

Awake!

August 22, 1988

THE NUCLEAR DILEMMA WHAT'S THE ANSWER?







The NUCLEAR THREAT

IMAGINE two boys in a closed garage, standing on a floor covered with gasoline. Each one holds a box of matches... This well illustrates the situation existing today between the two superpowers. Both possess arsenals of fearsome nuclear weapons that if used would result in mutual destruction. Their missiles stand ominously ready to kill, the gyroscopes of their guidance systems spinning rapidly.

Thousands of these messengers of death hide beneath the

ground in concrete silos. Hundreds more lurk within the hulls of submarines and yet more beneath the swept-back wings of jet planes. A frightened world wonders, What will happen if the weapons are ever used?

A four-star general answers. He says that a nuclear war would be "the greatest catastrophe in history by many orders of magnitude." Adds a scientist: "There is a real danger of the extinction of humanity."

An ancient Greek legend tells of a man named Damocles who was made to sit beneath a sword suspended by a single strand of hair. That sword could well represent nuclear weapons, and Damocles, all humanity. Remove the sword, some say, and Damocles will be secure. But is such a prospect likely? Developments in recent years have given hope to many:

March 1983: U.S. President Reagan proposes the Strategic Defense Initiative, scientific research designed to render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete."

January 1986: Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev proposes to eliminate all nuclear weapons by the end of this century. He later states: "We are ready for talks not only on ending the arms race, but on the biggest possible arms reductions, up to general and complete disarmament."

December 1987: Gorbachev and Reagan sign a treaty for missile reduction. According to a news report, "it is the first time since the dawn of the Atomic Age that the superpowers have agreed not just to restrain nuclear weapons but to *eliminate* entire systems."

How likely is it, though, that these latest developments will ever result in a world without nuclear weapons? What obstacles stand in the way of success?

The threat of nuclear annihilation has haunted mankind for over four decades. Recent peace initiatives, however, have ignited hopes for complete disarmament. How realistic are such hopes? *Awake!* now looks at the complex issues surrounding the subject of nuclear disarmament.

The Nuclear Dilemma

ATOP a spindly tower in the predawn New Mexico desert hung the chunky metal sphere the men called Gadget. In bunkers five and a half miles away, the physicists, chemists, mathematicians, and soldiers fidgeted, looked at their watches, and wondered if Gadget would really work.

It did. At 15 seconds before 5:30 a.m., Gadget exploded, releasing its nuclear energy in a millionth of a second. It whipped up a fireball that could have been seen from another planet and generated a blast that was heard 200 miles away. The heat of Gadget's explosion—hotter at its center than the center of the sun—fused the desert sand into a half-mile ring of jade-colored radioactive glass. Some swore that the sun rose twice that day.

On August 6, 1945, 21 days later, the second atom bomb shattered the Japanese city of Hiroshima, eventually causing the death of an estimated 148,000 people. The nuclear age had begun.

Cover photo of explosion, U.S. National Archives

WHY "AWAKE!" IS PUBLISHED

"AWAKE!" is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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That was 43 years ago. Weapons up to 4,000 times more powerful have since been tested. The combined power of all the world's warheads is estimated to equal 20 billion tons of TNT—over a million times the killing power of the Hiroshima bomb!

Call for Elimination

According to a 1983 World Health Organization study, a full-scale nuclear war would kill a billion people outright. A second billion would die later because of the blast, fire, and radiation. Recent studies are even more pessimistic. Understandably, then, a cry has arisen for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Not all calls for their elimination are on purely humanitarian grounds, however. Some argue that nuclear weapons simply have little or no value in actual warfare. Because of their awesome destructive power, only the most extreme provocation could ever justify their use. Thus, the United States did not use them in Korea or Viet Nam, the British did not use them in the

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Falklands, nor did the Soviets use them in Afghanistan. Says former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara: "Nuclear weapons serve no military purpose whatsoever. They are totally useless—except only to deter one's opponent from using them."

Similarly, nuclear weapons are not of much use as a diplomatic stick for threatening or influencing other nations. The superpowers are mutually vulnerable. And as for nonnuclear powers, they are often emboldened to stand up to the superpowers with little fear of nuclear retaliation.

Finally, there is the cost. According to a study published in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, during the years 1945-85 the United States alone produced about 60,000 nuclear warheads.* The cost? Almost \$82,000,000,000—a lot of money for something they hope never to use.

The Bomb as a Deterrent

The concept of deterrence is probably as old as the history of conflict. But in the nuclear age, deterrence has taken on new dimensions. Any nation contemplating nuclear attack is assured of swift and devastating nuclear retaliation.

General B. L. Davis, commander of the

* Because nuclear materials degrade, aging weapons have to be replaced by new ones.

U.S. Strategic Air Command, thus says: "A convincing case can be made that nuclear weapons . . . have made the world a safer place. They have by no means ended warfare; thousands continue to die every year in conflicts that are by no means minor to the nations involved. But superpower involvement in such conflicts is carefully calculated to avoid direct confrontation due to the potential for escalation into a major conflagration—nuclear or conventional."

In any household with loaded guns, though, there is always the risk that somebody will be shot by mistake. The same principle holds true in a world full of nuclear weapons. Nuclear war could thus erupt under the following circumstances:

(1) A computer error or a mechanical malfunction that makes a country think it is under nuclear attack. The response would be a nuclear counterattack.

(2) Nuclear weapons could be acquired by an extremist or terrorist power that would be less restrained from using them than are the present nuclear powers.

(3) The escalation of a small war in an area where the interests of the superpowers are involved—such as the Persian Gulf.

Despite such dangers, the nations have thus far maintained a policy of security

Awake!®

August 22, 1988

Vol. 69, No. 16

SEIMONTHLY LANGUAGES AVAILABLE BY MAIL: Afrikaans, Cebuano, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Yoruba

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Printed in U.S.A.

Average Printing: 11,350,000 Published in 54 Languages

25 cents (U.S.) a copy

Yearly subscription (see language lists)

Watch Tower Society offices

Semimonthly Languages

Monthly Languages

America, U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565
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Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly for \$5.00 (U.S.) per year 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 Watchtower, **Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.**

THE POWER OF A ONE-MEGATON BOMB

Thermal Radiation (Light and Heat): A nuclear blast creates an intense flash of light that blinds or dazzles people far from the point of explosion—up to 13 miles in daytime and 53 miles at night in a one-megaton blast.

At or near ground zero (the point directly under the exploding bomb), the intense heat of the fireball vaporizes humans. Farther away (up to 11 miles), people suffer second- and third-degree burns on exposed skin. Clothing catches fire. Carpets and furniture ignite. Under certain conditions, a superheated fire storm develops, enveloping people in an inferno.

Air Blast: The nuclear blast generates hurricane-force winds. Near ground zero, destruction is total. Farther away, people in buildings are crushed by falling ceilings or walls; others are injured or killed by flying debris and furniture. Still others are

suffocated by the dense dust of crushed mortar or brick. Wind overpressure causes eardrum rupture or hemorrhaging of the lungs.

Radiation: An intense burst of neutrons and gamma rays is emitted. Moderate exposure causes sickness characterized by nausea, vomiting, and fatigue. Damage to blood cells lowers resistance to infection and delays the healing of injuries. High exposure to radiation causes convulsions, tremor, ataxia, and lethargy. Death follows within one to 48 hours.

Irradiated survivors are susceptible to cancer. They are also more likely to pass on hereditary defects to their offspring, including lowered fertility, spontaneous abortion, malformed or stillborn children, and nonspecific constitutional weaknesses.

Source: *Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons*, printed by the United Nations.

through deterrence. Yet, in a world bristling with nuclear weapons, people do not feel secure. The balance of power is really a balance of terror, a suicide pact to which the world's billions are involuntary signato-

ries. If nuclear weapons are like the Damoclean sword, deterrence is the strand of hair that keeps it in check. But what if deterrence fails? The answer is too horrible to contemplate.

MEN SEEK SOLUTIONS

THE MAD [Mutual Assured Destruction] doctrine is immoral. There is something macabre, and worse, in basing our security on our ability to murder Russian women and children. And it is even more reprehensible—if that's possible—to deliberately increase the exposure of our own people to nuclear destruction simply in order to fulfill the demands

of an abstract, a historical, unproven and illogical theory." These words, spoken by U.S. Senator William Armstrong, reflect the uneasiness many Americans feel about a defense based on the ability to retaliate.

As an alternative, in March 1983, U.S. President Reagan proposed the SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative), more popularly known as Star Wars. He said: "I call upon

the scientific community who gave us nuclear weapons to turn their great talents to the cause of mankind and world peace: to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete."

Reagan envisioned the development of exotic, high-tech weapons—X-ray lasers, electromagnetic rail-guns, kinetic-kill vehicles, neutral-particle-beam weapons—that would defend America and its allies by zapping enemy missiles before they could reach their targets.

SDI, however, has been fiercely and widely debated from the outset. Opponents claim that it is technologically impossible to create a leakproof "umbrella" against a determined attack—and a leaky "umbrella" is useless against nuclear weapons. Summing up other objections, a U.S. congressman said cynically that "other than the fact that the SDI system can be underflown, overwhelmed, outfoxed, cannot be run by humans but only by computers, would breach a number of arms control treaties and could trigger a thermal nuclear war, . . . it is not a bad system."

The Soviet Union also strongly objects to SDI. They say that America simply wants to build a shield in order to wield the sword. U.S. officials, in turn, accuse the Soviets of secretly developing their own strategic defense system.

At any rate, SDI would prove extremely expensive to develop and deploy. Estimates range from 126 billion to 1.3 trillion U.S. dollars. By comparison, the entire U.S. Interstate Highway System cost \$123 billion! Nevertheless, billions of dollars have already been allocated by the U.S. Congress to SDI research.

Prospect of Disarmament

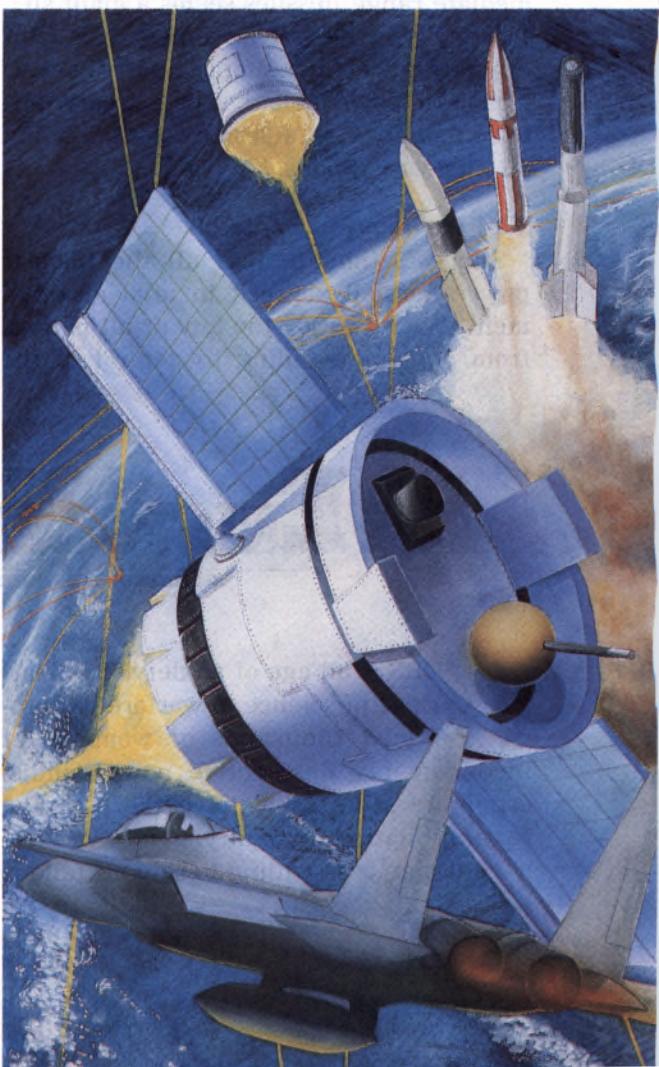
Says the Soviet Ministry of Defense: "The Soviet people are convinced that nuclear

disarmament is the most reliable guarantee that nuclear catastrophe will be prevented." Lofty ideals notwithstanding, the arms race continues at full speed.

The fundamental obstacle to disarmament? Lack of trust. *Soviet Military Power 1987*, a U.S. Department of Defense publication, accuses the Soviet Union of 'seeking world domination.' *Whence the Threat to Peace*, published by the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Defense, speaks of the U.S. "imperial ambition to 'rule the world.'"

Even when arms-control talks are

Some argue that defending against a nuclear attack is superior to retaliating after an attack



convened, both sides accuse the other of having selfish motives. The above-quoted Soviet publication thus accuses the United States of "blocking progress toward disarmament in all areas" in an effort to "conduct international affairs from the position of strength."

The United States counters that arms control is merely a Soviet scheme to lock in "existing military advantages. . . . Moreover, [Moscow] sees arms control negotiations as a way of furthering Soviet military objectives and undermining public support for Western defense policies and programs."—*Soviet Military Power 1987*.

The recent agreement to eliminate intermediate range missiles seems a giant step forward. It is the first agreement ever actually to reduce—not simply limit—nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, such a treaty, historic though it is, falls short of eliminating *all* nuclear weapons.

The Verification Problem

Suppose, though, that all the nuclear powers actually agreed to total disarmament. What would stop any or all nations from cheating—failing to get rid of the

banned weapons or secretly producing them?

Kenneth Adelman, former director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, said: "Elimination of nuclear weapons would require the most extensive and intrusive system of onsite inspections anyone could imagine. . . . That would mean, in turn, unprecedented openness to foreign intrusion on the part of all nations." It is difficult to imagine that any nation would adopt such an open-house policy.

But let us further suppose that the nations somehow overcame all these formidable obstacles and disarmed. The technology and knowledge required to make the bomb would still exist. Should a conventional war break out, there would always be the possibility that it could escalate to the point where nuclear weapons would be recreated—and used.

Hans Bethe, one of the physicists who worked to develop the first atom bomb, thus recently said: "We thought we could control the genie. It wouldn't go back in the bottle, but there were reasonable grounds for thinking we could contain it. I know now that this was an illusion."

An End to Nuclear Weapons HOW?

OURS is an age of anxiety. The marriage of science to warfare has produced thousands of weapons of inconceivably destructive power, indiscriminate killers that have the potential for annihilating humanity.

That man is so willing to slay his fellow-

man is disquieting. Yet, man's murderous tendencies were manifested almost from the beginning. Reports the Bible: "So it came about that while they were in the field Cain proceeded to assault Abel his brother and kill him." (Genesis 4:8) Man has been killing man ever since. And while

**The Bible prophesies
that it is God who
will put an end to
weapons of war**

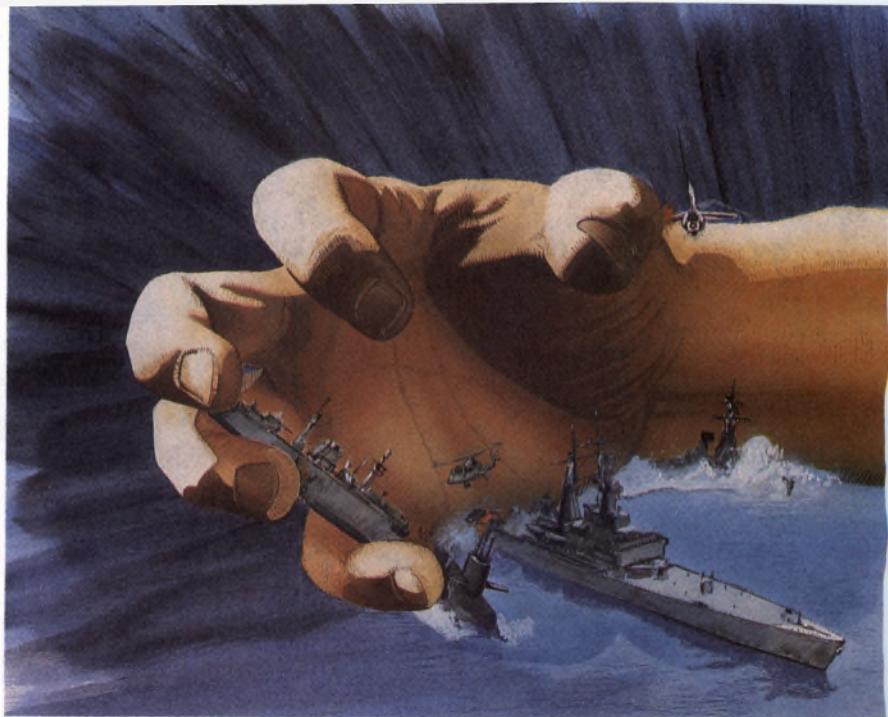
it is true that since 1945 man has restrained his hand from using nuclear weapons in warfare, ours remains the most murderous century in history. Clearly, the problem is not the weapons themselves.

Causes and Remedies

Some scholars feel that since it is men who fight wars, the causes must be found in the nature of man himself. According to this view, men fight wars because of selfishness, stupidity, and misdirected aggressive impulses. Prescriptions vary, but many feel that peace can come only through changing the outlook and behavior of man himself.

Others say that since wars are fought between nations, the causes of war lie in the structure of the international political system. Because each sovereign state acts according to its own ambitions and desires, conflicts inevitably occur. Since there is no consistent, reliable way to reconcile differences, war breaks out.

In his analysis of the causes of war, scholar Kenneth Waltz observes that "a world government is the remedy for world war." But he adds: "The remedy, though it may be unassailable in logic, is unattainable in practice." Others agree. Author Ben Bova stated in *Omni* magazine: "The nations must unite into a single government that can control armaments and prevent war."



However, he also says: "Most people regard such a world government as pie in the sky, a science-fiction dream that can never come true." The failure of the United Nations underscores this dismal conclusion. The nations have been unwilling to give up their sovereignty to that organization or any other!

World Government—A Reality?

The Bible, however, assures us that God himself purposed a real world government. Millions have unwittingly prayed for this government when saying the Lord's Prayer: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) The Head of that Kingdom government is the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ. The Bible promises regarding that government: "It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms," or human governments.—Daniel 2:44.

This world government will bring in true peace and security, not by nuclear



Under God's heavenly government, earth will be free of war and destructive weapons

deterrence nor through a sophisticated system of high-tech defensive weapons or shaky political treaties. Psalm 46:9 prophesies that Jehovah God "is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire." This means the destruction of all weapons, including nuclear devices.

But what about the warlike nature of

man himself? Under God's heavenly government, earth's inhabitants "will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4) Three million people today already live by this Bible text. They are Jehovah's Witnesses.

These Witnesses live in over 200 lands and come from many ethnic groups. Before becoming true Christians, some of them were warlike, perhaps even vicious. But as a result of taking in knowledge of God, they now refuse to take up arms against one another or anyone else. Their neutrality in the face of political conflicts is a matter of historical record. The peaceful stand Jehovah's Witnesses have taken internationally

testifies to the fact that a world free of war and nuclear weapons is possible.

Millions of people living today were born in the nuclear age and expect to die in it—if they do not die because of it. Jehovah's Witnesses do not share that gloomy outlook. Their trust is put squarely in the Kingdom and in their God, Jehovah, with whom "no declaration will be an impossibility."—Luke 1:37.

Young People Ask. . .



Why Don't People Like Me?

"UNLESS you are an exceptionally secure person," says writer Beth Levine, "at some point you too have worried whether people find you dull." Yes, it is normal and healthy to like being liked, and when others seem to shy away from us, we tend to worry. 'What is *wrong* with me?' we wonder.

Concern over whether others like them has driven some youths to despair. Dave, for example, felt that other young people were deliberately avoiding him. The effects of this rejection? "I felt lonely, worthless, even scared," recalls Dave. "It was one of the most distressing circumstances I've ever faced." What, then, if you sometimes get the feeling that others avoid you?

'Nobody Likes Me'—Or Do They?

First of all, try to analyze whether your feelings of being disliked are rooted in reality or in imagination. Does the fact that you are not the most popular person in your school or neighborhood mean that people dislike you? Of course not! Such all-or-nothing thinking is self-defeating and unrealistic. Really, it is the rare person whom *nobody* likes. The fact that you are perhaps overlooked from time to time does not mean that people feel animosity toward you.

View your situation objectively and realistically. Do you perhaps have *one* "friend sticking closer than a brother"? (Proverbs

18:24) Then obviously *someone* finds you likable! Take a look, too, at your family relationships. Do not your parents, brothers, and sisters seem to enjoy your company? Would this not indicate, then, that you do have attractive qualities? If you still have your doubts, ask someone—perhaps a trusted friend or family member—to help you analyze how others feel about you. Usually, the situation is nowhere near as dire as you think it is.

At times, though, you may be kindly told that some people are indeed shying away from you. This will hurt. But be grateful that someone cared enough for you to tell you the truth. (Proverbs 27:6; Galatians 4:16) Rather than despair, try to put your finger on what aspect of your behavior is causing the problem.

"Turn Off the Flow"

Could it be, for example, that you simply talk too much? Overly talkative people are often avoided by others. People feel cheated when they themselves are not given sufficient opportunity to speak. This is especially true when the talkative one focuses all the conversation on himself or herself. Recalls a youth named Danette: "This girl in school always talked about herself. Because of her vanity, the other kids didn't like her. They acted politely when they were around her, but they avoided her whenever possible." Aptly, then, the Bible

says: "The foolish one speaks many words."—Ecclesiastes 10:14.

Author Dale Carnegie said: "You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." Or as the book of Proverbs puts it: "The one freely watering others will himself also be freely watered." (Proverbs 11:25) So take an interest in others, and "be swift about hearing" what others have to say. (James 1:19) Advised King Solomon: "Don't talk so much.... Be sensible and turn off the flow!"—Proverbs 10:19, *The Living Bible*.

Do you not feel pleased when others give you an opportunity to speak about the things that interest you? So give others the pleasure of expressing themselves. They will like you for it.

Obnoxious Behavior

Perhaps, though, the problem is how you treat others. Consider, for example, the wise guy or know-it-all—the youth who has a knack for getting under the skin of others by always being ready with a clever insult, a stinging wisecrack, or a hilarious put-down. Then there is the person who just loves to argue and foist his opinions on everyone, or the person who is "righteous overmuch," quickly condemning anyone who does not live up to his personal standards. (Ecclesiastes 7:16) And what about the person who simply embarrasses others by being loud and boisterous? These are not people you enjoy being around, are they? Could it be, though, that others sometimes feel this way about *you*?

Obnoxious or outrageous behavior may provoke laughter, but it does little to promote friendship. Really, in whose company do you feel more comfortable—someone polite and respectful or someone who



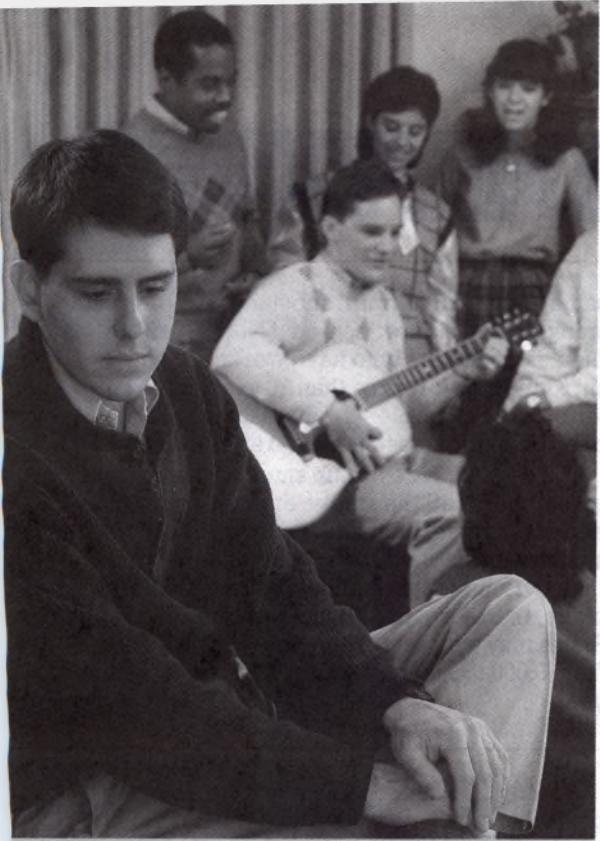
People will shy away from someone who insists on doing all the talking

fancies himself a put-down artist? Recalling some youths of the latter type, young Shellie says: "On the outside we would smile at their actions, but on the inside we were resenting their lack of fellow feeling."

The Bible's advice, therefore, is to "keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments." (Philippians 2:14) Needless bickering, teasing, insulting, and self-righteous condemning simply alienate others. People will like you a lot more if you show "fellow feeling" and "let your utterance be always with graciousness."—1 Peter 3:8; Colossians 4:6.

Don't Be a "Blank Screen"

While a person who does all the talking can be obnoxious, a person who has little or



People are seldom attracted to someone who has nothing to say

nothing to add to a conversation can be boring. Says Mark R. Leary, assistant professor of psychology: "If all I do is ask questions or say 'uh-huh,' no one finds out anything about me and I'm not an enjoyable partner. You don't want to dominate the conversation, but you don't want to be a blank screen."

There is "a time to speak." (Ecclesiastes 3:7) So ask yourself, 'Have I been making others feel bored and uncomfortable by clamping up when conversation starts?' If so, make an effort to be more conversational! What you say doesn't have to be profound, but it should be enough to show your interest in others. If coming up with interesting things to say is a problem, try asking questions. "As apples of gold in silver

carvings is a word spoken at the right time for it," says the Bible.—Proverbs 25:11.

Becoming Likable to Others

Perhaps you can now see some personality flaws you need to work on. As mentioned earlier, a family member or close friend may be of help in isolating undesirable traits. Ask specific questions, and be courageous enough to listen to their honest answers. It takes real inner strength to admit a flaw and even more to correct it.

Dave, who was mentioned earlier in the article, did some soul-searching and discovered that the core of his problem was his self-centeredness. He had so lost interest in others that he even failed to care for his personal appearance and hygiene! Dave, though, made needed adjustments. Today he is well-liked and enjoys the friendship of many, both young and old.

Of course, it doesn't pay to try to get others to like you at all costs. Explains Dr. Theodore I. Rubin: "Sadly, nobody is universally liked all the time and no affection, pretense, or twisting oneself in a pretzel produces a bit more love. Some people like us, some don't. In any case, most people can't stand phony manipulations for love; nor does the manipulator like himself." Indeed, Jesus Christ warned: "Woe, whenever all men speak well of you." (Luke 6:26) The mere fact that you take a stand for right principles is bound to make some dislike you.—Luke 6:22.

So make reasonable efforts to be agreeable, pleasant, likable. But never compromise what is right simply to gain the approval of others. Young Samuel of Bible times took a firm stand for what is right. The result? He kept growing "more likable both from Jehovah's standpoint and from that of men." (1 Samuel 2:26) And with a little work and determination, so will you.

Are They Spreading

DEATH?

GWARNING: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health." Die-hard smokers in the United States shrug off this ominous warning printed on cigarette packs. To such ones, lung cancer seems, at worst, a distant threat. 'Besides,' such ones reason, 'it's my body.'

However, the American Cancer Society reports: "Smokers endanger not only their own health but also the health of those around them." The Dutch publication *Roken welbeschouwd* (Smoking—All Things Considered) concurs, claiming that a nonsmoker working alongside an average smoker may absorb the

same amount of harmful substances as a person smoking five cigarettes a day! Not surprisingly, then, nonsmokers who have worked in smoky surroundings for more than 20 years often suffer bronchial problems—just as if they had been smoking one to ten cigarettes a day!

The reason? Sidestream smoke. That is what researchers call the smoke emanating from the end of a lighted cigarette. Far from harmless, sidestream smoke has more tar and nicotine than the smoke that is inhaled! Investigators claim, therefore, that smokers in the United States may well be responsible for anywhere from 5,000 to 50,000 deaths of nonsmokers each year.

Cigarettes, Women, and Babies. There is also a growing concern that smoking adversely affects infants. "Maternal smoking," warns the booklet *Facts and Figures on Smoking*, "has a direct, growth-retarding effect on the fetus and may adversely affect the child's long-term growth, intellectual development, and behavior." Pregnant women who smoke introduce large quantities of harmful substances into the bloodstream of their unborn children. Estimates vary, but some claim that at birth, their babies weigh, on an average, seven ounces less than babies of nonsmokers.

A study conducted in Denmark further suggests that cigarette smoking may also impair a woman's ability to breast-feed. "Probably as a result of the nicotine," say the Danish researchers, "heavy smokers have lower levels of prolactin, a hormone that stimulates milk production."

Ironically, though, more women are smoking today—and smoking more cigarettes—than ever before. As a result, says *Facts and Figures on Smoking*, lung cancer in the United States has surpassed breast cancer as the number one cancer killer of women. It claimed the lives of an estimated 40,000 women in 1985 alone.

Changing Attitudes. There is a silver lining on this cloud of smoke, however. According to the American Cancer Society, sentiment against smoking is growing. Three out of four Americans now feel that smokers should not smoke in the presence of others. The number of people who no longer smoke is likewise growing. Overall cigarette consumption in the United States and Western Europe is on the decline. Says Adele Paroni, spokeswoman of the American Cancer Society:

"The best news is that now fewer than 30 percent of American adults smoke!"

There are still some 54 million people in the United States who smoke. But according to the American Lung Association, nine out of ten current smokers say they want to quit. Perhaps they will be spurred on by the newer, more positive warnings printed on cigarette packages. One of them reads: "SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health."



**Sidestream
smoke from a
cigarette has
more tar and
nicotine than
the smoke
that is
inhaled**



**Pregnant women
who smoke
introduce large
quantities of
harmful
substances into
the bloodstream
of their unborn
children**



Can the **CULTURE GAP** Be Bridged?

DID you notice what all three couples have in common? All three are about to face a culture gap that will perhaps

"Our visas have been granted. We will immigrate to Canada next month."

"Have you heard? My husband has been transferred to the Persian Gulf States. We will be moving soon."

"Meet my fiancé. Yes, he is from the Middle East. We plan to live in his country after we are married."

prove even greater than the trip that they will make.

In our grandparents' day, the problem practically did not exist, since only a small portion of the world's population traveled any great distance from

their place of birth. But today, many cross continents and oceans on a regular basis and in just a matter of hours. More and more leave home for good.

The reasons are numerous. Many western companies have sent skilled employees to work in developing countries, with whole families being transferred because of long-term contracts. Students in developing countries have sought specialized training in European and American universities. And in recent years civil wars, national conflicts, and racial or religious persecution have caused many to seek refuge in countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United States.

Whatever the reason for the transfer, the newcomers will have to put forth an effort to bridge the gap between their own culture and that of their adopted home.

When East Meets West in Marriage

Many meet their mate while completing their education outside their own country and bring the mate home after marriage. Meeting the challenges of marriage takes understanding, patience, self-sacrifice, and conscious effort, even under the best of circumstances. So when the partners come from different cultures, those qualities must be developed to an even greater extent if the marriage is to last. Yet, many culturally mixed marriages are doomed from the start. Why? Let's take a typical example:

The romantically in-

Special efforts are required to make a success of marriage when mates come from different cultures

clined American coed finds it very easy to fall in love with Sami. He is so accommodating and treats her like a princess. No local boy has ever been so respectful. And those dark eyes—how they stir her emotions! Accepting his proposal of marriage and going to live with him in the mystic East seems very appealing.

What are the chances for such a marriage to succeed? Though her husband may have given her some description of his country, the bride may really have no idea of the actual situation in her husband's land of birth. She has never seen him in his own surroundings or with his family. Even though she may have taken a trip or two overseas, daily living in a foreign country is quite another matter.





In Eastern countries, some sort of refreshment is always offered, even to the most casual visitor

Sources of Irritation

One of the greatest sources of irritation to the new bride most likely will be a lack of the privacy that may be so respected in her homeland. She will find that having a Middle Eastern mate means taking on a whole family of intensely interested in-laws—including aunts, uncles, and first, second, and third cousins. These and immediate neighbors can ask very direct and personal questions that would be considered impolite in other lands. Yet, citizens of Mediterranean countries are not offended by such inquiries and may have *their* feelings hurt if one doesn't ask just as personal questions of them. Since they expect marriages to be fruitful, constant scrutinizing for signs of future offspring can be anticipated.

It is said that an Englishman's home is his castle, but a Middle Eastern man's home is sometimes more like a hotel. Friends and relatives drop in at any time without previous notice and in many in-

stances spend the night. If the cupboard is not sufficiently stocked, it will take some ingenuity to stretch meals.

In the East the woman's place is in the home. True, in some Eastern countries women may work outside the home, but they are still expected to do all the housework as well. The man is

very definitely the head of the family, and his word is law. In some Persian Gulf States, women are not even allowed out of the home alone. If they do go out, they must be covered from head to foot, including their face.

A source of frustration to a person unfamiliar with Eastern ways may be the lack of organization and the free-for-all attitude encountered in bus lines, at supermarket checkouts, while driving in heavy traffic, and in dealing with those in government offices. A person used to the principle of "first come, first served" will be sadly disappointed with a system where having pull is of primary importance.

Other possible sources of irritation involve the different sense of humor, the quick show of emotion—be it anger or sympathy—and the generally louder tones used in everyday conversation.

Avoid Being an Irritant

On the other hand, the bride herself can be a source of irritation to those in her new

land if she doesn't observe the local customs. Women in Eastern lands are expected to be modestly dressed. Bare backs are frowned upon. Alcoholic beverages are forbidden in Muslim countries or communities.

When a visitor enters a room, all present stand up to greet him and shake his hand. A casual nod in his general direction would be like a slap in the face. Also, some sort of refreshment is always offered, even to the most casual visitor. So it would be discourteous to ask first if a visitor would like a cup of coffee; he will always answer in the negative, no matter how much he would like to accept. Even if the refreshment is offered spontaneously, the visitor may refuse and have to be coaxed to accept, since he does not want to appear greedy. If no coaxing is forthcoming, the host or hostess will be considered stingy.

These are but a few of the new customs a bride will face in moving to the Middle East. Other countries will have still different customs.

Bridging the Culture Gap

A good suggestion for those who contemplate moving to another country because of marriage is to find out *beforehand* the situation that will be encountered. First read as much as you can about the country, its history, and its customs. Pay a visit there, and observe your fiancé with his family. A person one has come to know on familiar ground may seem an altogether different person in his own community. Is that polite, accommodating suitor just as accommodating and polite with all members of his family?

Complete frankness with each other is vital. Sources of irritation should be aired before they grow out of proportion. See

what can be worked out. Some, after all effort has been made, may find that lifestyles are just too dissimilar and that they just cannot make the required changes. If so, it is better to realize this before entering into a lifelong arrangement that will make both unhappy.

For those who decide to marry, the following suggestions will prove helpful: Make the effort to learn the language of your in-laws. Continually speaking your own language in the presence of those who do not understand it may make them suspicious that the conversation is about them. There is no need to wait to talk to them until you know the grammar perfectly. Use what you know, and you will find that people will be happy to help you along.

Do not make constant comparisons of your new situation with the life you left behind. Accept the fact that your previous way of doing things is not the only way. It may be more familiar and comfortable for you, but everyone around you is used to a different way. For example, the main meal in the Middle East is at midday, whereas "back home" it may have been in the evening. So instead of having her husband grab a sandwich at noon, a wife is expected to have a hot meal ready, and he usually expects her to share it with him. All it takes

How to Adapt

- ✓ Use the native language
- ✓ Learn the local customs
- ✓ Try new foods
- ✓ Avoid comparisons to former way of life
- ✓ Adjust mental attitude, and think positively
- ✓ Apply Bible principles

to keep life smooth is adaptability, applied by both partners.

While on the subject of meals, cultivating a taste for local dishes is also helpful. Trying a new dish "just once" to please one's mate may be delightfully surprising. Perfecting it and adding it to those dishes you regularly prepare will further cement the marriage. The same can be said of cultivating an ear for Oriental music.

Additionally, take time to learn the local social customs. Some can quickly be learned just by observation. In the Middle East these include: polite conversation, even with deliverymen; offering a cup of coffee or a cold drink even to the casual visitor; and rising to greet visitors with a firm handshake and relatives with a kiss on each cheek.

Ask your mate what will be expected of you in any new situation. For example, one bride was told by her husband that it is the custom even for adult children to kiss the hand of their parents and in-laws as they greet them. It is the local sign of respect. The first few times that she complied with the custom, it felt awkward. But later it became a matter of habit, and besides pleasing her in-laws very much, it made for good family relations.

Right Attitude Important

The fact that your neighbors may show more interest in your personal affairs than seems fitting can be balanced by their always being on hand in times of trouble. For example, an American woman married to a Lebanese man came home from shopping one day to find her house full of neighbors. It turned out that her husband had taken sick at work and had barely made it to his gate when a neighbor noticed his weakened condition and helped him into the house and into bed. The neighbor then sent

out the alarm to the whole neighborhood, and while some went to fetch the doctor, others made the husband comfortable and then went to buy the prescribed medication. How glad that woman was for her attentive neighbors!

So recognize the right of others to have different ways of doing things. And remember, the difference in itself does not make such ways either good or bad, right or wrong.

Living by the Bible's admonition has proved to be a tremendous help in bridging the culture gap. The wife who respects her husband as her head and the husband who loves his wife as his own body will find success in their union. (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21-33) They will especially be keen to show patience and understanding during the period of adjustment to the new way of life.

Yes, there will be times when differences of opinion arise as to whose customs should be followed under various circumstances. But couples who respect God's Word will look for the applicable principle in the Bible and seek to follow it. Even if the matter turns out to be one of personal preference, the Bible principle at 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5 can be applied: "Love . . . does not look for its own interests."—See also 1 Corinthians 10:23, 24.

Always keep in mind, though, that if you have moved to another country, you are the foreigner, and most of the adapting will be up to you. You cannot expect everyone else to conform to your standards or way of life. At the same time, you can share things from your culture with your new friends.

So can the culture gap be bridged? The example of many who have done so and who have enriched their lives by combining the best of the two cultures answers yes.

My Journey *in Search of* a Purpose



I HAD been in the Sri Lankan fishing village for nearly a month. It was calm and tranquil, really idyllic. I had a small hut, and for just 70 cents (U.S.) a day, a neighbor provided me with rice and vegetables and occasionally fish.

One morning, as if out of nowhere, a suntanned Caucasian walked across the sand toward me. My first reaction was that he might be a fellow New Zealander, but his greeting told me right away that he was an Australian.

"Do you have anywhere to stay?" I asked, surprised how Eastern hospitality was already rubbing off on me.

He seemed glad to accept my invitation, so he began to unpack his few belongings to settle in. My eye caught sight of a green hardbound book.

"What's that?" I asked.

"A Bible."

Now, I had a churchgoing background, and I thought I already knew everything "Western religion" had to offer. Besides, I had rejected it as being totally hypocritical.

"Why do you bother carrying a heavy thing like that around?" I asked rather cynically.

"It's got some far-out stuff in it," Adrian replied. "It even speaks about the end of the world as we know it!"

I was skeptical. "Can you show me that?" Show me he did. And was I stunned!

My Journey Begins

What was I, a 21-year-old New Zealander, doing in Sri Lanka back in November 1976? Well, I was on a journey in search of knowledge, and it took me to many places: from balmy, moonlit nights on tropical Asian beaches to dingy opium dens in Penang; from near shipwreck off the coast of Africa to the crowded markets of Port Sudan.

In 1975, I said good-bye to my parents and my career-type job and headed for Australia. My plan was to earn money in the Australian mines to finance a round-the-world trip. Everything went according to plan. I obtained employment in a uranium mine, and the money was coming in. But even before I began my trip, my thinking began to change. I began to be troubled with questions about the meaning of life. So in hopes of finding answers, I started to read books on philosophy and religion.

First Stop, Indonesia

When I felt I had earned enough money at the mine, I set out for my first stop, Indonesia. Here I developed quite a fondness for the Asian way of life. Its reduced

emphasis on material things and a far less pressured life-style appealed to me. Of course, for me it was easy—I was not affected by the malnutrition, poor hygiene, and extreme poverty that the majority of local people had to contend with.

I traveled by bus, train, boat, oxcart, and on foot, through the islands of Indonesia, including Bali, Java, and Sumatra. The longer I traveled, the more shallow and empty the Western way of life seemed to me. Yet, I couldn't really see that the Eastern way—though less materialistic—could be the answer to my questions.

From fellow travelers, I bought LSD. I did not take the drug for kicks. I was looking for some hidden knowledge, some form of enlightenment. While under its influence, for a moment I thought I saw life as it really was with perfect clarity and understanding. But this was followed by a feeling of extreme nausea, and after it was over, I realized that I had found nothing concrete in the way of answers.

Leaving Sumatra, I traveled to Malaysia—a beautiful country with friendly inhabitants. In the center of the Malay Peninsula is the state of Pahang, a highland rain-forest area with wild orchids growing right along the roadside, thriving in the cool, moist air. My spirits would soar as I walked among these unspoiled beauties of nature.

Thailand, Burma, and India

From Malaysia I moved up into Thailand and then over into Burma. Each of these countries delighted and fascinated me with its own peculiarities, foods, customs, and people. But though they were intriguing, I was not finding any real answers to my many questions. So after just a short stay in Burma, I decided to cross over into India.

Ah! Ancient, mysterious, devout India! Perhaps this was the place to find what I was seeking. The teeming cities depressed me, so I moved out as quickly as I could into rural India. Life here seemed to have been little affected by the 20th century; a strong religious influence was everywhere.

I watched fascinated as a Hindu procession passed by. Everyone was dressed in garments of saffron color. Flower bearers scattered frangipani petals in front of the procession. People kissed the ground. 'Holy men' wearing only loincloths, with bodies shining from a coating of perfumed oil, chanted continually. But, again, I felt disappointed. While admiring the devotion of Indian people, I still did not find the answers I was seeking.

Next, Down to Sri Lanka

The months of rugged travel, along with the oppressive heat and poor diet, were taking a toll on me physically. I needed a place to rest up. More than that, I needed a reason for what I was doing, really a reason for doing anything—a reason for living.

I had heard of the beauty of Sri Lanka, the pear-shaped isle just off the southern tip of India. It was described to me as a tropical island with sandy beaches, coral reefs in crystal-clear waters, cool tea-growing plateaus, and tall mountain peaks. What better place for a rest and further meditation!

The east coast had been recommended as suited to my needs, so I settled there in a little fishing village. It was here that I had my chance encounter with Adrian. But why was I stunned when Adrian read from the Bible in answer to my question? Because the two passages he showed me were from the 24th chapter of Matthew and the 3rd chapter of 2 Timothy. I had never heard these read in church. Why,

**The Sri Lankan
village where I
met Adrian**

here were forecast for "the last days" increase in crime, love cooling off, constant skirmishes among the nations, people becoming fearful, and so forth! I couldn't contain my astonishment.

Adrian laughed. "Oh, there's more," he said.

We sat on the beach under a starry sky and watched a giant orange moon rise out of the sea. Adrian explained what he knew of the great purpose that the Creator had for our planet. Although that purpose had been delayed for various reasons, it was going to occur, and very soon.

I didn't understand all that Adrian said, but there was something about this whole conversation that moved me in a way I had never before experienced. The next day I wrote in my diary: "For the first time in all my dealings with Christianity, I feel *truth*. The prophecies are obvious; the end of the system is not far away."

It began to dawn on me that if almighty God had a purpose and if we acted in harmony with that purpose, we too could have a purpose in our life. The thought of living forever on a paradise earth—though still seeming a bit way-out—certainly would be a grand purpose, and I decided I would look into it more deeply.

Then another scripture really took me by surprise. Adrian told me that God has a personal name, and he showed me Psalm 83:18: "That people may know that you,



whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." I now began to see that this Creator was not just a force but was a real person with a personal name.

Change of Plans

I had planned to return to India when my health improved, then visit the Himalayas and see Nepal. But Adrian and I agreed to assist a retired American couple who were sailing around the world. They needed help in sailing their 56-foot yacht on the next leg of their voyage, across the Indian Ocean to Kenya. I was happy for the opportunity to sail and also to learn more from the Bible by discussions with Adrian.

But where did Adrian learn all the wonderful things he was showing me from the Bible? He explained that he had studied with Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia. He had not progressed to the point of becoming a Witness, but he hoped that he might some day. In the back of his Bible, there was a list of addresses where Jehovah's Witnesses could be contacted. We scanned the list.

"There it is," I said. "Nairobi, Kenya. I'm

going to pay them a visit as soon as we reach Africa."

Another Prophecy in Fulfillment

One morning I rose as usual and climbed up on deck to look out over the ocean. Instead of seeing the usual deep royal blue, I was horrified to see that the water was a dark coffee-brown color. Big lumps of brown sludge were everywhere. A thin layer of dirty grease covered the surface of the ocean as far as the eye could see. We had sailed into a crude-oil slick!

The brown muck clung to the waterline of the yacht. We sailed through it all that day and part of the next. It must have been at least a hundred miles long. The skipper explained that supertankers sailing around the Cape of Good Hope en route to the Persian Gulf flush out their ballast tanks before arrival. Much of this waste oil then drifts south into the Antarctic region, damaging the plankton, the primary link in the ocean's food chain.

Adrian took advantage of this to show me Bible verses telling that man would 'ruin the earth' in the last days but that God would in turn "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11:18) 'What doesn't the Bible have something to say about?' I thought to myself.

My First Contact With Witnesses

After stops in the Maldives and Seychelles islands, we dropped anchor in Mombasa, a major seaport. A few days later we visited the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Nairobi, Kenya. We were warmly greeted and given a tour of the complex. On one wall there were large sheet maps of East Africa, with colored pins in different places. The Branch Committee coordinator explained that the whole area was being systematically covered by the Witnesses,



With my wife in our pioneer assignment in Moree, New South Wales

who were preaching the good news about God's Kingdom.

"But that's all tsetse-fly country!" I protested. "And over here there would only be nomadic Masai tribes!"

"That's right," he said. "We cover all of that."

He then referred me to Matthew chapter 24, the first part of which I remembered Adrian had shown me. He had me read verse 14: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." 'Well,' I thought, 'these people really seem to be doing that!'

Knowledge Has an Effect

With what I was learning, wandering the globe lost a lot of appeal. Still, Adrian and I continued on, visiting the Sudan, Egypt,

and finally arriving in Israel. It was now May 1977, and we decided to part company with the yacht. We were glad we did because shortly afterward it sank.

Adrian decided to return to Australia, feeling the need to get more involved with Jehovah's Witnesses. Somehow it wasn't the same without him. I missed his friendship more than I had expected. I visited Cyprus, Greece, Italy, and Germany. While all these places were intriguing, constant travel seemed to satisfy me less than ever. I realized that this was really no way to find a purpose in life.

There was only one thing to do: get back to a stable life-style and start in earnest to learn more about Jehovah God by a regular Bible study. I finally arrived in London, England, and bought an air ticket to Australia. Soon I was back in the uranium mine working—but also studying. Once a week a Witness drove 40 miles from the nearest town to conduct a study with me.

Finding Purpose in Life

Early in 1979, I had the pleasure of rejoining Adrian, this time in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses at Woy Woy on the central coast of New South Wales. In July of that year we were baptized together. Since then we have made progress in the Christian way. Both of us married fine Christian girls. My wife, Julie, and I then began to share in the full-time preaching work as pioneers, and Adrian's wife also entered the pioneer service.

Over eight spiritually productive years have passed since our baptism. We have been able to help a number of others also find purpose in their lives. For example, a Bible study with members of a rock band and some of their friends resulted in five of them accepting the truth and being baptized on the same occasion.

In 1986 Julie and I moved to serve in a part of New South Wales where there are fewer Witnesses. There we had the opportunity to spread knowledge of the true God Jehovah to Aborigines, farm owners, and people living in small country towns. This meant quite an adjustment for Julie, who had to move far away from her parents and seven brothers and sisters. However, she is happy in the knowledge that five members of her family also share in the full-time Kingdom service. In 1987 we were delighted to be invited to join the Australia Bethel family at Ingleburn to share in the construction of extensions to the printing factory and Bethel Home.

The love of travel is still in Julie and me. But we look forward to the time when the earth becomes a beautiful garden home. Then there will be time for travel that will be far more rewarding than anything we could experience now. In the meantime, Julie and I continue to experience God's rich blessing as we press on, secure in the most rewarding purpose of all—serving Jehovah, a God of purpose and love.—*As told by David Moffatt.*

In Our Next Issue

- Parents—You Have Homework Too!
- Should I Tell On My Friend?
- Why Liberation Theology Is Not the Answer

The Catholic Bishops and the "Sleeping Giant"

SHOULD ordinary Catholics be evangelists? Or should preaching be left to the dwindling number of priests? That was an issue facing Catholic bishops in their world synod, or meeting, held in Rome last year. If you are a Catholic, how do you feel about doing evangelizing work?

Until just a few decades ago, there was a negative concept of the laity. In the early part of this century, for example, Pope Pius X declared: "The Church is by its nature an unequal society . . . made up of two categories of persons: the Shepherds and the Flock, those who occupy a position in the hierarchy, and the crowd of the faithful. . . . The multitude has no other duty than to allow themselves to be guided and to follow."

Such a description would not be acceptable today. A modern theological dictionary states that "the layman is not a passive object, as he was considered for so



long in the past," but "is an active and responsible subject."

There are some 700 million Catholic laity in the world, and Irish cardinal O'Fiaich described them as a "sleeping giant." What did he mean? According to the bishops, the laity should live their faith in a more active way. The aim of the synod was to make the laity conscious of their responsibilities. But have changes really come about in the Catholic Church to awaken this "sleeping giant"? **The Role of Women.** Many Catholics expected changes in the role of women within the church. A document published by Catholic women recommended to the bishops: "The discriminatory articles of canon law concerning women, or that are based on limitative assumptions concerning the 'nature' and the 'role' of women, should be revised and corrected, including no. 1024 relative to ordination." Article 1024 of canon law says: "The sacred ordination is validly received exclusively by the baptized person of the male sex."

However, the Catholic publication *Rocca* stated that the Vatican 'does not presently seem to want to listen to anything that could modify its traditional preclusion of women from the priesthood.' It was a "door slammed in women's faces," said a priest.

Fewer Priests. At the same time, the Catholic Church is experiencing a grave vocational crisis. The number of priests is dwindling worldwide. Pope John Paul II considers this "the fundamental problem of the Church." For example, there are "ever fewer priests in Italy," writes *La Repubblica*. And *La Civiltà Cattolica* says that the fall in the number of priests in the Netherlands is "dramatic."

"It is estimated that out of three hundred thousand local Catholic communities all over the world that are bound to meet together every Sunday in liturgical assembly, more than half have no resident priest," affirms one newspaper.

Matter of Great Concern. The issue that received the most attention at this synod was evangelization. Prior to the synod, the pope himself had emphasized that "every Christian . . . is essentially an apostle."

Yet, many bishops claim that Catholics

themselves need to be "reevangelized." According to them, this is needed because of what was called "the challenge of the sects and the new religious groups." If they are not adequately prepared, said a bishop from Ecuador, 'Catholics are allowing themselves to be won over very easily by sects.'

One of the final proposals approved by the bishops says: "The sects are storming ahead in many regions of the earth. . . . The faithful should be awakened by catechism, in order for them to give a reason for their own faith." The synod exhorted Catholics to 'go and make disciples in all the nations.' But how can the "sleeping giant" of 700 million Catholics make disciples when they do not know how to evangelize?

The Bible clearly shows that the work of true Christians is to seek out deserving ones "from house to house." (Acts 5:42; 20:20; Matthew 10:11) And who are to take part in it? All Christians. Concerning the way in which the early Christians disseminated their faith, French historian Gustave Bar-
dy says:

"Individual action is found right from the origins of the church, and it is perhaps in this way that, during the first two centuries, . . . Christianity conquered the major part of its faithful. Every believer is of necessity an apostle. . . . All are able to consecrate themselves to this apostolate, even the poorest, the most ignorant, the most despised."

Indeed, all true Christians are ministers of God's Word. Among them, there are no distinctions between clergy and laity. Such distinctions came about after the falling away from original Christianity. (Acts 20:29, 30) Some Catholic sources acknowledge that the clergy-laity distinction in the Catholic Church "has no theological foundation." According to Vatican observer Giancarlo Zizola, the early Christians "had no priests, their ministers were presbyters, that is, elders . . . There were no hierarchies among them."

True Christians of today are awake and very active in their Christian work, zealously preaching the "good news" of God's Kingdom. Likely, they left this magazine with you.—Matthew 24:14; 25:13; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

From Our Readers

Bed-Wetting

I would like to suggest a subject for Awake! I had a problem with bed-wetting until I was 14 years old. No one wanted me to stop more than me, yet I was thought to be lazy, disobedient, and uncaring. Different forms of punishment were tried, including being made to suck on my wet sheets. This made me feel ashamed, hurt, bitter toward my parents, and isolated from the family. I feel helpful information on this subject would be deeply appreciated.

G. T., United States

By now, G. T. has no doubt noted the material on this subject in our February 22, 1988, issue.—ED.

Thank you for the article on bed-wetting. It is reassuring to know that the problem is so common with other families. My son is a bed wetter at the age of three and a half. Before I realized it was a real problem and not his just being too lazy to get out of bed, I used to spank my son (even leaving marks). I also used harsh words and even got my daughter to call him names. He now tells me he doesn't like to wet the bed. When I first heard that, I got a lump in my throat. I feel really guilty for the abuse I gave my son physically and mostly mentally.

Guilty Father, United States

How happy young ones must feel that Awake! shows concern about what may be their problem. One possible cause that is not commonly known is that when deep dreaming up to the point of urinating in the dream, the child bed-wets because he forgets that he is sleeping. But if he is quick to note the feeling, he can get up and stop it. Not dreaming up to the point

of urinating in my dream helped me to stop bed-wetting. If young ones that have this problem know this, it could help them. The parents could also assist the child to have this in mind.

T. O., Nigeria

Comics Artist

The article "A Comics Artist Pursues Happiness" in the February 22, 1988, issue was extremely timely for me. Right up until reading this article, I was planning to make my living by being a comics artist while serving in the ministry. As a cartoonist, I could work hours I like. And I received good results after submitting an application for new cartoonists.

How naive I was! Rather than working just hours that suited me, the work would have commanded my whole time. Also, I realized that I was tightly shutting my eyes to the possibility of promoting mistaken concepts in the minds of thousands of young girls.

M. S., Japan

Thank you for publishing this article. I was one of those "dreamy girls" referred to by the writer. When I entered junior high school, I was at the stage when interest in the opposite sex comes rushing in all of a sudden. While longing for a romantic love of one's own, by reading comic books one can identify with the main characters and experience everything. I was buying thick comic books and getting high by reading the 'fabulous stories' over and over again. I was addicted to comics and couldn't give them up. They became my escape. Young people's thinking is being corroded by comic books. I know because that has happened to me.

Anonymous, Japan

Watching the World



Smoking 'Addicts'

The surgeon general of the United States, Dr. C. Everett Koop, declared last May that nicotine is as addictive as heroin and cocaine. "Careful examination of the data makes it clear that cigarettes and other forms of tobacco are addicting," the surgeon general wrote in a preface to his annual report on the consequences of smoking on health. "An extensive body of research has shown that nicotine is the drug in tobacco that causes addiction." The 618-page report cites 171 separate scientific studies and concludes that the use of tobacco is a serious form of addiction, rather than simply a dangerous habit. This research helps to explain why people continue to use a product that is said to kill 320,000 annually in the United States alone.

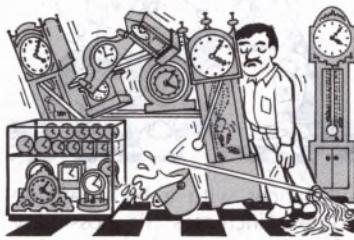
Memory Disturbers

To determine the effect of background noises on the memory, researchers tested French college students on their ability to remember nine-digit numbers while exposed to a variety of sounds. The testing revealed that noises comparable to that produced by a subway train had little or no effect on a student's recall ability. However, "background speech . . . is disruptive

even if it's in an unfamiliar language," notes *Hippocrates* magazine. Explaining why, researcher Alan Baddeley of England's Cambridge University says that short-term memory is linked to spoken language, which accounts for the need to repeat audibly a new phone number or a new lock combination. But according to the report, "the sound of another human voice jumbles this process" whether it is speech or vocal music.

Time for Accidents

People are most vulnerable to accidents "from 2 to 7 a.m. and



2 to 5 p.m.," reports *The Province*, a British Columbia, Canada, newspaper. According to the report, a panel of scientists believe that "brain processes produce an increased tendency toward sleep and diminished capacity to function in the early morning hours. A second, less-pronounced period of vulnerability occurs in the mid-afternoon." The disaster at the Three Mile Island nucle-

ar plant in Pennsylvania is cited as an example of human error in judgment occurring within these "zones of vulnerability." The researchers found "a striking association between the two daily periods of human sleep tendency and medical incidents, motor vehicle accidents and human error in technological catastrophes," notes *The Province*.

No Simple Solution

"Distant" is how 50 percent of the residents of Rome, Italy, feel toward the Roman Catholic Church, states a report by the Church of Rome. The report shows that in the last 20 years, the number of regular attenders at Mass dropped from 41 percent to 25 percent. In some Rome suburbs, practicing Catholics make up barely 5 percent of the population. Figures relative to priests are of no less concern to the church. There is 1 priest for every 10,000 inhabitants. "It is a problem with no simple solution," says *Il Corriere della Sera*, a Milan daily.

Does the Soul Die?

Bishop Krister Stendahl of Stockholm has shocked churchgoers in Sweden with his ideas on the immortality of the soul, published in his recent book *Meningar* (Opinions). Stendahl

says that the traditional belief in the immortality of the soul is approaching its end. Parliament member Filip Fridolfsson asserts that the bishop's position "calls the foundations of the Christian belief into question." But as Stendahl states: "You cannot find much strong support for the immortality of the soul doctrine in the Bible"—the real foundation of Christian belief. Yes, the Bible's stand is clear. The soul dies, and the hope of everlasting life for mankind is based on a resurrection, as indicated by such texts as Ezekiel 18:4 and Acts 24:15.

Bible "Sellout"

The "all-Australian Bible" released recently as part of Australia's bicentennial year had a surprisingly good initial reception. (See "Watching the World," May 8, 1988.) Within a week of its release, this 'Australianized' *Good News Bible* was sold out in some cities. However, the first printing was only 40,000 copies. According to *The Canberra Times* newspaper, the general secretary of the Bible Society in Australia said: "It is very sad that the great majority of our fellow Australians are Biblical illiterates. This comes through in so many ways and presents a big challenge." Who is responsible for the general lack of Bible knowledge among Australia's 16 million inhabitants? Surely, the clergy themselves must share the blame for failing to teach the people Bible truth.

'Breeding Psychopaths'?

"America may be becoming a breeding ground for psychopaths," reports *The Province* of Vancouver, British Columbia,

Canada. According to the article, American psychologist Ken Magid, codirector of the behavioral science program at Denver's Saint Joseph Hospital in Colorado, maintains that "there is a very serious problem of children who have not been properly bonded [in loving attachment] to their mothers in the first 16 months of life" when "trust in people is learned." He says that failure to bond may result from "anything that interrupts the loving connection between a mother and her baby." Dr. Magid claims: "We could end half of all violent, senseless crime in North America within two generations" if the governments helped mothers stay home with their babies for at least the first year.

Coffee Consumption

The *British Medical Journal* reports that excessive consumption of coffee or other



substances with a high caffeine content increases the possibility of a heart attack by raising blood cholesterol. While modest amounts of caffeine serve as a stimulant and can enhance individual performance both physically and mentally, in larger amounts it has an adrenalinelike effect that stresses the circulatory system by stimulating the heart and dilating blood vessels. Headaches, insomnia, and anxiety may result from consumption of more than three cups of coffee daily.

Boiled coffee was said to contain five times as much caffeine as coffee prepared in other ways.

The Longest Undersea Tunnel

The Seikan Tunnel, the longest undersea tunnel in the world, opened to the public last March. It links Hokkaido and Honshu, two of the main islands of Japan. The tunnel, which is exclusively for railway use, is 33.5 miles in length, of which 14.5 miles run 328 feet below the Tsugaru Strait seabed. It takes about 30 minutes for the fastest trains to pass through the tunnel. The cost of the tunnel? Thirty-four lives and 1.1 trillion yen (\$8.8 billion, U.S.) in overall construction outlays. However, during the 24 years that have passed since construction began on the tunnel, air travel has replaced much of the passenger rail traffic.

Pet Cemeteries

More and more Japanese are choosing to bury their dead pets in pet cemeteries. They pay from ¥10,000 (\$78, U.S.) to over ¥1,300,000 (\$10,000, U.S.) according to the type of cremation, funeral, and gravestone. Additional charges cover upkeep of the grave and a yearly visit by a priest "to pray for the peace of the animal's soul." Paying homage at the graves of dogs, cats, goldfish, and other animals is not uncommon. One cemetery reports being packed by over three hundred incense-offering worshipers on weekends. It is believed that more time and money are spent on many of these animals after death than on their acquisition and care when alive.

A Tree's Incredible Pump

Leaves high up in a tree need water and nutrients, often thousands of gallons a day. These must be pumped up, but how?

"This incredible pumping feat starts deep down in the earth where millions of microscopic root hairs absorb water and dissolved minerals," explains *Compressed Air Magazine*. "As water is consumed, a shortage is created in the leaves that causes the columns to move upward and literally pull more water from the soil. No man-made vacuum pump can pull water beyond about 32 feet." But what about the pumping system of a tree?

It is so remarkable that it is said it could, if necessary, lift water in a tree about two miles high! No wonder that an advertisement by a prominent manufacturer of pumps draws attention to the maple tree's "remarkable pump" and acknowledges: "We can't equal nature in patience or performance."



