directions. This is a prelude to disaster, for Jesus' words have yet to be disproved: "Every kingdom divided against itself comes to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."—Matthew 12:25.

Accept the True, Reject the False!

Some people may choose to ignore the evidence. But unfounded optimism is dangerous. "The churches have lived for more than a generation with the hope that things would get better more or less of their own accord," noted *The Times* of London in October 1988. It added: "In spite of the gradual long term decline in church membership in Britain, there has been little sustained effort within the churches to explain or reverse it, or to devise policies accordingly." It then logically concluded: "Any commercial organization finding its sales continually reduced would either prepare itself for ultimate disaster or take steps to improve its product and its marketing."

Nothing indicates that false religion will "take steps to improve its product and its marketing." The only basis for optimism for God-fearing persons lies in turning to the one true religion, whose flowing streams of spiritual water are in no danger of drying up. As regards false religion, "The Time for Settling Accounts Is Near." Learn more when that article appears in our next issue.



Why Do Mom and Dad Always Fight?

I have a lot of problems in my family, and I don't know what to do. My dad likes to yell at every little thing that he can yell about. And my mom yells about every other little thing. If my dad doesn't get anything to eat when he gets home from work, he just starts yelling at my mom.—A 12-year-old girl.

I'm very concerned about my parents getting a divorce. Of course, I love them both and I want to be with them both at all times, but they fight over financial things and a lot of other stuff.—A 10-year-old boy.

AS YOU see it, parents are supposed to love and care for each other. They are supposed to be all-wise, all-knowing, kind, considerate. They are supposed to see eye to eye on just about everything. And if they have a minor difference of opinion, they are supposed to discuss matters calmly, quietly, well out of your earshot. They simply aren't supposed to argue.

But perhaps you've discovered to your dismay that parents sometimes do disagree—and not always calmly and quietly. These are your parents, and to see them at odds pains you more deeply than words can express. One youth admitted that when his parents used to fight, "sometimes I felt like my insides were tearing."

Why Parents Fight

It would be wonderful, indeed, if mothers always kept 'the law of loving-kindness upon

their tongues' and never uttered a harsh word. (Proverbs 31:26) It would be finer still if fathers were never "bitterly angry with" their wives. (Colossians 3:19) But the Bible says: "We all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man." —James 3:2.

Yes, your parents are imperfect. As a rule, they may 'put up with each other in love.' (Ephesians 4:2) But it should not surprise you if, from time to time, irritations build and manifest themselves in the form of a squabble.

Remember, too, that these are "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) The pressures of making a living, paying the bills, contending with the atmosphere of the workplace—all these things place heavy strains on a marriage. And there are special pressures when both parents have secular jobs. Simply deciding who will cook and clean can become a source of controversy.

How Their Fighting May Make You Feel

Whatever prompts your parents' disagreements, it may devastate you to hear them argue. Writer Linda Bird Francke explains that children tend to "elevate their parents to exalted levels. A young child doesn't think of his mother or father as an individual with his or her own peculiar quirks or weaknesses, but as a rock-solid institution dropped on earth only

to serve and protect him." To see your parents quarrel brings home a painful realization: that your parents aren't nearly as "rock-solid" as you thought. This can shake the very foundations of your emotional security and arouse all kinds of fears.

The *Journal of Marriage and the Family* reports: "More than half of all children of elementary-school age interviewed in the recent National Survey of Children said they feel afraid when their parents have arguments." A young girl named Cindy put it this way: "Every now and then my mother and father argue a lot. I get very frightened and go to my bed. I wonder when it will end."

Fights about money—a common topic of debate between marriage mates—may incite fears that your family is facing financial ruin. And when *you* are the focus of the fight ("If you don't take a firmer hand, he/she is going to be a spoiled brat!") you may even fear that you are somehow to blame for the fighting.

Also disturbing are unrelenting battles over seeming trifles. ("I'm sick and tired of coming home and dinner not being ready!") Such constant bickering often springs from deeper resentment between your parents. Understandably, you may begin to worry that they are



Marital flare-ups prove distressing to teenagers

heading for the divorce court. The looming threat of a potential outbreak "makes you uncomfortable at home and unwilling to risk having your friends around."—*Trouble at Home*, by Sara Gilbert.

Your parents' conflicts may also create heart-breaking loyalty conflicts. As the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* put it, "closeness to one parent introduces the risk of rejection by the other." Fearing to say or do anything that could smack of taking sides, you may feel on edge anytime you are around your parents, fearing you will be dragged into the conflict.

'Are They Going to Divorce?'

Not likely. The Bible indicates that a certain amount of strain accompanies *all* marriages. At 1 Corinthians 7:28, Paul warns that those marrying "will have tribulation in their flesh," or "pain and grief in this bodily life." (*The New English Bible*) So the mere fact that parents disagree, even quite spiritedly, hardly means that they no longer love each other or that a divorce is impending. The Bible shows that even people who deeply care for each other can have occasional conflicts.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Good Health—What Can You Do About It?

Christmas Traditions—What Are Their Origins?

What Should I Do if My Parents Fight?



Applying Bible principles restores peace

Sarah, the wife of Abraham, is held out to Christian women as an example of wisely subjection. (1 Peter 3:6) Yet, when she sensed that Ishmael, son of Abraham through the slave girl Hagar, posed a threat to the well-being of Abraham's other son, Isaac, she vehemently made her feelings known. "Drive out this slave girl and her son," exclaimed Sarah, "for the son of this slave girl is not going to be an heir with my son, with Isaac!" (Genesis 21:9, 10) No doubt marital tensions flared! But no long-term damage resulted. In fact, at God's urging, Abraham went along with her request!

Very likely, then, your parents' disagreements seem far more significant to you than to them. Young Margaret discovered this when she tried to interrupt a parental squabble by yelling, "Stop fighting!" only to be told, "We're just having an argument."

Most domestic flare-ups are thus short-lived and quickly forgotten—especially if your parents are God-fearing and apply the counsel to "become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you." (Eph-

sians 4:32) Yes, your parents will most likely work out their difficulties without any help from you.

"First They Argue, Then They Hit"

Not all marital woes, however, are so easily solved. A seven-year study of some 2,000 U.S. families revealed that "every year about one out of every six couples in the United States commits at least one violent act against his or her partner. . . . *It is very likely a substantial underestimate.*" One teenage boy summed up his parents' conflicts this way: "First they argue, then they hit."

If such is the case in your home, then there are indeed serious problems in your parents' marriage. There may even be a real threat to your physical safety—or that of your parents. Recalls Marie, a young woman whose mother regularly bickered with the alcoholic father: "I was scared. I figured he was going to hurt my mother or she would hurt him."

Also of serious concern are parents who avoid displays of physical aggression but who attack each other verbally with "malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech." (Ephesians 4:31) Likewise, parents who hurl verbal darts that hint of sexual dissatisfaction or even infidelity give clear signs that serious marital problems may exist.

Some families even have special sources of conflict, such as alcoholism or drug abuse. Or it may be that one parent is a Christian and the other an unbeliever. Jesus Christ predicted that such a situation would "cause division" in a family. Serious marital stress may result. —Matthew 10:35.

What should you do, then, if your parents' marriage seems in real jeopardy? Is there anything you can do besides watch helplessly? This will be the subject of a future article.



Courtesy of Sarao Motors, Inc.

Jeepney

The Philippines' People Mover

By Awake! correspondent in the Philippines

ON THE streets of Manila in the Philippines, the jeepney, with its bold colors, flying streamers, and host of other eye-catching ornaments, is a familiar sight. It is a uniquely Filipino solution to a problem that nations around the world are grappling with—mass transportation. To anyone who has never been to the Philippines, however, even the word "jeepney" is strange. Authorities suggest that it is a combination of the words "jeep" and "jitney" (small bus). Allow us to introduce you to this fascinating vehicle.

In his book *Urban Mass Transportation*, George M. Smerk spotlights a common problem with mass-transport systems: "It has often been charged that mass transportation is inflexible, meaning usually that a transport line cannot be



altered to meet changing needs of the population over time." This is not true of the jeepney, however. The jeepney has shown itself flexible, economical, and easy to operate. Let's take a ride on one and see why.

A Ride on a Jeepney

As you stand in the tropical heat along one of the main thoroughfares of Manila, you may feel overwhelmed by what seems to be a river of jeepneys flowing noisily in both directions. Similar to a military-style jeep, only much elongated to accommodate more passengers, each one sports rainbow colors, with pictures, designs, and slogans painted on all sides. Mud flaps hanging off the back and sides may flaunt slogans such as "Master Mariner" or "Jeepney King."

Most jeepneys are also bedecked with other glittering paraphernalia—pinwheels, chrome-plated horses, streamers, and long whip antennas (even though the jeep may have no radio)—all designed to attract riders. You may see a jeepney with 12, 14, or even more mirrors on its hood (also for no apparent practical purpose) and may wonder if the driver can see where he is going through that maze of ornamentation. But he seems to manage.

How do you know which jeepney will take you to your destination? On the front and sides, they all carry signboards showing their routes. But how do you get one of those speeding jeepneys to stop for you? That is not difficult. If you look the least bit interested in riding his jeepney, the average driver is more than happy to stop and pick you up. You may signal him with your hand. Or he may attract your attention by beeping his horn at you, not just a honk-honk horn but one that plays a catchy musical tune.

Now let's get on the jeepney. As you enter from the rear, you notice that there is one padded bench on either side of the jeep. The passengers sit close together, facing one another across the small center aisle, their knees almost touching. You stoop to get on (the roof is very low), maneuver yourself to a vacant spot, and ease into it. As people with loads get on, the narrow aisle in front of you may fill up with boxes, chickens, children, or sacks of vegetables. A long mirror over the windshield allows the driver to watch traffic behind him and also to see who is getting on or off, as well as who has or has not yet paid his fare.

How much is your fare? Well, we said it was cheap. You can ride up to two and a half miles in Manila for only 75 centavos (4¢, U.S.). The fare gradually increases for longer rides. By prominently displaying a sign "God Knows Judas Not Pay," many drivers encourage passengers to pay.* Mounted on or near the mirror may also be the driver's personal altar and/or a pinup girl.

* This is an English/Tagalog play on words. In the local language, Tagalog, "Judas" is pronounced much as the English words "who does."

Now you can sit back and enjoy your ride, all the while keeping an eye on where you are so that you can tell the driver when you want to get off. You may be surprised at how rapidly the vehicle moves along as the driver zigzags through the thick traffic, seemingly oblivious to the fact that he just missed another jeepney by only a few inches.

Where Did the Jeepney Come From?

Saul Lockhart answers this in *The Complete Guide to the Philippines*: "The jeepney owes its birth to surplus jeeps, left over from the World War II, which were converted into passenger carrying vehicles." The first jeeps were quite small. Since then, jeepneys have been made longer and with greater capacity—up to 17 passengers now.

Mauricio De Guia began driving jeepneys in 1948. But in 1979 he changed his schedule to work only half a day. In this way he supported the seven in his household and also spent afternoons and Sundays in work as a full-time minister. Many other drivers hang pictures of rock or movie stars in their jeepneys, but Mauricio says: "I pasted Bible texts to the ceiling inside my jeepney that the passengers can read."

How did the passengers react? He says: "Some asked what my religion is. Because of this I was able to preach to people, and they benefited. Many passengers in my jeep were happy about what they read, and they said, 'Your jeepney is really nice. It would be good if all jeepneys were like this. Instead of having any silly old thing pasted up, they would have the words of God there to have something to think about.'"

Can you see what makes the jeepney an efficient and practical system for moving people? Some, though, disagree, blaming the jeepney for causing unnecessary congestion and pollution, especially in Manila. Some would even like to see it replaced by other forms of public transportation. Thus, an article appeared in Manila's *Bulletin Today* entitled: "Jeep phaseout under study." However, it is unlikely that such a thing will happen in the near future. Millions of people rely on the jeepney not only for their daily transportation but also for their livelihood.

WATCHING THE WORLD

SUICIDES IN CHINA

Suicide has become the leading cause of abnormal death in China, and Chinese authorities are concerned. According to *China Daily*, "about 140,000 people are killing themselves" each year, with women making up approximately 98,000 of that number. Why do so many women take their lives? A major factor cited was the failure of husbands to meet their wives' "psychological and emotional needs." Researcher Shan Guangnai said: "Statistics show that half of the suicide women died because of family disputes and failures in marriages." Another factor cited was industrialization, which, with its faster pace of life, has brought "conflict between the old and new social values and moral standards." Guangnai recommends a warm, loving family life coupled with harmonious relations as an aid to suicide prevention.

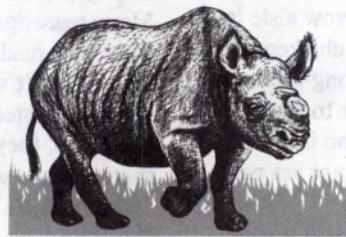
TUNNEL TRIUMPH

The recently completed Mount Macdonald railway tunnel in the Canadian Rockies, 9.1 miles long, is the longest tunnel in North America. It took two teams of 500 workers 54 months to complete. According to Ron Tanaka, the railway's chief construction engineer, teams of workers started on each side of the mountain and met in the middle, only a foot off target. The tunnel is part of a \$500-million project that also includes a 1.1-mile tunnel under Mount Shaughnessy, five major bridges, and a 4,032-foot viaduct. The project was engineered to reduce

grade through Beaver Valley from 2.2 percent to 1 percent, thereby eliminating the need to add pusher locomotives to west-bound freight trains. In the past it took six 3,000-horsepower locomotives to push the freight trains over Rogers Pass into Beaver Valley.

HORNLESS RHINO

In a last-ditch effort to thwart poachers, Namibia's wildlife officials have begun sawing off the horns of rhino to make them valueless to poachers. Conservationists claim it is as painless as the clipping of one's fingernails, as the horns are merely outgrowths of compressed hair and have no nerves. While a hornless rhino is defenseless against predators and other rhino, the desperate measure appears to be needed to halt the slaughter of Africa's black rhino, an endangered spe-



cies. In less than a decade, African black rhino have been reduced from 15,000 to 3,500, reported *African Wildlife* magazine. And in Namibia, where only about 100 rhino were thought to remain, at least 16 have fallen to poachers in the first five months of this year. Black rhino horns, prized for supposed medicinal

qualities, currently sell on the international black market for as much as \$50,000 a pair.

A NEW SOS

In use since the pioneer days of telecommunications, the Morse code SOS signal is in danger of extinction—at least as far as shipping is concerned. Beginning in 1993, ships will be equipped with a radio distress beacon that "sends a distress signal [via satellite] at the touch of a button," reports the *International Herald Tribune*. Due to become compulsory worldwide after 1999, this new system will allow coast guards to read on their computer terminals the imperiled ship's name and its exact position. However, Morse code still has its uses. "When the Mexico City earthquake of 1985 knocked out most electric power," the paper notes, "amateur radio operators used Morse telegraphy to call for help. Morse code signals can get through because they require much less broadcasting power to transmit than voice messages, and are far more easily unscrambled if distorted in transmission."

PAY FOR PRAYERS

A major worry of many older Japanese who have few or no relatives is that after their death, there will be no one to pray for them or care for their graves. Buddhist temples, however, are beginning to respond—for a price. A Tokyo temple offers, for as long as the temple stands, to bring out the remains of the deceased at all major festivals and offer prayers for the dead person.

The fee is ¥500,000 (\$3,500, U.S.). A graveyard in nearby Saitama Prefecture guarantees prayers and grave tending for 50 years at ¥700,000 (\$4,800, U.S.). Applications are already coming in from individuals seeking the 'pay for prayers' service.

TO DRINK OR NOT

Does a "normal" daily intake of alcohol really pose a health threat? Yes, claims H. H. Kornhuber of the Hospital for Neurology at Ulm University, Federal Republic of Germany. Daily consumption of alcohol impairs the processing of fat by the liver and leads to obesity. Other side effects are a rise in pulse rate and blood pressure and an increased cholesterol level. Investigations show "clearly that the borderline—where a threat to health begins—does not lie between those who consume little alcohol and those who consume much but between persons of moderate alcohol consumption and those of none at all," notes German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

CHERNOBYL AFTERMATH

In April 1986 the Chernobyl nuclear power plant explosion discharged radioactive particles over a large portion of the earth's surface. Genetic deviations are now appearing in plants and animals in the contaminated zone around the plant, reports the *International Herald Tribune*. According to the *Tribune*, the Soviet newspaper *Leninskoye Znamya* says that unusually large pine trees are growing in the area, as well as poplar trees with leaves seven inches wide, about three times their usual size. In addition to more cases of radiation-

induced cancer in humans, scientists now fear that because of the long half-life (up to 33 years) of some isotopes released in the accident, an increase in genetic disease, malformations, miscarriages, and premature births will be felt for generations to come.

LETHAL TOOTHPICKS

Each year in the United States, an average of 8,176 toothpick-related injuries are reported, notes *The New York Post*. As an example, the paper cited the case of a 28-year-old man who was killed by one. He had sought treatment for fever, chills, and bleeding. Doctors performed



emergency surgery and discovered a toothpick that had punctured an abdominal artery. The patient had swallowed the toothpick six months earlier and had forgotten about it. Swallowed toothpicks have caused deaths by suffocation and by puncture of the patient's bowels, or colon. Doctors emphasize "the need for adequate and immediate treatment in the event of such an ingestion."

SPACE DEBRIS

Since the first Soviet satellite, Sputnik, was launched into space on October 4, 1957, a total of 19,287 man-made objects have been tracked in orbits, mainly around the earth. NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Ad-

ministration) reported that as of June 30, 1988, there are still 7,184 remaining. The majority of these objects were debris from spent rockets. However, the British magazine *Spaceflight News* reports that while there are still 1,777 payloads orbiting in space, only 5 percent of them continue to operate.

WANING INFLUENCE

When a recent Gallup poll surveyed U.S. college students, nearly 80 percent said that religion plays an important part in their lives, but 69 percent do not consider premarital sex to be wrong. According to *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, an editor of the Christian Broadcasting Network, which commissioned the survey, said: "We were disappointed to see that even though they believe in God, their faith doesn't seem to have much of an effect on their personal lives and habits, their sexual attitudes and practices."

ARMS SALES

The United States and the Soviet Union are in competition: Who can sell the most weapons to developing countries? American sales rose by 66 percent in 1988 to \$9.2 thousand million, nearly matching the Soviet level of \$9.9 thousand million—a 47-percent drop during the same period. Together, they account for nearly two thirds of all sales of arms to developing countries. France and China come next, both delivering about \$3.1 thousand million worth of arms to developing countries last year. The Middle East has been the largest market. Two thirds of all weapons sold in the last four years were delivered there.

FROM OUR READERS

Down's Syndrome Thank you for the article "Living With Down's Syndrome." (August 8, 1989) We too have a handicapped member in our family, and we have seen how love has made her progress more rapid. At Christian meetings, she proudly sits there with her own Bible and Bible literature. We received much encouragement by reading about Suzy and the unfailing love of her family.

L. S. B., South Africa

Outstanding, Caring I have just finished reading the October 8, 1989, *Awake!* This issue was especially outstanding. Other magazines can be very informative but often leave me feeling sad or helpless. *Awake!* tells of God's purpose to remedy the problems. It is written in a very understanding, honest, straightforward but caring way. I can hardly hold back from going out immediately and offering it to the people in this community. Thank you so much!

S. D., United States

Steroids Lately I have been thinking a lot about your article on steroids. (March 22, 1989) My stepbrother took a couple of medals at the Winter Olympics. He was not satisfied with being the best, however; he had to be better. In two years of steroid use, he increased his body weight by half again what it used to be. All those pounds were solid muscle. But he became increasingly angry and aggressive. He was going to go to Lake Placid in 1990 for a sports competition. Instead, he will be spending the winter in the cemetery. Steroids killed him.

A. N., United States

Religious History I have just finished reading Part 12 of the series "Religion's Future in View of Its Past." I find these articles

very interesting and informative. Please put me on your mailing list.

M. K., United States

Gossip When I read the "Young People Ask . . ." articles on gossip (July 8 and July 22, 1989), I just started to cry because everything they said related to me. I helped spread a rumor, and it really hurt a lot of people, even me. I lost a lot of respect from people and even had rumors spread about me. The articles helped me. I just don't know how to thank you.

J. P., United States

Love Songs I have just read the article "Young People Ask . . . Is Love as It Is in Love Songs?" (June 22, 1989) The article was skillfully written and full of insight. I understand that all love songs are harmful to those not in a position to be married. But does this mean that married individuals should also discontinue listening to love songs?

D. K., United States

The article served, not categorically to condemn love songs, but to show that many of such songs teach an unrealistic and unwholesome view of love and marriage. However, the mere fact that a song expresses romantic sentiments does not automatically make it objectionable to Christians. Encouragement was thus given to youths to be selective in their choice of music. Married Christians should be similarly guided.
—ED.

I thought love songs really expressed how love is supposed to be shown and how it is given. This article made me finally realize that you have to work with a relationship and stay with it through the good and the bad times.

M. Z., United States



“THE WIDE AND EASY WAY”

“If only people rose to the occasion, if only they were not overwhelmed by their softness and apathy, if only they overcame their greed, if only they were morally strong, if only they were not selfish and narrow, if only they were not petty and spiteful and stupid, if only they were big, if only they knew what was at stake, if only they were not hypocritical, if only they trampled underfoot the wide and easy way.”

—Charles Malik, a former president of the UN General Assembly.

“If only they knew what was at stake,” Malik said. Over 19 centuries ago, Christ Jesus spoke of a ‘broad and spacious way’ and of a ‘narrow and cramped way,’ and he told what was at stake: “Go in through the narrow gate; because broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it.”—Matthew 7:13, 14.

The broad and spacious way is a dead end; the narrow and cramped way widens out and is endless.

