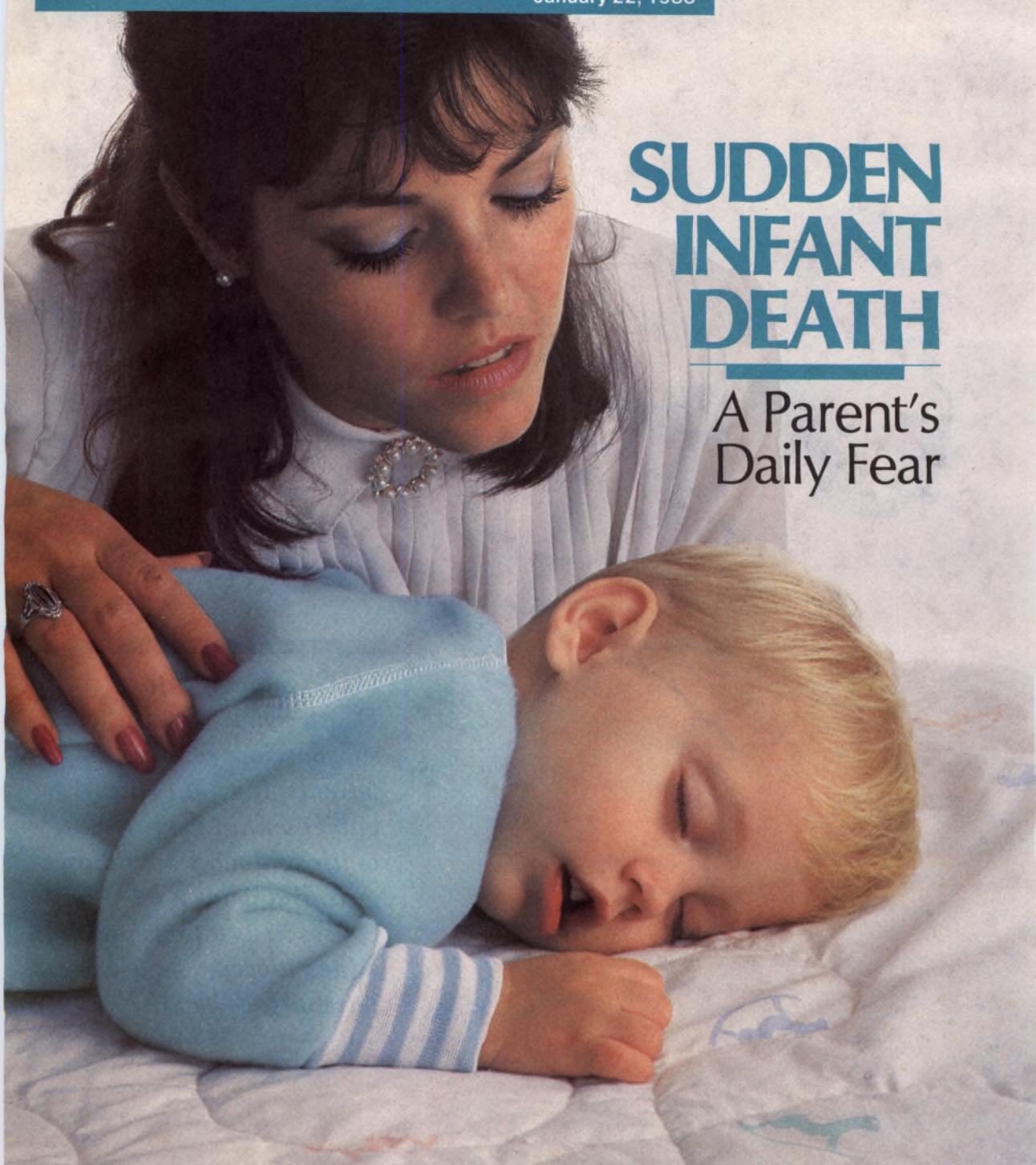


Awake!

January 22, 1988

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH

A Parent's
Daily Fear





SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) is the subconscious fear of many parents. It usually attacks babies within the first year of life and more boys than girls. But what is it? What causes it? Is it preventable? When it occurs, how can parents face it?

SIDS A Parent's Daily Fear

"The sudden, unexpected death of an apparently healthy baby is probably the most poignant and devastating event that can overtake a young couple—yet in Western society it is also the most common kind of infant death after the first week of life."—Professor Bernard Knight, "Sudden Death in Infancy—The 'Cot Death' Syndrome."

IT WAS 4:00 a.m. of December 22, 1984. Ken Eberline poked his head into the bedroom to see how seven-month-old Katie was doing. Little Katie was the firstborn pride and joy of Ken and Tottie, who were in their early 30's. The baby was sleeping peacefully. Ken left the house. He had a long drive to Las Cruces, New Mexico, to teach a seminar.

Tottie got up at 7:30 a.m. and went to see how Katie was. Katie was strangely silent. Tottie looked again, touched her, and immediately knew the worst. Katie was dead. She had died of crib death, or SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). This sudden, silent death creeps up on thousands of families every year.

A Compassionate Medical Examiner

How did Tottie and Ken react to their loss? Tottie told *Awake!*: "As soon as I realized what had happened, I called 911, the emergency services. The paramedics and the police arrived in haste along with

a medical examiner. They were all so kind and compassionate. Of course, doubts rushed to my mind—what had I done or failed to do that could have caused this?

"The medical examiner calmed my fears. He explained that he had lost a child in the same circumstances nine years earlier. 'There was nothing you could have done to prevent it,' he assured me. 'Even if you had been standing by the crib with a monitor, you could not have saved her.' He added: 'You cannot anticipate it and you cannot prevent it. In certain cases, everything just shuts down at once, and at present there is no way of knowing the cause.' I am sure that his remarks saved me from a lot of guilt and self-incrimination."

How did Ken and Tottie cope with their loss? A later article will answer that. But there are other questions to which every parent of a young baby wants answers: What causes SIDS? Are there any warning signals? Is it preventable?

SIDS Tracking Down Symptoms and Causes

"Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is responsible for approximately 2 deaths per 1000 live births in the United States, resulting in 7500 to 10,000 deaths annually."—*"The New England Journal of Medicine," April 30, 1987.*

ONLY in recent years has SIDS become known as a definition of a cause of death. In previous generations this type of death got buried in all the other statistics on the multiple causes of infant death that prevailed. Advances in medical science have now eliminated so many previous causes of infant death that SIDS now stands out—so much so that the World Health Organization established the "Sudden infant death" category in its *International Classification of Diseases* as recently as 1979. Yet, some medical experts think they can trace exam-

ples of what we now call SIDS all the way back to Bible times!

They quote the case of the two women who came before King Solomon, each claiming to be the mother of a live baby rather than the one that had died because the mother "lay upon him." (1 Kings 3: 16-27) As pathologist Bernard Knight writes: "Overlaying was the classical belief for the cause of cot [crib] death until very recently." One factor makes it doubtful, though, that the Bible describes a case of SIDS—the baby died when only three days old, "which is too young for a true sudden infant death," according to Knight.

While it is true that some babies have died because of being accidentally suffocated by a sleeping mother, it is also true that many of these cases over the centuries have been what today is called sudden infant death syndrome.

The Mystery of SIDS

SIDS is a world problem. It is estimated, for example, that from 1,000 to 2,000 infants die every year in Britain under the

"There is no single cause of cot [crib] death."—Professor Knight



SIDS definition. The average in developed countries is about one baby in every 500. Based on an estimated world population increase of 83 million per year, that represents at least 166,000 deaths yearly. But it also implies millions of worried parents who harbor the secret fear. As Phyllis, a New York mother in her early 30's, confessed: "Every time I put my baby to bed, I pray that it will wake up again."

SIDS continues to baffle the medical researchers and pathologists. An article in the magazine *Pediatrics* recently discussed SIDS in twins. Thirty-two cases were examined, and "no cause of death was found despite complete postmortem investigations." Ten other cases of SIDS in twins were researched by university clinics in Antwerp, Paris, and Rouen. The findings? "The cause of SIDS remained unexplained after a complete autopsy." The mystery cause, or causes, continues.

However, as shown in another report, in 11 of 42 pairs who were compared, "the future SIDS victim was more than 300 g lighter than his or her surviving sibling." The conclusion was that the only items differentiating the SIDS infants from the control infants were a "lower mean weight and height at birth, the previous occurrence of cyanosis [bluish skin and mucous membranes caused by lack of oxygen in the blood] or pallor during sleep, and the recurrent profuse night sweats."

In their report on 16 SIDS cases in England, a group of doctors stated: "SIDS usually occurs between 1 and 6 months of age with a peak at 2 to 4 months. . . . Other factors previously reported to be associated with SIDS are a maternal history of smoking during pregnancy, young maternal age at birth, unmarried status, large family size, [and] low socioeconomic status." They add:

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Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* used.
Printed in U.S.A.

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.

Parents Viewed With Suspicion

The enigma surrounding SIDS deaths has sometimes caused unnecessary pain and suffering to the parents. How so? Because outsiders, including sometimes the police and medical personnel, have viewed the death as highly suspicious, especially when it has occurred simultaneously in twins. And according to a survey covering over 47,000 births in Cardiff, Wales, between 1965 and 1977 there was a fivefold increase in the risk of SIDS in twins. Dr. John E. Smialek, writing in the medical journal *Pediatrics*, reported two exceptional cases that occurred five years apart in Wayne County, Missouri, and Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

He states: "The announcement of the deaths of the first set of twins resulted in an atmosphere of intense suspicion of the parents . . . by members of the medical community and other lay persons who were unaware of the existence of this phenomenon [SIDS]." That is easy to understand when we recall that SIDS has received major publicity only since 1975, when the U.S. government supported information and counseling programs on the subject. When a similar twins case of SIDS happened in Detroit five years later, there was much less suspicion. Professionals and the public were becoming informed.

Yet, even now, when so much more is known about the subject, Dr. Smialek admits: "Although SIDS is now widely accepted as a condition that parents have no power to predict or prevent, the occurrence of the simultaneous deaths of infant twins is a phenomenon that still evokes bewilderment and suspicion."

But why should twins be more susceptible to SIDS? Pathologist Bernard Knight answers: "They are very often premature and are often under normal birth-weight. They more often need to spend the early part of their lives in special care units in maternity hospitals. . . . All these factors make them more vulnerable to sudden infant death."

"SIDS is also reported more frequently in male infants and is more prevalent during the autumn and winter months." Yet, Bernard Knight cautions: "It must be emphasised that sudden infant death can—and does—strike at any family, irrespective of the position in the social hierarchy."

Pathologists Try to Unravel the Mystery

When an infant dies without obvious cause, the coroner or medical examiner will usually call in a pathologist to examine the body and perform an autopsy. The reason for this is to try to pinpoint the exact cause of death and use this knowledge to prevent future cases. What have the pathologists found in many of these cases?

Over the years different trails have been followed. At one time SIDS was attributed to suffocation by pillows, bedclothing, and posture. That was rejected when it was proved that babies normally struggle out of any suffocation posture. And bedclothes are usually porous enough to allow for breathing. Then it was thought that bottle feeding and the use of cow's milk was the cause. But breast-fed babies also died from SIDS. For a long time apnea, interrupted breathing, was blamed. Now that has been largely abandoned as a primary cause.

Some years ago some pathologists "truly believed that respiratory infection was the underlying cause of death . . . Though it is now [in 1983] generally thought that the infection is the trigger rather than the underlying cause, there is no doubt that some mild inflammatory condition of the air passages is implicated in a large proportion of SIDS."—*Sudden Death in Infancy*.

Professor Knight concludes that "it now seems obvious that there is no single cause of cot death" but that "there are several

"The occurrence of the simultaneous deaths of infant twins is a phenomenon that still evokes bewilderment and suspicion"

factors which come together in a given baby at a given time and cause death. We know some of the factors but not others." Thus, the detective work continues as more clues are sought. Recently, however, a new discovery was made.

Hemoglobin Change —Cause or Symptom?

This development was reported in *The New England Journal of Medicine* of April 30, 1987. It stated: "Prolonged elevation in the levels of fetal hemoglobin (hemoglobin F) in infants with SIDS could denote a compromised delivery of oxygen to sensitive tissue sites."^{**} The report indicated that after the birth of a baby, there is normal replacement of fetal hemoglobin with hemoglobin A produced by the baby's body —thus its own oxygen-carrying hemoglobin. In the victims of SIDS, a significant number of the victims still had a higher proportion of less effective fetal hemoglobin than was normal. So, what conclusion did the doctors draw?

"Our interpretation of this finding is that infants with SIDS are characterized by a marked delay in the switch from hemoglobin F to hemoglobin A—a phenomenon that may reflect an underlying chronic condition." Why does this happen? "The reason for the abnormal persistence of hemoglobin F is uncertain."

Although they did not see this as a cause of SIDS, they did view it as a useful marker with which to pick out the babies that might

* Hemoglobin is the blood component that is the coloring matter in red cells and is a compound of protein and oxygen. It carries oxygen to the body from the lungs.



be more subject to SIDS, "especially those beyond 50 weeks of post-conceptional age."

The doctors who originated this study stated that "studies of SIDS suggest an association with low birth weight, prematurity, retarded growth development, and maternal smoking."

This latter point is worthy of comment. Dr. Bernard Knight, of the University of Wales, Cardiff, wrote: "Quite a strong association of smoking with SIDS has been shown, though again it is difficult to know whether this is a direct link or merely an association with social factors." Nevertheless, he does quote statistics that are revealing. In a survey of 50,000 births in the city of Cardiff, the rate of SIDS for mothers who have not smoked or who have stopped smoking was 1.18 per 1,000 live births. But for mothers who smoked more than 20 cigarettes a day, the figure jumped to 5.62 per 1,000 live births—a fivefold increase!

Some mothers ask: "What about breast feeding? Does that give greater protection against SIDS?" Dr. Bergman, prominent in the United States in the field of SIDS research, stated: "I happen to believe in breast feeding and I think it is better for a whole lot of reasons; but I don't think that

people who have lost crib death babies should have it suggested to them that their baby might still be alive if they had only breast fed."

In view of the foregoing, is there anything parents can do to head off the threat of SIDS? Is it preventable?

SIDS Can It Be Prevented?

"Home monitoring of infants who are considered to be at high risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) has been increasingly used in recent years in an attempt to prevent sudden infant death."

—*"Pediatrics," June 1986.*

HOME monitoring has increasingly been used, but does it prevent SIDS? Thousands of parents have used or are using home monitors. The monitor, attached to the baby, gives a warning signal when there is threatening irregularity in cardiac activity or breathing. *Science News* reports that an estimated 40,000 to 45,000 home monitors are in use in the United States and from 10,000 to 15,000 are manufactured each year. Since the danger period is the first year of life, the monitor does not have to be used for years. But are these devices really effective in saving lives?

Dr. Ehud Krongrad and Linda O'Neill, RN, of the Babies Hospital of Columbia University, New York, studied 20 babies considered to be at high risk. Their study indicates that it is extremely difficult to identify accurately a baby that is at risk

and therefore really in need of a home monitor. They state: "No test is available to indicate with a high degree of specificity or sensitivity, or with a reasonable predictive value, that an infant is at high risk."

They argue that parents are naturally very subjective in diagnosing their child's reactions and state: "Most alarms perceived by parents as being true alarms associated with physical changes are not accompanied by cardiac electrical instability." In fact, their data "suggest that the overwhelming majority of infants who die suddenly and unexpectedly do not exhibit any notable and or clinically useful symptoms." As a result, George A. Little of Dartmouth Medical School stated: "If the criteria in the consensus panel report are applied by physicians, I'd anticipate a significant drop in home monitor use for infantile apnea."

This conclusion serves to support the counsel of the medical examiner to Tottie, quoted in our opening article: "There was nothing you could have done to prevent it. Even if you had been standing by the crib with a monitor, you could not have saved her. You cannot anticipate it and you cannot prevent it. In certain cases, everything just shuts down at once, and at present there is no way of knowing the cause." Unfortunately, in many fields, science and medicine do not have all the answers, and SIDS is one such field.

Another factor to bear in mind is that home monitors are electrical apparatuses, and therefore, as stated in an article in *Pediatrics*, "health professionals and consumers need to be aware that the presence of a monitor in a home represents potential risks, especially when the home includes a toddler or preschool child." A loose cable is a temptation to any child, and a nearby connection can be the next simple step to an electrocution or a burn accident. Therefore, where a home monitor is used, extreme caution should be exercised when there are other children around.

Near-Miss Babies

A near-miss baby is one that has stopped breathing and is apparently dead but is caught in time. Perhaps a parent suddenly noted that the baby had ceased breathing and scooped it up to run for help or rush to the nearest hospital. Some-

Baby attached to a home monitor to check breathing

times that sudden action and movement has served to trigger the heart and the breathing, and the baby has been saved without the need for any heart massage or CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

In some cases these near misses have been noted in babies that eventually died of SIDS. Dr. Marie Valdes-Dapena says that 'near-miss infants are at special risk for sudden death.' Therefore, doctors deduce that "these functions of breathing and heart rate are related to the autonomic nervous system and it seems almost certain that SIDS babies and potential cot deaths have some malfunction of this automatic part of the central nervous system." But the cause remains a mystery.

So SIDS is used to define the death of a baby in circumstances that cannot be explained. An autopsy fails to produce a valid reason or cause for the death. And at the present stage of research and investigation, SIDS cannot usually be foreseen or prevented. So when a baby dies—whether of SIDS or of any other cause—how do parents cope with such a loss? How do they face their grief?



SIDS Facing the Grief

SUDDEN infant death is a devastating tragedy. An apparently normal, healthy baby fails to wake up. It is totally unexpected, for who imagines that an infant will die before its parents? A baby that has become the center of a mother's endless love is suddenly the reason for a mother's endless grief.*

Guilt feelings begin to flood in. The parents feel responsible for the death, as if it were due to some neglect. They ask themselves, 'What could we have done to prevent it?' In some cases the husband, without foundation, might even unconsciously blame his wife. When he went to work, the baby was alive and healthy. When he got home, it had died in its crib! Then what was his wife doing? Where was she at the time? These irrational doubts have to be cleared up so as not to put a strain on the marriage.

Tottie, mentioned in our opening article, went through a difficult phase. She says: "If I am not careful, I still have bouts of guilt and depression. Mentally, I have to shift gears quickly and get out of that nonproductive thinking. Prayer has been a great help to me, as I have asked for help to recognize my own thought processes and to help me think more positively."

How can other people help them in their grief? Tottie shot out the answer: "Some people act as if Katie never existed. If only they would realize that in fact you do want to talk about your loved one! It is therapeutic

to talk. Katie will always be a lovely little child to us, and we want to remember her, not forget her. So why be afraid to talk about her?"

On the other hand, not all parents want to talk about their dead child. That is something that the visitor has to gauge.

Working Out the Grief

Grief reactions vary from person to person and from culture to culture. One study of SIDS in the United States found that, *on an average*, it takes the parents three years "to regain the level of personal happiness [they] felt they had held before the death."

Doug, a computer systems analyst, and Anne, now in their early 40's, lost little Rachel 12 years ago. That was when SIDS was still relatively unknown. Even though a doctor had checked the baby the day before, the attending policeman insisted that the coroner ask for an autopsy. Says Anne: "At the time we did not question the decision. Only later did we find out that the policeman had noticed blue marks on Rachel's throat, and he suspected child abuse! As it turned out, the condition was merely an evidence of death, called *livor mortis*—two blood spots that form and look like bruises. The autopsy came up with no reason for the death, and it was finally listed as sudden infant death."

How did Doug and Anne face the loss? Doug explains: "I was at the Kingdom Hall when a friend told me I was urgently wanted at home. When I arrived at the house, I

* For more detailed information on facing the loss of a child, see *Awake!* of August 8, 1987.

learned the worst. I could not believe it. I had been the last person to touch Rachel that night. Now she was dead. I broke down and wept, along with Anne. It was the only time I wept."

Awake!: "What about the funeral? How did that affect you?"

"The surprising thing was that neither Anne nor I cried at the funeral. Everyone else was weeping." Then Anne interjected: "Yes, but I have done plenty of crying for both of us. I think it really hit me a few weeks after the tragedy, when I was finally alone one day in the house. I cried all day long. But I believe it helped me. I felt better for it. I had to mourn the loss of my baby. I really do believe that you should let grieving people weep. Although it is a natural reaction for others to say, 'Don't cry,' it doesn't really help."

Awake!: "How did other people help you through the crisis? And what things don't help?"

Anne responded: "One friend came and cleaned up my house without my having to say a word. Others made meals for us. Some just helped by giving me a hug—no words, just a hug. I didn't want to talk about it. I didn't want to have to explain over and over again what had happened. I didn't need prying questions, as if I had failed to do something. I was the mother; I would have done anything to save my Rachel."

Doug continued: "Sometimes innocent remarks were made that were not helpful, such as: 'As Christians we should not mourn as others do.' Now, I know that. But I can assure you, when you lose a child, at that moment even the firm knowledge of the resurrection is not going to prevent you from weeping and mourning. After all, Jesus wept when Lazarus died, and

Jesus knew he was going to resurrect him."

Anne added: "Another comment that we did not find helpful was, 'I know how you feel.' We know it was said with the best of intentions, but unless that person had lost a baby as I did, there is no way he or she could know how I felt. Feelings are very personal. True, most people can show sympathy, but very few can show real empathy."

Awake!: "Did Rachel's death cause any strain between you?"

Anne was quick to answer: "Yes, it did. I suppose we had different ways of mourning our loss. Doug wanted to put up photos of Rachel around the house. That was the last thing I wanted. I didn't need those reminders. I didn't want it to look as if we were making a cult out of her death. Anyway, Doug understood my feelings, and he took the photos down."

Awake!: "How did little Stephanie, Rachel's sister, react?"

"For a short period after Rachel's death, Stephanie was afraid of getting sick. She feared that any illness would also kill her. And at first she was not too happy about going to sleep. But she got over it. When we had Amy, our next baby, Stephanie was always very afraid for her. She did not want her to die, and any cough or snuffle made her nervous for her sister."

A Solid Hope Sustains

What about the use of sedatives during the grief period? Pathologist Knight writes: "It has been shown that heavy sedation may be counter-productive if it is a barrier to the normal process of bereavement and grieving. The tragedy has to be endured, suffered and eventually rationalised and to retard this unduly by knocking out the mother with drugs may prolong or distort the process."

Suggestions for Helping Bereaved Parents

What You Can Do

1. Be available. Make meals. Clean house. Run errands. Care for the other children.
2. Express your genuine fellow feeling and sorrow at their loss.
3. Let them express their feelings and grief as they see fit.
4. Encourage them to be patient with themselves and not to demand too much from themselves.
5. Allow them to talk about the lost child as much as they wish, and you talk about the endearing qualities of the child.
6. Give special attention to the child's brothers and sisters for whatever length of time it is necessary.
7. Relieve them of guilt feelings. Reassure them that they did all they could. Highlight whatever else you know to be true and positive about the care they gave.

What to Avoid

1. Don't avoid them because you are uncomfortable. Just a sympathetic hug is better than absence.
2. Don't say you know how they feel—unless you have lost a child too.
3. Don't be judgmental or tell them what they *should* feel or do.
4. Don't become silent when they mention their dead child. And don't be afraid to mention the child—they want to hear good things about him/her.
5. Don't draw sham conclusions or lessons to be learned from the loss of the child. In their grief, there is no silver lining to this cloud.
6. Don't remind them that at least they have other children or can have more. No other child is a substitute or replacement.
7. Don't add to their guilt feelings by looking for faults in the home or hospital care.
8. Don't use religious platitudes that put the blame on God.

(Based in part on a list prepared by Lee Schmidt, Parent Bereavement Outreach, Santa Monica, California.)

Awake! asked Doug what had sustained him and Anne through their grief.

"I remember that the funeral talk was helpful. What comforted us most of all that day was our Christian hope in the resurrection. Her loss was felt deeply, but the hurt was softened by God's promise through Christ of seeing her again here on earth. From the Bible, we saw that the effects of death are reversible. The speaker showed from the Bible that Rachel was not in heaven 'as a little angel' nor in Limbo awaiting release to heaven. She was simply asleep in the common grave of mankind."—See John 5:28, 29; 11:11-14; Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Awake!: "How would you answer those who say that 'God took her'?"

"It would be a selfish God who would take little children from their parents. The Bible's answer at Ecclesiastes 9:11 is enlightening: 'Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all.' And Psalm 51:5 tells us that all of us are imperfect, sinful, from the time of our conception, and the eventuality for all men now is death from any number of causes. Sometimes death strikes before birth, resulting in a stillbirth. In Rachel's case, she contracted something as an infant that overwhelmed her system—an unforeseen occurrence."

Every day thousands of homes lose a child in death. Many of these are babies who die from SIDS. Compassionate friends, doctors, hospital staff, and counselors can mean so much in such tragic circumstances. (See box to the left.) Also, accurate knowledge of God's purposes toward mankind can truly sustain grieving parents.

If you would like to know more about God's promise of a resurrection to perfect life on earth, please feel free to contact Jehovah's Witnesses in your neighborhood. They will gladly help you with comfort from God's Word, without obligation.

Young People Ask. . .



How Can I Get Over a Broken Heart?

YOU just know this is the one you will marry. You enjoy each other's company, you share common interests, and you sense a mutual attraction. Then, suddenly, the relationship dies, exploding in a burst of anger—or melting in tears.

Few things in life cause as much heartache as the breakup of a romance. In his book *The Young Person's Guide to Love*, author Morton Hunt claimed: "Only about one out of five people, at the breakup of a teenage love affair, feels indifferent. As for the people who didn't want the breakup at all, most of them feel torn apart, crushed, wildly angry." Youths often bring vexation

"I can only be a 'Hi, how are you?' person now. I am not letting any person get close to me"

upon themselves by getting romantically involved long before they are ready for marriage.

Nevertheless, some young adults may be ready for marriage and have pursued courtship honorably and seriously—only to find themselves heartbroken when a re-

lationship does not work out. Can one recuperate from the bitter heartbreak of a wrecked romance?

Why Breaking Up Is Hard to Do

In his book *The Chemistry of Love*, Dr. Michael Liebowitz likens the onset of love to the rush of a powerful drug. But like a drug, such love can trigger raging 'withdrawal symptoms' if it dies. Psychologist David Goss cites 'depression, anxiety, physical illness, the loss of the sense of purpose in life, and a period of grieving' as typical reactions to romantic breakups. And it makes little difference whether the love is mere infatuation or the 'real thing.' Both can create dizzying highs—and agonizing lows if the relationship ends.

The feelings of rejection, hurt, and perhaps outrage that come in the wake of a breakup may thus sour your view of the future. One Christian woman speaks of herself as 'wounded' because of being jilted. "I can only be a 'Hi, how are you?' person [with the opposite sex] now," she says. "I am not letting any person get close to me." The deeper the commitment you feel in a relationship, the deeper the hurt its breakup can result in. Being told by others that it was just puppy love or that 'you'll get over it soon' is of little comfort.

Why Breakups Occur

Desperately needed now is, not irrational emotion, but calm reflection. "Thinking ability itself will keep guard over you, discernment itself will safeguard you," said Solomon. (Proverbs 2:11) Reasoning makes clear that the freedom to court whom you please carries a hefty price tag: the very real possibility of suffering rejection. After all, what is the only legitimate reason to keep close company with one of the opposite sex? Is it not to see how that one measures up as a potential marriage mate? To date simply for the fun of it would be nothing less than cruelly playing with someone's feelings.—Compare Proverbs 26:18, 19.

But does dating, or any form of courtship, guarantee that true love will grow or that a wedding is imminent? Not necessarily, for after a while it may become apparent that you have conflicting goals, incompatible life-styles, or clashing temperaments. In such cases, the wise thing to do may be to *call it off!* "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself," says the Bible.—Proverbs 22:3.

So if someone began courting you with honest intentions but later concludes that marriage would be unwise, you have not necessarily been dealt with unfairly. The problem is, there is no painless way of ending a romance. No doubt you would prefer that the person show Christian consideration and face you, explaining just *why* the relationship is over. Often, though, the one leaving is unwilling to brave a face-to-face meeting. He or she may thus take the unkind way out, sending a terse letter or, worse yet, simply ignoring you, as if that would make the problem go away.

Even when a breakup is handled with the utmost of tact and kindness, you are still

bound to feel hurt and rejected. This is no reason to lose your self-esteem, however. The fact that you were not "right" in this person's eyes does not mean that you will not be just right in the eyes of someone else. After all, this is not the only young man or woman in the world!

Another way to fight feelings of rejection is to try putting the defunct romance in cool perspective. Does the girl whom you thought you loved really fit the description of the "capable wife" described in the Bible? (Proverbs 31:10-31) Is the young man whom you set your heart on one who would truly 'love his wife as his own body,' or does he still manifest a measure of selfishness? (Ephesians 5:28) True, he or she may possess striking good looks and irresistible charm. Ah, but "charm is a cheat and beauty is a bubble."—Proverbs 31:30, *The Bible in Living English*.

The breakup may even spotlight disturbing things about this person—emotional immaturity, indecision, inflexibility, intolerance, a lack of consideration for your feelings. These are hardly desirable qualities in a marriage mate. At the same time, you may come to realize that *you* also have a few things to work on before you'll be a desirable marriage partner.

'But I Don't Want It to Be Over!'

What, though, if the breakup is entirely one-sided, and you are convinced a marriage *would* have worked out well? Certainly you have a right to let the other person know how you feel. Remember, though, "he that is sweet in his lips adds persuasiveness." (Proverbs 16:21) Emotional rantings and ravings will accomplish little. A calm discussion, though, may reveal that there have simply been some misunderstandings. Nevertheless, if he or she insists on splitting up, there is no need for

you to humiliate yourself, tearfully begging for the affections of someone who obviously has no feelings for you. Solomon said there is "a time to seek and a time to give up as lost."—Ecclesiastes 3:6.

True, there may be strong reason to suspect that you were merely being used by someone who never had a sincere interest in marriage in the first place. "I found out she was only giving me the attention to get another man jealous," recalls Daniel regarding a girl he dated years ago. "It was *very painful*. It was years before I let myself get involved again." A person who cruelly toys with someone's feelings could hardly be viewed as an exemplary Christian, and you can be assured that such deviousness is not unnoticed by God. Sooner or later, such a one will be made to regret his or her course of action—without your having to resort to vindictive reprisals. "The cruel person is bringing ostracism upon his own organism."—Proverbs 11:17; compare 6:12-15.

The Road to Recovery

Of course, simply knowing that breaking up was the best thing to do will not make all your hurt feelings vanish. You may from time to time be tormented by loneliness or romantic memories. If so, quickly get your mind down to earth! Get busy, perhaps in some physical activity. Avoid solitude. (Proverbs 18:1) Keep your mind on things that are cheerful and upbuilding. —Philippians 4:8.



When it becomes apparent that a courtship is not working out, the kind thing would be to have a face-to-face discussion, explaining why the relationship must end

You do not have to be a hero and suppress your feelings. Confiding in your heavenly Father will no doubt bring much relief. Being busy in the Christian ministry will help. It may also help to confide in a close friend. (Proverbs 18:24) And do not forget that your parents can often be of great comfort, even if you feel you are old enough to be independent.—Proverbs 23:22.

A breakup is a bitter experience. But one can benefit even from heartbreak. "Bruising wounds are what scours away the bad," says Proverbs 20:30. You may now see the need to work on certain aspects of your personality. Your vision of what you want in a marriage mate may be clearer than ever. And having loved and lost, you may decide to handle courtship a bit more prudently* should a desirable person ever come along again—the likelihood of which may be greater than you think.

* A future article will discuss this aspect of courtship.



TRUST thyself only, and another shall not betray thee." Although this cynical observation was made 250 years ago, many today express similar sentiments. A spirit of mistrust permeates society.

Leo, who plans to remarry, insists that before the wedding his fiancée sign an agreement outlining alimony benefits in the event of a future divorce. Marriage is no longer equated with trust.

Larry, typical of many unemployed youths, complains: "When society knows that it can take you, put you in a little hole and leave you there, that's what they do." He has lost confidence in society in general.

After a recent scandal involving a prominent television evangelist, Juanita, a former monetary contributor, lamented: "It's

A Trust That Will Never Be Betrayed

a deception, that whole thing." Even religious leaders are not always trustworthy.

Wisely, the Bible warns against naively trusting in humans and human institutions. The psalmist writes: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man." The same psalm, however, does advise us to rely on someone, someone who will never betray a trust, the almighty God.—Psalm 146:3, 5.

True, national leaders, even entire nations, frequently profess to put their trust in God. In fact, many United States bills and coins for the last hundred years have borne the motto: "IN GOD WE TRUST." But history indicates that rather than trust in God, mankind in general has put its faith in economic, military, and political might.

Can a people that really does put trust in God be found today? Is it worth their while to do so? How does it benefit them?

During the summer of 1987, in hundreds of cities throughout the northern hemisphere, millions convened to reaffirm their trust in God. The theme of their conventions, organized by Jehovah's Witnesses, was: "Trust in Jehovah." As a newspaper in Norwich, England, observed, this year's convention theme reflected the prevailing mood of disenchantment with the world. But rather than bemoaning the failure of human institutions, the Witnesses assembled to consider ways in which they could strengthen their reliance on Jehovah and to review the benefits that such a course brings.

What drew these people together? Their trust in God and in his Word, the Bible. A newspaper article in Granada, Spain, explained their motive for attending the convention: "Entire families have traveled to Granada, young children, parents and grandparents, in order to listen to the word

The Rahab drama



of Jehovah, because that is what the Bible counsels. This serves to unite families and to strengthen bonds of friendship."

Trust in God Manifested by Those Who Attended

For many, just being at a convention was an evidence of their reliance on Jehovah. This was true in the case of Simone Grijmonprez, who was at the convention in Kortrijk, Belgium, each day despite a grave illness that requires her to be on oxygen for six hours daily.

Present at the convention in El Ferrol,

**Roberto González,
Spain**





Top:
Claudine
Adolphe,
France

Center:
Crystal
Palace
National
Sports
Centre,
England



Baptism
symbolizing
dedication



Spain, was Roberto González who is a quadriplegic and also a full-time minister. Despite being confined to a wheelchair and having to be bedridden for two or three months every year, he spends an average of about 90 hours each month preaching on the streets to friends and neighbors about the value of trusting in God. He can speak from experience because it was precisely his trust in Jehovah that enabled him to overcome his drug addiction, a habit that left him with a police record of seven arrests and an incurable paralysis by the age of 18. He has already helped seven of his former associates to trust in God rather than narcotics in order to make life worth living.

Some had to make economic sacrifices to be present. This was true of many Witnesses in the Azores archipelago who had to travel to another island in order to attend the convention at Angra do Heroísmo. One family of five spent several months fattening up two cows that they sold in order to pay the fare.

Trust in God Means Trusting in His Standards

"Trust in Jehovah and do good," said the psalmist David. (Psalm 37:3) The Witnesses believe, therefore, that sincere trust in God must be evidenced by good conduct. Thus, serving a trustworthy God has motivated them to become trustworthy people. This is something that many observers have come to appreciate.

At the Le Havre convention in France, a telephone engineer was installing a telephone cable in the stadium facilities and expressed concern about leaving his equipment unattended. A town official assured him: "You don't have to worry about that with the Witnesses. The worst that could happen would be for you to find you have

more equipment afterward than you had before."

At one of the conventions in Sweden, the owner of a motel left all the master keys for his motel with the Witnesses who were organizing the convention. He allowed them to run the motel without any of his staff present. "We have never done this before," said the owner, "but we trust you." After the convention, he expressed his satisfaction with the way the Witnesses had taken care of the premises.

Appreciation Expressed for the Witnesses' Behavior

Trust in God also moves people to apply his standards of cleanliness and orderliness. It motivates them to offer their services as volunteers and helps them to work together in harmony. This aspect of the conventions certainly did not go unnoticed.

The mayor of Terni, Italy, sent the following telegram to the convention delegates assembled in that city: "I would like to convey the sentiments of respect and appreciation of the entire city for the elevated civic sense demonstrated in the use and preparation of the facilities made available to you. Cordial greetings to those taking part in the convention."

A foreman of the Ice Hall in Mikkeli, Finland, observing the spirit of the Witnesses who volunteered to organize the convention, exclaimed: "I have not found anything negative here, only positive! The spirit of the volunteer workers is great. It is a pleasure to see joyful people who enjoy their work."

A bus driver who was present at the convention in Nancy, France, remarked: "I was not familiar with Jehovah's Witnesses, but I know them better now. In the past I had always heard negative remarks about

them. But now I see things differently. It is difficult for me to describe the deep sense of well-being here. No one pushes, no one gets irritated, and everything runs like clockwork."

In Pergusa, Italy, a newspaper published a letter written by a group of local residents thanking the Witnesses for their fine behavior, especially their cleanliness, and the way they cared for the stadium facilities. "Everyone should behave as they do," the letter stated, "but unfortunately things are different when other types of gatherings are held."

Several talks at the conventions stressed the need to imitate divine qualities. Jehovah's Witnesses are striving to do just that. Some were very encouraged by the progress they have already made in this direction.

A newsagent, whose shop is near the convention location in Edinburgh, Scotland, exclaimed: "I am always so delighted when the Witnesses come to Murrayfield! They are so pleasant and polite when they come into the shop—no pushing, no grumbling, no scrambling to get served. It is a pleasure to have them here, and I look forward to seeing them every year."

A journalist in Belgium said: "Nowhere else have we seen anything like this." Another newsman commented: "In our day, it is unthinkable, from a purely human viewpoint, that such large gatherings can still be organized in such a fraternal atmosphere."

Tomas Bresky, a Swedish television interviewer, was present at the convention in Lulea, Sweden. He summed up his impressions in this way: "You get a feeling of fascination . . . after having mingled with these people for a few days. So firm in their conviction, so uncompromising, so strong

in their trust in the Bible. Who is not attracted by an organization that works? When serving 10,000 with food, it seems as if it were just a matter of handing out a few loaves of bread and fishes. Who would not like to have such quiet and patient children? Here you find real discipline and order."

Baptism Candidates Show Trust in Jehovah

At every convention, opportunity was provided for delegates to symbolize their dedication by baptism in water. The discourse that preceded this ceremony made clear that such a decision reflected trust in Jehovah. Many who presented themselves for baptism had already experienced the benefits of such a trust.

At the convention in Navan, Ireland, Noel Donaghue was baptized. Not long previously, he had been destitute, living in a derelict house in Liverpool, England, and not even caring for himself properly because of depression and deep despair about conditions in the world. His health deteriorated, and he became suicidal. Finally, in February 1984 his legs had to be amputated because of frostbite.

Later that year he returned to his home in Ireland and was contacted by the Witnesses. Soon he was attending meetings, and his despair was replaced by a real hope for the future. "The first half of that year was terrible," he said, "but the second half was marvelous." Now he has an optimistic outlook, reflected by his answer when asked how he managed to go preaching from house to house with his artificial limbs. "Well," he replied, "at least I'm not bothered by cold feet in the winter!"

Among the baptism candidates were elderly ones who had also learned to trust in God. At the district convention held in Colombes Stadium near Paris, Claudine Adolphe, a woman 91 years of age, was baptized. Her daughter had become a Witness some years earlier, and Claudine, despite her advanced age, began to observe the faith and way of life of Jehovah's Witnesses. Having lost several members of her family in death, she was greatly comforted by the Bible hope of the resurrection that was explained to her. She began to study the Bible and came to know Jehovah and trust in him, the God who promises to bring the dead back to life.

José Benito, who was baptized in El Ferrol, Spain, could also testify to the value of trusting in Jehovah. For four years he had fought to overcome his drug addiction but without success. Then he started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, and the accurate knowledge of God's Word, together with the strength that God supplied, enabled him to break free from this habit. He had always had a certain appreciation for spiritual matters, and while under the influence of drugs, he used to preach in bars and on street cor-

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- Advertising
—*The Powerful Persuader*
- Is Religion Slipping out of the Picture?
- We Were Lilliputians Among Dwarfs

ners his own particular doctrine concerning Jesus and the need for peace. He was sarcastically nicknamed "the apostle" by the people in his town. Now he has brought his life into harmony with God's requirements and has learned to preach in a dignified, reasonable way.

Appreciation for Convention Program and Releases

The Witnesses, attending from many lands, were thrilled with the instructive program and the fellowship enjoyed. A full-time preacher, who served 43 years as a Catholic nun, remarked: "It's the excellent worldwide unity that continues to amaze me. How often I say to myself: 'Only Jehovah can be the Organizer of such events, unique in a world becoming increasingly divided in all spheres of life!'"

A father of three children from Stoke on Trent, England, wrote: "Each talk seemed to have a point especially for us. Each night as we got home, we thanked Jehovah for making such a provision for us."

At the Spanish-language conventions, the audience was delighted to receive the book *Aid to Bible Understanding* in Spanish. One brother in Granada, Spain, obtained a copy and was leafing through it while waiting at a gas station just opposite the convention grounds. One of the attendants noticed the title of the book and said: "That is just what is needed, some-

1987 CONVENTION REPORTS THUS FAR

Country	Number of Conventions	Peak Attendance	Number Baptized
Austria	5	24,686	360
Belgium	7	31,121	319
Britain	15	155,743	1,212
Denmark	5	23,029	200
Finland	6	26,144	284
France	19	138,683	2,705
Germany	24	159,361	1,455
Greece	5	28,811	418
Ireland	2	4,326	61
Italy	34	221,227	5,496
Luxembourg	1	1,458	8
Malta	1	674	13
Netherlands	9	43,510	231
Norway	4	12,703	218
Portugal	12	55,057	1,102
Spain	15	105,591	2,394
Sweden	10	30,099	312
Switzerland	5	19,459	261
18 Countries in Europe	179	1,081,682	17,049
23 Other Countries	233	1,866,875	23,270
TOTAL 41 COUNTRIES	412	2,948,557	40,319

thing to help people understand the Bible. I certainly don't understand it." The brother offered to help him, and a Bible study was started with this man the week after the convention.

Above all, the convention program stressed the need to trust in God and his Kingdom rather than in human institutions. In Italy, a well-known journalist noticed this unique aspect of the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses. He explained on a nationwide television broadcast: "They firmly believe in this message . . . of the victorious return of Christ, which is certainly contained in the New Testament writings. I would say that these themes have been shoved aside not only by the

Catholic Church but by all the great Christian religions. They have removed them from the center of that which was the original Christian faith, and these movements [the Witnesses] have rediscovered them. In this sense it is an authentic recovery, a correct recovery."

This "recovery" of fundamental Christian doctrines has enabled the Witnesses to replace skepticism with faith, despair

with hope, and mistrust with confidence. They know that God will never betray their trust in him. This very series of conventions demonstrated that it is worth while to trust in God and to live in harmony with that conviction. At the conclusion of the program, the delegates returned to their homes determined more than ever to 'trust in Jehovah with all their heart.'

—Proverbs 3:5.

She Reached Her Goal

Many youths today have no purpose in life. In contrast, a teenage girl in Italy set her goal and reached it, and we are pleased to share her experience with our readers.

IN ABOUT a month I will be 14 years old. I am the eldest of four brothers and sisters. My family is spiritually divided, since my father is not one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

My mother became a Witness when I was only a few months old. Right from the start, she took to heart her responsibility to bring us children up in the "mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6) In fact, as far back as I can remember, she regularly studied the Bible with us, we prepared for the meetings together, and we accompanied her in the house-to-house ministry every week. We also witnessed to our faith at school.

From the time that we were very young, Mom tried to instill in our hearts the desire for the full-time ministry by reading to us

the experiences of those Witnesses who had been full-time ministers for many years. Above all, she set an example for us. In fact, Mom never asked us to do something that she herself did not do.

While people may gladly listen to children who call at their homes in the ministry, they are sometimes rude to the adults who accompany them. Once when I was eight or nine years old, I was calling at homes along with an elder. A lady opened the door, and I began my presentation. In a very rude manner, the lady said to the brother: "You even obligate these poor children to preach!" "No, Madam," I promptly replied. "If I am here, it's of my own free will!" After that, the lady, speechless, accepted the literature that I offered her.

When I was ten, I shared in the ministry full-time during the school vacation in July, though I was not yet baptized. This involved a small sacrifice, as I had to give up going to the beach. I never regretted it though, because the happiness I felt at the end of that month was indescribable.

I got baptized in June when I was 12 1/2 years old. In the summer of that year, I again shared in the full-time ministry, and later, with the help of a good schedule, I was also able to make the most of the Christmas vacation. I did this because at the beginning of the school year, I had set myself a goal. I had made the decision, and had told Jehovah in prayer, that I would finish that school year with a flourish, gain my third-year high-school diploma, and would enter the full-time ministry.

From the moment I made this decision, I ran into problems. Since I was good at certain subjects, the teachers pressured me to continue my studies. The temptation was very great because I liked school, but I had not forgotten my goal and the promise I had made to Jehovah.

When the news got around among the teachers that I didn't want to continue my studies, the pressure increased, even on the part of a teacher who had never shown any liking for me. To be on the safe side, nine months in advance I submitted my application form for the full-time ministry to the elders of my congregation. The pressure at school did not let up, but by this time I just wasn't listening. My determination also helped me overcome pressure on the part of my classmates.

School finally finished in June, and in July, I started as an auxiliary full-time minister. There were many blessings, but then another problem arose. Jobs became available in the factory where my father worked, and he wanted me to go and work

with him full-time. I just didn't know what to do, but Jehovah helped me. I was not yet 14 years old, so they could not give me the job.

Then in August my father said: "In October you're going to come and work with me." If I had gone to work in that factory, I would not have had enough time for the full-time ministry, and having to work shifts, I would also have missed meetings. I took the matter to Jehovah in prayer.

Jehovah's answer was not long in coming—almost immediately I found a part-time job! And so, happily, on September 1, 1987, I began the regular full-time ministry. I am so happy I just can't find the words to describe the joy I have. I feel that Jehovah is near to me, and I pray that he will continue to bless my efforts.—*Contributed.*

Letter Received From a 14-Year-Old Student

On February 14, on what the world recognizes as Valentine's Day, my honors English teacher asked his students to make Valentine cards. I couldn't convince him to let me do something else, so I wrote this poem:

If you know God,
many would say,
You would not celebrate
Valentine's Day.

For it originated
with the myth Cupid,
An ancient false god
of some who were stupid.

So this card reflects,
in a poetic way,
Why I don't celebrate
Valentine's Day.

KOKICHI Mikimoto was deep in thought. He was thinking about oysters, and he wondered aloud, "How do pearls get in there in the first place?"

"Accident," answered Ume, his beloved wife.

"If it's an accident, then how can we make it happen on purpose?" Mikimoto mused. "There must be some way to sow pearls and make them grow like rice or turnips."*

Centuries before this young couple in Japan talked about 'growing' pearls, this precious

* This conversation is excerpted from the book *The Pearl King—The Story of the Fabulous Mikimoto*, by Robert Eunson.

gem from the sea was already being harvested in exotic places of the Orient and especially in the Persian Gulf. Around the tiny island sheikhdom of Bahrain, oyster beds were plenty. Each May, the pearl season began by the decree of the sheikh. The divers, with pearl songs on their lips, put out in their wooden boats, looking for the lustrous gems locked away in oyster hosts.

Natural Jewel of the Sea

What they were looking for were jewels of the sea called natural pearls. A pearl is formed when some minute particle has got into the oyster while it is in the sea. The oyster spins around the intruder his precious

Culturing Pearls

A Gem of an Idea!



swaddling bands, a pearly substance called nacre. Soon, the nucleus is no longer recognizable. It has become a polished gem—a pearl, ready for use.

Theories about pearls are as old as the harvest. The ancient Chinese called it “the hidden soul of the oyster.” The Greeks imagined that pearls were formed when lightning entered the sea. The Romans fancied that pearls were the oyster’s tear. All of this only highlights its mystery and rarity. Even as recently as 1947, out of 35,000 oysters harvested by a crew in one week, only 21 bore a pearl treasure, and of these, only 3 were of marketable quality.

Natural pearls were the most sought after

of gems until the technique for polishing stones was perfected. During the Roman heyday, General Vitellius, it has been reported, financed an entire military campaign by the sale of “just one of his mother’s earrings.” In the first century, Jesus used the “pearl of high value” to illustrate the precious “kingdom of the heavens.” (Matthew 13:45, 46) Marco Polo described meeting the King of Malabar, whose trappings included a “rosary” of 104 pearls and rubies “worth more than a city’s ransom.” Good quality naturals were like gold, and the divers were the prospectors.

As the world moved into the 20th century, the gorgeous natural pearl remained popular with royalty and the rich. Its high cost, however, kept it out of the reach of the common people. All of that would change with the advent of the cultured pearl.

Mikimoto's Dream

By the late 19th century, natural pearl harvesting had nearly depleted the oyster supply around Japan. Because of his love for the sea around his home on Ago Bay in Mie Prefecture, Kokichi Mikimoto began to think seriously about oysters. He was intrigued by the oyster’s ability to produce pearls. Was there a way to produce pearls in such quantities that every woman who wanted a pearl necklace could afford to have one? So began his dream.

The idea of introducing some foreign particle into the oyster in order to have it developed into a pearl had been known for some time. The Chinese are said to have used this method since the 12th or 13th century to produce crude blister, or semispherical, pearls from freshwater mussels.

So it was in the 1880’s that Mikimoto started experimenting with oysters. With the help of the local fishermen, he went to work and implanted a thousand oysters with small bits of shell. But success was elusive; not one single oyster yielded a pearl. Fighting his own disappointment and the people’s ridicule, he mustered up the means and the courage to implant 5,000 more with bits of coral, shell, glass, or bone—and waited. Meanwhile, he and Ume inserted tiny, shiny pieces of mother-of-pearl from shells into a smaller crop of oysters near their home.



K. Mikimoto & Company Ltd.

Oysters have natural enemies, and one of the deadliest chose to strike that year. Called red tide, it was a plague of poisonous red-orange plankton that multiplied quickly and smothered the oysters. Five thousand seeded oysters and four years of hard work went with the tide, and Mikimoto's dream turned into a nightmare.

Hoping to bolster her husband's spirit, devoted Ume urged him to check the small unharmed crop that remained. It was a balmy day, so she went along and busied herself with the oysters. Opening one, she screamed. There, a gleaming white pearl! It was semi-circular in shape and formed against the inside of the shell. Mikimoto had the method that yielded this blister pearl patented in 1896, but his heart was still after his dream—the perfectly round cultured pearl.

Unlocking the Oyster's Secret

Meanwhile, two other men were in hot pursuit of the same thing. By 1904, a self-made scientist, Tatsuhei Mise, had spherical pearl samples to present to marine experts in Japan. And by 1907 marine biologist Tokichi Nishikawa also had rounded pearls to show. One man's progress led to another man's enlightenment. Pearl farms today largely employ a combination of the methods developed by these men. However, the patent for the perfectly round cultured pearl was ultimately to go to Mikimoto in 1916. What had happened?

Once again, in 1905, Mikimoto lost his nucleated oyster crop to the killer red tide. Searching through 850,000 dead and stinking

oysters on the beaches of Ago Bay, the weary man stumbled on the oyster's secret. He found five perfectly formed round pearls, all lodged deep in the flesh of the oysters rather than against the shell. Now he realized what he had been doing wrong. Because he had been planting the nucleus between the shell and the flesh of the oyster, he had been getting only blister pearls. But these were deep in the oyster's 'belly' and were thus 'free rolling,' allowing them to be completely covered by nacre. The result was perfectly beautiful round pearls!

Convincing the Public

By the 1920's cultured pearls had begun to break into the international market. But one question remained: Were they real pearls or were they imitations? Court battles were initiated in England and France. But scientific studies done in these countries led to the conclusion that the only difference between natural and cultured pearls lies in their origin. For that, Mikimoto won the licenses to export his pearls as just that—pearls. And he won for himself the well-deserved title "Pearl King."

The "Pearl King" was to make his most outstanding mark on the market in his own country. The Depression had moved dealers to flood the market with imitation pearls made from glass beads coated with an extraction from fish scales. Such fraudulent practices were destined to ruin the market for good. Mikimoto stepped in and bought up all the fakes he could find. Then, one day in 1933, he personally shoveled an estimated 750,000 imitations, and a few poorly cultured ones, into flames at a public burning. Doubts about the genuineness of cultured pearls blew away with the smoke, and they have found an honored place on the gem market ever since.

Nowadays, the beauty of pearls is no longer the private preserve of royalties and the very rich. Many a working woman can gaze at perfectly round pearls like moons against a darkened sky of the jeweler's velvet. She may even be able to buy some for herself—all because pearls are cultured. What a gem of an idea!—By *Awake!* correspondent in Japan.



K. Mikimoto & Company Ltd.

SOUTH AFRICAN Isaac Langa was raised in the black township of Alexandra, Johannesburg. Having a strong racialistic spirit, he hated whites and viewed the Zulu nation as superior to other blacks. Attending meetings arranged by the ANC (African National Congress), a banned antigovernment organization, Isaac became involved in the South African riots of 1976. He recalls: "Many were shot dead by police; some became cripples for life. As I saw all of this, I developed a spirit of revenge. I wanted to get an automatic gun and shoot as many as I could before being killed myself. Unable to find one, I decided to follow the example of others who left for neighboring countries in order to get military training."

Overcoming Racial Prejudice

At this crucial time Isaac was contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses in their house-to-house preaching. Books explaining the Bible's message were left with him, and one in particular, *True Peace and Security—From What Source?*, made a lasting impression. He explains: "Now I found the true peace I was looking for. I learned that the Bible says: 'That which is made crooked

cannot be made straight,' and: 'It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.' (Ecclesiastes 1:15; Jeremiah 10:23) So it became clear to me that our struggle was in vain because it was not going to bring peace on earth. Only God's Kingdom will do so. (Revelation 11:17, 18) The Bible has also helped me change my view of other races. (Acts 10:34, 35) It is heartwarming to know that people of all races and tribes are already living with the hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth under God's Kingdom."

Isaac now serves as a full-time traveling minister, strengthening congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses made up of many different national groups.

IN HIS book *The Tarnished Door*, John Crewdson examines the subject of the waves of immigrants, legal and illegal, that are pouring into the United States, especially from Mexico. In it he also sheds some light on the source of some of the blood that goes into U.S. blood banks.

He describes how the U.S. Border Patrol tracks down some of the illegal immigrants in El Paso, Texas, by means of their blood: "First stop for the 'city patrol' is a blood plasma center a short distance from the bridges, one of nine centers in South El Paso that buy blood from Mexican border crossers for \$8 a pint—the

Eight Dollars a Pint

equivalent in Juárez [in Mexico] of a good day's wages—then sell it for \$20 to hospitals and research labs. The centers advertise in their windows that a regular donor can earn up to \$81 a month, and for not a few in Juárez the blood banks are their sole source of income.

"Williams [a Border Patrol officer] frequently finds donors at the centers who have

been coming over from Juárez twice a week for years to sell their blood." What quality of blood is going into the blood banks is therefore anyone's guess.

For Christians, who respect the sanctity of blood from God's viewpoint, this commerce in blood is unacceptable. The leaders of the early Christian congregation wrote: "For the holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining . . . from blood . . . If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!"—Acts 15:28, 29.

From Our Readers

Depression

When I first saw your magazine on "Depression—You Can Win the Fight!" (October 22, 1987) my first thought was, 'Oh, no! Not another article about all you have to do is to think happy thoughts, wear a smile, and it'll be gone.' I was diagnosed as having S.A.D. (Seasonal Affective Disorder), so when I saw it mentioned in the article, I was elated! Especially thank you for the sentence immediately following its description: "So depression is not always 'in the head.'"

J. E. G., United States

College Education

I disagreed with the article "College Education—A Preparation for What?" (January 8, 1987) and also the letter in the August 22, 1987, issue. I personally know young people who have attended college, and they have stimulating jobs as well as strong Christian marriages. Life is not just learning practical things. As we walk in the woods, look at the stars, learn to play tennis, or read a book about art, we are not doing anything practical, but these things can enrich our lives tremendously.

A. J. M., United States

Your article on college education annoyed me. I agree with the reader who said it was unfair and biased, and I also agree with your reply. (November 8, 1987) College has its good points and its bad points. Whether a person succeeds in college or in a religious organi-

zation depends on how well he individually applies what he has learned.

T. M., United States

We agree that there are many benefits to be gained from increased knowledge that institutions of higher learning can dispense. At the same time, we do not ignore the benefits society has received from men such as Thomas Edison and Henry Ford, who had little or no formal education. We do not condemn the so-called higher education as such and reaffirm what we have stated before, that going to college is an individual matter. At the same time, we feel compelled to point out the hazards of the college environment.

First, although there may be exceptions, the thrust of college education is generally against faith in God and in favor of humanist philosophies.

Second, college education usually puts the emphasis on getting ahead in the world and attaining material success, contrary to the advice of Jesus and the apostle John.
—Matthew 6:19-21, 25-34; 1 John 2:15, 16.

Third, the usual college environment fosters a spirit of independence and permissiveness, resulting in sexual immorality and drug misuse that may be difficult for many young people to resist. We encourage young people to continue acquiring knowledge, especially that found in the Bible because it leads to gaining everlasting life.
(John 17:3) We also encourage them to cultivate the skills necessary to lead a useful, productive life with the emphasis on Jesus' words at Matthew 6:33, to keep seeking first God's Kingdom and his righteousness.

And fourth, the time is short. (Luke 21: 34-36; Ephesians 5:15, 16) It can be spent most profitably in serving our Creator.
—ED.

Watching the World

and the world's political situation. It also includes a map of the world.

Soviet Drug Addiction

According to the magazine *Sowjetunion heute*, published by the Soviet embassy of Cologne, Germany, there are 46,000 registered drug abusers in the Soviet Union. A poll taken of addicts in Soviet Georgia revealed that 91.7 percent were men, 81.9 percent were between the ages of 20 and 34, and 49 percent were married. Factors cited as contributing to their addiction included (allowing for overlap) the search for happiness (68.3 percent), a desire to imitate others (25.3 percent), dissatisfaction with life and the desire to forget (7.5 percent), curiosity (2.3 percent), a psychological trauma (2.3 percent), and prescribed medicines that contain drugs (1.3 percent).

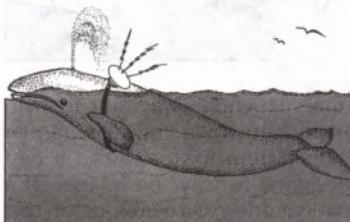
The Price of Fitness

"In Switzerland, growing enthusiasm for sports and a prolonged fitness boom have led to a rise in sports accidents," reports the Swiss newspaper *Basler Zeitung*. About 373,000 Swiss citizens were injured in 1986 in sports-related accidents. That represents over 10 percent of all persons active in some kind of sports. A fifth of these had to be hospitalized. Among the reasons cited for the accidents were "lack of concentration or poor fitness." Inferior equipment was also mentioned as a contributing factor. The campaign to reduce sports accidents is

placing considerable emphasis on an appeal for fair play.

Deep-Sea Weathermen

Whales that plunge to the ocean depths now help supply weather forecasters valuable information, reports *The Sunday Times* of London. Deep-diving mammals, such as the pilot, gray, and humpback whales, are being fitted with a 1.5 pound, soup-bowl-size transmitter that sends details of the water temperatures encountered at various depths. Since heat from



the sea drives the earth's winds and storms, such measuring of water temperatures aids accurate weather prediction. As the mammals roam vast ocean areas often inaccessible to ships, their transmitters broadcast the weather information to a satellite after surfacing from depths of half a mile or more.

Threatening Clutter in Space

Scientists are taking a hard look at an increasing threat to their

space endeavors: orbiting space debris. They estimate that there are already millions of tiny bits of junk in orbit, including flecks of paint from previous spacecraft. Why are such small objects of concern? "Experts say a fast-moving fragment the size of a pea could easily shatter a \$100 million satellite," notes *The New York Times*. "At worst, one fragmenting satellite might touch off other breakups in a cascade of destruction." Some suspect that such accidents have already occurred. Orbiting junk has also been a nightmare for astronomers. Not only has it interfered with telescopes and distorted star photographs but it has also prompted a number of erroneous astronomical "discoveries." Some 7,000 orbiting objects of baseball size or larger are currently being monitored.

A Global Language?

The Story of English, a book by McCrum, Cran, and MacNeil, states that English is spoken throughout the world by about one billion people—350 million of whom speak it as their mother tongue. The great variety of spoken English with its fascinating accents is legion. There is Indian English, Jamaican English, American English, Australian English, South African English, as well as the British cockney and "shire" dialects added to the cherished Oxford and Cambridge English, not to mention Scottish, Welsh, and Irish.

In their book, the authors tell us that the English language consists of approximately 500,000 words (not counting scientific, technical, or medical terms) compared with 185,000 German words and fewer than 100,000 French words. This is remarkable when one notes that English did not exist as a language when Julius Caesar landed in Britain only about 2,000 years ago.

Unwanted Honesty

The following appeared in *The Times* of London: "Warning to all business executives who occasionally tell little white lies—before you employ a new secretary, check her religion. A prominent City figure, called to the telephone to speak to someone he was trying to avoid, told his temporary secretary: 'Tell him I'm busy and that I'll call him back later.' He couldn't believe his ears when she replied, in all seriousness: 'I can't tell lies—I'm a Jehovah's Witness.'"

Largest Galaxy

Astronomers say they have discovered that a galaxy observed by astronomers for two decades is 13 times as big as the Milky Way," reports *The New York Times*. "This would make the galaxy, Markarian 348, the largest known." Located 300 million light-years from earth in the direction of the Andromeda constellation, the galaxy is said to measure 1.3 million light-years in diameter. (One light-year equals about six trillion miles.) The Milky Way, of which our solar system is a part, has a diameter of about 100,000 light-years.

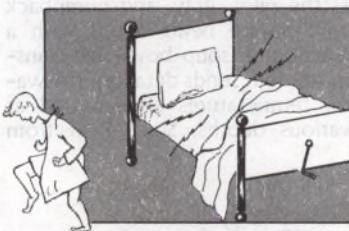
Rethinking Transfusions

The high risk of deadly AIDS infection is forcing doctors in countries where traditionally much blood is transfused to rethink the

subject. For example, the German medical paper *Ärztliche Praxis*, published by specialists on hospital hygiene from Mainz University, recommends a procedure for disinfecting or destroying AIDS infected instruments to protect medical personnel. "Transfusion medicine has to proceed on the assumption that absolutely HIV-free blood no longer exists," states the paper, referring to a virus that weakens immunity and causes AIDS. "Therefore symptoms indicating the need for a transfusion must be assessed very carefully."

Smart Beds

In an effort to provide maximum care and protection for hos-



pital patients who must remain bedridden while convalescing, an Indiana firm has produced a bed designed to "spy" on its user. If a patient tries to sneak out of bed though told not to, special sensor strips under the bedsheets will send a signal to another room where an attending nurse is alerted to check on the patient. The sensors can serve to protect a patient from injuries, as those who are elderly or who may be on medication could fall when getting out of bed without assistance. "The beds let us get to patients before they hurt themselves," explains Mary Smith, a registered nurse. The special beds have already been installed in dozens of hospitals throughout

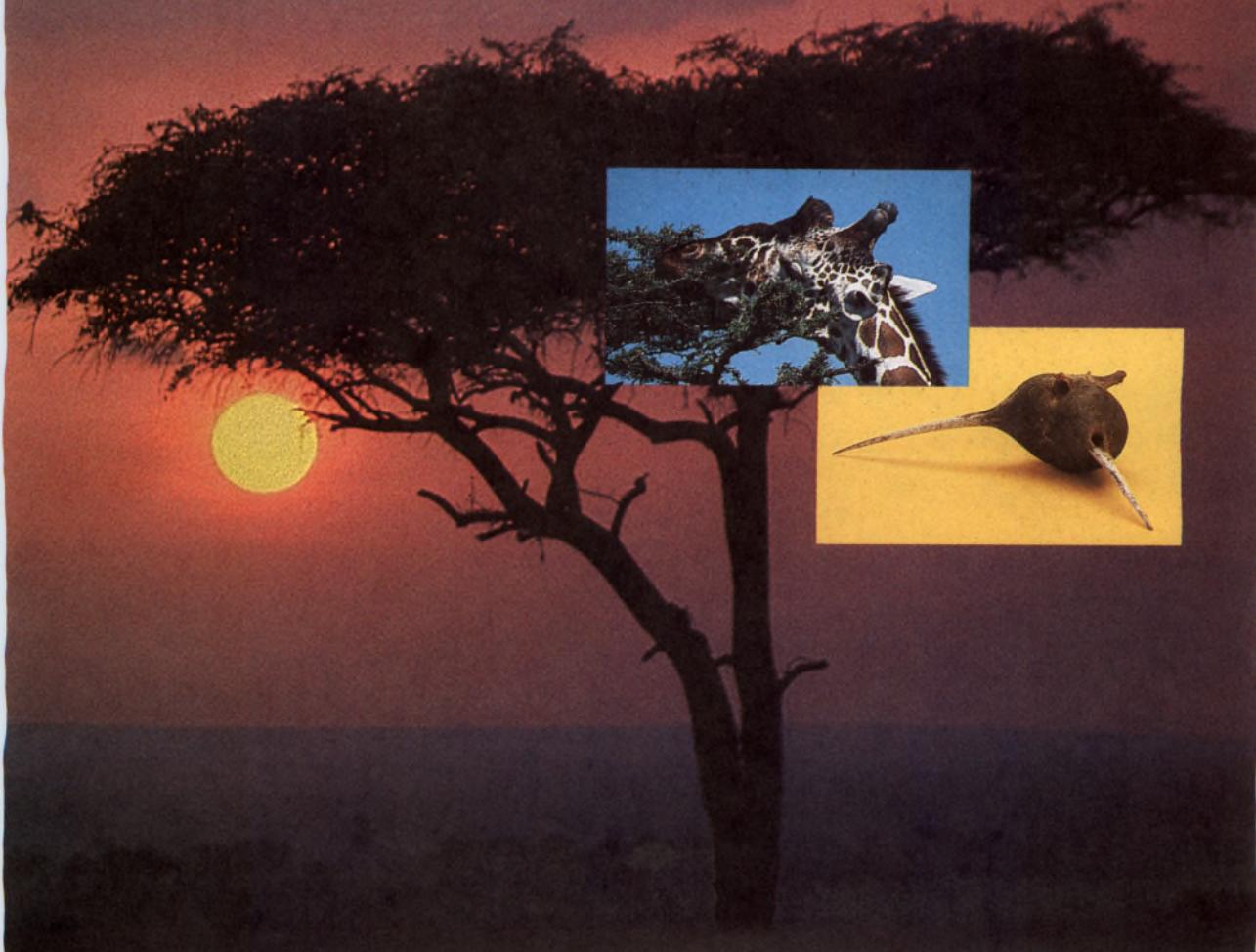
the country, *Health* magazine reports.

Slaughter on Italy's Roads

"Up at dawn, over four hours of driving to reach the Adriatic coast, sunning and bathing, a meal that is certainly not suitable for a driver, more sun, and then cooking again in the car on the way home." So go many Sunday outings in Italy, says the newspaper *Il Corriere della Sera*. These are the conditions under which the drivers function so as to get home and to bed as soon as possible to start another workweek the next day. The resulting drowsiness, lack of proper attention, and speed are the main causes of road accidents in Italy, according to Italy's Ministry of the Interior. During the first 13 days of July 1987, in a total of 9,902 road accidents in Italy, 348 people lost their lives and 7,823 were injured.

A Bible in Every Home

This is the ambitious aim of the major Protestant churches in Australia during that country's bicentennial year of 1988, according to *The Sun-Herald* newspaper. The proposed free distribution of Bibles is named: "Operation Good News '88," and is estimated to cost the participating churches more than three million Australian dollars. Special-edition Bibles are to be prepared, "designed to look interesting and inviting," according to a spokesman. The Bible Society and the World Home Bible League will provide the Bibles. The director of the operation says that it will not be just a letter-box drop but that church members will visit every home on every street, going from door to door to deliver the free Bibles.



Giraffes, Ants, and Acacia Trees

THE GIRAFFE loves the leaves of the acacia, but the acacia fights back. Cynthia Moss tells how in *Portraits in the Wild—Behavior Studies of East African Mammals*, page 56:

"The tree harbors colonies of ants, which live in the black, hollow galls that cover the branches. Each leaf stem has a nectar outlet that apparently serves no other purpose than that of feeding the ants. When a giraffe comes to browse on the tree, it disturbs the ants, which scurry all over the branches and onto the animal. These particular ants, of the *Crematogaster* species, have a very painful sting; therefore, the giraffe does not spend very long at one tree, but goes from tree to tree. Although this mechanism does not stop the giraffe from browsing on this type of acacia, it apparently insures that the damage is distributed throughout the tree population."

sent to Dr. A. B. Smith, Boston, Mass.