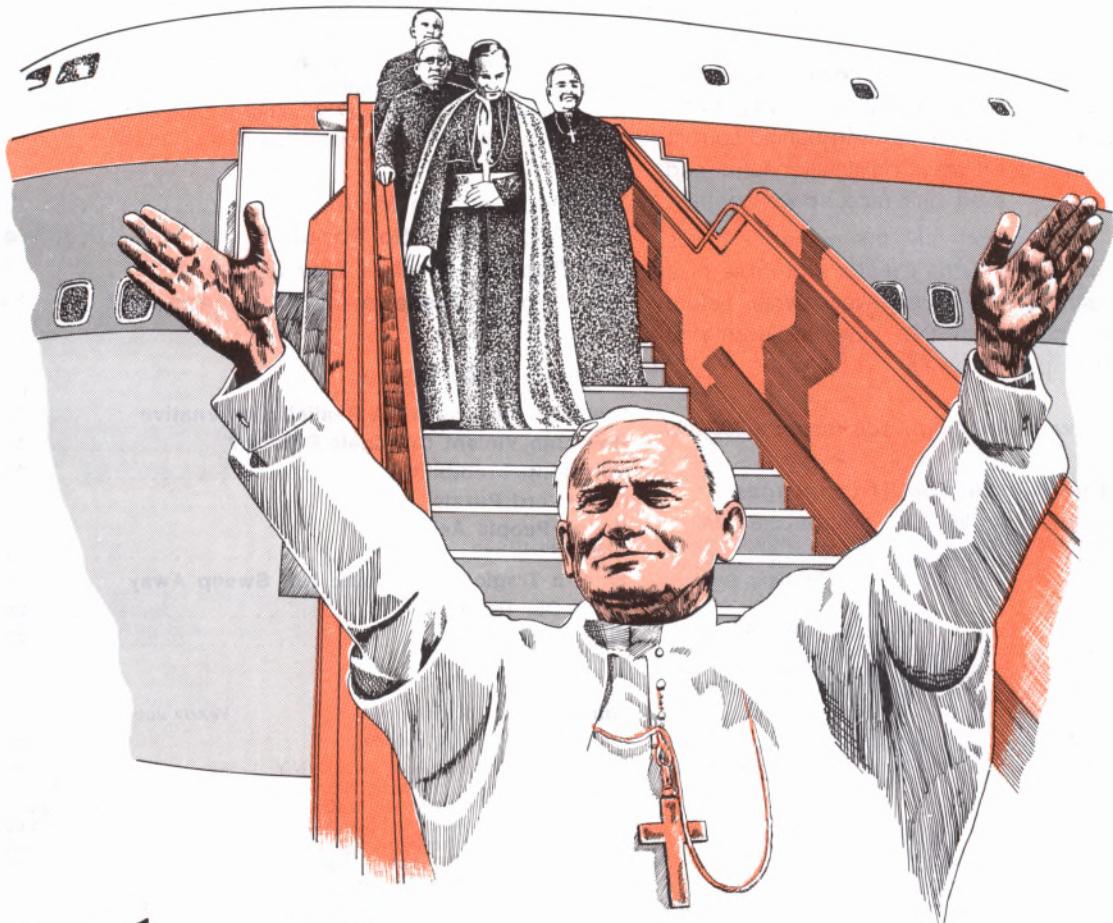


Awake!

DECEMBER 8, 1983



The Pope on the Move—Why?

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Feature Articles

Since 1979 Pope John Paul II has made 20 journeys to some 38 foreign lands. No other pope has ever traveled so widely, in so short a space of time, or been so popular. What is the secret to his popularity with the masses? Why are his journeys so necessary at this point in history? What is his message for mankind? Whether a Catholic or not, you will surely find our discussion of these questions interesting.

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THE POPE ON THE MOVE

“THE Pope Conquers Spain” was a headline in the Spanish press. “Papal Fever Everywhere,” proclaimed the *Sunday New Nigerian* on the occasion of the pope’s visit to West Africa. “More than a million Poles gathered at a soccer stadium to hear Pope John Paul II celebrate mass,” reported *The New York Times* of June 18, 1983.

These descriptions reflect some of the fervent reactions to the pope’s 20 journeys that have covered 38 countries around the world during the last five years. It was estimated that 18 million Poles saw him in the course of his eight-day tour of Poland this year. That is half of the country’s population!

In many countries, such as the United States and Great Britain, even non-Catholics turned out to satisfy their curiosity. As one writer stated: “Acclaim was not confined to the working classes, nor even to Catholics.”

According to the same source, “An English [Catholic] cabinet minister wrote of him [the pope] in May 1979 in the language of a fan-club magazine: the Pope had star quality, his presence was

majestic and electrifying, he radiated authority and strength.”

In his biography of Pope John Paul II, Britain’s Lord Longford, a converted Catholic, commented that in New York’s Yankee Stadium the pope “was given a reception worthy of a superstar.” Little wonder that writer Peter Nichols, sympathetic to the church, though not a Catholic, stated in his book *The Pope’s Divisions*: “Popular enthusiasm for the papacy is now part of modern life.”

But why is this pope so popular? How deeply do his visits really affect the conduct of Catholics? Why are these papal visits so necessary at this point in history? What is the message that the pope offers to the world? The following articles will discuss these questions.

Countries Visited by the Pope Since His Election

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1979 | Dominican Republic, Mexico, Poland, Ireland, United States, Turkey |
| 1980 | Zaire, Congo, Kenya, Ghana, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, France, Brazil, West Germany |
| 1981 | The Philippines, Japan |
| 1982 | Nigeria, Benin, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Portugal, Great Britain, Argentina, Switzerland, San Marino, Spain |
| 1983 | Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Haiti, Poland, France, Austria |



THE POPE

-Why So Popular?

"**P**OPE John Paul II's visit across Spanish soil has been like a hurricane of popular emotions, enthusiasm and fervor . . . To use the language of numbers . . . John Paul II's visit has broken all the country's records."—ABC, Madrid daily newspaper.

Of course, the pope's popularity can be explained in simple terms—he is the spiritual leader of over 600 million Catholics around the world, so that in almost any country where there are Catholics he is sure to get a good audience. But that would be an oversimplification of the phenomenon. What, then, are the factors that explain the pope's popularity at this moment in history?

"He Doesn't Miss a Trick"

Part of the answer can perhaps be found in his early experience as an actor. Lord Longford, in his authorized biography of Pope John Paul II, says: "It is, however, as an actor that he is best remembered by his schoolfriends. A visiting director told him: 'One day you will be a great actor.'" The biography continues: "There can be no doubt that this art of the living word . . . permeated

and inspired Karol Wojtyla [the pope's real name] from youth onwards."

However, what bearing does this have on his rapport with the public? Biographer Lord Longford adds: "It was eventually reflected in the astonishing impact that the future Pope was to make in many different languages on countless millions throughout the world." Catholic priest and writer Andrew M. Greeley wrote: "He has handled the first six weeks of his job with the accomplished skills of a professional actor and a professional politician. One cannot help but marvel at the flawlessness of his performance."

Certainly this pope knows how to make use of the emotive and dramatic gesture to win over the masses. For example, before a crowd of 200,000 in Rome, "when a little boy rushed up with flowers, a fussy monsignor tried to chase him away. But the pope grabbed the little bambino and hugged him." Adds Greeley: "You can tell, somebody said to me, that he studied for the stage. He doesn't miss a trick." Priest Greeley agreed: "He sure doesn't."

"The Greatest Show, the Biggest Fiesta Ever"

Psychology of the masses is another feature of this pope's success. A writer for *Newsweek* described the pope as "a gifted trouper who can play a vast crowd like an actor enthraling an audience." An example of this ability took place on his arrival in Mexico in 1979. As noted in the book *The Man Who Leads the Church*, he was met at the airport with "a full-scale mariachi band—traditional local musicians" who "swung into the great Mexican favourite, 'Cielito Lindo' . . . It was a cliché, but nobody cared. This pontifical tour was to be the great-

est show, the biggest fiesta ever. John Paul II's sense of spectacle proved equal to his hosts'. He stalked down the gangway and fell on his hands and knees to kiss Mexican soil. (It had become a traditional gesture. . . . But it never failed of its effect.)"

The effect of all of this on the crowds worldwide is well described by Catholic author Peter Hebblethwaite: "What messages were they picking up from this exciting new pope? . . . In the popular enthusiasm aroused by the journeys of John Paul II people simply forgot or omitted to attend to what he was actually saying. . . . The reason he was able to get away with almost anything was that the novelty of his pontificate and the charisma of his presence provided a distraction from what he actually said."

Yes, as they enjoy the show the masses seem to miss the implications of the pope's forthright speeches. But for many liberal-minded Catholics his sermons are very unpalatable, too hard line and conservative.

'A Partner With Statesmen and Politicians'

Another cause of the pope's popularity is that we live in a generation that has been conditioned to offer and accept idol worship. People worldwide have their television and cinema stars, sports idols and political saviors. So why not religious idols too? If the

Protestants have their Billy Graham and "Reverend" Moon, why should not Catholics have their John Paul II? In case anyone should think this is an exaggeration, note what Catholic writer Hebblethwaite states in his book *The Year of the Three Popes*: "When a man becomes pope, a process of mythologization starts which it is difficult to resist. His previous life is edited to show that he was long destined for the office he would eventually occupy [the papacy]. He becomes over-night a world figure, a partner in dialogue with *statesmen and politicians* and with Church leaders of all kinds." —*Italics ours.*

Therefore, in the modern context the pope thrusts himself into the limelight by reason of his constant contact and



'The pope becomes a partner in dialogue with statesmen and politicians'

communication with "statesmen and politicians." He becomes another worldwide TV personality. Since he is also the head of a temporal state, Vatican City, he is received with all honor by heads of state and political rulers—even by the communists! Yes, "despite its minuscule size, however, Vatican City has been said to possess an influence greater than that of Italy itself," says the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

But other factors have also greatly influenced the publicity projection of the present pope. Catholic editor Rowanne Pascoe supplies a clue, saying: "Despite, or perhaps because of, his lack of army divisions, the Pope is the one person who can be called a world leader. In an age of political pygmies he has taken over the moral leadership of the world." This suggests that the political figures of the world are so low on moral stature that it makes the pope look like a giant!

The Pope, Politics and Poland

Another element that has enamored this pope to the masses is his evident use of nationalism and his involvement in political and social issues. He has crossed swords with several governments and political leaders. Herein lies an apparent contradiction between his commands to the clergy to keep out of politics and his own speeches that have entangled him in political issues.

For example, Lord Longford noted that during the pope's visit to the Philippines "he warned the anti-government wing of the Church there to avoid interfering in politics, reminding them of their roles in society: 'You are priests and religious. You are not social or political leaders or officials of a temporal power.'" Yet in his speech to the Brazilian Bishops'

Conference he is quoted as saying that 'although the Church could be linked to revolutionary social reform, political violence could not be condoned.' During his 13 days in Brazil, said Longford, the pope "urged the poor to do everything within their power to ensure that they obtain rights owing to them by the government. His visit was, according to *The Universe*, 'an accusation of the Brazilian Government's criminal neglect.'"

The pope's political power is exemplified by his recent visit to Poland, which, according to press reports, was very carefully planned with a view to resolving Poland's critical political and economic problems. William Safire of *The New York Times* wrote: "Church and state have reached some secret agreement, and the political blessing so avidly sought by Moscow's chosen Polish leader was given. . . . The church, to endure, is sometimes required to make deals with totalitarians."

The fact that the pope's visit to Poland also had a political motivation has further support. President Reagan interviewed Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia, who had accompanied the pope on his visit to Poland. Why? Because "Mr. Reagan wanted the Cardinal's impressions of the situation in Poland after the papal visit *with its sharp political ramifications.*" (Italics ours.) Who can deny that the pope's travels have political overtones, which fact also makes him popular with the masses, if not always with the rulers?

It is one thing to understand the reasons for his present popularity, but a more important question is, Why have his world travels been necessary now? What message has he presented? How deep are its effects? The following articles will discuss those issues.



THE POPE'S TRAVELS

-Why Necessary?

WITH his second visit to Poland, Pope John Paul II completed his 20th international pilgrimage in just five years. After centuries of papal immobility, it is reasonable to ask, Why have so many excursions been necessary in so short a period?

Writer Peter Nichols supplies us with a clue. Speaking of the conclave when John Paul II was chosen, he writes: "There must surely have been, however, widespread agreement . . . that, above all, the Catholic Church needed taking in hand, and that its long period of unease, confusion, experiments, of doubts and discussions, to say nothing of defections . . . had now to be brought to an end."

This situation is further highlighted by an elderly Dutch priest who, speaking of Dutch Catholicism, said: "There is despair. There is a flight of intellectuals and of simple people. There are public conflicts between the bishops. It is an immense, immense tragedy." Then, on the vocation for the priesthood, he added: "They do not want to be priests these young people. They will not give

their confidence to a church in a state of moral tragedy."

This malaise affects the Catholic Church in most parts of the world. The unquestioning loyalty of Catholics to the precepts of their church that was evident 30 or 40 years ago has diminished. Attendance at Mass and confession has dropped.

Yes, there are deep and definite cracks in the monolithic structure of the Roman Catholic Church. Divisions are evident in three main fields: (1) the daily practice of basic Catholic norms on morality (abortion, birth control, divorce), (2) politics and social reform, and (3) theology, the basic teachings of the church.

Do Catholics Obey the Pope?

In just the last few years, abortion, contraception and divorce have become burning debates at all levels of Catholic society. Just prior to the pope's visit to the United States in 1979 a sample of American Catholics was polled about their adherence to Catholic norms. The book *The Man Who Leads the Church* states that "50 per cent were prepared to tolerate abortion on demand; 53 per cent believed priests should be allowed to marry; 63 per cent thought divorce acceptable . . . and 66 per cent said they would like the Church to approve artificial birth control. On that last point in particular, practice and precept among American Catholics had permanently parted company. Catholic couples were known to be widely using contraceptives, and without any great feelings of guilt about it."

Similar attitudes on issues of morality are found even in predominantly Catholic countries. A report from Spain indicated that 47,605,000 birth-control items were sold there in 1982. Abortions have been common practice in Catholic coun-

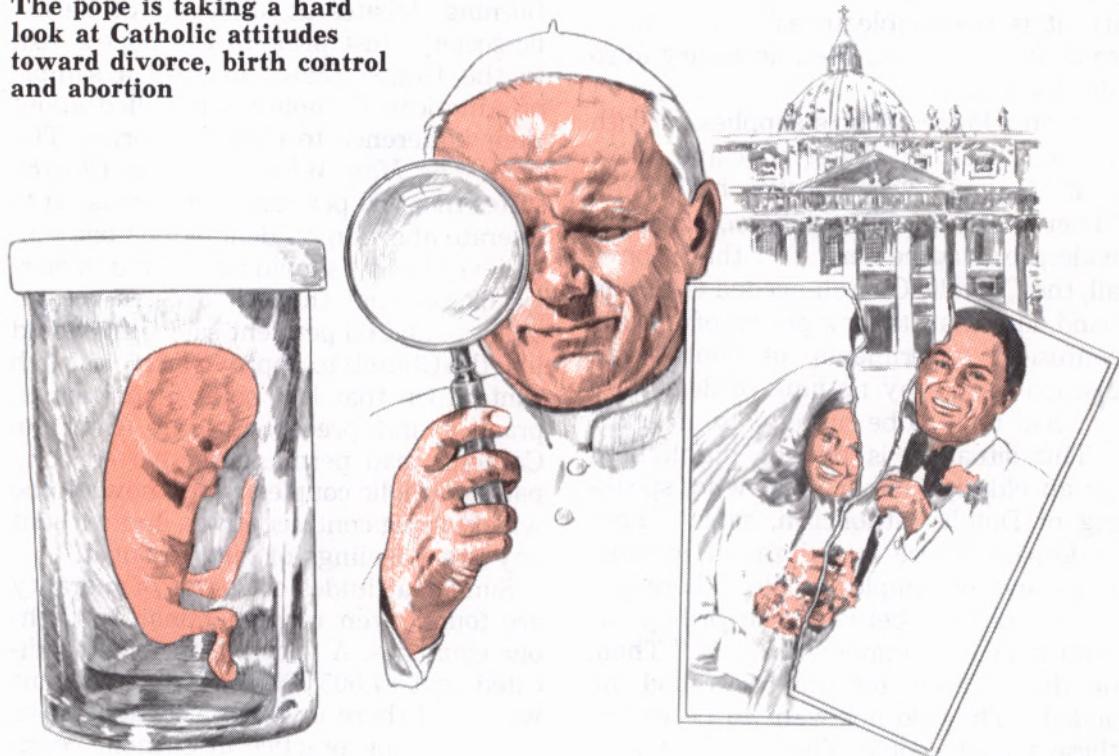
tries for a long time. Even Ireland, a fervently Catholic country, is showing the cracks. John Whale writes: "The bishops [of Ireland] themselves acknowledge that 'at present more than 2200 Irish girls are officially registered as having abortions in Britain each year.' The true figure is commonly reckoned to be much higher."

One of the big issues deeply affecting Catholics is divorce. For the church it does not exist, and in his speeches Pope John Paul II has been adamant on that score. However, there is, instead, the sometimes costly and time-consuming annulment. Writer John Whale says about the situation in the United States: "Divorce was identified by Archbishop Edward McCarthy of Miami as 'the main

problem we face—no doubt about it.'" Why are some church authorities reluctant to apply the strict norms of the church on this matter? "They recognize that such a course would defeat their aims, both pastorally and in point of Catholic numerical advance. So *they issue thirty thousand annulments a year*—in essence, certificates that a broken marriage never really happened in the first place, . . . 'There's an element of legal acrobatics in it', a Chicago cleric . . . acknowledged."—Italics ours.

A cardinal in the United States recently celebrated a Mass for divorced and separated persons. *The New York Times* reported: "It was . . . the first time a cardinal celebrated mass for divorced and separated Catholics." If even a cardinal

The pope is taking a hard look at Catholic attitudes toward divorce, birth control and abortion



flies in the face of church edicts, no wonder the pope has to travel the world to try to keep discipline within the ranks!

Does Politics Divide the Church?

Although great emphasis is laid by Vatican spokesmen on the "pastoral" purpose of the pope's travels, many commentators see them in a different light. The book *The Man Who Leads the Church* states regarding the pope's journeys: "Despite the emphasis on their spiritual or pastoral nature, each journey involved tackling a *political issue*."

So why are these visits so necessary? Because deep divisions affect the Catholic clergy on political and social issues. This was especially exemplified in the pope's tour of Central America. One journalist headlined his article on the pope's journey: "Politics and Religion Divided and Entwined on Pope's Route." That was made abundantly clear on his visit to Nicaragua, where Catholic priests occupy important positions in the government. At the same time, according to *The New York Times*, the archbishop of Managua, capital of Nicaragua, is "a strong critic of the Government." Is that not a church divided?

The same report also stated that the pope's principal objective in Central America was "to strengthen the Roman Catholic Church . . . against challenges from the inside by leftist priests and nuns." The monolithic and autocratic structure of the Catholic Church is cracking and, somewhat like the legendary Dutch boy trying to plug the ruptured dike with his finger, Pope John Paul II is dashing around the world trying to stop up the holes.

Church Teachings Under Assault

Further cracks in the church fabric are seen as Catholic theologians and priests continue to put in doubt some of the fundamental teachings of the church. Little wonder that Benedictine priest Patrick Granfield described the pope's responsibility of preserving the unity of faith as awesome, "because nearly every aspect of the traditional teaching on faith and morals is the subject of intense theological debate. The issues include: . . . sexual morality; birth control; abortion; divorce and remarriage; priestly celibacy; ordination of women," among others.

Back in 1971 the pope, then Cardinal Wojtyla, had indicated that some theologians had been sowing seeds of doubt by questioning such basic doctrines as the Trinity, the nature of Christ, the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the indissolubility of marriage. Others, such as Hans Küng, Swiss Catholic scholar, put in doubt the 19th-century doctrine of papal infallibility.

The Catholic Church is wracked with divisions and self-doubt. The clergy cover the spectrum from liberal and progressive to conservative and ultraorthodox in the religious field, and from communist to fascist in the political arena. Added to all of this is the worldwide crisis in vocations, leading to a shortage of priests and nuns. Communism continues to claim the loyalty of a sizable portion of the population in Catholic countries such as Italy, France and Spain. Little wonder the pope must travel and deliver stern warnings!

But, in his travels, what message does he carry to the nations? What hope does he offer to the world? Our final article on this subject will discuss those questions.



THE POPE'S MESSAGE

-Is It the Answer?

BIDDING farewell to my country-men in Cracow, . . . I wish that good, under the care of the Holy Virgin of Jasna Gora, could once again turn out to be more powerful than evil on Polish land."

With these words Pope John Paul II concluded his 1983 visit to Poland. *The New York Times* reporter commented: "The reference to the icon of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa, Poland's most revered symbol of religion and nationalism, has been an *underlying theme of the Pope's trip.*"—Italics ours.

Passionate Attachment to the Virgin Mary

Catholic writer Peter Hebblethwaite observes: "Devotion to Mary is something else that Wojtyla owes to the Polish long tradition. . . . Even in his briefest statements he alludes to Mary." This significant remark is a clue to a predominant facet of the present pope's religiosity—his attachment to the Virgin Mary under her many different manifestations in the Catholic world.

In his authorized biography of the

pope, Lord Longford states: "His devotion to the blessed Virgin Mary is a fundamental part of him. . . . It is impossible to think of him without it. In this respect he shares no doubt in a fervent Polish tradition. His love of the Virgin Mary goes back to his earliest years." Interestingly, his mother died when he was a child, so the same writer says: "It has been suggested that the early loss of his mother may have contributed to Wojtyla's *passionate attachment to the Virgin Mary* in later years." (Italics ours.) Peter Hebblethwaite comments: "Mary represents the feminine element in his life."

Some Catholics Taken Aback

But as Hebblethwaite admits: "Some Catholics find this cult of Mary excessive; some Protestants dismiss it as unscriptural, superstitious and even, at the limit, blasphemous." Even Mexican Bishop Sergio Mendez Arceo reproached the pope's inordinate devotion to Mary; the innumerable references to the virgin of Guadalupe were "altogether too much." Even more so when we remember that anthropologists identify this Virgin, '*la Morenita*,' with the 'sweet lady of Tepeyac,' who is identified with the old Aztec goddess Tonantzin. Catholic priest Andrew Greeley admits "that Mary is one of the most powerful religious symbols in the history of the Western world. . . . The Mary symbol links Christianity directly to the ancient religions of mother goddesses."—Italics ours.

How did some Italian Catholics react to Polish Catholicism? Writer Peter Nichols describes the reactions of a group who visited Poland to see for themselves the Catholic revival there. "The first shock —there were others—was that Jesus had a subordinate role. The Virgin Mary

came first and the Polish pope second, with Jesus, as these young people put it, a bad third." In this case, the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, "Most High over the whole world," did not even make a worse fourth!—Psalm 83:18, Catholic *Jerusalem Bible*.

Whom Did Peter Emphasize?

All the foregoing gives us some understanding of the present pope's Polish religious background and his basic message for mankind. He hammers home the role of the "Mother of God" as a mediatrix between God and man. But is he teaching the right message for the times in which we live? Should he be emphasizing the mother of Christ? Or should he be proclaiming that which the apostle Peter and the early Christians preached as the only hope for mankind, namely, God's Kingdom, or government rule, by Christ?

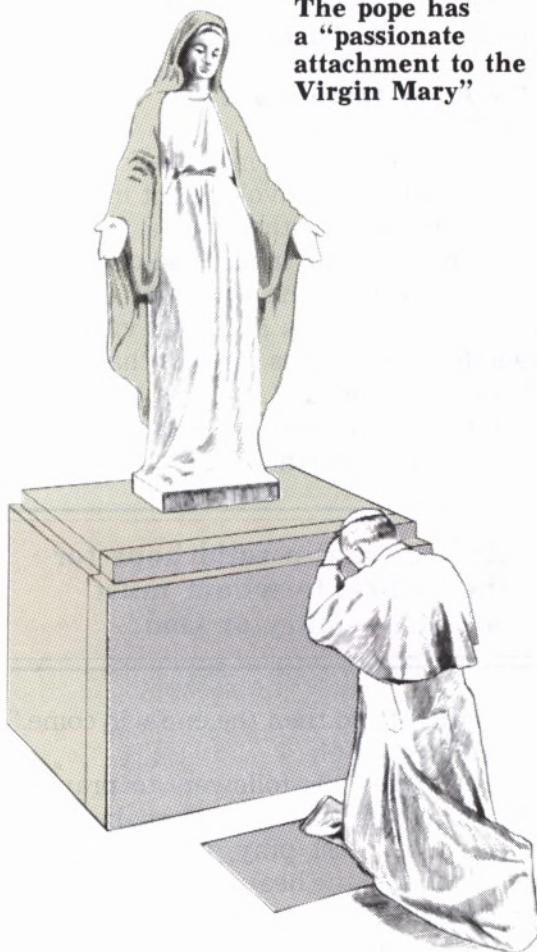
As a matter of interest, since the pope claims to be the legal successor to the apostle Peter, what did Peter say about Mary? Did he direct attention to her as the solution for mankind's problems? Did he use her as a nationalist symbol? Did he exalt her above God and Christ in his worship?

The truth of the matter is that in his two letters he does not even mention Mary once! And she is mentioned in only 5 of the 27 books of the Greek Scriptures. Although she is spoken of in the Gospels with respect and favor for her humble role as the mother of the Messiah, no writer ever attributes any veneration to her.

In contrast, Peter does clearly highlight God's role. In his first letter he states: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for according to

his great mercy he gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And, regarding Jesus, he said to fellow believers: "Set your hope upon the undeserved kindness that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "The revelation of Jesus Christ," not Mary, will mean the end of this corrupt system of things. By means of the cleansing "war of the great day of God the Almighty," all wickedness will be removed from the earth. Justice and righteousness will be

**The pope has
a "passionate
attachment to the
Virgin Mary"**



restored through Christ's Kingdom rule from the heavens.—1 Peter 1:3, 13; Revelation 16:14, 16; 19:11.

Peter wrote of that Kingdom, saying: "In fact, thus there will be richly supplied to you the entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This same heavenly Kingdom government is going to rid the earth of all elements that blaspheme Jehovah's name and pollute this earth. As Peter emphatically states: "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Peter 1:11; 3:13; Daniel 2:44.

The Right Message and the Right Mediator

Therefore, the true message for the nations today is not involvement in politics or nationalism; neither is it a matter of venerating a man-made tradition about Mary, "the feminine aspect of God," as priest Greeley calls her. The vital message for our perilous times is that which Jesus commanded: "And this *good news of the kingdom* will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all

If we want a solid hope for the future, to whom must we turn—Mary or God?

the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:14.

Jesus urged his followers to pray for that Kingdom to come when he counseled: "You must pray, then, this way: 'Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. *Let your kingdom come.* Let your will take place, as in heaven,

also upon earth.'" Did Jesus say that his followers should request God's Kingdom through his mother, Mary? His own answer is: "Also, whatever it is that you ask *in my name*, I will do this, in order that the Father may be glorified in connection with the Son [not the mother]. If you ask anything in my name, I will do it." Clearly, Christ is the sole Mediator between God and man, even as the apostle Paul affirmed: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus."—Matthew 6:9, 10; John 14:13, 14; 1 Timothy 2:5.

Therefore, if we want a solid hope for the future of mankind and the earth, to whom must we turn? Is it to the "Queen of Poland," as the pope has suggested so many times? What did Jesus say? "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." Yes, everlasting life is through Jehovah God and Christ Jesus because the Kingdom is also through them. And knowledge of them is obtained by means of a study of God's Word, the Bible, "the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."—John 17:3; 2 Timothy 3:15.

We urge all sincere persons, Catholics and others, to acquire that knowledge. You, too, can know of God's Kingdom and look forward to the fast-approaching time when "he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." Jehovah's Witnesses in your neighborhood will gladly help you to understand the Bible by means of a free home Bible study, without any obligation.—Revelation 21:4.

Prepared Childbirth -A Realistic Alternative

CAROL'S contractions began at four in the morning. Her husband, Brian, however, waited until the contractions became stronger and closer together before taking her to the hospital.

By the time the admission routine was completed, Carol's contractions were coming every five minutes. In accordance with her special preparation course, she started her "Phase I" breathing. When the contractions were two minutes apart, Carol switched to her "Phase II" breathing. A doctor then examined her and told her it would be a while before delivery. He had hardly left the room, however, when Carol's contractions increased. She moved into "Phase III" breathing.

And where was husband Brian? Nervously pacing the floor? Banished from the delivery room? Not at all! Brian was right there coaching her through her labor and, probably most important of all, giving moral support.

Now the time of delivery came. Brian was right behind his wife—literally—supporting her head and shoulders as she complied with her doctor's commands to "Push! Push!" Within minutes a ten-pound girl announced her arrival! And that without anesthetics or medication. By being trained and prepared ahead of time, they had shared in a prepared



birth. Having the birth in the hospital assured them that medical help would be available if complications developed.

This was quite different from the birth of their previous child, some ten years earlier. At that time, Carol had gone into labor totally unprepared to cope with the intensity of her contractions. When she discovered she was pregnant again, Carol decided there *had* to be a better way.

The Lamaze Technique

The "better way" for this couple proved to be a technique developed by French obstetrician Fernand Lamaze. Sometime after attending a gynecological conference in Paris in 1952, he traveled to Russia to learn more about their recently developed methods of reducing childbirth pain. After making a few mod-

ifications, such as adding rapid accelerated breathing techniques (the kind Carol practiced), he introduced these methods into his own medical practice.

Since then there has been a growing movement away from "managed birth" (using anesthesia), a method practiced in many parts of the world. Why? Some parents have been concerned about the relatively high infant mortality rates in North America, where "managed" childbirth methods are traditional. Some are very concerned about the prospect of giving birth and want to be better informed. Other parents simply desire a more active role in the birth of their children. And the medical profession has acknowledged the importance of parental involvement in childbirth. After all, "Doctors don't deliver babies," said Dr. Murray Enkin, "women do!"

Natural birth methods have therefore caused somewhat of a revolution in the delivery room. In his 1956 book *Painless Childbirth*, Lamaze stated: "A woman learns how to give birth in the same way that she learns how to swim, or write or

"I think it is so wonderful when a husband can be with his wife in the delivery room"

read." Many doctors now see the value of physical, emotional and mental preparation of a woman for childbirth—aided by the coaching and encouragement of her husband.

How Does It Work?

A couple gains this preparation by attending special classes. There the woman

is taught to regard birth as a positive experience. She learns something not only about her anatomy but also about the mechanics of childbirth. She practices the breathing and relaxation techniques Carol used effectively.

These methods will later serve to distract the woman and, hence, alleviate some of the pain of her uterine contractions. Of course, a woman should expect some pain or discomfort in labor. The Bible shows that such pain has been a part of childbearing from the first human birth. (Genesis 3:16) But this training helps her to approach giving birth more positively. Thus the birth pains can be less distressing. Often the need for anesthetics is reduced, if not eliminated.

The Benefits

The old image of an anxious father wearing out the carpet in the waiting room is no longer typical. Nowadays many husbands realize that providing their wives with moral support not only makes giving birth easier but also has the long-term benefit of strengthening their marriage. Said one appreciative wife: "I think it is so *wonderful* when a husband can be with his wife in the delivery room. My husband was there for the birth of our son, and he still talks about it to this day."

One survey revealed that in Holland, where over 80 percent of the women use prepared childbirth techniques, fewer than 5 percent need drugs of any kind when they give birth. Perhaps the one who benefits the most from this is the newborn infant. Pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton observed that "in a study of a group of breast-fed babies, we found that the ones whose mothers had no medication recovered and began to gain

weight twenty-four to forty-eight hours before the group of infants belonging to medicated mothers. This implied to me that the mothers' milk production was cut down while the medication was affecting her."

Similarly referring to the aftereffects of medication administered to a mother in labor, Dr. N. J. Eastman, in an editorial of *Obstetrical and Gynecological Survey*, wrote: "The onset of respiration is usually less prompt and less vigorous when sedative drugs have been given than when they have been completely withheld."

Studies published in *Johns Hopkins Magazine* further suggest that any drug given during labor—be it a sedative or a regional anesthetic—may possibly affect the fetus. These studies indicate that nearly all drugs have the potential of inhibiting the action of an oxygen-binding enzyme, thus reducing oxygen transport to the baby by way of the placenta. Natural childbirth, however, along with husband and wife preparation, may make such medication unnecessary.

Close Bond

Researchers have discovered another apparent benefit of prepared childbirth: a closer bond between the parents and the newborn baby. For one thing, it usually results in a speedier and smoother delivery of the baby, although it should not be expected that all deliveries will be quick and trouble free. A mother who has undergone a smooth labor may more easily have positive feelings toward her infant than one who has had a rough delivery. And a husband's participation allows him, too, to experience a unique closeness with his infant. As one father expressed it: "I felt close to my son right

from his birth. I naturally take an active part in his care and I believe that this will have a significant bearing on our relationship when he's older." Another

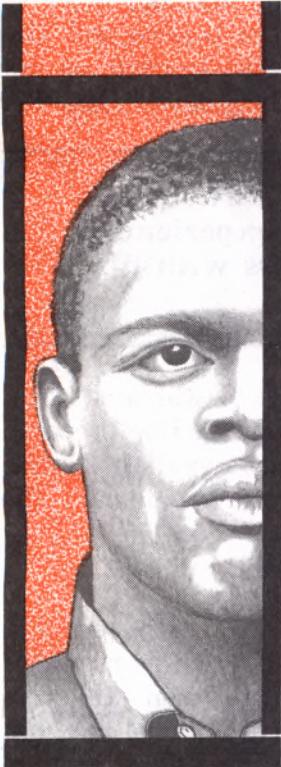
A husband's participation allows him to experience a unique closeness with his infant

father said similarly: "I was amazed at how efficient the training [for prepared childbirth] was. The rapport that exists between my wife and me toward the baby is amazing."

How to Get Training

Of course, it must be stressed that what each couple does in this regard is an entirely personal decision. Children, whether born under traditional methods or with the help of parent preparation, are indeed a blessing. (Psalm 127:3) Nevertheless, if you are interested in learning more about the Lamaze method, possibly your local hospital or family doctor will be able to assist you. Statistics indicate that only a small minority of prospective parents are taking advantage of the training offered in their area. Some, however, may choose to receive their training by means of some of the excellent books that are presently available. That is how Brian and Carol received their training.

Giving birth to and raising a child is indeed an awesome responsibility. But it need not be faced with fear or unwholesome anxiety. For some, "prepared childbirth" courses will prove to be a helpful and realistic alternative.



How Can Violent Criminals Reform?

By "Awake!" correspondent
in Nigeria

"OUR prisons . . . are now training grounds for criminals," stated a writer in Nigeria's *Daily Sketch*. This is only an echo of similar expressions made in many parts of the world. And there is much truth to this statement, for there is little evidence that prison life really reforms prisoners. Some even argue that violent punishment increases a criminal's hostility, making his reformation more difficult. Indeed, many criminals admit that while in prison they learn more about committing crime. New prisoners learn from hardened ones.

What are governments to do? Many feel that a stiff prison sentence can reform some criminals. Jehovah's Witnesses, however, know a better way. Docu-

mented examples from all over the world illustrate that the Bible's message can often reform criminal personalities where other methods have failed. Let us look at a few examples from West Africa.

Can an Armed Robber Reform?

Right from school days James terrorized schoolmates and teachers. Describing his course of life, he says: "I became noted as the village wrestler. Fighting and marijuana were my food. And when I was 16 years of age, the outbreak of war in my country afforded me a greater opportunity to indulge in my love for violence. I enlisted in the rebel army and was trained as a guerrilla and commando fighter. I took delight in the large-scale killing of opposing soldiers during daredevil attacks of my squad against them.

"Then war came to an end. It was hard for men like me to start life over again. Our homes had been destroyed. We were hungry, poorly clothed and unemployed. So I joined an armed gang, and we launched a campaign of robbery against hospitals, schools, banks and offices. People lived in fear of us.

"Although we consulted spirit mediums and used charms for supernatural protection, the police eventually caught up with us. Several of our gang, including myself, were imprisoned. But right in

prison we ganged together and organized a revolt. When our plans failed, however, our gang was broken up, and we were assigned to different prisons. Then our main gang leader—the most notorious and feared criminal of that time—was executed. This frightened me, and I prayed to God, promising to serve him if he delivered me from this trouble."

But could such a hardened criminal really reform? Sadly, when he was released a few months later, James forgot the promise he had made in prayer. He explains: "I returned home and resumed my old way of life. One day, however, I saw a member of our gang and asked him about his 'activities.' He told me that he was now studying with Jehovah's Witnesses and had given up crime! 'Who are *they*?' I asked him, and he started to preach to me. This led to my joining in his Bible study meetings with Jehovah's Witnesses, who, I found, were teaching about serving the God whom I had vowed to worship.

"I soon realized that I would have to transform my life, but it seemed impossible for me to change. I saw, for one thing, that the Witnesses did not smoke, whereas I was addicted to tobacco and marijuana. What would I do if they told me to stop smoking? However, my study of the Bible continued to influence me for good, strengthening my desire to reform. As I learned more about Jehovah and his goodness, I felt urged to purify my life to serve him and honor his name. I kept praying to him for help.

"Gradually my life changed. I stopped smoking and abandoned my violent criminal habits. But my new Christian personality brought opposition. The people did not like to see me 'going about preaching with Jehovah's Witnesses.' They were

displeased because I no longer represented the village in wrestling matches. So they started to ridicule and threaten me, until an old man intervened on my behalf. He called the village elders and advised them to stop trying to harm me. He said: 'If all the people were Jehovah's Witnesses, there would be no trouble in this village. If you insist on troubling this man and any problems arise, I shall not come out to answer on your behalf.'

James dedicated his life to Jehovah and was baptized in 1973 at the age of 23. He is now a completely reformed and rehabilitated man—a minister helping others to bring their lives into harmony with God's will.—Ephesians 4:17-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

Pardoned for Good Conduct

Here is another case: Oruaefe was sentenced to a 21-year jail term for supplying arms to robbers. During the first two years of his imprisonment, he used to act very harshly toward the prison officers, often attacking the warders. Then he joined some other prisoners in Bible study classes that were being conducted by Jehovah's Witnesses who made weekly visits to the prison. This marked the beginning of a change in the pattern of his life. A transformation in his personality took place as he applied in his daily conduct the things he was learning from the Bible. This is how he describes what followed:

"The prison officers noticed how much I had reformed and began to give me responsibilities of trust. They put me in charge of the prison pharmacy, because the drugs were stolen by those caring for them. They also gave important responsibilities to other prisoners who became Jehovah's Witnesses."



A break can be made
from a life of crime

One of these other reformed prisoners was Godwin, a former leader of a gang of armed robbers. He was arrested in 1968 and sentenced to 22½ years of imprisonment. Describing the influences that led to the change in his life, he says:

"In prison I met some of my trainees who had become Jehovah's Witnesses. They no longer smoked Indian hemp or stole or engaged in violence or immorality. They had become meek, humble men. I could not understand how they could have changed so much. Then one day I heard a visiting minister of Jehovah's Witnesses explaining the Bible to them, and I joined their Bible study class. Now, I had always considered myself to be a Christian. I was a member of the Church Missionary Society (Anglican). But the things I began to learn from the Bible in these classes gradually transformed me into a true Christian."

Because of their outstandingly good conduct, these two men were given a state pardon in 1981 and were released from prison. They have continued to make progress in cultivating the Christian personality and in helping others to do so. They have become rehabilitated in their community and are fully integrated into the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Successfully Adjusting to Life Outside Prison

The problem of reintegration into the life of their community has hindered many so-called reformed criminals. An article in the Nigerian *Daily Times* newspaper observed that many prisoners "lose confidence in themselves and . . . cannot meet the demands of the world outside their prison cells. They feel . . . incapable of facing the challenges of what they

believe to be a hostile society." Many ex-convicts therefore return to their criminal ways.

However, the aforementioned individuals were not only successfully reformed but also rehabilitated into useful and exemplary life in their community. How did they survive such a difficult adjustment? They used their time and Bible knowledge to help others to become better persons. There is yet another experience that illustrates this.

In The Gambia, a Nigerian missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses received permission from prison authorities to conduct Bible studies with prisoners. The weekly studies were attended by as many as 20 prisoners, including a Muslim named Sangoné, who was serving a three-year sentence. Prison was not new to this man, who was now 26 years of age. He received his first sentence when he was eight years old and was confined to a reformatory school. Other prison sentences followed and he became increasingly hardened as a criminal.

Now, though, as he progressed in learning the righteous conduct that is required of true servants of God, he abandoned his criminal inclinations and worked hard at practicing the good things he was learning. As the end of his prison term approached, he told the missionary that he loved the truth he was learning from the Bible and desired to take his stand as a Christian witness of Jehovah. However, he said that there was one problem that he wanted to clear up first. He had previously been sentenced to prison in another country but had escaped from jail while he still had 17 months to serve. Now he wanted to return and serve his remaining term.

When he returned to this country and

presented himself to the authorities, they were unable to find any record of his imprisonment or of his jailbreak four years previously. One court official advised him to "just disappear again," for after another year no one would have the right to arrest him. Sangoné refused this, saying that he wanted to serve the remaining term and clear his conscience. He explained: "I have been studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, and I now want to straighten out my way so that I can dedicate my life to do Jehovah's will in a clean way."



**Criminals can change
to Christian ministers**

In Our Next Issue

- *Nuclear Holocaust—How Real the Threat?*
- *"You Will Die Without Blood!"*
- *Does It Matter What I Read?*

Sangoné completed his term and was released in April 1980. He made use of this period in prison to learn a trade. This helped him to provide for himself materially until he obtained other employment. In his free time he engaged in the door-to-door preaching activity. And in November 1980 he was baptized as a dedicated witness of Jehovah. He began serving as an "auxiliary pioneer," devoting 60 hours of his time each month to sharing his faith with others. One year later he married one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Today Sangoné and his wife have

a small child. But they still enjoy helping others to be transformed by making their minds over, so as to conform to God's will.—Romans 12:2.

Although just four former prisoners have been highlighted, many others have been influenced in the same way by the power of God's Word.

The Power to Reform

Yes, "the word of God is alive and exerts power." It is "beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." (Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Its practical counsel, coupled with the excellent motivation that it gives toward doing good, succeeds in transforming even criminal personalities.

For those who are trained by it, God's Word also protects people from ever becoming involved in criminal conduct. The writer of Psalm 119 says that youths can remain pure by behaving as God's Word prescribes. (Verse 9, *The Jerusalem Bible*) Yes, the Bible provides counsel and instruction that teaches practical wisdom and righteousness—"the entire course of what is good."—Proverbs 2:1-9.

Vanishing Credibility

"Trust is a social good, like air and water. Once it becomes polluted, the process is hard to reverse." That is what Sissela Bok, an ethics teacher, said about the effect of casual lying, which she feels has become a part of today's way of life, both privately and in many professions. Another psychologist estimates that the average American tells a staggering 200 lies a day, and there is no reason to believe that things are much better elsewhere.

"There's been too much lying," says Professor Al Gini at a discussion series held at Loyola University in Chicago on the subject of lying. "We're breaking down the barriers between

truth and non-truth," he adds. Indeed, surveys show that 69 percent of the people believe that the country's leaders have consistently lied to them. Other statistics quoted by the professor are: "Only 42 percent have confidence in doctors, 17 percent trust lawyers, 13 percent believe what corporations say and seven percent think advertising is truthful." All of this leads to serious breakdowns in government, corporations and the family.

How obvious it is that mankind in general is under the influence of the one whom Jesus Christ called "the father of the lie"!—John 8:44; 14:30.

crossword puzzle

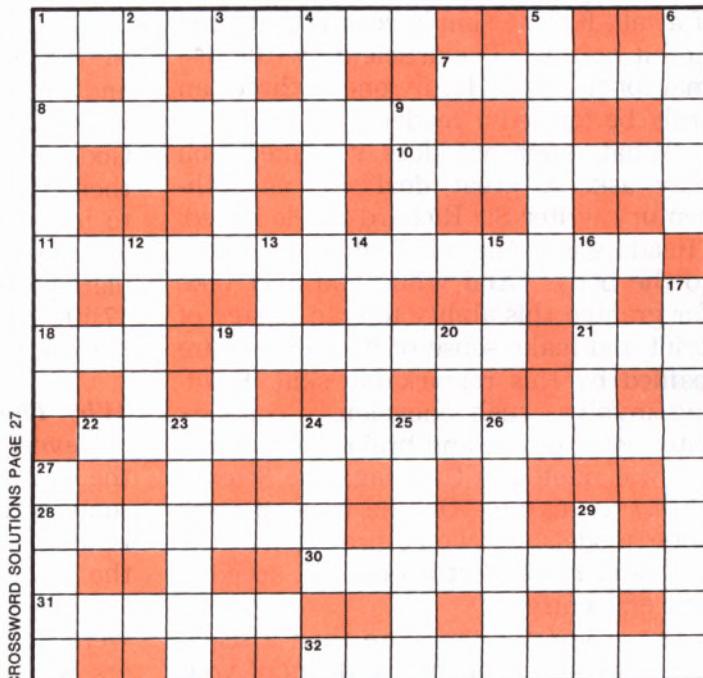
Clues Across

1. Where Paul spoke on Sabbath days while in Corinth (Acts 18:1, 4)
7. To cause to exist (Psalm 51:10)
8. Belshazzar's father (Daniel 5:29; *Aid to Bible Understanding*, page 1196)
10. He struck Jeremiah and put him in stocks (Jeremiah 20:2)
11. What the Israelites considered the camel, the rock badger and the pig to be [2 words] (Leviticus 11:4-8)
18. Eve was formed from one (Genesis 2:21, 22)
19. An ancestor of Jesus' mother, Mary (Luke 3:28)
21. Jesus walked on it (John 6:19)
22. Samuel's mother would bring him one each year [2 words] (1 Samuel 2: 18, 19)
28. A son of Joktan and founder of one of the early post-Flood families (Genesis 10: 26, 32)
30. King Herod claimed that he wished to do this to Jesus (Matthew 2:1-8)
31. The son of Guni of the tribe of Gad (1 Chronicles 5:11, 15)
32. Enemies of Israel and the first to be defeated by Saul after he became king (1 Samuel 11:1-13)

Clues Down

1. The curtain located here was torn in two at Jesus' death (Matthew 27:50, 51)
2. A Babylonian deity (Isaiah 46:1, 2)
3. Rather than fight, "a slave

- of the Lord" must be ----- (2 Timothy 2:24)
4. This judge of Israel proved his loyalty to Jehovah by tearing down his father's altar to Baal (Judges 6: 25-32)
 5. High priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:1, 2; 3:2)
 6. How the nation of Israel felt after the inauguration of the temple built by Solomon (1 Kings 8:66)
 9. The lilies of the field do not do this (Matthew 6:28-30)
 12. Name given to the district of the 20 cities that Solomon gave to King Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings 9:10-13)
 13. The good news will be preached "to --- the nations" before the end comes (Matthew 24:14)
 14. "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no ----- that its builders have worked hard on it" (Psalm 127:1)
 15. Thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet (Psalm 119:97)
 16. This might be used to catch the animal in 20-down
 17. The state of being corpulent (Job 15:27)
 19. Part of a sewing needle (Luke 18:25)
 20. This animal was not to be yoked together with a bull (Deuteronomy 22:10)
 23. An extremity of the land of Moab (Isaiah 15:8)
 24. Repetition of a sound
 25. High regard (2 Kings 5:1)
 26. To add flavor or zest (Mark 9:50)
 27. A city in the Shephelah, or lowland region of Judah (Joshua 15:20, 33, 42)
 29. Strained out by the Pharisees (Matthew 23:23, 24)



CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS PAGE 27

Young People Ask...

Read? Why?

FIIFTEEN-year-old Pierre rarely reads. "Of course, I *do* read comic books," he says, "and sometimes dragster magazines." But other than that, his reading is mostly confined to assignments at his Paris school.

What about you? Could it be that reading, even a short article such as this, is a tedious ordeal? If so, you are not alone. The French TV weekly *Télérama* said, under the title "Read? You've Got to Be Kidding!": "Here is what [youths surveyed] had to say about reading. They were very frank. They read very little, if at all, for the simple reason that they find it boring." The article drew the dismal conclusion: "Hardly one in three can truly be termed a reader."

"What difference does it make?" you may ask. A great deal, for as 18th-century writer Sir Richard Steele stated: "Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body." And while you may take for granted this ability to scan a page of print and make sense of it, scientists are baffled by this remarkable skill. Reading involves such enormously complex interaction of eye and brain that a scientist was quoted in the magazine *Science Digest* as saying: "On the basis of computer models, we would predict that the eye can't read." Yet it does . . . speedily and efficiently.

But reading is far more than a scientific curiosity. It opens the doors of your

intellect and imagination. Without leaving your armchair you can be transported to the ends of the earth, meet exciting people, ponder eloquent poems, digest new and stimulating ideas, analyze current events and relive history. Far more importantly, however, reading is the key to understanding *the Bible*. Only by reading it can you know why we are here, where we are going and what we must do *now* to please God.

The Bible therefore encourages us to *read*—and read well! Joshua, who had the massive assignment of leading God's people into the Promised Land, was told to 'read God's Law in an undertone day and night.' (Joshua 1:8) Kings of Israel were likewise told to make a copy of God's Law and 'read in it all the days of their life, in order that they might learn to fear Jehovah their God so as to keep all the words of his Law and these regulations by doing them.' (Deuteronomy 17:19) Is such reading any less important for you today?

Why They Do Not Like to Read

Nevertheless, many youths approach the reading of a book with loathing. And some educators blame the way reading is taught in school. Perhaps you recall the monotony of reciting dull, lifeless "See Dick run"-type sentences when you were learning to read. Say researchers who spoke with over 300 children:

"Without exception, the children complained about how stupid the stories in their basic readers had been, and said how much they had hated having to read them. . . . These books are an insult to the child's intelligence." Matters may have improved little as you got older because you were then probably subjected to reading the so-called classics—books that for all their style seemed horribly dull or hard to understand. Reading thus became a dreaded chore.

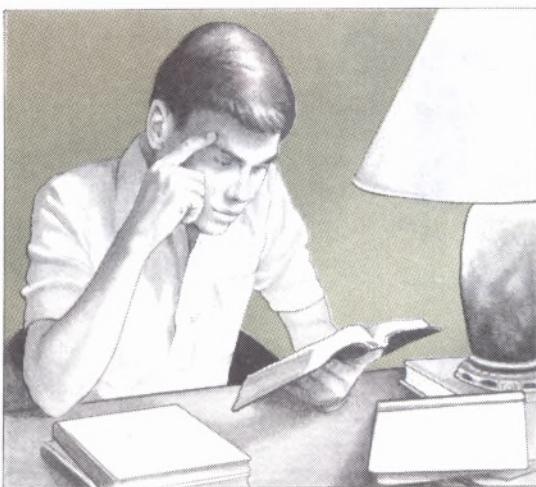
Nevertheless, if you are not an avid reader, schools may only be partly to blame. In the *Télérama* survey mentioned earlier, 21 percent of those interviewed explained their boredom with reading by saying: "I prefer watching television." With what effect? The report of the National Institute of Mental Health (United States) says: "The evidence now supports the opinion that heavy television viewing tends to displace time required to practice reading, writing, and other school-learning skills. . . . Television on the whole also seems to interfere with educational aspirations."

What has been the effect of all of this? An article in the *International Herald Tribune* stated: "A growing number of students across the country now arrive at high school without the reading skills necessary to study history, and over the last two decades history has virtually disappeared as a distinct subject in American high schools." The 1979 Ford Foundation report similarly concluded that 25 million Americans cannot read at all and 35 million more could be considered functionally illiterate.

But is reading all that necessary in our television and computer age? Yes, indeed! Why, a person unable to read and fill out a job application often cannot even get a

job as a manual laborer! And will even the most efficient of computers ever replace the human imagination? Reading stimulates your imagination by forcing you to visualize what you read. But as 12-year-old Debbie puts it, "TV doesn't leave much room for the imagination." And while TV can be educational, do you not still need books and magazines when you need specific information? Does TV allow you to stop and reread something you did not understand or reflect upon some impressive point? And even if computers seem more interesting than books, will you ever learn to operate one without a book of instructions?

So the ability to read continues to be an important part of life. And those whose reading abilities are so poor they cannot decipher a cookbook recipe or a simple bus schedule are at a serious disadvantage. It is so serious that one educator concluded: "Illiteracy is really a much greater functional handicap than is the loss of limbs."



Reading opens up vast fields of knowledge and allows you to become acquainted with your Creator

Improving Your Reading

Knowing that you *should* read doesn't make it easier, however. Becoming a proficient reader takes a lot of work. For example, you might know someone who plays the guitar well. Did you ever stop and think about how many hours of practice it took him to reach that stage? Just knowing how to produce notes or even knowing how to read music was not enough. He had to acquire speed and dexterity by doing exercises and practicing the scales. Hard work? Yes. But he has no regrets over the time spent.

Similarly, simply making out words is not sufficient to be a good reader. The French weekly *L'Express* showed, for example, that it is a "handicap" for anybody to be unable to read "a test adapted to his age at less than 8,000 to 10,000 words an hour." (Don't let this seemingly impressive pace worry you, for you are probably reading this article at least that fast.) On the other hand, if

you do not read fast enough (a minimum of 150 words a minute*), you will find yourself laboring over *words* instead of analyzing *ideas*. And if you continually have to regress because of losing the line of thought, you will find reading heavy going.

The trick, therefore, is to widen your eye span and read several words at a time. Refuse to let your eyes stop at each word. Don't silently mouth the words, as this is sure to slow you down. (Of course, at times, reading "in an undertone" is quite appropriate, as when digesting Scriptural material.) As you read, ask yourself if you understand what you are reading. Compare it with what you have learned about the subject from other sources. This will help you to maintain your interest and concentration.

Proper surroundings are also important. Sitting in a cozy armchair with music blaring from your stereo is not the way to tackle difficult reading matter;

nor is a stuffy room ideal. Try, instead, a table that has been cleared of anything that might distract, and a chair that will keep you alert.

The American philosopher H. D. Thoreau wrote: "How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book." That could soon be true in your case, especially should you acquire a taste for reading 'the Book of books,' God's Word, the Bible. (1 Peter 2:2) It will take time—and effort. But it is well worth it!



Attempting to read in a setting that is too distracting or too relaxing can be counterproductive

* If you are able to read this article within 8 minutes, you are reading at a rate of about 11,000 words an hour (187 words a minute)!

What a Tragic Flood Could Not Sweep Away

By "Awake!" correspondent in Spain

WELCOME rains began to fall over southeastern Spain, the rich agricultural areas of Valencia, Albacete and Murcia. The often dry region of Alicante also got its share. But the rain outstayed its welcome. In a few hours it rained more than it had in three years! A refreshing change was suddenly converted into a nightmare. The rivers began to flood as the rains swept down off the mountains.

Some 50 kilometers (31 mi) from the coast a new danger suddenly developed. The dam at the Tous reservoir began to crack. Too late for some, a warning was sent out. The dam gave way and a wall of water, in some places nearly 9 meters (30 ft) high, rushed down the valley of the river Júcar, swallowing up all in its path.

The flood left behind a trail of desolation: 60 towns were ravaged, 3,000 homes disappeared, another 8,000 were severely damaged and 5,000 vehicles were lost in the sea of mud. Some 140,000 people suffered loss in one way or another; in some cases it was the loss of dear ones. In the province of Valencia 42 dead and 19 missing was the count at one point. In the small town of Carcagente alone 11 people perished. More lives were lost in the provinces of Albacete and Alicante.

Eyewitness Reports

Jehovah's Witnesses in the zone were also greatly affected. Although no loss of

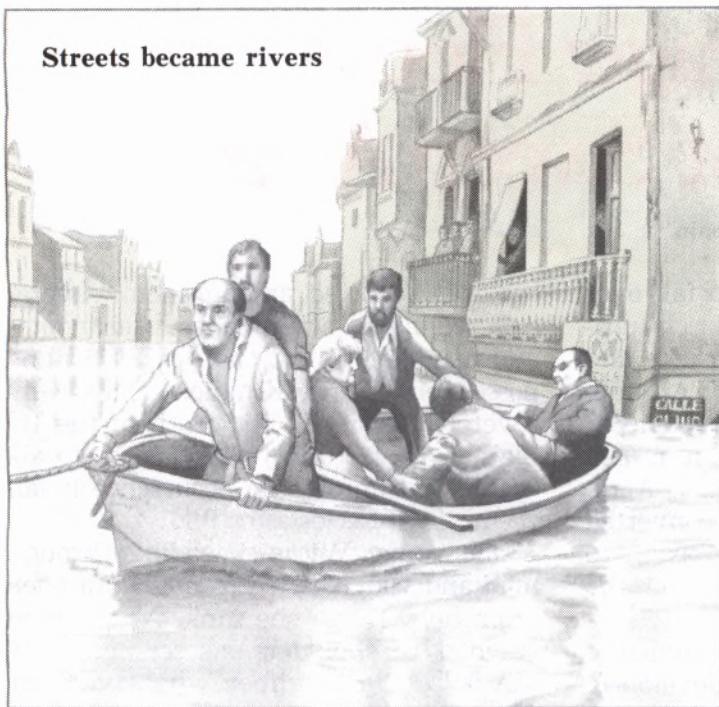
life was reported among them, several suffered injury, about 25 lost their homes and many more lost their furniture and possessions. Three Kingdom Halls were severely damaged. The truth of the Bible's saying certainly came home to all: "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all."—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

One young Witness, wading through mud and water, failed to notice an open drain hole. Down she sank. As the mud reached her shoulders, her screams drew the help of a neighbor who saved her life.

Another Witness who was in the flood zone relates: "It was about two o'clock in the afternoon and we were just finishing eating when suddenly a neighbor appeared at the door to warn us that a great avalanche of water was bearing down on our town. Alarmed, we went out on the street. We saw coming toward us a huge river of water. We dashed back into the house, shut the door and tried with sacks and other things to stop the water from getting through . . . but the water, with overpowering force, passed over the barrier.

"At that moment we saw and felt the water creeping up our legs. We tried to save our books and other belongings, but the water entered so rapidly it prevented us. Before we realized it, the water was swirling around our waists. We rushed to save our lives and with great effort got to the upper floor of our dwelling.

Streets became rivers



From there we watched as the water rose to almost cover that floor too. We passed the night praying to Jehovah and wishing that daylight would soon come. They were anxious hours!"

Aid Rushed In

Local organizations, such as the fire departments and the Red Cross, as well as many other volunteers, swiftly rushed in to help the affected region. The day after the devastating flood, an aid committee, appointed by the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain, also managed to establish contact with some of the Witnesses in the affected areas. Two days later, with great difficulty, a truck entered Alcira loaded with food, clothing and other provisions that the Valencia congregations had collected to help their needy spiritual brothers.

Alcira, with a population of 37,000, was one of the worst-hit cities, since it is situated on the banks of the river Júcar, and is only 14 meters (46 ft) above sea level. In some of the towns the water reached a height of some 8 meters (26 ft) above street level! When the waters subsided, everything was converted into a bog, with more than half a meter (1½ ft) of foul-smelling mud.

Because of the traffic difficulties and the danger of epidemics from the rotting carcasses of animals, the authorities controlled access to the worst-hit towns. However, the aid committee got permission to enter the blocked areas to attend to the most urgent needs of the congregations of Witnesses in the zone. In addition to a supply of food and clothing, it was necessary to clean the homes of the layer of mud that had entered. In the first weekend after the catastrophe, some 200 members of the congregations in Valencia city and province helped in that work. Others who were not Witnesses were also aided, such as neighbors and those who lived near Kingdom Halls. Help came from all over Spain as the brothers responded to the need in different ways. Many Witnesses with specialized ability voluntarily offered to help restore homes and Kingdom Halls.

The Vital Role of the Elders

Up-to-date congregation records, indicating the complete address of where

everyone lived, were a great help in reaching the needy ones. In time of emergency, that information is essential. A circuit overseer who helped in the flood zone added: "The presence of an elder in the congregation who goes looking for the brothers is a matchless means of encouragement and comfort. In difficult times like these there is no substitute for good, faithful elders as a source of comfort and strength."

He then drew attention to another vital need in time of distress. "On Wednesday, October 27, a week after the disaster, we were able to hold our first meeting with the Carcagente Congregation. Since the Kingdom Hall was damaged, we used a private home. It was a heartwarming experience. The brothers entered the apartment and saw one another for the first time since the flood had struck. Their eyes filled with tears and they tenderly embraced.

"The meetings played an important role in strengthening the brothers. I believe that the continuing of regular theocratic activities gave the brothers strength from Jehovah. Not even a flood that reached to the ceiling is strong enough to sweep away our theocratic habits. The meetings have been a first step toward a normal life, raising the morale of the brothers.

"At the meetings arrangements were made for preaching activity. This, although limited by the circumstances, helped the brothers to feel that they continued to be ministers. These three factors—the help offered by the local elders, the meetings and the preaching—can be seen as provisions from Jehovah himself, 'the God of all comfort.'" —2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

Right Attitude Essential

These floods that took place in October 1982 helped the Witnesses to see the importance of one's attitude toward material things. If a person's whole trust is in possessions, then in a disaster like this everything is lost. As one Witness commented: "The apostle Paul's expression 'a lot of refuse' is really appropriate. Because that is what our possessions really are—you work all your life to get them and in half an hour a bit of water reduces them to refuse. Then they are piled up in the street and rot."—Philippians 3:8.

Yet the Witnesses, in spite of their material losses, recognize that they have something that the most powerful flood cannot sweep away—the love and solidarity of their brothers who came to their aid. They also have the privilege of sharing with others the encouraging hope of God's Kingdom rule for mankind, as well as the blessing of meeting together to build up their faith and trust in Jehovah.

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

1	S	Y	N	A	G	O	G	U	E	5	J	6	M
2	A	E	E	I			7	C	R	E	A	T	E
3	N	A	B	O	N	I	D	U	S	S		R	
4	C	O	T	E			10	P	A	S	H	H	U
5	T	L	O	O	I	I	11	U	L	Y			Y
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From Our Readers

Cocaine, Dangerous Drug?

I wish to express my appreciation for the article "Cocaine—Dangerous Drug or Innocent Pastime?" (August 8, 1983). It was the most truthful, no-nonsense report I've ever read, not only on the problem of cocaine use itself but also on the evidence regarding addiction and the danger involved in using this "seductive" drug even one time. I am a former cocaine addict and dealer, and I only wish that more people would learn from this article.

K. D., California

This is to express my appreciation for the article on "Cocaine." My husband left his three children and me one and a half years ago because of cocaine addiction. His life is near ruin at present. The article really hit home, and my hopes are that this might help him to have hope. I've read every article I could find on this subject. This one surpassed them all. You have the facts and used insight.

J. S., Illinois

Video Games

Thank you for your article on video games. (September 8, 1983) I've just finished going over the article with my children. . . . They decided that when their father offers them quarters to go to play video games, they will suggest to him that the money be used for a "family fund for entertainment," one that can grow and be used to promote a wholesome family activity.

L. K., Massachusetts

My son and I read with great interest the article on violent video games. Even though we didn't have any 'shoot-'em-up-type' games, we still found that playing what we had was very detrimental to us—mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. And these were the nice games! Just to show what playing such did to us: I was playing a game like tennis one evening, the baby started crying and my son was supposed to be looking after her. I got so upset I swore at my son. While I used to have a foul mouth, I had not sworn in more than ten years. That made me realize what my husband had been saying all along—these games were turning my son and me into aggressive and selfish people. We sold the game with all the tapes and a week hadn't gone by when all three of us noticed the complete change in the family. We were a loving, caring, sharing family again. I guess this all sounds a little too dramatic, but it really is true.

B. S., Maryland

In publishing these articles (November 8, 1982; September 8, 1983), we did not intend to imply that video games per se are always dangerous or even that every arcade has a very bad environment. But we do believe that very often there will be found in the arcades an unwholesome environment that people interested in guarding their spiritual and moral standards will want to avoid. Further, there is not only the unwholesome influence of the violent games but also the fascination with the electronic games in themselves that can get too great a hold on some people, with undesirable results, even as the above letter shows. These are the reasons for the cautions we have published on this matter.—ED.

Watching the World



"Shocking Lack of Knowledge"

● "A shocking lack of knowledge about the Bible," is the way world-renowned pollster George Gallup, Jr., puts it, and he says it is "time to sound the alarm." He went on to say "that eight out of 10 people surveyed consider themselves Christians" but that "only 4 out of 10 people know that . . . Jesus Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount." Commenting on Gallup's report, *The Toronto Star* adds that "40 per cent of the U.S. population is 'unchurched,' meaning they have not attended church in the past six months," except for special holidays. Gallup was speaking to the Seventh All-American Council of the Orthodox Church of America at their week-long meeting where they were discussing "Church Growth." The council apparently was not emphasizing Bible knowledge.

Gigantic Resettling

● Indonesia has planned to resettle 2.5 million Javanese on some of its 13,700 islands by the end of this year. Why? Because 91 million people live on Java, which is only about the size of Louisiana. Feeding that

many in so small an area is a formidable task. Most Javanese are farmers, but the farms are said to be so tiny that they are measured by the meter. Yet most farmers do not own land nor do they have enough to care for their own needs. The transmigration program "without a doubt beats all," marvels *The Wall Street Journal*. The government promises "a parcel of land, a wooden shanty, food for a year, seeds for two years and an assemblage of garden tools, kitchen pots and mosquito nets." Indonesia plans to move four million more people by 1988.

Astronaut Problems

● The diary kept by Soviet astronaut Valentin Lebedev during a seven-month flight revealed what life was like during his 3,300 orbits of the earth. According to the Communist Party newspaper *Pravda*, he wrote: "I am apprehensive about myself, whether I will be able to live and work so long with my colleague, whether I will always be able to keep my composure and self-control." Later the diary revealed his most difficult problem was "keeping calm in dealing with ground control"

because of "pent-up fatigue." Sometimes he did not sleep well or did not sleep at all, and he began to complain mildly about the food and difficulty in keeping clean. His diary indicates that after five months his concern had increased: "I am humming tunes and pacing up and down the station. I have begun to wonder if there will ever come a time when we will be back on earth." Homesickness was also a real problem.

Value of a Smile

● Scientific research confirms the Bible proverb: "A joyful heart has a good effect on the countenance." (Proverbs 15:13) "Just the act of flexing facial muscles into the characteristic expressions of joy or other emotions, the researchers found, can produce effects on the nervous system that normally go with those emotions," reports *The New York Times*. Dr. Ekman, the principal researcher, says the finds are quite surprising. He believes that the movement of facial muscles is tied in with the nervous system, which controls heart rate, breathing and other vital involuntary functions. The article reveals that actors know that "acting out an emotion can have physical effects."

Canaanite Fortress Discovered

● Israeli archaeologists have discovered what they believe was "the base of a huge stone fortress that served as the principal public building of Jerusalem in the time of the Canaanites before King David conquered the city," reports the *Los Angeles Times*. Professor Yigal Shiloh, the Hebrew University archaeologist in charge of excavation in Jerusalem, asserts that King David built his citadel on the foundation of the Canaanite fortress, which he says was more than

250 square yards (210 sq m) in area. The ruins were found in the area "now known as the City of David," which is just south of where Solomon built his temple and lies outside the present Old City wall built by the Ottoman Turks.

Proper Dress Adds Dignity

● In order to maintain an atmosphere of dignity and distinction in Brazil's Legislative Assembly, deputy Ricardo Izar recently presented a resolution requiring all male members to be properly dressed in suit and tie. Those failing to do so would not be allowed to remain in the assembly. Why? "The appearance in public of members of parliament," he said, "should be according to the standard of sobriety and decorum that shows that they have self-respect." The exercise of parliamentary activity, he added, imposes upon the deputy the use of dress fitting the solemnity of the House. Apparently Mr. Izar had in mind the fact that some of his peers come to sessions in blue jeans and T-shirts, trying to appear as laborers, while members who were formerly manual laborers present themselves in neat attire. Newspaper editorialists were quick to point out that while adherence to etiquette by statesmen is appreciated, compliance with ethical standards is even more so.

Massive Sacrifice

● On September 17, Muslims commemorated Abraham's sacrifice of a ram instead of his son. *The Economist* of London reported that "1.2 million animals, flown in from Australia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Argentina and Uruguay" were to be killed "on behalf of 2 million Haj pilgrims." What is done with all the meat? "Most is burnt and buried," says the report, "but efforts are being made to find

a way of using it." This year some 100,000 carcasses, yielding about 17,000 tons of meat, were to be chilled and flown to refugee camps in Sudan, Pakistan and Djibouti. It has been proposed that the meat be frozen with liquid nitrogen next year.

Porn—"Liberating Force"?

● "Quite intelligent people argued then [10 or 15 years ago] that pornography would be a sexually liberating force," reported *The Toronto Star*, but "instead it has turned bitter, violent and darkly angry." According to this article, the idea was that once pornography was freely available "it would quickly exhaust the interest of its consumers." Rather, the desire for it was found to be "insatiable" and more people want it. People of 20 years ago "never imagined in their worst nightmares" the outcome of their liberal attitude toward pornography, comments the *Star*.

Monkeys in Business

● Thailand may open a school for monkeys and send graduates to do agricultural work in other countries, reports United Press International. After witnessing 40 monkey contestants climbing coconut trees "with inhuman agility," Niphond Bunyapataro, governor of the province of Surat Thani, asserts that "monkeys make ideal fruit-pickers." The top monkey picked eight coconuts in 30 seconds. Its proud owner said he rejected an offer of \$1,300 (U.S.) for the monkey because on a good day it "can pick up to 1,400 coconuts." The governor suggested awarding graduation certificates and sending the trained monkeys to Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and other countries.

Coconut-Tree Wood

● The island of Jamaica has found disease-killed coconut

trees valuable for lumber. Thousands of the trees are being turned into wood that is said to rival mahogany in density and cedar in strength. Coconut wood can be used for making furniture, for handicrafts and in construction of floors and wall paneling. Guy Symes, director of the Fidco Company that already uses coconut wood, says that it "is a wasting asset." Making use of trees killed by the lethal "yellowing disease" will help the economy as well as get rid of the dead trees.

Determined Dog

● Having fallen down a flight of stairs in his mountain home ten miles (16 km) from help, 73-year-old Briton Brian Miller recalls that "Lady (his collie dog) was [his] only hope." Lady, being unable to rouse her unconscious master, ran ten miles to a neighbor's house and arrived at midnight, "barking her head off," said the neighbor. He added, "When I went outside, she grabbed the sleeve of my robe and started tugging. I knew something had to be wrong." The neighbor took the dog and drove to Miller's mountain cabin and took Miller to a hospital in London "just in time," said the doctors, to save his life.

Never-Forgotten Quake

● An estimated 16 million people in Japan participated in an earthquake drill on September 1, 1983. Drills staged in Tokyo and nine surrounding prefectures included a traffic halt, schoolchildren scrambling beneath their desks for protection, then evacuation to playgrounds. Why such a gigantic drill? To mark the 60th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1, 1923. This struck Tokyo and surrounding areas, killing 142,800 and engulfing

the city in flames. Seismologists warn "that there is grave danger of another great quake."

Homing-Pigeon Theory

● How homing pigeons find their way home has long been discussed. The latest theory, according to a four-year study by the Max Planck Institute of Ethology of Seewiesen, Federal Republic of Germany, "seems to confirm an unlikely-sounding theory first proposed 12 years ago—that the birds use their sense of smell to find their way home." The initial experiments establish, says the report, "that birds whose olfactory membranes were knocked out with anaesthetics or whose nostrils were plugged, could not find their way home over long distances."

Goat Problems

● "A two-ton ice cream truck careened 215 feet [66 m] down a hill into a hickory tree—with a nanny goat at the wheel," reports the New York *Daily News*. The driver had stopped to take an order and left the door open. So the inquisitive goat hopped inside, accidentally releasing the brake and thus setting the truck in motion. The damage to the truck was \$5,000 (U.S.), but the goat was uninjured.

Handgun Safety?

● "Of 20,053 homicides recorded by the FBI in 1981, half were caused by handguns," cites Betsy Gotbaum, executive director, National Alliance Against Violence, in a letter to *The Wall Street Journal*. She add-

ed: "Fifty-five percent were committed by family, friends or acquaintances of the victim. There are some 800 accidental deaths due to handguns each year in the U.S., with one child killed per day. An estimated 6,600 Americans each year commit suicide with a handgun." In Washington, D.C., where there exists a Firearms Act, domestic homicides in families were said to be cut in half, while in nearby Baltimore they continue to increase. Gotbaum also pointed out that a person attempting to use a handgun for self-protection is "liable to sustain injuries that are five times more serious," and those resisting a robbery are "eight times more likely to be killed than individuals who do not resist."

the Lord's commandments. In the Psalms, David said, "I have stored up your word in my heart, so that I might not sin against you" (Psalms 119:11). The apostle Paul also spoke of the importance of God's Word in his life. He said, "I have committed to memory all the commandments of Christ" (1 Timothy 5:18). The Word of God is the key to spiritual growth.

God's Word is also a powerful tool for defeating Satan. In the Book of Job, the Devil said to God, "There is still one more thing I can do to test your servant Job. If you let me, I will make him curse you to your face." God allowed the Devil to do just that. Job lost his wife, his children, his home, and his health. But he did not curse God. Instead, he said, "The Lord gave it, the Lord has taken it away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). Job's attitude was based on his knowledge of God's Word. He knew that God's promises were true. He also knew that God's Word was powerful enough to overcome even the Devil.

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