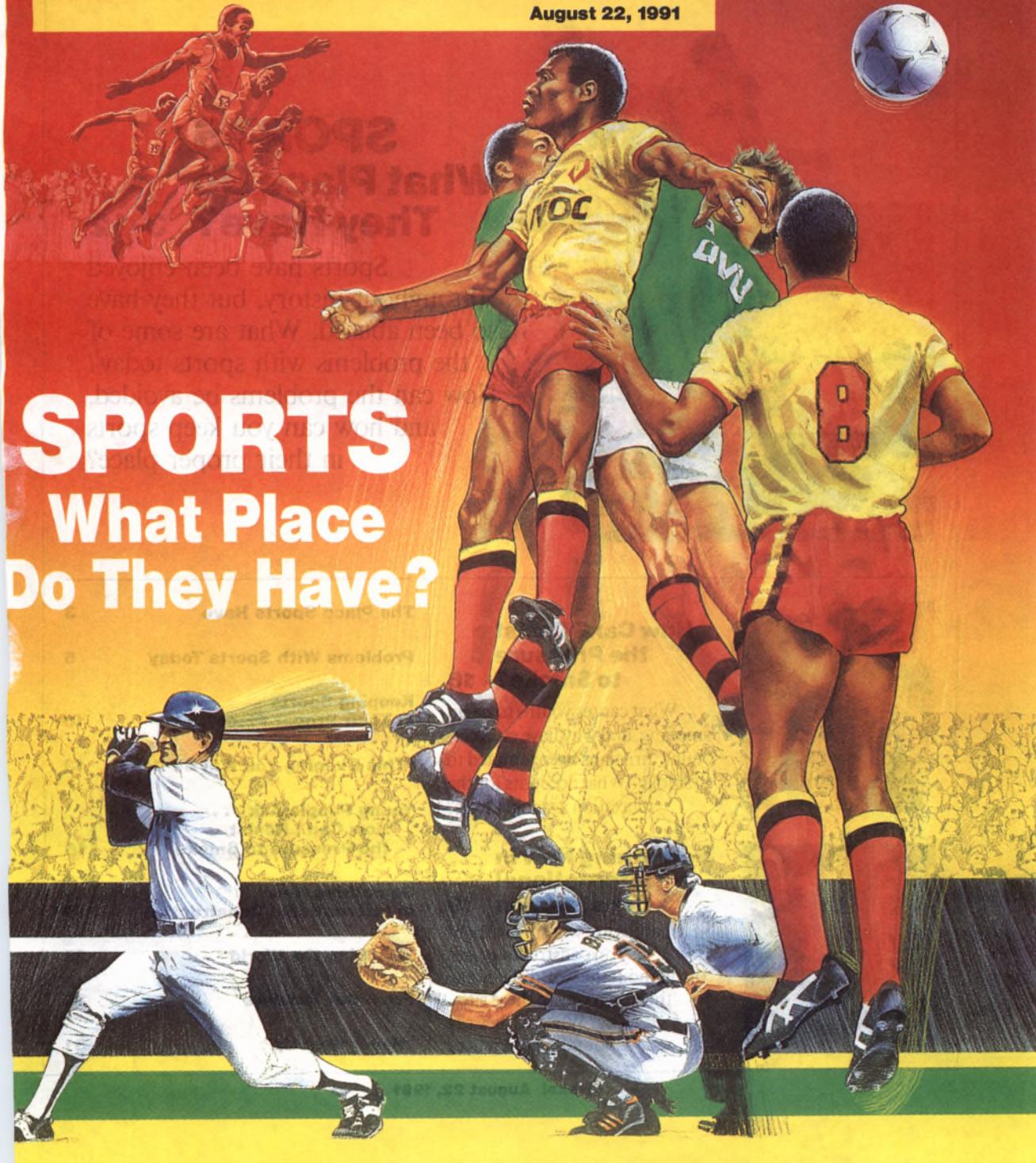


# Awake!

August 22, 1991





## **SPORTS** **What Place Do** **They Have? 3-12**

Sports have been enjoyed throughout history, but they have also been abused. What are some of the problems with sports today? How can the problems be avoided, and how can you keep sports in their proper place?



### **How Can I Resist the Pressure to Smoke? 16**

What causes youths to begin smoking, and why have even certain Christians been tempted to smoke? What accounts for the relaxation a smoker feels?



### **Something New in International Construction 19**

Hundreds are working without pay on construction sites throughout the world. They pay their own way to these sites. Why? What do they say about the experience?

<b>The Place Sports Have</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Problems With Sports Today</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Keeping Sports in Their Proper Place</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>"This Evening You Will Be Dead"</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Young People Ask . . . How Can I Resist the Pressure to Smoke?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Something New in International Construction</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Watching the World</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>From Our Readers</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>"Never Give Up"</b>	<b>31</b>

# The Place Sports Have



THE Grand Creator is described in the Bible as "the happy God," and he wants his creatures to be happy. (1 Timothy 1:11) So it should not be surprising that he created humans with the capacity to enjoy play. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* thus reports: "The history of sports and games is a part of the history of man."

The appearance of the ball is said to have been the most significant factor in the history of games. "The observation that animals enjoy gambols with playthings," says the above-quoted encyclopedia, "suggests that there may never have been a time . . . when a ball substitute was not chased or thrown."

Interestingly, some instrument has also long been used to bat the ball. "Certainly there were stick games played by the Persians, Greeks, and American Indians," the *Britannica* notes. "Polo, a word of Tibetan origin, was apparently well known in some form to the Persians at the time of Darius I (reigned 522-486 BC). Golf, though claimed by Scotland in its modern form, had respectable antecedents in Roman times and in many European countries."

## Early Emphasis on Games

Hundreds of years before the writing of the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament") was completed, organized sports were popular. For example, games were held every four years at ancient Olympia, Greece. The *Britannica* reports: "There are records of the champions at Olympia from 776 BC to AD 217," or for nearly a thousand years! The Olympic Games were so important in Greek life that

time was measured by them, each four-year time segment between the games being called an Olympiad. Thus, according to that early method of counting time, Jesus Christ was born during the 194th Olympiad.

The Hebrew Scriptures do not say anything about organized games, although one of the prophets speaks about "the public squares of [Jerusalem being] filled with boys and girls playing." (Zechariah 8:5) Over a hundred years before Jesus' birth, Greek athletic contests were introduced into Israel. A gymnasium was set up in Jerusalem, and even some priests neglected their duties in order to engage in the games.—2 Maccabees 4:12-15.

Augustus Caesar, Roman emperor when Jesus was born, had a love for athletics, and games became popular in Rome. However, the events that really interested the Roman citizenry were those that involved fighting, such as boxing and wrestling. These "sports" often deteriorated into violent, bloodletting contests in which men were pitted against one another or against animals in fights to the death.

## Sports in the "New Testament"

Yet, such terrible abuses of sports did not mean that playing them was wrong. Never do we read in the Scriptures of Jesus or his followers condemning games or the playing of them. Rather, the apostles often used features of them to illustrate points of teaching.

For example, the apostle Paul evidently had in mind the footraces featured in the Olympic Games when he encouraged Christians: "Do you not know that the runners in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a

way that you may attain it.” He added: “Every man taking part in a contest exercises self-control in all things. Now they, of course, do it that they may get a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one.”—1 Corinthians 9:24, 25.

On another occasion, Paul said that a Christian should run with determination to win the prize of life. “I am pursuing down toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God,” he wrote. (Philippians 3:14) Further, when illustrating the need to adhere to the rules of a moral life, Paul reminded Timothy: “If anyone contends even in the games, he is not crowned unless he has contended according to the rules.” (2 Timothy 2:5) And the apostle Peter wrote that Christian shepherds who fulfill their responsibilities “will receive the unfadable crown of glory.”—1 Peter 5:4.

No doubt young Timothy would have been involved in shepherding young Christians who enjoyed sports. Therefore, Paul wrote him that “bodily training [as a gymnast] is beneficial for a little,” thus acknowledging that the gymnastic exercises practiced rigorously by the Greeks were of some benefit. “But,” Paul quickly added, “godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come.”—1 Timothy 4:8; see *The*



*Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures.*

### A Proper Place for Exercise

So the Scriptures indicate that bodily exercise can have a proper place in life. Yet, there is a need for

balance, for reasonableness. “Let your reasonableness become known to all men,” Paul wrote. (Philippians 4:5) How difficult, though, to find this balance!

The early Greeks overemphasized games, and the Romans featured types that harmed the participants as well as those who took pleasure in the gory spectacles. On the other hand, some in the name of religion have repressed and even prohibited games. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* observed: “The puritanical attitudes of the 17th century reduced the amount of fun in Europe and America.”

Sports have recently experienced a resurgence perhaps never equaled in history. “Next to the weather,” says *The World Book Encyclopedia*, “people probably talk more about sports than about any other topic.” Sports have even been called “the opiate of the masses.”

What are some of the problems that such fervor for sports has created? Are you or your family suffering any adverse effects as a result? How can you keep sports in their proper place?

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*Awake!* (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589. Vol. 72, No. 16 Printed in U.S.A.

# Problems With Sports Today



PEOPLE used to argue that sports were of value because they built character. They claimed that games promoted appreciation for hard work, sportsmanship, and the joy of playing. But to many today, such arguments sound hollow, even hypocritical.

The emphasis on winning is particularly a problem. *Seventeen* magazine calls this "a darker side of sports." Why? Because, to quote the magazine, "winning overrides concerns about honesty, schoolwork, health, happiness, and most other important aspects of life. Winning becomes everything."

The experience of Kathy Ormsby, a U.S. collegiate track star, was used to illustrate the sad consequences of overemphasis on athletic achievement. On June 4, 1986, a few weeks after setting a national collegiate women's record in the 10,000-meter footrace, Kathy veered off the track while competing in the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) championships, ran to a nearby bridge, and jumped off in an attempted suicide. She survived, but she was paralyzed from the waist down.

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Scott Pengelly, a psychologist who treats athletes, noted that Kathy is not unique. After Kathy's suicide attempt, Pengelly reported: "I got phone calls that said, 'I think this is about me.'" Another athlete, Mary Wazeter of Georgetown University, who set a national age-group record for a half-marathon, also attempted suicide by jumping from a bridge and was paralyzed for life.

The pressure to win, to live up to expectations, can be tremendous, and the consequences of failure devastating. Donnie Moore, a star pitcher for the California Angels, had been within one strike of putting his team into baseball's 1986 World Series. But the Boston batter hit a home run, and Boston went on to win the game and the American League championship. Donnie, who according to his friends had been obsessed by his failure, shot and killed himself.

## Extreme Competitiveness

A related problem with sports today is the extreme competitiveness. It is not an exaggeration to say that competitors may be transformed, in effect, into monsters. When he was boxing's heavyweight champion, Larry

## Average Printing: 12,980,000 Published in 64 Languages

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Holmes said that he had to change when he entered the ring. "I have to leave the goodness out," he explained, "and bring all the bad in, like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Athletes develop an obsessive compulsiveness in an effort to prevent others with equal talent from beating them.

"You must have that fire in you," a former football coach once said, "and there is nothing that stokes that fire like hate." Even former U.S. president Ronald Reagan reportedly once told a college football team: "You can feel a clean hatred for your opponent. It is a clean hatred since it's only symbolic in a jersey." But is it really good to work up hatred for an opponent?

Bob Cousy, a former all-star basketball player for the Boston Celtics, once told about his assignment to guard Dick Barnett, a high-scoring player for the Los Angeles Lakers. "I sat in my room from morning to night," Cousy said. "All I did was think about Barnett, partly going over the way to play him and partly working up a hate for him. By the time I got on the court, I was so fired up that if Barnett had said 'hello' I probably would have kicked him in the teeth."

The fact is, players often deliberately try to incapacitate opponents, and they are rewarded for doing so. Ira Berkow, a newspaper sports-writer, said that a football player who is able to knock an opposing player out of the game is "hugged and squeezed [by teammates] for a job well done. If he has delivered enough of those damaging blows, . . . he is rewarded at season's end with either increased salary or, for fringe players, further employment. Thus do players proudly wear badges in the form of nicknames, like Mean Joe Greene, Jack (the Assassin) Tatum," and so forth.—*The New York Times*, December 12, 1989.

Fred Heron, a defensive tackle for the St. Louis football team, related: "The coaches

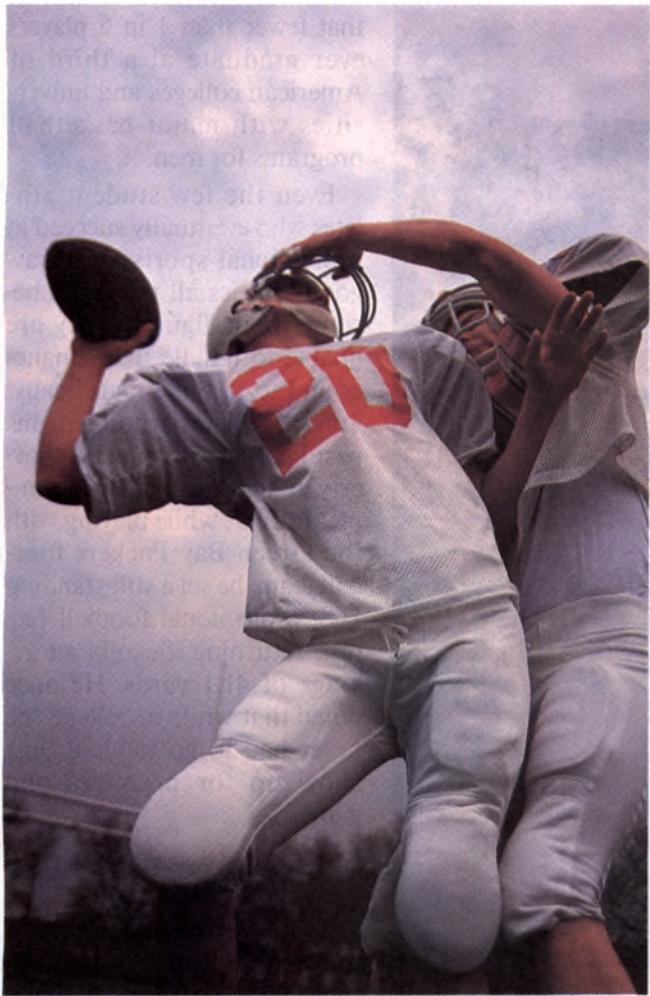
told us that [the Cleveland Browns'] quarterback had a bad neck. They suggested that, if I got a chance, I should try to put him out of the game. So during the game I broke through the line, beat the center and guard, and there he stood. I tried to tear his head off with my arm, and he fumbled the ball. My teammates were praising me. But I watched the quarterback on the ground in obvious pain. I suddenly thought to myself, 'Have I turned into some kind of animal? This is a game, but I'm trying to maim somebody.'" Yet, Heron noted: "The crowd was giving me an ovation."

Injuries resulting from extreme competitiveness are lamented by many as being a major problem with sports today. Sadly, millions of these injuries involve children who are introduced early in life to highly competitive play. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, every year four million children are treated in emergency rooms for sports injuries and an estimated eight million more are treated by family physicians.

Many children now suffer overuse injuries, which were rarely seen in earlier years. When children played just for fun, they went home when they were hurt and didn't play again until the soreness or aching stopped. But in highly competitive, organized sports, children often keep on playing, damaging already sore or aching body parts. According to former star baseball pitcher Robin Roberts, adults are the main cause of the problem. "They're putting too much pressure—psychological and physical—on the kids long before they're ready for it."

### **Money and Cheating**

Another problem with sports is that money has become an overriding concern. Greed rather than sportsmanship and fair play seem now to dominate sports. "The innocence of sports, sorry to report, completely vanished during the 1980s," laments *The Denver Post*



#### **Players are often incapacitated**

columnist Jay Mariotti. "They swagger into the '90s as a monster force in our culture, an incredibly mammoth, multi-trillion-zillion-dollar industry (actually, \$63.1 billion [thousand million], 22nd-largest in America) that sometimes is better described as a racket."

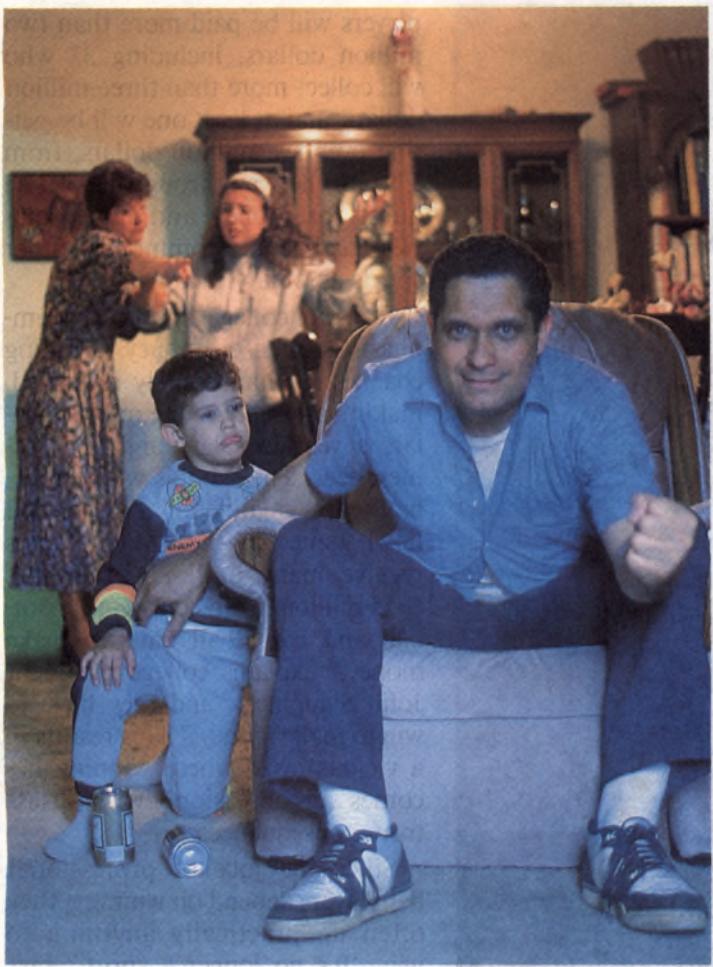
Last year 162 major league baseball players in the United States—more than 1 in 5 of them—made over one million dollars, with something over three million dollars being the peak salary. Now, a year later, over 120

players will be paid more than two million dollars, including 32 who will collect more than three million dollars, and at least one will be getting over five million dollars, from 1992 all the way through 1995! The quest for money and huge salaries has become common in other sports as well.

Even in college sports, the emphasis is often on money. Winning coaches are handsomely rewarded, making as much as one million dollars a year in salary and endorsement fees. The schools whose football teams qualify for the year-end bowl games in the United States receive many millions of dollars—55 million in a recent year. "Football and basketball have to make money," explains college president John Slaughter, "and they have to win to make money." This results in a vicious cycle where winning becomes an obsession—with disastrous consequences.

Since the jobs of professional ballplayers depend on winning, they often do practically anything to win. "It's no longer a sport," says former baseball star Rusty Staub. "It's a vicious, physical business." Cheating is pervasive. "If you ain't cheating, you ain't trying," explains baseball outfielder Chili Davis. "You do what you can if you can get away with it," New York Mets' infielder Howard Johnson says.

Thus moral fiber is undermined, and this is a big problem in college sports as well. "Some coaches and athletic directors cheat," admits Harold L. Enarson, former president of Ohio State University, "while presidents and trustees look the other way." In a recent year, 21 universities in the United States were



#### **Watching sports on TV can cause family dissension**

penalized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association for infractions, and 28 other universities were under investigation.

No wonder the values of young players are ruined, which is another major problem with sports today. Drug use to enhance athletic performance is common, but getting an education often is not. A major study confirms that players on campuses with major athletic programs spend more time on playing their sport during the season than they do studying and attending class. A federal study also found

that fewer than 1 in 5 players ever graduate at a third of American colleges and universities with major basketball programs for men.

Even the few student athletes who eventually succeed in professional sports and draw good salaries all too often become tragic figures. They are unable to handle their finances and to face life realistically. Travis Williams who died this past February in homeless poverty at age 45 is but one example. In 1967, while playing with the Green Bay Packers football team, he set a still-standing U.S. professional football record, returning kickoffs an average of 41.1 yards. He once noted that while in college "he never had to go to class. Just show up for practices and games."

#### **Spectator-Related Problems**

Today people spend much more time watching sports than they do playing them, and significant problems have

resulted. For one thing, going to games often involves being exposed to obscene and even violent behavior by other spectators. Fights are common in the emotionally charged atmosphere of some sporting events, and hundreds have been injured and some killed while in attendance.

But today most spectators are not physically present at sporting events; they watch them on television. In the United States, a 24-hour sports channel devotes more time to daily sportscasts than any of the major net-

works devote to daily newscasts! But is watching sports in the privacy of one's home problem-free?

Far from it. "For years my husband has known every professional sport individual," explains one woman, "and he is not at all an isolated case. Few are his friends who do not watch sports on a regular basis. The biggest crime involving this activity," this woman says, "is the influence it has on the children." She adds: "I resent that my husband uses his personal time to watch sports without consideration for me or the children."

An isolated complaint? Not at all. In households throughout much of the world, there are family members who spend too much time watching sports to the neglect of other members of the household. A Brazilian housewife points to a dangerous consequence: "The love and trust between a husband and wife can gradually be undermined, putting the marriage in danger."

Sports enthusiasts often are unbalanced in other ways as well. They commonly idolize players, which some players themselves see as a problem. "When I entered my own hometown, people stood there and gazed up at me as if they were expecting blessings from the Pope," German tennis star Boris Becker noted. "When I looked into the eyes of my fans . . . I thought I was looking at monsters. Their eyes were fixed and had no life in them."

No question about it, sports can be a magnetic force that creates excitement and strong loyalties. People are fascinated not only by players' teamwork and feats of skill but also by the uncertainty of a game's outcome. They want to know who will win. Moreover, sports offer a diversion for millions from what may be to them a humdrum life.

Yet, can sports bring people happiness? Are there real benefits they can provide? And how can you avoid the problems associated with them?

## The Religion of Sports

Canadian Tom Sinclair-Faulkner has argued that ice "hockey is more than a game in Canada: it functions as a religion for many." This is typical of the attitude displayed by many sports enthusiasts, no matter where they live.

For example, sports in the United States have been labeled "a positive secular religion." Sports psychologist David Cox noted that "there are a lot of connections between sports and the dictionary definition of religion." Some "people treat athletes as if they were gods or saints," added Mr. Cox.

Sports fanatics make great sacrifices, devoting time and money to their sport, often at the expense of their families. Fans will devote countless hours to watching sports events on television. They will proudly don their team

colors and publicly display sports emblems. They will sing songs with gusto and bellow chants that identify them as devotees of their sport.

Many athletes even pray for God's blessing before a game and kneel down for a prayer of thanksgiving after scoring a goal. In the 1986 World Cup game, one Argentine soccer star attributed his goal to the hand of God. And like some religionists, sports fanatics have even been labeled "dogmatic fundamentalists." This fanaticism has led to bloody, sometimes fatal, fights among rival fans.

Similar to false religion, the "secular religion" of sports provides "saints," traditions, relics, and rituals for its avid followers but gives no real or lasting meaning to their lives.



# Keeping Sports in Their Proper Place



WHEN people play their favorite sports, they feel exhilarated as their bodies respond and perform feats of skill or endurance. God created us to enjoy physical activity. Perhaps even more people derive pleasure from watching others play. So sports are much like many things that are good when kept in their proper place.

To illustrate: When people go to the beach to enjoy the sun, what happens if they get too much? They suffer a painful sunburn that spoils the good time and even poses serious risks. It is similar with sports. A little is good, but overexposure can be harmful.

Sports can be excellent relaxation and fun, yet they should not be an end in themselves. They do not bring true contentment or lasting happiness. Unfortunately it sometimes takes a

tragedy for a person to realize this. "All my trophies and my medals, it just doesn't matter," explained Mary Wazeter, the female athlete who jumped from a bridge and was paralyzed.

"I have learned many truths about life," she reported. "One is that true contentment is not attained in the ways that so many people strive for perfection and achievement. Contentment for me didn't come from having been a straight-A student, a state-championship runner or the possessor of an attractive figure."

Putting matters rather harshly into focus, sociologist John Whitworth noted: "At the end of the game, all you have is a list of statistics. It all seems rather rootless. However, I suppose that fits with our society." The undue importance attached to sports today throws everything out of perspective.

After his victory in the 200-meter sprint in the 1964 Olympics, Henry Carr explained: "As I rode back to the Olympic Villages, I took my first real look at the gold medal. . . . I actually asked myself: 'What in the world! For all these years I have been working hard, and to receive this? I was mad, when I should have been happy. It was a real letdown.' Marlon Starling felt similarly after winning the World Boxing Association welterweight championship in 1987. "The title," he noted, "doesn't match my kid saying, 'I love you, Dad.'"

So a vital lesson can be learned: Productive work, family, and especially worship of God should properly take priority. The Bible is correct when it says: "Bodily training [which sports provide] is beneficial *for a little*." (1 Timothy 4:8) That indicates the proper place for sports in our lives. It should be a secondary one. Since sports can be so fascinating, a person must be ever vigilant that more important things are not neglected.

Wisely, therefore, be sensitive if family members complain that you devote too much time talking about, watching, or playing sports. One woman, whose husband made adjustments in his attention to sports, gratefully noted: "He now spends more time with the children and me. Sometimes our family watches a game on television, but most evenings we walk together and talk about the events of the day. This is very pleasant and helps to keep us happy."

In view of the potential problems, why not honestly face the question: Could I be devoting more time and attention to sports than I should? Yet, there are other aspects to this matter of keeping sports in a proper place.

### **What About Competition?**

For games to be beneficial rather than harmful, a proper attitude toward competition is important. "Coaches, gym teachers, parents, and the kids themselves have become

so intent on winning that they forget what sports [for young people] are all about," lamented a physician for a professional hockey team. The purpose of sports, he said, should be "to develop teamwork and discipline, to build physical fitness, and, most important of all, to have fun."

Sadly, however, the emphasis on winning has ruined the fun for many. Sports psychologist Bruce Ogilvie noted: "I once interviewed the rookies [first-year players] in 10 major league baseball camps and 87 per cent of them said they wished they'd never played Little League baseball because it took the joy out of what had been a fun game." A related problem is that extreme competitiveness contributes to a high number of injuries.

The Bible provides guidelines, saying: "Let us not become egotistical, *stirring up competition* with one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5:26) According to Greek-English lexicons, the Greek word here rendered "stirring up competition" means "to call forth," "*to challenge* to a combat or contest with one." Thus *An American Translation* has the rendering: "Let us not in our vanity challenge one another." And the footnote of the *New World Translation* offers the alternative: "Forcing one another to a showdown."

Clearly, then, stirring up competition is not wise. It does not create good relations. If you are forced to a showdown and defeated, and the victor boasts of the outcome, the experience can be humiliating. An intensely competitive attitude is unloving. (Matthew 22:39) At the same time, if the competition is kept on a friendly, good-natured level, it can contribute to the interest and enjoyment of a game.

Some may want to look for ways to play sports in such a way as to minimize the element of competition. "I'm a firm believer in sport for sport's sake up to the age of 13 or 14," one English soccer coach said. He

recommended not keeping records of results or of the standing of the teams—"no ladders, no finals." Yes, the emphasis on winning should properly be minimized or eliminated entirely.

### Attitude Toward Athletes

Keeping sports in their proper place will also involve our attitude toward talented, well-known athletes. Understandably, we might admire their athletic abilities and amazing feats. But should they be idolized? Youths are often seen to display posters of such athletes in their rooms. Do the achievements of such persons really make them worthy of honor? Perhaps just the opposite is the case.

A new player on a National Football League championship team at first looked with admiration to a lot of his teammates. But their conduct and attitude, he said, "just completely blew all feelings and the respect that I had for them." He explained: "For example, they would say: 'Hey, I made it with five girls last week, not including my wife.' And I looked at the person and thought to myself: 'So this is the guy I idolized.'"

Really, it is improper to idolize any human, and especially would this be true of those who excel in activity that the Bible says has *little* or *limited* benefit. God's servants are urged to "flee from idolatry."—1 Corinthians 10:14.

### How Sports Are Beneficial

As we have noted, the Bible says that physical training, such as that realized in sports, "is beneficial for a little." (1 Timothy 4:8) In what ways is this so? How might you benefit from sports?

The second-century Greek physician Galen, personal physician to Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius, stressed the importance of exercise for general health. And he recom-

mended ball games, since these exercise the whole body in a natural way. Ball games are also usually fun to play, so a person will be more likely to play these games he enjoys than to engage in other forms of exercise.

Many find that the exercise derived from sports gives them a sense of well-being. After a stimulating workout or game, they feel rejuvenated and refreshed. Yet this should not be surprising, since, as Dr. Dorothy Harris says, "exercise is nature's best tranquilizer."

Physical exercise, such as that furnished by calisthenics, jogging, and games, is generally recognized today as being important to good health. "Physically fit people perform their usual tasks easily without tiring and still have energy for other interests," *The World Book Encyclopedia* notes. "They also may be able to resist the effects of aging better than those who are physically unfit."

Regardless, however, of how physically fit sports may assist a person to become, the benefit is limited. Aging and death cannot be thwarted by human efforts. Yet, after saying that "bodily training is beneficial for a little," the Bible states: "Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Timothy 4:8.

Only Jehovah God, our Creator, can give us life. Nothing, therefore, is more important than "godly devotion," that is, reverence, worship, and service to God. So those practicing godly devotion will have as their priority doing God's will. They will expend themselves in God's service, using their youth as Jesus Christ did, telling others of the good things about God and his Kingdom.

Yes, by putting God's interests first, humans can win his favor and attain life forever in his righteous new world. There the happy God, Jehovah, will give them true and lasting happiness and contentment.

# "This Evening You Will Be DEAD"

By Awake! correspondent in South Africa

**A**RE you aware that you are dying and that by this evening you will be dead?" the doctor asked.

Weak from loss of blood, 15-year-old Wyndham Cook replied that even if it meant losing his life, he was determined to obey the Bible command to 'abstain from blood.'—Acts 15:20.

"Would you put a gun to your head and shoot yourself?" countered the doctor.

"I would not," explained Wyndham. "But refusing a blood transfusion is not committing suicide. It is simply obedience to God's command." Wyndham has varicose veins in the esophagus, which at times leads to internal bleeding. To make matters worse, Wyndham is a partial hemophiliac.

## A Crisis Looms

Understandably, Wyndham's parents were worried when, on Tuesday, November 28, 1989, he started to bleed again after seven trouble-free years. Wyndham was immediately taken to the hospital. After undergoing an endoscopy (internal viewing of the esophagus), his hemoglobin count dropped to 6.6 grams per deciliter. (A normal hemoglobin count is from 14 to 15 grams per deciliter.) That night everyone was uneasy as Wyndham slept off and on.

By midday Wednesday his blood count had dropped to 4.3 grams, and he was still bleeding. This initiated the first of several discussions with the hospital staff as to why Wyndham could not have a blood transfusion. Wyndham's father, Chris, explains: "We reasoned at length on the Scriptures. We made it clear also that we were not rejecting their medical help, or life itself. In a crisis such as this, we desperately needed their medical expertise. We were only rejecting blood as therapy."

At 2:00 p.m. an inflatable tube was to be inserted down Wyndham's throat, which could be pumped up to put pressure on the swollen veins and thus restrict bleeding. The tube also extends into the stomach to draw up any blood that has collected there from internal bleeding. At this point, when Wyndham's parents were not present, a nurse said to him: "Just a few units of blood and your life could be saved. Your parents and minister need never know."

"Jesus took blood with his 12 apostles," argued the doctor. "Christ said, 'This is my blood . . . drink it.' You call yourself a Christian and you want to follow Christ's example, so why not take a blood transfusion?"

Wyndham explained that when the apostles drank from the cup Jesus offered, it was wine that was merely symbolic and was not Jesus' actual blood. Wyndham's uncompromising stand made such an impression that a note was put into his file to the effect that, at age 15, fully conscious and of sound mind, he had categorically refused a blood transfusion. This strong stand was to pay great dividends the next day.

As the sun rose on Thursday, Wyndham seemed to have stabilized somewhat. But the relief was short-lived. He began to bleed again. By 9:00 a.m. his blood count had dropped to 3.0. His situation was critical. The senior doctor in charge of the surgical section asked if

Wyndham's family would leave the room as he wanted to speak to Wyndham alone.

"It was not easy to leave him on his own," says his mother, Judy. "We were scared that in his weak condition his resistance would wear down. But he had been baptized six months earlier, and so he had a right to make his own defense."

"All we could do now," recalls his father, "was beseech Jehovah to help Wyndham maintain his integrity. We learned the real meaning of the word 'supplicate.'" Young Wyndham says that what helped him was remembering Revelation 2:10. "The words, 'Prove yourself faithful even to death, and I will give you the crown of life,' kept turning over and over in my mind," he said.

### A Court Order?

Finally the doctor said that he would apply for a court order to permit a blood transfusion. As Wyndham was a minor, everyone expected that the application would be granted. The prayers in Wyndham's behalf were intense. "Virtually the whole congregation lived through the ordeal with the Cooks," explained Neville, the congregation's presiding overseer. "When Wyndham improved, the whole congregation breathed a sigh of relief. When he deteriorated, all in the congregation held their breath and prayed for a happier outcome."

"During the time we were waiting for the result from the court," recalls Judy, "most of our body of elders arrived and were waiting in the patients' lounge. What a blessing they proved to be! With the bleeding continuing and a blood count of 2.9, Wyndham did not seem to stand a chance."

Within the hour, a reply came back stating that the court order to force a blood transfusion on Wyndham had been refused. "We were told," explains Chris, "that the reason for the refusal was that Wyndham was fully conscious and of sound mind. He was aware of the con-

sequences of his decision, and he had made a carefully considered decision consistent with his Bible-based beliefs."

### Facing Death

But Wyndham was not getting any better. In fact, at noon Thursday, Chris and Judy were informed: "Your son has just a few hours to live. If you want your minister and relatives to see him before he dies, you had better call them immediately." Wyndham's brother, 9-year-old Jonathan, was brought to see him.

At 1:30 p.m., the staff removed the tube down Wyndham's throat so that he could die with dignity. For the next few hours, Wyndham's life hovered in the balance. Although critical, his condition remained stable as a high fever raged through his body. He hung on throughout that night.

Then, over the weekend, he began to improve. On Monday it was decided to send him home, as there was nothing more that could be done for him in the hospital. Upon his arriving home, things took an ominous turn. Chris recalls: "We carried Wyndham into the house and tucked him into bed. Not 45 minutes later he woke up and began bleeding heavily again. We were devastated! We prayed to God that he would help us cope with the situation in the right way."

Within 30 minutes Wyndham was back in the same hospital, in the same room, with the same doctor attending him. His hemoglobin count had dropped to 2.5. By that evening Wyndham was put on oxygen, since he was finding it difficult to breathe. The struggle for life was still continuing the following day when a most encouraging visit took place. "Our district overseer, Sarel, and his wife, Maryann, came to see Wyndham," Judy explains. "Sarel stood by Wyndham's bed and, holding his hand, offered a heartfelt prayer to Jehovah. We felt strengthened after his visit."

Throughout the crisis the Christian congregation provided practical assistance. There



**Wyndham and his parents**

was a congregation roster of those who would supply food not only for the Cook family but also for the other Witnesses on shift with them. Youngsters cleaned the house, fed the dog, put lights on, and so forth. They did all the little things the family didn't have time to think about. Support and encouragement from fellow Christians at a time like this should never be underestimated.

The doctors decided again that, aside from giving blood, there was nothing more they could do for Wyndham. So, while still on oxygen and with a blood count of under 2, he was sent home.

### **Recovery**

The drug erythropoietin, a synthetic form of a hormone that stimulates the bone marrow to produce red blood cells at an accelerated rate, was recommended to build up Wyndham's blood count.\* This therapy is not registered in South Africa, but a waiver was signed and the drug was administered by the family doctor. Over a period of three weeks,

Wyndham's blood count rose to 6.2, and within six weeks it was 11.5. Two months later, Wyndham was strong enough to spend a month with his family engaging in public preaching as an auxiliary pioneer.

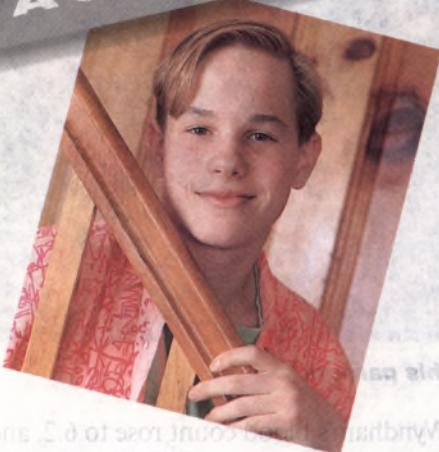
One of the fine results of Wyndham's close encounter with death was the effect that it had on other young ones in the congregation. Judy observes: "I think it came home to them that they could be called on to take a similar stand on short notice. They were at the hospital, involved with the whole ordeal, and I think the message got through to them, 'Are we taking the truth seriously?'"

Since this episode, Wyndham has successfully endured two other bleeding incidents. Wyndham realizes that he may suffer another setback at any time. But whatever happens in the future, Wyndham Cook keenly anticipates the time when Jehovah God will ultimately reward him with perfect health in the coming Paradise on earth. In the meantime, Wyndham is firmly resolved to keep on living in accord with Bible principles.\*

\* See the brochure *How Can Blood Save Your Life?*, page 15, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

\* As this magazine was going to press, Wyndham died after suffering another bleeding incident.

**Young  
People  
Ask . . .**



# How Can Resist the Pressure to Smoke?

**"It relaxes me, makes me happy and peaceful."**

**"It's kind of something to do."**

**"It makes you feel more secure."**

**"It's something to do with my hands."**

**T**HESE were the reasons some teenagers gave when asked why they smoke. (*Teens Speak Out*) Yes, in spite of all the warnings

about lung cancer, emphysema, and heart disease, smoking still has an irresistible appeal to many youths. Perhaps you have even been tempted to try it yourself.

The media bombard you with the images of attractive, well-dressed men and women who are always smoking. None of them look like cancer patients. Or you may feel under pressure from peers to give it a try. At school you may be harassed with dares, such as: 'Are you chicken?' 'Everyone who's cool smokes.' And if you are around youths who smoke, you may feel out of place if you do not have a cigarette in your hand.

Pressure to smoke may also come at home. If one parent abstains but your other parent chooses to smoke, this can be extremely confusing. And if *both* parents smoke, the pressure may be even greater. 'My parents smoke about two packs a day, so there are always cigarettes around,' says 14-year-old Rebecca. Being told by such parents that *you* shouldn't smoke may seem like the height of hypocrisy! Complains young Allison: "If we tell parents we care about their health, they don't listen. So how can they expect us to listen to them?" —*The Private Life of the American Teenager*.

Whatever their reasons, many youths decide to give smoking a try and often become addicts for life.\* Hopefully, you want something better for yourself. You know the sad consequences of smoking and see no reason to experience them firsthand. Still, you may wonder just how you can stand up to the powerful pressures to smoke.

## Social Awkwardness

Let's first look at some of the reasons youths give for smoking. Like the youths quoted at the outset, many argue that holding

\* Three fourths of the smokers in the United States began smoking before age 21. In one survey half of a group of teenage smokers had smoked their first cigarette before finishing elementary school.

a cigarette makes them look more poised and "adult." Young Oren believed this to be true in his case. Socially awkward to an extreme, he recalls: "I was very uncomfortable, especially at parties. I never knew how to act or what to say. Smoking seemed to be the answer to my problem."

However, sucking in and exhaling noxious fumes really only makes one look foolish, insecure, and inconsiderate. An increasing number of youths are beginning to see it this way. In a survey by Jane Rinzler, 63 percent of the girls and 73 percent of the boys polled disapproved of smoking! One 16-year-old girl said: "People think it makes them look cool [to smoke], but it really looks like they're trying too hard." Even if smoking *did* make one "look cool," would it justify taking up a destructive and addictive habit?

Interestingly, though, Maurice Falk, a professor of child psychiatry, notes: "Young people who know what to do in social situations feel less awkward. . . . [They] are less likely to smoke." This has proved true for many youths among Jehovah's Witnesses. They develop poise and confidence by speaking to people of all ages in the public preaching work. By taking advantage of the educational program offered at the Christian meetings at the Kingdom Hall, they also learn to speak in a skillful but modest way in front of an audience. This takes away any need for a social crutch.

If you feel unhappy about yourself or feel shy or awkward around people, then try associating closely with a congregation of true



***Instead of making one look mature,  
smoking can betray one's insecurities***

Christians. It's hard to remain shy for long when you are actively involved with others. You can also discuss your concerns with your parents. Remember, though, you gain the respect of others, not by dangling a cigarette from your lips, but by becoming, as the Bible urges: "An example . . . in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness."—1 Timothy 4:12.

**"It Relaxes Me"**

What about the claim some make that smoking is a pleasant experience? "Some smokers say they can't relax without a cigarette," says writer Alvin Rosenbaum, "that smoking relieves tension, anxiety, and anger." However, instead of being a relaxant, "nicotine is a stimulant," notes Rosenbaum.

What, then, accounts for the relaxation a smoker feels? Actually, what a smoker feels is the relief that comes from satisfying *an addiction!* Yes, people become addicted to the

nicotine in tobacco. This addiction is very much like heroin or cocaine addiction, and some say it is even harder to overcome.

When a smoker's body runs out of nicotine, it begins to crave it. He becomes nervous, tense, and irritable until he gets another nicotine "fix." Temporarily he feels relaxed—until his body craves nicotine again. Smoking is thus a foolish way of relaxing. Listening to soft music, reading, and taking leisurely walks are far safer ways.

### **Standing Up To Peer Pressure**

Fourteen-year-old George relates: "So many kids offer me cigarettes that I have to ignore them." Peer pressure appears to be the main reason most youths begin smoking. One survey of teenagers revealed that less than 1 percent of them smoked if none of their friends smoked, while 73 percent smoked if all of their friends did.\* If you are being pressured by your peers, you may ask: 'What would be so wrong about taking a puff just to get others off my back?'

Some youths raised in Christian homes have reasoned that it wouldn't be so wrong and have compromised their faith.\* A few have admitted to holding a cigarette in their hand or even putting one in their mouth—just so they could 'be like the others.' The Bible, however, says: "My son, if sinners try to seduce you, do not consent." (Proverbs 1:10) And to their credit, the majority of youths raised in Christian homes are heeding these words. Fourteen-year-old Maribel, for example, was offered a cigarette by associates, and she refused. "They began to withdraw

\* If you have secretly experimented with tobacco, please seek help by letting your parents know about your problem. (Proverbs 28:13) They may be upset to learn of your problem. But if they are Christians, after their initial upset wears off, they will focus on helping you avoid a repetition of error. The overseers of the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses can also be of much help and encouragement to you along these lines.—James 5:14, 15.

from me," she recalled, "and they made fun of me." She reminded herself, though, that 'it's better to have God's approval than the world's' and did not give in to pressure!

Really, what kind of friends would urge you to inhale a deadly substance? "He that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly," warns Proverbs 13:20. If necessary, find yourself some new friends. Why, just being around smokers is a health hazard! Says 15-year-old Brenda: "None of my friends smoke. So I don't have any problems with peer pressure."

It may not be possible, though, for you to avoid unchristian youths entirely. You may have to stand up for your convictions and unequivocally refuse to smoke! This does not necessarily mean giving them a sermon on the evils of tobacco. Writer Sharon Scott points out that often a simple "no thank you" suffices. When this fails, she recommends that you state your refusal in stronger terms, "I said NO!"

Other strategies are to leave the scene, ignore the offer, or simply change the subject. You might even try rehearsing in advance how you will resist the pressure to smoke. And if a detailed explanation is requested, you should be prepared to provide one. As the Bible says: 'Always be ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason.'—1 Peter 3:15.\*

The Bible education offered at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses has helped many to break free from smoking. Oren recalls: "The desire to talk to others about living forever in perfect health on a cleansed paradise earth gave me the incentive to quit." The wise course is never to get started in the first place!—Colossians 4:5.

\* For information on the dangers of smoking, see the August 8, 1991, issue of *Awake!*

# *Something New in* **INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION**

MANY marvel at such construction projects as the pyramids of Egypt and the Great Wall of China. Modern quarter-of-a-mile-high skyscrapers also are awe-inspiring. Yet, features of another building program are equally astonishing.

Volunteers are building dozens of huge projects worldwide. Most of these volunteers are from the countries where the buildings are being constructed. But since additional help is often needed, workers from other countries have spent millions of dollars of their own money to pay their way to the distant construction sites. Many of these volunteers sacrifice their vacations to work; others take a leave from their regular employment and thus forfeit considerable income.

This remarkable assistance effort is an international volunteer construction program that is coordinated from the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York. Since the start of this construction program in November 1985, over 3,000 persons have paid their own way to more than 30 work sites in North and South America, Australia, Africa, Europe, and various islands.

Presently, some 600 international volunteers are working in about 25 countries. Over 400 of them are on long-term assign-

ments of one year or more, and they are termed "International Servants." The rest are on short-term assignments of from two weeks to three months.

Why are all these workers volunteering their skills and labor free of charge? What do they consider of such importance that they would make these personal sacrifices?

### **To Fulfill Bible Prophecy**

The reason for the marvelous response to the international construction program is found in the answer to a question. Over 1,900 years ago, the apostles of Jesus Christ asked him: "What will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" After describing such things as widespread wars, food shortages, pestilences, and earthquakes, Jesus said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:3, 14.

The volunteer workers are convinced that now is the time that Jesus' prophecy is being fulfilled. So they are happy to do whatever they can to promote the Kingdom proclamation before the end of this system comes. This international construction program was instituted to coordinate efforts of such

persons to build facilities that print and distribute the Kingdom message.

### **Expansion of the Kingdom Work**

Last year 678,509,507 *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, which feature God's Kingdom as the only hope for mankind, were printed in facilities operated by Jehovah's Witnesses. That is well over two million magazines—like the one you are reading—coming off the presses every workday! In addition, each year tens of millions of Bibles, books, booklets, and brochures are printed and distributed.

The largest printeries are at the international headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, and upstate near Wallkill, New York. However, during the 1950's and 1960's many printeries were also built outside the United States. Thus, by 1970 *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were being produced in facilities operated by Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany, South Africa, Canada, England, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and France.

Then, in 1972 and 1973, the magazines also began to be produced in printeries of Jehovah's Witnesses in six more countries: Japan, Brazil, Australia, Ghana, Nigeria, and the Philippines. In the following years, as the Kingdom work grew, construction was started on new branch offices with even greater printing capabilities. To give an idea of the rapid expansion, consider that branch complexes with new printeries for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were dedicated on the following dates:

Greece, January 16, 1979; Sweden, December 23, 1980; Brazil, March 21, 1981; Canada, October 10, 1981; Italy, April 24, 1982; Republic of Korea, May 8, 1982; Japan, May 15, 1982; Australia, March 19, 1983; Denmark, May 21, 1983; Spain, October 9, 1983; the Netherlands, October 29, 1983; Germany,

April 21, 1984; India, January 20, 1985; and South Africa, March 21, 1987.

Furthermore, there were dedications of new branch offices or major additions to older ones in Côte d'Ivoire, February 27, 1982; Tahiti, April 15, 1983; England, October 2, 1983; Finland, May 5, 1984; Norway, May 19, 1984; Martinique, August 22, 1984; Peru, January 27, 1985; Mexico, April 13, 1985; Venezuela, April 21, 1985; and France, May 4, 1985.

Although some of the construction work on a few branches was done by salaried non-Witness professionals, Jehovah's Witnesses generally did most of it themselves. By the thousands they volunteered their services, even though many of them were unskilled in the construction trades.

As the Kingdom preaching of Jehovah's Witnesses continued to increase, enlarged facilities were needed. How could these be built with greater efficiency?

### **The New Program Fills a Need**

To organize and help with the phenomenal growth of this international construction work, the special volunteer program was conceived and developed. "During a construction project, particular trades are needed at particular times," one of the overseers of the program explained. "You don't need a roofer when the foundation is being poured. So the international worker office was established in Brooklyn, New York, to coordinate matters."

Thus, as requests for tradesmen come in, the Brooklyn office serves as a "matchmaker." It matches the needs of the construction projects around the world with the appropriate workers to fill those construction needs. For example, as new residence additions to the Mexico branch were nearing completion in 1988, a call was made to Brooklyn for skilled carpet layers. Within a few minutes, the office located four experienced ones who

were happy to volunteer. By the time the branch addition was dedicated in January 1989, the carpets were laid and looked beautiful.

### **Qualifying to Serve**

To share in the international volunteer program, a worker needs first to qualify. Each volunteer must be a dedicated, baptized Witness of Jehovah. In the United States, the prospective volunteer must first serve at one of the New York facilities of Jehovah's Witnesses. This provides an opportunity for his work habits and abilities to be evaluated. He may then be invited to submit an application for the program. Wives of prospective volunteers, although usually not invited to serve with their husbands in New York, can also qualify for the program and fill out an application.

Jehovah's Witnesses in other countries can apply to participate in the program by requesting an application from their home branch. This application is forwarded to the office at the Brooklyn headquarters that supervises the international servants and other international volunteer workers. The applicant is then notified when his work skills are needed.

### **Contribution of the Wives**

Although wives of construction workers usually are unskilled in the trades, many have been trained to tie reinforcing steel together with wire, to set and grout tile, as well as to sand and paint. Others care for necessary domestic chores. All of them thereby contribute in a fine way to the work at construction sites around the world.

One wife who joined her husband in working on the new branch construction in Puerto



**Tying reinforcing steel is a part of construction work**

Rico recently wrote the Brooklyn office: "We arrived January 1, 1991, for our one-month assignment. I worked with the crew that tied the reinforcing steel into mats. This was by far the hardest physical work I'd ever done. Basically, it consisted of bending over and tying steel rods together, using pliers and a spool of wire—all day!"

"The first few days my hard hat kept falling off, and I kept tying my oversize gloves into the mat. But eventually I got it together. Five or six Band-Aids kept my blisters in check. I learned to take measurements from prints, strike chalk lines, and lay out the steel for each mat. It was truly satisfying work. So much of what I normally do on a day-to-day basis needs to be done over and over again—cleaning, cooking, laundry, and so forth."

But those steel mats are going into walls that will stand as long as the branch stands. That thought is rewarding!"

### **Grateful for the Privilege to Work**

An overseer of this international construction work said: "It is the most remarkable thing you can imagine. People use their vacations to travel to distant work sites, *paying their own way*. There they may work harder and for longer hours than they have all year. And when they get home, they write to thank us for the privilege!"

For example, a recent letter says: "We are writing to thank you for the tremendous privilege we enjoyed working for three months on the branch in the Philippines. At the end of each workday, we were physically tired, as we expected, but very built up spiritually by our fine association. We enjoyed getting to know many of the other volunteers who were there, and we were so very impressed by the local Witnesses with whom we worked. Truly they have become beloved to us, an extension of our family."

A couple who went to Ecuador wrote: "We learned to live without junk food, to bathe in just a little water, and to shave and shower in cold water. We had no idea how much our thinking had been influenced by advertising. We gave the best we had at the work site, but we came away with much more than we gave. Our Ecuadoran brothers are poor materially, according to U.S. standards, but their spirituality and appreciation for the preaching work is outstanding. Words cannot really describe how we feel about this privilege."

### **Tilt-Up Construction**

A unique feature of the international construction work is the use of the tilt-up method. This method consists of on-site casting of large, steel-reinforced concrete wall panels. These may be up to three stories high and weigh as much as 20 tons. The panels are

formed either on the floor slab of the building or on a nearby casting slab.

Six or eight panels can be stacked on top of one another. When the panels are strong enough—usually after seven days—a crane is used to tilt them up into place. Panels are now being used for both exterior and interior walls, as well as in multistoried buildings. Hundreds of these panels, for example, were used in the 11-story branch home in the Philippines. The smooth precast concrete panels need only to be painted.

Not only is this method of construction timesaving but it makes effective use of less skilled workers. A trade publication, *Concrete*, said regarding the construction of the new factory of Jehovah's Witnesses in England: "Tilt-up construction was particularly appropriate to their needs because of the simplicity of this method of building . . . Savings in time and costs have always been the system's prime advantages."

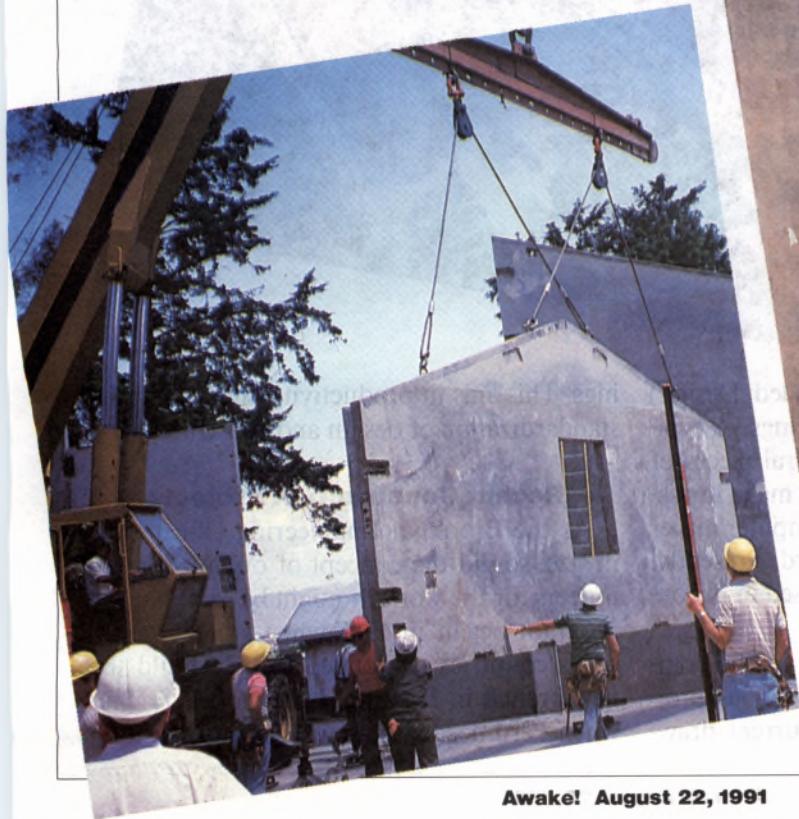
The magazine added regarding tilt-up construction: "Its ability to construct large areas of walling (load-bearing and otherwise) in a short period of time, allied to the use of local labour not needing an unusual amount of supervision, gives the method its speed and economy." How appropriate, therefore, that the new construction program should utilize this simple, efficient method of construction!

### **Engineering Offices**

Direction for this international construction program is provided from a large engineering office at the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York. There, well over a hundred engineers, construction designers, and draftspersons—members of the headquarters staff—work on the building plans. To help with the increased workload, regional engineering offices were recently established in Japan, Australia, and Europe.



**In tilt-up construction, concrete panels may be formed on top of one another. When the panels are strong enough, they are lifted into place**





**The new branch complex in Poland is reviewed in Brooklyn. Architectural drawings being prepared on a computer**



In 1987, CAD (Computer Aided Design) was introduced to prepare drawings. A typical CAD station consists of several pieces of equipment. Used together, these make it possible to prepare drawings on a computer rather than by hand on a drafting board. Presently, over 65 CAD stations are being used in Brooklyn and in the branches.

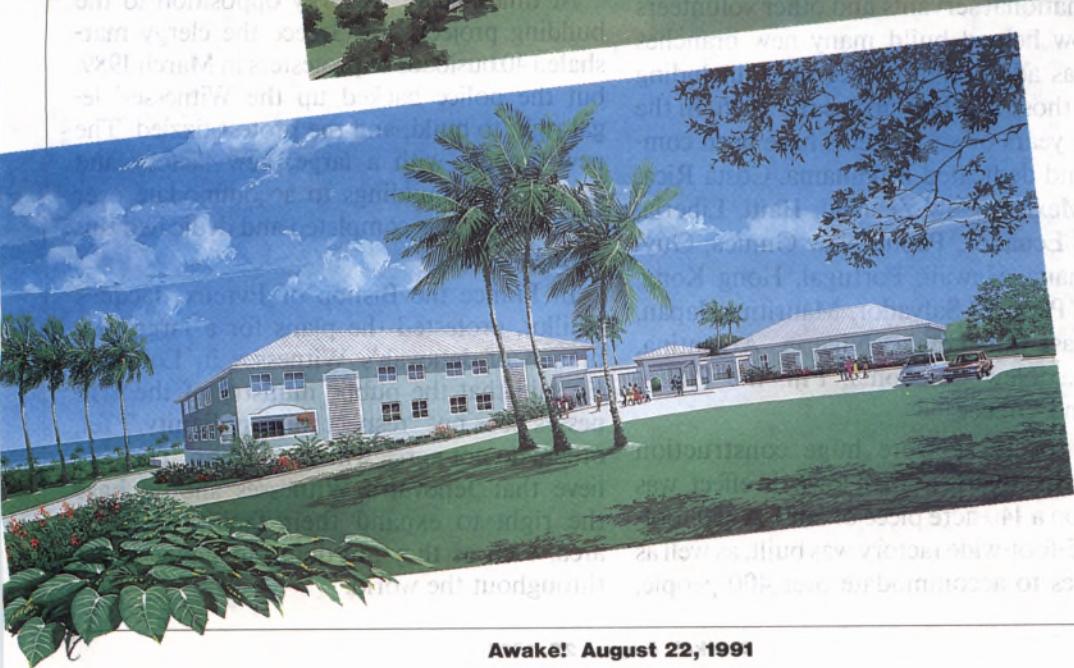
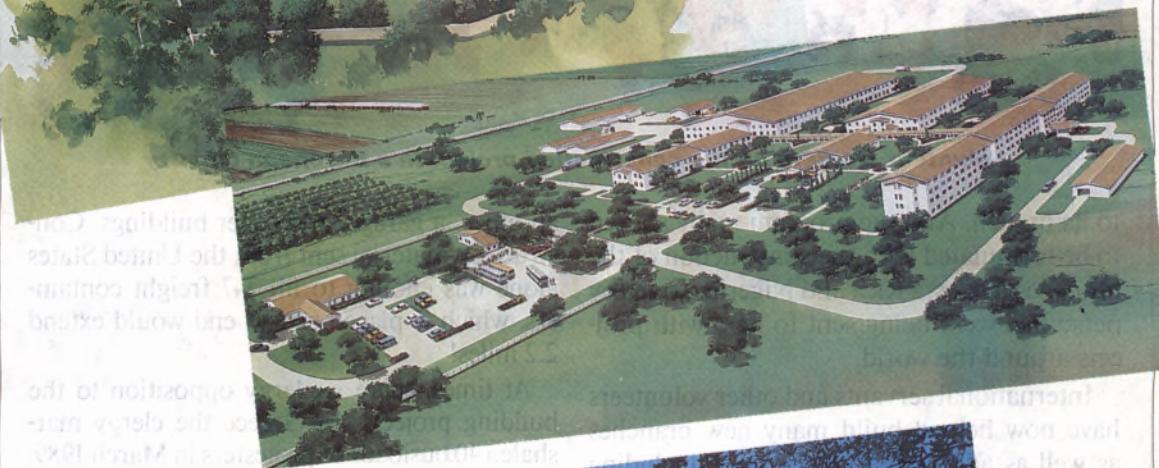
Since drawings can be stored in the computer's memory, designs from previous projects can be incorporated into current draw-

ings. This aids in productivity and also in the standardization of design and construction.

#### **Recent Construction Projects**

As the Brooklyn Engineering Office grew in size, so did the concept of organizing volunteers for the work. It might be said that the program began in 1985 when workers from other countries responded to help build the new branch in Panama. It developed further when Peru needed help with a huge addition

**Branch complexes as planned  
for Puerto Rico, Zambia, and  
the Leeward Islands**





**Volunteer workers on the construction project in a European country**

to its branch. And the program really started to be formulated with the construction of the branches in Costa Rica and Nigeria. Soon key personnel were being sent to help with projects around the world.

International servants and other volunteers have now helped build many new branches as well as additions to older ones, including most of those finished since early 1986. In the past five years or so, projects have been completed and dedicated in Panama, Costa Rica, Chile, Mexico, New Zealand, Haiti, Liberia, Austria, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea, Guyana, Ghana, Hawaii, Portugal, Hong Kong, Cyprus, Peru, El Salvador, Mauritius, Japan, Honduras, Guatemala, Nigeria, Argentina, Australia, New Caledonia, Fiji, the Philippines, and Greece.

Many of these were huge construction projects. In Nigeria a small town, in effect, was erected on a 140-acre piece of land. A 450-foot-long, 225-foot-wide factory was built, as well as residences to accommodate over 400 people,

an office, a garage, and other buildings. Construction material sent from the United States alone was enough to fill 347 freight containers, which if placed end to end would extend 2.2 miles!

At times, there is clergy opposition to the building projects. In Greece the clergy marshaled 40 busloads of protesters in March 1989, but the police backed up the Witnesses' legal right to build, and the protest fizzled. The new branch, with a large, new factory and 22 residence buildings to accommodate over 170 persons, was completed and dedicated this spring.

In France the Bishop of Evreux, Jacques Gaillot, protested the plans for a large new branch of Jehovah's Witnesses in Louviers. He said that the public ministry of the Witnesses does not "respect human dignity." Yet, others do not agree with the bishop. They believe that Jehovah's Witnesses should have the right to expand their facilities in the area, even as they are doing in many places throughout the world.

Presently, international construction volunteers are working on branch projects in Colombia, Puerto Rico, Zambia, Brazil, England, Canada, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Poland, Guadeloupe, Thailand, Leeward Islands, Bahamas, Western Samoa, Tahiti, Solomon Islands, Venezuela, Republic of Korea, South Africa, and Germany. Other projects are on the drawing boards, including new branches or additions to present ones in France, Spain, Mexico, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Suriname.

### **Anticipating a Need**

When the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses authorized a 50-percent enlargement of the branch in Germany in 1988, some observers considered the addition excessively large. But in 1989 and 1990 the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses was legalized or was permitted to operate unhindered in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Romania. And on March 27, this year, Jehovah's Witnesses were recognized by the Soviet Union as a religious organization.

Over 250,000 persons in Eastern European countries attended conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses last summer and were eager to receive Bible literature. "During just two months," noted the *1991 Britannica Book of the Year*, "the West German branch office of the Watchtower Society shipped 275 tons of Bible-based literature, including 115,000 Bibles, to East Germany alone." Thus it is obvious now that the Germany branch needs every bit of the expansion authorized, and it needs it quickly!

### **Preparing for Future Needs**

As you can imagine, to preach 'this good news of the Kingdom in all the inhabited earth before the end comes' in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy requires tremendous effort. (Mat-

thew 24:14) And true Christians worldwide are putting forth that effort. They are doing everything they can in a well-organized way to make the Kingdom message available to all nations.

To accomplish this, Jehovah's Witnesses are expanding their capacity for publishing Bible literature at their world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. Construction of a 30-story building, located at 90 Sands Street, to accommodate a thousand more members of their headquarters staff is now under way and is scheduled for completion in 1993.

The largest building project, however, is that which is in progress about 70 miles from New York City, near Patterson, New York. "When [Jehovah's Witnesses] are finished, sometime in 1996," *The New York Times* of April 7, 1991, reported, "they will have built 6 apartment houses 2 to 5 stories high with 624 apartments, a 450-car garage, a 144-room hotel, a huge kitchen and dining room to serve 1,600 people at one sitting, an office building, a classroom building and several service buildings." Hundreds of volunteers are providing free labor to build this huge Kingdom educational center.

Truly, a marvelous building program is under way in every part of the earth—all being coordinated and accomplished by volunteer workers. It is indeed something new in international construction!

### **In Our Next Issue**

**Why Pornography Is Dangerous**

**I Was a Professional Burglar**

**'If Only I Could Play Like That!'**

## Watching the World

### Transfusion Decree in Italy

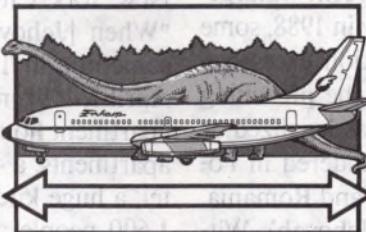
According to the Italian Constitution, no one can be subjected to a particular medical treatment against his will. A recent decree of the Italian Ministry of Health confirms that this constitutional regulation applies also to blood transfusions. In fact, this decree, dated January 15, 1991, states that "transfusions of blood, blood components, or blood derivatives, constitute a therapeutic practice that is not without risks; therefore, it requires the informed consent of the receiver." In other words, patients should know the risks and have the right to refuse blood. An appendix to the decree acknowledges that transfusions can transmit "infectious diseases, such as hepatitis and AIDS," and that "laboratory tests cannot always identify persons recently infected."

### Pope Credits Mary

During a recent visit to Portugal, Pope John Paul II made a special sojourn to the shrine of the Virgin of Fátima to mark the tenth anniversary of the attempt on his life by a gunman in Rome. The assassination attempt took place on the "Day of Our Lady of Fátima"—a day that commemorates the occasion in 1917 when three children in Fátima claimed to have had a vision of the Virgin Mary—so the pope credits Mary with having saved his life on the day of the shooting. In fact, on this anniversary one of the bullets taken from his body was used to adorn the diamond-studded crown worn by the Fátima statue of the virgin. The pope also thanked the virgin for the "unexpected changes" that have resulted in the end of Communist rule in Eastern Europe in recent years.

### As Long as a Boeing 737 Jet

"Whatever it was, its remains are mighty big. Individual neck vertebrae are 1.5 metres [5 ft] across while ribs measure three metres [10 ft], leading scientists to estimate the animal's overall length at 27 to 30 metres [90-100 ft]," reports *The Vancouver Sun* of Canada. That is as long as a Boeing 737 jet! In 1986 the petrified neck of this monster was excavated at a site in Inner Mongolia by a team of Canadian and



Chinese scientists. Four years later its huge skull was unearthed. "The real significance of finding the skull is that for the first time we'll be able to determine whether this dinosaur is related to well-known dinosaurs in North America," said Philip Currie of the Royal Tyrell Museum of Paleontology at Drumheller, Alberta, Canada.

### Caste Brutality

India's caste system was behind the recent public murder of three youths, reports *India Today*. In the tiny town of Mehrana, an 18-year-old boy of the Jatav caste became romantically involved with a 16-year-old girl of the richer, more powerful Jat caste. The girl's parents, and many others of the Jat caste, were enraged. At a council, reportedly dominated by the wealthier Jats, the two youths

and another Jatav boy who acted as their go-between were sentenced to death. The two boys were brutally tortured for hours, and then their fathers were allegedly forced to put the nooses around their sons' necks. All three teenagers were hanged in the town square. *India Today* reports that the main culprits in the murders are now in jail but laments: "It was a tragic reminder that the country's villages continue to be steeped in the medieval obsession of caste, which no amount of 'modernity' can erode."

### Crime Without Punishment

Britain's Home Office Research and Statistics Department has recently released some dismaying figures regarding crime in that country. Consider 100 crimes. Of those, 59 are never reported. Of those that are, police follow up on only 26. Of these, they clear up less than a third—only seven are finally solved. And of these, only four lead to the conviction or even the warning of the offender! However, these statistics cover all crimes, including vandalism and theft. British police clear up 70 percent of the crimes involving violence and 90 percent of the murders.

### Stress and Ethics

Ethical behavior may be linked to happiness, while unethical behavior may be related to stress, suggests a recent study. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, a consulting firm called London House subjected 111 executives, managers, and other professionals to a battery of tests to determine their overall emotional health. Test subjects also had to agree or disagree with such prob-

ing ethical propositions as these: "It is not necessary to associate with unethical business people in order to get ahead" and, "White-collar lawbreakers should get more lenient treatment . . . than criminals working the street." The tests revealed that the executives who showed a more developed sense of ethics were also healthier emotionally. They were happier, more responsible, and less likely to feel tense, anxious, hostile, or fearful than their less ethical colleagues.

### Mine Fraud Alleged

Some 500 mining companies in the United States have committed a type of fraud that could endanger the lives of thousands of mine workers, the U.S. Department of Labor charged recently. Mine companies are required by law to submit regularly the filters from small air samplers installed in their mines. The department analyzes these filters and may shut down mines that show dangerously high levels of coal dust in the air, which can lead to black lung disease and even death. The department charges that in the past year and a half, 847 mines have sent in 4,710 filters bearing evidence of fraud. Some filters had been coated with household sprays that prevent dust from accumulating. Others had been vacuumed to reduce the amount of dust appearing. Black lung disease afflicts hundreds of thousands of miners; every year, as many as 4,000 retired miners succumb to its gradually debilitating effects and die.

### Shielding Pedophile Priests?

"Some dioceses still shield priests accused of pedophilia," ran a recent headline in the U.S. newspaper *National Catholic Re-*

*porter*. The newspaper interviewed Jeffrey Anderson, a lawyer who specializes in cases of sexual abuse. He estimates that since 1985, when priestly pedophilia came under increased public scrutiny, there have been over a thousand cases in which priests molested children. Anderson had some harsh words for the church's response to the ongoing crisis: "It is a continuing saga of avoiding responsibility," he charges, decrying the church's focus on protecting the accused clerics. "As a general rule, the institutional response of the church has been willfully inadequate both in tending to victims and dealing with risks."

### Disturbed Sleep

"Singles sleep best, married persons fairly well, and widowed or divorced persons living alone suffer most from disturbed sleep," reports the German medical journal *Ärztliche Praxis*. A survey involving 1,500 patients between the ages of 18 and 65 revealed that 19 percent regularly had disturbed



sleep that left them worn-out during the day, 31 percent had problems with their sleep, although less serious, and only half reported no problems with sleep. The incidence of disturbed sleep was high among retired persons, the unemployed, the emotionally disturbed, and the chronically sick. Generally speaking, "men sleep better than women," comments the journal, and "the elderly worse than the young."

### Protecting Asian Wildlife

That is the challenge facing such Asian countries as Thailand. According to *Asiaweek* magazine, the World Wide Fund for Nature has singled out Thailand for its illegal trade in endangered wildlife, calling the country "the wildlife supermarket of the world." Thai law apparently does not protect wildlife that is not indigenous to the country; thus, Thailand has become a preferred conduit for the traffic in endangered animals from surrounding countries. There are markets where exotic animals and birds are sold, and some restaurants even feature 'jungle food' on their menus, including the meat of such endangered creatures as crocodiles, barking deer, and wild boars.

### Religious Scene's Most Rapid Growth

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the most rapid growth of followers is not among the mainline churches or even among the energetic evangelical groups. Rather, the 1986 census revealed accelerating growth in the number who stated positively that they had no religion or who left unanswered the question about religion. The census indicated that nearly 25 percent of the Australian people are in this category, or nearly double the percentage of 20 years ago. But Dr. G. Bailey, a university professor of religion, told *The Weekend Australian*, a Sydney newspaper, that such people nevertheless do have a "surrogate religion." He referred to a materialistic world view, "with its emphasis on greed and enterprise and its implicit goal of salvation through material possessions and material security."

## From Our Readers

**Flirting** The article "Young People Ask . . . What's the Harm in Flirting?" caught my interest. (May 8, 1991) I have a friend that is always flirting with those of the opposite sex, and it often looks like fun. I was relieved to learn that 'it's only natural to want to be liked.' But I realize now that flirting is dangerous, and I instead want to show a genuine interest in people in general.

S. I., Japan

**Man and Beast** I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the subject "When Man and Beast Live in Peace." (April 8, 1991) I have been a student of the Bible for a year now, and I have learned about Jehovah's purpose to make the earth an eternal paradise. The article greatly increased my love for Jehovah and my desire to live in peace with the animals in his new world.

A. S., Brazil

I have always been a lover of animals. I even wanted to enter a university and join their zoological program. What would I have gained, though, to spend a lifetime studying only a few animal species? In Jehovah's new world, I'll be able to study *all* the animals—forever! Reading the article made me cry tears of joy, knowing that one day that wish will come true.

L. M., United States

**Bad Habits** The article "Preventing the Return of Bad Habits" (April 8, 1991) was like a letter directed especially to me. Although the article did not mention my bad habit specifically, I believe the guidelines it gave will be beneficial. With Jehovah's help I will overcome this habit once and for all!

S. M., United States

About 11 years ago, I successfully lost over 80 pounds, only to regain it. I am watching my weight again, and when I begin to weaken, I re-

read the article. I also used it with two new students of the Bible who are fighting to quit smoking.

E. T., United States

It was such a beautiful article that I shed tears. What touched me most was the part where it says: 'I failed, so I may as well give up.' I have always thought that way. But the article helped me to see things in a different way.

S. H. S. N., Brazil

**Children of Divorce** Your issue "Help for Children of Divorce" (April 22, 1991) couldn't have come at a better time. I am currently going through a divorce. The day before this article arrived, I said harsh things to my husband in front of the children. I later apologized to him and gave him this issue of *Awake!* Thank you for your help and advice.

C. L., United States

When I was nine, my parents got a divorce. Three years later they got remarried. I was very happy. Recently, I found out that they are getting another divorce. Knowing that they love me and I have Jehovah to turn to keeps me from falling apart. Your article came at the time when I needed it most. Thank you for considering the children. We need all the support we can get!

A. J., United States

**Sexual Harassment** I am grateful for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Make Him Leave Me Alone?" (May 22, 1991) On the very day my mother gave me that magazine, I received a love letter from a boy in my class. The article taught me that when boys make unwanted advances, we can make our religious beliefs clear. Thank you for providing loving help for us young ones.

M. K., Japan

# *“Never Give Up”*

AT BIRTH, Wilma Rudolph was tiny and sickly. She was four before she started to walk. Then she became seriously ill with scarlet fever and pneumonia. Although she survived, her left leg suffered paralysis. Determined that Wilma would walk, her mother massaged her wasted leg and taught three of her older children to do the same. So there were four daily shifts of “rubbing Wilma.”

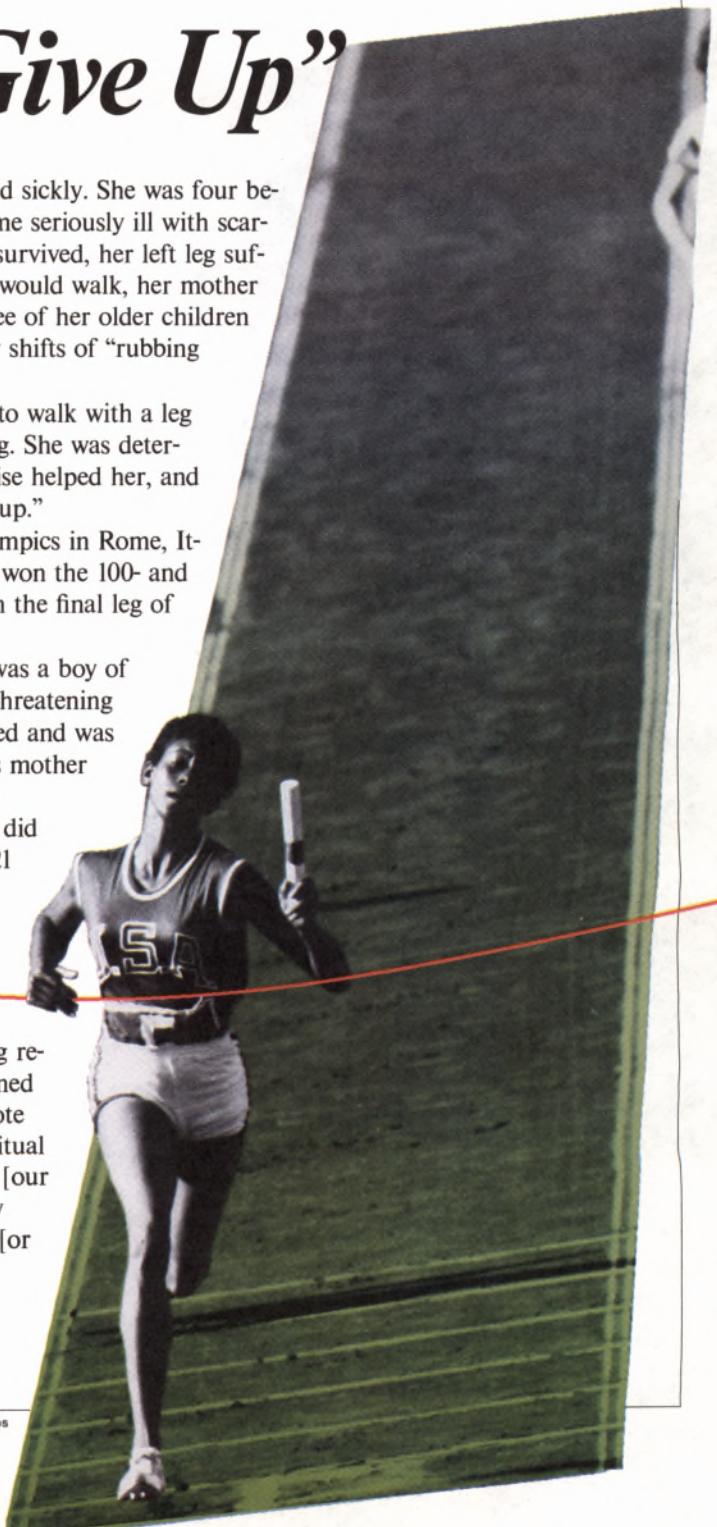
When Wilma was eight, she was able to walk with a leg brace. Soon she was running and playing. She was determined to overcome her disability. Exercise helped her, and so did her mother’s advice: “Never give up.”

Wilma didn’t. And in 1960, at the Olympics in Rome, Italy, she received three gold medals. She won the 100- and 200-meter foot races and came in first in the final leg of the 400-meter relay.

During the first world war, when he was a boy of seven, Glenn Cunningham suffered life-threatening burns to his legs. He spent months in bed and was told that he might never walk again. His mother daily kneaded his damaged muscles and urged him to walk and then run. Glenn did not give up. In fact, he eventually won 21 of 31 mile races on the indoor track at Madison Square Garden. And, in 1934, he set a world record for the mile run.

Sometime in life all of us face setbacks of one kind or another. Often it is some health problem. Instead of being resigned to defeat, how fine to be determined not to give up! “We do not give up,” wrote the apostle Paul in connection with spiritual efforts. “Even if the man we are outside [our physical body] is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed [or given fresh strength] from day to day.”

—2 Corinthians 4:16.



UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

# "Asha's Gains Up"