

Awake!

May 22, 1994

***YOUTHS WHO
PUT GOD FIRST***



Youths Who Put God First 3-15

In former times thousands of youths died for putting God first. They are still doing it, only today the drama is played out in hospitals and courtrooms, with blood transfusions the issue.



What If I Fall For an Unbeliever? 18

Heartache can follow if you ignore the counsel to "marry only in the Lord."



Put Humor Into Your Life 25

Why? Because it's indicative of many things—values, interests, imagination, needs.

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HE 'REMEMBERED HIS CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF HIS YOUTH'



ADRIAN always drew more than his share of parental attention," his father said. "At age four he drove the family car into a tree, making everyone late for the congregation meeting. At five he collected dozens of frogs and brought them into the house. It took days to get rid of those things. We felt like a family of Egyptians during the Biblical plague of frogs.

"When he was 11, he found three young raccoons alongside the highway and took them to school in his book bag. When the teacher came in, the classroom was in a turmoil—children crowded around Adrian's book bag, chattering excitedly. The teacher looked in, saw the raccoons, and drove him and his pets to a facility that took in animal orphans. Adrian was in tears at the thought of losing his babies, but after touring the facility and seeing baby foxes and other orphans well cared for, he left his raccoons there."

His father continued: "Adrian wasn't a bad boy. Just a very busy one. A lively imagination that kept life interesting."

Adrian's mother showed another side of him—family oriented, a homebody, a very loving boy. She relates: "The children at school described him as a person who would not hurt anyone. A girl in his class was limited mentally though not retarded. She rode the school bus with Adrian. Other children made fun of her, but her mother told us that Adrian always treated her daughter with respect and a special kindness. He had a serious side to him—a very thoughtful boy with deep feelings who didn't express them often. But when he did, he surprised us with comments that cut to the heart of matters."

She concluded her assessment of her son: "His sickness made him mature quickly and produced a deeper spirituality in him."

He Was Adamant—No Blood!

His sickness? Yes. It started in March 1993, when Adrian was 14 years old. A fast-growing tumor was found in his stomach. The doctors wanted a biopsy but feared excessive bleeding and said that a blood transfusion might be necessary. Adrian said no. He was adamant. He said, with tears in his eyes: "I just could not live with myself if I am given blood." He and his family were Jehovah's Witnesses, who reject blood transfusions on the Biblical grounds recorded at Leviticus 17:10-12 and Acts 15:28, 29.

While in the Dr. Charles A. Janeway Child Health Centre in St. John's, Newfoundland, awaiting the biopsy—to be done without blood—Adrian was asked by oncologist Dr. Lawrence Jardine to express himself on the matter of blood.

"Look," Adrian said, "it wouldn't matter whether my parents were Jehovah's Witnesses or not. I still wouldn't take blood."

Dr. Jardine asked, "Do you realize that you could die if you don't take a blood transfusion?"

"Yes."

"And you're willing to do that?"

"If that's what it takes."

His mother, also present, asked, "Why are you taking such a stand?"

Adrian replied: "Mom, it's not a good trade. To disobey God and extend my life for a few years now and then because of my dis-

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.

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obedience to God lose out on a resurrection and living forever in his paradise earth —that's just not smart!”—Psalm 37:10, 11; Proverbs 2:21, 22.

The biopsy was performed on March 18. It showed that Adrian had a large lymphoma tumor. A subsequent bone marrow biopsy confirmed the fear that he had developed leukemia. Dr. Jardine now explained that a very aggressive chemotherapy program with blood transfusions was the only way Adrian could possibly live. Adrian, however, still refused blood transfusions. Chemotherapy was started, without the transfusions.

Now, however, with this critical stage of treatment underway, there was fear that the Child Welfare Department might intervene and get a court order for custody and the power to give blood transfusions. The law allowed for anyone 16 years old or over to make his own decision on treatment. The only way for anyone under 16 to have that right was to be classed as a mature minor.

In Newfoundland's Supreme Court

So on Sunday morning, July 18, the acting director of Child Welfare did initiate court proceedings to obtain custody. Quickly, an outstanding and highly respected lawyer, David C. Day, Q.C., of St. John's, Newfoundland, was retained to represent Adrian. That same afternoon, at 3:30, the Supreme Court of Newfoundland convened, Justice Robert Wells presiding.

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'The Life Is in the Blood'

Blood is incredibly complex, reaching every cell in the body. Within a single drop, 250,000,000 red blood cells carry oxygen and remove carbon dioxide; 400,000 white cells seek out and destroy unwanted invaders; 15,000,000 platelets gather instantly where there is a cut and start clotting to seal off the break. All of these are suspended in clear, ivory-colored plasma, which is itself made up of hundreds of ingredients playing vital roles in the blood's long list of duties. Scientists don't understand all that blood does.

No wonder Jehovah God, the Creator of this miraculous fluid, declares that 'the life is in the blood.'—Leviticus 17:11, 14.

During the afternoon session, Dr. Jardine made it very clear to the judge that he considered Adrian a mature minor who had a deep conviction against the use of blood and that he, Dr. Jardine, had promised Adrian that he would not include blood transfusion in any treatment. Justice Wells asked the doctor that if it came to a court-ordered transfusion, would he administer it? Dr. Jardine answered: "No, I personally would not do it." He mentioned that Adrian felt that his Biblical hope of eternal life would be threatened. The sincere testimony of this outstanding doctor was both amazing and heartwarming and brought tears of joy to Adrian's parents.

If you would like more information about Jehovah's Witnesses or their publications, please send your request to Watch Tower at the appropriate address below.

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"Please Respect Me and My Wishes"

When the court reconvened on Monday, July 19, David Day presented copies of an affidavit that Adrian—too ill to appear in court—had prepared and signed stating his own wishes concerning the treatment of his cancer without blood or blood products. In it Adrian said:

"You think a lot about things when you are ill, and if you are ill from cancer, you know you could die and you think about that. . . . I won't agree to blood or let it be used; no way. I know I could die if no blood is used. But that is my decision. No one talked me into that. I trust Dr. Jardine very much. I believe he is a man of his word. He says he'll give me intense treatment with no blood ever being used. He told me the risks. I understand that. I know the worst. . . . The way I feel is that if I'm given any blood that will be like raping me, molesting my body. I don't want my body if that happens. I can't live with that. I don't want any treatment if blood is going to be used, even a possibility of it. I'll resist use of blood." Adrian's affidavit ended with this appeal: "Please respect me and my wishes."

Throughout the hearing Adrian was confined to his hospital room, and Justice Wells very kindly came to see him there, with David Day present. In giving an account of that interview, Mr. Day spoke of Adrian's riveting and compelling remarks to the judge on this one theme, in essence: "I know I'm very ill, and I know I could die. Some medical people say blood will help. I don't think so, with all the dangers I read about it. Whether or not it helps, my faith is opposed to blood. Respect my faith and you'll respect me. If you don't respect my faith, I'll feel violated. If you do respect my faith, I can face my sickness with dignity. Faith is about all I've got, and now it's the most important thing I need to help me fight the disease."

Mr. Day had some comments of his own about Adrian: "He was a client capable of handling his critical illness patiently, stoically, and bravely. There was resolve in his eyes; understated confidence in his voice; pluck in his manner. Above all, his verbal and body language communicated to me an abiding faith. His signature was faith. Uncompromising illness required him to build bridges between youthful dreams and adult reality. Faith assisted him to do so. . . . He was unhesitatingly candid and, to my mind, truthful. . . . I was alert to the consideration whether his parents [had imposed] upon him their opposition to blood use in the medical treatment of him. . . . I was satisfied [that] he exercised a mind of his own in expressing his wish for medical treatment absent blood."

On another occasion Mr. Day remarked on Adrian's beliefs that "were more dear to him than life itself" then added: "This steadfast young man, in the face of such problems, makes me feel that all the woes of my life are nothing. He will be etched in my memory forever. He is a mature minor of enormous courage, insight, and intelligence."

The Decision—Adrian a Mature Minor

On Monday, July 19, the hearing concluded, and Justice Wells rendered his decision, which was later published in the *Human Rights Law Journal*, September 30, 1993. Excerpts follow:

"For the following reasons, the applications of the Director of Child Welfare are dismissed; the child is not in need of protection; the use of blood or blood products for the purposes of blood transfusion or injection have not been demonstrated to be essential, and in the particular circumstances of this case, could be harmful.

"Unless a change in circumstances necessitates a further order, the use of blood or blood products in his treatment is prohibited:

and the boy is declared to be a mature minor whose wish to receive medical treatment without blood or blood products is to be respected.

"There is no question that this 'young person' is very courageous. I think he has the support of a loving and caring family, and I think he is facing his affliction with a great deal of courage. Part of his religious belief is that it is wrong for him to use blood products by having them introduced into his body, for whatever purposes . . . I have had the advantage of reading an affidavit that was made by A. yesterday, and I have had the advantage of hearing his mother, who gave evidence, and have had the advantage of talking to A. himself.

"I am satisfied that he believes with all his heart that to take blood would be wrong and that to be forced to take blood in the circumstances about which we are speaking would be an invasion of his body, an invasion of his privacy, and an invasion of his whole being, to the extent that it would impact severely on his strength and ability to cope with the dreadful ordeal that he has to undergo, whatever the outcome.

"I agree that the doctor made eminent sense when he said that the patient must be in a cooperative and positive frame of mind about chemotherapy and other cancer treatments in order for there to be any hope, any real hope, of success, and that a patient on whom something is forced contrary to his most deeply held beliefs would be a patient whose suitability for the treatment would be drastically reduced. . . .

"I think that what has happened to A. has matured him to a degree that would be unthinkable for a 15-year-old who is not facing and living with what he is living with and has to face and is facing. I think that his experience is as bad an experience I can conceive of, and I suspect that their faith is one of the

Bloodless Heart Transplant

Last October, three-year-old Chandra Sharp was admitted to a hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., with a heart that was not only enlarged but also failing. She was undernourished, her growth stunted, her weight only 19 pounds, and she needed a heart transplant. She was given only a few weeks to live. Her parents agreed to the transplant but not to blood transfusion. They are Jehovah's Witnesses.

This was no issue with the surgeon, Dr. Charles Fraser. *The Flint Journal of Michigan* reported on December 1, 1993: "Fraser said the Cleveland Clinic and other medical centers are becoming adept at performing many surgeries—including transplants—without the infusion into the patient of other people's blood. 'We have learned more about how to conserve blood, and how to prime the heart-lung machine with solutions other than blood,' said Fraser." He then added: "Some specialty hospitals have for decades been doing major cardiovascular operations without blood transfusions. . . . We always try to do surgery without (transfused) blood."

On October 29, he performed the heart transplant on Chandra without blood. A month later Chandra was reported doing well.

things that is sustaining him and his family. I think that what has happened has made A. mature beyond any normal expectation or maturity in a 15-year-old. I think the boy that I spoke to this morning is very different from a normal 15-year-old, because of this tragic experience.

"I think he is mature enough to express a cogent view, and he has expressed it to me . . . I am also satisfied that it is proper . . . for me to take into consideration his wishes, and I do

so. His wishes are that blood products not be administered, and I am satisfied also that if these wishes are countermanded in some fashion by the Director under an order of this Court, that his best interests would be manifestly and in a very real sense adversely affected . . . Furthermore, if—and this is very possible—he should indeed succumb to this disease, he would do so in a state of mind that, taking into consideration his religious beliefs, would be very sad, very unfortunate, and not at all to be desired. I am taking all these things into consideration. . . .

"In all of the circumstances, I feel that it is proper for me to deny the request that blood products be used in A.'s treatment."

Adrian's Message to Justice Wells

It was a remarkably thoughtful message that this young boy, who knew he was dying, sent to Justice Robert Wells, which was passed along by Mr. David Day, as follows: "I think I would be remiss if I did not, on behalf of my client with whom I spoke but briefly after you left the hospital today, thank you from the bottom of his heart, which is a very big heart, for your having dealt with this matter with expedition and with sensitivity and with great fairness. He is ever so grateful to you, My Lord, and I wish the record to show that. Thank you."

Adrian's mother recounts the closing events of the story.

"After the trial Adrian asked Dr. Jardine, 'How much longer do I have?' The doctor's answer: 'One or two weeks.' I saw my son shed one tear, squeezed out from between tightly closed lids. I went to put my arms around him, and he said: 'Don't, Mom. I'm praying.' After a few moments, I asked, 'How are you dealing with this, Adrian?' 'Mom, I'm going to live anyway, even if I die. And if I've only got two weeks to live, I want to enjoy them. So you've got to cheer up.'

"He wanted to visit the Watch Tower's branch in Georgetown, Canada. He did that. He swam in the pool there with one of his buddies. He went to a game of the Blue Jays baseball team and had his picture taken with some of the players. Most important, in his heart he had dedicated himself to serve Jehovah God, and now he wanted to symbolize that by water immersion. By now his condition had worsened, and he was back in the hospital and could no longer leave it. So the nurses kindly arranged for him to use one of the stainless steel tanks in the physiotherapy room. He was baptized there September 12; he died the next day, September 13.

"His funeral was the largest that the funeral home had ever had—nurses, doctors, parents of patients, classmates, neighbors, and many of his spiritual brothers and sisters from his own and other congregations. As parents, we never realized all the wonderful qualities that became evident in our son as he endured his many trials or the kindness and thoughtfulness that were part of his developing Christian personality. The inspired psalmist said: 'Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah.' Certainly this one was, and we look forward to seeing him in Jehovah's new world of righteousness, to be established soon now in a paradise earth."—Psalm 127:3; James 1:2, 3.

May we anticipate fulfillment for Adrian of Jesus' promise at John 5:28, 29: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment."

By rejecting blood transfusions that could conceivably have extended his present life, Adrian Yeatts showed himself to be one of the many young people who put God first.

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YOUTHS WHO HAVE "POWER BEYOND WHAT IS NORMAL"

YOU are young. Only 12. You have a family you love. You have school friends you enjoy. You have outings at the beach and in the mountains. You feel awe when gazing at a night sky packed with stars. You have your whole life ahead of you.

And now you have cancer. Such news is a blow when you're 60. It's total devastation when you're 12.

Lenae Martinez

So it seemed for 12-year-old Lenae Martinez. Her hope was to live forever on a paradise earth. This hope was bolstered by the Bible training she had received from her parents, who are Jehovah's Witnesses. Had not she herself read in the Bible that the earth would continue forever, that it was created to be inhabited forever, and that the meek would inherit it forever?—Ecclesiastes 1:4; Isaiah 45:18; Matthew 5:5.

Now she was in the Valley Children's Hospital in Fresno, California, U.S.A. She had been admitted there for what appeared to be a kidney



infection. Tests revealed, however, that she had leukemia. The doctors treating Lenae determined that packed red blood cells and platelets should be transfused and chemotherapy started immediately.

Lenae said that she wanted no blood or blood products, that she had been taught that God forbids that, as shown in the Bible books of Leviticus and Acts. "For the holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication."

(Acts 15:28, 29) Her parents supported her in this stand, but

Lenae stressed that it was her decision and it was very important to her.

The doctors talked several times with Lenae and her parents. Even so, they came again one afternoon. Lenae said concerning this visit: "I was feeling very weak from all the pain and had been vomiting a lot of blood. They asked me the same questions,

only in a different way. I told them again: 'I don't want any blood or blood products. I would rather accept death, if necessary, than to break my promise to Jehovah God to do his will.'"

Lenae continued: "They were back the next morning. The platelets were dropping, and my fever was still high. I could tell the doctor listened to me more this time. Even though they didn't like my stand, they did say I was a very mature 12-year-old. Later my pediatrician came in and told me he was sorry but nothing would help me but the chemotherapy and transfusions. He left and said he would be back later.

"When he left, I started to cry very hard because he had taken care of me all my life, and now I felt like he was betraying me. When he came in later, I told him how he had made me feel—that he didn't care about me anymore. This surprised him, and he said he was sorry. He did not mean to hurt me. He looked at me and said: 'Well, Lenae, if that is the way it has to be, then I will see you in heaven.' He took his glasses off and, with big tears in his eyes, said he loved me and gave me a big hug. I thanked him and said: 'Thank you. I love you too, Dr. Gillespie, but I hope to live on a paradise earth in the resurrection.'"

Then two doctors and a lawyer came, told Lenae's parents that they wanted to talk to her alone, and asked the parents to leave, which they did. Through all this discussion, the doctors had been very considerate and kind and were impressed with Lenae's articulate way of speaking and her deep conviction.

When alone with her, they told her that she was dying of leukemia and said: "But blood transfusions will prolong your life. If you refuse blood, you will die in a few days."

"If I take blood," Lenae asked, "how long will that prolong my life?"

"About three to six months," they answered.

"What can I do in six months?" she asked.

"You will get strong. You can do many things. You can visit Disney World. You can see many other places."

Lenae thought a bit, then answered: "I have served Jehovah all my life, 12 years. He has promised me everlasting life in Paradise if I obey him. I will not turn away from him now for six months of life. I want to be faithful until I die. Then I know in his due time he will resurrect me from death and give me everlasting life. Then I will have plenty of time for everything I want to do."

The doctors and the lawyer were visibly impressed. They commended her and went out and told her parents that she thinks and talks like an adult and is able to make her own decisions. They recommended to the ethics committee of the Valley Children's Hospital that Lenae be viewed as a mature minor. This committee, made up of doctors and other health-care professionals, along with a professor of ethics from Fresno State University, made the decision to allow Lenae to make her own decisions with regard to her medical treatment. They considered Lenae a mature minor. No court order was sought.

After a long, difficult night, at 6:30 a.m., September 22, 1993, Lenae fell asleep in death in the arms of her mother. The dignity and calmness of that night are etched in the minds of those present. There were 482 who attended the memorial service, including doctors, nurses, and teachers, who had been impressed by Lenae's faith and integrity.

The parents and friends of Lenae were deeply grateful that the doctors and nurses and administrators of the Valley Children's Hospital were so perceptive in discerning the maturity of this minor and that no court case was necessary to make that decision.

Crystal Moore

Such consideration was not accorded 17-year-old Crystal Moore when she was admitted to Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City. She was suffering from inflammatory bowel disease. Upon her admission to the hospital, Crystal, along with her parents, emphasized repeatedly her refusal to accept blood. She did not want to die; rather, she wanted medical treatment consistent with the Bible's command to abstain from blood.—Acts 15:28, 29.

The medical team caring for Crystal was certain that her condition required a blood transfusion. One doctor bluntly stated: "If Crystal does not have a blood transfusion by Thursday, June 15, then on Friday, June 16, she will be dead!" On June 16, Crystal was not dead, and the hospital applied to the Supreme Court of the State of New York for authority to force transfusions.

At the hearing, which was hurriedly convened at the hospital that morning, one of the physicians testified that Crystal needed two units of blood immediately and might need at least an additional ten units. He further stated that if Crystal tried to resist the transfusions, he would tie her to the bed with wrist and leg restraints to accomplish the procedure. Crystal told the doctors that she would "scream and holler" if they attempted to transfuse her and that as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, she viewed any forcible administration of blood to be as repulsive as rape.

Despite her attorney's repeated requests at the hearing, Crystal was denied the op-



portunity to speak for herself before the court to demonstrate her decision-making ability. Although Crystal had just received an award in the Super Youth Program in recognition of her academic excellence and leadership at her high school, the trial judge refused to allow her to testify on record about her refusal of blood. This amounted to a denial of Crystal's rights of due process of law, bodily self-determination, personal privacy, and religious freedom.

Although the trial court would not allow Crystal to testify on the record, the court did visit with Crystal alone in her room for about 20 minutes. After the visit the trial judge said that Crystal was "obviously very intelligent" and "very articulate" and explained that Crystal "certainly was sound in mind" and "capable of expressing herself fully." Despite these observations, the trial court adamantly refused to allow Crystal the opportunity to decide on her own medical care.

On Sunday morning, June 18, Crystal needed emergency surgery, which she consented to, but continued to reject blood. Only three ounces of blood was lost during the procedure. Yet, the physicians claimed that a postoperative blood transfusion might be required. Another doctor testified that no transfusion was needed. He had routinely treated similar cases without blood for the past 13 years, and no follow-up transfusions were ever needed.

On June 22, 1989, the trial court gave temporary custody of Crystal to the hospital for purposes of blood transfusion to be given

only if "necessary to protect and save her life." This guardianship terminated when Crystal was discharged from the hospital. Crystal never needed blood, and none was ever transfused, but it is shocking to see how the court treated Crystal.

Since being discharged from the hospital, Crystal graduated from high school with honors. Shortly afterward, she became a full-time minister as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. She became a tour guide at the Jersey City Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and volunteered as a member of a crew that builds and remodels Kingdom Halls.

Yet, the doctors at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center said that if she didn't get transfused on June 15, she would be dead on June 16 and that if she resisted the transfusion, she would be tied down with wrist and leg restraints. When doctors wanting court orders to give blood declare blatantly that if the judge doesn't comply immediately, the patient will die, let them remember the case of Crystal Moore.

Lisa Kosack

Lisa's first night in Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children was worse than a nightmare. She checked in at four in the afternoon and was immediately given a series of tests. She didn't get to her room until a quarter past eleven that evening. At midnight—well, let Lisa tell what happened. "At midnight a nurse came in and said: 'I have to give you some blood.' I cried out: 'I can't take blood because I'm one of Jehovah's Witnesses! I hope you know that! I hope you know that!' 'Well, yes, I do,' she said, and

immediately pulled out my IV and shoved in the blood. I was crying and becoming hysterical."

What callous and cruel treatment to inflict on a sick and frightened 12-year-old girl in the middle of the night in strange surroundings! Lisa's parents had taken her to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children hoping to find kind and cooperative doctors. Instead, their daughter was subjected to the harrowing midnight transfusion, in spite of both Lisa and her parents' position that blood or blood products are a violation of God's law and are not to be used.—Acts 15:28, 29.

The next morning the hospital sought a court order to give transfusions. The trial lasted five days, presided over by Judge David R. Main. It was held in a room at the hospital, Lisa in attendance all five days. Lisa had acute myeloid leukemia, a condition usually fatal, although the doctors testified that the rate of cure was 30 percent. They prescribed multiple blood transfusions and intensive chemotherapy—a treatment involving extreme pain and debilitating side effects.

On the fourth day of the trial, Lisa gave testimony. One of the questions put to her was how the forced midnight transfusion made her feel. She explained that it made her feel like a dog being used for an experiment, that she felt she was being raped, and that being a minor made some people think they could do anything to her. She hated seeing someone else's blood going into her, wondering if she would get AIDS or hepatitis or some other infectious disease from it. And chiefly, she was concerned about what Jehovah



Dangers of Blood Transfusion

The *New England Journal of Medicine*, issue of December 14, 1989, reported that a single unit of blood may carry enough AIDS virus to cause up to 1.75 million infections!

In 1987, after it became known that AIDS was being transmitted by the volunteer blood supply, the book *Autologous and Directed Blood Programs* lamented: "This was the most bitter of all medical ironies; that the precious life-giving gift of blood could turn out to be an instrument of death."

Dr. Charles Huggins, director of blood transfusion services at a Massachusetts, U.S.A., hospital, said: "It is the most dangerous substance we use in medicine."

The *Surgery Annual* concluded: "Clearly, the safest transfusion is the one not given."

Because there is a much higher recurrence of cancer after surgery where blood transfusions have been used, Dr. John S. Spratt said in *The American Journal of Surgery*, issue of

September 1986: "The cancer surgeon may need to become a bloodless surgeon."

The journal *Emergency Medicine* said: "Our experience with Jehovah's Witnesses might be interpreted to mean that we do not need to rely on blood transfusions, with all their potential complications, as much as we once thought."

The journal *Pathologist* referred to the refusal of Jehovah's Witnesses to take blood and said: "There is considerable evidence to support their contention, despite protestations from blood bankers to the contrary."

Dr. Charles H. Baron, professor of law at Boston College Law School, said concerning Jehovah's Witnesses' refusal to take blood: "All of American society has benefited. Not only Jehovah's Witnesses, but patients in general, are today less likely to be given unnecessary blood transfusions because of the work of the Witnesses' Hospital Liaison Committees."

would think of her breaking his law against taking someone else's blood into her body. She said if it ever happened again, she "would fight and kick the IV pole down and rip out the IV no matter how much it would hurt, and poke holes in the blood."

Her attorney asked, "How does it make you feel, the Children's Aid Society asking that custody be taken from your parents and given to them?"

"Well, it makes me feel very, very angry; it makes me feel that they are cruel because my parents have never beaten me, they have loved me and I love them, and whenever I was sick with strep throats or colds or anything, they took care of me. Their whole life was centered around me, and now just to have somebody, just because they disagree, to come and just remove me from them I

think is very, very mean, and it upsets me a lot."

"Do you want to die?"

"No, I don't think anybody wants to die, but if I do die I'm not going to be scared, because I know that I have the hope of everlasting life in a paradise on earth."

There were few dry eyes as Lisa courageously discussed her impending death, her faith in Jehovah, and her determination to remain obedient to his law on the sanctity of blood.

"Lisa," her attorney continued, "would it make any difference to you to know that the court orders you to take transfusions?"

"No, because I'm still going to remain faithful to my God and listen to his commands, because God is a lot more superior than any court or any man."

"Lisa, what would you like the judge to decide in this case?"

"Well, what I would like the judge to decide in this case is to have me just sent back to my parents and to have them to have custody again with me so I can be happy, and so I can go home and be in happy surroundings."

And that is what Judge Main did decide. Excerpts from his decision follow.

"L. has told this court clearly and in a matter-of-fact way that, if an attempt is made to transfuse her with blood, she will fight that transfusion with all of the strength that she can muster. She has said, and I believe her, that she will scream and struggle and that she will pull the injecting device out of her arm and will attempt to destroy the blood in the bag over her bed. I refuse to make any order which would put this child through that ordeal."

Concerning the forced midnight transfusion, he said:

"I must find that she has been discriminated against on the basis of her religion and her age pursuant to s. 15(1). In these circumstances, upon being given a blood transfusion, her right to the security of her person pursuant to s. 7 was infringed."

His impression of Lisa herself is interesting:

"L. is a beautiful, extremely intelligent, articulate, courteous, sensitive and, most importantly, a courageous person. She has wisdom and maturity well beyond her years and I think it would be safe to say that she has all of the positive attributes that any parent would want in a child. She has a well thought out, firm and clear religious belief. In my view, no amount of counselling from whatever source or pressure from her parents or anyone else, including an order of this court,

would shake or alter her religious beliefs. I believe that L. K. should be given the opportunity to fight this disease with dignity and peace of mind."

"Application dismissed."

Lisa and her family left the hospital that day. Lisa did, indeed, fight her disease with dignity and peace of mind. She died peacefully at home, in the loving arms of her mother and father. In so doing she joined the ranks of many other youthful Witnesses of Jehovah who put God first. As a result, she will, with them, enjoy the fulfillment of Jesus' promise: "He that loses his life for my sake will find it."—Matthew 10:39, footnote.

Ernestine Gregory

At 17 years of age, Ernestine was diagnosed as suffering from leukemia. Upon being hospitalized, she refused to consent to the use of blood products to support the chemotherapy the doctors wanted to administer. Because of Ernestine's refusal and her mother's support of her choice of nonblood treatment, the hospital reported the matter to the welfare officials in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., who in turn sought a court order to use blood. A hearing was arranged, at which the trial court heard testimony from Ernestine, a medical doctor, a psychiatrist, and an attorney, as well as from other people involved.

Ernestine told her doctor she did not want blood. That it was her own personal decision based on her reading of the Bible. That an involuntary transfusion administered under court order still disrespects God's law and is wrong in her eyes, regardless of court authority. That she was not opposed to medical treatment and did not want to die. That her decision was not a death wish, not suicidal; however, she did not fear death.

Stanley Yachnin, M.D., testified that he was "impressed with Ernestine's maturity, her sense of herself," and the sincerity of her religious beliefs. He also said Ernestine understood the nature and consequences of her illness. Because of her comprehension, Dr. Yachnin saw no need to call in a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

Nevertheless, one was called, Ner Littner, M.D., a psychiatrist, who after talking with Ernestine was of the opinion that she had the maturity of someone between the ages of 18 and 21. He stated that Ernestine exhibited an understanding of the implications of accepting or refusing blood transfusions. He said she accepted this, not because she was under the control of another, but because she believed this herself. Dr. Littner said Ernestine should be allowed to make her own decision in this matter.

Jane McAtee, an attorney for the hospital, testified that after interviewing Ernestine, she believed that Ernestine understood the nature of her illness and that she "seemed fully capable of understanding her decision and accepting the consequences of it."

The court too was very impressed with Ernestine's testimony. The court found that Ernestine was a mature 17-year-old, able to make informed medical decisions; yet, amazingly, the court granted an order allowing blood transfusions. At the hospital two doctors were standing by, transfusion equipment set up, and as soon as the court's decision came in, the transfusion was forcibly given to Ernestine in spite of her vigorous protests. The court's order was promptly appealed but



not in time to stop the hospital's precipitate transfusion.

To stop any further transfusions, the trial court's order was first appealed to the Illinois Appellate Court. In a two-to-one decision, the Appellate Court held that Ernestine could not be forced to submit to blood transfusions against her will. The court reasoned that Ernestine's First Amendment right of religious free exercise along with her constitutional right of privacy protected her right as a mature minor to refuse blood transfusions for religious reasons.

The child-welfare officials then appealed the Appellate Court's decision to the Illinois Supreme Court. The Illinois Supreme Court affirmed, ruling that even though Ernestine was a minor, she had the right to refuse medical treatment that was objectionable to her. This supreme court based its decision on the common law right of bodily self-determination and the mature-minor rule. The standard to be applied in mature-minor cases in Illinois was summarized by the Illinois Supreme Court in the following statement:

"If the evidence is clear and convincing that the minor is mature enough to appreciate the consequences of her actions, and that the minor is mature enough to exercise the judgment of an adult, then the mature minor doctrine affords her the common law right to consent to or refuse medical treatment."

Ernestine had no further transfusions, and she did not die from her leukemia. Ernestine stood firm and put God first, like the other young people mentioned previously. Each one received "power beyond what is normal."

—2 Corinthians 4:7.

ALLIGATORS Rare, White, and Blue-Eyed!



THE following release prepared by Curt Burnette for Audubon Institute tells the story of the remarkable white alligators.

"The white-skinned, blue-eyed alligators are a genetic mutation of the American alligator and not a different species. This mutation is called leucism, therefore these are leucistic alligators. Albinos have white skin and pinkish-yellow eyes. Leucistic animals have pigmented eyes. Albinism is rare but leucism is even more rare. Although leucism is known in a few other species of animals, the white gators are the first known leucistic alligators.

"There are 18 white gators, all discovered at the same nest site in late August, 1987. Three Cajun fishermen found them near Houma, Louisiana, southwest of New Orleans. They were approximately 1-2 weeks old when the first ones were brought to the Audubon Zoo on September 5, 1987. Besides the 18 whites, 7 normal-colored siblings were captured and an undetermined number of normals escaped. The nest

was located on land owned by the Louisiana Land and Exploration Company (LL&E). Although the nest area has been watched and eggs collected and hatched out, no further white gators have ever been discovered.

"All 18 white gators and their 7 normal siblings are male. This is possible because the sex of a baby alligator is determined by the temperature of the nest and so can be all male, all female, or a mix. As of this writing, the gators are reaching sexual maturity (5-6 years). The size of the 18 varies from about 5 feet and 50-60 pounds to over 8 feet and 250 pounds. This is a result of differing management techniques. Gators raised at LL&E's alligator farm grow more rapidly.

"LL&E owns 14 of the white gators and graciously donated 4 to the Audubon Institute. The Institute currently displays 2 at its Audubon Zoo and 2 at its Aquarium of the Americas. Two alligators are rotated out on loan to other zoos and aquariums and have already been to over a dozen in the U.S. and one in Japan.

Photos: Audubon Zoo, New Orleans



"The white gators have become famous and popular all over the world. Their discovery was broadcast worldwide by CNN. They have made numerous television appearances including the Today Show, the Nashville Network, the Tonight Show, CBS Morning News, Late Night with David Letterman, Christian Broadcast Network, MTV, and various foreign news and morning shows. Newspaper and magazine articles worldwide occasionally feature them. A few years back a French magazine ran an article and photos of them and the public response was so favorable they ran a sequel feature."

"How come there are so few white gators and no one had ever seen any before? Besides being rare mutations to begin with, leucistic and albinistic alligators are at a distinct and deadly disadvantage from normal alligators. When a baby gator hatches, it's only 8-10 inches long. The mother gator guards the nest for a while but soon the little gators are on their own. Normal gator hatchlings are yellow and black

striped and blend in well with their surroundings. A white hatchling would easily be spotted by and fall prey to many different predators.

"Two last interesting and unusual facts about the white gators: their black spots and their temperament. Only a very few of the white gators were hatched with black spots. Most had none at all. As they grew, however, more began developing some black areas. Almost all the spots developed around the head and neck only. It has made it easier to identify who is who, although some have never acquired any spots at all."

"And finally, it is agreed by everyone who has worked with the white gators, they are more feisty and temperamental than normal alligators. No one is sure why this is so, but they are treated as if they were fast and quick-tempered crocodiles rather than relatively slower and more easygoing alligators. Yet another of the many mysteries that surround these white wonders of the swamp!"—By Curt Burnette, Audubon Institute.

**Young
People
Ask...**



What If I Fall For an Unbeliever?

"I have a problem," confessed one Christian girl. "I have a crush on my neighbor. He is kind, polite, and considerate, but there is one thing he is not—a lover of Jehovah. I know it is wrong for me to like him, but I am not sure how to handle my feelings for him."

Mark was 14 years old when he found himself in a similar situation.* He became infatuated with a girl who did not share his religious beliefs. "I would often daydream about what it would be like together, married," he says. "But I knew it was wrong."

* Some of the names have been changed.

CRUSHES and infatuations are common during the teenage years, when romantic impulses run strong. (Compare 1 Corinthians 7:36.) Having no safe outlet for such feelings, youths are prone to develop infatuations for favorite teachers, entertainers, and the like. Since personal relationships with such adults are, for the most part, unattainable, these crushes are usually short-lived and relatively harmless.* What, though, if you have developed strong feelings for a peer—someone willing and able to have a relationship—but that person simply does not share your religious beliefs?

Some might not see this as a problem. For one thing, many youths have little interest in religion. And even among those who do, dating someone of a different faith may not always be frowned upon. Liberal-minded people might even approve of it. Many adults, though, see the potential problems in such relationships, especially since they often result in marriage. Writer Andrea Eagan thus advised youths: "Having the same religious background isn't important if neither of you is religious. But if religious practice is important to one or both of you, then differences about religion do have to be taken into consideration. . . . You don't have to be the *same* when it comes to religion . . . , but you do have to be able to live with each other."

Such advice may sound reasonable. But in reality it reflects "the wisdom of this world." (1 Corinthians 3:19) The Bible shows that a romance between a believer and an unbeliever raises issues of far greater importance than marital compatibility. Youths among Jehovah's Witnesses know this is a matter of obedience to God's Word, which urges Christians to marry "only in the Lord." (1 Corin-

* See chapter 28 of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

thians 7:39) Since dating is not mere recreation but a prelude to marriage, it would displease God for one of his servants to get romantically involved with someone who has not dedicated his or her life to Jehovah.

Even so, some Witness youths have found themselves becoming attracted to unbelievers. How does this happen? What should you do if you find yourself in such a situation?

How It Happens

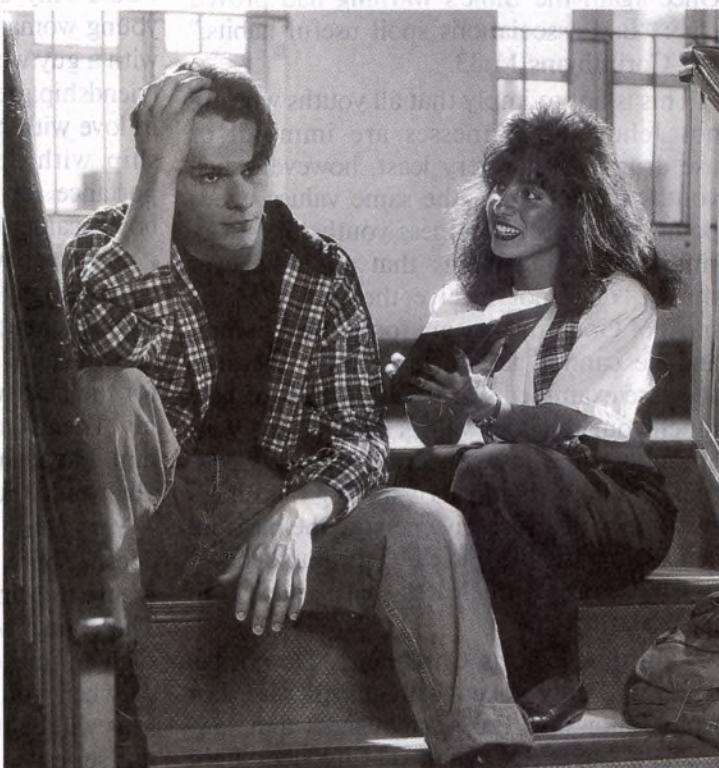
Realize, first of all, that all humans are prone to error. "Mistakes—who can discern?" asked the psalmist. (Psalm 19:12) Youths are particularly subject to errors in the realm of romance. Why? For the simple reason that they lack the shrewdness that comes with experience and age. (Proverbs 1:4) Having had little experience in dealing with the opposite sex, a Christian youth may simply not know how to handle romantic attraction—or attention.

This was the case with Sheila when she realized that a schoolmate had a crush on her. "I could tell that he liked me," said Sheila. "During lunch hours he would come over and eat with me. During study periods in the library, he would seek me out." Sheila's feelings for the boy began to grow. Mark, mentioned earlier, similarly recalls: "I would always see this girl in gym class. She

would go out of her way to come up and talk to me. It was not hard for a friendship to develop." In the case of 14-year-old Pam, a neighborhood boy went so far as to give her a ring as an expression of his affection for her.

Admittedly, it has not always been a case of a Witness being the innocent victim of advances. One girl was merely reciprocating the obvious interest shown by a Christian boy named Jim. The pressure was on, though, when one day she showed up at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, looking for him!

Whatever the circumstances, you may have known it was wrong to get involved. But sometimes it is hard to resist attention from the opposite sex. Consider Andrew. During his first year in high school, his parents were going through a divorce. "I needed someone



Will an unbeliever share your enthusiasm for spiritual matters?

to talk to," he recalls. A girl in school seemed always to have the right word of encouragement for him. Mutual romantic feelings soon developed.

The Dangers

Left unchecked, such feelings can get you in real trouble. Proverbs 6:27 says: "Can a man rake together fire into his bosom and yet his very garments not be burned?" Consider, for example, the experience of a girl named Kim. Although raised as a Christian, she allowed herself to get emotionally involved with a boy at school. "He was one of the most popular and exciting guys in school," Kim recalls. Before long she was secretly attending parties where drugs were used openly. "I was so scared, but I was in love with him. I became pregnant." Kim married her boyfriend, but he ended up in prison for armed robbery. Once again the Bible's warning had proved true: "Bad associations spoil useful habits."

—1 Corinthians 15:33.

This is not to imply that all youths who are not Jehovah's Witnesses are immoral or use drugs. At the very least, however, such youths do not share the same values, viewpoints, or goals as Witness youths. First Corinthians 2:14 explains that an unbeliever simply "does not receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot get to know them, because they are examined spiritually." Think of how much your religious values have shaped your emotions—the joy you experience at Christian meetings, the thrill of sharing the Bible's message with a receptive person, the pleasure of studying the Bible itself. Can an unbeliever possibly grasp—much less share—such feelings? Hardly.

Paul thus exhorts Christians: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light

have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?" (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15) Young Sonya learned this lesson firsthand when she became emotionally involved with an unbeliever. She admits: "Having a companion who doesn't share your zeal and love for Jehovah is the worst loneliness imaginable. It is emotionally crushing. When the truth is the motivating force of your life, you have to share it—you just *have to!* It's such a very empty feeling when you can't share it with your mate because you're with an unbeliever."

In such a relationship, then, religion is likely to become, not a common ground, but a focal point of contention. You could easily feel forced to downplay your spiritual interests in order to keep peace. But doing so would only devastate your spirituality. One young woman relates: "I became quite close with a guy who was not a Witness. But as the friendship grew closer, I realized I had fallen in love with him. Little by little my relationship with Jehovah kept having less importance for me; my relationship with this boy became the most important thing to me. I no longer wanted to go to meetings, associate with my Christian brothers, or go out in the preaching work. All I wanted to do was to be with him. I became inactive as a Witness for the next two years. And throughout it all, my 'friend' never reciprocated my love for him. I kept thinking that someday he eventually would, but it never happened."

Yes, getting involved with someone who doesn't share your religious and moral values is sure to bring you sorrow and unhappiness. The course of wisdom is to withdraw from such an uneven yoking. But how can you do so when you feel strongly about someone? This will be the subject of our next article in this series.

IS THE BIBLE IRRELEVANT?

MANY answer yes and say: "It is unscientific. It is myth and legend. It is outdated. It is impractical. Believers are living in a dream world."

However, What Are the Facts?

- The Bible says that life was created by God. Science says that life originated through a chance combination of chemicals and energy. *The World Book Encyclopedia* says: "Pasteur showed that life cannot arise spontaneously." Biologist Michael Denton's book *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* says: "Between a living cell and the most highly ordered non-biological system, . . . there is a chasm as vast and absolute as it is possible to conceive." No evolutionist can suggest any scientifically sound way that life could arise spontaneously.

- Evolution says that this original cell evolved into all the living creatures on earth. The fossil record shows absolutely no such gradation in which one family kind becomes another. Scientist Francis Hitching in his book *The Neck of the Giraffe* writes: "When you look for links between major groups of animals, they simply aren't there." This matches what the Bible says—that a family reproduces "according to its kind." —Genesis 1:12, 25.

- In many instances archaeology verifies that the Bible's historical accounts are true.

- The ancients thought that the earth was supported in space by all sorts of fantastic means. It was Isaac Newton who scientifically showed that by laws of motion and gravitation, the earth floated free in space. The Bible indicated that nearly 3,200 years earlier, recording at Job 26:7 that God was "hanging the earth upon nothing."

- The *Encyclopedia Americana* says: "The concept of a spherical earth was not widely accepted until the Renaissance," but in the eighth century B.C.E., the Bible said of God: "He sits over the round earth."—Isaiah 40:22, Moffatt.

- The Mosaic Law (16th century B.C.E.) reflected awareness of infectious disease germs

thousands of years before Pasteur linked germs and disease.—Leviticus, chapters 13, 14.

- At thousand years before Christ, Solomon wrote in figurative language about the circulation of the blood, but medical science had to wait until William Harvey explained it in the 17th century C.E.—Ecclesiastes 12:6.

- Solomon wrote of ants that had underground granaries where they stored seeds to last through winter. (Proverbs 6:6-8) Bible critics said no such ants existed. In 1871, however, a British naturalist discovered the ants and their granaries.

- Psalm 139:16 reflected knowledge of the genetic code: "Your eyes saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writing."

- In the seventh century B.C.E., before scientists recognized bird migration, the Bible at Jeremiah 8:7 revealed: "The stork in the sky knows the time to migrate, the dove and the swift and the wryneck know the season of return."—The New English Bible.

- In the first century C.E., the Bible foretold that in "the last days," men would be destroying the earth's environment, and because of this, God would "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." —2 Timothy 3:1; Revelation 11:18.

- The Bible impractical? It has the most practical wisdom of all for these perilous times, but people have to use their free will to follow it if they would benefit. 'Beat your swords into ploughshares and your spears into pruning hooks.' 'Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.' Love your neighbor as you do yourself. Those who follow these precepts begin no wars, commit no crimes. When people on earth are obedient to the rule of God's Kingdom in the hands of Christ Jesus, then the Bible believer's hope will prove to be, not an impossible dream, but a practical reality.—Micah 4:2-4; Matthew 7:12; Revelation 21:3-5.

YOUR CHOP YOUR SIGNATURE

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN TAIWAN

AFFIX your chop here," says the clerk behind the counter in the busy Taipei, Taiwan, post office.

"Affix my chop?" I mutter in total puzzlement. "But excuse me, I am new here. I don't have a chop—whatever that is," I try to explain. "May I not just sign my name?"

"Yes, you may, but why not get a chop made?" responds the postal clerk. "Then you will not have any more trouble."

Wondering what a chop is and where its strange name comes from, I do some digging. From my dictionary I learn that a chop is a seal or an official stamp or its impression and that "chop" comes from the Hindi word *chāp*, meaning "stamp."

How to Acquire a Chop

First, I will need a Chinese name.* For a foreigner the name is often a transliteration of the sound of the name. For example, "John Smith" may become "Shih Mi Sse" or "Shih Yueh Han." Or I can get a Chinese friend to help me choose a name. He will probably choose one that he thinks fits me, but it may not sound anything like my real name.

The next step is to visit the shop of a chop carver. There I select a suitable piece of material from the wide variety available. Then the artisan carves the stylized characters of my Chinese name on my chop.

I am now equipped to do business or make a transaction at a post office, a bank, or other place of official business. For certain legal transactions, the imprint or impression of my chop must be registered at the Household Registry Office. If it is for a corporation, then it is registered at the courthouse.

* Although chops with names in other languages can be made, the beauty of the chop lies in the design of its Chinese script.

But I wonder how a clerk knows whether the chop is genuine. To find out and to see how chops are actually made, I pay a visit to Lin Rongdeh, a chop maker in the city of Kaohsiung, in southern Taiwan. According to Mr. Lin, many people believe that even chops with the same name carved by the same chop maker are never exactly the same. To check if a chop is genuine, an office clerk would fold the impression in half, usually diagonally, and lay it over the impression already on file. The two halves should match exactly.

"Nowadays, though," says Mr. Lin, pointing to a machine in his shop, "there are machines that can carve a chop with the help of a computer. Chops carved in this way could be identical."

"That is amazing!" I respond. "But how do you make a chop with a computer?"

"First, I typeset or draw on a small piece of semitransparent paper or plastic the characters of the name in a form suitable for a chop," explains Mr. Lin. "Then I place it on one rotating head of the machine, which reads the name by means of a laser beam. At the same time, I clamp the chop to be carved on a second rotating head, and a tiny router controlled by the laser beam carves the chop to form the characters I have drawn."



Clockwise:
Vermilion imprint of
a chop; chops with
chain, all carved
from one piece of
Jade; chop maker
carving a design;
chop inscribed
with a poem



Chops: National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

As this method is quite inexpensive, usually each member of a family has a chop made. These are kept handy in the house to be used by anyone accepting registered mail or other items that would require a signature in Western lands.

Origin of the Chop

The first known use of a chop in China was in the year 1324 B.C.E. But not until the

Chop in the form of a turtle



Chou dynasty (1122-256 B.C.E.) did they gain popularity. In those early times, rather than being used as a signature, they were carried, often at the girdle, to show rank or office or just to show that a person was honorable. It represented not so much the person as the position he held. The chop was, as it often is today, turned over to the next holder of the office on the retirement or death of the official. When a nobleman sought an audience with the emperor, he would present his jade chop to prove his identity.

When paper was invented, the chop gradually came to represent the signature. It came to be used more frequently even by ordinary people. Today, everyone here has a chop, even a foreign resident like me, and any transaction involving a person's signature can be completed only with the use of the chop. Although officially a written signature may also be used, for most people it is the chop that makes things legal. This practice has spread to most of the Orient, so that the Japanese and the Koreans also use a chop.

What Chops Look Like

A chop may be square, oblong, oval, or round, or it may take innumerable other shapes. It may be as small as an eighth inch in diameter or as large as six inches square. A chop may be made of jade, soapstone, animal horn, bamboo, brass, wood, or plastic, depending on the wish and the means of the purchaser as well as the purpose for which the chop will be used. If a chop is to be used very seldom and for less important transactions, wood or plastic may suffice. But if the owner plans to use it throughout his lifetime, then he may choose a more valuable and attractive medium.

The official chop of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, Taiwan branch, for example, is carved on a block of hardwood three inches long, two inches wide, and one inch thick. Rather a cumbersome "signature," wouldn't you say? Often the paper to be signed may not be much bigger!

The most common chops are plain pieces of the chosen material with the name carved in stylized Chinese on the flat bottom. A carving on the stem or at the top adds to the beauty and value of the chop. Some chops are very elaborate works of art. (See picture on page 23.) The owner will usually carry the chop either in a small leather sack or in a small box with a little compartment containing vermilion ink paste at one end. Sometimes a new-

ly married couple will have their chops carved on two pieces taken or cut from the same stock and with matching designs—a rather romantic notion. Or as is the case with the beautiful yellow-jade chops pictured on page 23, the three chops and chains were all carved from one piece of stone.

Once carved, the chop becomes the legal signature of the owner or office holder, so it must be treated with utmost care. It must be guarded against theft, as a thief could use it to forge documents, withdraw money from banks, cash checks or bonds, and so forth.

What do I do if I lose my chop? First, I must notify the post office, bank, and other agencies concerned so that they can cancel my chop. I must, of course, do this immediately to prevent unlawful use of my chop. Then a new one must be made. If it is to replace a registered chop, I must go through the process of registering it again, and the offices concerned must be informed of my new chop. So you think losing a credit card is a hassle? It is a wise person who guards his chop against loss or theft!

In the West, philately, or stamp collecting, is a popular hobby. In China many people collect chops or the imprint of various chops, for which special books are published. Some chops are quite beautiful, since the style of the characters and the shape, color, and texture of the chop combine to give a most pleasing appearance. Chops that were once the property of famous or influential people or chops of special antiquity are often kept in museum collections.

For every person in the West who picks up a pen to sign some official document, there is probably someone in an Oriental land who takes out a chop, presses it a few times on the vermilion-ink pad, and carefully stamps his "signature" on the dotted line.

How interesting different customs make life!

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Have You Lived Before?
Will You Live Again?**

**Does the Bible Discourage
Freedom of Thought?**

Do You Suffer With Back Pain?



Put Humor Into Your Life

It was a cold winter day, and the steps were covered with ice. The first one who attempted the descent nearly fell. The next one in line announced: "Now this is the way to do it!" No sooner were the words out of his mouth than down he went—flat on his back. An instant of alarmed silence, then bursts of laughter from bystanders after seeing that he was unhurt.

THREE is "a time to laugh." So observed the wise man Solomon almost three thousand years ago. (Ecclesiastes 3:4) It is no less true today. The ability to laugh is a God-given trait, a gift from the One described in the Bible as "the happy God."—1 Timothy 1:11.

Not surprisingly, then, creation is full of humorous things—kittens and puppies with absurd antics, a lion cub chewing on its moth-

er's tail until it gets swatted, baby monkeys chasing and tumbling over one another through the branches. There is humor all around us, waiting to be observed and appreciated.

This is not to say that all people laugh at the same things. On the contrary, what is funny often depends on one's culture, personality, background, and mood, as well as other factors. Virtually everyone, though,

respond with laughter to something—a funny story, a pleasant surprise, a joke, a clever play on words.

What purpose does humor serve? At the very least, it is a means of better relating to others. One comment called laughter “the shortest distance between two people.” Indeed, some believe that humor can be used as a barometer of marital compatibility. A study on humor found that couples who agree on what’s funny are more prone to like, love, and want to marry each other than those whose humor preferences are less alike. Why? Because humor is indicative of many things: values, interests, preoccupations, intelligence, imagination, and needs. A 1985 survey of a thousand U.S. corporations revealed that “people with a sense of humor tend to be more creative, less rigid and more willing to consider and embrace new ideas and methods.”

To Laugh or Not to Laugh

No one really knows exactly what makes something funny. Some believe that at the heart of humor is incongruity—the bringing of two seemingly incompatible elements to-

*ordw and Humor can help
smooth out domestic mishaps*



gether. A grown man dressed as a circus clown may throw a small child into a fit of laughter. However, an adult with his greater life experience and superior cognitive skills may no longer find the clownish antics funny. He may find pleasure in more mental forms of humor—puns, plays on words, or jokes—that exploit incongruity on a verbal, rather than a physical, level.

Some researchers believe that humor may result from the release of pent-up emotional energy. Humor may serve to mask tension and pain. Says the Bible: “Even in laughter the heart may be in pain; and grief is what rejoicing ends up in.”—Proverbs 14:13.

Many forms of humor involve what is called slapstick. A man trips or gets doused with water. Funny, isn’t it? Perhaps, if nobody really gets hurt.

A Christian takes pains not to cultivate an appetite for sick or sadistic humor. After all, love “does not rejoice over unrighteousness.” (1 Corinthians 13:6) A Christian also avoids tasteless jokes that put down any nationality or race. He tempers his sense of humor with “fellow feeling.” (1 Peter 3:8) For example, it may be delightfully amusing to watch a toddler take a few tentative steps and then collapse in a heap. But if an elderly or disabled person falls, the appropriate response is to rush to his assistance, not to laugh.

Humor and Your Health

Properly used, humor has much value. In fact, evidence is slowly accumulating that laughter may even serve as a therapeutic tool. It is known that the act of laughing gives a healthy massage to one’s internal organs. Furthermore, according to *American Health* magazine, some “researchers think laughter may empower the immune system.” The magazine then quotes immunologist Lee S. Berk as saying: “Negative emotions can manipulate the immune system, and it now

seems positive ones can do something similar." This underscores the wisdom of the Bible's words: "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer."—Proverbs 17:22.

In hopes of utilizing the healing power of humor, some hospitals have set up so-called laughter rooms in which patients can play games, watch funny movies, listen to jokes, or simply visit with relatives in a more cheerful atmosphere. Can you put humor to work yourself? Say you have a sick friend or relative in the hospital. Why not brighten that ailing one's outlook by giving him or her a humorous book or funny card where that would be appropriate?

Laughter can also mitigate anger. Dr. R. B. Williams, Jr., says: "Being angry is bad for your health." Similarly, the Bible says: "A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism, but jealousy is rottenness to the bones." (Proverbs 14:30) Dr. Williams notes: "It's hard to stay angry when you're laughing." Yes, seeing the humor in a situation is one of the most constructive ways of handling anger.

Within the Family Circle

Humor can be put to work within the home. One husband says: "It's as useful to me as a multipurpose tool is to an auto mechanic because it does so many things. It protects, encourages, opens up fruitful conversations, breaks down preconceived ideas, and turns troublesome words into those that are reasonable and considerate."

A sense of humor is especially helpful when irritating habits threaten to strain relations. Your son forgets to put his toys away despite repeated admonition to do so. Your husband leaves his dirty clothes on the bathroom floor. Your wife burns supper. Finding fault, shaming, blaming, yelling, or screaming only worsens matters. One health re-

searcher, quoted in *Redbook* magazine, noted: "If you confront a person or ridicule him, he'll become defensive. Humor invites people to look at their behavior from a distance—and change it."

This does not mean making fun of the person guilty of the indiscretion. That usually brings pain, not laughter. Try directing your humor toward the situation itself. Having a good laugh may do much to ease the tension. Says one wife: "There are times when my husband sees I'm about to get angry, and he softens it with some humorous remark or action. Before I know it, I'm laughing. Then I realize it wasn't that serious after all."

A few words of caution, though. Avoid trying to be funny when a situation calls for seriousness or compassion. Note Proverbs 25:20: "He that is removing a garment on a cold day is as vinegar upon alkali and as a singer with songs upon a gloomy heart." Humor should be used only with due discretion, so as not to harm emotionally or physically. Never allow humor to be meanspirited or disrespectful. This would rule out allowing older children to make their younger siblings the constant butt of jokes. Gentle teasing is one thing, caustic comments quite another. Marriage mates must also strive to keep humor within bounds, not using it as a weapon of criticism or a means of belittling.

Poet Langston Hughes once wrote: "Like a welcome summer rain, humor may suddenly cleanse and cool the earth, the air, and you." Truly, humor can play an important part in our lives. It can keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. It can help us stay cheerful and relaxed. It can smooth out relations with others. It can help us cope with adversity. It can even improve our health.

So put humor into your life. Discover it. Nurture it. Cultivate it. It's bound to do wonders for you and those around you!

WATCHING THE WORLD

"A Source of Great Suffering for the Church"

In his audience with the bishops of eastern Canada, John Paul II turned his attention to sexual abuses committed by priests. As reported in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the pope told the Canadian prelates that "the scandal given by those members of the clergy and those Religious who have failed in this regard has been a source of great suffering for the Church in Canada." He added that he had prayed "for those who have been victims of sexual misconduct, as well as for those who have been guilty of it." Some believe that abolishing obligatory celibacy for priests could both contribute to the reduction of scandals connected with sexual abuse by the clergy and resolve "the shortage or uneven distribution of priests" mentioned by the pope. But according to John Paul II, "the difficulties involved today in keeping celibacy are not sufficient reason to overturn the Church's conviction regarding its value and appropriateness."

Why Drug Addiction?

"Many people believe that modern pharmacology has a little pill that can solve any of our problems. If a person cannot sleep, he takes a little pill. If he wants to improve his performance at work, he takes another one," explains São Paulo's chief of police, Alberto Corazza, as quoted in the Brazilian magazine *Veja*. "It is logical that such culture influences youths." He adds: "Eighty percent of drug addicts have serious family problems. They come from a very repressive or a very permissive family or from a home without a father." But how can parents protect youths from drugs? Says

Corazza: "It may seem romantic, but in a well-balanced home in which there is love for the children and dialogue, drugs will find hardly any room."

"Most Violent Nation"

"America is the most violent nation in the world," writes columnist Ann Landers. "In 1990, handguns murdered 10 people in Australia, 22 in Great Britain, 68 in Canada and 10,567 in the United States." It is also the most heavily armed nation. Its people possess over 200 million firearms—almost one for each of the 255 million inhabitants. Schools are not immune from the violence. Nearly 20 percent of all high school students carry a weapon of some sort.



Almost three million crimes a year occur on or near school campuses. Each day 40 teachers are physically attacked, and about 900 are threatened with bodily harm. According to the National Education Association, 100,000 students carry guns to school each day, and a typical day will see 40 children killed or injured by firearms. "Our tolerance for violence is extraordinary, and schools are merely a reflection of that," says John E. Richters of the National Institute of Mental Health. One English teacher, who previously had only a 10-percent success rate in getting his 12th-grade students to

write an essay, had 100-percent success when he assigned them the topic "My Favorite Weapon."

Church Dilemma

Bishops from western Canada have asked the Vatican to relax the church's celibacy rule and allow married priests to serve the native populations in the Northwest Territories. The bishops feel that cultural considerations, coupled with the shortage of priests in the northern regions, justify their request. "Bishop Denis Croteau," reports *The Toronto Star*, "says the Inuit and Dene peoples have a family value in their culture where, unless a man has married, raised a family and become an elder, 'you're not a leader and people won't listen to you.'" Although Pope John Paul II and other Vatican officials gave attention to the bishops' plea, no change will be forthcoming. Cardinal Jozef Tomko, head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, expressed fear that "an exception granted in Canada would become the focus of media attention and open a floodgate of requests in Africa, South America and elsewhere," says the *Star*.

Depression Increases

"Twelve independent studies involving interviews with a total of 43,000 people in nine countries have corroborated earlier American research by indicating that the rate of major depression has risen fairly steadily in much of the world during the 20th century," states *The Harvard Mental Health Letter*. After grouping the subjects "into cohorts determined by decade of birth, beginning before 1905 and ending after 1955," almost every study showed that

"people born later were more likely to have been seriously depressed at some time in their lives." Most studies also showed a steady increase in major depression throughout the century.

Keeping Children Healthy

"More than 230 million preschool children in the developing world, or 43 per cent, are stunted because of malnutrition due to lack of food and to disease," says a UN press release. In 1993 an estimated four million children died because of malnutrition, either directly or because it worsened the impact of infectious diseases. What is the answer? The World Health Organization recommends that "all infants be fed exclusively on breast milk from birth to 4-6 months of age. Thereafter, children should continue to be breast-fed, while receiving appropriate and adequate complementary food for up to 2 years of age and beyond." Mothers and health-care providers are urged not to misinterpret the growth patterns of breast-fed infants as growth faltering and prematurely introduce other foods. This can be dangerous for the infants and contribute to malnutrition and disease, especially where the introduced foods are contaminated and nutritionally inadequate.

Slavery Today

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "no one shall be held in slavery or servitude," hundreds of millions of people are nonetheless suffering as slaves. The number of people subject to slaverylike practices today, points out *UN Chronicle* magazine, is in fact even greater than the number of slaves during the 16th to the 18th centuries, "the peak slave-trade era." One alarming as-

pect of today's slavery is that many victims are children. Seven-to-ten-year-olds toil in factories for 12 to 14 hours a day. Others slave as household servants, prostitutes, or soldiers. "Child labour is in great demand," reports the UN Centre for Human Rights, "because it is cheap" and because children are "too frightened to complain." Slavery, notes the UN, remains a grim "modern reality."

Formula for Obesity

The number of hours a day that preschoolers spend watching television is directly linked to an increase in body fat later in childhood, claims Dr. Munro Proctor of the Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Proctor made a four-year study of 97 preschool children who, at the start, were between the ages of three and five. Parents monitored the hours of



television viewing by their children daily, while measurements of skin folds throughout the body were taken annually. As reported in *The Medical Post* of Canada, "each child sat in front of the tube a mean of two hours daily. For every additional hour of TV watched per day, there was a 0.8 mm [0.03 in.] increase in triceps skinfold change and a 4.1 mm [0.2 in.] increase in change in the sum of skinfolds." Dr. Proctor concludes that television viewing leads to reduced physical activity and lower metabolic rates and exposes children to advertisements

for high-calorie foods that are consumed while being inactive.

Holiday Isle

"The [World] Bank and the [International Monetary Fund] are asking the government to reduce Sri Lanka's number of non-working days, at present 174 of the 365, possibly a world record," says *The Economist*. "How can a country progress when its people are on holiday for almost half the year?" The high number of days off reflects Sri Lanka's mixture of races and religions. In addition to the 5 secular holidays, there are 20 religious holidays for the Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, and Christian faiths. Civil servants get an additional 45 days off each year—matched by many private businesses. Yet, Sri Lanka's economy keeps growing. "Agriculture is the heart of the economy and depends on the two monsoons that sweep across the island in the cropping seasons," states *The Economist*. "Monsoons don't take time off."

Walking While Intoxicated

"Drinking and driving don't mix," the advertisements say, and stiff penalties are imposed on those who drive while intoxicated. Although most of the attention has been on drunk drivers, little has been focused on drinking and walking. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 5,546 pedestrians were killed in the United States by cars in 1992, and over a third of those pedestrians were drunk. They accounted for 14 percent of vehicle-related fatalities. Of those over age 14, some 36 percent had a blood-alcohol level high enough for them to have been cited for drunken driving if they had been behind the wheel. Little is known at present as to how to prevent those deaths and who is most at risk.

FROM OUR READERS

Magic Now that I've read the article "The Bible's Viewpoint . . . Is There Danger in Practicing Magic?" (September 8, 1993), I really understand why much magic is wrong. What one could call summoning up the spirits to foretell the future has recently become a fad at my school. The others say to me, 'Won't you join us?', and although I've refused, I've wondered why it's wrong. I tried to find an answer but couldn't find one that satisfied me. Just as I had given up searching, there was your article. It provided a satisfying answer. Thank you for publishing it.

M. K., Japan

Cartoons I liked your article "Are Violent TV Cartoons Harmful?" (December 8, 1993). I really enjoyed it because a lot of little children are influenced by such violent programs. I'm 13 years old.

D. L., United States

Uniting the World I was deeply moved by the series "What Will Unite the World?" (December 22, 1993) I was feeling sad at heart about the ongoing news from Bosnia and Herzegovina and from Somalia—how people are being forced to live under the conditions of war, famine, and death. However, this series showed the true remedy and how it is actually working in the midst of this world's misery. Having been a delegate at the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Poland back in 1989, I can see that the loving, united brotherhood Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy is like a modern miracle.

H. K., Japan

Female Mutilation I wish to express my sincere thanks to you for publishing the article on female circumcision ("Millions Are Suffering—Can They Be Helped?") in your April 8, 1993, issue. Since reading this article, I have felt deeply for the helpless victims of this practice. It is perpetuated by parents who are guided by misconceptions about female

sexuality. But it is no love to subject children to this unreasonable practice that often has serious physical and psychological consequences.

J. O. K., Nigeria

Watching the World I just wanted to write and tell you what a great job you are doing. The feature "Watching the World" has been a great help when I need to write short news reports for school.

J. W., United States

I am 14 years old, and I regularly read *Awake!* I thoroughly enjoy all the articles. One particular section that I'd like to thank you for, however, is "Watching the World." I learn so many different things from it. It is always up-to-date, and I often find things in it that we are currently discussing at school. I also appreciate the fact that you never give your own opinions regarding these items. This makes it easier to share the information with other people without getting into an argument.

T. M., United States

Daydreaming I am writing to thank you very much for the informative "Young People Ask . . ." articles on daydreaming. ("Is It Wrong to Daydream?", July 8, 1993, and "How Can I Stop Daydreaming So Much?", July 22, 1993) After reading the second article, I recognized that I have been a compulsive daydreamer for many years. My childhood was abusive, and my means of escape (daydreaming) gradually turned into a mental prison in adulthood. Daydreaming has impaired my performance at work and when driving. It has even detrimentally affected my marriage. Thanks to your articles, I have, with much discipline, effort, and prayer, begun to restore my powers of concentration and thinking ability.

L. G., United States

Contaminated Blood Given to Hemophiliacs

BLOOD has become a two-billion-dollar-a-year business. The pursuit of profits from it has resulted in a gigantic tragedy in France. HIV-contaminated blood caused the death of 250 hemophiliacs in AIDS-related illnesses, with hundreds more infected.—*The Boston Globe*, October 28, 1992, page 4.

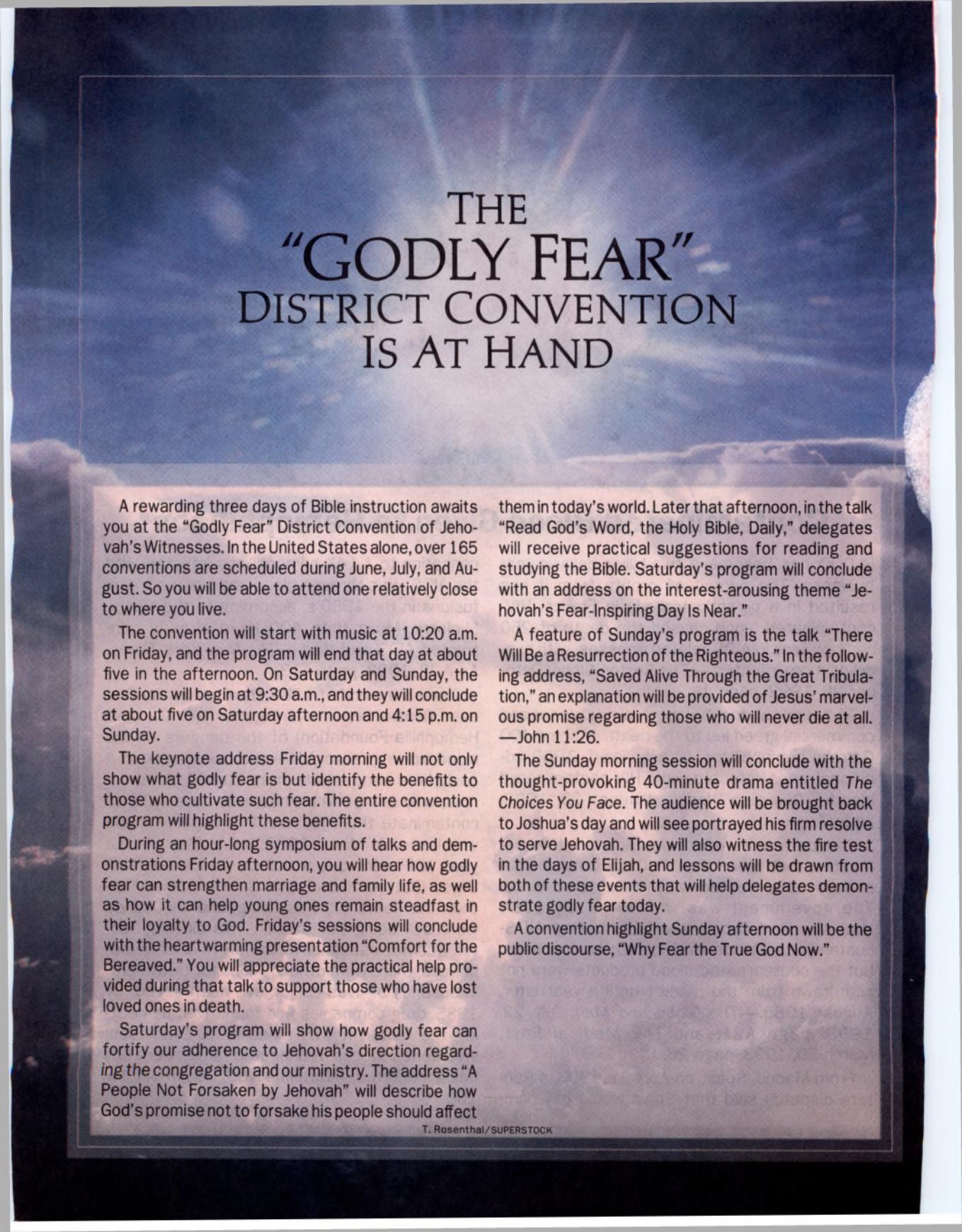
An "unholy alliance" of medical negligence and commercial greed led to the death of some 400 German hemophiliacs, with at least 2,000 additional ones infected with HIV-contaminated blood.—*Guardian Weekly*, August 22, 1993, page 7.

Canada had its own blood scandal. It is estimated that more than 700 Canadian hemophiliacs were treated with HIV-infected blood. The government was warned in July 1984 that the Red Cross was distributing AIDS-contaminated blood to Canadian hemophiliacs, but the contaminated blood products were not withdrawn from the market until a year later, August 1985.—*The Globe and Mail*, July 22, 1993, page A21, and *The Medical Post*, March 30, 1993, page 26.

From Madrid, Spain, on April 21, 1993, a Reuters dispatch said that Spain would pay com-

pensation to 1,147 hemophiliacs infected with the AIDS virus through blood and plasma transfusions in the 1980's, according to the Health Ministry. More than 400 have already contracted AIDS and died.—*The New York Times*, April 22, 1993, page A13.

Toward the end of 1982, the Centers for Disease Control began warning the NHF (National Hemophilia Foundation) of the dangers of the blood clotting factor VIII—one transfusion of it could be a concentrate from 20,000 blood donors, only one of which needs to have AIDS to contaminate the injection. A stronger warning was issued in March 1983, but in May of that year, NHF sent out a bulletin headlined "NHF Urges Clotting Factor Use Be Maintained." By then the death toll was rising, and thousands were still being put at risk. This clotting factor was not essential to the survival of hemophiliacs; there were other options for treatment. Thousands of lives could have been saved. By 1985, drug companies had found that by heating the factor, it was made safe. Even then, inventoried stocks of unheated factor were still being marketed.—*Dateline NBC*, December 14, 1993.



THE “GODLY FEAR” DISTRICT CONVENTION IS AT HAND

A rewarding three days of Bible instruction awaits you at the “Godly Fear” District Convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses. In the United States alone, over 165 conventions are scheduled during June, July, and August. So you will be able to attend one relatively close to where you live.

The convention will start with music at 10:20 a.m. on Friday, and the program will end that day at about five in the afternoon. On Saturday and Sunday, the sessions will begin at 9:30 a.m., and they will conclude at about five on Saturday afternoon and 4:15 p.m. on Sunday.

The keynote address Friday morning will not only show what godly fear is but identify the benefits to those who cultivate such fear. The entire convention program will highlight these benefits.

During an hour-long symposium of talks and demonstrations Friday afternoon, you will hear how godly fear can strengthen marriage and family life, as well as how it can help young ones remain steadfast in their loyalty to God. Friday’s sessions will conclude with the heartwarming presentation “Comfort for the Bereaved.” You will appreciate the practical help provided during that talk to support those who have lost loved ones in death.

Saturday’s program will show how godly fear can fortify our adherence to Jehovah’s direction regarding the congregation and our ministry. The address “A People Not Forsaken by Jehovah” will describe how God’s promise not to forsake his people should affect

them in today’s world. Later that afternoon, in the talk “Read God’s Word, the Holy Bible, Daily,” delegates will receive practical suggestions for reading and studying the Bible. Saturday’s program will conclude with an address on the interest-arousing theme “Jehovah’s Fear-Inspiring Day Is Near.”

A feature of Sunday’s program is the talk “There Will Be a Resurrection of the Righteous.” In the following address, “Saved Alive Through the Great Tribulation,” an explanation will be provided of Jesus’ marvelous promise regarding those who will never die at all.

—John 11:26.

The Sunday morning session will conclude with the thought-provoking 40-minute drama entitled *The Choices You Face*. The audience will be brought back to Joshua’s day and will see portrayed his firm resolve to serve Jehovah. They will also witness the fire test in the days of Elijah, and lessons will be drawn from both of these events that will help delegates demonstrate godly fear today.

A convention highlight Sunday afternoon will be the public discourse, “Why Fear the True God Now.”