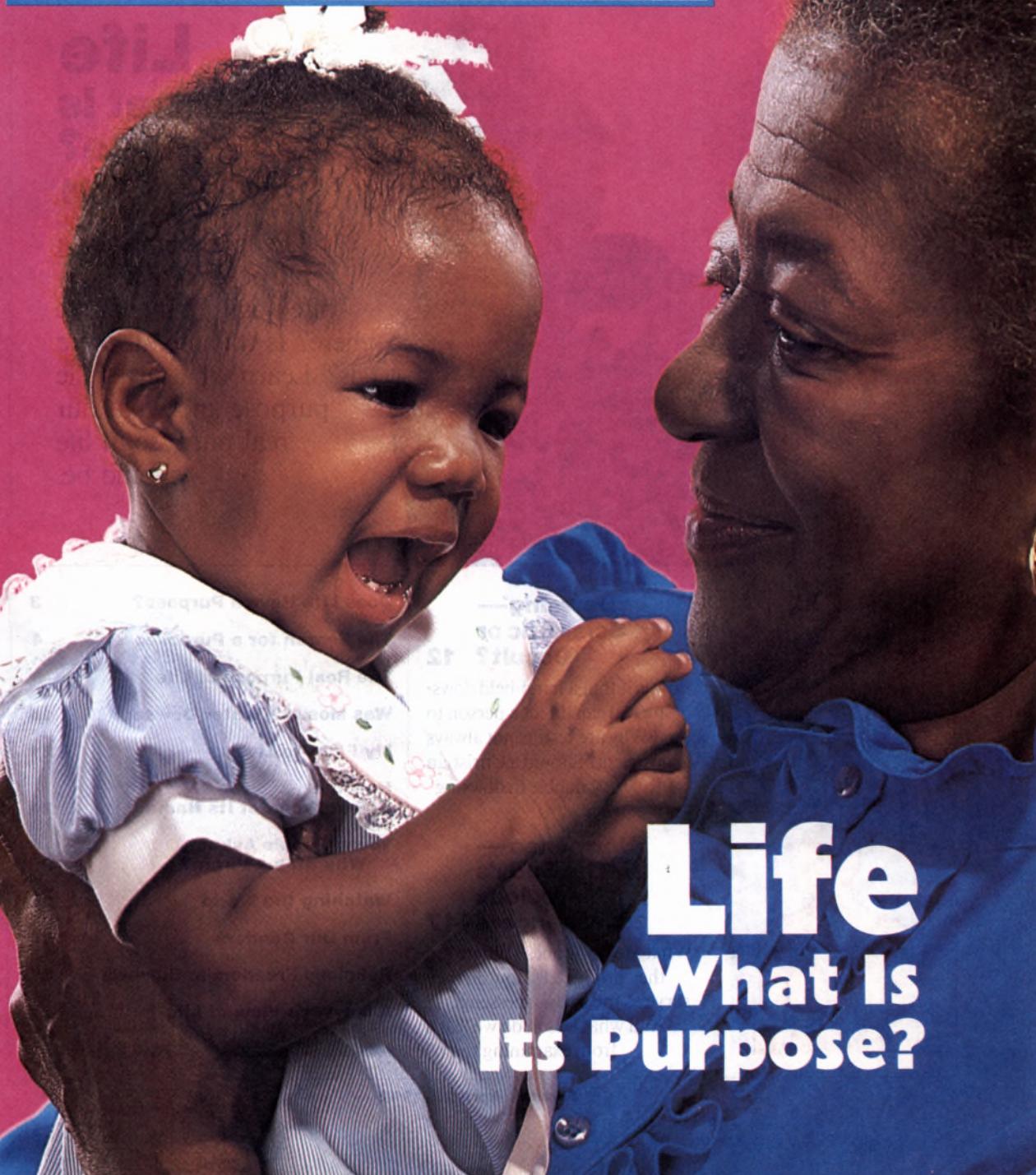


Awake!

April 22, 1992



**Life
What Is
Its Purpose?**



Life What Is Its Purpose? **3-11**

People search for a purpose in life. They often ask, 'Why are we here? Is this life all there is?' Learn what gives life purpose and what our real purpose in life should be.



Dowsing— Scientific or Occult? **12**

How is it that a hand-held dowsing rod can direct a person to water? Why are results not always consistent? Should a Christian dabble in dowsing?



Hormones— The Body's Marvelous Messengers **17**

What are hormones? Where are they produced? How do they serve as the body's messengers? And what lesson do we learn from examining them?

Does Life Have a Purpose?	3
The Search for a Purpose	4
The Real Purpose of Life	8
Was Moses a Water Dowser?	16
My Fight to Live	21
How the Quiver Tree Got Its Name	24
Young People Ask . . . Why Stay a Virgin?	25
Watching the World	28
From Our Readers	30
Religious Freedom in Bulgaria	31
A Lawyer's View of Life	32

Woodcut of dowser from Georgius Agricola's *De Re Metallica*

Does Life Have a Purpose?

“‘Why are we here?’ is the most important question a human being has to face. . . . I believe that life has meaning in spite of the meaningless death I have seen. Death has no meaning, life has.”

THESE words were written by Elie Wiesel, well-known writer and survivor of Nazi concentration camps. He was one of many who answered a question posed by *Life* magazine: “Why are we here?” He had seen life at its very worst, yet he was convinced that life has meaning.

Not everyone, however, agreed. A taxi driver named José Martínez answered the same question in this way: “We’re here to die, just live and die. I drive a cab. I do some fishing, take my girl out, pay taxes, do a little reading, then get ready to drop dead . . . Life is a big fake.” To José, life evidently has no meaning, no purpose.

Surprisingly, a number of educated people appeared to agree with the taxi driver rather than with the writer. Evolutionists Richard E. Leakey and Roger Lewin, in their book *Origins*, suggest: “Perhaps the human species is just a ghastly biological blunder, having evolved beyond a point at which it can thrive in harmony with itself and the world around it.” At least to them, human life is meaningless.

Similarly, evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould wrote: “We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures; . . . because a small and tenuous spe-

cies, arising in Africa a quarter of a million years ago, has managed, so far, to survive by hook and by crook. We may yearn for a ‘higher’ answer—but none exists.” To Gould, human life is a meaningless accident.

Gould is correct in at least one respect. Many do yearn for a “higher” answer than the one he proposes. In times of tragedy, many think like 11-year-old Jason. This young boy wrote of the death of a young friend: “When my friend Kim died from her cancer I asked my Mom if God was going to make Kim die when she was only 6, why did he make her born at all?” Jason instinctively felt that life should have a purpose, and the sad death of his young friend seemed to frustrate that purpose.

The Importance of the Question

Is it important to know whether life has a purpose or not? Is this just a philosophical question, or one that should concern you? Many have lived out their lives without giving the matter much thought. And if José Martínez is correct, theirs might have been a wise course to follow.

If, though, Elie Wiesel is correct and life does have meaning, surely we should try to discover what it is. Otherwise, we could miss out on the whole point of the wonderful

adventure of living. It would be like walking through an art gallery without looking at the pictures or sitting in a restaurant without ordering a meal.

How can we find out whether life has a purpose or not? In the next article, we will discuss some facts that help to solve this problem.

The Search for a Purpose

SINCE the time of Charles Darwin, there has been enormous pressure from biologists to accept the theory that life, as a result of evolution, is basically purposeless. However, many instinctively reject this. A young married couple, looking at their beautiful newborn baby, would have difficulty believing that this new life is purposeless. To them, it is a miracle, a life-enriching wonder.

Even some scientists do not agree that life is a meaningless accident. Why not? Because of what *The Encyclopedia Americana* calls "the extraordinary degree of complexity and of organization in living creatures." The *Americana* goes on to say: "A close examination of flowers, insects, or mammals shows an almost incredibly precise arrangement of parts."

Considering such complexity and beautiful organization—which is seen in even the

simplest of living creatures—South African scientist Dr. Louw Alberts was quoted in the *Cape Times* as saying: "I get more intellectual satisfaction in accepting there is a God than merely accepting that it [life] happened by chance." Speaking of the chemical composition of living organisms, British astronomer Sir Bernard Lovell wrote: "The probability of . . . a chance occurrence leading to the formation of one of the smallest protein molecules is unimaginably small. . . . It is effectively zero."

In a similar vein, astronomer Fred Hoyle wrote: "The entire structure of orthodox biology still holds that life arose at random. Yet as biochemists discover more and more about the awesome complexity of life, it is apparent that the chances of it originating by accident are so minute that they can be completely ruled out. Life cannot have arisen by chance."

Awake!

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

**Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address on page 5.
This is part of a worldwide Bible educational work that is supported by voluntary donations.**

Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

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

What does this mean? If life did not come about by accident, it must have come by design. And if so, it must have had a Designer. And what a Designer! The psalmist rightly said: "In a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14) But what does this tell us about whether life has a purpose or not?

Well, humans also design and make things. They make jet airplanes. They make oil refineries. They make electric power plants. And they make a myriad of other things of greater or lesser complexity. But humans do not design and build such complicated things without a reason. Everything is made with a purpose in mind.

Since nothing that humans have made even comes close to matching the awesome complexity of living things, surely the Designer of life would not have created life without having some purpose for it. It is the height of unreason to believe that we were "wonderfully made" and then left rudderless and without purpose.

The Search for Purpose

That the Creator created humans to fulfill a purpose is also strongly supported by the fact that we humans instinctively seek a purpose in our lives. Gilbert Brim, a psychologist, spoke about man's instinctive need for purpose when he said: "Many people find growth and challenge in the workplace. But those who cannot will search for special chal-

lenges and achievement elsewhere: losing weight, mastering the six-iron shot on a downhill lie, making the perfect omelet or seeking adventures—whether it's hang gliding or experimenting with new foods." Psychiatrist Viktor Frankl even claimed: "The striving to find a meaning in one's life is the primary motivational force in man."

Let us examine some of the goals that people set for themselves in life.

What Gives Life Purpose?

One young teenager, when asked about her purpose in life, said: "My dream is just to have a nice condo, a nice car, and a nice guy for the car. I'm out for myself. I'm a me person. I want what's going to make me happy, not what's going to make the whole society happy." If you think that sounds selfish, you are right. It is. Unhappily, though, it is not an uncommon attitude.

Yet, does simply pursuing material things and pleasures satisfy the need to have meaning in one's life? No. When pleasure is our only objective, pleasure is unsatisfying. Individuals who make it their main goal in life usually end up echoing in their hearts the sentiment of a wealthy king of ancient times who used his power and wealth to explore various aspects of pleasure available back then. Listen to the conclusion he came to:

"I accumulated also silver and gold for myself, and property peculiar to kings and the jurisdictional districts. I made male singers

Semimonthly Languages Available by Mail:

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English (also cassettes), Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Yoruba, Zulu

Monthly Languages Available by Mail:

Chicheŵa, Chinese, Cibemba, Croatian, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Kannada, Malayalam, Myanmar, New Guinea Pidgin, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Swahili, Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Xhosa

© 1992 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Subscription requests should be sent to Watch Tower at the appropriate address below.

America, United States of, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	New Zealand, P.O. Box 142, Manurewa
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	Nigeria, P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, Edo State
Canada L7G 4Y4, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario	South Africa, Private Bag 2067, Krugersdorp, 1740
England NW7 1RN, The Ridgeway, London	Zambia, Rep. of, Box 21598, Kitwe
Ghana, Box 760, Accra	Zimbabwe, 35 Fife Avenue, Harare
Jamaica, Box 180, Kingston 10	

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

and female singers for myself and the exquisite delights of the sons of mankind, a lady, even ladies. . . . And, look! everything was vanity and a striving after wind."—Ecclesiastes 2:8, 11.

Many find satisfaction in a career or in using their mental or physical strength to achieve what seem to be worthwhile objectives. After a while, though, a career does not entirely satisfy the need to have a purpose in life. Peter Lynch, described as an "investment superstar," gave up his lucrative career when he realized that something was seriously missing in his life. What? His relationship with his family. He confessed: "I loved what I was doing, but I came to a conclusion, and so did some others: What . . . are we doing this for? I don't know anyone who wished on his deathbed that he had spent more time at the office."

Hence, a teenage girl showed a measure of balance when she considered her goals in life and said: "One of my dreams is to have a career. But I think my main dream is to have a happy family." Yes, our family can give meaning and purpose to life. A young married woman said: "Very early in my life I saw being a parent as one of the things that one was born to do, one of the purposes of life, and I never questioned it."

Others look for a purpose in life in other pursuits. Some—likely including those scientists who claim that life is a meaningless accident—find a purpose in the pursuit of knowledge. Evolutionist Michael Ruse wrote: "We have a thirst to know, and this raises us above the brutes. . . . Among our greatest needs and duties is that of passing on, to our children, the accumulated wisdom of the past, together with our zest and our achievements. . . . The quest for knowledge, and the successes, make for one of the great marks of the human spirit."

Some find that serving a cause gives purpose to their lives. They work for the preservation of rare animal species. Or they fight pollution and the destruction of the environment. Caring people champion the rights of children or work for the homeless or the poor. Or they labor to prevent the spread of drug addiction. Such individuals sometimes accomplish much good, and what they do enriches their lives with purpose.

Frustrations and Disappointments

We have to acknowledge, though, that humans are often frustrated in their pursuit of goals even if the goals are worthy ones. Parents who put much love and effort into raising their children sometimes lose them to accidents, crime, sickness, or drug addiction. Or when the children grow up, they may get infected by the selfish spirit of this world and fail to return their parents' love.

Those who work selflessly to improve the environment are often frustrated by commercial interests or by the fact that others just do not care. Those working for the betterment of the poor are overwhelmed by the enormity of the task. An individual who finds his career fulfilling is frustrated when he is forcibly retired. A researcher who finds the pursuit of knowledge completely satisfying is frustrated when his life draws near its end and there are still so many unanswered questions. A man who has spent his life building a fortune finds that, eventually, he has to leave it to others.

The ancient king who was quoted earlier described some of these frustrations when he wrote: "I came to hate all my labour and toil here under the sun, since I should have to leave its fruits to my successor. What sort of a man will he be who succeeds me, who inherits what others have acquired? Who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will be master of all the fruits of my labour and skill."

—Ecclesiastes 2:18, 19, *The New English Bible*.



Some find that the pursuit of knowledge gives meaning and purpose to their lives

Humans do not build complicated things without having a purpose in mind

Is life ultimately without purpose, then, as these oh-so-true words seem to imply? Are the various goals that humans pursue merely a help to get them through the 70, 80, or 90 years of life that many are granted? Beyond that, are these goals basically meaningless? No. In fact, they indicate something very profound about the way we were made, and they provide evidence that life does, indeed, have a very wonderful purpose. But how can we find this purpose?



NASA photo

The Real Purpose of Life

IMAGINE that you are visiting a friend's workshop. He has just finished a project, and you are fascinated by it. The object is beautifully made and intriguingly shaped. But try as you may, you cannot determine what it is for. How do you find out? Why, you simply ask your friend, and he will likely be happy to tell you.

So how can we find out the purpose of life? Well, why not ask God, "the source of life"? (Psalm 36:9) How can you do that? Happily, he has spoken to us through the Bible. He has had individuals of faith write down his thoughts in a way that we can understand. Actually, the purpose of life can be expressed in just a few words: *We are here to learn about God and to do his will.* The Bible says: "The conclusion of the matter, everything having been heard, is: Fear the true God and keep his commandments. For this is the whole obligation of man."—Ecclesiastes 12:13.

Does that seem too simple? Well, it is not. Our being here to learn about God and to do his will has wonderful and profound implications.

God's Original Purpose

Learning what God originally intended for mankind will help you better understand the purpose of life. It will also explain why some of the things mentioned in the previous article bring a measure of meaning and purpose to the lives of many today.

The Bible account of man's creation says: "God went on to say: 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.'" (Genesis

1:26) Thus, humans were made with the potential for being like God, possessing the outstanding qualities he has, including wisdom, power, righteousness, and love. Is it surprising, then, that some find it fulfilling to seek new knowledge or to engage in activities that challenge their mental or physical powers? And is it unexpected that helping others provides a satisfying purpose in the lives of many? Not at all. This is, in part, what we were created to do.

The Bible record goes on to say that humans were given oversight of all other life on earth—"the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens . . . and every moving animal that is moving upon the earth." (Genesis 1:26) No wonder, therefore, that even today many find satisfaction in having animals around and in playing with them. Some feel their responsibility toward the animals to such an extent that they work hard for the preservation of threatened species, or they campaign against the exposing of animals to needless suffering.

Humans were also commanded to 'subdue the earth.' (Genesis 1:28) What did this imply? Certainly not that people should selfishly and irresponsibly exploit the earth until its riches were exhausted, its atmosphere polluted, and its seas and land areas strewed with garbage. Rather, God set the pattern for subduing the earth when he "planted a garden in Eden, toward the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed." (Genesis 2:8) This garden of Eden was the model showing what the earth would become. It reflected God's purpose for our planet.

**The Giver of life
had a purpose in
creating mankind**

The Bible account explains: "Further, God blessed [the first man and woman] and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it.'" (Genesis 1:28) God wanted humans to have children and populate the earth. He brought the first man and woman together and, in effect, performed the very first wedding. (Genesis 2:22-24) No wonder that marriage and family add meaning and purpose to the lives of so many!

What Life Could Have Been

As we study the Bible, it is evident that God intended for Adam's family to grow and for him and his children to extend the boundaries of the garden of Eden until humans filled the entire earth. And the subdued earth would be a paradise. True, man would use the riches of the earth for his own benefit. But this would be done in a responsible way. Man was to be a steward of the earth, not a despoiler of it. The destruction of the earth that we witness today is against God's will, and those who share in it are going contrary to the purpose of life. —Revelation 11:18.

We learn something else from the early Bible record, and that is that it was not God's purpose for people to die. Our first parents died only because they disobeyed God. (Genesis 2:16, 17) When they disobeyed, they were no longer fulfilling the purpose of life—they were no longer doing God's will. So not only did they die but all their offspring have also been subjected to death because of inheriting



imperfection from them. (Romans 5:12) Humans were, however, originally intended to live forever, not to die. This is likely why many find it frustrating to contemplate the cutting short of their life's work by death.

Fulfilling God's Purpose

God's original purpose for humankind and this earth has not changed. He still intends to have a paradise earth peopled by a perfect human race. Yet, he has had to make arrangements to overcome the sad effects of the failure of our first parents. Doing God's will today involves acting in harmony with all these arrangements of God. Happily, the Bible provides a description of the progressive fulfillment of his purpose.

We read in the first book of the Bible that God spoke of a "seed" who would come to undo all the harm wreaked by Adam and Eve's failure to do His will. (Genesis 3:15) In the Christian Greek Scriptures ("New Testament"), we read



***God has not abandoned his purpose
to have a paradise earth filled with a perfect human race***

of the appearance of Jesus Christ as that "seed," of his sinless life, and of his death at the hands of his enemies. Jesus' death was, effectively, a sacrifice in our behalf, opening the way for us to regain the eternal life that Adam and Eve lost. (Hebrews 7:26; 9:28) Yes, the Bible says: "Everyone exercising faith in him [will] not be destroyed but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

And there is more. After his death, Jesus was resurrected as an immortal spirit creature and is now ruling as King of God's heavenly Kingdom. Soon that Kingdom will act to replace the present earthly governments with a new world society that will take over the management of human affairs. A Bible prophecy promises: "The kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Daniel 2:44.

Afterward, this Kingdom will oversee the delightful activity of restoring Paradise to the earth and raising humankind to perfection. The Bible even speaks of a resurrection of the dead, so that they too can have the opportunity

to share in the fulfillment of God's grand purpose for mankind. (Acts 24:15) Then will be fulfilled the beautiful promise: "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace. The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 37:11, 29.

Benefiting Personally

To benefit personally from the fulfillment of God's grand purpose for the earth, we must first get to know God. Jesus Christ said: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) How can we do that? We learn some things about God by observing the world around us, the creation, including the starry heavens. (Psalm 19:1) Especially, though, do we learn about God—as well as about his Son, Jesus Christ—through the Bible. We learn his name and his qualities, and we find out in detail what God has done for mankind. Such knowledge makes us love him and draws us very close to him and to his Son.

Getting to know God makes us want to do his will. Perhaps we have prayed as Jesus instructed: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) The real purpose of life—the one that brings true satisfaction—is living our lives in harmony with that will of God.

What is involved, though, in doing God's will? For Adam and Eve, it involved overseeing the animal kingdom and subduing the earth and filling it with perfect offspring. If we would do God's will today, we must learn about and exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice. And we must follow Jesus' example by telling others about the good news of God's kingdom.'—Matthew 24:14.

Doing God's will also includes developing a godly personality. So we identify the things God hates—such as lying, theft, harmful gossip, uncontrolled anger—and we reject them. We also study the qualities that God loves—such as love, joy, peace, kindness, and goodness—and we cultivate them with the help of God's holy spirit. (Galatians 5:19-24) If we are to gain eternal life, we need to be the kind of people that God will want to have around for all eternity. Indeed, learning about God and doing his will gives purpose and meaning to our lives as nothing else can!

The Difference It Makes

The lives of millions of people around the world testify that finding the real purpose of life truly makes a difference. Consider the example of Wayne, who was devastated by the death of his first wife. His local clergyman was unable to comfort him, so Wayne became busy in volunteer work. He served as a commander in the American Legion and was active in political groups. Then he married again, but the marriage was stormy. He and his wife had no direction in their lives.

One day, however, Wayne picked up a Bible and started reading. In three months he fin-

ished it, and he says: "Now I knew that there was a purpose for our being here and a hope of a life after death." He told his wife: "We should find people to associate with who adhere to the Bible." Soon they met Jehovah's Witnesses, and their discussions with them intensified their desire to do God's will. Both Wayne and his wife dedicated their lives to God, and their family life was greatly benefited.

Susan, a daughter of Presbyterian missionaries, wanted to do something with her life that would really help the world. A lecture on the dangers of nuclear power convinced her that this was of the utmost importance. So she left college in order to spend all her time educating people about the problem. When she was 21, she served as a coordinator for a big antinuclear rally. Later she was visited by Jehovah's Witnesses and shown what the Bible says and, in time, found the real purpose of life. While doubtless still concerned about mankind's ruining of the earth, she realizes that God will solve these problems through his Kingdom. Hence, she helps people put faith in that.

Marielle made it her purpose in life to enjoy the things the world offers. She pursued a career. She enjoyed all the 'in things' of Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., including parties and drugs. But when she began to study the Bible, got to know and serve God, she saw how empty all those things were. She says her life is much richer now that it harmonizes with God's purposes.

The number of those whose lives have been enriched by learning the real purpose of life is increasing by the hundreds every day. Living in harmony with that true purpose of life by doing the will of our loving, heavenly Father truly makes a difference. It is something that can change your whole life for the better. We invite you to look into the matter for yourself. Your life will be more fulfilling if you do.

DOWSING Scientific or Occult?



Woodcut of dowser from Georgius Agricola's *De Re Metallica*

"**A**MAZING!" exclaimed a dairy farmer in the Midwestern United States. A slender peach limb was jerking and twisting violently in his hands. He dug his fingernails into the bark to hold the branch steady, but the downward force was strong. "It even left pieces of bark in my hands," he gasped, awestruck. He was still more amazed

later when he found water by digging in the exact spot that the limb had pointed out. What was going on here?

The farmer was practicing what is often called dowsing, water witching, or water divining. Often, the dowser holds a forked branch in his hands and paces about, concentrating on his search for water. Suddenly, his dowsing rod may behave erratically. Some rods jerk toward the ground, others snap upward, even striking the dowser's face or chest, while still others just barely move. In any such case, the dowser feels that there is water below. Dowsing is practiced around the world. According to one estimate, some 25,000 dowsers ply their trade in the United States alone.

Is It Scientific?

Is there some scientific principle that makes dowsing work? The question has long been controversial. Over 70 years ago, the *Watchtower* magazine reasoned this way: "We would not wish to be in an attitude of disregarding any of nature's laws, but it seems passing strange that a small trickle of water fifteen or twenty feet below the surface of the earth would have magnetic power enough to bend a willow with when a whole creek full of water will in no wise affect the same stick.... There must therefore be something other than the operation of natural laws."

Still, many dowsers insist that dowsing is a science. In fact, The American Society of Dowsers calls itself "a non-profit, educational and scientific Society." Over the years, more than a few scientists have emerged to call upon some new branch of science to explain dowsing. In the 1700's it was "emanations" from atomic particles that made dowsing work. In the 1800's it was electricity. In our century it has been everything from radioactivity to electromagnetism to human psychology.

More recently, in 1979, the reputable *New Scientist* magazine published seemingly plausible theories on dowsing. An energy consultant and a geologist speculated that the human body itself might be supersensitive to subtle changes in electric, magnetic, or electromagnetic fields caused by underground water or ore.*

But such theories have failed to win wide acceptance among scientists. In fact, in *The Encyclopedia Americana*, Harvard University scientists E. Z. Vogt and L. K. Barrett dismiss dowsing this way: "Controlled field and laboratory tests have failed to establish the validity of dowsing, and judged by scientific standards the practice has little basis in fact." In November 1990, dowsers submitted to 720 experiments in Kassel, Germany. Although they were pleased with the conditions of the tests and were confident of success, the dowsers failed; they had only fluky successes in detecting underground water and metals. The monthly magazine *Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau* concluded that when judged scientifically, dowsing is "as reliable as flipping a coin." Other such experiments have ended similarly.

Dowsers explain such failures in strange terms. Some complain, for instance, that the tests make them doubt their abilities or lead them to dowse for motives that are not right or serious enough. Such factors, they claim, make them lose their powers temporarily. In fact, a number of dowsers have found that after a lifetime of successful dowsing, it is the one time when they really need to prove themselves that their powers suddenly vanish—or mislead them. Some therefore conclude that the force behind dowsing has a perverse sense of humor.

* One such theory was reported on in the June 22, 1979, issue of *Awake!*

Does this sound like science to you? After all, natural forces (those measurable by methods known to science) do not have a sense of humor, perverse or otherwise; nor are they whimsical. They are constant. They do not fluctuate according to the mood, mind-set, or motives of those who test or measure them. Thus, to most scientists dowsing is a superstition—nothing more. In fact, even prominent dowsers have agreed that no force known to science can account for dowsing.

Is It Fake?

But does this absence of a scientific explanation mean that all reported cases of successful dowsing are either remarkable coincidences or outright fakes? What about the farmer's experience mentioned at the outset—was it just a fluke, an isolated case?

Actually, the field of dowsing has produced innumerable well-attested stories. For instance, a woman in Vermont called a dowser when the water supply to her house was cut off. Apparently a long pipe running from a distant spring to the house had developed a leak. The woman did not even know where the pipe was—it had been buried 30 years previously—let alone where the cracked section might be. But the dowser mentally asked his rod, and it bobbed over a certain spot. Six inches from there, the leaking piece of pipe was found.

Probably the most famous story concerns the noted American dowser Henry Gross. Geologists were convinced that fresh water could not be found underground in Bermuda. *The Saturday Evening Post* reported: "Gross spread out a map of Bermuda in [novelist Kenneth] Roberts's home in Kennebunkport, Maine, and passing his divining rod over it, marked three places where fresh water was to be found . . . To check his findings, Gross and Roberts flew to Bermuda, persuaded the government to provide drilling equipment,

and went to work. A few months later, in April 1950, all three wells had come in as Gross had said they would."

Dowsers claim to have found water for wells by the thousands. Reporters have accompanied dowsers, have seen the rods jerk so violently that the dowser's hands blistered, and have heard dowsers predict even the depth of the water below. They have seen the wells drilled and the predictions verified. While science may not supply viable reasons why this phenomenon works, it clearly does work—at least for some people, sometimes. Why?

A Revealing History

The history of dowsing is quite revealing in this regard. The practice may well have been around for thousands of years. But when the 16th-century physician Georgius Agricola wrote his landmark work on mining, *De Re Metallica*, the first detailed description of dowsing was recorded. German miners were using the practice to find veins of metal ore. But even then there was controversy over whether dowsing was a natural or an occult phenomenon. Agricola noted that some objected to the practice, since "the twigs [dowsing rods] will not move for everybody, but only for those who employ incantations and craft." As dowsing spread across Europe, the controversy spread with it. Martin Luther condemned it, and other church leaders later followed suit. To appease such clergymen, some dowsers had their rods baptized, and they invoked their Trinitarian God when dowsing.

For many dowsers, looking for water and mineral deposits was not enough. They found more and more uses for the rod. In 17th-century France, Jacques Aymar began dowsing to find criminals! Reportedly, he was dowsing for water one day when his rod

jerked violently at the grave of a murdered woman. The rod then lurched toward the woman's husband, who promptly fled. Aymar—and many imitators—used the dowsing rod to flush out criminals all over Europe. Catholic zealots even enlisted Aymar and his dowsing rod to help them hunt down Protestants to slaughter.

The Occult Connection

Not surprisingly, even in Aymar's day there were "experts" who thought they could explain such feats scientifically. They theorized that Aymar's dowsing rod was picking up mysterious "emanations" unique to murderers, which they dubbed "murderous matter." Clearly, though, Aymar's feats had little to do with science. The force behind what Aymar did was *intelligent*. It could pick out criminals, differentiate between Protestant and Catholic, and find water and minerals as well.

Similarly, how could anything but an intelligent force be behind map dowsing, where the rod points out water sources on a mere map of a distant location? Some dowsers have found lost wallets, passports, jewelry, and even people by dowsing with a pendulum over a map. Some watch for the dowsing instrument's response to yes or no questions. In the 1960's some U.S. Marines used dowsing rods to locate tunnels, land mines, and booby traps in Vietnam. Today, the dowsing rod is increasingly popular as a tool of the paranormal. It is used to predict the future, to look for 'ghosts,' and to investigate 'past lives.'

Author Ben G. Hester was originally convinced that dowsing was simply a "not-yet-understood physical phenomenon." But after eight years of investigating the subject, he wrote the book *Dowsing—an Exposé of Hidden Occult Forces*. In it he equates the dowsing rod with such devices as Ouija boards. He found that some dowsers claim the ability to

heal people—or make them sick—with a dowsing rod! Similarly, dowser Robert H. Leftwich wrote in his book *Dowsing—The Ancient Art of Rhabdomancy*: “The energies being tapped probably belong to powers that . . . are closely allied to those practised in witchcraft. Careless experimentation can therefore be dangerous.”

To true Christians, the foregoing has an unpleasant ring to it. Whether real or fake, dowsing in such cases as noted above is clearly not science; it seems to be the occult. As scientists Evon Z. Vogt and Ray Hyman summed up in *Water Witching U.S.A.*: “We therefore conclude that water witching is a clear-cut case of *magical divination*. ”

Should a Christian Dabble in Dowsing?

Of course, if dowsing is really an act of divination, a true Christian would want nothing to do with it. God’s people were commanded, as we read in the Bible at Deuteronomy 18:10: “There should not be found in you . . . anyone who employs divination, a practitioner of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer.” The prophet Hosea bemoaned the Israelites’ failure to heed this command, writing: “My people consult their block of wood, a rod answers their questions.”—Hosea 4:12, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Some might object, though, that they only indulge in the simplest form of dowsing: locating water. But is water dowsing clean of all association with the occult? It is interesting to note that dowsing instructors commonly teach students to tell the rod directly what they are looking for, as if it were an intelligent entity. One dowsing instructor even tells his students to name the rod and address it by name! Dowsers often ask their dowsing rods how far down the water source lies. The rod begins to bob, and the dowser counts the

number of times it does so. The final tally equals the depth, in feet, of the water source! Does this not suggest that a hidden intelligence is at work?

Furthermore, water dowsing is associated with another practice that Jehovah’s Witnesses have long been careful to avoid—ESP (extrasensory perception). *The Watchtower* noted that connection back in 1962. Shortly thereafter, the American Society of Dowsers responded with a letter: “We agree with the

Is It a Dowsing Rod?

DOWSING rods today take many forms besides the forked branch. Some dowsers use a pair of metal rods that form a cross when “detecting” the desired material. Others use a stick held bowed in their hands. Others use metal coat hangers. And some use no tool at all; they simply wait for a feeling of nausea or a tingly feeling in their hands. There are also many high-tech dowsing rods on the market, with handles and a chamber in which to place a sample of the material being sought. Of course, there are also legitimate metal detectors. They need a power source, such as batteries, and are therefore easily distinguished from dowsing rods.

theory that dowsing is a form of ESP and that engaging in any form of ESP *can* lead to ‘possession’ or the involvement with ‘wicked spirit forces’ unless proper precautions are taken. We must take exception, however, to your dogmatic advice of total abstinence.”*

What do you think? If even the most ardent proponents of water dowsing admit that it carries a risk of involvement with wicked

* In 1989 an extensive report on dowsing in *The New York Times* magazine noted that today even the more conservative of American dowsers agree—tacitly—that ESP is the force behind dowsing.

spirit forces or even of possession, should not a Christian want to abstain from such a practice?

"But doesn't dowsing do a lot of good?" some might ask. "Is that not proof that the force behind dowsing is benevolent?" Sadly, no. Remember, "Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14) Even in Bible times demons occasionally tried to gain favor and influence by uttering truths.—Acts 16:16-18.

Granted, we cannot assert dogmatically that each and every case of dowsing (and ESP as well) is scientifically unexplainable

and must be caused by demons. Without a doubt, there is much about the human mind and the forces of nature that still eludes the grasp of science. And no doubt there are a great many dowsing and ESP feats that can be explained away as plain, old-fashioned fakery. But since the history and current practice of dowsing is so inextricably intertwined with the occult, ESP, and spiritism, it is clearly too dangerous to be dismissed as a harmless trick.

No, when it comes to dowsing, "quit touching the unclean thing" still seems appropriate counsel.—2 Corinthians 6:17.



Was Moses a Water Dowser?

"MOSES, who brought forth water by striking a rock with a rod (Numbers 20:9-11), has been called the first water dowser." (*The Encyclopedia Americana*) This is a notion that crops up frequently when the subject of dowsing is discussed. Recently, *National Wildlife* magazine matter-of-factly called Moses' staff "a divining rod." And some dowsers believe that their power comes from Moses.

Quite to the contrary, though, Moses was the one who wrote down the command against divining! (Deuteronomy 18:10) And the miracle at Meribah was a far cry from water dowsing. Many dowsers rely on a rod to search for hidden water; they follow it along, waiting for it to bob or jerk. But Moses never followed his staff around waiting for it to bob; in fact, he never actually searched for the water at all. Jehovah, the Creator of the earth and its hidden springs of water, told Moses exactly where and how to get the water: "You must speak to the crag," God commanded, "that it may indeed give its water."—Numbers 20:8.

Moreover, dowsers usually only tell people where to dig. When Moses' staff hit the rock, a torrent of water burst forth—enough to quench the thirst of an entire nation. Moses incurred God's wrath when he took some of the credit for this miracle. How much worse to give the credit to his staff—a senseless piece of wood!

Hormones

The Body's Marvelous Messengers

YOU are crossing a street. "Look out!" somebody yells. You turn your head and see that a truck has run a red light and is thundering toward you at high speed.

Your body instantly equips you for emergency action. Your brain flashes an urgent message to your adrenal glands, which respond by pouring adrenaline and noradrenaline into your bloodstream. These hormones shut down the blood supply to parts of the body whose services are not immediately needed for escape, and they rush it to reinforce your brain, heart, and muscles.

Adrenaline and noradrenaline force your heart to beat hard and fast. They widen the airways of your lungs; your breathing quickens. They boost your blood sugar to supply maximum energy. In a twinkling, hormones have helped to equip you to perform feats of strength and endurance far beyond your normal ability.

The truck roars nearer, the ground shakes. There's not a second to spare! You make a mighty leap to the safety of the sidewalk. You gasp for breath, your heart pounds, your stomach churns, your hands tremble—but you are alive!

In such situations hormones help save lives. But they do far more than that. They help us

grow and develop into healthy men and women. They make possible our sexuality and reproduction. If we are cold or hot or hungry or thirsty or bleeding or sick, they assist us. And they are on the job 24 hours a day!

But how is all this work organized in our bodies? To help us understand that, let us consider what hormones are and how they function.

Communications Within

Hormones are chemical substances that are manufactured by our endocrine glands. The word "endocrine," which means "secreting directly into," describes these glands well, since they secrete hormones directly into the bloodstream. As the heart pumps the blood through the body, the hormones speed to various destinations, where they accomplish their work.

In order for the hormones to perform their functions, good communication is needed among our many body parts. All of us have complex communications systems that transmit information to keep us alive and operating smoothly—the endocrine system and the nervous system.

To illustrate how the two work together, let us take a look at Venice, Italy, a city famous for its network of canals. In Venice, people use the telephone system to send messages to other parts of the city. Similarly, the body sends its messages by means of the nervous system, a high-speed communications network that uses electrochemical signals. Like a telephone call, a nerve transmission is delivered virtually instantaneously.

Of course, a message could also be delivered by gondola, a long boat that travels through the maze of city canals. In the body, chemical messengers (hormones) travel through the bloodstream or other body fluids.

If we liken the bloodstream to the Venetian canals, then the hormones are like fleets of

ENDOCRINE GLANDS SECRETE HORMONES INTO THE BLOODSTREAM

THE HORMONES TRAVEL TO OTHER PARTS OF THE BODY TO ACCOMPLISH VARIOUS TASKS

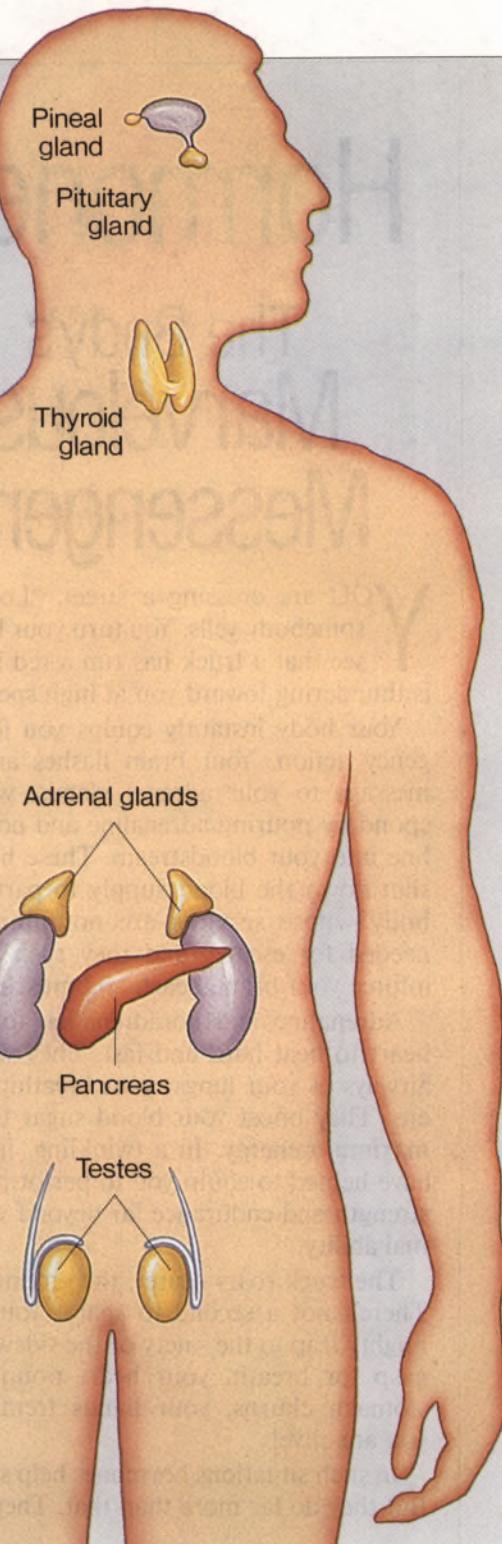
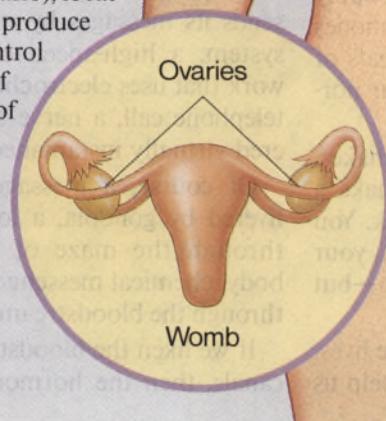
Pineal Gland

This small gland, situated within the base of the brain, secretes melatonin, which is thought to affect wakefulness and various biorhythms in the body. The exact function of melatonin is not yet known.

Gonads, or Sex Glands

The two ovaries (in females) are found in the pelvic girdle, on each side of the womb. The hormones estrogen and progesterone are produced here. These control the menstrual cycle and affect the development of adult female physical characteristics.

The testes (in males), located in the scrotum, produce hormones that control the development of the body features of an adult male at puberty and stimulate sperm production.



Pituitary Gland

This pea-sized organ is attached to the brain by a slender stalk and lies just above and behind the nose. The pituitary is supervisor of the other glands, sending out chemical messages to the thyroid, adrenal, and sex glands, as well as to other glands having endocrine functions. It is the main controller of height and influences the growth of bones and muscles. It also stimulates the production of milk by the breasts of a nursing mother.

Thyroid and Parathyroid Glands

These glands are situated in the neck. The parathyroid secretes hormones that regulate calcium levels to maintain healthy bones. The thyroid produces other hormones that control the speed at which oxygen and food are used to produce energy.

The Adrenal Glands

Located just above each kidney, the two adrenal glands produce adrenaline and noradrenaline, which equip the body for fight or flight in emergencies. Additional hormones manufactured here affect the metabolism of carbohydrates and proteins, regulate water handled by the kidneys, and activate the body's food stores when there is little to eat.

Pancreas

Located underneath the stomach, this gland turns out glucagon and insulin, which regulate the level of sugar in the blood.

gondolas carrying messages hither and thither from many sources to many destinations. These hormones travel to muscles, organs, or glands far from their point of origin. Once they reach their destination, they set in motion a series of complex chemical reactions to accomplish their purpose.

But how is all this activity directed and coordinated? To answer that question, let us look at the headquarters of the endocrine system and see what work is done there.

Pituitary—The Master Gland

The overseer of the endocrine system is the pituitary, a small, reddish-gray organ that is attached to the brain by a slender stalk and that lies in a bony pocket just behind and above the nose.

The pituitary is not impressive to look at. It is only the size of a pea, and it weighs a mere 0.02 ounce. But even though the pituitary is small, its responsibility is immense. It has been called the master gland, the conductor of the endocrine orchestra. It is like a business executive whose office is a flurry of activity, with messages coming from and going to many departments.

Some jobs the pituitary delegates to other endocrine glands. For example, the pituitary launches a hormonal message into the bloodstream ordering the thyroid gland to produce and release three other hormones. These control metabolism, body heat, and bone maintenance. The pituitary likewise commands the sex glands to produce the hormones that will bring about the physical changes of puberty. The master gland can also instruct the adrenals to manufacture hormones that maintain blood pressure and salt balance in the body.

At times, though, the pituitary cares for matters directly, sending out hormonal messages that influence the growth of our bones and muscles. Its hormones even control how tall we will be.

The pituitary further plays a big role in delivering babies. To assist a woman in labor, the pituitary sends out oxytocin, a hormone that stimulates contractions of the womb. When the baby's head reaches the birth canal, the brain sends a message to the pituitary requesting an extra supply of oxytocin to help with the final phase of delivery. All along, hormones from the pituitary have been stimulating the production of milk in the mother's breasts. When baby is born, mother is equipped to feed it.

The Master Gland's Master

While the pituitary is the overseer of other glands, it has its own overseer—the hypothalamus. This is a cluster of nerve cells no larger than the tip of your thumb. It is located at the base of the brain and is connected to the pituitary. Its job is not only to supervise the work of the endocrine system but also to coordinate the work of the autonomic nervous system.

Part of its work is to test the makeup and temperature of the blood. More blood gushes through the hypothalamus than any other part of the brain. Into this blood flow, the hypothalamus pokes wrinkled fingerlike sensors, much as a bather uses his finger to test the temperature of the water in his tub. If the blood is too cool, the hypothalamus sends instructions (via the pituitary and the thyroid) for more thyroxine, a hormone that boosts metabolism to produce heat to warm the blood.

Since the hypothalamus does its work automatically, we are usually unaware of its labors. Yet, it has a day-to-day effect on our lives. Are you hungry? Your hypothalamus has detected too little glucose in your blood, so it is telling you to eat. Are you thirsty? Your hypothalamus has decided that the salt level in your blood is a little too high. "Drink some water," it tells you.

The hypothalamus also monitors levels of calcium in the blood. Without calcium our brain, muscles, and nerves would not work properly. When the level of blood calcium is too low, the hypothalamus withdraws calcium from the bones, much as a person withdraws money from a bank. How is the calcium withdrawal made? The hypothalamus sends a hormonal message to the pituitary. The pituitary launches its own command to the parathyroids, located in the neck. The parathyroids, in turn, secrete parathormone, which goes to the bones to request calcium for the bloodstream. Once the hypothalamus sees that the calcium level is correct, it cancels orders for further withdrawals.

But what if the hypothalamus learns that there is too much calcium in the blood? Once again messengers are sent to the 'bone bank,' but instead of making a withdrawal, they make a deposit. This is the procedure: The hypothalamus sends a message to its chief executive, the pituitary. The pituitary now issues a command to the thyroid. The thyroid, in turn, sends out the hormone calcitonin, which acts to transfer excess calcium from the blood to the bones.

Intelligent Design

What a masterpiece of organization! The hypothalamus controls the pituitary, the pituitary directs the glands, and the glands regulate the body. And all of this is done by more than 30 different kinds of hormones that flow silently through our body to care for our most basic physical needs. Yet, despite the complexity of all of this, the endocrine system operates with stunning efficiency.

The Bible states that "God has set the members in the body, each one of them, just as he pleased." How fitting the psalmist's expression to God: "I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware"—1 Corinthians 12:18; Psalm 139:14.

My Fight to Live

TWENTY years ago my wife, Ingrid, and I were raising two young boys in Lima, Peru, and enjoying a full, busy life. Although my secular work involved traveling to other countries of South America, we nevertheless scheduled time each week for the congregation meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and for sharing Bible truths with others in the public ministry.

Then, in 1973, while I was still in my late 20's, I began suffering headaches and rounds of depression. Both the headaches and the depression worsened during the next two years and became more frequent. It required constant effort to keep up with daily activities.

Well do I remember a business trip to Quito, Ecuador, high up in the Andes Mountains. As I stepped from the plane onto the landing strip, my head was pierced through with a headache so unbearable that all I could think to do was board the next plane back to Lima.

I immediately went to my doctor. He had been treating me for tension, believing that this was the cause of my headaches. But when he examined the back of my eyes, he noticed ruptured blood vessels. So I was put in the hospital.

Tests confirmed a tumor on the brain. But even more devastating was the news that the tumor was so large and apparently so entangled with the brain that it was inoperable. Within a month, the doctor said, I would be blind. Then I would become paralyzed and die in about three months.

The news was an incredible shock to Ingrid, who was first to receive the prognosis.

She immediately contacted my sister, Heidi, in Los Angeles, California, U.S.A., and asked her to look for a surgeon who would consent to operate on me without administering blood transfusions—a prime requisite for us because of our firm determination to obey the Scriptural injunction to refrain from blood.—Acts 15:28, 29.

Just three frenetic days later, we were on our way to Los Angeles. When we were flying over the Caribbean, Ingrid said to me: "Look, how beautiful the islands are, with their white, sandy beaches!" I looked out but could see nothing. My vision was already going!

The First Battle

Arriving in Los Angeles, I was immediately put in the UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles) Medical Center. On October 6, 1975, Dr. Walter Stern operated on me. Upon my awakening, not even Ingrid's radiant face could prepare me for the good news—they had removed the entire tumor! It was the size of a baseball, situated on the right frontal lobe of the brain. But it was enclosed in its own membrane and came out complete.

Swift treatment evidently saved my life. "Just a few more days, and you would no longer have been with us," the doctor said. But I was alive and with my mental faculties intact! We were euphoric!

However, the period of recuperation brought its own worries. First, blood clots formed in one leg, presenting a dilemma. For although I needed anticoagulants to dissolve the clots before they broke loose and reached a vital organ, I also needed coagulants to keep the bleeding in

the brain to a minimum. What a relief when the doctors successfully worked out a balance between the two contrasting medicaments!

The trauma of 12 hours of surgery on the right frontal lobe—associated with emotions—was apparently responsible for a period of euphoria, an accelerating of emotions, that medication would not control. For six months after returning to Lima, I was irrational in my evaluation of what I could do, as if I were on a continual high. In a few months, this passed, and a terrible depression set in, so severe that I almost continually thought of suicide. Happily, after a year I was back to normal and able to renew all my activities.

I was appointed an elder in the Christian congregation, and the challenge now became to balance congregation, family, and business responsibilities. Whenever I wasn't traveling for business, I arranged for time to be with the boys. Our favorite pastime was riding our motorbikes over the sandy, rocky hills on the outskirts of Lima. The next nine years seemed to fly by with our scarcely sensing their passing. I began to take my renewed health for granted.

Then, in May 1985, Ingrid began to notice that I was somewhat pale and had an uncharacteristic lack of bounce. We didn't suspect that there was another brain tumor until one night when I wanted to turn in bed and couldn't. The left side of my body had become paralyzed. This time the doctors submitted me to an advanced form of X ray, the CAT scan, and the results again had us on our way to Los Angeles.

The Fight Resumes

On June 24, 1985, Dr. Stern and his team operated on me once more. The tumor had grown again, this time extending back toward the parietal lobe—the zone that con-

trols movements of the extremities. As a result, my left arm and leg were paralyzed. The operation was terminated after eight hours, leaving 25 percent of the tumor deep inside.

My arm and leg remained partially paralyzed after the operation. Cobalt radiation treatments were given me for a few weeks in an effort to stop the growing of the tumor. But then two months after the operation, I began to have convulsions. Although these were somewhat controlled with medication, in time they became more frequent and uncontrollable. My public life was reduced to a minimum. I was able to care for some secular work from home, but the threat of convulsions always hovered like a dark cloud. Being dominated by something insidious inside me was a constant source of frustration.

Not knowing when the attacks would come, I no longer dared preside over meetings at the Kingdom Hall. But with Jehovah's help, I was able to share Bible knowledge with people who wished to study in their homes. Doing this regularly kept my mind on our Source of strength, Jehovah God, and seemed to lessen distress over my unstable physical condition.

Finally, in May 1988, I had a strong convolution that left me paralyzed along my entire left side. Yet, CAT scans each time indicated that everything was normal, that the tumor had not grown. The conclusion was that the convulsions were somehow a part of the healing process. However, we decided to return to Los Angeles for more extensive tests.

Dr. Stern, who had performed the first two operations without the use of blood, had now retired. But he kindly referred us to Dr. Donald Becker, head of the UCLA Department of Neurosurgery. Dr. Becker agreed to operate if this was deemed necessary and, at the same time, honor our Bible-based respect for blood by not giving me blood transfusions.

The now familiar tests began. But this time besides CAT-scan pictures and an angiogram of the brain, a new, unfamiliar technique called MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) was included. It was established that, yes, there were tumors—three of them!

Before the day scheduled for the operation, something frightening was discovered—my blood would not coagulate! The medication that I had been taking to control the convulsions was destroying the platelets in the blood. So for the next two and a half weeks, this medication was little by little replaced with another that did not have this adverse side effect. The changeover was traumatic because by the time it was completed, I had suffered a series of strong convulsions.

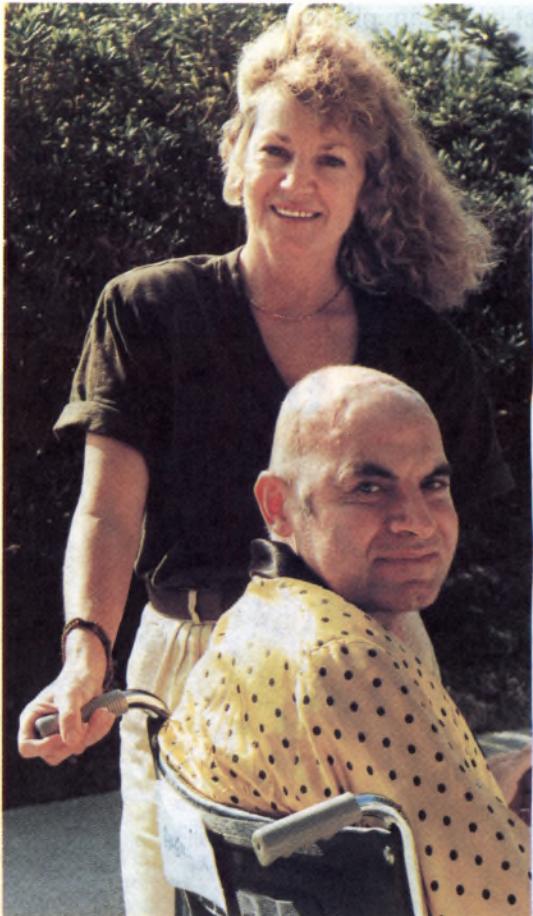
The Third Operation

Finally the day for the operation arrived, August 1, 1988. At 6:00 a.m., Ingrid and I said emotional good-byes. Minutes later I found myself in the operating room. It was a long 12 hours later when Dr. Becker came out to share the news with Ingrid that they had removed all the tumors—even the part that had remained from the second operation three years before—and that I had lost only a little more than a cup of blood!

"But something was still worrying me," explains Ingrid. "What would Hans' mental condition be when he woke up? Would he recognize me as his wife?" Early the next morning, the doctors let Ingrid in to see me. As I opened my eyes, I said, "Schatzi," a term of endearment I always used. And, as she said, "It was the beginning of a new day!"

The Fight Continues

Yet, my period of rehabilitation seemed never to end. Two years later, new tumors were found to be interfering with my recovery. So on November 26, 1990, I had a fourth brain operation. Two more tumors were removed. Again I was back in a wheelchair, and



With my wife, Ingrid

once more my days were filled with painful leg exercises to stimulate the brain into remembering how to get me walking again.

However, the tumors were soon back, and this time there was the diagnosis of malignancy. My most recent operation took place July 16, 1991; yet several tumors were inoperable. I was subjected to a special radiation treatment in an effort to shrink and dissolve them. We hope that this can be achieved, but my rehabilitation therapy has become ever more difficult.

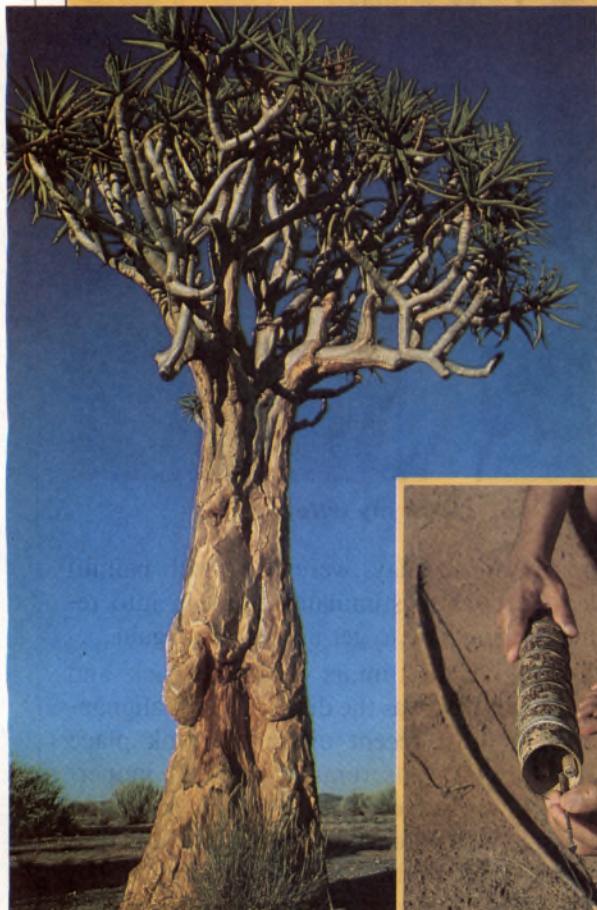
Considering future prospects on the basis

of what I am physically can only lead to frustration. The only wise course is to focus on spiritual values. As if written to me personally, the Bible says: "Bodily training is beneficial for a little; but 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.

The life that is to come is eternal life in

God's new world. Evidence shows that it is near, yes, that soon I will be running and jumping like a deer. (Isaiah 35:6) And if I die before that new world arrives, then the resurrection is assured for those faithful to Jehovah. Not by any mightiness on our part will everlasting life be attained, but by our faithfully serving our God, Jehovah.—*As told by Hans Augustin.*

How the Quiver Tree Got Its Name



FEW travelers in the arid wilderness regions of southern Africa have failed to be impressed by the sight of a quiver tree. "With its grey bark streaked with white . . . , it stands erect on the ribs of the mountains, stark and dignified. . . . They are like the centurions of a forgotten legion, inured to wind, sun, thirst, and freezing nights." That is how Jon Manchip White describes quiver trees in his book *The Land God Made in Anger*.

Actually, the quiver tree is one of 150 species of aloe that grow in southern Africa. Though it has spiky, succulent leaves, it grows in regions that receive little or no rain. It survives by storing water in its trunk. Every June and July, the quiver tree is thus able to treat the local birds, bees, and baboons to a copious feast of nectar from its bright yellow flowers.

Why, though, is this tree popularly called the quiver tree? Because the Bushmen, the innovative hunter-gatherers of southern Africa, used the branches of the tree to fashion quivers for their arrows. These resourceful inventors removed the soft fibrous core of the branch, leaving the hard outer shell to dry into a hollow tube. Hence its name—the quiver tree.

**Young
People
Ask . . .**



Why Stay a Virgin?

VIRGINITY," says writer Lesley Jane Nonkin, "has become like baby teeth, 'something to lose before graduation.'" Statements like this reflect the permissive, free-wheeling attitude that many youths have toward sex. Nowadays, a youth who is still a virgin is likely to be viewed as a curiosity, an oddball. In one youth survey, boys admitted that they were "desperate" to lose their virginity. Virgin girls admitted to feeling "abnormal."

As a previous article showed, however, virginity is proper in the eyes of God.* He holds it in high esteem and condemns premarital sex as morally wrong and harmful. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8) Even so, staying a virgin re-

quires standing up to immense pressures. Why should a youth do so? Are there advantages to remaining a virgin?

The Way to Find Love?

Many youths think of sex as simply a way to express love—or to be loved by someone. It's only natural to want to be loved. And youths often have particular needs in this regard. Explains the book *Coping With Teenage Depression*: "The decreasing amount of intimacy and nurturing in many families causes teenagers to look elsewhere for such comfort and closeness. Many families today lead busy lives with little time for each other and for shared activities and confidences. . . . If the teen can't find love and caring at home, he or she . . . will see sexual activity as the ultimate step toward intimacy and the proof of being loved and valued."

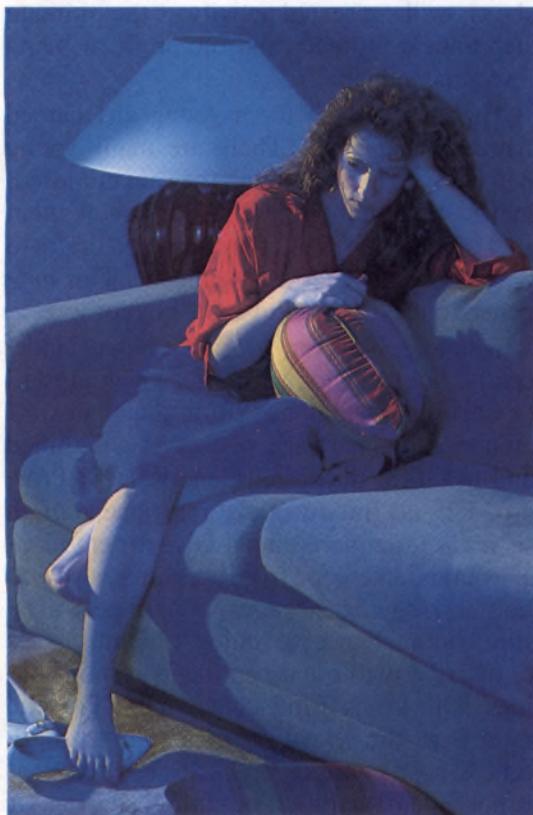
This proved true for a young girl named Ann. She explains: "There are many young persons who feel as though they are not loved, maybe because their parents don't show them a lot of attention. Soon they need and desire to be loved or to be close to someone. This happened to me. I turned to some boy for love."

True love, however, "does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests." (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5) Within the context of an honorable marriage, sex serves a dignified and beautiful purpose. (Genesis 1:28; Proverbs 5:15-19) But outside of marriage, it often serves as little more than a salve for emotional wounds, an escape from pressures, a way to bolster a sagging ego, a response to peer pressure, or a chance to enjoy the intimacies of marriage without accepting its responsibilities. Dr. Louis Fine concluded: "For the most part, the sexual act of a young adolescent is hostile, angry, and self-destructive; it is not a demonstration of caring, sharing, or feeling."—"After All We've Done for Them"—*Understanding Adolescent Behavior*.

* See the March 22, 1992, issue of *Awake!*

Ann found this to be true in her case. "I got pregnant," she recalls. "And when that happened, I realized that my parents did care, that they did love me. It was my parents who stuck by me through my pregnancy—not the guy I turned to for love. He's gone."

Even when no dire consequences, such as pregnancy, result, illicit relations often leave one feeling hurt and empty. Says the book *The Private Life of the American Teenager*: "Some feel exploited by boyfriends who threaten to walk out unless they agree to have intercourse. And if they do agree, they often end up feeling used, especially if the relationship ends or if it continues on a purely sexual basis."



Many who give up their virginity before marriage feel used and exploited

When Too Young to Marry

Some feel that sex can help a couple to draw close to each other. But if a couple is too young to marry, what purpose does getting so close serve? The result can only be emotional pain when the relationship suffers its virtually inevitable breakup. In his book *How to Raise Parents*, writer Clayton Barbeau reminds us that "adolescence is when you're putting yourself together, finding out who you are." He asks: "If you don't know who you are, how can you love, and therefore know, someone else?"

Besides, sex in a courtship tends to squelch, not promote, meaningful communication. At the same time, feelings of guilt can work to drive a couple apart. (Romans 2:15) "My guilt caused an even wider gap in our relationship," confessed one girl. "I resented [my boyfriend] for making me feel so bad about myself. I couldn't even look my parents in the eyes anymore I felt so ashamed." Laments another youth: "I threw away everything I believed in, my values and self-respect, and my clean conscience—all in order to feel loved."

Writer Clayton Barbeau thus summed it up well when he said: "I think teenagers playing with sex are like infants handling nitroglycerin."

The Key to a Happy Marriage?

Some youths feel that gaining sexual experience will better prepare them for marriage. The facts show otherwise. For one thing, intimate problems in marriage are usually related to emotional factors—not a lack of sexual experience. If anything, premarital sex is destructive to a marriage. It tears down mutual respect and teaches a couple to relate to each other primarily on a physical basis; emotional intimacy is neglected. As the book *Building a Successful Marriage* observes: "Premarital intercourse must of necessity be chiefly on

the physical level, characterized by selfishness rather than mutuality." In the long run, a selfish view of sex results in marital misery. Marital satisfaction comes when a married couple apply Bible principles and are more concerned with giving than with selfishly receiving.—1 Corinthians 7:3; compare Acts 20:35.

The book *Why Wait Till Marriage?* points out another problem: "Men and women who have been permissive sexually before marriage cannot be expected to change miraculously when they marry. With few exceptions, they continue to manage their sex impulses as they did before they married." The book concludes: "If fidelity in marriage is important to you, then recognize that it is tied in with fidelity before marriage." Remaining a virgin until marriage can help you develop the moral strength needed to obey the Bible's command: "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers."—Hebrews 13:4.

An article in a respected medical journal thus concludes: "It is clear that virgins have a better predicted chance for marital success because they often have other virtues, such as greater devotion to duty, more ability to delay gratification, increased concern for following the rules, and similar characteristics." Those who foolishly discard their virginity will thus have much to regret.* Said one girl: "I am 14 years old and have lost my virginity. With all my heart and soul, I deeply regret it. My

* Those who have lost their virginity because of rape or child abuse can take comfort in knowing that God still views them as "blameless and innocent." (Philippians 2:15) Any who engaged in fornication before gaining a knowledge of Bible principles can similarly be comforted in knowing that because of exercising faith in Jesus' ransom, they have been "washed clean" in God's sight. (1 Corinthians 6:11) A Christian who has fallen into immorality but then sincerely repents and recovers can also acquire a clean standing before God. Loving, understanding marriage mates have often been willing to forgive under these circumstances.

heart aches because I wanted to be the virgin lady my future husband would desire."

Avoid Wronging Yourself

There is one final advantage to virginity that you should consider. The Bible shows that those who flout God's laws are "wronging themselves as a reward for wrongdoing." (2 Peter 2:13) How could premarital sex result in such a wronging of yourself? Consider, for example, an article in *Seventeen* magazine: "AIDS researchers say they are becoming increasingly alarmed by what they see as a growing spread of the AIDS virus among teenagers." Yet, in spite of all the publicity surrounding this deadly disease, one study reveals that "only about one-third [of youths surveyed] had altered their sexual behavior as a result of fear of the disease."

Such youths also fail to realize that immoral behavior may result in pregnancy, a score of sexually transmitted diseases in addition to AIDS, emotional trauma, a seared conscience, and—worst of all—a damaged relationship with God. Do not wrong yourself. Proverbs 14:16 says: "The wise one fears and is turning away from badness." Do not be lulled into believing the myth of "safe sex." As far as God is concerned, the only sex that is safe and acceptable is within the bond of marriage. Until then, treasure your virginity. Don't let others make you ashamed of it or persuade you to toss it away.

In Our Next Issue

Help! We Are Aliens

"I Was Determined to Die for the Emperor"

What Should Be Done if a Minister Sins?

Watching the World

Warped Priorities

The desperate living conditions in developing countries could greatly improve if governments would only modify their national budgets, according to the Dutch magazine *Internationale Samenwerking* (International Cooperation). Basing its conclusions on a recent report issued by the UN Development Program, the magazine states that "if developing countries would merely freeze their defense budgets," they could save over \$10 billion a year. Such a sum, which the magazine calls a peace dividend, could pay for basic education, primary health care, sufficient food, and safe drinking water. However, the magazine also notes that many countries "are presently spending at least twice as much on weapons as on education and health care," listing as examples nations in Africa, Asia, and South America.

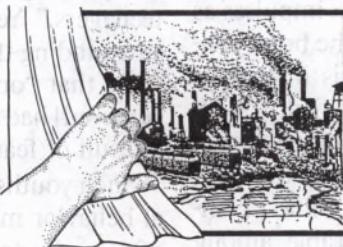
Promoting Tobacco in Africa

As smoking continues to take its toll on millions of Africans, health officials are speaking out. Says Dr. Paul Wangai, a World Health Organization consultant in Kenya, Africa: "Tobacco . . . is the only product I know that kills if used as intended by the manufacturer." According to the southern African newspaper *Lesotho Today*, "175 billion cigarettes are smoked in Africa every year." This means spending the equivalent of three and a half times the national budget of Côte d'Ivoire. Dr. Wangai asserts that cigarette manufacturers unscrupulously take advantage of the lack of restrictions on advertising in Africa as well as the prevailing ignorance of the health hazards of

smoking. According to *Lesotho Today*, cigarette advertising and packaging in most of Africa does not carry "health warnings as is the requirement in developed countries."

Polluted Cup of Freedom

The fall of the Iron Curtain has revealed that Eastern Europe is swamped with environmental problems, says *London Calling*, the



program journal of the British Broadcasting Corporation. "Unregulated chemical factories, polluted waterways, dying forests and unsafe nuclear reactors," reports the journal, form only a fraction of the "environmental legacy left by Communism . . . , bitter dregs in the cup of freedom."

Granny Dumping

Hospital workers call the practice granny dumping. Family members bring an aged relative to a hospital emergency ward, often citing some physical complaint that may call for a battery of expensive tests and a stay of a night or more. After the tests, the hospital tries to contact the elderly person's family, only to learn that the address and phone number that they left are false. Some nursing homes follow a similar practice. While an aged resident is in the hospital, they simply give his or her bed away—often to a more reliable paying customer—

and then refuse the hospital's efforts to return the patient. According to *Newsweek* magazine, experts agree that this practice is on the increase. It notes that in one informal survey, "some doctors reported as many as eight elderly patients dumped on their emergency wards every week."

Drilling in the Arteries

Doctors in Australia are using an unusual new tool to clear blocked heart arteries, reports *Asiaweek* magazine. Called the Rotablator, the tool has a tiny head encrusted with thousands of microscopic diamond chips. As the head spins at 190,000 revolutions per minute, it sands away highly calcified arterial blockages, breaking them up into particles that are too fine to pose any danger of causing a stroke by getting stuck in the brain. The bloodstream simply sweeps them away safely. According to *Asiaweek*, the tool is so precise that "in demonstrations it grinds a groove in the outer shell of a raw egg without breaking the inner membrane."

A Positive Role Model?

"I am gay!" These words came from a surprising source recently—a comic-book superhero. Northstar, red-suited Canadian hero of a popular comic book published by Marvel Comics, was depicted in a recent issue as declaring that he is a homosexual. Although the character was previously billed as "Canada's most eligible bachelor," homosexuals have long suspected that he was intended to be gay, according to the *New York Daily News*. Homosexual groups praised the latest revelation, which is trumpeted on the comic book's cover with the words: "Northstar as You've Never Known Him Be-

fore!" As a parent, do you consider a homosexual to be a positive role model for your children? God's Word the Bible condemns those who "become inflamed in their lust for one another, males with males." It calls what they do "obscene." —Romans 1:24-27.

A Trunkless Tree

"At present, we no longer have a global explanation for the evolution of life on earth," says *Le Figaro-Magazine* of Paris. Reporting on an international conference held in Blois, France, where 200 leading scientists from around the world met to discuss the origin of life, the magazine observes that "the old theories are collapsing." The magazine sums up the comments of several scientists this way: "The Darwinian theory can explain a certain number of secondary things but not the essential stages of evolution, such as the appearance of new organs or new types of organization such as birds or the vertebrates." Commenting on the huge gaps that riddle the theory, paleontologist Robert Fondi said: "If we picture a genealogical tree of evolution, only the leaves and a few branches exist but no knots or trunk. It is a tree that cannot stand!"

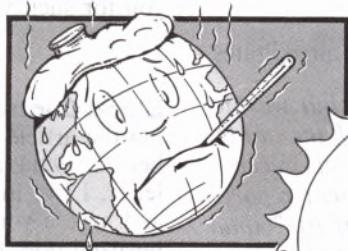
Mentally Ill and Homeless

The number of people who are both homeless and mentally ill continues to surge upward in the United States. In fact, the ranks of this pitiful group swelled by 7 percent in just the past year, according to a survey of 21 North American cities taken by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The 21 cities reported an estimated total of 208,000 homeless, about a third of whom—69,000 people—are severely mentally ill. The survey included the three largest cities in the country—New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Some mayors at the con-

ference complained that this problem is largely due to a lack of government funding for mental-health care for the mentally handicapped.

Earth's Temperature Rising

The 1980's were a hot decade. *Perspectives*, a magazine published by the International Institute for Environment and Development, reports that "six of the seven warmest years over the 140 year period that temperature records were kept have



all occurred since 1980." And according to data released by the British Meteorological Office, 1990 was the hottest year on record. This information, claims *Perspectives*, "confirms that the average surface air temperature is rising and provides new evidence that the globe is set on a general warming trend."

The Dogs of Paris

With one dog for every ten humans, Paris, France, boasts the densest canine population of any European capital. These 200,000 dogs deposit some ten tons of waste on the streets daily. The city spends \$8 million (FFr42m) a year to employ a fleet of motorbike-riding sanitation workers who scoop up nearly half of the excrement, while the rest is supposedly washed into the gutters and sewers. However, so much of the offensive stuff remains on city pavements that it ranks as the third most common complaint that Parisians make about their city. The city is now launching a campaign to en-

force laws that order people to clean up after their dogs.

The Plague of Juvenile Crime

"Juvenile delinquency is on the increase. It has doubled in the last five years. It has increased by a third in just the last few months." This is the dark picture painted by statistics on the growth of juvenile crime in Italy between 1986 and 1990, according to the newspaper *La Repubblica*. Cases of grievous bodily harm inflicted in 1986 numbered 3,064, while in 1990 there were 6,092 such crimes involving juveniles. There were 715 cases of drug trafficking and consumption in 1986, compared with 2,113 in 1990. Sadly, Italy is not alone in this regard. At the Second International Conference on Security, held in Paris in November, it was mentioned that with the exception of Japan, juvenile crime is on the increase everywhere in the world.

"The Storks of the Night"

In Brazil, *Veja* magazine reports that a clandestine women's organization is leaving babies at the doorsteps of well-to-do families. After depositing the child, they ring the bell and run off to watch from a car parked nearby. Later that night they telephone the family anonymously, urging them to adopt the baby. The family never hears from the women again. *Veja* reports that in the last six years, 60 wealthy families in Feira de Santana, Brazil, have thus found newborn babes at the doorway. The group of women, known as "the storks of the night," are supposedly trying to help children who have been abandoned, but the practice is controversial. Márcia Serra Negra, a lawyer and specialist in family matters, is quoted as saying: "What the storks are doing is a kind of coercion."

From Our Readers

Cancer Treatments I believe that the item "Treatments Compared" that appeared in the "Watching the World" section (September 22, 1991) was seriously misleading. It implies that people suffering from cancer would benefit just as much from unconventional therapy as they would from treatment at an established medical center. The tenor of *The New England Journal of Medicine* article upon which your item was based is quite different from your item.

A. R., M.D., United States

Our brief item was accurate, but we did fail to report one key finding of the study, namely, that terminally ill patients receiving conventional medical treatment reported a "significantly better quality of life" than those receiving unorthodox treatments. Nevertheless, as our item showed, neither treatment proved effective in prolonging the patients' lives. The study thus suggested that a "no-treatment alternative" for some terminally ill patients be considered. Readers should also note that, according to the researchers themselves, these findings "cannot be generalized to patients with less advanced stages of [cancer]." The authors of the study conclude that some unorthodox treatments "may warrant appropriate investigation" by medical researchers.—ED.

Eastern European Conventions I found the series "Lovers of Godly Freedom Rejoice in Eastern Europe" to be very moving. (December 22, 1991) It was as though I could hear the shouts of joy and the applause as our Christian brothers there received new Bible publications in their own languages. Since it was not possible for me to be present at those conventions, I am grateful that you published these articles, which enabled us, in some measure, to be able to share their joy and better appreciate the freedom we enjoy.

M. M., Italy

Flirting I read the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Avoid the Hurt of Flirting?" (December 8, 1991) It touched my heart, since I had an experience like the one related in the article. One subheading read "Don't Be Hurt by a Flirt!" That is hard because by the time you realize you are the victim of a flirt, you may already have been hurt. But as the article says, we may have to receive a few bruises and scratches on the way to true love. Thank you for such valuable articles.

S. C. S. M., Brazil

Blood Controversy I've just finished reading the article "Never Say Never!" (September 22, 1991), and I'm in tears as I write this letter. I live in a religiously divided household and have a young daughter. Even though my husband does not oppose my faith now, if a situation arose with our daughter where blood transfusion was an issue, he would. This article reinforced in my mind the need to train our children so that they themselves can take a stand for Bible principles at an early age.

L. W., United States

Wool and Moths In your article "The Wonder of Wool" (September 22, 1991), you state: "You probably don't need to be reminded that moths love wool. They lay their eggs so that the newly hatched caterpillars have plenty to eat." However, the vast majority of moths do not damage wool or any other fabric! That statement will convince people that all moths are a hazard and should be killed.

T. K., England

The article hardly called for the wholesale extermination of moths but simply offered practical suggestions to prevent moth infestation. Interestingly, according to "Grzimek's Animal Life Encyclopedia," the types of moths that feed on wool "are very reluctant to fly. Most of the moths which do fly about in houses belong to other, harmless families."—ED.

Religious Freedom in Bulgaria

Six buses from Bulgaria, carrying over 300 delegates to the "Lovers of Freedom" District Convention, arrived at the convention grounds outside Thessalonica, Greece, Thursday night, July 11, 1991. Because of the civil war in neighboring Yugoslavia and the unrest it created in the area, these delegates had been unable to obtain their visas until the last possible moment.

On Wednesday afternoon embassy personnel in Sofia, Bulgaria, stayed overtime in order to process the visas. Thus, the buses were able to pick up delegates from various parts of Bulgaria just in time to get them to the convention site the night before the convention was to start on Friday, July 12.

At the time, Jehovah's Witnesses were banned in Bulgaria, so what a thrill it was for them freely to enjoy Christian fellowship in the neighboring country of Greece! A hall at the convention site, with an attractively decorated stage (seen in the photograph), had been prepared for the Bulgarian visitors. How delighted and grateful the visitors were to have practically the entire program presented in their own language! The exception was the Bible drama. A 15-minute talk



summarizing the drama was given in Bulgarian, and then the delegates met with their Greek brothers to watch its presentation.

A highlight of the Bulgarian convention was the baptism discourse on Saturday morning. A peak of 342 attended, and 39 were baptized (some of them seen standing above). The delegates were also thrilled by the release, in their own language, of the brochure *Spirits of the Dead—Can They Help You or Harm You? Do They Really Exist?* and the publication *My Book of Bible Stories*.

But the greatest thrill of all awaited the delegates shortly after they returned home to Bulgaria. On July 17, less than a week after the convention, the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses were legalized in Bulgaria! Remarkably, the following month the congregation publishers in Bulgaria averaged 21.2 hours in their ministry. How happy we can be that religious freedom is being enjoyed in yet another Eastern European country!

A Lawyer's View of Life

LIFE—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation? Millions have pondered over this. A thoroughly researched, 256-page book with the above title was published in 1985 to examine these questions. Already, over 26 million copies of the book have been printed in 28 languages. After reading it, a semi-retired attorney wrote in appreciation:

"Over the past two years, I have read it four times and continue to be impressed with the depth of study, scholarship, and documentation that went into its production.

"Please continue to publish it. This book should be in the hands of every person in the world. Should this happen, all the carpings and confusion over our origins and the atheistic beliefs would be ended immediately.

"I have degrees in both law and political science and history and can recall no single book which so lucidly and forcefully develops its premises. The bibliography is beyond compare."

