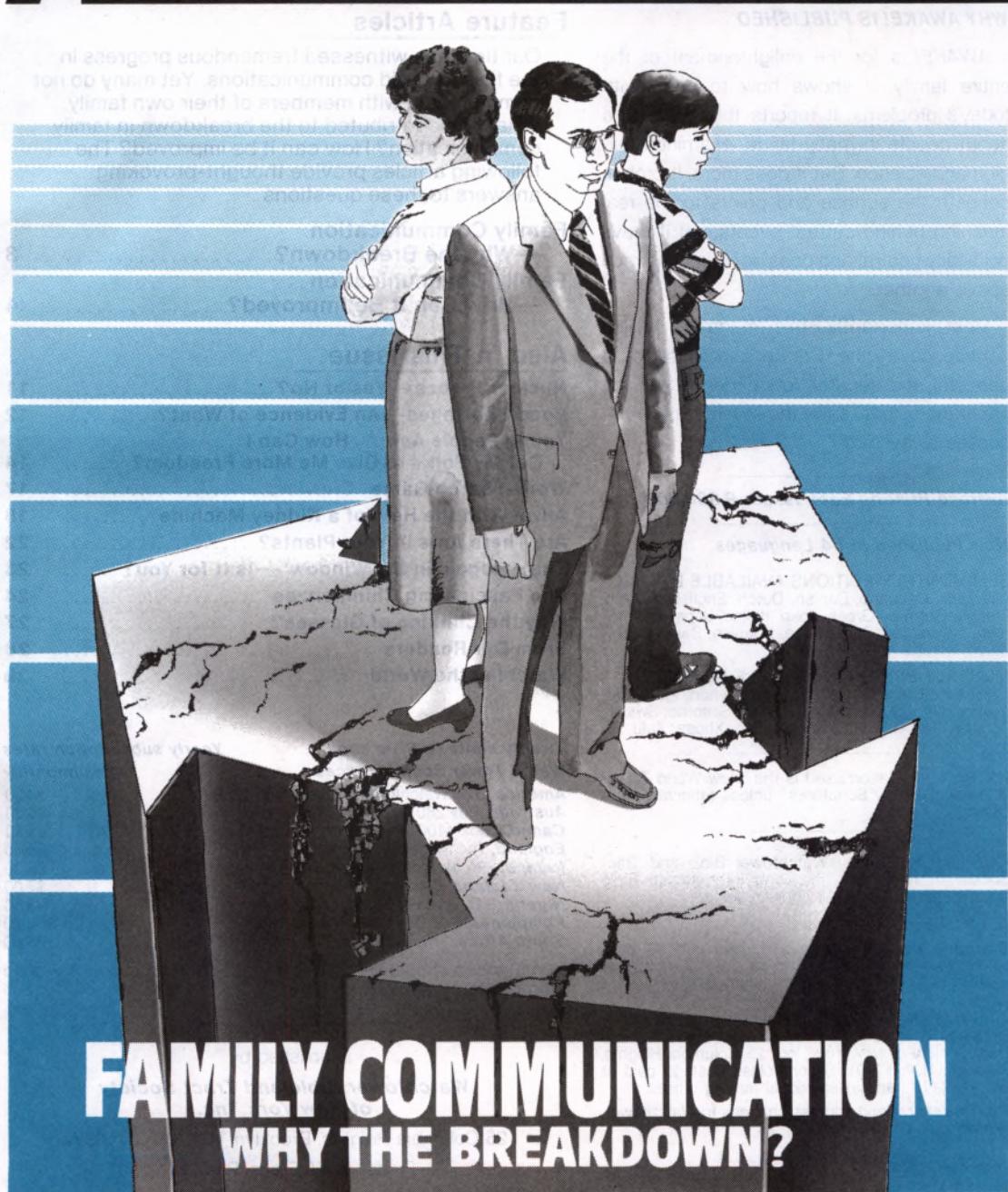


Awake!

JANUARY 8, 1985



**FAMILY COMMUNICATION
WHY THE BREAKDOWN?**

Awake!

January 8, 1985
Vol. 66, No. 1

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 stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

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Our time has witnessed tremendous progress in the field of rapid communications. Yet many do not communicate with members of their own family. What has contributed to the breakdown in family communication? How can it be improved? The following articles provide thought-provoking answers to these questions

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Frederick W. Franz, President

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

WHY THE BREAKDOWN?

BACK in the days of Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of the British port of Singapore, it was not unusual for him to wait a whole *year* for an answer to one of his dispatches to London. But that was the 19th century. Today such wonders as communications satellites allow instantaneous communication to virtually any spot on earth.

It is ironic, however, that while man can so easily communicate with someone on another continent, he is often a failure when it comes to communicating with

members of his own family. Skyrocketing divorce rates bear grim testimony to this fact. Little wonder, then, that in one study of "happy" and "unhappy" couples, the researchers drew this conclusion: "The prime need in many troubled marriages is for better ways of *communicating* between the partners." But how many families really *commune*—that is, talk intimately "with great mental or spiritual depth," as one dictionary defines the word? Often there is little or no meeting of minds, still less of hearts.

Why, though, has this breakdown come about?



m before fog even begins to form. (Illustration by Jim Weller)

The Communication Breakdown: Its Causes

Many are the factors that have worked against the quality of family life. Prior to industrialization, "work" was more or less a family operation, but now this has changed. In most parts of the world, a man must spend long hours working away from home to make a living. A sagging world economy has forced many women to do likewise. Children are thus often entrusted to paid caretakers or left to fend for themselves. Schools have taken over the entire job of educating children—a job that in times past was primarily the responsibility of parents. Technology—the same tool that has so improved communications—has at times worked to debilitate family life.

Before the days of radios, TVs, stereos, videotape recorders, and video games, family members often spent time *talking* with one another. But the present glut of such gadgets has all but killed the art of conversation in some families. The report of the National Institute of Mental Health

(U.S.A.) entitled *Television and Behavior* states: "Family gatherings by the fireplace or at the dinner table now seem to have given way to gatherings in front of the television set." Particularly disturbing was the finding that in the United States, "families spend about half their waking hours at home watching television." And the tragic fact is that, in many families, when the TV is switched on, the family switches off; conversation sinks to a low level.

The result? Family life becomes shallow. Fellowship ebbs and family members inevitably drift apart. But for a family to be united, bound by the ties of understanding and love, there has to be communion of minds and hearts. Family members that enjoy such communication can upbuild one another to withstand the strains of a tense, troubled society. How, though, can a family cultivate such closeness? Advice abounds from many sources. But the best source of advice is the oldest book in existence—the Bible! Let us take a look at how some of its principles can be effectively applied.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

HOW CAN IT BE IMPROVED?

MY HUSBAND never talks.' 'My wife never *listens* to what I have to say.' These complaints are common among married couples. Youngsters often feel like 12-year-old Max: 'I'm not scared to talk [to my parents], but I'm scared of how

they might react.' Barricades of silence thus separate family members.

Some might argue that in many cases the husband and wife are simply a bad match; that they are hopelessly incompatible and should never have got married in

the first place! To be sure, many couples do take courtship lightly and fail to lay a firm groundwork for communication *before marriage*. (See box on page 9.) Nevertheless, the success of a marriage does not rest solely upon so-called compatibility. Far more crucial is whether a couple is willing to accept God's standards for marriage and apply the Bible's principles or not. Consider just a few of the things the Bible says about the roles and responsibilities of husbands and wives:

- “Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord.”—Ephesians 5: 22, 23.
- “Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it . . . Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies.”—Ephesians 5: 25, 28.
- “Do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.”—Ephesians 6:4.

When these principles are put to work, a solid basis for marital communication is laid. Why? Because a husband who views ‘loving his wife’ as a God-given responsibility will be more inclined to talk to her and *listen* to her. A wife who believes that obedience to her husband is a divine requirement will be similarly motivated. But how does one deal with stresses and strains that develop in a marriage? Can the Bible’s advice really help you cope?

When Problems Arise

Marriage is the most intimate of human relationships. In time a couple can enjoy a relationship so close that just a touch, look, or gesture conveys volumes. Few attain this blissful state however.

A young wife recalls: “We had a rough time financially after we got married. We were living from week to week and from

hand to mouth. I wasn’t used to such insecurity.”

This young couple, however, eased their marital tensions by applying the Scriptures. Confesses the husband: “I guess I was just totally oblivious to her feelings. I thought everything was just fine. But I didn’t realize she was a nervous wreck.” What did they do about this communication gap? Recalls the wife: “We had long talks. They were at times uncomfortable talks, but they always helped.”

A husband named Richard said: “I had trouble adjusting to the routine of marriage. We were both working full time and my wife wanted me to pitch in with the housework. However, I had the idea that my wife should do everything. Besides, after a day of work I was in no mood to do anything but relax and watch sports. So if all of a sudden I heard, ‘Can you take the clothes to the cleaners?’ I’d say, ‘Do it yourself!’”

Richard and his wife, though, began studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses. Learning that God required him to ‘love his wife as his own body,’ he was motivated to carry a share of household responsibilities. Even the pressures of work looked different in the light of God’s Word. He recollects: “Once I had a reason to live and understood God’s purposes, I could get rid of the negative thinking I picked up on the job.”

The Bible, though, points to another possible source of problems: “For we all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body.” (James 3:2) Yes, everyone is occasionally guilty of a tactless or even unkind remark. And when two imperfect personalities grate on each other, tempers may flare.

But what happens if a couple allows

such problems to dominate in their marriage? Says the Bible: "A brother who is transgressed against is more than a strong town; and there are contentions that are like the bar of a dwelling tower." (Proverbs 18:19) Communication may be cut off, with serious consequences for both the couple and their children. Indeed, experts say "persistent parental discord" is one of the most destructive influences on a child.

Applying the Bible's counsel, however, can minimize such conflicts. Husbands are commanded not to "be bitterly angry with" their wives. (Colossians 3:19) And it takes two to quarrel. If your mate gets upset and angry, why not try to remain calm and tactful? Agree and sympathize if possible. As the Bible says: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage." (Proverbs 15:1) Sharp retorts will only aggravate the situation. Better it is to ask in a kind way: "Did I upset you? What's wrong, dear?" Lovingly and tactfully drawing out the cause of the trouble in this way will often help to solve it. On the other hand, it might be a matter of frankly, but kindly, telling your mate that you are irritated or upset by his or her actions. The Bible says: "Let the sun not set with you in a provoked state. But become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another." —Ephesians 4:26, 32.

One young husband learned to apply this counsel. He says: "My wife is very emotional. So it's sometimes hard for her to have a calm discussion without getting really uptight. But I've tried to adjust to her personality and to be more sensitive to her feelings." Such conscientious effort not only helps keep peace but endears you to your mate!

Communicating With the Children

The arrival of a young couple's first child presents a real challenge to them.

After all, a newborn infant needs more than just regular feedings and diaper changes. Researchers say that infants have a strong need to *communicate*. True, a baby cannot talk. But a parent's eyes, touch, and bodily contact do much to open the lines of communication. This is one reason why many hospitals no longer separate mothers from their newborn infants. And, say Swedish researchers Winberg and de Château: "While close [mother-infant] contact during this period may directly influence the baby's development, it may be of even greater importance to the mother, strengthening her bond to the newborn . . . This contact seems to influence her attitudes and sensitivity to the infant's needs."

What else can parents do to get communication with their children off to a good start? The Bible indicates that parents should speak to their children "from *infancy*." (2 Timothy 3:15) Is this realistic? Researchers Winberg and de Château claim that singing and *talking* to an infant may be "important in meeting [his] psychological needs." Soviet researcher M. I. Lisina similarly cites an experiment in which babies were spoken to affectionately, smiled at and caressed. The result? After two months these babies reached "a significantly higher developmental level" than other children who did not receive this attention. Such loving communication pays emotional dividends for a child, and as Dr. Lisina further observes: "We believe interaction with other people is critically important in the genesis of [a baby's] verbal functions."

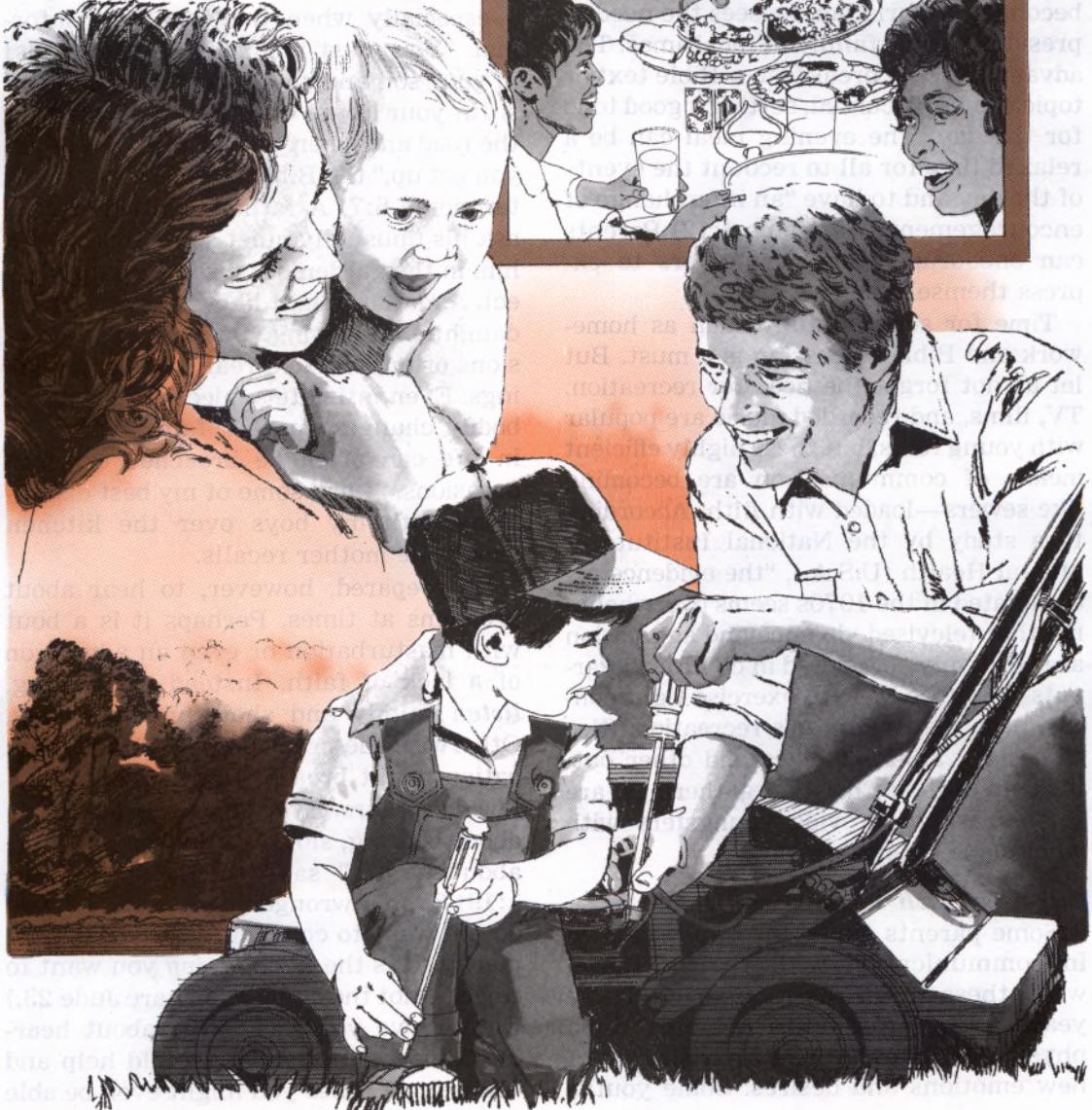
Study and Recreation

Naturally, as the children grow older the problems of raising them become more complex. Many Christian families have thus found it helpful to establish a

has any real merit. If it has
any merit, it has to be based
on facts. The right to do
what you want to do is not
the same as the right to do
what you can do.

**Parents should use
every opportunity to
build up communication
with their children**

—Audrey L. Williams



program of spiritual activities. This can do much to promote communication and unity. Such a program can be varied, flexible, and enjoyable for all.

Admittedly, establishing such a program may require some adjustments on the part of everyone. For example, in some parts of Africa, the father traditionally eats in dignified solitude. But upon becoming a Christian, he sees the need to preside over his family at mealtimes. The advantages? At breakfast, a Bible text or topic can be discussed, setting a good tone for the day. The evening meal can be a relaxed time for all to recount the events of the day and to have "an interchange of encouragement." (Romans 1:12) Parents can encourage their youngsters to express themselves.

Time for serious study such as homework and Bible discussion is a must. But let us not forget the need for recreation. TV, films, and recorded music are popular with young folks, but these highly efficient means of communication are becoming like sewers—loaded with filth. According to a study by the National Institute of Mental Health (U.S.A.), "the evidence accumulated in the 1970s seems overwhelming that televised violence and aggression are positively correlated in children." Parents therefore have to exercise tight control over their children's recreation. (See Ephesians 5:3-5.) Picnics and other outings, as well as Christian gatherings, are some ways to provide youngsters with wholesome entertainment.

Talking With Teenagers

Some parents experience a breakdown in communication with their children when these reach the teen years. Those years bring for a youth not only rapid physical changes but also an onslaught of new emotions and desires. Some youths

react by withdrawing into themselves. Others withdraw from their parents and become strongly attached to their peers. It therefore takes much determination on the parents' part to keep the lines of communication open during these critical years. They must be sensitive to their youngsters' moods and feelings.

Personal chats can be very helpful—especially when they are kept informal. "You must inculcate [God's words] in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up," the Bible tells parents. (Deuteronomy 6:7) A father might therefore ask his unusually quiet son to work with him in the garden or on some repair project. A mother might likewise instruct her daughter in sewing. Such relaxed occasions often lead to a real sharing of feelings. Even intimate subjects such as sex, bodily changes, morals, faith, and goals in life can often be broached on such occasions. "I had some of my best discussions with my boys over the kitchen sink," one mother recalls.

Be prepared, however, to hear about problems at times. Perhaps it is a bout with masturbation or even an admission of a lack of faith. Instead of scolding, *listen* calmly and show understanding. Otherwise the precious line of communication might break. "Know this, my beloved brothers. Every man must be swift about hearing, slow about speaking, slow about wrath," says the Bible. (James 1:19) Even if wrongdoing is involved, you do not want to condemn your child summarily. It is the *wrongdoing* you want to reject—not the child. (Compare Jude 23.) First prove yourself "swift about hearing," and *then* offer your child help and counsel. At times you might even be able

COURTSHIP and COMMUNICATION

"YOU make two great choices in life," wrote Professor Ernest Burgess, "the selection of a profession or trade; the other, the choice of a mate." Most people are fairly rational when it comes to picking their lifework. "When you marry, however," the professor continued, "you are likely to behave in a romantic rather than a practical way."

Courtship is therefore a time for doing some serious communicating. True, even before they actually meet, there can be powerful communication between a man and a woman. He may gaze admiringly at her, and she may flash an appreciative look. An old saying has it: "The eye is the mirror of the soul." Our eyes can convey deep emotions and messages of the heart. In time verbal expressions of endearment may give way to another means of communication—touch. In many cultures such things as holding hands or embracing are considered appropriate expressions of love.

But while displays of affection have their place, a solid marriage is not based on passion. A touch from a person you love can arouse strong feelings and sexual desires. The Bible encourages Christians to "deaden" immoral impulses. (Colossians 3:5) This is not only a moral safeguard but good and practical advice. For when sexual desires are uncontrollably "turned on," serious communication is often "turned off." Couples can be blinded to obvious personality flaws and weaknesses.

Open and frank conversations during courtship will provide the answer to questions such as: Are we really well matched? Is he, or she, honest and

kind? Does this person have good morals? Is he capable of being a good provider? Does he make good decisions? Will she be capable of caring for a home? Is she willing to submit to headship? Do we have true love for each other—and not merely physical attraction?

What if one is shy? Remember that a basic requirement of good conversation is *being sensitive to the feelings and interests of others*. That should not be difficult for two who really love each other. (1 Corinthians 13:5) Learn to ask simple, but appropriate, questions. Most people like to talk about themselves, their lives, families, and occupations and will do so willingly if tactfully drawn out.

These courtship chats might reveal that a couple holds many interests, goals, and hopes in common. What, though, if differences are revealed? Try to discern to what extent these differences will jeopardize marital happiness. The fact that a prospective mate does not enjoy a particular form of recreation, such as dancing, does not mean that the person will make a poor husband or wife. Perhaps there are other, more important things that could be shared in common. Or there is the potential of developing new interests in common. At any rate, Professor Ernest Burgess further stated: "Couples should discuss and try to settle the important issues in their relationship, such as children, in-laws, finances, religion, and philosophy of life, before the wedding date. It is generally a vain hope to expect to reform a mate after the wedding ceremony."

to reassure him by saying, 'You are not the only one who has had such a problem. Even I had to deal with it when I was your age.' Your calm reaction may result in his confiding in you when the need for help again arises.

It is important, though, that you *make yourself available* to your children. One father had a quite responsible job, and as a result he spent much time at home in his study poring over papers. His daughter, though, had what seemed to her a serious problem. But with her father so busy, she kept it to herself. Soon she became depressed and left home. Fortunately she returned, had a good talk with her father and realized that the problem was only a minor one. However, thereafter her father arranged to do his work in the sitting room where he was more available to his youngsters.

Your just *being there* means more to your children than material riches. A single parent named Anita had five children, aged one to six, to provide for. Though child welfare granted her but a meager monthly allowance, she did not begrudge having to live off so little. This government provision allowed her to be at home with her children. And although money at times was very tight, she recalls: "We were never hungry. We learned to rely on Jehovah." With the help of some Christian friends who furnished them with clothing, she was able both to provide materially for her children and to give them the attention they needed.

Happy, United Families

Loving, empathetic, communicative parents can do wonders for their youngsters. Wrote educationist Audrey Bilski: "'I can talk with them about anything' is perhaps one of the finest compliments a teenager or a grown-up son or daughter

can pay to their parents." Wives and husbands likewise appreciate it when they can confidently approach their mates to discuss even the most delicate of matters, knowing they will receive an understanding and sympathetic hearing.

True, in today's complex world there are many pressures that work against family communication. And at times parents need guidance themselves. But there is no reason for you to feel helpless. Other experienced parents, especially mature Christians, can often help. And there is God's Word, the Bible, which is "alive and exerts power." (Hebrews 4:12) The book *Making Your Family Life Happy*, published by the publishers of this magazine, has helped thousands to improve their family life.

This article has presented merely a sampling of the Bible's practical advice. Take the time to study and apply it regularly. By doing so, you can succeed in making your family a happy and united one.



Nuclear Freeze—Yes or No?

IN MAY 1983, in the United States, bishops of the Roman Catholic Church formally urged a reduction in the existing nuclear stockpiles and a halt to "the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems." They explained: "There must be no misunderstanding of our profound skepticism about the moral acceptability of any use of nuclear weapons."—See *Awake!* of March 22, 1984, page 4.

In a letter drafted at Lourdes, France, on November 8, 1983, the French bishops of the Roman Catholic Church showed that they were not in full agreement with their American colleagues. "Nations," insist the French bishops in an explanatory note, "can legitimately prepare their defenses to discourage aggressors, even by a nuclear deterrence."

In their letter the French bishops stated: "Obviously, for nuclear deterrence to be morally acceptable:

"it should be used only as a defense measure

"stockpiling should be avoided; deterrence is attained when the threat of retaliation makes any outside attack unreasonable

"every precaution should be taken to eliminate the risk of nuclear war being set off by accident, madness, terrorism, etc.

"the nation taking the risk of nuclear deterrence should, on the other hand, pursue a constructive peace policy."

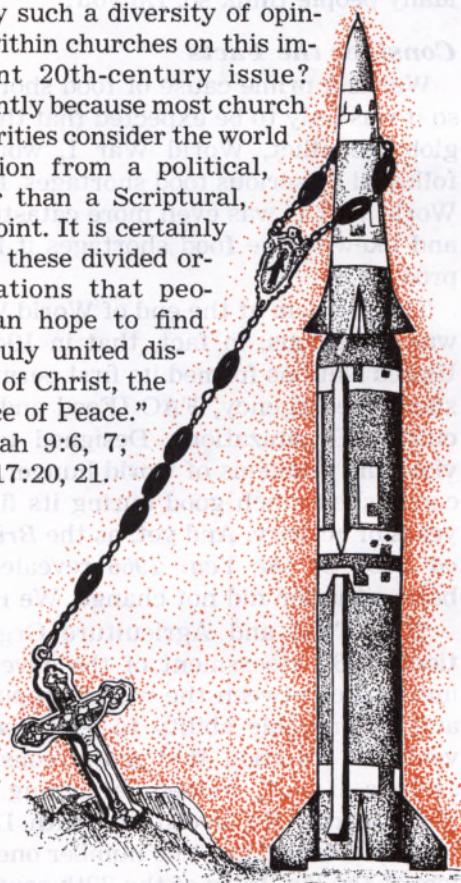
Many French Catholics disagreed vocally with their bishops' stand. Mr. Alain Woodrow, religion writer for the Paris daily *Le Monde*, commented: "The bishops' arguments were bordering on casuistry. Even if they explain that a 'threat is not use of force,' the distinction is very subtle, and they themselves admit that for a country's defense to carry credibility, 'that country

must be resolved to take action if deterrent measures do not work'."

Interestingly, the viewpoint of the French Protestant Council of Churches was closer to that of the American Catholic bishops when, a few days later, they declared themselves in favor of a "nuclear freeze as a first step toward reversing the arms escalation, even if only unilaterally." This statement, in its turn, met with keen opposition from within the Protestant Church. In the opinion of one pastor, such an attitude encourages "aggression and subversion from totalitarian states."

Why such a diversity of opinions within churches on this important 20th-century issue? Evidently because most church authorities consider the world situation from a political, rather than a Scriptural, viewpoint. It is certainly not in these divided organizations that people can hope to find the truly united disciples of Christ, the "Prince of Peace."

—Isaiah 9:6, 7;
John 17:20, 21.



FOOD SHORTAGES

An Evidence of What?

INCLUDING this as part of "the sign" of what the Bible calls the conclusion of the system of things, Jesus said that "food shortages" would occur "in one place after another." Giving us reason for hope, however, he explained that these food shortages would be an evidence that "deliverance" was "getting near."—See Luke 21:7, 11, 28.

Are the food shortages signifying imminent deliverance really in evidence today? Many people think so. Do you?

Consider the Facts

War is a prime cause of food shortages, so it was only to be expected that the first global conflict, World War I, would be followed by serious food shortages. It was. World War II was even more catastrophic and likewise the food shortages it helped produce.

The problem at the end of World War II was so serious, in fact, that in 1945 the United Nations formed its first permanent specialized agency, FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization). Designed to alleviate the problems of world hunger, it accomplished much good during its first 20 years of activity. And yet, as the *Britannica Book of the Year 1966* revealed, the basic situation did not change. We read:

"The Food and Agriculture Organization's 1965 assessment of the developing imbalance between the world's population and its probable ability to feed itself revealed a situation that many considered serious if not, indeed, alarming. . . . Sen. George McGovern of South Dakota termed the food gap 'the number one problem of the last third of the 20th century.'"

In 1978, over ten years later, the problem persisted. In fact, it was getting worse (see chart), leading the then U.S. President Carter to set up a 20-member Commission on World Hunger. Its purpose: to determine how the problem of world hunger could be eliminated by the end of the century. An admirable goal, but could it be reached?

What Caused the Problem?

To put all the blame simply on overpopulation would be misleading. The matter is really much more complex. The scientific journal *Bild der Wissenschaft* comments: "The determining factor does not seem to be the rate of population growth in itself but the failure of governments to pursue an adequate agricultural program."

Also not to be overlooked are so-called natural causes, like drought and flooding, which in 1981 were responsible for reducing an estimated 14 million Chinese to emergency rations. Political upheaval and labor unrest can also cause food lines, as they in fact did in some eastern European nations that same year.

Another cause is best exemplified in Africa. About the world's hungriest continent, where 23 of the 29 countries currently classified by FAO as having "abnormal food shortages" are located, the magazine *New African* writes:

"Before the impact of colonialism, Africa was self-sufficient in food. There were surpluses which were traded within the continent. But as European powers divided up Africa, they also forced cash-crop production onto African societies.

"This shift has accelerated since the end of World War II. Africa has been 'developed' as a producer of cash crops for the Western world. . . . Luxury crops such as flowers, tea, coffee and cocoa, and industrial crops such as rubber, cotton and sisal."

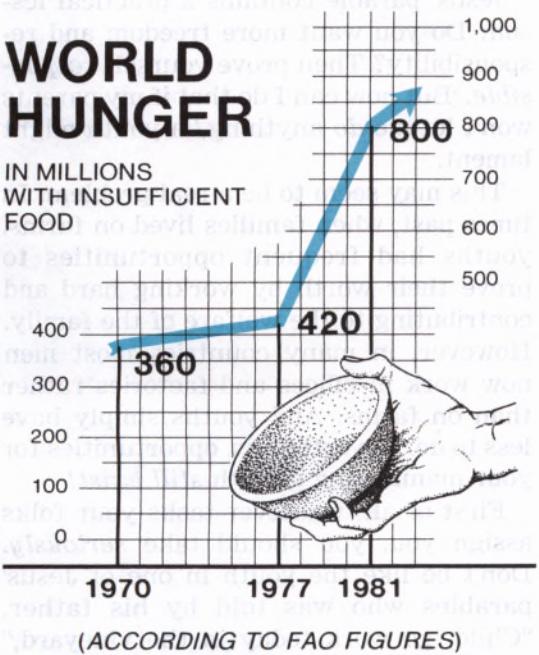
These and many other factors have contributed toward making food shortages a global problem. How many more millions are doomed to die before it can be solved?

Outlook for the 1980's

The World Food Council's conference held in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1980, issued a report saying that the prospects for developing nations had never looked so gloomy. It prophesied that the 1980's might well turn out to be "the decade of food shortages." The Council's Executive Director Maurice Williams was moved to say: "I wish I could say I had hope for the future, but I fear that we are headed for a period of permanent food crisis in Africa."

WORLD HUNGER

IN MILLIONS
WITH INSUFFICIENT
FOOD



Man's success in preventing the causes of food shortages—droughts, wars, political upheavals, disease or pests, natural disasters—is limited at best. And political expediency, poor management, transportation bottlenecks, bureaucratic snags, shortsightedness, and greed make the problem even more difficult to overcome. Gordon Taylor, author of *The Doomsday Book*, says that far from being solved, "the crisis . . . will become more and more imminent as we approach the end of the century."

The President's Commission on World Hunger has reached similar conclusions. Reporting on their findings, *Time* magazine said: "The hunger problem today is *vastly different from that of the past*, when recurrent famines killed millions. Now there is so little food *in so many parts of the world*, year after year, that fully 25% of the globe's population is hungry or undernourished, and one person in eight suffers from debilitating malnutrition. . . . The report predicts that a major shortage of food could occur in the next 20 years—with disastrous effects."—Italics ours.

In summary, what do these facts show? That present food shortages affect more people now than at any other time in history, that rather than being temporary in nature as in the past, they are becoming a permanent feature of today's world, and that despite scientific progress no human solution seems forthcoming. These facts make this phenomenon of food shortages something new, just exactly what we would expect to see in fulfillment of Jesus' "sign."

But do not forget that Jesus said that "food shortages" experienced "in one place after another" would be clear evidence that "deliverance" was "getting near." Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to help you learn more about this exciting prospect.

Young People Ask...

How Can I Get My Folks to Give Me More Freedom?

JIM smiles when he talks about his younger brother Ron. "There's only 11 months difference between us," he says, "but our parents treated us so differently. They gave me a lot of freedom. Even when I was small they let me take my brothers to the movies. When I got older, I had the use of the family car. One year they even allowed me to take one younger brother on a trip to New York City to attend a religious convention.

"It was different with Ron, though," Jim continues. "He wasn't given much freedom at all. Dad didn't even bother teaching him how to drive when he came of age. And when he felt he was old enough to start dating, my folks wouldn't let him."

As you get older you naturally desire more freedom, more adult privileges. Yet, youths often find themselves running into a wall of resistance from their parents. Are such parents being overprotective or perhaps guilty of favoritism? Not necessarily. Explains Jim: "Ron tended to be irresponsible. He lacked initiative. He often failed to do what was assigned him. And although I *never* talked back to my parents, Ron would let them know he disagreed. This invariably backfired on him." Why, though, was Jim favored with so much freedom?

More Will Be Given

Jesus once told about a wealthy man who entrusted each of his slaves with

some money. Two of them immediately invested the money and made a profit. But one slave merely "went off, and dug in the ground and hid the silver money of his master." When the master returned from a trip, he rewarded the industrious slaves with greater privileges. The lazy slave? The master decreed that the money should be taken away from him, saying, "For to everyone that has, more will be given and he will have abundance; but as for him that does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."—Matthew 25:14-29.

Jesus' parable contains a practical lesson: Do you want more freedom and responsibility? Then prove yourself *responsible*. 'But how can I do that if my parents won't let me *do* anything,' a youth might lament.

This may seem to be a real problem. In times past, when families lived on farms, youths had frequent opportunities to prove their worth by working hard and contributing to the welfare of the family. However, in many countries most men now work in offices and factories rather than on farms. And youths simply have less to do. Nevertheless, opportunities for your manifesting growth *still exist!*

First of all, whatever tasks your folks assign you, you should take *seriously*. Don't be like the youth in one of Jesus' parables who was told by his father, "Child, go work today in the vineyard,"

and who said, "I will, sir," but did not go out." (Matthew 21:28, 29) Convince your parents that if they ask you to do something, no matter how small, it is as good as done.

Doing this is why Jim enjoyed freedom as a youth. "I showed my folks I could handle responsibility" he recalls. "Even when I was a child, they would send me to the bank, let me pay our utilities bills, go to the supermarket and shop. And when Mom had to go out and get a job, I even cooked the family meals." But was a desire for freedom the *only* reason Jim exerted himself in this way? Says he: "My reward was pleasing my parents. If I could relieve them of some pressure by, say, cooking a meal, it really made me happy."

Taking the Initiative

What, though, if your parents simply haven't given you such assignments? Pur-

sue various *initiatives*. In Jesus' parable, the master gave his slaves no specific instructions as to what to do with the money. They used their skills and abilities. You can do the same thing.

For example, *Seventeen* magazine suggested: "Offer to cook your family a meal, and tell your folks you want to do everything: plan the meal, make the grocery list, budget, shop, cook, clean up." And if cooking is not your forte, look around and see what else can be cared for. You don't need a specific decree from your parents to act when there are dishes to be washed, floors to be swept, or rooms to be straightened up.

The book *Adolescence* further observes: "Wiser parents . . . expect their young people . . . to acquire the academic, vocational, and social competencies that will make them more independent of their



families." Grades are one measure of your 'academic competencies.' Do they truly reflect your abilities? If you are falling short in school, don't be surprised if your parents curtail your freedom.

And what about 'vocational competencies?' Many youths are eager to prove their ability to work by taking on part-time work during the summer or on weekends. However, *earning* money is just part of the picture. Have you proved that you are capable of *saving* and *managing* such money? Do you, for example, have a savings account? And now that you have some of your own money, have you volunteered to make a contribution for your room and board. (You might find it eye opening to check the going rate for renting a room in your community.) Doing so might mean less pocket money, but as your folks observe your grown-up way of handling money, they will no doubt be inclined to give you more freedom.

Loosening the Apron Strings

Some youths, however, say that they *are* doing such things and still find themselves hemmed in by restrictions. *Seventeen* magazine, though, quoted Dr. Michael Solomon as saying: "Some teen-agers wonder why their parents exercise so much control. But these same teens will continue to ask their parents everything . . . even how to dress."

Of course, you should not cast off your parents or spurn their advice. The Bible encourages us to listen to our parents even after we have become adults. (Proverbs 23:22) Parents should be our 'confidential friends,' rich sources of advice and counsel. (Compare Jeremiah 3:4.) As one married man said: "My wife's parents are still living, and though we are in our late 40's now, they still have advice for us

from time to time. We accept their advice and oftentimes (not always) heed it."

So at times it is appropriate to "give your heart" to your parents and confide in them. (Proverbs 23:26) Especially is this true when a serious problem exists. However, this does not mean that you must rely on them to make every petty decision. Writer Shirley Gould once warned parents: "By keeping a youngster dependent on you . . . you are crippling the child just as surely as if you broke both her legs and arms too." Rather than being emotionally crippled, you want to develop what one writer calls your "own inner reserves of esteem and self-confidence." It is only through *using* what the Bible calls your "perceptive powers" that you gain this confidence.—Hebrews 5:14.

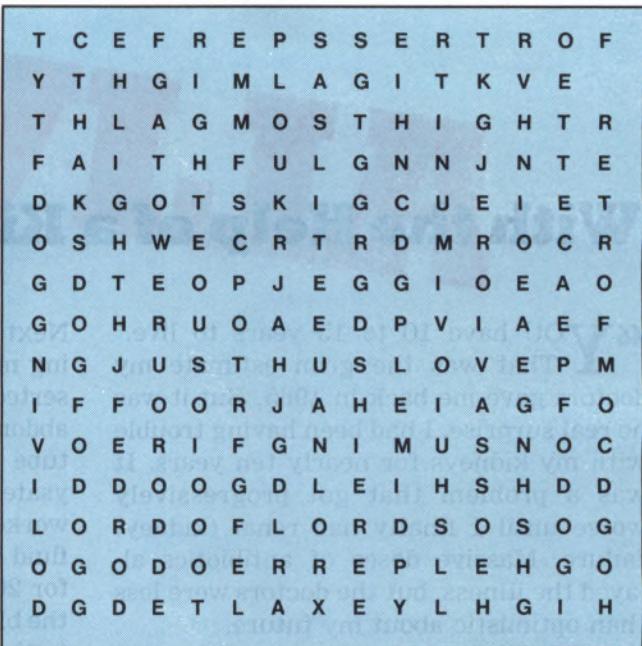
So instead of running to your parents at the first sign of minor distress, try first to work out the problem in your own mind. Rather than being "overhasty," or impulsive, about matters, follow the Bible's advice to "consider knowledge" first. (Isaiah 32:4) Do some research, especially if Bible principles are involved. After calmly weighing matters, *now* approach your parents. Rather than always saying, 'Dad, what should I do?' or, 'Mom, what would *you* do?' explain the situation. Let them hear the way you have reasoned the situation out. Having done that, ask for their observations.

Your parents now see you talking not as a child but as an adult. Inevitably those apron strings of parental control will begin to loosen. True, you don't want to cut those ties completely, for you will always value your parents as sources of advice. But you will have taken a big step toward proving that you are becoming an adult. With what result? Your folks will begin to treat you as an adult.

Word-Search Game

Expressions Concerning Jehovah

In the letter maze shown at right are to be found 31 words or expressions pertaining to Jehovah. Identify these with the help of the scripture texts and then locate them in the word maze. (Sometimes the expression will be a different grammatical form than that used in the text.) They are found spelled forward, backward, up and down, as well as diagonally. When all the words have been located, put the unused letters in the spaces at bottom of page to form a scripture text. (Solutions on page 27.)



JEHOVAH IS ...

1. Genesis 17:1, God _____.
2. Exodus 15:1, _____.
3. Deuteronomy 4:24, _____.
4. Deuteronomy 10:17, _____ and _____.
5. Deuteronomy 32:4, _____.
6. 2 Samuel 22:33, strong _____.
7. Psalm 3:3, _____.
8. Psalm 47:7, _____.
9. Psalm 75:7, _____.
10. Psalm 83:18, _____.
11. Psalm 135:3, _____.
12. Psalm 136:4, _____ of wonderful things.
13. Proverbs 18:10, strong _____.
14. Isaiah 30:18, _____.
15. Isaiah 40:28, _____.
16. Isaiah 43:12, _____.
17. Isaiah 49:26, _____.
18. Isaiah 51:12, _____.
19. Isaiah 60:19, _____.
20. Jeremiah 10:10, _____.
21. John 4:24, _____.
22. 1 Corinthians 14:33, _____.
23. Hebrews 13:6, _____.
24. 1 John 4:8, _____.
25. Revelation 4:8, _____.

ALIVE!

With the Help of a Kidney Machine

YOU have 10 to 15 years to live." That was the grim estimate my doctors gave me back in 1965. But it was no real surprise. I had been having trouble with my kidneys for nearly ten years. It was a problem that got progressively worse until I finally had renal (kidney) failure. Massive doses of antibiotics allayed the illness, but the doctors were less than optimistic about my future.

In spite of dire predictions, I decided to use my "last" years in God's service. My husband, Bill, was a travelling overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses and at the time was supervising a large area, or district. In spite of failing health, I wanted to continue accompanying him; and that I did for the next ten years. But in 1975 I suffered complete kidney failure. By this time Bill was overseeing a somewhat smaller group of congregations, a circuit, located in Sheffield—the famous steel city. Fortunately Sheffield was also famed for its renal research. So when I was too ill to journey 160 miles (260 km) to a London hospital by ambulance, the renal consultant in Sheffield agreed to treat me.

By the time I got to the hospital, my body wastes had built up to such a point that I was vomiting constantly. To offset this, they passed tubes through my nostrils into my stomach and siphoned some of the poisons off. This procedure was repeated every half hour or so for days.

Next came peritoneal dialysis. After giving me a local anesthetic, the doctors inserted a narrow plastic tube into my lower abdomen. Then by means of a Y piece, the tube was connected to two bags of dialysate hanging on a stand. The way it worked was simple. Gravity drained the fluid into my abdomen. There it remained for 20 minutes absorbing impurities from the blood. Then the two bags were lowered to the floor and the fluid was drained out. This cycle was repeated for 48 hours, and the whole process had to recur every week. Leaking fluid and a sodden bed added to the discomfort of this miserable process. But my body adapted to it, and I must confess it did me a great deal of good during the four months the treatment lasted.

Chained to a Machine?

Though peritoneal dialysis was helpful, eventually I would have to be connected with a kidney machine. This meant having two minor operations called fistula shunts—a process in which a vein is enlarged. This makes it easier to insert the needles used in kidney-machine treatment (haemodialysis). The first fistula shunt was not successful. The blood clotted. They tried again on the right arm, though, and it worked. So after four months in the hospital, I was moved to another in July of 1975. There I saw a kidney machine for the first time.

I think that this was one of the worst periods of my life. Looking at that machine made me realize for the first time how tied down I would be in the future. For the rest of my life, I would have to be on a machine three days a week for at least six hours a day, plus spend two hours preparing and cleaning up. In addition, I would never be able to leave the machine for long periods. After a life of freedom, being able to serve Jehovah God wherever I was needed, this seemed a terrible burden.

"You Will Have to Learn"

Haemodialysis is a fascinating process. First two needles are inserted into the veins. A peristaltic pump draws blood through one needle and several feet of connecting tube into an artificial kidney. This kidney does the actual cleansing of the blood. From there the blood passes through yet more plastic tubing to the second needle and thence back into the

body. The kidney machine itself simply monitors the job.

The use of needles was, and still is, something quite difficult to endure. It is painful and sometimes takes several attempts. This is because the needle must go *along* a vein, threading it, as it were, and not *through* it. When this does happen, blood escapes, filling the surrounding tissue and causing a painful swelling, or bump. Then there were the problems of adjusting mentally and physically to the routine.

The machine seemed to me to be so complicated that I thought I could never master it. That and the needle problems distressed me to the point of tears. But a nurse said, "You will have to learn to use it, otherwise you will die."

"Well," I said, "there are things that are worse than dying. Death holds no terrors for me."

"All right," she then said. "Let's look at

I have to be on the kidney machine three days a week for at least six hours a day, but I am alive



it from another point of view. In your work you do a good deal to help people. Well, people need that kind of help, so think of them and the work you can do." That set me to thinking.

Something else greatly encouraged me. When I arrived at the hospital, the visiting

All other treatments having failed, one final hope was placed before me —blood transfusions

renal consultant said to the nurse: "You are aware, I suppose, that Mrs. Bull is one of Jehovah's Witnesses? Well, make sure she is never given blood. We don't want anyone coming around waving bottles of blood. Make sure it is written in her notes."

Setting Up a Home

Because I was so seriously ill, the need for me to settle in one place became imperative. But after years of travelling, we had no home. Renting a house seemed nearly impossible, especially since for years we had never stayed anywhere for more than a few days at a time. Furthermore, we did not have the wherewithal to furnish a home. Nonetheless, while I lay in the hospital, my husband, Bill, set about to try to find somewhere to live. We thought about Jehovah's promise never to forsake his servants.—Psalm 37:25, 26.

As it turned out, two other full-time ministers were invited to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead (a school for missionaries). So just at the moment when we needed a place to stay, they moved out, and the house was rented to us. Now we had the problem of furnishing it.

From all over the country came money and gifts. For example, when a much needed secondhand furniture set became available at the moderate price of £155 (then \$310, U.S.), we bought it. This left us penniless. The next morning a letter arrived from a Christian sister whom we did not know and who knew nothing of our purchase. The letter contained a cheque for £150 (then \$300, U.S.)!

After our home was set up, I came out of the hospital but returned weekly for four months of peritoneal dialysis. More than 500 get-well cards and letters arrived from all over the country, telling of prayers for my well-being. Feeling more or less helpless myself, the knowledge of these prayers gave me infinite comfort. During all this time, Bill was continuing to serve congregations in his circuit. However, he eventually had to make the decision to take up secular work to meet our commitments. He therefore became a chimney sweep.

Dialysis at Home

Shortly after settling down in our new home, we received and installed a modern technological wonder: the home kidney

My family and friends were told that I could not last the night

machine. It is only 48 inches (122 cm) high by 27 inches (69 cm) square. It monitors temperature, flow of blood, and the mixing of the dialysate fluid with water, the process by which the impurities are absorbed from the blood. A series of alarms covering these and other features make it a virtually fail-safe machine. Nevertheless, operating it imposes some real restrictions

upon Bill and me. At that time, Bill could work only two and a half days a week as he had to be present all the time I was on the machine. In recent years, however, two loving Christian sisters come on different days and look after me during dialysis. If my blood pressure drops too low I may get sick enough to faint. So while the machine is a blessing, operating it is

'This is the end,' thought Bill. But it was really a turning point

an endurance test for all concerned. Three times a week, I have to go through this six-hour ordeal.

Eighteen months of treatment gradually won me back a measure of strength and a chance to engage in some Christian activities. Then in February of 1977 my abnormally enlarged left kidney started to bleed. Home dialysing became impossible and I returned to the hospital. I became worse, however, and the blood loss increased. All other treatments having failed, one final hope was placed before me —blood transfusions.

Death Withholds Its Hand

Sick and dying as I was, I rejected this proposition. I knew from my study of the Bible that this would be contrary to God's law. (See Genesis 9:4; Acts 15:29.) But my blood count went down and down. I became increasingly sleepy. External bleeding stopped, but, internally, red cells were still dying. Then I dropped into a coma. In the four and a half days this lasted, the haemoglobin level sank to an unbelievably low 1.8 grams. Long before this nadir all hope had been abandoned. My family and friends were told that I could not last the night.

On the fifth day, though, I awoke, saw my husband and said, "Bill, may I have a drink of water, please?" I sat up and drank while Bill combed my hair. But then I lay down again and fell asleep. 'This is the end,' thought Bill. But it was really a turning point. To the surprise of the hospital staff, I began to get better. "A miracle!" they called it. I viewed it as a vindication of Jehovah's Word and law.

A difficult period then commenced. I was very weak, could not walk, and suffered terrible depression. In a little while I was back home though. I saw myself as a permanent invalid, needing to be carried everywhere I went. Nevertheless, the haemoglobin count began to climb. At the end of September, I had the diseased kidney removed. By this time my haemoglobin had risen to 11.9 grams, and even after the operation it stood at an incredible 10.3! The surgeon remarked that of all the nephrectomies (kidney removals) he had performed, he had never spilt so little blood. Ten days later when I had the stitches removed my haemoglobin was 11.3—a very high figure for renal patients, many of whom receive regular blood transfusions.

In Our Next Issue

- ***Child Molesting
—We Can Protect
Our Young Ones***
- ***The River That Falls
From the Sky***
- ***Seeking the Causes
of Death, I Found Life***

Living With a Kidney Machine

Dependence upon a kidney machine means learning to live with many restrictions. Nevertheless, I can work about the house and cook. I also share regularly in preaching the good news of the Kingdom from house to house and

I have learned that although death is an enemy, it is not an enemy to be feared

attend all the congregation meetings. Although I can leave my home for only two or three days at a time (I *must* dialyse on the fourth day), I have even been able to attend circuit and national conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses.

As to my diet, I have to avoid foods high in potassium and salt; not too much fruit, no chocolate, nuts, or dried fruit. I must keep to white bread and should eat cakes only if they are made with plain flour. Beverages are restricted to a little coffee or tea if it is weak. Chocolate-based drinks, wine, and beer are forbidden.

In spite of all of this, I feel that I am among the most blessed of women. Jehovah has shown me such loving care and oversight. I have a devoted husband who continues to help me in every way. Wonderful Christian brothers and sisters have also done so much to strengthen me through these many years. I also cannot speak too highly of the kindness received from the consultant doctors, surgeons, and hospital staff. More than once, new consultants and nurses have been told of how I nearly died through blood loss, refused transfusions, and yet now have a normal blood count.

I have learned that although death is an enemy, it is not an enemy to be feared. Though I have walked in the valley of deep shadow, I have never had to fear anything bad. (Psalm 23:4) Whether we live or whether we die, it is to Jehovah, for our life is in his hands. (Romans 14:8) 'How can I repay Jehovah for all his benefits to me?' I have often reflected. (Psalm 116:12) The gift of life is indeed precious, a gift I now enjoy because of the help of God, the loving dedication of skilled medical personnel—and the kidney machine.

—*As told by Dorothy Bull.*

Are There Ants in Your Plants?

Many people think that ants are a pestiferous menace to plants that may grow in one's home or garden. However, the findings of Dr. David Inouye of the University of Maryland offer some rather interesting sidelights about the activities of these little creatures. It appears that ants scamper up and down the stems of plants because they relish dining on their floral nectar. Furthermore, because they are of a militaristic nature, they will aggressively chase away other insects who may dare to encroach on their staked-out territory with its sweet treasure. Thus ants are really good, natural protectors against many destructive insects that seek to devour more of the plant than merely its nectar.

HOW much is that doggie in the window?" asks a popular song of the 1950's, "the one with the waggly tail." Cute little balls of fur scampering playfully in pet shops turn hearts soft. Those lovable little faces and pleading eyes are unmistakably saying, "Please take me home with you." Window-shoppers find them so irresistible that on impulse they buy "the one with the waggly tail."

In addition to 'that one in the window,' there are also those strange varieties brought home by children—breeds not even an expert can identify. The wide-eyed, excited child displays the helpless creature to parents and announces: "Look what followed me home! Can we keep it?" Without the heart to say no, the parents allow the dog to become a member of the family.

Often, however, there is a sad postscript to this. In a year or two the animal is driven to another part of town and dumped—the owner likes to think some family in the area will adopt it. Or it may be pushed from the car along a country roadside, to join the ever-increasing ranks of starving strays.

Such calloused cruelties frequently occur around vacation time, when the family will be away from home. Reports from France claim that 300,000 dogs are abandoned in that country every August. It is estimated that in Italy a million dogs are abandoned every vacation season. The president of the Italian Society for the Protection of Animals said: "Italians tend to take their pets for granted. Often they are acquired only for the children, like a new toy, to keep them happy. The parents have no feeling for the pets. Thus, when vacation season comes, it is a good time to get rid of unwelcome guests because the children's minds are on the holiday."

"That Doggie in the Window"

—Is It for You?



Some owners reason that their unwanted pets will receive a good home if they deposit them at the nearest animal shelter. This is wishful thinking, as the following report shows: "The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) learned in a recent survey that 15 to 17 million cats and dogs were turned in to the nation's animal shelters in 1973. Of that number, a shocking 13.5 million were put to death!"

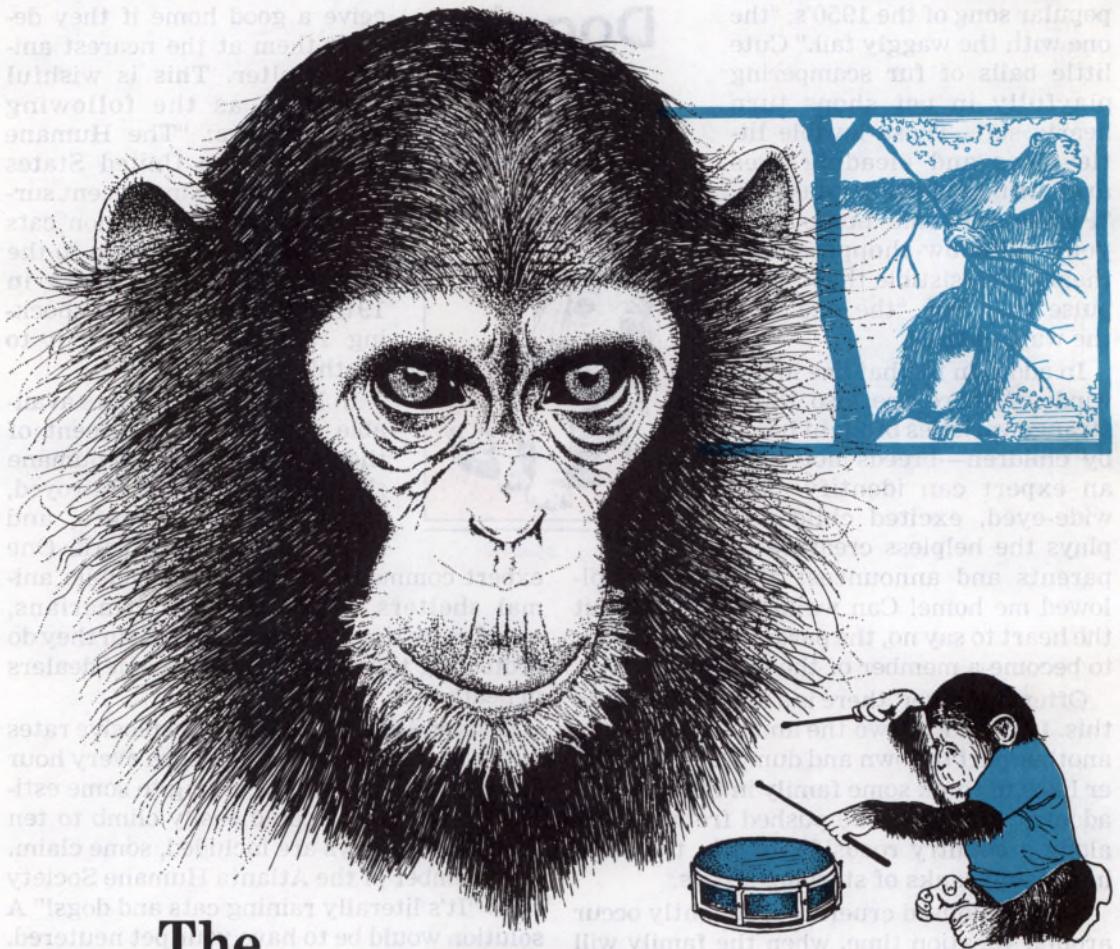
In England the figures available show that 55 percent of the dogs brought in to humane shelters there were destroyed, 73 percent in Toronto, and 83 percent in New York. One

expert comments: "Private and public animal shelters, along with veterinarians, spend more time killing animals than they do protecting them. They have become dealers in death."

Dogs and cats reproduce at explosive rates—two to three thousand are born every hour in the United States, according to some estimates. The figure could easily climb to ten thousand if strays are included, some claim. One member of the Atlanta Humane Society said: "It's literally raining cats and dogs!" A solution would be to have your pet neutered. But some reject this, saying they want their children to see the miracle of birth.

The animals pay dearly for the child's lesson. "Perhaps," the Atlanta Humane Society says, "children should witness the other end as well—the finality of death in a pound or shelter because there just are not enough homes to go around. Only one out of six puppies actually gets a home and for cats the rate is one out of twelve."

The pet population is exploding. It needs to be defused. It can be and it should be, for the good of the innocent and helpless victims.



The Fascinating Chimpanzee

By "Awake!" correspondent in Sierra Leone

I WAS new both to West Africa and to this home to which I had been invited. Suspecting nothing, I entered the living room and took a seat. Suddenly there was a furious scampering in the hallway. And without further warning a hairy creature—a blur of motion—bounded into the

room. With two mighty leaps it touched down once in the middle of the floor and then thudded solidly and heavily in my lap! Flinging its powerful arms around my neck, it froze—lips pouted and eyes staring piercingly into my eyes. I was thunderstruck. But the other people in

the room laughed heartily. In a dramatic, unforgettable way, Chippie, a pet chimpanzee, had introduced himself.

Sitting there nose-to-nose with one of the most popular and versatile of all animals, the only thing I could think of was, 'What's he going to do next?' Chippie, however, moved on to other matters, allowing me to regain my composure.

Since my first simian encounter, I have learned that about 3,000 years ago King Solomon imported "apes"—perhaps including chimpanzees—to Jerusalem. (1 Kings 10:22) However, it wasn't until the last three centuries that primates began to be carefully studied and classified. In 1738 a specimen was brought to England from Africa. It was called by an Angolan name, chimpanzee, or 'mock man.' The name stuck.

Plundering the Wild Population

Though some chimps are bred in captivity, the majority still have been brought in from the wild. During the past decades, equatorial Africa has been the source of thousands of them. Since foreign markets want young chimps, capture methods involve shooting or poisoning nursing mothers and wresting infants from their arms. Casualties are high since not only mothers but also males and even infants are sometimes gunned down accidentally. More die while being transported. Indeed, according to Dr. Geza Teleki, primatologist and special adviser on conservation to Sierra Leone, for every chimpanzee that arrives safely abroad about ten others die.

But demand is great, and profit incentives are high. West African dealers pay local suppliers as little as \$30 (U.S.) for an infant chimpanzee,

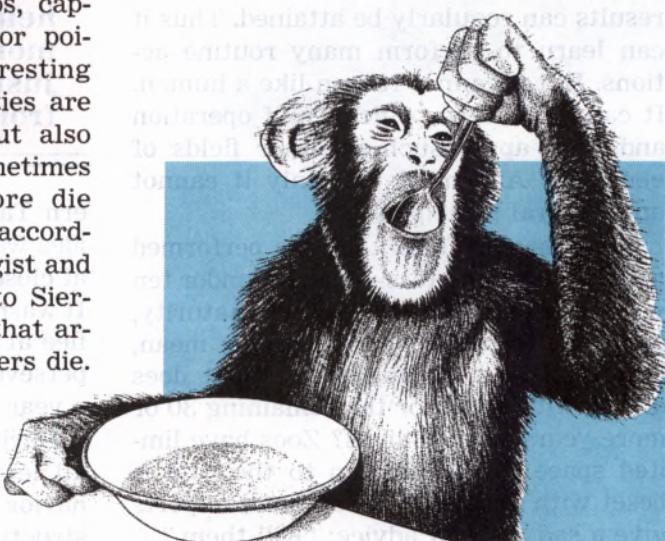
whereas the price tag in the United States or Japan soars to \$10,000 or more!

In recognizing the value of preserving the remaining, but threatened, wild populations, governments have imposed restrictions and bans on poaching and trade. Despite this, however, the chimpanzee is now listed among the growing ranks of endangered animal species.

Chimps in Man's World

Chimpanzees are of great value in scientific fields. A chimp named Ham preceded man into space. Chimps also helped pioneer the way for astronauts by being used in experiments designed to investigate the mental and physical effects of weightlessness, partial vacuums and extremes of heat and cold.

The chimpanzee is perhaps best known, however, for its dynamism and disposition. Young chimps in captivity are sociable, responsive and quite bright. They are extroverts who so love to play before an audience that some have become "superstars" in the entertainment field. A chimp named Cheetah thrilled millions as he swung through



the jungles with his man-friend Tarzan. Chimp antics continue to delight crowds at circuses and roadshows. And, oh, what manners they show at zoo tea parties!

Chimpanzees have also been trained to work in bars, pouring drinks and carrying them to the customers. They can eat and drink at tables, put on clothes, sweep floors, and wash dishes. Crude pictures

The chimpanzee can learn to perform many routine actions, but it cannot reason like a human

painted by chimp "artists" have even been sold. They ride bicycles and motorcycles.

One should not conclude, however, that the chimpanzee is almost human. Like a lot of other animals the chimpanzee responds to its surroundings. It can observe that certain actions produce certain results. By repetition it can be taught that by going through certain motions, certain results can regularly be attained. Thus it can learn to perform many routine actions. But it cannot reason like a human. It cannot discern principles of operation and then apply such in other fields of endeavor. And most certainly it cannot apply moral principles.

The amazing feats that are performed are by the youngsters—usually under ten years of age. But as they reach maturity, captive chimpanzees may become mean, introverted—and dangerous. What does one do with them for the remaining 30 or more years of their lives? Zoos have limited space. Rehabilitation to the wild is beset with problems. So at times experts give a sad piece of advice: "Kill them."

Man in the World of Chimps

Extensive studies of how chimps react in the world of man have revealed much about their disposition and versatility. Nevertheless, the chimp is as much out of his element in man's world as a man would be in the chimp's. Researchers thus realize that in order to understand the chimpanzee fully, studies must be made in the wild.

Possibly the first attempt to do this was during the late 19th century. Zoologist R. L. Garner entered the field equipped with a very large cage. Only the cage wasn't for the apes he hoped to study; it was for him! Safely locked inside, he observed animals as they passed by. Though his findings were limited, it was nevertheless a genuine effort to study apes in their native habitat.

Though another brief study was made in 1930, it was not until the 1960's that further field studies began. Dr. Jane Goodall, a researcher operating in West-

Studying chimps 'has helped me to realize, perhaps more than anything else, just how different we are from them.'—Dr. J. Goodall

ern Tanzania, did not sit in a cage. Her idea was to approach and observe chimps at close quarters, to be accepted by them. It wasn't easy though. At first they would flee at the sight of her, but patience and perseverance were rewarded, and within a year she was sitting in their midst.

During the next two decades, Dr. Goodall learned much about chimpanzee behavior as well as their social and family structure. Chimps also have intriguing

ways of interacting with one another. After being apart for some time, they may greet by clasping hands and kissing. They also groom one another, removing burs and ticks. But, alas, chimpanzee interaction isn't always so altruistic! At times they kill and eat one another.

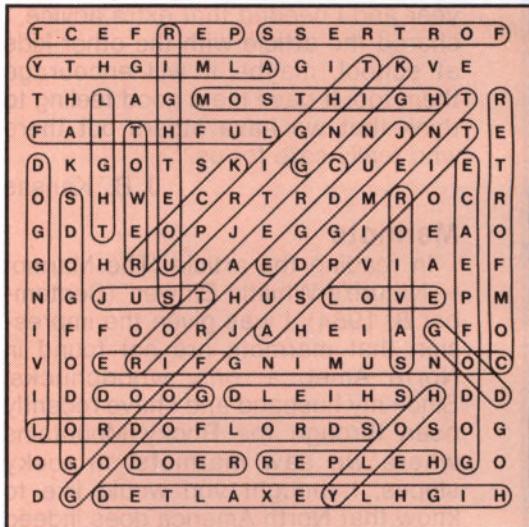
Dr. Goodall was recently interviewed by *WWF News* (World Wildlife Fund) and she said that studying chimps 'has helped her to realize, perhaps more than anything else, just how different we are from them.' When asked to be specific, she said: "Humans have more sympathy. In the chimp you have sympathy between a mother and a child but you seldom find it anywhere else. Sympathy is a very, very human characteristic." After living with chimps for 22 years, she and her colleagues are still learning new things about them.

No doubt about it, wherever you find them, whether in man's world or in their own, chimpanzees are truly remarkable animals—a fact you won't need to be reminded of if one ever lands in *your* lap!

Word-Search-Game Solutions

- | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Almighty | 8. King | 17. Savior |
| 2. highly exalted | 9. judge | 18. Comforter |
| 3. consuming fire | 10. Most High | 19. light |
| 4. God of gods
and Lord of lords | 11. good | 20. living God |
| 5. Rock, perfect, just,
faithful, righteous,
upright | 12. Doer | 21. a Spirit |
| 6. fortress | 13. tower | 22. God of peace |
| 7. shield | 14. God of
judgment | 23. helper |
| | 15. Creator | 24. love |
| | 16. God | 25. holy |

Unused letters: "Give thanks to Jehovah, . . . for he is good."
—Psalm 136:1.



Why the Clinking of Glasses?

Have you ever noticed people at parties or in restaurants clinking their beverage glasses before taking a drink? If you asked them why they did this, most of them could not give you an answer. Or they may feel it is a harmless act among friends.

However, they may be surprised to learn that it is an ancient superstitious custom. According to the American Library Association, thousands of years ago people had the ridiculous notion that when they took a drink the Devil could enter their bodies through their open mouth. And they actually believed that this evil spirit could be frightened by noise. So to avoid this danger they noisily banged their goblets. In Europe, drinkers still bash their beer steins or make the sign of the cross. And some primitive people, including certain Africans, will ring bells before downing their drinks.

From Our Readers

Study Habits

I enjoyed the "Young People Ask . . ." article about study habits. (August 8, 1984) I thought about my own study habits. I will be in the eighth grade this year and I needed that extra advice. I shared the article with the other kids at school, maybe it will encourage them too. It gave me a good feeling to think that we have others out there who really care for us.

J. B., Kansas

Marmots

In reading the article "The Marmot—Nature's Whistle Blower" (September 8, 1984), I was given the impression that marmots are not found in North America, only woodchucks. Since my husband and I have recently been through the Rocky Mountains where we saw marmots on rocky slopes, I thought you would like to know that North America does indeed have them too. I just thought you would like to know it is different from a wood-chuck.

S. S., Minnesota

Yes, marmots indeed inhabit the slopes of the northern Rocky Mountains and other western mountains. According to the "Encyclopedia Americana" (1977 edition), America has two marmot species, the siffleur, or whistler, marmot that inhabits the tops of the northern Rocky Mountains and the familiar eastern woodchuck. Our article showed only some of the places where marmots are to be found.—ED.

The Catholic Church and War

I find the article "I Started Out a Warbird but Ended Up a Dove"

(July 22, 1984) very offensive. I wonder if Mr. Hurst realized how offensive his article was! I notice the words spoken by the Roman Catholic priest in 1945 to the writer were in quotes. Those were the words of one priest, and I think many people within any religion often have varying degrees of what is acceptable or not regarding war and peace. I believe this passage to be very hostile to the priest and to all people who share his faith. We, as Roman Catholics, try to love and understand all people and respect their varying views on religion, but I must say I do not like this direct 'war' against our greatly loved faith.

E. H., England

The account was definitely not an attack against the Catholic Church. Mr. Hurst recounted the problem that he had as a sincere Roman Catholic contemplating dropping bombs on German cities inhabited mainly by his fellow Roman Catholics. He related correctly the conversation he had with his Catholic chaplain. Not only did Catholic kill Catholic and Protestant kill Protestant by the millions in World Wars I and II, with the full blessing of the clergy on each side, but today in many parts of Central and South America, Catholic priests and church members are to be found fighting against one another in many guerrilla actions. Every sincere Catholic should honestly ask himself if these actions by practicing Catholics are in harmony with Jesus' words found at John 13:35: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."—ED.

Watching the World



Malaria's Comeback

● Malaria has been ranked as the world's number one public health enemy. It affects 108 nations, kills millions of people every year, and probably has claimed more lives than all the wars of history. Once thought to be eradicable, malaria has made a dramatic resurgence worldwide—365 million cases at last count. According to WHO (World Health Organization), the number had quadrupled in ten short years. Why the comeback? The increased numbers are blamed on the malaria-carrying mosquito's growing resistance to insecticides and the simultaneous development of resistance in the malaria parasite to once life-saving drugs. While there is international scientific activity in the search for new effective drugs, commercial interest is low, according to University of California biologist Irwin Sherman. He says: "The cost of development is very high and the financial return is low. The chief markets are poor countries, which can't afford to pay for them."

Arms-Race Peril

● At the International Press Institute's conference in Stock-

holm, Sweden, on June 11, 1984, Sweden's prime minister, Olof Palme, stated: "The international Institute of Strategic Studies recently said that international tensions are now at their worst since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962." He noted how modern war-weapons technology has increased the arms-race peril by introducing a new time frame. "Today," continued the prime minister, "the time between an attack and its first serious effects is counted in minutes. This does not give much scope for reflection and considered decision."

Infertility Linked to STD

● The term STD (sexually transmitted disease) has replaced the expression VD (venereal disease) because it is more specific in terms of the mode of transmission (sexual contact). It encompasses a number of infections not included under the traditional VD designation. The latter covered five infections, including gonorrhea and syphilis. The term STD covers 35 more.

STDs now account for more than 50 percent of infertility problems in women in many parts of the world, says Professor Richard Morisset, 1984 chairman of

the International Conjoint STD Conference, held under the patronage of the World Health Organization. "We are concerned that women today who are more mobile are increasingly in contact with infectious diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia, yet often the symptoms go unreported," he says. "As a result, an infertility problem which might have been avoided with early diagnosis and correct treatment becomes irreversible." He estimates that every six seconds somebody in the world acquires a sexual disease—and that the rate is increasing.

Arthritis Drug Use Warning

● The OMA (Ontario Medical Association) in Canada has issued a warning about serious, undesirable reactions to certain anti-arthritis drugs now in use, especially among the aged. The *Globe and Mail* of Toronto reports that for the first three months of 1984, the OMA noted "eight deaths . . . among 53 adverse reactions (43 of them considered serious) to non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs." It appears that the victims were those taking combinations of some of these drugs. "Patients at special risk are the aged, people with impaired liver or kidney function and those who have inflammatory disease of the gastrointestinal tract or a history of stomach ulcers," says the article. It would seem wise for the elderly who are taking such drugs to consult with their doctor about this health threat.

No TV for Tots?

● Does television rob children of their childhood? Yes, answers Professor Gerhard Priesemann, vice-chancellor of Germany's Kiel University. He feels that TV programs do not make enough al-

lowance for the differences in age between children and adults, and therefore cause children to believe that the world really is as it appears on TV. He says that the natural steps children take from immaturity to maturity—often achieved only by means of a painful learning process—are lost due to TV viewing. According to Priesemann, as reported in the city of Kiel's newspaper *Kieler Nachrichten*, children should only watch TV "when they have sufficient powers of speech and thought to be able to digest the complicated events that take place on the television screen." Preschoolers should not, in his highly controversial opinion, watch TV.

Caribbean 'Sheep Raiders'

● A recent letter to the editor published in the Dutch Roman Catholic magazine *Bijeen* complained about the problem of "sheep raiding" in the Netherlands Antilles Caribbean island of Curaçao. Who are the 'sheep raiders?' "The different Bible sects of North American origin which aggressively inflict themselves on the Catholic population to convert them to their own group," explains the letter writer. Aggressive proselytizing was a "thorn in the side of the Antillean Catholic Church" 30 or 40 years ago, but those groups have calmed down, continues the letter. Then, unintentionally acknowledging the unabated zeal of one group of ministers, it adds, "That is with the exception of the Jehovah[h's] Witnesses."

Sleep Aids Health

● For many people, the weekend is for excessive recreation and late night parties. But according to Dr. Carlos Suárez Zamudio, director of the Family Health Unit, Mexican Institute of Social Security, the weekends may provide people with the best medicine to

prevent illness and serious accidents—sleep! A little more sleep during the weekend is the best medicine for the human being, advises Dr. Suárez Zamudio, as reported in Mexico City's newspaper *El Universal*. Sleep helps the body to recuperate physically and mentally, renews its energy, gives it a psychological lift, and prepares the person to work with greater enthusiasm the following week, emphasizes Dr. Suárez Zamudio.

Newspaper for the Blind

● Sweden now has what can truly be called a newspaper for the blind, reports *The Medical Post* of Canada. The system "delivers the news directly from a newspaper's word processing computer to a microcomputer in the blind reader's home via FM radio signal, bypassing presses and carrier," states the article. "The blind subscriber has the option of reading from a braille terminal or listening to a voice synthesizer." That means that sightless readers get the news earlier than sighted ones who must wait for the newspaper to be printed and delivered.

Mt. Fuji Crumbling

● Some 300,000 tons of mountainside falls down a huge crevice on the southwestern wall of Mt. Fuji each year, and government officials in Japan are concerned that the mountain may eventually split in half. So to halt the erosion and protect Fujinomeya City, which lies below, engineers will be building a concrete barrier at a point 7,200 feet (2,200 m) high, where deterioration is especially pronounced—10 feet (3 m) thick, 16 feet (5 m) tall and 55 feet (17 m) long. It is hoped that the barrier, which should be invisible from a distance, will stop the slides and preserve the beauty of Mt. Fuji.

'Hearing-Ear Dogs'

● Just as there are dogs to assist sightless persons, 'hearing-ear dogs' are trained to assist deaf persons. But unlike dogs to assist the blind, which are usually Labrador retrievers or German shepherds, 'hearing-ear dogs' can be of any breed—even a mongrel dog. What is needed, reports the *Globe and Mail* of Canada, is a dog that is extremely active, and able to run quickly to the source of the noise, and small dogs usually work best. During the four to six months needed, the dogs are trained to run to the source of any noise—alarm clock, telephone, door bell, whistling kettle, smoke detector, a crying baby—and then alert their owners by running back to them.

Catching Criminals

● Over 210,000 fugitives are at large at any given time in the United States, officials say—wanted for committing a felony, escaping from prison, or violating parole or probation. But catching them has always been a problem. One ploy recently used in a campaign to catch the career criminal fugitives was to send notices to their last known address, advising them that a package of goods worth \$2,000 was waiting delivery to them, upon their signing a receipt. Scores of fugitives responded and signed for the nonexistent package. Arrested and handcuffed, a number asked, "Where's my package?" "It's amazing," said Howard Safir, assistant director for operations of the Marshals Service, "if you put a little greed into the situation, like a \$2,000 package, people ignore some of the details," such as why anyone would be sending it to them.

Endangered Species

Surplus

● "It's a contradiction," says Dr. Gilbert K. Boese, director of

the Milwaukee County Zoo, "but it is a fact of life that if you do a real good job of breeding endangered species in captivity you're going to end up with another problem; that is, overcrowding or genetic imbalance." This is the problem that zoos are now facing: what to do with the animals they have successfully bred in captivity but no longer have either room for or need for in order to preserve the species. As reported in *The New York Times*, "zoo space for animals is limited. All the zoos in the world would fit in Brooklyn." Some zoos try to meet the problem by curtailing breeding by means of a contraceptive implant. Attempts have also been made to return some animals to the wild. But zoos often have to resort to killing small animals to feed other animals, and killing larger

animals to reduce the size of herds.

Indoor Pollution

● Indoor air pollution may be worse than outdoor pollution, warns the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission. A year-long study of some 40 homes found between 20 and 150 chemicals in the inside air. They came from building materials, aerosol sprays, appliances, cleaning products, dry-cleaned fabrics, and even cosmetics. And as more homes are being sealed for heating or air-conditioning by weatherstripping and insulation, the pollutants are trapped indoors. "Indoor levels of the volatile organic chemicals are generally ten-fold greater than outdoor levels," says the study prepared for the commission. Exposure to them has been associated with birth defects, can-

cer, and allergic reactions. It is suggested that homes be aired out regularly and that attention be given to the products used within.

Exercise Prolongs Life

● A study of 17,000 men has revealed that a direct relationship exists between the level of physical activity and the length of a person's life. Even former athletes, now leading sedentary lives, are affected, the researchers say. According to the article in the *International Herald Tribune*, "the scientists strongly urged that people undertake some form of regular exercise, even brisk walks four times a week, to help ward off cardiovascular and pulmonary disease." The study is said to be the "first scientific evidence that even modest exercise helps prolong life."

