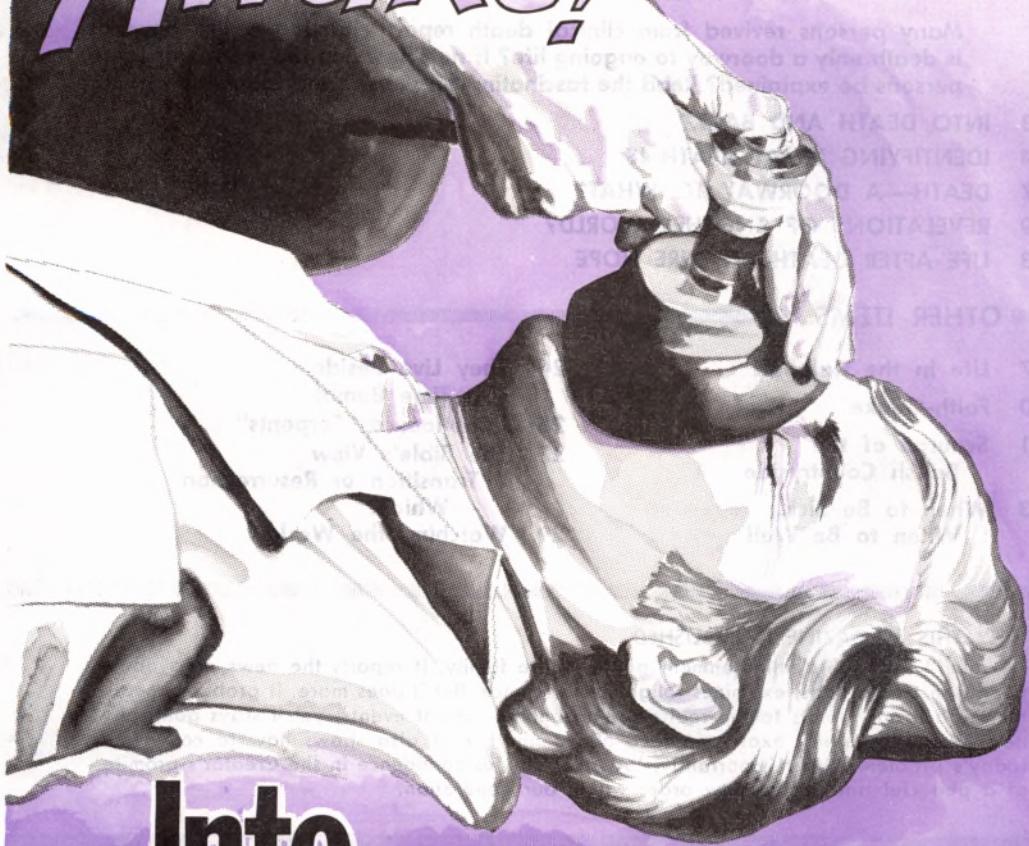


JULY 22, 1979

Awake!





Into DEATH and back- revelations of another world?

FEATURE ARTICLES

Many persons revived from clinical death report enjoying a life beyond. Is death only a doorway to ongoing life? If not, how can the reports of these persons be explained? Read the fascinating answers in the following articles

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WHY THIS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED

"Awake!" is for the enlightenment of the entire family. 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 stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. It also shows how to cope with today's problems. Most importantly, "Awake!" builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new order within our generation.

The Bible translation used in "Awake!" is the modern-language "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

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Into DEATH and back?

CAN a person who dies be brought back to life? Many news reports from around the world tell about its happening. The *Toronto Star* of February 20, 1976, carried this amazing heading:

"'Dead' 105 minutes doctors revive boy"

The Canadian newspaper explained:

"A 16-year-old boy who 'died' for 105 minutes three weeks ago now just wants to get back to school.

"Edward Milligan collapsed on a school snowshoeing expedition and had no heart beat, no pulse and did not breathe for at least 105 minutes. . . .

"Dr. Arnold Tweed, a specialist at [Selkirk General Hospital], said 'it is the longest time we know of' that a patient's heart has stopped beating and the patient recovered without apparent brain damage."

Less than a year later, on January 20, 1977, the *New York Post* carried an even more amazing report. The newspaper heading read:

"Longest Death: Revived After 4 Hours"

The report told about a 20-year-old

Chippewa Indian woman, Jean Jawbone, who was found unconscious in a snowbank. She had been there for nearly two hours at temperatures as low as 33° F below zero (-36° C)! Her heart had stopped, and her body temperature was only 75° F (24° C), more than 23° F (13° C) below normal! The *Post* reported:

"The doctors applied non-stop heart massage, depressing the breastbone and squeezing the heart for two hours before they had any signs of life returning.

"A tube was inserted into her windpipe to pump air.

"Finally, they used a rare technique known as peritoneal dialysis—injecting a warm solution into the abdominal cavity.

"After the woman's body temperature rose sufficiently, a defibrillator was used to give her heart an electrical jolt that established a regular beat.

"She regained consciousness, was able to talk, and 'behaved just like a person coming out of anesthesia,' [Dr. Brian] Pickering said.

"Yesterday, Miss Jawbone was 'just waiting to go home.' "

Surely these are remarkable recoveries. And with the advent of modern medical techniques, recoveries like these are occurring with greater frequency. But they can raise intriguing questions, as noted in a headline of the *San Diego Union* of October 1, 1978:

"Case Poses Problem Of 'Death' In Texas"

The newspaper explained:

"Roger Ragland's startling return to life after 12 hours of apparent clinical death has renewed debate over what constitutes death in Texas. . . .

"He had all the neurological signs of brain death," said Dr. James Lindley, who examined the youth in the Brackenridge Hospital emergency room.

"Physicians had received his family's permission to use the teen-ager's kidneys

in a transplant, and put him on a respirator to continue blood and air circulation through body tissues. The family had notified a funeral home.

"The day after the accident, however, neurosurgeon Bryon Neely noticed movement in Ragland's legs and then detected brain activity. . . .

"Texas now has no legal definition of death. Such legislation could be brought before the Legislature when it meets in January."

Have these persons actually returned from the dead? Can they give the living some insights regarding the condition of those who have died? What really is death?

Identifying what DEATH is

DEATH has long been viewed by many as simply a change from one form of life to another. Such viewpoint holds that at death the soul is liberated from the body and continues living elsewhere. But is this really what happens?

Later we will see, but first let us examine some things that have been learned about death. Death does not occur all at once; it is a process that has been separated into two classifications.

Clinical Death

"A person whose heart and lungs stop working may be considered *clinically dead*," explains *The World Book Encyclopedia*. Yet thousands of persons today who were at one time clinically dead are now alive and healthy. As a result of a heart attack, of drowning or of electrocution

their heart and lungs ceased to function. But persons present at the time knew how to reverse the dying process. How?

The person applied *cardiopulmonary resuscitation, CPR*, and successfully revived the victim.* If a person's heartbeat and breathing have stopped for more than about four to six minutes, it is generally too late to restore him to meaningful life. By that time his brain has usually been damaged due to being deprived of oxygen for too long. How, then, you may ask, is it possible for people *clinically dead for hours* sometimes to be restored to good health?

The rapid dropping of their body temperature at the time of "death" is responsible. Dr. Brian Pickering, who re-

* See *Awake!* of February 8, 1979, pp. 8-10, for discussion of "cardiopulmonary resuscitation."

vived Jean Jawbone (mentioned in the previous article), explains: "She is a very lucky woman. The extreme cold had the effect of freezing the brain and preventing any damage to it." Persons who have drowned in very cold water have also been successfully revived after being "dead" for quite a long time.

Insights into Death?

Walking around in good health today are literally thousands of persons who were once clinically dead. Has their experience given them insights into death? Do they remember anything about it?

Many say that they do. Doctors have interviewed quite a few of such persons, and a number of recent books are based on the stories that they have told. Newspapers have reported the findings under attention-grabbing headlines. For example, on January 6, 1979, one headline in the *Toronto Star* said:



AWAKE! — JULY 22, 1979

"There is life after death and it may be hell, says MD

Book reports experiences of people who have 'died'

The National Observer carried the headline:

"Back From Death?"

A Few Who've Been There Say They Found Signs of Life Beyond"

Similarly, the Atlanta *Constitution* proclaimed:

"Life After Life"

People Who Have 'Clinically' Died Describe a Sensation of the Soul Leaving the Body"

Many of the stories told are gripping and astounding. Heart specialist Dr. Maurice Rawlings, of the Diagnostic Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee, has resuscitated hundreds of patients. Often, he says, patients describe vivid experiences upon being revived. Almost all of them tell of enjoying very pleasant, blissful things. But not all. In one instance a 48-year-old mail carrier "dropped dead" while running on a treadmill in his office. Rawlings resuscitated him again and again, explaining:

"Each time he regained heartbeat and respiration, the patient screamed, 'I am in hell!' He was terrified, and pleaded with me to help him. . . .

"This patient had a grotesque grimace expressing sheer horror. His pupils were dilated and he was perspiring and trembling—he looked as if his hair was on end.

"He said: 'Don't you understand? I am in hell. Each time you quit massaging my chest I go back to hell. Don't let me go back to hell!'

Experiences such as this one have convinced Dr. Rawlings that there is life after death. And a number of other medical men and investigators have reached the same conclusion as a result of the stories that they have heard "dead" persons tell. Thus the New York Post carried the headline:

"Science begins to believe that there is life after life"

Why the Stories Are Believed

The fact is that stories told by revived patients at times are indeed remarkable, baffling. Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, one of the chief investigators of so-called after-death experiences, tells about a 12-year-old girl who, "in crossing the threshold into the life beyond," was met by an older brother, whom she described in detail. But, as the doctor explained, the brother had died three months before the girl was born, and her parents had never told her about this brother.

Dr. Raymond A. Moody, who also has interviewed many such patients, says that while "dead" one girl went out of her body and into another room in the hospital. There she found her sister crying, and saying: "Oh, Kathy, please don't die." Later, when Kathy told her sister exactly what she had said and where she had been when she said it, her sister was amazed.

'Aren't such experiences proof that something leaves the body at death to con-

tinue life elsewhere?' some will ask. Dr. Moody claims: "There is no normal way for these people to have guessed what was going on in the room while they were 'dead.'" He says: "If Mr. Jones tells you his spirit was hovering about the ceiling and proceeds to describe who was in the room when and what went on, it seems as if one has no alternative but to believe him."

Yet, is there really no alternative explanation? Is it accurate to say that these revived people were *truly dead*? Does the stoppage of breathing and heartbeat mean that *actual death* follows immediately?

Biological Death

No, it does not. As noted earlier, death does not occur all at once. *The World Book Encyclopedia* explains: "The individual cells of the body continue to live for several minutes [after clinical death]. The person may be revived if the heart and lungs start working again and give the cells the oxygen they need." But what if the vital oxygen is not provided soon enough?

This encyclopedia continues: "The brain cells—which are most sensitive to a lack of oxygen—begin to die. The person is soon dead beyond any possibility of revival. Gradually, other cells of the body also die. The last ones to perish are the bone, hair, and skin cells, which may continue to grow for several hours."

So those persons who reportedly were restored to life were not *actually* dead. They had not experienced complete, or biological, death. Their heartbeat and breathing had simply stopped temporarily.

Why is it, then, that so many persons who have been revived tell such amazing experiences? Isn't it possible that, in their state of *clinical death*, they could be receiving a preview of what awaits them in a future life? Does death open the door to a life beyond?

DEATH—a doorway to what?

SURELY everyone desires to enjoy a life of happiness beyond our present existence. Life now is all too short and filled with trouble. A University of Virginia student well summed up the attitude of people in general when he said:

"It's very hard for the average working Joe to go through life and all that it imposes on us and then say to himself: 'You mean this is all there is?' The general thought is that there has to be something more to it than just this."

It is natural for humans to think this way. Why? Because God created man, not to live only 70 or 80 years, but forever. Thus the Bible speaks of the "hope of the everlasting life which God, who cannot lie, promised."—Titus 1:2.

But how will this hope be realized? By means of an immortal soul? Many think so.

Conflicting Reports

The belief in an immortal soul is practically universal. The magazine *Presbyterian Life* of May 1, 1970, describes the popular concept: "There is a divine soul in each of us, imprisoned in our bodies. When, at death, we toss aside our bodies, our souls return to their true home in heaven."

The reports of many who have been revived from apparent death would seem to confirm this concept. For example, typical is the description of what one woman said happened to her when she was supposedly dead:

"After I floated up, I passed through this dark tunnel and came out into brilliant light. A little bit later on, I was there with my grandparents and my father and my brother, who had died. There was the most brilliant light all around. And this was a

beautiful place. There were colors—bright colors—not like here on earth, but just indescribable. There were people there, happy people."

On the other hand, most revived persons tell nothing about a life beyond. Dr. George E. Burch, who is a well-known cardiologist at Tulane Medical Center, explains: "I have interviewed approximately 100 such patients. . . . They told me that during the three and a quarter or less minutes before they were revived, they all experienced a sensation of deep, pleasant, peaceful sleep." *They did not remember anything.*

Why are there such conflicting reports? What really happens to us when we die?

Ongoing Life After Death?

"People of most cultures believe that at death something which leaves the body has ongoing life," observes the book *Funeral Customs the World Over*. But the questions are: Where did this belief originate? Does the Bible teach it?

The above-quoted *Presbyterian Life*, which described the popular concept of the soul, points to the source of the belief. It explains: "Immortality of the soul is a Greek notion formed in ancient mystery cults and elaborated by the [ancient Greek] philosopher Plato." Dr. Moody, who sought parallels in ancient writings to what revived patients told him, writes: "The philosopher Plato left us descriptions of occurrences very similar to those experienced in near-death situations."

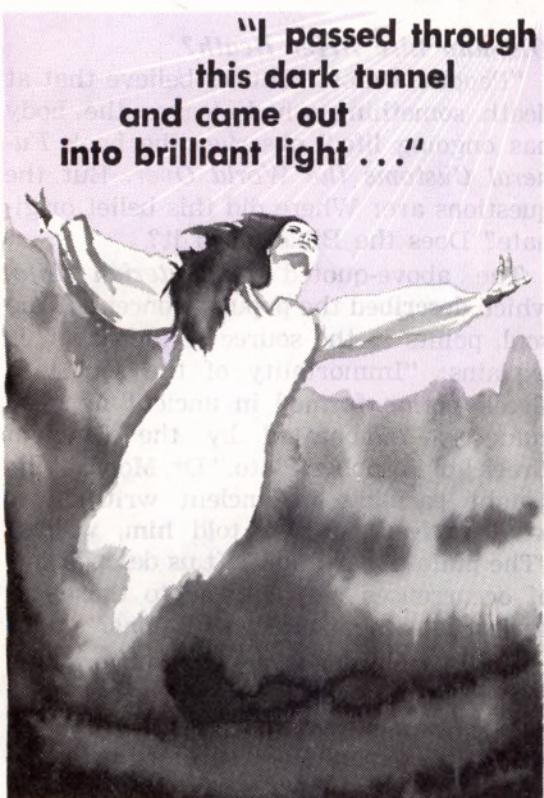
But doesn't the Bible also support this immortality-of-the-soul teaching? Moody had to acknowledge that it really does not. And *Presbyterian Life* concluded emphatically that there is "nothing in Scripture

to back up the idea that souls have 'an immortal subsistence.'

In agreement, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* observes: "The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture." (Italics added.)

No, the soul is not some separate part of humans that can survive death. The Bible does not teach this pagan concept, as the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* explains: "The soul in the O[ld] T[estament] means not a part of man, but the whole man—man as a living being. Similarly, in the N[new] T[estament] it signifies human life: the life of an individual, conscious subject."

Search the Bible as you may, you will



**"I passed through
this dark tunnel
and came out
into brilliant light . . ."**

In Future Issues

■ Paradise—Will You Ever See It?

■ Caring for That Marvelous Instrument—Your Piano

■ Man's Struggle for His Rights

not find one text that says that the soul is immortal or that it survives a person's death. Yet you will find many Bible texts that say the soul dies, or is subject to death. For example, the ones at Ezekiel 18:4, 20 read: "*The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.*"

So the Bible does not teach that death is a door to a life beyond. Such a teaching is a lie. In the magazine *Psychology Today* of July 1977, it is observed: "Thousands of years ago, a snake of all things, said to a certain young lady, 'Ye shall not surely die.' Ever since then it seems we have believed, or liked to believe, this first lie." (Gen. 3:4) The truth is, death is a terrible enemy—it is the end of life, nonexistence.—1 Cor. 15:26.

How is it, then, that some people, after being revived, report having experienced life beyond "death"? Surely, not all the people who report these things are lying, are they?

Possible Explanations

From youth on many people have been inculcated with belief in an afterlife, and so these ideas about immortality are embedded deep in their minds. Dr. Nathan Schnaper, who sees many of these revived patients, discounts their stories as psychological fantasies. "These people are experiencing a vacuum," he says, "and

psychologically we can't abide a vacuum. It's a void that must be filled, so they invent these experiences."

This is not to say that they do this intentionally. Significantly, patients under medication also have reported hallucinations and out-of-the-body experiences. Similarly, in the critical minutes while a patient is near death—when the heart stops pumping blood, yet before the cells die—the brain's oxygen-starved condition produces extraordinary effects. Those who recover may be merely reporting the results of this altered state. Julian DeVries, the medical editor of the *Arizona Republic*, identifies such factors as being responsible for the experiences reported.

"When physical prowess is at its lowest ebb," he writes, "as under anesthesia, or the result of disease or injury, automatic control of bodily functions diminishes accordingly. Thus, the neurohormones and catecholamines of the nervous system are

released and pour out in uncontrolled quantity. The result, among other manifestations, is the hallucination, rationalized after returning to consciousness, of having died and returned to life."

Unanswered Questions

Yet the above does not explain how certain patients, upon revival from apparent death, know about things that happened while they were unconscious. As Dr. Moody said: "If Mr. Jones tells you his spirit was hovering about the ceiling and proceeds to describe who was in the room when and what went on, it seems as if one has no alternative but to believe him." How can this remarkable knowledge of revived patients be explained?

Also, if death brings an end to life, how will the hope of everlasting life promised by God be realized? How can anyone ever enjoy life beyond the grave?

Let us now examine these questions.

Revelations of another world?

"**R**EVELATIONS" coming from 'another world' are simply too widespread to ignore. Commonly these communications are reputedly from dead persons with whom the living were acquainted as humans. In his diaries, W. L. Mackenzie King, prime minister of Canada for over 20 years, claimed to receive such revelations. The *Toronto Star* of January 3, 1979, explains:

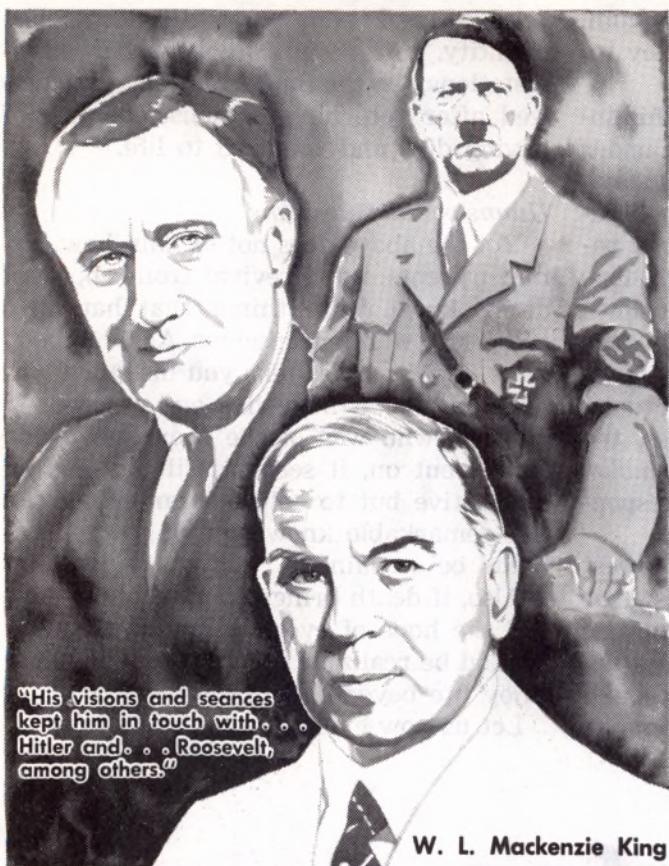
"His visions and seances kept him in touch with his long-dead adored mother, with Hitler and with United States president Franklin Roosevelt, among others.

"On Aug. 29, 1948, at Kingsmere, his home in the Gatineau Hills north of Ottawa, King wrote he had had a vision of

German dictator Adolf Hitler walking on 'something that looked like my bed quilt, making rows of button fastenings over the top.'

"All his 'conversations' and 'visions' were recorded in his diaries."

James Albert Pike, a prominent Episcopalian bishop during the 1950's and 1960's, also received revelations from 'another world.' The communications, achieved with the assistance of a spirit medium, were reputedly from his dead son, Jim. In *Look* magazine, Pike reported the following conversation with Jim:



W. L. Mackenzie King

"His visions and seances kept him in touch with . . . Hitler and . . . Roosevelt, among others."

"'Thanks, Jim,' I replied. ' . . . I'll be calling your mother to tell her about what's going on here now.'

"'Good,' was the response. 'I want her to know—to know I really love her—that I'm alive.'

"'She believes that, Jim,' I responded reassuringly. 'She did all along. By the way, about things in your new situation: are you . . . alone, or—'

"'I have masses of people around me, and hands lifting me up, as it were,' came through—and, after a pause, 'I was so unhappy until I could make you know.'"

There are many reports of conversations such as these, even as there are similar reports from persons who have been revived from apparent death. Evidently, communications are being received from somebody. *But they are not being received from the dead!* The Bible is very emphatic about this when it says: "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing*

at all." (Eccl. 9:5) Death is not a transition from life here to a life beyond.

Who, then, is responsible for these revelations from 'another world'?

Promoters of First Lie

Do you recall what God told the first human pair would be their penalty for disobedience? "You will *positively die*," God said. (Gen. 2:17; 3:3) But it was "the *original serpent*, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth," who told Eve: "You *positively will not die*." (Rev. 12:9; Gen. 3:4) In view of this, should it really be surprising that the rebel angel Satan, and those angels who joined him in rebellion against God, would promote this lie that if people disobeyed God's command, they would not die off the earth, but keep living as humans?

They have done this by teaching that, at the death of the human body, the "soul" lives on in a spirit realm. To support this, they provide sorcerers, spirit mediums and fortune-tellers with special knowledge that seems to originate with the departed souls or spirits of the dead. But Jehovah God has sought to protect his people from this evil deception. When the Israelites were about to come into the land of Canaan to possess it, he ordered them:

"You must not learn to do according to the detestable things of those nations. There should not be found in you . . . anyone who employs divination, a practitioner of

magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah."—Deut. 18:9-12; Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27.

Yet, God's servants have repeatedly been tempted by persons whom Satan uses to spread his lie of human immortality, as the Bible says: "People will tell you to ask for messages from fortunetellers and mediums, who chirp and mutter. They will say, 'After all, people should ask for messages from the spirits and consult the dead on behalf of the living.'" But what does the Bible advise? "You are to answer them, 'Listen to what the LORD is teaching you! Don't listen to mediums—what they tell you will do you no good.'"—Isa. 8:19, 20, *Today's English Version*.

However, someone may object: 'Doesn't the Bible itself promote the view that the living can consult the dead? Didn't King Saul get information from the dead prophet Samuel?' Let us examine this.

King Saul's Inquiry of the Dead

Saul was well acquainted with God's law about spirit mediums and fortunetellers. Thus the account regarding his making inquiry of the dead is prefaced with the comment: "Now Samuel himself had died, and all Israel had proceeded to bewail him and bury him in Ramah his own city. As for Saul, he had removed the spirit mediums and the professional foretellers of events from the land."—1 Sam. 28:3.

But a desperate situation arose in the 40th year of Saul's reign. A mighty enemy force of Philistines came against the Israelite army camped at Mt. Gilboa in the valley of Jezreel. Saul was terrified. Because he had left Jehovah's laws, Jehovah no longer responded to his appeals.

Prior to his recent death, the prophet Samuel had refused to see Saul. So now, in this desperate situation, Saul sought a spirit medium for guidance.

Saul's servants told him that such a medium lived in the city of En-dor, located some 10 miles (16 km) away, not far from the Philistines camped at the city of Shunem. So Saul disguised himself and with two of his men made the dangerous journey to En-dor under cover of night. The woman was found and, after receiving assurance that she would not be exposed for practicing her God-condemned art, she agreed to contact the dead Samuel. (1 Sam. 28:4-12) In the course of the séance, "Samuel" appears, as the spirit medium describes to King Saul:

"'A god I saw coming up out of the earth.' At once [Saul] said to her: 'What is his form?' to which she said: 'It is an old man coming up, and he has himself covered with a sleeveless coat.' At that Saul recognized that it was 'Samuel,' and he proceeded to bow low with his face to the earth and to prostrate himself.

"And 'Samuel' began to say to Saul: 'Why have you disturbed me by having me brought up?' To this Saul said: 'I am in very sore straits, as the Philistines are fighting against me, and God himself has departed from me and has answered me no more . . . And 'Samuel' went on to say: 'Why, then, do you inquire of me, when Jehovah himself has departed from you?'"—1 Sam. 28:13-16.

Is the Bible here teaching that this woman really did bring back Samuel in some spiritual form? Or did her demon-controlled mind visualize a representation of Samuel?

Samuel or Not?

Remember, God's law condemned spirit mediums, saying: "Do not turn yourselves to the spirit mediums, and do not consult professional foretellers of events, so as to become unclean by them. I am Jehovah

your God. . . . I shall certainly set my face against that soul and cut him off from among his people. And as for a man or woman in whom there proves to be a mediumistic spirit or spirit of prediction, they should be put to death without fail."

—Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27.

Clearly, Almighty God was strongly opposed to all spiritistic practices. And, as we have noted, God was also displeased with Saul because of his disobedience, and refused to communicate with him. So even if a spirit medium could get in touch with the dead, would that medium be able to force God to give Saul a message through dead Samuel? Is a spirit medium stronger than God?

Consider this too: God's prophet Samuel strongly opposed spirit mediums while he was alive. As a follower of God's law, he saw to it that they were put to death. So, then, would he, while he was dead, allow a spirit medium to arrange for him to meet with Saul? If Samuel refused to speak with Saul while alive, could a condemned medium make him do so after he had died?

Furthermore, why did God's law label the practice of consulting the dead as something "unclean," "detestable" and deserving of death? If the communication were actually with dead loved ones, why would a God of love designate this as a terrible crime? Why would he want to deprive the living of getting some comforting messages from the dead?

No, it obviously was not Samuel that the spirit medium of En-dor contacted. Samuel was dead, and at death, according to the Bible, a person "goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Ps. 146:4) Rather, the voice was

that of a wicked spirit person, one of Satan's angels, who was impersonating Samuel. These powerful, invisible agents of Satan have, by such methods, been promoting Satan's lie of human immortality for thousands of years.

Source of the Knowledge

So when certain patients, revived from near-death situations, know about things that happened while they were "dead," this may be due to dreams experienced, either when lapsing into unconsciousness or when coming out of it. Or, since the patients were not alive in some spiritual form personally to witness these things, they may have received such

knowledge from the same source as did the spirit medium of En-dor. In their critical, near-death situation, as their life-forces were ebbing, the demons conveyed to them information that they could not receive by ordinary means.

We should not be surprised that Satan would operate in such devious ways. "Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light," the Bible warns. In fact, God's Word says: "The god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through."—2 Cor. 11:14; 4:4.

"Unbelievers"—persons, for example, who refuse to accept what the Bible says about death, choosing rather to believe pagan philosophies—will remain blinded to "the glorious good news." You may still ask, however: 'If, as the Bible says, death really is extinction, how will everlasting life be attained? How can life beyond the grave be enjoyed?' *of our beloved*

AS THEIR LIFE FORCES WERE EBBING, THE DEMONS CONVEYED TO THEM INFORMATION THAT THEY COULD NOT RECEIVE BY ORDINARY MEANS



SOME persons place their hopes in medical science to restore the dead to life. They may ask: Since people who have collapsed in a snowbank, or drowned in a frozen river, have been revived after being "dead" for hours, couldn't a person be revived even many years after being frozen? Findings of a new study, called cryobiology, have caused some to be optimistic.

Cryobiology is the study of the effects of extremely low temperature on cells or organisms. For example, a cat's brain reportedly was frozen for

six months at -3° F (-19° C) and registered normal brain activity three hours after it was thawed out. And, commonly now, human skin, corneas, nerve tissue and bones are frozen for possible use at a future date. Hoping for cures of diseases and aging to be discovered in the future, some are preparing now to benefit then. How?

They are having their bodies frozen at death in hopes that they can be brought back to life when a cure for the disease that caused their death has been developed. The practice is called cryonics. Dozens of persons are already in deepfreeze. In the San Francisco Bay area of California alone at least 45 more are signed up to be frozen.

The body of the person to be frozen is attached to a heart and lung resuscitation machine before the onset of complete *biological* death. This keeps oxygen circulating in the blood. The body is then gradually cooled, and the blood is replaced with an antifreeze solution. Then the body is put in a cryogenic storage capsule filled with liquid nitrogen, and is brought down to an extremely cold -320° F (-196° C). The process is expensive, and so is the cost of maintenance. But many are willing to bear this cost in hopes that, as medical science learns the answers to disease and aging, the person can be revived and kept alive indefinitely.

Yet how solid is this hope of returning to life? Since man is incapable now of reviving the frozen dead, what sound reason

is there for believing that it will be possible later?

In actuality, whether frozen or not, the dead can be raised. It has happened before, and there were hundreds of eyewitnesses.

Reason for Confidence

According to the Bible, the man Jesus Christ was put to death by religious opposers. However, on the third day afterward he was resurrected. On the first day of his being raised, the Bible reveals, he appeared on five different occasions to some of his disciples. (Matt. 28:1-15; John 20:11-25; Luke 24:13-43)

Then, during the days that followed, he showed himself to them several more times, once to upward of 500 disciples! (John 20:26-29; 21:1-19; 1 Cor. 15:3-7) With what effect?

When Jesus was killed his disciples were downhearted, in mourning. But, on receiving this absolute proof that he had been resurrected, they were lifted to heights of extreme joy and were filled with courage to preach this marvelous news. They boldly declared it despite the murderous persecution of religious opposers. (Acts 4:1-3, 33; 17:18) Now consider: If the resurrection of Jesus had not really occurred, would hundreds of people have risked their lives—some even being martyred—to proclaim this message?—Acts 7:55-59.

Yet these early disciples of Christ had even more evidence that the dead could be returned to life.

Other Resurrections

In the Scriptures then available to them, three instances are recorded of the dead

being brought back to life. (1 Ki. 17:17-23; 2 Ki. 4:17-37; 13:20, 21) The disciples had every reason to believe these accounts, for Jesus Christ repeatedly emphasized the truthfulness of the Scriptures. And Christ himself told his followers: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." (John 5:28, 29) Some of his followers had actually been eyewitnesses of three resurrections performed by Jesus, which gave force and credence to his above promise.—Luke 7:11-17; 8:49-56; John 11:1-44.

The last of these resurrections that Jesus performed occurred shortly before his own death.

Jesus had been ministering across the Jordan River in Perea. While there, word reached him that back in Judea his dear friend Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, was sick. Two days after receiving the news, he told his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." The Bible account says:

"When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. Bethany [the hometown of Lazarus] was less than two miles from Jerusalem, and many Judeans had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother's death. . . .

"Mary arrived where Jesus was, and as soon as she saw him, she fell at his feet. 'Lord,' she said, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died!'

"Jesus saw her weeping, and he saw how the people with her were weeping also; his heart was touched, and he was deeply moved. 'Where have you buried him?' he asked them. . . .

"Deeply moved once more, Jesus went to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone placed at the entrance. 'Take the stone away!' Jesus ordered.

"Martha, the dead man's sister, an-

swered, 'There will be a bad smell, Lord. He has been buried four days!'

"Jesus said to her, 'Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believed?' They took the stone away. Jesus looked up and said, 'I thank you, Father, that you listen to me. I know that you always listen to me, but I say this for the sake of the people here, so that they will believe that you sent me.' After he had said this, he called out in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' He came out, his hands and feet wrapped in grave cloths, and with a cloth around his face. 'Untie him,' Jesus told them, 'and let him go.' "—John 11:7-44, "Today's English Version."

We indeed have every reason for confidence that the dead can be raised! For surely the One who originally started off human life—the One to whom Jesus appealed in prayer—is also wise and powerful enough to resurrect the dead. And bodies need not be kept in a state of frozen preservation. God can restore to life a person whose body was putrefying, as he did with Lazarus, or, if one's body has completely disintegrated, he can re-create an entirely new one and restore life to the person.

But consider: What was Lazarus' condition for the four days that he was dead and in the tomb? Others of dead mankind are in that same condition. So we can learn from Lazarus' experience.

A Conscious Existence or Not?

The Bible says nothing of Lazarus' experiencing conscious existence elsewhere during those four days. If he had been alive in heaven, surely he would have said something concerning the many marvelous heavenly things about which humans are interested to know. Yet he was completely silent on the matter. Then, too, if he really had been enjoying heavenly life, would it not have been an unkind thing for his friend Jesus suddenly to take him from there, and bring him back to life on earth again?

The reason why Lazarus reported nothing about his activities during those four days is that he did not know anything. He was unconscious. No part of him had survived and was living elsewhere. He was in Sheol, mankind's common grave, where "there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom." He was really dead, as the Bible explains: "*As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all.*" —Eccl. 9:5, 10.

How simple and clear the Bible teaching is! A person himself is a soul, so when he dies he is a "dead soul." (Num. 6:6) He is no longer alive; he is unconscious. But Almighty God can resurrect that person, yes, bring him back to life. The churches of Christendom have created great confusion by adopting the pagan immortality-of-the-soul teaching. Pointing up this confusion, *Theology Today*, a prominent Protestant religious journal, notes:

"If the soul is already blissfully in heaven (or is already justifiably roasting in hell), what need is there for anything further? What point could there possibly be to Christ's return or the renovation of the universe? This inner contradiction has remained to plague Christians throughout the centuries."

Similarly, Catholic priest Ray T. Bosler observes:

"What happens immediately after death before the final resurrection? . . . Our theologians disagree among themselves over just what the existence of the saints is like until the final resurrection. . . .

"Our liturgical prayers for funerals reflect some of this ambiguity. We rejoice that our dead already enjoy some of the life of the resurrection and yet we pray that they will be raised on the last day. All we can do is humbly admit that we know not what awaits us at the moment of death."

Yet, the answers are available from the Bible. There is no need for the confusion and uncertainty that is so prevalent in the churches. And consider the harm be-

ing done. Millions of persons, believing that death is a doorway to another life, are exposed to deception by wicked spirits who impersonate persons who have died. Around the earth many people live in fear of these supposed spirits of the dead.

The Bible teaching of the resurrection, on the other hand, can be a source of genuine hope, comfort and courage.

A Living Hope That Motivates

Suffering Job, who raised the question, "If an able-bodied man dies can he live again?" showed that he was comforted by the resurrection hope, for he said to God: "You will call, and I myself shall answer you." (Job 14:14, 15) Early Christians, too, were strengthened by this same hope. They were given courage to face hungry lions in Roman arenas, rather than break God's law by performing acts of worship to the emperor.

The resurrection hope has also been motivating Christians in modern times. For example, Christians in Nazi Germany chose to be executed rather than violate God's law by supporting Hitler's devilish war schemes. Consider such a person's final letter to his wife, and note the strength he drew from his hope of the resurrection:

"My Dear Erna,

"It is now my last night. My sentence has been read out to me and I have eaten my last meal. So when this letter reaches you my life will be fulfilled. We know that the sting has been removed from death and victory has been won over the grave. . . .

"And so I look once more into your serene and glistening eyes, and wipe away the last sorrow from your heart; and, in

spite of the pain, lift up your head and rejoice, not about death, but over the life that God will give those that love Him.

"Heartfelt greetings in love and true friendship, from your loving husband."

Similarly a 13-year-old German girl, who was suffering from dreaded leukemia, illustrated what a powerful force the resurrection hope was in her life. Of her, the chief physician observed: "In my whole practice I have never seen such a case, where a child was so happy after learning that it had to die." Why was this? In her letter read at her funeral she explained:

"My big hope is not to float around in heaven somewhere as a spirit.

No, but I am resting in the grave till after Armageddon, and if the great Life-Giver Jehovah considers me worthy he will give me a resurrection—in honest-to-goodness flesh and blood as a human on a cleansed paradise earth in delight and happiness. So you see that is why it wasn't hard for me to die. Can you understand that?"

Christians with this quality of faith are now meeting in "Living Hope" District Conventions in many places around the world. In the United States alone over 90 of these four-day conventions are being held from June through August. If at all possible, attend one of them. There you will learn more about the "hope of the everlasting life which God, who cannot lie, promised."—Titus 1:2.

You are invited also to contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally. For the address of their meeting place nearest to your home, please write the publishers of *Awake!* and we will be glad to send it to you. We are confident that you will enjoy discussing with them the resurrection hope held forth in the Bible.

**"MY SENTENCE HAS
BEEN READ OUT TO
ME AND I HAVE
EATEN MY LAST MEAL"**

LIFE IN THE KALAHARI

By "Awake!" correspondent in South Africa

"WHERE the water has dried up"—this is indeed a fitting name for a desert. And that is what some believe to be the meaning of the Tswana word *Kgalagadi*, or *Kalahari*.

"A lifeless waste" is the description that may readily come to mind when one thinks of a desert. But this does not fit the Kalahari, which covers a large area of the northern Cape Province of South Africa, the eastern part of South-West Africa and the central and western part of Botswana.

Some sections of this region are flat and sandy and covered with shrubby vegetation, large thorn trees and grass. Other parts, like the section inside South-West Africa, consist of miles of undulating dunes, with, roughly, the same kind of vegetation. Some of these dunes are over 100 feet (30 m) high. Unlike those of the Namib Desert on the west coast of South-West Africa, they are not pointed and irregular; they are long, rounded ridges comparable to gigantic waves. Flat stretches, known locally as "streets," separate the dunes by a distance of between some 100 and 300 paces or more.

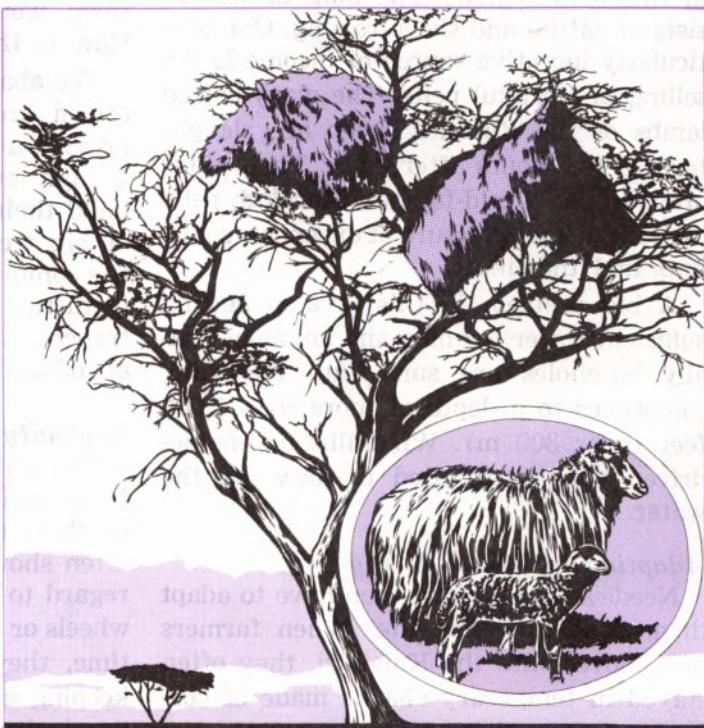
Driving through parts of the Kalahari, often over dry riverbeds, is like traveling through a game park. Apart from mice, gecko lizards and meerkats, or mongooses, that scurry across the path con-

tinually, one might suddenly chance upon a little furry bateared fox or a maned jackal, a cheetah or two, or even a small herd of hartebeests or some other antelope. At times a person may spot several ostriches. He

should not be surprised if one of these birds keeps up with a vehicle moving over 35 miles (56 km) an hour. Leopards and lions are also to be found in the Kalahari.

Witnessing in the Kalahari

For Jehovah's Witnesses in this area, the greatest joy comes from sharing Bible truth with others. People here are generally very hospitable and have a high regard for the Bible. So a visiting Witness may spend as much as an hour or two discussing the Scriptures with a person in his home. Even though the people



Abandoned nest serves as food for older Karakul ewes, who couldn't survive the daily walk to pasture grounds

may engage in a heated discussion with a Witness over some Bible subject, they will still invite him to share some food, if his visit is near mealtime. During the meal the conversation will be kept strictly on friendly generalities. Afterward, however, the previous argument will be taken up again with unabated fervor.

Getting to some of the farms is quite an undertaking. The homes are often 10 to 15 miles (16 to 24 km) apart, with the farms usually covering 19 or more square miles (50 square km) each. Traveling must be done over dunes where there are no real roads but simply the tracks left by other vehicles. A person may be able to visit only three or four farm homes in a day.

Farming in the Kalahari

Just what kind of farming is carried on in this arid region? The bulk of it consists of cattle- and sheep-raising. One particularly lucrative source of income is the selling of Karakul pelts. The wavy-haired lambs of the Karakul sheep are slaughtered a few hours after birth. Their skins provide the world-famous Karakul pelts used in the manufacture of expensive coats, hats and the like.

A big problem in this area is getting sufficient water for men and animals. Usually boreholes are sunk into the sand, sometimes to a depth of more than 1,000 feet (over 300 m). Windmills or engine-driven pumps are used to draw up the water.

Adapting to Desert Living

Needless to say, here men have to adapt themselves to desert life. When farmers first moved into the Kalahari, they often stayed in temporary shacks made of corrugated iron. These were unbearably hot during the day and uncomfortably cold at night. But the people seemed to get used

to living under these conditions. On many farms, however, large modern homes have been built. These appear somewhat out of place in their surroundings and lack few modern conveniences.

For domestic animals, life in the desert presents its problems. When goats return from their grazing, one may at times see them walking on their knees instead of on their front hoofs. Why? Well, since these animals never walk on hard ground, their hoofs are not kept worn down and so they grow too long for normal walking. The same condition also develops in cattle and sheep. Hence, farmers must clip the hoofs from time to time.

Older ewes often do not have the strength to survive a daily walk to the pasture grounds when the hot sun is beating down upon them. This means that they must be fed at home. Buying fodder for them would, of course, be very costly. How is this problem overcome?

The abandoned nests of a kind of weaverbird known as the "sociable weaver" provide a ready source of cut grass with a high nutritional content. These birds build their gigantic nests in the branches of big trees. Scores of the birds live in the communal nests at one time, constantly flitting in and out of the multiple entrances. Eventually, however, the nests are abandoned for other accommodations.

Ingenuity in the Use of Motor Vehicles

Being able to keep a car going can sometimes spell the difference between life and death in the sand. Yet, Kalahari dwellers often show an alarming indifference with regard to basic items such as jacks, spare wheels or patching equipment. At the same time, they display amazing ingenuity in keeping a motor vehicle going under unusual circumstances.

The first rule of driving in the sand is to keep the tires very much underinflated.

Although this is detrimental to the walls of the tires, it enables one to drive in virtually any kind of sand without sinking into it.

But what happens if a tire gets a puncture? Lifting the car with a normal jack would be virtually impossible, since it just pushes right into the sand. The obvious thing is always to carry a piece of plank to put underneath the jack. But when this is forgotten, the Kalahari farmer is not easily stumped. He may simply put a solid object, such as a steel toolbox, a stump of wood or a stone under the axle near the damaged wheel and then proceed to scoop out the sand from underneath the wheel. This enables him to remove the wheel, either to fix it or to replace it with a spare wheel. Next, he forces as much of the sand as possible underneath the wheel again and scoops out the sand underneath the solid object that held up the axle, thus putting the car back on its wheels.

But what if a person has neither a spare wheel nor patching equipment? After removing the inner tube in the normal way, one person will grab the punctured spot firmly between thumb and forefinger and then hold the rest of the tube in his other hand and stretch the punctured section away from it. This makes it possible for his companion to tie a piece of string or raw leather thong around the stretched section, pulling hard and winding and knotting it repeatedly. In this way the puncture will be bound off. The seemingly plausible solution of filling the flat tire with sand simply does not work.

When a vehicle develops starter trouble, Kalahari ingenuity is soon in evidence. It is quite impossible to push a truck in the sand to get it started. Faced with this problem, one man raised one of the car's rear wheels as he would in the case of a flat tire. Then he switched on the ignition and put the car in high gear. Now it was sim-

ply a matter of firmly gripping the outside of the free rear wheel and turning vigorously. Soon the engine started running.

"Reading" Spoor

An intriguing ability developed by these sand dwellers is that of "reading" tracks. One elderly farmer stopped to examine some animal spoor, or tracks, and then told his visitors that these were jackal tracks. Upon making closer examination, he declared that there were two animals, a male and a female, and that the female was soon going to give birth. The visitors laughed. But then the farmer reasoned with them, saying: "Look! One set of prints is large and the other small. It is reasonable to assume that a male and a female are running together." The visitors conceded that point. "But now," continued the farmer, "if you look again, you will notice that the smaller one sank deeper into the sand. This means that the smaller animal, obviously the female, is relatively heavier than the larger one, which will be the case with a female carrying pups." Sure enough! Three days after seeing this spoor, the farmer found the mother jackal with the newborn pups.

Hints for Survival

Kalahari farmers express amazement when they hear of people getting lost and then being found in their car in a state of collapse because of the intense heat and thirst. "Fancy nearly dying of thirst with the car's radiator full of water," they comment. Of course, one would have to be sure that there is no toxic anti-freeze in the water.

The best protection against the midday heat is right under the car, not inside it. But why not a shady tree, if there is one? Because under a Kalahari tree there is the danger of *tampans*, venomous little ticks that make things unbearable with their stinging bites.

A person should never walk very far during the heat of the day. It would be better to sleep during the day and walk in the evening and at night, choosing a bright star by which to fix one's course.

Memories

Few who have spent time in the Kalahari fail to look back on the experience with nostalgia. Never can one forget the sharp contrasts—the scorching days, the cold nights, and the vast stretches of grass-covered dunes, seemingly desolate, yet vibrant with an endless variety of life.

A person gets an incomparable feeling "Old beliefs have decayed and new beliefs have not sprung forward to replace them," said an editorial in the November 30, 1978, "The Wall Street Journal." It was reflecting on the mass suicides in Guyana. It continued:

"The decay of religion is unmistakable. The appeal of the cults expresses the profoundness of the human will to believe, the longing for the certainty of faith. The last place anyone would look today to fill this longing is any of the mainstream religious denominations. They have little time for faith, being preoccupied with such issues as how to govern South Africa. Even the Roman Catholic Church, with its millenniums of experience in sorting evil and good in the religious impulse, is losing its power to touch the soul."

Some look to science for hope, but the editorial did not. "Yet it is not only religious belief that has declined; so has the powerful secular faith that sprang from the Enlightenment. The power of reason, the power of science, the belief in progress—all are coming under increasing doubt. And in the secular world as in the religious one, it is often the established priests who lead the trend.

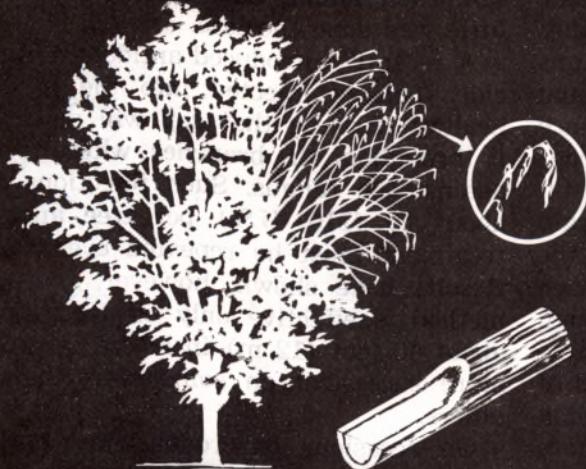
"The scientists who invented the atomic bomb also started a magazine with a doomsday clock on the cover of every issue—a stunning testimony to their own guilt and a stunning symbol of their own doubt that science is good. Today one can feel the scientific world tremble at the accumulating evidence for a 'big bang' origin of the universe. It raises the question of what came before, and the scientists' most fundamental faith is shaken by being brought face to face with their inability to answer ultimate questions."

of peace as the heat subsides when the sun dips below the horizon. The sunsets are simply magnificent, with constantly changing hues of red, orange and purple. Meanwhile, the penetrating "clack-clack-clack" call of a gecko lizard receives a thousand replies from other geckos calling back and forth. The air is filled with their sound. Rounding out the symphony are the bleating of sheep, the lowing of cattle and the raucous cry of the korhaan flying up and down in a display of bird aerobatics.

Truly, life in the Kalahari has its challenges and rewards. This desert is no dead wasteland. It is a realm of fascinating life.

Faith-Quake

SCOURGE OF THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE



By "Awake!" correspondent in Great Britain

TWENTY thousand elm trees are dying every day in Britain. It is estimated that 11 million have died since 1968, all casualties of a scourge known as Dutch elm disease.

Although called "Dutch," the disease did not originate in Holland. Rather, it is so named because much of the early research into the disease was undertaken in that country. It is generally thought that Dutch elm disease reached North America from Central Europe, and the present epidemic probably was introduced into Britain in diseased timber from North America in 1968. But before discussing the disease, let us take a brief look at the elm itself.

Of the six basic species of elms growing in the British Isles, the English elm, also known as the common, or field, elm, and the wych, or broad-leaved, elm, have long predominated. The common elm has a thick rough trunk on which are many gnarled bosses or knobs, and the bark of the tree is very rugged and covered with

deep furrows. It is an easily recognizable tree, being clothed right down to the ground with a dense mass of brushwood. The wych elm has no brushwood at the base of the trunk, and its leaves are larger and broader. Being less rugged, the wych elm is the more graceful of the two types.

Elm wood is still valued as timber, the rough bosses that grow on the trunk of the common elm being prized by cabinet-makers who find the wood curiously veined and streaked. Today, though, it is used mainly

for pallets, chipboard, pit props and coffins. The most important feature of the English elm, however, has been its unique contribution to the landscape. It stands either in rows or individually, and is one of Britain's tallest trees.

What Is Dutch Elm Disease?

Dutch elm disease is a fungus disease transmitted by a beetle, *Scolytus destructor*, which feeds on healthy trees for a week or so before it starts to breed. During this period fungus spores are rubbed off the body of the beetle and enter the wood vessels of the healthy tree. A reaction from the fungus gradually weakens the elm and it dies from loss of foliage and from poisons. When an elm has thoroughly weakened, the beetle enters the bark of its main trunk. There the insect breeds, the young beetles emerging the following spring to start the cycle all over again.

Typical external symptoms of Dutch elm disease are yellowing and browning of

once bright green leaves. Sometimes vigorous new shoots bend over, indicating that they are dying. Peeling back the bark of a twig will reveal the outermost wood vessels stained with long dark streaks. Such symptoms can be recognized readily by the layman. But there are two strains of this tree malady, one aggressive and the other nonaggressive. The difference cannot easily be determined. The nonaggressive strain does not usually kill infected trees, but the aggressive strain spreads twice as fast and kills elms by the million. During the 10 years it has been in Britain, this disease has swept through the country, decimating all but the Cornish and Huntingdon elms. By the end of 1977, 11 million of the country's 23 million elms had died. In at least one county, more than 90 percent of the elm trees are already dead, which amounts to 50 percent of all the trees in that county.

In London there are many beautiful parks where old and particularly fine elms have grown, and these have suffered severely. In Regents Park during 1977 alone, approximately 100 of the remaining 500 or so elms had to be cut down. As in other parts of the country, attempts have been made to inject affected trees. But it appears that these measures have been ineffective in the face of this virulent disease.

Counteracting the Disease

Until recently the only long-term remedy for Dutch elm disease was to replace dead elms with new resistant varieties. Short-term measures were aimed at preserving as many of the existing elms as possible, the primary means of control being 'sanitation felling.' For sanitation felling to work, trees must be cut down as soon as they are infected, and the bark must be burned. A tree that dies should be felled by the following spring, before the beetle can breed and spread the fun-

gus. In the majority of cases, this will not happen, which means that by the following spring a further 1,000,000 elm trees probably will be infected. Unfortunately, sanitation felling has failed because too little was done too late.

A recently introduced antidote is fungicide. This is injected into the base of healthy trees so that sap will distribute it throughout the branches, where it acts against the fungus. Such injections cost about £5 (\$10, U.S.) per tree and the treatment must be repeated every year. Results have shown, however, that this method is effective only on trees up to about 40 feet (12 m) in height; and it is more successful on some elms than on others.

On occasion, elm roots join together, enabling the fungus to spread underground from tree to tree. It is possible for a tree to be isolated by means of a chemical barrier established by pouring a soil sterilant into one-inch (2.5 cm) holes, drilled two feet (0.6 m) deep and six inches (15 cm) apart between trees. This treatment will last for several years, but it is very expensive, costing at least £12 (\$24, U.S.) per tree. It is practical only in the case of valuable elms.

Efforts to Replant

Today there is a growing awareness that trees are an essential part of the whole ecological balance of life. Will the elms be replaced? And if so, how? In many areas there are schemes for public rather than private planting, but with quick-growing species like limes, not elms. In an area where more than 170,000 new trees were planted by 1975, none of them were elms. So far, the response to the elm tragedy has been as effective as trying to stem a forest fire with a garden hose.

In spite of government grants, there is a natural reluctance on the part of farmers and landowners to plant new trees.

Why? Because present laws require that of every four trees planted, three, in effect, must go to the government in the form of taxes. Hence, at least 90 percent of planned replanting schemes were canceled in 1975.

The grounds of the Watch Tower Society's branch office in London have also felt the effects of tree maladies. Up to 30 trees on these grounds have had to be cut down, including many elms. Gales, too, have taken their toll. Recently, however, a vigorous replanting program has been undertaken. In addition to over 100 conifers forming part of a perimeter fence, more than 200 trees have been planted throughout the grounds. These include silver birch, sycamore, eucalyptus, rowan

(mountain ash) and maple. But filling gaps in the landscape is a very slow process.

In recent months ecologists have been heartened at noticing elm suckers springing up from some of the old root systems around the countryside. Perhaps they will eventually grow and help to restore the balance. But at present it is too early to be sure of their ability to mature.

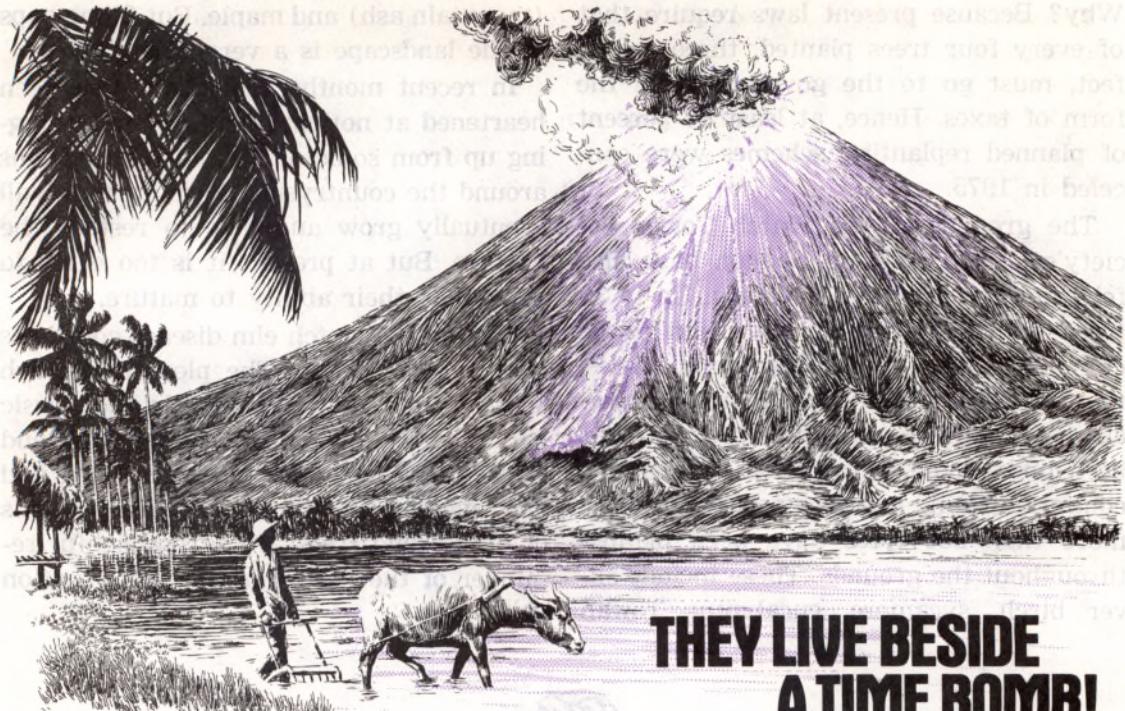
Meanwhile, Dutch elm disease continues its rampant course. The pleasant British countryside, vividly recalled in the classic paintings of Constable, Gainsborough and Turner, has been tragically scourged and destroyed by this disease. The bare boughs of once-proud trees are a reproachful reminder of the failure of any conservation policy.



When to Be Sick, When to Be Well

New Jersey teachers have an absentee rate three or four times as high as workers in private industry. Annually, it forces the public schools to spend millions of dollars extra to hire substitutes. It limits student achievement. It causes students to copy the teachers in truancy. Newark spent 4 million dollars on substitutes in one year; Jersey City spent 1.5 million. All of this according to a survey by the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company. Strangely, or not so strangely, "most teacher absences occur on Mondays, Fridays, the days before and after holidays and the first warm days of spring. . . . There were two days each month when absenteeism was nil: paydays."

Stung by this evidence that indicates sick days are often play days, an irate person from Syracuse University responded in the "Letters" section of the magazine that published the results of the survey. The letter explained: "Absence may be a coping mechanism. 'Illness' in the many nonspecific forms it can take is an individual's way of reacting to an abrasive environment. Sickness and absenteeism must be viewed as withdrawal phenomena, not dereliction of duty." Another letter writer could not cope with this explanation and offered a remedy: "There is a very simple solution to the high cost of absent teachers. Pay them only for days they work!"



By "Awake!" correspondent in the Philippines

THEY LIVE BESIDE A TIME BOMB!

WOULD you like to live beside a time bomb? One that might explode at any time with tremendous destructive fury? "Not a very pleasant prospect," you say? Yet, that is the situation of thousands living in the towns and barrios (small villages) around majestic Mayon Volcano in the Bicol region of the Philippines.

Almost all the time, 8,000-foot- (2,400 m) high Mayon stands serene and peaceful above the fertile green plains of Albay in the southern section of Luzon island. The perfectly shaped mountain, with a completely regular cone, dominates the scenery for miles around and is to many the very symbol of the Bicol countryside. But at times this time bomb explodes. Over the years, thousands of lives have been claimed by the fiery mountain when the serenity of the countryside has been blasted by molten lava, red-hot ashes and huge, searing boulders, hurled by unimaginable

force into the defenseless bamboo dwellings below.

Hence, many long-time residents of the area have a volcano story to tell. And another chapter was added this year. Numerous lives were temporarily disrupted as the time bomb seemed to start ticking once again.

Past Eruptions

Mayon has erupted violently many times, often causing loss of life. Its most destructive eruption occurred in February 1814, when 1,200 perished in the towns of Cagsawa, Camalig and Budiao. In the area of Cagsawa, a reminder of that disaster is the top part of an old, Spanish-style church. The rest of the building was buried under a hail of boulders and ash, along with the unfortunate parishioners who had run into it, hoping to escape the fury of the eruption.

The last eruption occurred in 1968. Since Mayon has developed the reputation of erupting every 10 years, many were apprehensive about what the year 1978 would bring. In May, their question was answered! On May 3, the gigantic mountain seemed to 'clear its throat,' ready for an awakening. During a 24-hour period, 12 tremors were sensed by the ever-alert observation stations around the volcano. Trickles of lava were observed on the southwest side, while tumbling and crushing sounds were heard. White steam and blue gas were issuing from the summit.

On the Alert

Immediately, the area swung into an "alert" situation. About a three-and-a-half-mile (6-km) danger zone around the summit was declared to be off limits, and threatened barrios were mobilized for prompt evacuation. The possible danger to life was very real.

As the condition of the volcano became more threatening, the administration did what it could to prevent a tragedy. Through the media, people were told of the most likely health problems to be expected due to a possible evacuation and the activity of the volcano itself. They were warned of fractures, burns, shock and respiratory ailments, as well as diarrhea and other intestinal disturbances. People heard about the dangers of hot blasts of air from the lava flows, rolling molten rocks, fissures caused by earthquakes and changes in the courses of streams. Individuals having respiratory problems were warned about possible ash showers.

As the area girded itself, the mountain slowly intensified its activity. By May 8, the lava had crept down to the middle portion of the southwestern slopes. On the southern side, volcanic debris was piling up about 2,300 feet (700 m) below the

rim of the crater. This brought with it the fear of a mud slide in the event of heavy rains. Some people were voluntarily evacuating their homes and moving into temporary government shelters. Residents of certain areas reported that they could feel the hot air from the lava.

Time to Evacuate!

On May 9, evacuation was ordered for many residents of the southwestern slope—the area most directly threatened by the lava flow. By then, the volcano's activity was fully reported on in the newspapers. Soon, tourists were flocking into the provincial capital of Legaspi, nine miles (14 km) from the volcano. Seeing the glowing lava, the steam and the smoke, and hearing the rumbling of the huge mountain, were unforgettable experiences. One eyewitness said: "Seen against the dark shadow of the crater at night, the glowing red lava inching down the slopes appears like a giant comet in the sky." Another commented: "It was as if rivers of gold had started to flow down from a huge fountain, carrying in its stream ruby chips which sparkled every now and then."

As May progressed, the restless volcano continued to disrupt the lives of the local residents. By May 11, lava was observed on the southeastern slopes. People there were warned of the danger of mud slides and hot rainwater. By the 12th of May, 7,500 people reportedly had been evacuated. For the first time, fire was spewed out of the summit of the mountain, and 42 volcanic quakes were reported during that 24-hour period. There was speculation that the big bang was very near.

Old-Timers Watch the Wild Pigs

However, some were not so concerned. Certain old-time residents noted that the wild pigs and other animals had not yet

abandoned their homes in the woods on Mayon's slopes. Hence, these persons concluded that there was as yet no immediate danger of a major eruption. One old-timer reportedly was unwilling to leave his home. Why? Well, he remembered that in 1968 he had been able to smell the sulphur fumes of the erupting volcano. He felt that there would be no real danger until he could smell those fumes again.

Meanwhile, the mountain's activity continued. By May 15, big explosions and strong tremors were discernible some 15 miles (24 km) away. Ash clouds were ejected 2,500 feet (760 m) above the summit. Lava had flowed down to the forested area and some trees were being set on fire. Soon heavy ash was forcing more people to leave their homes. One family complained that they could not eat their food because of the ash falling on it. The number of refugees was increasing.

Ash-laden clouds were now rising 5,000 feet (1,500 m) into the air. Reportedly, rocks as big as houses were being ejected 600 feet (183 m) above the crater rim. Streams of flaming, red-hot lava kept moving down the sides of the mountain. Meanwhile, 22 evacuation centers were caring for more than 20,000 evacuees.

What Next?

Then, suddenly, it all started dying down. Although the underground rumblings continued for a while, and there were a few brief spasms, it was noticed that there was less lava movement and not as much ash. Slowly, as May drew to a close, the huge mountain ended its spectacular display. By early June, apart from a few dribbles of lava, Mayon Volcano was once more a picture of beauty, towering serenely over the green and fertile plains of Albay.

One little girl's life will be permanently affected by the eruption. Her name, Mayona, will be a constant reminder that she was born during the brief awakening of the mountain. Meanwhile, over 20,000 rural folk were able to leave the evacuation centers. Their lives had been completely disrupted for a few weeks. They had left their houses, wondering if they would ever see them again.

Now, these dwellers beside the volcano are back home, leading normal lives. But perhaps they are keeping a wary eye on their gigantic neighbor, wondering when it will again bring fear and disruption into their lives.

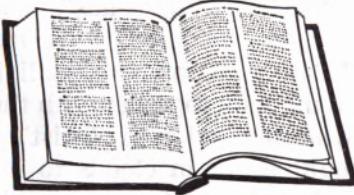
That is what it is like to live beside a towering time bomb!



"Cautious as Serpents"

Jesus Christ once told his followers that they should be "cautious as serpents" when doing their preaching work among hostile people. (Matt. 10:16) Are snakes cautious creatures? They are among the most cautious of all. In fact, a recent volume, Grzimek's "Animal Life Encyclopedia," states: "There is no snake which preys on man. Any snake will flee from him, if it has time; only when one approaches so closely that the snake is threatened is it likely to defend itself by biting, using its poison fangs as well. Many venomous snakes even refuse to use this weapon; for example, banded kraits—at least in the daytime—and many species of sea snake, at all times, are extremely reluctant to bite, and adopt this defense only when severely annoyed."—Vol. 6, p. 31.

The Bible's View



THE famous American poet of the last century, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, wrote: "There is no death! What seems so is transition."

Is this view correct? Or do people who die remain unconscious until God may choose to bring them back to life in a resurrection? What do you believe?

Many are confused about the matter. One such person wrote the evangelist Billy Graham: "After death [do] people have to remain in their graves until the resurrection? I thought that our souls go to be with God at death."

Graham replied: "At death, the soul and body are separated. The body disintegrates, while the unbelieving soul is held in captivity in hell or Hades." Of righteous believers, Graham said: "In their cases, the death of the body means the immediate release of the soul to be with Christ."

This is the commonly held religious view. Yet it raises the question: If at death a person immediately is united with Christ in heaven—or, if wicked, is immediately sent to hell—what further need is there of a resurrection? This contradiction is one that Church theologians have long wrestled with, but without resolution.

Transition or Resurrection —Which?

Yet when the plain statements of God's Word are accepted any confusion disappears. The Bible explains that at death human thought and existence end. "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man," the Bible says, "he goes back to his ground; *in that day his thoughts do perish.*" (Ps. 146:3, 4) Yes, "as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing at all.*" "In death there is no mention of you"—Almighty God.—Eccl. 9:5; Ps. 6:5; 115:17.

When Jesus Christ died, he could no longer mention his heavenly Father, praising Him. Jesus was dead, he was unconscious, out of existence. Death did not mean a transition to another life for Jesus; rather, nonexistence. But on the third day of his death God restored him to life. "This Jesus God resurrected," the apostle Peter said.—Acts 2:32.

Jesus died as a human of flesh and blood, having a physical body like ours. But he was resurrected by God as a spirit person, with a body invisible to human eyes. The apostle Peter explains: "Even Christ died once for all time concerning sins . . . he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit." The Bible observes: "If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual one."—1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Cor. 15:44.

Jehovah God, Christ Jesus and the angels all have spirit bodies, and those who go to heaven receive similar spirit bodies. How big the bodies of spirit persons are—whether God, for example, has a much bigger body than Christ or the angels—or what their bodies look like, we do not know. The apostle John did not know, as he explained: "As yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he [God] is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is."—1 John 3:2.

When near to dying the apostle Paul was confident that he would receive the reward of heav-

only life. "I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith," he wrote. "There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me as a reward *in that day.*"—2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

"*That day*"—the day when Paul would receive the reward of heavenly life—was a day then far in the future; it was not the day of Paul's death. Death was not a transition for Paul to life with Christ in heaven. No, death meant for him unconsciousness, an end of existence. But Paul explained what would happen to him and faithful Christians like him at a future date: "The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and *those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first.*"—1 Thess. 4:16.

Yet someone may ask: 'Doesn't the Bible indicate that at death there is an instantaneous change—"in the twinkling of an eye"? And doesn't this show that at death there is a *transition immediately* to another life?'

Let us examine this matter. The apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians: "Look! I tell you a sacred secret: We shall not all fall asleep in death, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, during the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised."—1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

Note that this quick change to spirit life, of which Paul here speaks, occurs "*during the last trumpet.*" In his letter to the Thessalonians quoted above, the sounding of "God's trumpet" is shown to occur when the Lord "descends," that is, turns his attention toward earth to resurrect his beloved followers. At that time, "*those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first.*"—1 Thess. 4:16.

But what about anointed Christians who are yet alive on earth when "God's trumpet" sounds and Christ "descends" to resurrect those dead in union with him? "Afterward," Paul explains, "we the living who are surviving will, together with them [Christians who died prior to Christ's return], be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord."—1 Thess. 4:17.

Thus such Christians who are resurrected "in the twinkling of an eye, during the last trumpet," are those who die *after* Christ "descends." At that time—after Christ resurrects those who are dead in union with him—there is no need for heaven-bound Christians who *thereafter* die to sleep in death. So at their death these ones are changed immediately, "in the twinkling of an eye," to join those already resurrected into heaven. They die as humans, but receive a resurrection in a spirit body.

It should be noted, however, that not all Christians will join Christ in heavenly glory. Only a limited number will. The Bible explains that those who go to heaven to be with Christ have "part in the first resurrection," and they "will rule as kings with him." The Bible reveals that only 144,000 persons are so resurrected to heavenly life to "rule as kings over the earth." (Rev. 20:6; 5:10; 14:1-3) What, then, about the rest of humankind that eventually gain God's favor?

These will, in time, enjoy everlasting life on earth, just as God originally purposed for humankind when he placed the first human pair in a paradise earthly home. They will be earthly subjects of God's kingdom. The Bible promises: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." How grand it will be when all of God's marvelous purposes are eventually realized!—Ps. 37:29; Rev. 21:3, 4.

Watching



the

World

Teachers Vote for the Rod

◆ Teachers in England have voted overwhelmingly to keep "the rod of discipline" in school. Corporal punishment is definitely needed, said delegates at the annual conference of the National Union of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers. The union's London delegate said: "We don't enjoy corporal punishment, but it is necessary to maintain discipline." And a magistrate and head of a Birmingham secondary school said: "It is acceptable to use corporal punishment when there is thieving, vandalism, violence and fighting. There are good reasons for a sharp reminder. The knowledge that the sanction is there is often sufficient deterrent."

A Heart-Attack Preventive?

◆ Some studies, reported on in medical journals, have indicated that the daily use of aspirin by heart-attack victims can reduce the chance of a recurrence. Now a report by Dr. Ruth Pick, published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, hints that a small daily dose of aspirin may prevent the initial onset of the problem. Monkeys were fed a high cholesterol diet and five received a child's dosage of aspirin each day. Six months later an examination revealed that the coronary arteries of

monkeys not given aspirin were twice as narrow as those put on the aspirin diet. The report said that aspirin prevents blood platelets from building up. How much aspirin prevents blood platelets from building up? Dr. Pick plans further research to determine the matter of dosage, since platelets become slippery only with the correct dosage. Further, overdosage may result in upset stomach or stomach bleeding. "It would be nice to be able to prevent heart attacks and strokes by taking an aspirin a day from childhood," said the research scientist. "But we are not there yet."

TV Imitators Injure Playmates

◆ The Yugoslav national television has a series dealing with a skilled medieval archer. Children, playing with bow and arrow and imitating the folk hero, are causing many injuries. In one Belgrade hospital alone, there were more than 20 children suffering with eye injuries from arrows shot by playmates.

Types of TV Violence

◆ A study in England about the effect of TV violence on young boys has now been completed. It confirms previous studies made in other countries that violence on TV does indeed incite young ones to violent acts. However, the

study revealed that certain types of violence on TV are not likely to stimulate youthful violence. Among such were slapstick violence, science-fiction violence and cartoon violence. But contrary to some previous findings, the study indicated that violence by even a "good guy" can incite violent acts among youths.

Camera Battery Danger

◆ The button-sized mercury batteries often used in cameras can pose a danger to children, warns the *British Medical Journal*. If children mistake such a battery for candy and swallow it, it can be fatal. Each battery contains about two grams of mercuric oxide, nearly twice the lethal dose for a child. The battery cases may deteriorate quickly in stomach acids. Five hours after a child swallowed one, the battery was found to be "bubbling vigorously," and surgery was performed immediately to remove the battery.

Cheating Costs More

◆ The Japan National Railways decided to crack down on people who cheat on train fares. The results were quite startling. "We were shocked to find among the cheaters schoolteachers, men with managerial posts at big enterprises and others—people usually not associated with cheating on train fares," said a railway official. A banker who cheated for two years on train fares was fined the highest ever in Japan for such an offense. He had to pay \$7,800 (U.S.), which was three times what he would have paid had he been honest. Another, attempting to save for a house, was fined \$6,300 (U.S.), which was more than twice what he had saved till then. Many cheaters were found to have been given a travel allowance by their employers, but they used such funds as pocket money.

Recreational Injuries

◆ According to preliminary data of the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, at least 446,878 Americans suffered bicycle injuries during 1978. As for sports, government experts estimated that baseball-related injuries came to 399,874 last year; football injuries were 394,827 and those from basketball, 349,760. Snow skiing resulted in 103,893 injuries.

Treasure Discoveries

◆ A Soviet-Afghan archaeological expedition recently came upon a treasure trove in northern Afghanistan. Excavating six royal burial sites, the team uncovered an amazing 20,000 pieces of gold jewelry. Gold seemed to be everywhere. The Soviet Novosti Press Agency reported that a dead king was found wrapped in two or three garments, adding: "The head of the buried king lay on a large gold platter with a small decorative gold tree. The jaw was tied with gold ribbons and the head capped with a gold crown." Besides the thousands of pieces of jewelry, there were gold cups and daggers. The gold objects were said to date from the first and second centuries and to show definite influence from several cultures: Roman, Greek, Indian and Chinese.

In England two treasure hunters went searching for "the odd coin" on a Roman site. Instead of an odd coin, they found enough coins to pay a year's wages for nearly 200 of Caesar's Roman legionnaires. The coins numbered some 56,000 and were third-century double denarius silver pieces. They were mainly in an earthenware pot that was 200 years older than the coins.

Waning German Birthrate

◆ Women in the Federal Republic of Germany are limiting their families to an average of only 1.4 children. If such a rate were to continue,

authorities say that the population would decline from the current 57.2 million to 49 million by the end of this century. Financially distressed manufacturers of baby carriages and clothing blame the falling birthrate on birth-control pills, abortion and "the growing feminist selfishness." Many polls have been taken as to why German women are not having more children. The answers? They vary considerably, but one basic theme came through: "The future does not look all that good."

Noise Pollution

◆ The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reports that the Western world is getting noisier. Noise pollution is at its worst, said the 22-nation research panel, in the United States. The organization explained that if Americans slept with their windows open, 13 percent of all of them would be awakened by airplanes. Elsewhere in the Western world, the figure was 2 percent.

Should Cancer Patients Know?

◆ The *Journal of the American Medical Association* recently reported on a survey among physicians regarding the question, Should patients be told when they have cancer? Twenty years ago, 90 percent of the doctors did not think so; today, 97 percent think that the patients should know the truth.

New Therapy for Cancer Pain

◆ Japanese researchers report a new way of relieving pain in cancer patients: instilling alcohol into the pituitary gland. A needle is used to puncture the area around the pituitary gland. Reported Dr. Fumikazu Takeda of Osaka Medical College: "The pain relief was so excellent that the procedure became the first choice of treatment for cancer pain in our hospitals." Among 25 of 30 patients so treated,

complete pain relief continued for a long time.

Lead Excess

◆ To determine the human body's natural level of lead, California researchers recently analyzed the bones of Peruvian Indians who died 1,600 years ago. Their findings, however, underscore the effect of industrial pollution on modern-day man. Reporting in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the researchers said that Americans today have 500 times the human body's natural level of lead.

More than Gambling Fever

◆ Many have heard that gambling is bad for one's moral health, but fewer persons may be aware of its physical health dangers. Word in from Reno, Nevada, tells of a number of such dangers. One of the most serious is termed "Jackpot Attack." This occurs when a gambler gets so excited about winning that he keels over in a heart attack or a faint. Even a faint could be serious because of the possibility of striking one's head on the way down. Other ailments related to gambling were given names such as Slot Machine Elbow, Blackjack Blackout and Keno Coma.

Churches in Moscow

◆ When the Bolshevik revolution took place in 1917, there were 657 churches in Moscow. Today? Soviet officials state that there are only 100 to 150 standing, and, of these, only 46 are ever used for worship.

Wild Weddings

◆ Egypt's interior ministry has ruled that friends and relatives attending a wedding must leave their guns at the door. Why? Agence France-Presse news service claims that in the past three years, guests firing wild celebratory bursts from their small arms have slain 769 fellow guests and wounded 3,087.

Illegitimacy in Sweden

◆ Sweden's Central Bureau of Statistics recently disclosed that every ninth couple in the country are unmarried and every third child is born out of wedlock. The report indicates that cohabiting of the unmarried in Sweden became common in the early 1960's.

Crime in São Paulo

◆ Last year crime in São Paulo increased by 25.3 percent. Published averages were: one robbery or mugging every half hour; six people murdered every day; three reported rapes every 24 hours. Crime against property rose from 50.16 in 1977 to 55.35 a day. São Paulo has an estimated population of 12,089,000.

Expensive Cities

◆ Coming as no surprise to many persons was the fact that the United Nations Monthly Bulletin of Statistics lists Tokyo as the world's most expensive city. Using New York as a base of 100 and relating the cost of living of other cities to that, Tokyo was indexed at a whopping 199. Other expensive cities were: Geneva (163), Brussels (150), Bonn (148), Copenhagen (146), The Hague and Buenos Aires both indexed at 143. Among the least expensive places were Kingston (61), Belize (63), Lima (72), Warsaw (73) and Cairo (75).

Impaired Digestive System

◆ Liver damage is not the only danger from heavy drink-

ing, reports Hagop S. Mekhjian, professor of medicine at Ohio State University. He warns that the heavy drinker is likely to develop nutritional deficiencies. He says that six or seven drinks a day can cause the small intestine to flush food from the body before it is used. This deprives the body of needed minerals and vitamins. After about two weeks of such heavy drinking, the "intestine will go into a secretory state where it will pour out fluids, resulting in a loss of minerals and vitamins." The professor says the condition can be partially corrected by supplementing the diet with folic acid, but that "all of these abnormalities are reversible when a person stops drinking."

