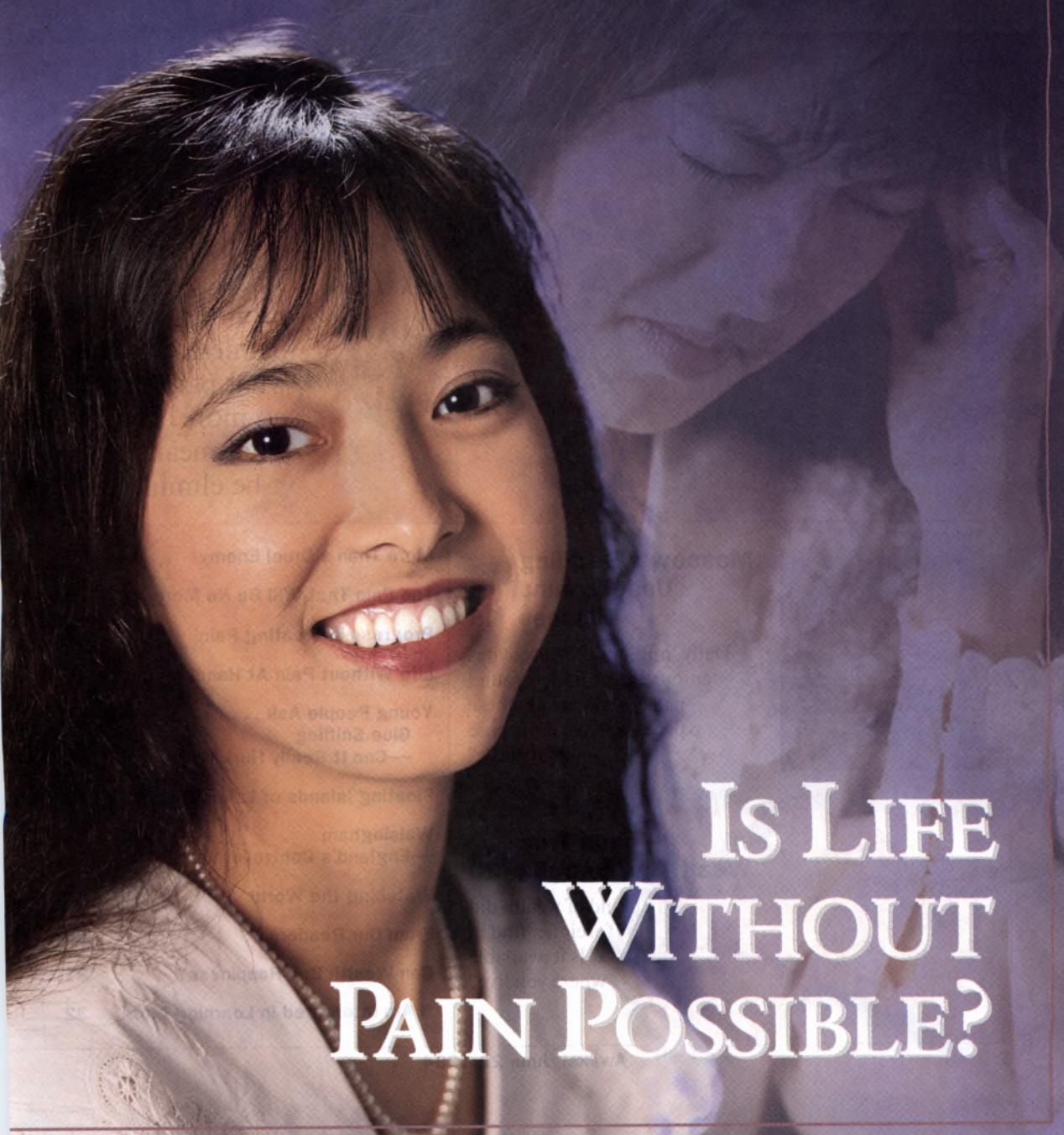
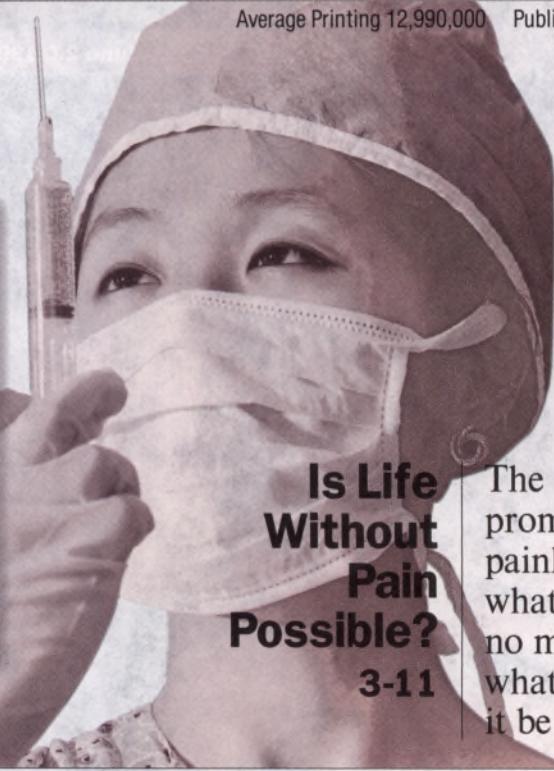


Awake!

June 22, 1994



Is LIFE
WITHOUT
PAIN POSSIBLE?



Is Life Without Pain Possible? 3-11

The Bible promises a painless life. But what pain will be no more? By what means will it be eliminated?

Sovfoto/Eastfoto



Moscow's Dazzling Underground Palaces 15

Daily, millions of Muscovites enjoy visiting underground palaces. Where are these palaces, and what purpose do they serve?

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What kind of wealth did this foreigner find in Australia? Is it available where you live?



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MORE THAN A CRUEL ENEMY

UNRELENTING pain can devastate people's lives. It steals their peace, joy, and livelihood, making life so miserable that some seek relief through suicide. Medical missionary Albert Schweitzer concluded: "Pain is a more terrible lord of mankind than even death itself."

Literally hundreds of millions suffer horribly. 'If we could be suspended in timeless space over an abyss from which the sounds of revolving earth rose to our ears,' a French surgeon said, 'we would hear an elemental roar of pain uttered as with one voice by suffering mankind.'

Indeed, what the Christian apostle Paul wrote over 1,900 years ago has even more force today: "All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now."—Romans 8:22.

Major Health Problem

One in 8 Americans experiences the terrible pain of osteoarthritis, the most common form of arthritis. Even more people have racking back pain. Others must endure the painful effects of cancer and heart disease.

Millions more suffer from excruciating headaches, toothaches, earaches, hemorrhoids, and a multitude of other illnesses and injuries. No wonder that in a recent year, Americans spent \$2.1 billion on nonprescription pain relievers alone, or that pain is called "America's hidden epidemic."



John J. Bonica, perhaps the foremost authority on pain, said: "From the dollars and cents point of view, and from the point of view of human misery, chronic pain is more important than virtually all other health-care problems put together."

A Life Without Pain?

In the face of such stark reality, it may appear rash to suggest the possibility of life without pain. Therefore, what the Bible says may seem farfetched, namely: "[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes . . . neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Revelation 21:4.

Yet, the possibility of life without pain is not farfetched. But think a moment. What does that scripture really mean? There are people today who have no sense of pain. They are born without it. Are they to be envied? Anatomist Allan Basbaum said: "Not to have pain at all is a disaster."

If you were unable to feel pain, you would probably not notice that you had developed a blister until it became a badly ulcerated sore. According to a news report, the parents of one little girl who felt no pain "would sometimes smell burning flesh and find her casually leaning against the stove." Thus, pain is more than a cruel enemy. It can also be a blessing.

What, then, about the Bible's promise: "Neither will . . . pain be anymore"? Is this a promise we should really want fulfilled?

A Life Without Tears?

Note that the context of this verse also says: "[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes." (Revelation 21:4) This is significant, since tears are vital. They serve to protect us, as does the sense of pain.

Tears keep our eyes moist and prevent friction between the eye and the lid. They also wash foreign substances from our eyes. In addition, they contain an antiseptic called lysozyme, which disinfects the eyes and prevents infection. The ability to shed tears is thus a remarkable feature of our wonderfully designed bodies, as is our sense of pain.—Psalm 139:14.

However, tears are also closely associated with sorrow, grief, and vexation. "All night long I make my couch swim," lamented King David of Bible times. "With my tears I make my own divan overflow." (Psalm 6:6) Even Jesus "gave way to tears" at the death of a friend. (John 11:35) God did not originally purpose for people to shed such tears of sorrow. The sin of the first man, Adam, is responsible for the imperfect, dying condition of the human family. (Romans 5:12) Thus, it is the tears that result from our imperfect, dying condition that will be no more.

Since the Bible refers to a certain kind of tears that will be eliminated, how will the promise that pain will be no more be fulfilled? Will not people, at least on occasion, suffer pain that causes sorrow and crying?

Awake!®

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

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

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THE PAIN THAT WILL BE NO MORE

THE pain that will be eliminated in fulfillment of the Bible's promise will be the pain that is experienced as a result of the first man's imperfection. This pain includes what can be described as chronic pain.

Rather than being a warning system for disease or injury, chronic pain has been likened to a "false alarm" that just won't turn off. It is this pain that causes sufferers to spend billions of dollars annually in a quest for relief, and it ruins the lives of millions.

Pain expert Dr. Richard A. Sternbach wrote: "Unlike acute pain, chronic pain is not a symptom; chronic pain is not a warning signal." *Emergency Medicine* emphasized: "There's no purpose at all to chronic pain."

Thus, many doctors in recent years have come to view such pain as a genuine affliction in itself. "In acute pain the pain is a symptom of disease or injury," explains Dr. John J. Bonica in *The Management of Pain*, today's standard text on pain. "In chronic pain the pain itself is the disease."

Efforts to Understand Pain

Pain is still not fully understood. "The eternal allure of trying to puzzle out what pain

is," said *American Health* magazine, "has scientists working intensely." A few decades ago, they assumed that pain was a form of sensation, like sight, hearing, and touch, that is felt by special nerve endings in the skin and is transmitted through particular nerve fibers to the brain. But this simplistic concept of pain was found to be untrue. How?

One factor that led to the new insight was the study of a young woman who had no sense of pain. Following her death in 1955, an examination of her brain and nervous system led to a whole new concept of the cause of pain. Doctors "looked for the nerve endings," explained *The Star Weekly Magazine*, July 30, 1960. "If [she] didn't have any, that would account for the girl's insensitivity. But they were present and apparently perfect.

"Next, the doctors examined the nerve fibers supposed to connect the nerve endings with the brain. Here, surely, a defect would be found. But it wasn't. The fibers were all perfect, as far as could be seen, aside from those degenerated due to injury.

"Finally, examinations were made of the girl's brain and, once more, no defect of any

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kind could be established. According to all existing knowledge and theory, this girl should have felt pain normally, yet she couldn't even feel tickling." She was, however, sensitive to pressure when applied to the skin and could distinguish between the touch of a pin head and a pin point, although the pricking of the pin did not hurt.

Ronald Melzack, who in the 1960's coauthored a popular new theory to explain pain, provides another example of its complexity. He explained: "Mrs. Hull kept pointing to her foot that *wasn't there* [it had been amputated], and describing burning pains that felt like a red-hot poker being pushed through her toes." Melzack told *Maclean's* magazine in 1989 that he was "still looking for explanations of what he calls 'phantom' pain." In addition, there is what is called referred pain, in which a person may have a malfunction in one part of the body but feel the pain in another.

Both Mind and Body Involved

Pain is now identified as "an extremely complex interaction of the mind and the body." In her 1992 book *Pain in America*, Mary S. Sheridan says that "the experience of pain is so heavily psychological that the mind can sometimes deny its existence and sometimes create and sustain it long after an acute injury is gone."

One's mood, concentration, personality, susceptibility to suggestion, and other factors are all important in how one responds to pain. "Fear and anxiety cause an exaggerated response," noted pain authority Dr. Bonica. Thus, one may learn to sense pain. Dr. Wilbert Fordyce, a professor of psychology who specializes in problems of pain, explains:

"The question is not whether the pain is real. Of course it is real. The question is what are the crucial factors which influence it. If I talk with you just before dinner about a ham

sandwich, you salivate. It is very real. But it occurs because of conditioning. There's no ham sandwich there. Human beings are exquisitely sensitive to conditioning. It influences social behavior, salivating, blood pressure, the speed of digesting food, pain, all sorts of things."

Just as your emotions and frame of mind can intensify pain, they can suppress or dull it. Consider an example: A neurosurgeon said that as a youth he was once so enamored of a girl while sitting with her on an icy wall that he felt no sensation of severe cold or pain in his rump. "I was almost frostbitten," he explained. "We must have been sitting there for 45 minutes, and I didn't feel a thing."

Such examples are manifold. Football players involved deeply in the game or soldiers in the heat of battle may be badly injured and yet feel little or no pain at the time. The famous African explorer David Livingstone told of being attacked by a lion that shook him "as a terrier does a rat. The shock . . . caused a sort of dreaminess in which there was no sense of pain."

It is noteworthy that servants of Jehovah God, who calmly look to him with complete confidence and reliance, have also at times had the experience of their pain being suppressed. "Strange as it might seem," reported a Christian who was beaten, "after the first few blows, I really didn't feel them anymore. Instead, it was as if I could only hear them, like the beating of a drum off in the distance." —February 22, 1994, *Awake!*, page 21.

How Pain Sensations Are Modified

In an attempt to explain some of the mystifying aspects of pain, in 1965 a professor of psychology, Ronald Melzack, and a professor of anatomy, Patrick Wall, devised the widely acclaimed gate-control theory of pain. The 1990 edition of Dr. Bonica's textbook on pain

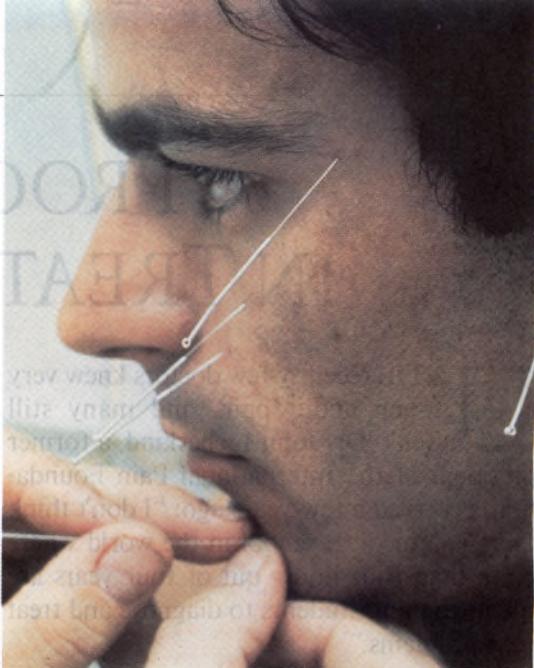
said that this theory was "among the most important developments in the field of pain research and therapy."

According to the theory, the opening and closing of a theoretical gate in the spinal cord either permits or blocks passage of pain signals to the brain. If sensations other than pain crowd the gate, then pain signals reaching the brain may be diminished. Thus, for example, pain is lessened by rubbing or shaking a slightly burned finger, since signals other than those of pain are thereby sent to the spinal cord to interfere with the passage of pain signals.

The discovery in 1975 that our bodies produce their own morphinelike substances called endorphins further helped in the search to understand the mystifying aspects of pain. For instance, some people may have little or no sensation of pain because they produce endorphins in excess. Endorphins may also explain the mystery of why pain is minimized or even eliminated by acupuncture, a medical procedure in which hair-thin needles are inserted into the body. According to eyewitness reports, open-heart surgery has been performed while the patient was awake, alert, and relaxed by utilizing acupuncture as the only painkiller! Why was no pain felt?

Some believe the needles may activate the production of endorphins that temporarily wipe out the pain. Another possibility is that acupuncture kills pain because the needles stimulate nerve fibers that send signals other than pain. These signals crowd gates in the spinal cord, preventing the pain signals from squeezing through to reach the brain, where pain is sensed.

The gate-control theory, and the fact that the body produces its own painkillers, may also explain why one's mood, thoughts, and emotions affect the measure of pain felt. Thus, the shock of a sudden attack by a lion



H. Armstrong Roberts

How does acupuncture minimize or eliminate pain?

may have activated Livingstone's production of endorphins, as well as flooded his spinal cord with signals other than those of pain. His feelings of pain, as a result, were lessened.

Yet, as noted before, one's frame of mind and emotions can have an opposite effect. Too much of the everyday stress of typical modern life may increase a person's sensation of pain by producing anxiety, tension, and muscle contractions.

Happily, though, pain sufferers have reason for optimism. This is because many patients are now benefiting from improved methods of treatment. Such improvements have resulted from a better understanding of this terrible affliction. Dr. Sridhar Vasudevan, president of the American Academy of Pain Medicine, explained: "The idea that pain can sometimes be a disease in itself revolutionized treatment in the '80s."

How has the treatment of pain been revolutionized? What treatments are proving effective?

PROGRESS IN TREATING PAIN

UNTIL recently few doctors knew very much about pain, and many still don't. Dr. John Liebeskind, a former president of the International Pain Foundation, observed a few years ago: "I don't think there is a medical school in the world where more than four hours out of four years are spent teaching students to diagnose and treat pain problems."

Breakthroughs in understanding pain, however, have coincided with greater efforts in treating it. Thus, the outlook for pain sufferers has brightened. "We can all be grateful," *American Health* magazine reported, "that medicine now recognizes that chronic pain is no mere symptom, but a treatable disease in itself." This view has contributed to a tremendous increase in the number of clinics devoted to treating pain.

Where Pain Is Treated

Dr. John J. Bonica opened the first multidisciplinary pain clinic in the United States. "By 1969 there were only 10 such clinics in the world," he reported. But the number of clinics devoted to treating pain has increased dramatically in the last 25 years. There are now over a thousand pain clinics, and a representative of a national chronic-pain outreach association said that "new ones open nearly every day."*

Think of what that means! "Now patients who used to have to travel hundreds or thousands of miles to get relief from serious pain

can find it close to home," noted Dr. Gary Feldstein, an anesthesiologist in New York City. If you are the one suffering, what a blessing it can be to receive help from a team of specialists trained to treat pain!

Linda Parsons, the wife of a traveling overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses, suffered from back pain for many years. She sought help from one physician after another, yet her pain continued unabated. One day in May last year, in near desperation, her husband picked up the phone book and looked under pain. Listed was the phone number of a pain clinic not far from where they were serving in southern California. An appointment was made, and a few days later Linda met with a doctor to receive her initial consultation and evaluation.

Arrangements were made to treat Linda as an outpatient. She began visiting the clinic three times a week for treatment and also followed a treatment program at home. In a few weeks, she began to feel marked improvement. Her husband explains: "I remember her saying almost in amazement one evening, 'I can't believe that I hardly feel any pain.'" Within months, regular visits to the clinic could be discontinued.

The help Linda received to manage her pain is similar to that provided by many multidisciplinary pain clinics. Such a clinic employs the expertise of a team of health professionals, which, according to Dr. Bonica, is "the best approach to dealing with chronic pain." How, for example, was Linda treated for her pain?

*Awake! does not endorse any particular pain clinic or method of treatment.

How Pain May Be Treated

A clinic brochure describes the procedure on arrival: "Each individual is evaluated by a physician to assess the basis for the pain and then realistic goals and treatment programs are outlined. . . . Specialized techniques and approaches are used to aid the body in releasing 'endorphins' (naturally produced chemicals in the body) to diminish pain and anxiety and avoid drug dependence."

Among the treatments Linda received were acupuncture and TENS, which stands for transcutaneous (across the skin) electrical nerve stimulation. She received electrical stimulation treatments at the clinic and was provided a small TENS unit to use at home. Biofeedback—a procedure in which the patient is taught to monitor his body responses and modify them to reduce the impact of pain—was also employed.

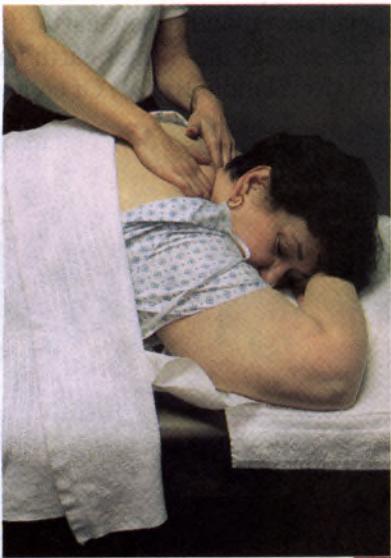
Physical therapy, including deep tissue massage, was a feature of the treatment regimen. In time, but only after Linda was ready

for it, an exercise program in the clinic's gymnasium was introduced, and it became an essential part of treatment. Exercise is vital, since it has been found to restore endorphins depleted by chronic pain. The challenge, however, is to help people in pain to manage a beneficial exercise program.

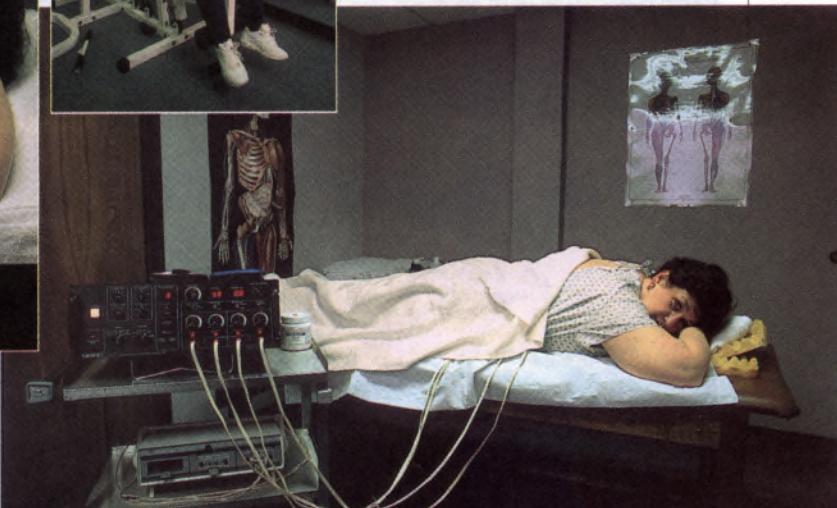
Many chronic-pain sufferers coming to clinics are taking large amounts of pain medication, and Linda was no exception. But soon she had been weaned from her medication, which is an important goal of pain clinics. Linda experienced no withdrawal symptoms, yet that is not unusual. Pain expert Dr. Ronald Melzack noted that in "a survey of more than 10,000 burn victims . . . , not a single case of later addiction could be attributed to the narcotics given for pain relief during the hospital stay."

Since there is often a major psychological aspect to chronic pain, clinics try to help patients, in effect, to unlearn their pain. "What you think about," explained Dr. Arthur

Courtesy of Pain Treatment Centers of San Diego



**Methods of
treating pain, including
electrical nerve stimulation**



Barsky, a professor at Harvard Medical School, "what you expect, how much attention you pay to feelings—all these things have a tremendous influence on what you in fact feel." So patients are helped to concentrate on matters other than their pain.

Prospects for Cure

Are these new pain clinics the answer to mankind's pain problems? Though the pain-treatment methods described here can be helpful, one must use care in choosing a competent clinic or pain specialist. Even then, expectations must be realistic.

To illustrate with a typical success story:

Stephen Kaufman, a former Olympic weight lifter, was left almost an invalid because of chronic pain suffered when a mugger shot him in the neck. After eight months in a pain-treatment program, he was able to return to work full-time and eventually even to competitive weight lifting. Yet he said: "Half the time, my toes burn like they're in boiling water."

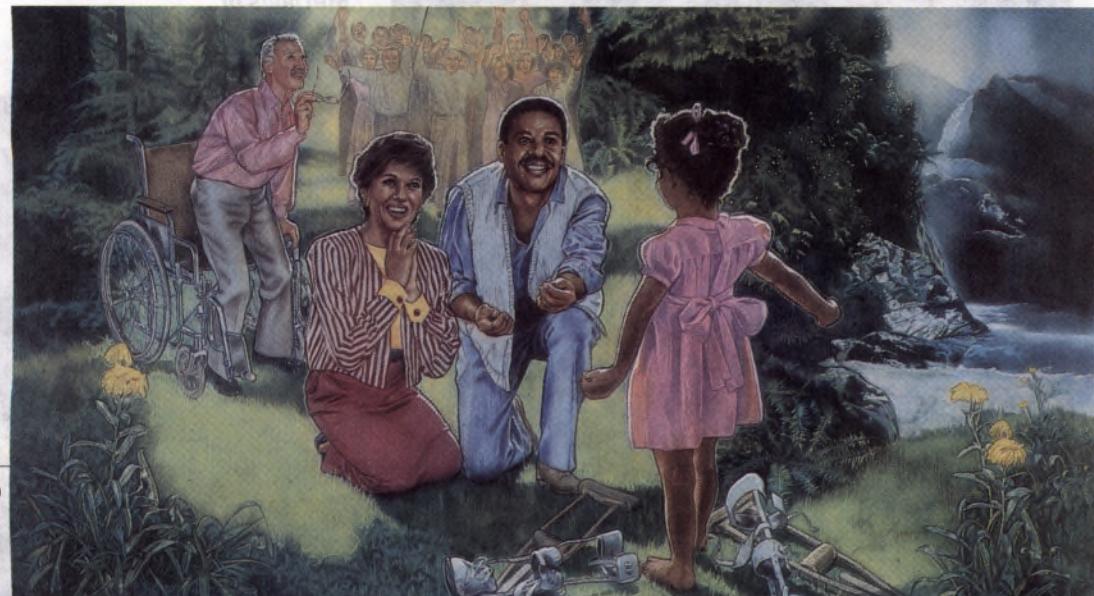
So despite all the exciting progress, it is obviously beyond human capability to fulfill the Bible's promise: 'Pain will be no more.' (Revelation 21:4) How, then, can that goal be achieved?

LIFE WITHOUT PAIN AT HAND!

THE body's complex mechanisms that protect us from harm are certainly a marvel. A study of them should move us to praise the Creator, as did the Bible psalmist who wrote: "I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14) Truly, only God

can make possible life without pain! But how will this be accomplished?

Note that just prior to the promise about pain and tears being eliminated, the Bible tells of "a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away." (Revelation 21:1, 4) Of course,



the Bible is not speaking of our literal heaven and earth passing away. Rather, it is saying, in short, that a completely new system of things will replace this present one. Yes, a new, superhuman government will make it possible to enjoy a painless life right here on earth.

In describing this government, the Bible says that “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom [or, government] that will . . . crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.” (Daniel 2:44) When Jesus Christ was on earth, he taught us to pray for this Kingdom government when he said: “Pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”—Matthew 6:9, 10, *King James Version*.

How, though, can the fulfillment of that prayer mean a life without pain for you?

A Ruler With Superhuman Power

The key lies in the wisdom and power of the one whom God has chosen to head His government. That one is Jesus Christ himself. Of him, a Bible prophecy says: “The government shall be upon his shoulder . . . Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”—Isaiah 9:6, 7, *KJ*.

The wisdom of Jesus, now in heaven, is far greater than that of all earthly physicians. He fully understands the workings of our physical body, including its systems for protecting itself from injury. When he was a man on earth over 1,900 years ago, there was not a disease or affliction that he could not cure. He thus demonstrated what he will do on a larger scale as Ruler of God’s Kingdom. Of one instance, the Bible says:

“Then great crowds approached him, having along with them people that were lame, maimed, blind, dumb, and many otherwise,

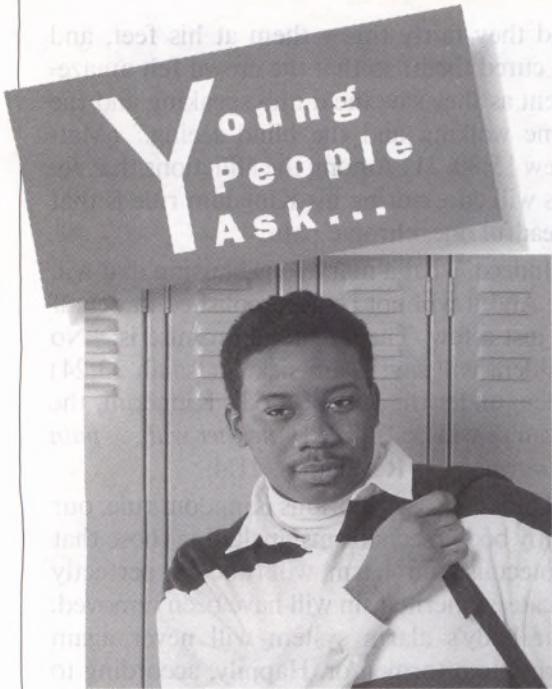
and they fairly threw them at his feet, and he cured them; so that the crowd felt amazement as they saw the dumb speaking and the lame walking and the blind seeing.” (Matthew 15:30, 31) Among the afflictions that Jesus will cure during his Kingdom rule is that dreadful one, chronic pain.

Indeed, what a marvelous blessing that will be! And it will not be accomplished in behalf of just a few. The Creator’s promise is: “No resident will say: ‘I am sick.’” (Isaiah 33:24) Then, under the rule of God’s Kingdom, the promise will be fulfilled, “neither will . . . pain be anymore.”—Revelation 21:4.

Under Christ’s glorious Kingdom rule, our many body mechanisms, including those that protect us from harm, will function perfectly because inherited sin will have been removed. Our body’s alarm system will never again turn into a tormentor. Happily, according to Bible prophecies now undergoing fulfillment, we are at the very threshold of that new world, in which pain will never cause suffering.—Matthew 24:3-14, 36-39; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Peter 3:11-13.

You can enjoy life under God’s Kingdom when the kind of pain that now plagues millions of people no longer exists. But you need to do something. Jesus Christ pointed to a fundamental requirement when he said in prayer to God: “This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.”—John 17:3.

Jehovah’s Witnesses will be happy to assist you in acquiring this vital knowledge. Just ask one of them in your area, or write to the publishers of this magazine, expressing your wish to have a Bible study in your home or at any other convenient location. Arrangements will then be made for you to learn more about God’s purposes for humans to enjoy a life without pain.



Glue Sniffing Can It Really Hurt Me?

"IT'S great—just like watching cartoons."

So says Sveta, a 13-year-old girl from Moscow, Russia.* But Sveta is not raving about the latest film or video. She is describing her experience with a form of drug abuse that is popular among thousands of youths the world over—glue sniffing.

Glue is just one of many substances that some youths are sniffing, though. In Britain, for example, air fresheners, lighter fuel, and "20 to 30 other common household products . . . are being abused," according to *Young People Now* magazine. This includes "paint re-

lief sprays, furniture polishes, and puncture repair outfits." Why, some youths even sniff fire-extinguisher fumes! It is therefore more accurate to call this noxious but popular habit "solvent abuse" or "volatile substance abuse," as do some experts.

Whether they are abusing glue or furniture polish, sniffers seek the same results. According to one source, they want "to get a 'high' or 'buzz' similar to the intoxication produced by alcohol." Solvents are cheap and more accessible than harder drugs such as cocaine. Britain's *New Scientist* magazine thus reported: "Solvents are once more the drug of the poor, young and dispossessed: the street children of Guatemala and inhabitants of reservations in North America, as well as young people in hostels and night shelters in Britain." Some authorities believe that in Britain, 1 in 10 teenage girls and boys has sniffed solvents. And the effects are anything but harmless.

The booklet *Drug Misuse* explains that "inhaled solvent vapours are absorbed through the lungs and rapidly reach the brain." Solvents affect the central nervous system, and like alcohol, they can produce a temporary sense of euphoria. In some users, they even produce a variety of short-lived hallucinations—and not all are as pleasant as those described by Sveta at the outset. "I saw lots of rats," says a youth named David who sniffed glue at age 14. "There were thousands of them—small ones coming out of bigger ones. I thought they were eating my friend." A Japanese youth named Kazuhiko, who began sniffing glue at age 17, recalls: "I saw the ground cracking apart and beasts attacking me."

Why, then, is solvent sniffing so appealing to some youths? Lee, who started sniffing glue when he was 13, says: "Basically, the reason people do it is to try to escape from reality." Yes, for some youths, getting high on

* Some of the names have been changed.

solvents is a way to forget troubles. Others crave the excitement; they think a frightening hallucination is like an entertaining horror film. "Other reasons," says Ireland's Department of Health, "include curiosity, response to peer group pressure, attempts to gain status, to compensate for low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy."

Sudden Death

Whatever its appeal, solvent sniffing is a deadly practice! It caused 149 fatalities in Britain in 1990, and it sometimes kills in a matter of only minutes. "Sudden sniffing death" it is called. Rachel, for example, used to pour typewriter correction fluid onto her sleeve and sniff it in school. One day she sniffed it while traveling on a bus. She got off the bus and fell down. She got up for a moment and collapsed again—dead! Rachel was 15.

Particularly frightening is the fact that solvents can kill you *the very first time that you abuse them!* Re-Solv, a British charity set up to fight solvent abuse, reports that "18% of all solvent abuse deaths between 1971 and 1989 were first time 'sniffers.'" The youngest one to die was only nine years old. Like alcohol abuse, solvent abuse can be said to bite 'just like a serpent and to secrete poison just like a viper.'

—Proverbs 23:32.

Sniffers can also die as a result of accidents that occur while they are under the influence of solvents. Some have fall-

en off buildings or drowned. Others have become unconscious and choked on their own vomit. Some have even died as a result of sniffing with a plastic bag over their heads; they became too intoxicated to remove the bag, and they suffocated. Yet others have burned to death when the solvents caught fire.

Body Pollution and Other Dangers

Although such drastic consequences are not experienced by all, one expert writes: "The regular abuser knows that he is 'polluting' his system and he experiences chest pain, loss of balance, headache, loss of memory and a multitude of other symptoms to which he has rarely admitted." Recalls Lee (quoted earlier): "I got the worst headache I've ever



Do not allow peer pressure to lure you into a deadly practice

had in my life." The organization Re-Solv says that sniffing solvents can also damage the kidneys and liver, can bring mental impairment, and can cause depression.

Then there are the moral dangers. Some sniffers have become thieves to support their habit. Or consider what was reported in Japan's *Daily Yomiuri*: "One of the three youths indicted for the murder of a teenage girl [said] that he felt no sense of guilt while killing the girl because he was under the influence of [solvents] at the time."

Finally, solvent abuse can result in emotional dependency on solvents—addiction. "Some 10% of those who abused solvents became chronic sniffers," says Scotland's *Glasgow Herald*. This can only hinder one's emotional and spiritual growth. Consider the Bible's words at 1 Corinthians 14:20: "Do not become young children in powers of understanding, but . . . become full-grown in powers of understanding." How does one grow up in this regard? The Bible explains at Hebrews 5:14: "Solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." The addict fails to develop his perceptive powers. Instead of facing problems, he tries to escape them by going into a drug-induced stupor. The magazine *Young People Now* said that chronic sniffers are "trapped as teenagers—unable to move into adulthood."

Don't Try It!

You may know some peers who have tried solvent sniffing, and it is only natural to be curious. But the Bible says: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear." (2 Corinthians 7:1) Why experiment with something that contaminates your body or that causes you to lose control of your mind, even temporarily? The counsel of God's

Word is for us to "keep our senses." (1 Thessalonians 5:6) This phrase literally means "may we be sober." Rather than polluting his precious thinking abilities, a Christian wisely safeguards them.—Proverbs 2:11; 5:2.

Kazuhiko says: "I regret that I ever started the habit." Lee agrees, saying: "It's crazy. It is a very, very dangerous thing to do." Spare yourself a lot of pain and sorrow, and don't try solvent sniffing in the first place. Act as the Bible says: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself, but the inexperienced have passed along and must suffer the penalty."—Proverbs 22:3.

Applying this advice may not be easy, though. "Peer group pressure" is said to be one of the most common reasons youths get ensnared in solvent abuse. "My brother got me interested in sniffing glue," says young David. "My friends introduced me to it," adds Kazuhiko. Yes, as 1 Corinthians 15:33 says, "bad associations spoil useful habits." Why let peers ruin your life? Jehovah God, our heavenly Father, exhorts: "My son, if sinners try to seduce you, do not consent."—Proverbs 1:10.

Wisely, let your parents know if others are pressuring you to use drugs. They can help reinforce your resolve to say no. On the other hand, perhaps you are tempted to try solvent sniffing because you feel pressured or overwhelmed by problems. A far better relief for stress is to talk over your problems with your parents or some other mature, empathetic adult. You need guidance, not a drug-induced escape. You can also take advantage of the provision of prayer to help you cope. "Trust in [God] at all times," says the psalmist. "Before him pour out your heart."—Psalm 62:8.

Solvent sniffing may seem exciting, but it will not solve your problems. Indeed, it can ruin your life. Be smart. Don't ever try it.

MOSCOW'S DAZZLING UNDERGROUND PALACES

IT WAS not difficult to guess where the subway, or Metro, was located. An endless stream of people poured into an entrance leading underground. Above the entrance was the letter M, shining in bright red neon. The entryway doors swung open before me. Inside I was faced with the curious sight of people rapidly descending and disappearing as if into an abyss. At first I hesitated. Then, getting a firm grip on myself, I followed.

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN RUSSIA



Sovfoto/Eastfoto

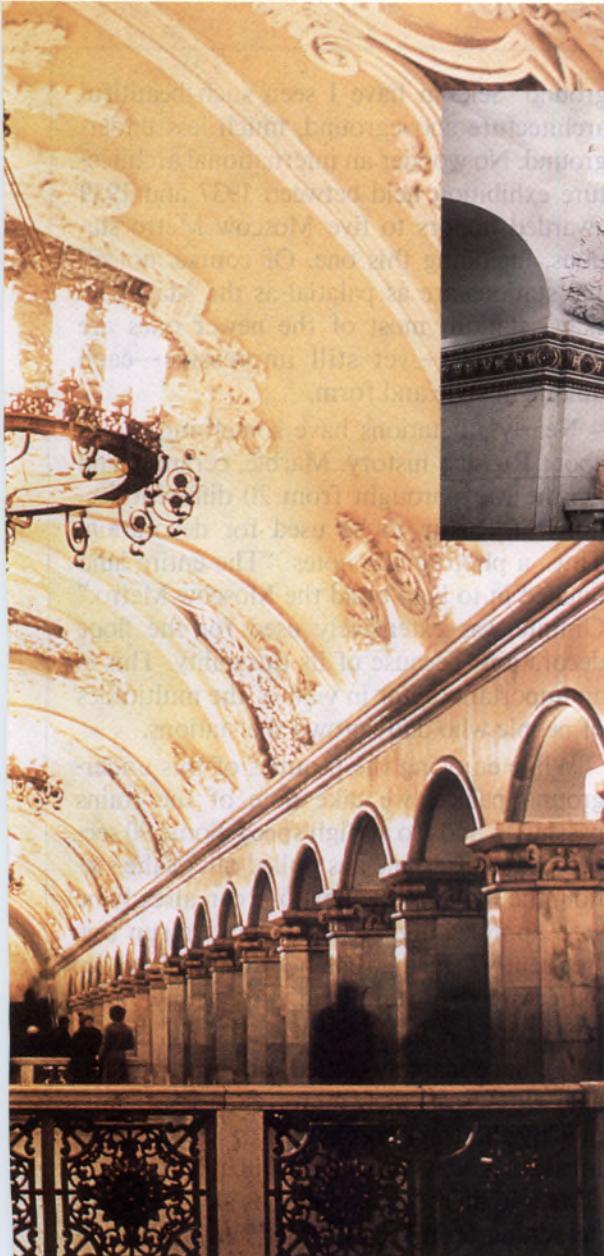


For the first time in my life, I was in a subway. Not just any subway—the Moscow Metro! But in a world where man can travel in space, split the atom, and even perform complicated brain surgery, what is so special about a subway?

For one thing, I had been told that the

Moscow Metro is probably the most beautiful subway in the world. As the Russian proverb says, “better to see something once with your own eyes than to hear about it a hundred times.” When I attended the international convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Moscow last July, I was eager to ride the Metro.

Photo credits (clockwise from top left): Laski/Sipa Press; Sovfoto/Eastfoto; Sovfoto/Eastfoto; Laski/Sipa Press; Laski/Sipa Press; Sovfoto/Eastfoto



How It Came About

In 1902 a Russian scientist and engineer named Bolinsky suggested building a surface transportation system that would run along the Kremlin wall and circle the center of the city. But the Moscow city council rejected plans for developing the system at that time.



A few of Moscow's beautiful subway stations



Ten years later the council began giving the idea serious consideration—it was to be the first of its kind in Russia—but the outbreak of World War I in 1914 delayed further development. Not until 1931 was the idea revived. That is when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

decreed that the country's first underground railway was to be built in Moscow. Russia thus became the 11th country, and Moscow the 17th city, to undertake such a gigantic construction project.

Moscow's Metropolitan Subway opened its first line, consisting of about seven miles of track, at seven o'clock in the morning on May 15, 1935, just three years after construction had started. Four trains served 13 stations, and they were able to carry about 200,000 passengers a day. Muscovites and foreign visitors were impressed. It was so new, so unusual! In the evenings people waited in line to be among some of its first passengers. It was something to see. And it still is.

Since 1935 the system has been expanded to nine lines that cover a total of about 125 miles and that have 149 stations. Nearly all other forms of public transportation in Moscow, including the airport and the riverways, are in some way connected to travel on the Metro. In fact, Muscovites could not imagine life without the Metro. Understandably so, since every day it carries an average of nine million passengers, nearly twice the population of Finland. In comparison, the subways of London and New York City together carry only about half that number.

Taking a Closer Look

Are you curious to see what lies 20 stories underground? An escalator quickly carries us down. It is but one of some 500 in the entire system, which if put end to end would reach more than 30 miles. And what a sensation it is, going downhill on a 30-degree slope at a speed of some three feet a second—nearly twice the speed of escalators in many other countries!

We have entered Mayakovskaya station. Its architecture makes us feel more like being in a palace than in a subway station. I find it hard to imagine that we are really under-

ground. Seldom have I seen such beautiful architecture aboveground, much less underground. No wonder an international architecture exhibition held between 1937 and 1939 awarded honors to five Moscow Metro stations, including this one. Of course, not all 149 stations are as palatial as the Mayakovskaya station; most of the newer ones are more modest—yet still impressive—each unique in style and form.

Nearly all stations have something to say about Russian history. Marble, ceramic, and granite were brought from 20 different sections of Russia to be used for decoration. Thus, a photo guide notes: "The entire land pitched in to help build the Moscow Metro." Granite was extensively used for the floor decorations because of its durability. This is an important factor in view of the multitudes of people who daily crowd the stations.

While enjoying the beauties of this underground palace, we take note of the trains passing to and fro at high speed. Some 90 seconds or so after one has pulled out of the station, the lights of the next one can already be seen approaching. Do trains always run this frequently? During rush hour traffic, they do. Otherwise they run about three to five minutes apart.

We have scarcely settled into our comfortable train seats before we experience how quickly the train accelerates to top speed. It hurtles its way through a tube only about 20 feet in diameter, sometimes at a speed approaching 60 miles an hour. Why, a person could travel the total length of the Metro in about six hours! Muscovites prefer the Metro not only because it is the fastest means of transit but because it is cheap and comfortable. Last July, during the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses, a ride anywhere on the Metro cost ten rubles, then equal to one U.S. penny.

The intervals between trains are so short that you may wonder how it is possible for the trains to travel at such high speed. The explanation is simple. A system of automatic speed control has been expressly designed to prevent accidents. This system sees to it that the distance between trains is never less than the distance that would be necessary to stop the train at that speed. In other words, a train traveling 55 miles an hour that draws closer than the necessary stopping distance to the train ahead automatically begins applying its brakes. Additionally, the engineer in the lead train is warned by an alarm signal. This system, of course, greatly increases travel safety. Could that be why Muscovite Metro-travelers seem so calm and relaxed? Most of them sit quietly reading, clearly confident that they will safely reach their destination.

Lights and Air

Early every morning, as thousands of electric motors begin to whir and hundreds of thousands of lights begin to glow, millions of people start threading their way through the crowded underground palaces where some 3,200 subway cars will be alternately opening and closing their doors throughout the day. All of this is made possible by a stupendous amount of electricity.

This activity generates a great deal of heat, which, in part, is absorbed by the surrounding earth. But what about surplus heat that could cause overheating of the tunnels and the stations? Well, as is befitting palaces, each station is serviced by a ventilation system that completely renews the air four times an hour. Fresh air is always available, no matter how crowded the Metro. In fact, the ventilation system in the Moscow Metro is considered by many to be the best in the world.

During the winter, however, this heat comes in handy. Except for the buildings and entryways located aboveground, no heating system is necessary. The trains, the multitudes of people, and the earth itself, having stored up heat during the spring and summer, generously give off enough heat to keep the underground palaces comfortably warm.

Praise From All Sides

As might be expected, the illustrated Metro guide booklet is exuberant in its praise: "The Moscow Metro is rightly regarded as one of the world's handsomest, whose palatial stations with their intricate network of track, wiring, piping and cables represent a truly absorbing amalgam of the cream of artistic effort and engineering ingenuity. More than stations, these are rather architectural masterpieces of inimitable elegance and charm tastefully ornamented with marble, granite, steel and tiling, set off by lighting of novel design, sculpture, mosaic, moulding, panelling, stained glass and repoussé work. The country's finest architects and artists," including sculptors, "contributed to the layout and décor."

Now, after having visited Moscow and seeing the Metro for myself, I would agree. Many of my fellow delegates to the convention were also impressed. A German told me: "I felt as if I had entered a concert hall with beautiful chandeliers. I was enraptured." A visitor from the United States was impressed by the Metro's punctuality, cleanliness, and efficiency. And a convention delegate from distant Siberia was amazed at the tremendous size and scale of the underground structures.

Should you ever be in Moscow, I would urge you to visit these dazzling underground palaces. Remember: "Better to see something once with your own eyes than to hear about it a hundred times."

I FOUND TRUE WEALTH IN AUSTRALIA

IT WAS April 1971. After spending seven years in Australia, I had recently returned to Greece to visit my family. It was evening, and I was sitting quietly at a café table in the village square of Karies when the local priest and the mayor came and sat opposite me. It was obvious they were eager to pick a quarrel.

With scarcely a greeting, the priest charged that I had migrated to Australia only for the purpose of making money. To say that I was taken aback would put it mildly. I replied as calmly as possible that while I was living in Australia, I was able to acquire wealth far more valuable than money.

My answer surprised him, but he then demanded to know just what I meant. I replied that among other things, I had learned that God has a name. "And this is something you neglected to teach me," I said, looking him straight in the eye. Before he could retaliate, I asked, "Would you please tell me the name of God that Jesus referred to when he taught us to pray in the model prayer: 'Let your name be sanctified'?"—Matthew 6:9.

Word about the dispute spread quickly in the village square, and within ten minutes some 200 people had gathered. The priest

started to feel uncomfortable. He would not answer my question about God's name, and he had weak answers to further Bible questions. His embarrassment showed by his constantly calling the waiter for more ouzo, a Greek alcoholic drink.

An interesting two hours passed. My father came looking for me, but when he saw what was going on he sat down quietly in a corner and observed the scene. The lively discussion continued until 11:30 p.m., when an intoxicated man began shouting angrily. At that I suggested to the crowd that in view of the late hour, we should all go home.

What had caused this confrontation? Why did the priest and the mayor try to pick a quarrel with me? A little background about my growing up in this part of Greece will help you understand.

Early Hardships

I was born in the village of Karies in Peloponnisos, in December 1940. We were ex-

tremely poor, and when I wasn't attending school, I was working alongside Mother from sunrise to sunset in the rice fields, standing knee deep in water. When I finished primary school at age 13, my parents arranged for me to work as an apprentice. For me to receive training as a plumber and window installer, my parents gave my employer 1,100 pounds of wheat and 45 pounds of vegetable oil, which was almost their entire income for a year.

Life as an apprentice—living miles from home and often working from dawn to midnight—was far from easy. At times I considered returning home, but I could not do that to my parents. They had made such an unselfish sacrifice in my behalf. So I never let them know about my problems. I told myself: 'You must persevere, no matter how difficult it becomes.'

Over the years, I was able to visit my parents from time to time, and I eventually completed my apprenticeship when I was 18. I then decided to go to Athens, the capital, where job prospects were greater. There I found employment and rented a room. Each day after work, I returned home, cooked for myself, cleaned up the room, and then spent what little free time I had learning English, German, and Italian.

The immoral talk and behavior of other youths troubled me, so I avoided their association. But this caused me to feel quite alone. When I turned 21, I was required to perform military service, during which time I continued my study of languages. Then, in March 1964, after I left the army, I migrated to Australia, settling in Melbourne.

Religious Search in a New Land

I soon found work, met another Greek immigrant, named Alexandra, and within six months of my arrival, we were married. Several years later, in 1969, an elderly lady, one

of Jehovah's Witnesses, called at our house and offered *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* I found the magazines interesting, so I put them in a safe place, instructing my wife not to throw them away. A year later two other Witnesses called and offered me a free home Bible study. I accepted, and what I learned from the Scriptures was just what I had been looking for to fill the emptiness that had existed in my life.

As soon as my neighbor found out that I was studying with the Witnesses, she referred me to the Evangelists, claiming that they were a better religion. As a result, I also began studying with an elder from the Evangelist Church. Soon I began attending meetings of both the Evangelists and the Witnesses, for I was determined to find the true religion.

At the same time, in fairness to my Greek upbringing, I began looking more deeply into the Orthodox religion. One day I went to three Greek Orthodox churches. When I explained the purpose of my visit at the first one, the priest slowly showed me to the door. As he did, he explained that we were Greek, and so it was wrong to associate with either the Witnesses or the Evangelists.

His attitude surprised me, but I thought: 'Maybe this particular priest is not a good representative of the church.' To my surprise the priest at the second church reacted similarly. He did tell me, however, that there was a Bible study class conducted by a theologian at his church every Saturday evening. When I tried the third church, I was further disillusioned.

However, I decided to attend the Bible study class conducted at the second church, visiting there the next Saturday. I enjoyed following the reading from the Bible book of Acts. When the portion about Cornelius kneeling before Peter was read, the theologian interrupted the reading and pointed out

that Peter had correctly refused Cornelius' act of worship. (Acts 10:24-26) At that I raised my hand and said that I had a question.

"Yes, what is it you want to know?"

"Well, if the apostle Peter refused to be worshiped, why do we have his icon and worship it?"

There was dead silence for several seconds. Then it was as if a bomb had dropped. Tempters flared, and there were cries of, "Where did you come from?" For two hours there was heated debate, with a lot of shouting. Finally, as I was leaving, I was handed a book to take home.

When I opened it, the first words I read were: "We are Greek, and our religion has shed blood in order to preserve our tradition." I knew that God does not belong only to the Greek people, so I immediately severed ties with the Greek Orthodox Church. From then on I continued my Bible study only with the Witnesses. In April 1970, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism, and my wife was baptized six months later.

Contact With the Village Priest

Toward the end of that year, the priest from my home village in Greece sent a letter requesting money to help repair the village church. Instead of sending money, I sent him the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, along with a letter explaining that I was now one of Jehovah's Witnesses and that I believed I had found the truth. Upon receiving my letter, he announced in church that an immigrant to Australia had rebelled.

Afterward, the mothers who had sons in Australia kept asking the priest whether it was their son. My mother even went to his house and begged him to tell her. "Unfortunately, it is your son," he said. Later Mother told me that she would have preferred he had killed her than tell her this about me.

Return to Greece

After our baptism, my wife and I wanted to return to Greece and tell our families and friends of the good things we had learned from the Bible. So in April 1971, accompanied by our five-year-old daughter, Dimitria, we returned for an extended vacation, staying in the town of Kiparissia, about 20 miles from my home village of Karies. Our round-trip airline tickets were good for a six-month stay.

On the second night home, Mother broke down and told me tearfully that I had taken the wrong course and had disgraced the family name. Crying and sobbing, she implored me to turn from my "erroneous" course. Then she fainted and collapsed in my arms. The next day I tried to reason with her, explaining that I had simply increased my knowledge of the God about whom she had so lovingly taught us from infancy. The following evening I had that memorable encounter with the local priest and the village mayor.

My two younger brothers, who lived in Athens, had come to stay for Easter. They both avoided me as if I were a leper. One day, however, the older of the two began to listen. After several hours of discussion, he said that he agreed with everything I had shown him from the Bible. From that day on, he defended me before the rest of the family.

Afterward I visited Athens often to stay with my brother. Each time I did, he invited other families to come and hear the good news. To my great joy, he and his wife, along with three other families with whom they conducted Bible studies, later symbolized their dedication to God by water baptism!

The weeks passed quickly, and just before our six months was up, a Witness serving in a congregation about 40 miles from our village visited. He pointed to the help needed

**Kiparissia, where I
lived after returning
from Australia**

With my wife, Alexandra



with the preaching work in the area and asked whether I had given thought to staying permanently. That night I discussed the possibility with my wife.

It would be difficult to stay, we both agreed. But it was obvious that there was a great need for the people to hear Bible truth. Finally, we decided to stay for a year or two at least. My wife would return to Australia to sell our house and car and bring back what belongings she could. Having made our decision, we went into town the next morning and rented a house. We also enrolled our daughter in the local primary school.

Opposition Exploses

Virtual war was soon declared on us. Opposition came from the police, the school principal, and the teachers. At school Dimitria would not make the sign of the cross.

School officials called a policeman to try to frighten her into complying, but she stood firm. I was called in to see the principal, and he showed me a letter from the archbishop that ordered that I take Dimitria and leave. After my having a long discussion with the principal, however, she was permitted to remain in school.

In time I learned that there was a couple in Kiparissia who had attended an assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses, and we were able to renew their interest. My wife and I also invited Witnesses from a nearby village to our home for Bible studies. Shortly, however, the police came and took us all down to the police station for questioning. I was charged with using my house as a place of worship without a license. But since we were not imprisoned, we continued our meetings.

Although I was offered a job, as soon as the bishop heard about it, he threatened to have my employer's shop closed unless he dismissed me. A plumbing/sheet-metal shop was for sale, and we were able to buy it. Almost immediately two priests came with threats to close us down, and a few weeks later the archbishop ordered that our family be

excommunicated. Anyone then excommunicated from the Greek Orthodox Church was treated as a total outcast. A police officer was stationed outside our shop to deter anyone from coming in. Even though there were no customers, we doggedly kept the shop open every day. Our predicament soon became the talk of the town.

Arrested and Put on Trial

One Saturday another person and I set out on his motorbike to witness in a nearby town. There the police stopped us and took us down to the police station, where we were kept in custody all weekend. On Monday morning we were taken back to Kiparissia by train. News that we had been arrested spread, and a crowd gathered at the railway station to see us arrive with our police escorts.

After being fingerprinted, we were taken to the public prosecutor. He began proceedings by saying that he would read aloud accusations against us that had been compiled from villagers who had been questioned by the police. "They told us that Jesus Christ had become King in the year 1914," the first accusation said.

"Wherever did you get this strange idea?" the prosecutor asked belligerently.

I stepped forward and took the Bible he had on his desk and opened it to Matthew chapter 24 and suggested that he read it. He hesitated for a moment but then took the Bible and began to read. After reading a few minutes, he said excitedly: "Hey, if this is true, then I should drop everything and join a monastery!"

"No," I said quietly. "You should learn the truth of the Bible and then help others to find the truth as well."

A few lawyers arrived, and we were also able to witness to some of them during the day. Ironically, this resulted in another charge—proselytizing!

During that year, we had three court cases, but finally we were acquitted of all charges. The victory seemed to break the ice as far as the people's attitude toward us was concerned. From then on they began to approach us more freely and listen to what we had to say about God's Kingdom.

Eventually the small study group in our home in Kiparissia was formed into a congregation. A Christian elder was transferred to our new congregation, and I was appointed a ministerial servant. The meetings in our house were soon being attended regularly by 15 active Witnesses.

Back to Australia

After two years and three months had passed, we decided to return to Australia. The years here have passed quickly. My daughter Dimitria has maintained her faith and is married to a ministerial servant in a Melbourne congregation. I am now serving as an elder in a Greek-language congregation in Melbourne, where my wife and our 15-year-old daughter, Martha, attend.

The small congregation we left behind in Kiparissia has now grown much larger, and many deserving ones there have opened their hearts to Bible truths. During the summer of 1991, I visited Greece for a few weeks and gave a public Bible talk in Kiparissia, and 70 were in attendance. Happily, my younger sister Maria has become a servant of Jehovah in spite of family opposition.

I am grateful that in Australia I have had the opportunity to obtain true wealth—a knowledge and understanding of our Creator, Jehovah God, and of his Kingdom government. My life now has real purpose, and my family and I await the near future to see the blessings of God's heavenly government spread over the whole earth.—*As told by George Katsikaronis.*

Floating Islands of Lake Titicaca



BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN PERU

ISLANDS that float? Yes, islands in this unique lake in South America do. And people live on them.

Lake Titicaca, bordered by Peru to the west and Bolivia to the east, is the world's highest lake navigable to large vessels. Lying 12,500 feet above sea level, it extends 120 miles in a northwest-to-southeast direction and is over 50 miles across at its widest point.

Some of Lake Titicaca's many islands are floating mats of dried totora, a reedlike papyrus that grows in some shallower areas of the lake. The reeds grow from the lake bottom, pass through many feet of water, and extend several feet above the surface of the water. To make an island, the reeds, while still rooted to the lake bottom, are bent over and interwoven to make a strawlike platform, or floor, that rests on the surface of the water. The reeds are then

packed with mud and reinforced with additional cut lengths of reed. The inhabitants live in reed huts built on the floating reed islands.

The Encyclopædia Britannica notes that people have long lived on these islands. It also observes: "Lake dwellers make their famed balsas—boats fashioned of bundles of dried reeds lashed together that resemble the crescent-shaped papyrus craft pictured on ancient Egyptian monuments."

Recently, Jehovah's Witnesses obtained a boat for preaching to people on the islands of Lake Titicaca. The boat is powered by an outboard motor and is capable of carrying 16 people. When the Witnesses walk from dwelling to dwelling on these reed islands, they say there is a slight movement of the surface underfoot. Happily, the message of God's Kingdom is now reaching even people on these remote islands that float!



WALSINGHAM

England's Controversial Shrine

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN BRITAIN

WALSINGHAM, a picturesque village in Norfolk County, England, receives up to 100,000 pilgrims a year who visit the shrines of Our Lady of Walsingham. One shrine is sponsored by Roman Catholics, and the other is sponsored by the Church of England. This has led to a controversial situation.

"The National Pilgrimage to Walsingham has been a painful experience in recent years," wrote a Church of England cleric in the *Church Times*. "The procession of pilgrims . . . is confronted by the loud and angry shouts of . . . an increasingly large and well-organised crowd of protesters."

Why the protest? "What is being practised here under the name of Christianity is nothing short of paganism," proclaim the protesters against the Church of England shrine, "a

blatant affront to the Truth, an abomination in the sight of God and a vile insult to our protestant heritage."

In England, religion rarely raises such passions. What is there at Walsingham to generate such strong feelings? A review of the history of the shrines will help you understand.

Protestant Versus Catholic

Prior to the Reformation of the 16th century, England was Roman Catholic and boasted many shrines. One of the oldest was at Walsingham, the country's principal shrine of the Virgin Mary. It started in the year 1061 when the lady of the manor built a house in the village. According to legend, details of its construction were given in a vision, as it was supposedly to be a replica of the house in Nazareth where Mary, the mother of Jesus, had lived. In the Middle Ages, this shrine to

Mary gained international importance and popularity.

Kings and commoners alike flocked to Walsingham. What attracted them? Aside from the wooden image of Mary with the infant Jesus on her knee, indulgences and relics were readily available for sale, and diseases were reported to have been cured there. Pilgrims could also view the "miracle" of Walsingham, a vial reputed to contain a few congealed drops of Mary's milk. Some visitors were convinced that the contents were just chalk or white lead, while Erasmus, the Bible scholar, questioned the authenticity of the relic, which to some looked like beaten chalk tempered with the white of an egg.

Why did such an eminent reformer as Erasmus make a pilgrimage to Walsingham? Apparently to fulfill a vow. Although he described the shrine in great detail, "his satire on the whole devotion is exceptionally caustic," says *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Erasmus wrote "in a satirical and unbelieving mood," explains historian Frederic Seebohm, adding that there is no proof "that he himself was a worshipper of the Virgin or a believer in the efficacy of pilgrimages to her shrine."

During the Reformation the newly formed Church of England deposed the Roman Catholic religion. In the year 1538, the shrine of the "Witch of Walsingham," as she had become known, was destroyed by order of King Henry VIII, the head of the breakaway church, and the site was sold. The statue, a hated symbol of idol worship, was taken a hundred miles to Chelsea in London and there burned publicly.

Protestants Mimic Catholics

Early in this century, however, the Church of England restored Our Lady of Walsingham—as a Protestant shrine! In 1921 a carved replica of the original statue was installed in the parish church of Walsingham, and the first modern pilgrims arrived a year later. As

the shrine has grown in popularity, so too has the ire of some church members. In May of each year, when the statue is carried through the streets during a 30-minute procession, they vehemently protest the idolatry.

In 1934, Roman Catholics set up in Walsingham their National Shrine of Our Lady. This shrine contains a second replica of the original mother and child image and is located in the old Slipper Chapel. This is the place where pilgrims used to leave their shoes to walk barefoot to the original village shrine. Interestingly, the target of the protesters is limited to the Church of England shrine, which they maintain is a promotion of Mariolatry and a repudiation of the church's Protestant heritage.

But is there another reason for the fervent opposition of the protesters? Many believe there is. The "protests have become increasingly homophobic of late," reports *The Independent*, a newspaper, "directed particularly at the Gin and Lace element." This is a reference to a group of Church of England men, mainly clergymen, who for the past few years have made Walsingham their annual convention. Why do they come? One regular pilgrim commented: "This is not the most deeply heterosexual event in the world."

Clearly, such an event, steeped deeply in idolatry and now with homosexual overtones, is to be avoided by true Christians.—1 Corinthians 6:9; 10:14; 1 John 5:21.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Should You Guide
Your Life by the Stars?**

**Thrill Sports
—Should I Take a Chance?**

Is the Magpie Really a Thief?

WATCHING THE WORLD

Homosexual Clergy

For years the synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hannover, Germany, has allowed homosexuals to function as members of the clergy as long as they do not have a homosexual partner. But according to the publication *The Week in Germany*, the removal of an active homosexual from his clerical duties more than three years ago has created much controversy. Authorities in Hannover, according to *The Week*, have recently approved a proposal stating that "pastors and their companions who 'live in single-sex partnership' would be eligible for employment in the church, including the pastorate."

Accidents With AIDS-Tainted Blood

Recently Japan's Health and Welfare Ministry asked hospitals to submit reports on the frequency of accidents with HIV-infected blood involving medical workers. The interest was specifically in accidents during the past ten years. According to *The Daily Yomiuri*, the 276 hospitals that responded reported that the "total number of needle accidents was 12,914, with 2,997 cases of accidental blood contact." Of these, over a hundred cases involved HIV-tainted blood. All the victims of these accidents have thus far tested negative for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Cancer—A Ticking Time Bomb

A study in Australia by the Skin and Cancer Foundation revealed that skin cancer is now the most common form of cancer in that country. It is estimated that every year some 1,000 Australians die of skin cancer. According to *The Da-*

ly Telegraph Mirror of Sydney, Australia, the study says that "the carefree attitude of many Australians to sun care in the past has created a ticking cancer time-bomb." Most of today's victims were the teenage sunbathers of the '60's, '70's, and '80's.

Help for Insomniacs

Researchers at Harvard Medical School have compiled a list of suggestions for people having serious difficulty falling asleep. According to *The Harvard Mental Health Letter*, a group of patients who had needed about 80 minutes to fall asleep experienced significant improvement. After trying the treatment for several weeks, "it took



them an average of only nineteen minutes to fall asleep (a 75% reduction)," notes the letter. The recommended methods include: Avoid spending more than seven hours in bed; avoid staying in bed more than an hour beyond your average sleeping time; arise at the same time every day, including weekends; go to bed only when sleepy; and if you do not fall asleep within 20 minutes after going to bed, get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy again.

Comet Pearls

A group of more than 20 comet fragments, which appear in tele-

scope photographs like a string of pearls, are on a collision course with the planet Jupiter, reports *The Washington Post*. The comet chunks, some of which may measure perhaps two miles across, are collectively known as Shoemaker-Levy 9, after the discoverers. Scientists believe that the comet string was produced when a lone comet was torn to pieces by gravitational forces as it recently flew by Jupiter. The impacts of the comet fragments, a rare event for human observers, will occur over several days in late July 1994. Although the impact will take place on the backside of Jupiter, the resulting flashes may brighten the moons of Jupiter and may be observable from Earth through telescopes.

Violence Against Women

A recent survey reveals that 51 percent of Canadian women 16 years or older have been victims of male violence at least once in their adult lives, according to *The Globe and Mail*. That amounts to more than five million women. This Canadian newspaper reported that almost half the women interviewed said assaults came from "boyfriends, husbands, friends, family members or other men familiar to them." Ten percent of the women surveyed were victimized in the past year alone, and about 1 attack in 5 was serious enough to cause physical injury. Many women reported being pushed, grabbed, shoved, slapped, kicked, bitten, or hit by their husbands or live-in male partners.

Thousands of Plants Ignored

"Several thousand plant species have been used for human food in history, but now only about 150

are cultivated and no more than three supply almost 60 percent of the calories and protein derived from plants," says the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. International agricultural studies confirm this. Humans stick to their familiar staples—rice, maize, and wheat—ignoring thousands of other nutritious plants found in nature.

Little Power Over Their Own Lives

Despite recent changes favoring democracies, 90 percent of today's world population have no say in the factors that shape their lives. That is a conclusion of the *Human Development Report 1993*, issued by the UN Development Program (UNDP). Former UNDP administrator William Draper, in a foreword to the report, said that life for the majority is still shaped by continuing "struggles for access to the ordinary opportunities of life—land, water, work, living space and basic social services." The report notes that "ethnic minorities, the poor, rural dwellers, women, and the disabled often have little power to change their lives."

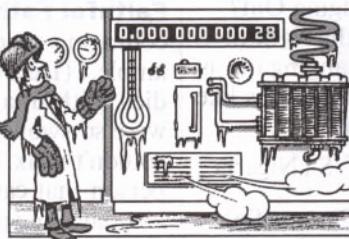
Pocket-Size Video Rosary

An Italian Catholic priest has patented an electronic video Rosary complete with music and moving religious images. According to the Bologna daily newspaper *Il Resto del Carlino*, the device, which is battery powered, is "simple and handy (fitting conveniently into a pocket or handbag)." For those who want to recite prayers while driving, there is also a "special adapter that can be plugged into the car cigarette-lighter attachment." The believer can choose the part of the Rosary he wants to recite. The "Ave Maria" button, for example, enables the user to proceed step-by-step in the various

phases of the prayer, the words of which are displayed on the screen. "Should someone get tired before finishing all the prayers," says *Il Resto del Carlino*, he can switch the device off and, thanks to the electronic memory, "continue from where he left off when it is switched back on."

The Coldest Spot in the Universe

The coldest temperature in the entire universe was recently measured at 0.000,000,000,28 Kelvin. This extremely low temperature is a tiny fraction of a degree above absolute zero. Where was this very cold temperature experienced? In the Nordic country of Finland, according to the magazine *New Scandinavian Technology*. Yet,



most people in Finland were unaware of this event, since the low temperature was achieved artificially in the Low Temperature Physics Laboratory at the Helsinki University of Technology. Scientists have never been able to achieve absolute zero, which is described in *New Scandinavian Technology* as "the temperature that marks the absence of all thermal movement within atoms."

Value of Window View

According to a study by researchers at the University of Michigan, U.S.A., employees with a window view perform better. Contrary to popular belief, having a view does not necessarily encourage daydreaming. The magazine

Business Week reports that a 1,200-person survey revealed that "workers with views of the outside world show more enthusiasm for their jobs, less frustration, more patience, better concentration, and fewer physical ailments." In contrast, workers in windowless cubicles are likely to be "less imaginative and more irritable" and have more problems with concentration.

Intellectual Toys

"Educational toy sales skyrocket as parents trade in plain fun for future competitive edge," notes *The Globe and Mail*, a Canadian newspaper. The report adds that some parents are even preventing their children from playing with toys that are "simply fun to play with. Instead, they want every moment of play to be packed with the potential to teach skills." While many believe that this trend can produce children with higher intelligence and better skills, some experts disagree. They feel that robbing children of valuable unstructured playtime will stifle their creativity "and that they will learn less in the end," says the newspaper.

Piracy on the Rise

The London-based International Maritime Organization, a United Nations agency fighting piracy and armed robbery of ships, reports that piracy has "increased substantially in recent years both in number and brutality to crew members." Although most of the 400 reported incidents of piracy took place in Southeast Asia's Strait of Malacca, pirates are also prowling along the western coast of Africa and the northeastern coast of South America. Piracy, writes *UN Chronicle* magazine, "threatens to become a worldwide problem."

FROM OUR READERS

Communication Thank you for the wonderful series "Communication in Marriage." (January 22, 1994) I have been married for 26 years. A few years ago, my marriage became extremely strained, and we were on the verge of a crisis. The problem was our lack of communication. I searched the Watch Tower Society's publications and tried to apply what I read. My husband also began studying the Bible. But these articles have given me additional points to work on. They are helping me to cultivate discernment and have motivated me to put the suggestions into practice.

Y. K., Japan

Young People Ask The article "Young People Ask . . . What About Hanging Out?" (June 22, 1993) really set me in the right direction. I live in an area where hanging out is very common. I believe that many youths like me will benefit from this material.

T. S., Nigeria

The article on "Why Are My Parents So Moody?" (November 8, 1993) was of special interest to me because I have a father who gets mad at me for what my brother does. Sometimes I go to work with my father, and now I realize how much pressure he goes through.

A. K., United States

Thank you very much for the articles "Am I Developing Normally?" and "Why Am I Developing So Quickly?" (September 22 and October 8, 1993) I am 11 years old, and some people say I am too small for my age. The articles were really great.

J. R. P., Germany

I am 11 years old and have been the target of cruel jokes about my height. Thank you for helping me to see that I am not alone in this area and that I am normal. I am just de-

veloping more quickly than others. I have really been helped by these articles.

E. Q., England

I wish I'd had this article several years ago when one of our sons started into puberty and shot up to his present six-foot-nine-inch height. I cannot tell you how many times the first thing people said was, 'Boy, are you tall?' or, 'What's the weather like up there?' instead of, 'Hello, how are you?' Needless to say, it made an awkward age even more difficult. We need to help youths to feel comfortable with the bodies they have inherited. Your article was most appreciated.

M. D., United States

Faithful Father Thank you for the encouraging article "My Father's Faithful Example." (December 22, 1993) My own dad died faithful almost two years ago. His legs were so swollen that the last month he couldn't walk. But he did preach to every person that came to his bedside down to his last day. He spent close to 20 hours telling others about his faith during his last month. The article reminded me that 'the same things in the way of suffering are befalling the whole association of our brothers.'

—1 Peter 5:9.

D. P., United States

Blood Transfusions I would like to express my thanks for the article "Jehovah's Witnesses and the Medical Profession Cooperate." (November 22, 1993) It showed Jehovah's concern for our physical as well as our spiritual welfare. I had a blood transfusion forced on me nearly 13 years ago following childbirth. So I realize the importance of having Christian men who are trained to come to our aid when needed. I hope and pray that others will be spared from experiencing what I experienced.

K. T., United States



Can Wealth Buy Happiness?

EVIDENTLY having more money does not make people happier. Says the magazine *Psychology Today*: "Once above the poverty line, increases in income have surprisingly little relation to personal happiness."

This was confirmed in a *New York Times* obituary of October 29, 1993, that carried the headline: "Doris Duke, 80, Heiress Whose Great Wealth Couldn't Buy Happiness, Is Dead." The article said: "Late one evening in Rome in 1945, Miss Duke, who was then 33 years old, told a friend that her vast fortune was in some ways a barrier to happiness."

"All that money is a problem sometimes," Duke confided to a friend. "After I've gone out with a man a few times, he starts to tell me how much he loves me. But how can I know if he really means it? How can I ever be sure?" The *Times* noted: "Her words that night showed that her life had been profoundly affected, even scarred, by her wealth."

Similarly, Jean Paul Getty, once reputed to

be the richest man in the world, said: "Money doesn't necessarily have any connection with happiness. Maybe with unhappiness." And Jane Fonda, a famous Hollywood actress, who during the 1970's received half a million dollars per movie, said: "I've had my taste of wealth and all the material things. They don't mean a thing. There's a psychiatrist that goes with every swimming pool out here, not to mention divorces and children who hate their parents."

While wealth alone will never bring happiness, neither does abject poverty. Thus, a wise man long ago said: "Give me neither poverty nor riches." (Proverbs 30:8, 9) Another Bible writer noted that what a person needs in order to be happy is "godly devotion along with self-sufficiency. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."—1 Timothy 6:6-10.



You Can
Live Forever
in Paradise
on Earth

"I Am Interested in Learning More"

A MAN from Colorado, U.S.A., wrote the above last December in a letter to the publishers of this magazine. He explained:

"Although you wouldn't consider me a religious person by most people's standards, I have always believed there has to be more to life than what we see and hear in our day-to-day existence. I have always had a spiritual commitment, although not to a specific religion.

"However, lately I have found myself in some fairly distressing situations and find myself lacking the inner strength to cope. Problems at home and work have increased my level of anxiety to a point I have not experienced before. . . .

"Strangely enough, when I was at the height of my frustration, I stumbled across one of your pieces of literature in a shopping mall. Your views regarding the Holy Father are refreshing, and I am interested in learning more, but I'm not sure where to turn.

"I would greatly appreciate any guidance you can give me to learn more about Jehovah's Witnesses and your beliefs. As I mentioned, I found it strange to stumble across one of your pieces of literature at the height of my frustration—it may be a sign of divine guidance."