

Awake!

MAY 8, 1983



**Does Your Child Have
Learning Problems?**

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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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Feature Articles

It is claimed that hundreds of thousands of children have learning disabilities. Could many of these be cases of teaching disabilities or parent disabilities? How can you determine if a true learning disability exists? What efforts might be put forth to help in such cases? The following articles will provide valuable information

What's Wrong With Marty?	3
Does Your Child Have Learning Problems?	4
Parents—What Can You Do?	7
A Mother's Story	11

Also in This Issue

A Bird of a Different Feather—Hurricane Iwa	14
South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church —A House Divided	16
Young People Ask . . . Why Don't My Parents Understand Me?	20
Word-Search Game	23
Are You Thankful for Green Plants?	24
From Our Readers	28
Watching the World	29

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What's Wrong With Marty?

TWO-YEAR-OLD Marty was like a perpetual-motion machine—he couldn't sit still. He didn't go to bed until midnight but got up early in the morning—raring to go! He not only got into things he shouldn't have but also seemed to break everything. His coordination was so poor that he was always tripping over his own feet and bumping into things. "That's a boy for you," others would tell his mother. "He'll get over it."

But he didn't. At five, Marty had considerable difficulty expressing himself, compared to other five-year-olds. He had trouble formulating thoughts in his mind. When he turned six, he couldn't write the letters of the alphabet and he couldn't identify colors. When he started school, the problems multiplied. He couldn't sit still. He couldn't seem to focus on group activity, even briefly. Yet the teacher described him as a sensitive boy, trying hard to do right.

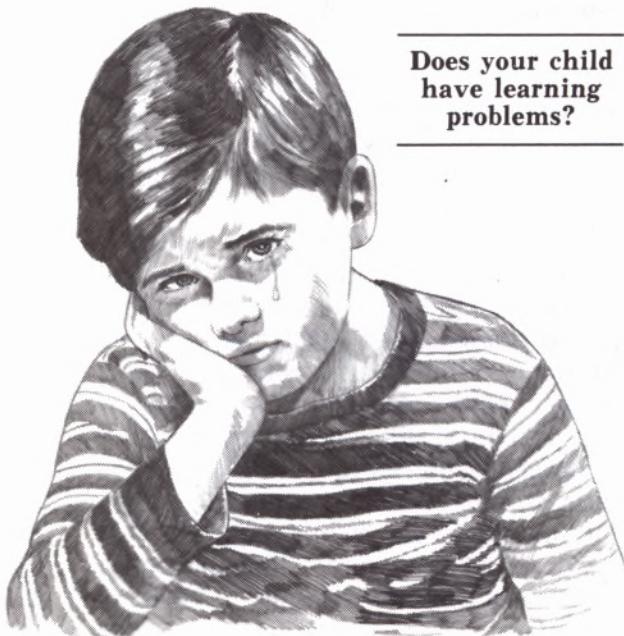
Marty was very easily distracted too. Why, he couldn't walk from the kitchen to the bathroom to wash his hands without doing many other things along the way. And then when he got there he had forgotten why he went!

Then there were the temper

tantrums—uncontrolled and often frightening displays of anger, wild crying, stamping and kicking the floor. Whenever Marty's parents asked him to do something, it was always the same thing—he didn't listen. And the frequent spankings didn't seem to help either. Marty's mother was at her wit's end!

A bad boy? No. Mentally retarded? No. Well, then, below average intelligence? No, in fact he has normal intelligence. Then what is his problem? Actually, Marty has a learning disability.

**Does your child
have learning
problems?**



Does Your Child Have Learning Problems?

Hundreds of thousands of children are being diagnosed as learning disabled. Is the label being misapplied to far too many children? How can you know if your child has a learning disability?



LEARNING DISABILITY is a term that has become popular in the last decade or so. It describes a variety of conditions that make it difficult for normally intelligent children to master one or more of the skills essential to learning. Such children have normal vision and hearing and no obvious physical handicap. Yet there is a gap between potential and achievement.

The cause? Unfortunately, research is inconclusive. But some findings point to a malfunctioning of one area or another of the brain caused by: trauma before, during or after birth; premature birth; disease of the mother during pregnancy; long labors or difficult deliveries. Thus, learning disabilities are often associated with minimal brain dysfunction. They may involve a defect in perception, that is, the child may have difficulty interpreting information coming in through his senses. There is also evidence that

the problem may be hereditary, as indicated by the high incidence of boys over girls with this problem.

Signs and Symptoms

Whatever the cause, a child with learning disability has a very real problem. And it can manifest itself in a variety of ways. Of course, no single pattern of behavior typifies the learning-disabled child. No two children learn or behave in exactly the same way. Following are some of the symptoms, which can vary from mild to severe.

- ***Visual Perception Problems:*** "I can't see the blackboard," the child says. Yet vision tests reveal that he can see normally. Is he making excuses for poor work? Well, if he has a learning disability, he may have visual perception problems. That is, he may have difficulty interpreting what he sees. Although we see with our eyes, we understand

what we see, not with our eyes, but with our brain.

Thus reading and writing may pose problems for him. In reading he may skip words. Words that begin with the same sound may be substituted one for another ("skip" for "skirt"). He may invert letters as he reads ("stop" for "spot"). In writing he may reverse letters ("b" for "d") or whole words ("saw" for "was").

● *Auditory Perception Problems:* "I didn't hear you," he replies when you ask him why he didn't do what you said. Yet hearing tests reveal that he can hear normally. Did he really not hear you? Or is he being difficult, willfully disobedient?

If he has auditory perception problems, then in a sense he is deaf—internally. He may hear only jumbled-up versions of other people's speech. The "static" that he hears confuses him and may cause him to react in an aggressive manner. If given several instructions, he may in actuality hear only one. But, then, at other times all are heard and perceived by his brain. A sort of hit-and-miss affair.

● *Language Problems:* We learn to express ourselves from the things we hear. But a child with auditory perception problems has probably never heard in the full or normal sense. As a result, he cannot express his own ideas well. Words and ideas sometimes get turned around. "Mommy, the car is going backward," he may say. But the car is really going forward.

● *Visual and Auditory Memory Problems:* Visual and auditory memory difficulties often follow a child who has either visual or auditory perception problems. Thus, he may not be able to remember what he has been told orally, or the order in which he was told to do things.

When a lack of visual memory exists, he will have trouble remembering what he reads and where he puts things.

● *Lost in Time and Space:* The child with a learning disability may be lost *in space*, that is, the concept of up-down, left-right, above-below or in-out. Simply put, how can he understand that the shelf is *up above*, if he doesn't know for sure that his feet are *down below*? Or if you ask him to put the paper *into* the box, he puts it *under* the box.

He tends to have a poor concept of his own body; he cannot figure out how much space it takes up. As a result, he is frequently misjudging himself. Little wonder that he is often awkward and clumsy—far more than other children his own age.

His *timing* is usually off too. He seems bewildered by yesterday, today and tomorrow. You may wonder if he will ever learn the sequence of the days of the week or the months of the year.

● *Poor Muscle Coordination:* A learning-disabled youngster may also display a lack of fine motor skills. For him, cutting, coloring and drawing may be extremely difficult. He can't tie his shoes, dress himself or cut his own food long after other children his own age have mastered these skills. Sports are difficult for him—he can't coordinate the bat and the ball.

● *Rigid and Inflexible:* The learning-disabled child tends to become rigid and inflexible. He wants what he wants when he wants it, no matter what is going on around him. He doesn't see the wholeness of things; he sees the details and misses the picture. He becomes extremely anxious when the normal routine is disrupted.

"Can't You Do Something With That Child?"

Is it any wonder that such a child would be given to anger, frustration and temper tantrums? After all, he may "hear" and "see" only sketches of information. He may be uncoordinated and called stupid by his classmates. Worst of all, he is perhaps not understood by his parents or teacher.

Granted, it is not easy to live with a child whose perception and timing may be off so much of the time. Such a parent may be given to anxiety and frustration more often than other parents. Sadly, though, their plight often elicits criticism. "Can't you do something with that child?" a critical onlooker may ask.

The parent may feel that *something* is wrong with his child, but he can't figure out what. Yet, early detection is important. If untreated, such a child may become withdrawn and alienated, never reaching his full potential.

"Doctor, My Child Has All the Symptoms"

So a worried parent may say while clutching a magazine article about learning disabilities. Literally hundreds of thousands of children are being diagnosed as "learning disabled." Some children, of course, truly are. But could it be that the label is being applied indiscriminately to far too many youngsters?

"Many children are being labelled LD [learning disabled] who are nothing of the kind," says psychiatrist Thomas P. Millar. Why the mislabeling? "No-fault parenthood" is one reason, ex-

plains Millar. The anxious parent says: "The reason my child is not learning well is not that I have been an inadequate parent. No, the reason is that he has a learning disability." But does he? Or could it be "parent disability"?

Or, perhaps, "teaching disability"? Says Dr. Barbara Bateman, a recognized authority on learning disabilities: "Learning disability has become an incredibly successful excuse for the failure of the public schools to adequately teach those children who truly need good teaching."

Another commonly used term is hyperactivity (or, hyperkinesis), which is often associated with learning disabilities.* What is hyperactivity? According to a report published by the Academy of Orthomolecular Psychiatry, it is "physical activity which appears driven—as if there were an 'inner tornado'—so that the activity is beyond the child's control, as compared to other children." The symptoms? Short attention span, easily distracted, impulsive movement from place to place, difficulty in concentrating on one thing, inability to sit still.

* It must be acknowledged that while a high percentage of learning-disabled children are hyperactive, not all hyperactive children have learning problems.



Frustrated—Why?

"That sounds like my child," a parent may say. But don't be hasty in diagnosing your child. The fact that he is restless, energetic or fidgety does not necessarily mean that he is hyperactive. There may be some other cause—allergy to a certain food, lack of sleep, or a hearing or vision problem.

Of course, learning disabilities along with hyperactivity are all too real, though the numbers may be exaggerated. What should you do if you suspect that your

child has a learning disability? Seek professional advice. A child should not be labeled "learning disabled" until he has undergone careful testing.

Have a frank discussion with your child's teacher. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Be certain that it is a learning disability, not a teaching disability. Find out what it is and what can be done about it. Sometimes simply *understanding* a problem can help. Once the diagnosis has been made, then what?

Parents —What Can You Do?

NOTHING works!" "He just doesn't get it!" So the frustrated parent says. How can you get through to your learning-disabled child? And what can you do about hyperactivity if that is his problem?

A child with a learning problem needs what all other children need—to be loved, understood and accepted by his parents. But he may require extra time and attention. He may sense that there is "something wrong" with him. He needs to be reassured over and over again that he is intelligent, not mentally retarded. He just needs more time to learn than others do.

In many localities, specialized educational programs are available. It takes special teaching skills to teach a child that does not learn in a normal way. Often this is difficult for parents; emotions get in the way. In some areas there are

organizations dedicated to helping the parents of such children.

Besides this, there is much that you, the parent, can do to improve the home situation. To the extent that you make the home environment one that is orderly, filled with love and firmness for what's right, your child will be secure and happy. At the same time, keep in mind that your child's behavior problems may be a direct result of his learning disability; he may be acting out his frustrations. A few suggestions are offered here to help *control* not *cure* your learning-disabled child.

If the child has *auditory perceptual problems*, first be sure that when speaking to him you have his attention. Then speak slowly, not giving too many instructions at one time. Ask him to repeat what you said. Remember, he doesn't always "hear" you. In fact, such chil-

dren frequently mishear sounds: "Oh, I thought you said *horse*," but actually the word was "*house*." You might also try writing down instructions and tucking them inside his pocket. He may have to walk around with a pocketful of in-

"Your child wants to learn! . . . His bad behavior is a normal reaction to frustration. . . . Bad behavior is his way of saying, 'Look at me! I've got a learning problem. I need help!'"

—Dr. Robert D. Carpenter

structions, but at least he will remember what to do!

Disciplining a child with a learning disability who is perhaps hyperactive is by no means easy. Recalls Marty's mother: "I decided Marty couldn't learn right from wrong. I began excusing his behavior. But at the end of that year I had worse problems on my hands, and he had no respect for me."

So don't give up! As Proverbs 29:15 wisely recommends: "The rod and reproof are what give wisdom; but a boy let on the loose will be causing his mother shame." But how can you get through to such a child?

"When it comes to behavior, I strive to know my daughter well enough to distinguish between *can't* and *won't* reactions," says Sandra, whose daughter has a learning disability. "Then I know if I need to exercise *understanding* or *firmness* in handling the problem."

Having such insight will demonstrate to the child your *fairness* and *resoluteness for what's right*. This can be ex-

tremely effective in getting through to him.

What about punishment? A punishment of long duration, such as no television for a month, is usually ineffective. Why? Because by the middle of the month he will not remember what the punishment was for. But warning him that a trip to the zoo (or something else he is looking forward to) will be canceled if he continues to misbehave is usually more effective. Of course, he must know that you mean what you say. You must be *consistent*. "Just let your word *Yes* mean Yes, your *No*, No," the Bible recommends. (Matthew 5:37) Does it really work?

Here's what Marty's mother reported: "Whenever he misbehaved, he was made to sit in the same isolated spot for four minutes. If he did not carry out directions in a reasonable amount of time, if he grabbed toys away from others or if he had a temper tantrum, out to the spot he went. This was extremely effective."

Something else is very important: *routine* and *organization*. They provide the needed structure for these children. Routine and organization lessen confusion. A regular time for meals, homework, getting up and going to bed, and so forth, will help them to form good habits. And once you have established a schedule, try to stick to it.

A word about your child's emotional well-being. As noted in the previous article, the learning-disabled child often is given to more frustration and disappointment than are other children. What can you do? Children learn much by example. So if your child sees that you can laugh at your own mistakes, it can help him to do the same with his. Getting him

to verbalize his feelings can also help. If you share your feelings with him, it will make it easier for him to share his feelings with you.

What About Controlling Hyperactivity?

While not all youngsters with a learning disability are hyperactive, a significantly high percentage are. This, of course, compounds an already difficult situation. As with learning disability, hyperactivity can range from mild to severe. At times restlessness can be controlled by a change of pace, simply moving to a different activity. Beyond this, how can hyperactivity best be controlled?

Drug Management: In some cases amphetamines (stimulant drugs) are prescribed. Stimulant drugs? Yes.

Paradoxically, they tend to have a calming effect on hyperactive children, bringing activity within normal range and improving concentration. Should you consider this form of treatment, you will want to weigh the possible side effects: nervousness, insomnia, hypersensitivity, dizziness, palpitations, loss of appetite and stunted growth. Some authorities recommend careful use of such drugs under a physician's supervision. Others, however, are even more cautious, indicating that not enough is known about the safety and effectiveness of long-term use of stimulant drugs in treating hyperactivity. So you must decide.

Eliminate Food Additives: Beginning in 1973, Dr. Ben Feingold, pediatric allergist at

the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center in San Francisco, suggested that a diet free of artificial food additives and colorings could dramatically improve the behavior of at least 50 percent of hyperactive children. It was believed that these children have allergic reactions to food additives and colorings, causing adverse effects in behavior.

But since 1973 a controversy has raged, with the experts volleying back and forth over this issue. Summing up the controversy are the comments of Dr. Stanford Miller of the Food and Drug Administration: "Studies suggest there is some kind of link between behavior in some sets of children and food components, but based on the evidence we have, I have



**Try to distinguish between
can't and won't reactions**

to conclude that the jury is still out on the question."

Megavitamin Therapy: The megavitamin therapy has been used in treating some children with hyperactivity. Treatment consists of large doses of vitamins, the elimination of sugar and the careful maintenance of proper nutrition. In some cases, a significant decrease in hyperactivity has been the result.

But, again, the experts don't all agree. Some claim that there seems to be no effect of megavitamins upon learning disabilities or hyperactivity, warning that there can be health problems caused by the side effects of high dosages of vitamins. How do they explain the improvement in children who are treated with the megavitamin therapy? Increased attention of the family toward the child's problems and the determination to help him or her, they claim.

On the other hand, proponents of the megavitamin therapy argue that the side effects that sometimes occur are dose related and subside with decrease of the dosage.

It would be advisable to consult with a physician, especially a pediatrician, in both diagnosing and carrying out any of the above-mentioned therapies.

Clearly, there is no easy remedy. But one thing appears certain. Learning disabilities and hyperactivity are real maladies caused by one or more factors other than a child's own reluctance to be "still" or his refusal to learn. Such a child needs special help to meet

his special needs. Above all, he needs a parent who understands his "difference." This presents a real challenge for parents, as the following article shows.

What about the future? With proper training, many such children can lead normal, productive lives. Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein are among those who successfully dealt with learning problems.

But there is even greater reason for hope. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy clearly indicates that we are living in "the last days." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) We are fast nearing the end of this wicked system of things. What will follow? A righteous New Order of God's making wherein handicaps such as learning disabilities will be done away with. Imagine that! No longer will there be a gap between potential and achievement. No longer will children such as Marty have to feel like a square peg trying to fit into a round hole.—2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-4.

He needs reassurance



A Mother's Story

WE WERE in our middle 20's, and now we were about to become parents. Oh, how we wanted this child! I was careful about my diet, had good prenatal care and did all I could to ensure a normal, healthy baby.

At the onset of labor we excitedly went to the hospital. But how long we waited! After more than 24 hours, the doctor, afraid that the baby might be showing signs of stress, ordered drug-induced stimulation of labor.

Several hours later I awoke to learn that we had a baby girl. When we first saw Jessica, how thrilled we were! We noticed, though, that she was very red —unlike the other newborn. The doctors assured us that she was normal and healthy; it was a temporary condition caused by the difficult delivery.

The first three months with any infant can be most taxing. But Jessica always seemed to be screaming for long periods of time. The doctor dismissed it, saying, "She'll get over it." At about six months of age Jessica started crawling. She seemed filled with energy, quickly moving from one thing to another. Observers would say, "Watching her gives me a headache."

As Jessica approached two years of age, things worsened. She was always falling and hurting herself. She cried easily and often for no apparent reason. Mealtime was usually a tearful scene. Worst of all were the temper tantrums. "Why," we would ask, "just because we said, 'You can't have another cookie'?"

On the lighter side, her behavior did

have its amusing aspects. Why, once in a department store she got into the store window, undressed the mannequin and started to carry it away! 'But how does she think of such things?' we wondered.

Then there were the disasters at home, constant messes in big order. I was wearing thin. How could I keep up with this child who was only two but didn't go to sleep until midnight and got up at dawn? Even observers were saying, "She sure is a handful." We tried to be firm, but why wasn't anything working?

Hyperactive?

About this time a visiting friend, seeing our plight, told us that her child was hyperactive and had we ever thought about seeing a doctor who specialized in treating hyperactivity. She was convinced that her son had been helped, and she urged us to do something.

Hyperactive? we wondered. We did not want to jump to a wrong conclusion. But after a lengthy consultation with the doctor and some observation of Jessica, sure enough, she was diagnosed as hyperactive. The doctor recommended the removal of sugar from her diet and that she take certain vitamins, suggesting that the lack of various nutrients in her body was causing a chemical imbalance, which produced hyperactivity.

Reflecting, we had long observed that after eating certain foods, especially "junk foods," Jessica appeared supercharged. We now felt that at long last we had something to go on. We began keeping a log of foods eaten and behavior. Sugar

alone didn't seem to be the culprit; some foods with sugar didn't seem to affect her.

Shortly thereafter we stumbled on an article in a newspaper about an allergist and his recent book on how artificial

We had long observed that after eating "junk foods" Jessica appeared supercharged

colorings and flavorings had been linked to hyperactivity. Now that seemed more specific, we thought. In reading the book, it seemed to make a lot of sense. Could this be Jessica's problem?

Our suspicions apparently proved correct. Eliminating all artificial colors and flavors produced dramatic results! Jessica slowed down greatly. It was as if her motor, once racing too fast for her body, was now down to its normal rate.

Eliminating artificial colors and flavors, that's easy enough, we thought . . . until we started reading labels! They are everywhere! Add to that, eating in restaurants, at homes of friends—it is no easy task. However, there were times when Jessica would eat a confirmed "artificial" and nothing would happen. Thus, she did not prove to be allergic to every artificial coloring and flavor.

Problems at School

Time passed. When Jessica was four and a half, her brother Christopher was born. We thought we were finally settling down to a more normal life. People noticed the change in Jessica's behavior. For the first time we were beginning to see her real personality come through.

Now a new dimension was surfacing. We already knew that Jessica was very clumsy, often falling and habitually spilling things; she was always covered with scrapes and bruises. But she would soon be starting school. We were concerned. Why, at five years of age, did she have such a hard time holding a crayon and coloring on paper? Would she have difficulty learning?

School started. Excited and happy, Jessica was so eager to learn. And so began the coloring, pasting and cutting that go with kindergarten. But her obvious difficulty with these skills was soon noticed.

We worked with her at great lengths at home. Those homework hours were often painful for her and for us. By the end of that year we reflected: Why did it seem so difficult for an otherwise bright child to master the printing of the alphabet? Other things puzzled us too: Why did she always write her name *Jesscia*? And why did she frequently reverse letters, such as *b* and *d*?

In first grade Jessica progressed very fast in some areas. She seemed to read quite easily, but math and spelling were very weak. It seemed strange that her

In Our Next Issue

- *The Wild Kingdom—Is It Vanishing?*
 - *A World in Decay—Is There Any Hope?*
 - *How Can I Get My Parents to Understand Me?*
 - *I Grew Up in Nazi Germany*
-

papers were marked either very good or extremely poor. "I didn't get it," or, "I couldn't see the blackboard," she would explain.

Promptly, we took her for hearing and vision tests, which, much to our surprise, revealed hearing and vision to be normal. The situation, however, only worsened. There were far too many headaches and stomach aches related to school, as well as repeated cases of crying in the classroom and again when returning home.

Even at home we were noticing a child of almost seven who had to be told over and over again to do something, as if she didn't hear us. She seemed so absentminded. Shoes were always on the wrong feet and dresses put on backward. The days of the week made no sense to her and she didn't know the difference between yesterday, today and tomorrow.

By second grade Jessica's problems in school got even worse. How could she know the words one day and then, come the spelling test, reverse letters, like *siad* instead of *said*? Math was no different. Simple concepts like $2 + 2 = 4$ made little or no sense to her. The teacher kept writing, "You must help Jessica at home." We were exasperated!

Learning Disabled Too?

Finally, at one of our many visits to the school, we asked to see the learning disabilities specialist. We described Jessica and her learning problems. A psychological evaluation was ordered. We were tense, anticipating the results.

They were conclusive. Jessica was indeed learning disabled. She had both auditory and visual perception problems. Visual and auditory memory were far below average, and there were significant problems with muscle coordination.

It was painful to face these facts, but we accepted them. The psychologist explained to us what these findings meant in Jessica's case. With proper help she could, by special teaching techniques, be taught the things she had failed to grasp and in time catch up with her class.

How could she know the words one day and then, come the spelling test, reverse letters, like *siad* instead of *said*?

We were certainly relieved. All along she really was paying attention! It wasn't her fault that her brain was misinterpreting the signals received from her eyes and ears. *For the first time we now really understood our daughter.*

It has been a few years now since Jessica's learning disability was determined. Our only regret is that we lost valuable years in tracking down the source of her problems. In addition to the special aid given her in school, we have found a private tutor most helpful. The progress has been more than we expected. Her own sense of self-worth has returned. Instead of a frustrated, rejected child headed for serious emotional problems, she now knows that she can learn. She is happy much more of the time, and the bond of love between us has deepened.

As for the future, we realize that it may take Jessica longer to reach the maturity of adulthood. But having isolated the problem and having learned how to work with it, we will do all we can to help her reach her full potential.
—Contributed.

A Bird of a Different Feather —Hurricane Iwa



IWA (ē' va) is the Hawaiian name for the frigate bird, or man-of-war bird. Indeed, it was a bird of a different feather that struck the Hawaiian Islands on Tuesday, November 23, 1982. Iwa was the first hurricane to be given a Hawaiian name, and it gave the islands a rare display of nature's force. The worst storm to hit the state since 1959, Iwa battered the islands of Niihau, Kauai and Oahu with winds up to 110 miles (177 km) an hour.

On Kauai, which took the brunt of the storm, one out of eight homes was either destroyed or made uninhabitable. Almost all other structures suffered minor to extensive damage. Trees, power lines and utility poles were down everywhere, making roads impassable. Many of the trees that were still standing were stripped of leaves and branches—stark reminders of the storm's strength. Waves 25 to 30 feet (8 to 9 m) added to the damage caused by high winds, destroying homes, condominiums and hotels in the coastal areas.

Overall damage was less extensive on Oahu, although the north and west shores were severely affected by winds and high surf. Power was lost for both islands during the storm, resulting in a total blackout. While electricity was restored to parts of Oahu late that night, authorities estimated that it would take at least a month to restore full service to both islands. Amazingly, there was only

one storm-related death and relatively few injuries—mostly of a minor nature.

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses on both islands suffered material losses, but not one was injured. Christian elders quickly called or visited all in their congregations to ensure their safety and to care for any needs they might have. They not only were able to encourage those whom they visited but received many firsthand reports of the storm's strength and destruction to add to their own personal experiences.

One Witness reported: "The whole house shuddered as if a giant hand were shaking it." Thinking they might have to flee, he tried to open the kitchen door, but the force of the wind against it was so strong that he could not budge it. "Looking out the window, I saw the four-car garage and shed outside our home shudder like an airplane at the end of a runway," he said. "Then it banked to the right and flew off into the sky, disappearing from sight."

An elderly Japanese Witness, who watched her roof disappear in the storm as she sat protected in the corner of her living room, said she was too excited to be afraid. "But," she added, "I wasn't too excited to forget to pray."

Some had to evacuate their shore-area homes. One Witness family returned to find that their home had been moved 40 feet (12 m) by the huge waves, but it was sitting, still intact, in its new lo-

cation. On entering they found nothing in the home broken except one dinner plate.

A Witness whose husband owns a produce warehouse relates: "My husband's warehouse was almost completely destroyed by the high winds. The only part still standing, almost unharmed, is the room that he lets us use for a Congregation Book Study. This prompted one of his employees to say, 'You should have let them (Jehovah's Witnesses) use the whole building and none of it would have blown away.'"

While some tried to use the storm and the confusion in its aftermath for looting and personal gain, a feeling of concern and care for others was generally shown by people in the community. For the most part there was a fine spirit of cooperation and community help throughout the islands. This was especially evident among Jehovah's Witnesses, as noted by two traveling overseers who reported: "Everywhere we went we found the friends to be in good spirits. Elders were quick to check on all in their congregations and see that any needing housing or provisions were cared for. Others in the congregations lovingly responded by sharing what they had with any in need. It was heartwarming to see the love and concern showed by the Witnesses in caring for one another."

Spiritual needs were not forgotten either as preparations were made by elders for congregational meetings, even in areas severely hit by the storm. The day after the hurricane, most congregations were able to have their meetings, even though electricity

had not been restored in many of these areas.

Jehovah's Witnesses also expressed concern for neighbors in their communities by sharing material provisions with them and by helping them in the repair work. Thursday, less than 48 hours after the storm, many of the Witnesses were calling on those with whom they study the Bible to see if any further physical aid or spiritual comfort could be rendered.

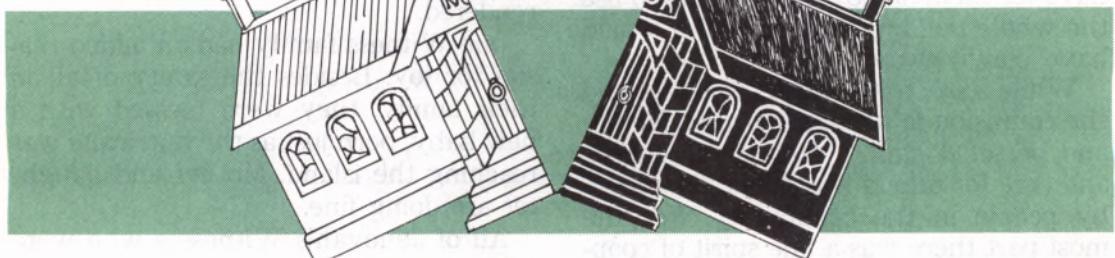
One Witness family had an added reason for joy. Besides the safety of all in their family, they were blessed with a new baby, born just as the hurricane was reaching the island. Mother and daughter are doing fine.

All of Jehovah's Witnesses who were affected by the hurricane expressed thankfulness for their physical safety. They felt as did the apostle Paul after surviving much tribulation. At 2 Corinthians 1:11 he wrote: "You also can help along by your supplication for us, in order that thanks may be given by many in our behalf for what is kindly given to us due to many prayerful faces."



South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church

-A House Divided



By "Awake!" correspondent in South Africa

ON AUGUST 25, 1982, a wedge was driven yet deeper into a house already divided. That day the World Alliance of Reformed Churches met in Ottawa, Canada, and voted for the suspension of South Africa's two most powerful Afrikaans churches. The reason? The refusal of these churches to accept nonwhites as members. And as a dramatic underscore of this decision, the very next day the alliance elected Allan Boesak, a black South African minister, to serve as its president.

Sectarian struggles are so common in Christendom that this event was hardly deemed newsworthy by much of the news media. Nevertheless, you may be one who yearns for religious unity and wonders if it is possible. The situation in South Africa should therefore be of interest to you.

No one can comprehend South Afri-

ca's religious polarization without first knowing some of the nation's history. In 1652 the Dutch first established a settlement at the Cape in South Africa. Originally intended as a mere stop for ships en route to the Dutch East Indies, it later saw a virtual invasion of settlers—Dutch, French, German and British. These lands, however, were already inhabited. It was therefore not long before animosities flared between natives and settlers.

The Roots of Discord

The first white settlers belonged to the Reformed Church in Holland. So this church was established in South Africa and in time took on the name Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk (referred to as the NG church), or Dutch Reformed Church. At first the church had a tolerant view of the black and "coloured"

(mixed racial origin) races. "Converted" ones were accorded full church privileges. This, however, did not set well with many of the Dutch settlers.

Come the 1800's and the Cape was now controlled by the British. To the annoyance of the Dutch, the church became a tool of the State: the governor was declared head of the church, prayers had to be said for the British royal family at every church service, English-speaking ministers were appointed, services began to be conducted in English. Further, the British made the law "colour-blind"; new rights and privileges were suddenly bestowed upon the African.

But since the settlers had long engaged in ferocious wars and disputes with the native population—and they also had a general disdain for the dark races—it is no surprise that these changes angered many of the Dutch populace. The Dutch

Unwittingly the church had provided "an ecclesiological blueprint for the Nationalist policy of separate development" of the races, or apartheid

thus turned to their church. And in 1829 the request for segregated places of worship was brought before the church synod (assembly). This request was soundly rejected by the synod. Communion would be administered "simultaneously to all members without distinction of colour or origin."

"The Afrikaans frontier farmer now got no satisfaction from Church and state," in the words of historian C. F. J. Muller. War with the mighty British Empire being out of the question,



In 1835 the Dutch trekked into the interior and formed their own church, maintaining segregation

many trekked—moved, fled from British rule en masse. In 1835 the Great Trek began, some 14,000 Dutch settlers heading for the northern interior. The church's reaction? Denunciation and a refusal to permit "any of its ministers to leave the colony with the Trekkers."

The trekkers, nevertheless, saw their flight "as the birth of a nation, as a divinely directed exodus out of the land of oppression," says one historian. "Many trekkers saw this as the prophecy of Joel and believed that their flight was necessary for scriptural fulfillment." Since the church would not serve the large group of trekkers who had fled into the far area known as the Transvaal, they formed their own church! This happened following the arrival in 1853 of Dirk van der Hoff from Holland. He became the minister of the new church—the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk. In 1858 this church became the State church of the Transvaal Republic. The schism widened the next year when Dirk Postma, another minister from Holland, arrived and founded yet another church—the Gereformeerde Kerk.

Now there were three reformed churches to choose from. Buffeted by the winds of change, the NG reassessed its position toward the trekkers. Ministers were sent out to organize those who wanted to remain part of the original NG church.

The NG church then made an even more drastic change of position. Making allowances for what it termed "the weakness of some," the synod of 1857 decided to tolerate racially separate church services. One writer admits this was "an example of social pressure and pragmatism, custom and culture, rather than theology and Scripture, determining the

life of the church." This decision was to have long-lasting ramifications. Unwittingly the church had provided "an ecclesiological blueprint for the Nationalist policy of separate development" of the races, or apartheid.

The Breach Widens

In 1865 leaders of the Hervormde church and a minister of the NG church met with hopes of uniting the churches. Neither church was willing to budge, however, on its stand on "predestination," a teaching of French theologian John Calvin. While the NG church staunchly held to this theory, the elders and deacons of the Hervormde church could not believe a loving God would create some humans for salvation and the rest for damnation. Hopelessly divided, they terminated the meeting.

Racial animosities widened the gap further in 1881. The NG church established the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk, or mission church. It was a church solely for nonwhites. Since then other "daughter" churches for blacks and Asians have been formed. Oddly enough, the "mother," or the NG church, gives financial support to her "daughters." But it still does not allow its members to become members of the exclusively white NG church. Sometimes nonwhites are even turned away from religious services, such as funerals.

Recent Attempts at Unity

More recently, meetings of South African church leaders and theologians have been held. While some had hoped that these meetings would be a major step forward, they ended with the churches as polarized as ever. Why? For one thing, as the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, "many Afrikaners [Dutch de-

scendants] see themselves as a 'chosen people' similar to the children of Israel." The problem is, however, that some black church members also envision themselves as a "chosen people" fighting for liberation. So when at one of these meetings

Only 16 percent of the members of the church are in favor of having nonwhite members

NG director Pierre Rossouw reportedly claimed that "God sanctioned the present South African system of white minority rule and apartheid in politics and church life," an "uproar" was caused at the meeting. According to *The Christian Century* of May 26, 1982, "Some black delegates booed Rossouw's speech; liberal members of his own NGK described his views as 'untheological' and 'based on ideology' rather than Scripture."

In June of 1982, 123 of the white ministers of the NG church had a joint letter published in the official mouthpiece of the church, *Die Kerkbode*, saying: "We want also to: Confess our deep guilt before God because we ourselves do not sufficiently practise the unity of the Church in Christ." Nevertheless, a subsequent survey published in the Afrikaans newspaper *Rapport* indicated that only 16 percent of the members of the church are in favor of having nonwhite members.

The surprise decision of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches mentioned at the outset, however, apparently caused the church to reassess its support of apartheid policies. *Die Kerkbode* of September 1, 1982, claimed that the church

would "reexamine the whole situation in the light of the Scriptures." Nevertheless, *The Cape Times* of October 25, 1982, reported the results of a church synod: "The powerful and influential Ned Geref Kerk (NGK) remains irrevocably committed . . . to a policy of apartheid in church and politics."

Whether the powerful NG church will take a course based on Scripture or expediency remains to be seen. In the meantime South Africa's reformed churches continue to fragment. Yet a fourth white church has come into being—the Afrikaanse Reformatoriese Kerk. Black members are not tolerated—not even "daughter" churches.

Religious Unity—Is It Possible?

Lamentably, unity seems to be out of reach for the reformed churches of South Africa. However, their tale is far from unique. Rather, it is typical of the divisiveness that plagues the religions of Christendom. Sincere lovers of truth find this sad state of affairs difficult, impossible, to reconcile with the Bible's words to true Christians at 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you."

Nevertheless, true followers of Jesus enjoy unity even now. Because they are united by a bond of Christian love, they overcome political, racial and doctrinal differences. Jesus even said that you would be able to recognize his followers by "their fruits" or activities. (Matthew 7:16) The publishers of this magazine invite you to investigate the "fruits" of Jehovah's Witnesses who enjoy unity—even in divided South Africa.

Young People Ask...

Why Don't My Parents Understand Me?

Dear Watchtower Society,

In the last two years it seems like I've developed thousands of problems within myself. I feel sometimes as if I'm going crazy. I'm starting to change physically, and all of a sudden my parents don't trust me with boys anymore. Every time I do something wrong Mom and Dad compare me to my mean older sister, and this hurts. I went to them and talked, but they didn't understand my feelings. Perhaps I need to go someplace where I can be alone for at least a year. I hope you have some answers.

—A 16-year-old girl.

PERHAPS you have similarly longed for your parents to understand you better. After all, it's only human to want to be understood. And if you have problems and your parents are critical of things you love or think are important, you can feel very frustrated. Sixteen-year-old Robert, for example, felt that his father did not understand his choice of music. "All he does is scream and say, 'Turn it off!'" said he. How did Robert handle this situation? "So I turn *it* and *him* off."

Many youths react the same way. They may withdraw emotionally into their own private world or take refuge among their peers. Said 19-year-old Birgit of West Germany: "When I have problems with my parents, I really want to cry on someone's shoulder, someone who understands me differently." Yet others take the drastic step of running away from home. A 1981 study by research-

ers Offer, Ostrov and Howard that embraced over 20,000 average adolescents in four countries revealed that although the vast majority did "not perceive any major problems between themselves and their parents," 26 percent admitted, "I try to stay away from home most of the time." Almost 50 percent of those who had got into trouble with the law felt this way.—*The Adolescent—A Psychological Self-Portrait*.

Whether one withdraws physically or emotionally, the sad result of this lack of understanding is a gap between a youth and his parents. But is it true that this gap is caused simply because parents don't understand their teenaged children?

"Power" Versus "Gray-Headedness"

No doubt there are many things you wish to see and do, now that you are a teenager. You are on the threshold

of adult life and probably raring to enjoy some adult privileges. Proverbs 20:29 states: "The beauty of young men [or, women] is their power."

This newly acquired strength, or "power," can lay the groundwork for a generation gap. The proverb continues: "And the splendor of old men is their gray-headedness." Older persons, like your parents, view life differently. Though perhaps understanding your feelings, they realize that not every experience in life has a happy ending. Their realism learned through the years (perhaps by a bitter personal experience) has tempered the enthusiastic idealism they once had as young persons. Because of this wise experience—as it were, "gray-headedness"—they just may not share your eagerness over certain matters.

For example, Jim, a teenager, said: "On the subject of money, my parents (depression-era children) feel that money should be saved to buy or spend on things of importance." His experienced parents saw the need to worry about future security. "But I am living right now too," insisted Jim. "This is an important part of my life. I want to travel a lot." Yes, his "power" and his parents' "gray-headedness" helped create an emotional gap.

This emotional gap can run deep on other issues, such as dress and grooming, behavior with the opposite sex, use of

drugs and alcohol, curfews, associations and even household manners and chores. You may be plagued with "desires incidental to youth" and still be trying to follow right standards. (2 Timothy 2:22) This can be emotionally confusing. While striving for more independence, you still are hesitant and may feel the need for your parents' guidance. The previously mentioned study found that 63 percent of those polled agreed with the statement, "When my parents are strict, I feel that they are right even if I get angry."

So the reasons for an emotional gap between youths and parents are complex. This gap, however, can be bridged! Recognizing the need for *mutual understanding* is a first step.

Do I Understand My Parents?

"When I was younger I naturally felt that Mom was 'perfect' and didn't have



Do your parents understand you?

any of the weaknesses and feelings I had," stated John, as he reflected on the time before his parents were divorced. Now his mother was trying to care for seven children alone.

"More and more Mom would ask us what to do about various matters," continued John. "Then one day I saw a truly bewildered look on her face. I thought,

"Working together at home helps a lot in the growing-up process for both parents and children. . . . By having to cooperate to run the house, families learn a lot about successful human relations right under their own roof."—The Cooperating Family by Eleanor Berman

'What's going on, she really doesn't know what to do.' Then I began to see that she didn't have all the answers. I began to sympathize with her more from that point on, knowing that she's 'normal' just like everybody else." John's teenage sister, April, added, "I remember seeing her cry because of the frustration of trying to keep up with everything. Then I realized we had a wrong viewpoint. She can't do everything, and always at the right time and in the right way. We were drawn to her when we saw that she had feelings and was human too."

These young people developed empathy, and it contributed to a warm family. "If errors were what you watch, O Jah," said the psalmist, "O Jehovah, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3) No one could! Neither you nor your parents. "All of you," states 1 Peter 3:8, "be like-minded,

showing *fellow feeling*, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate."

Remember that your parents may feel very insecure in their ability to rear you properly. They may feel overwhelmed by all the moral dangers and temptations you face and may overreact. As you get older, they may feel unneeded, unloved and misunderstood.

Your parents may have certain physical, financial or emotional hardships that you may not fully realize. For instance, a father may hate his job, but because of his family he suppresses those feelings. When his child says, "I can't stand school," rather than being sympathetic he may retort, "What's the matter with you? You kids have it easy!" But would not fellow feeling on your part ease the situation?

"I never think about my parents' problems because I have my own," explained one teenager. Don't you appreciate it when someone listens, absorbs your verbal bombardment and is sympathetic? You feel as if you're worth something. Well, your Mom or Dad feels similarly. "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you," taught Jesus Christ, "*you also must likewise do to them.*" —Matthew 7:12.

Naturally this is easier said than done, but a big help is: "Keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Philippians 2:4) How?

Take a "Personal Interest"

"Try asking your mother about her relationship with *her* mother, what opportunities she had or didn't have when she was your age, or what choices she felt were available or unavailable to her

when she was growing up," wrote feature editor Aurora Mackey in *Teen* magazine. "Chances are that if she feels that you're interested in, and aware of the reasons for some of *her* feelings, she'll try to be more aware of *yours*." The same is true of fathers.

True you can't control what your parents say or do, but you can control your own reaction. By trying to look at pressures and problems from the other person's perspective, and recognizing that we all make mistakes, you will develop insight. "The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger, and it is beauty on his part to pass over transgression." —Proverbs 19:11.

If your parent has been insensitive, ask yourself the questions in the accompanying box. Such analysis may help you "pass over transgression" and overlook

the lack of understanding. This would be 'beautiful' on your part and contribute to *mutual understanding*—to the joy of you and your parents.*

* The next issue of *Awake!* will provide additional positive steps by answering the question, "How can I get my parents to understand me?"

***If your parent has been insensitive,
ask yourself: Was my parent—***

- Not feeling well, or was he/she worried about a matter?
- Hurt over some thoughtless deed or word on my part?—Proverbs 12:18.
- Afraid I'll get into trouble and is he/she perhaps right?
- Simply misunderstanding what I meant?

Word-Search Game

The names of the 12 apostles selected by Jesus are hidden in this letter maze. The names read forward, backward, up, down or diagonally, are always in a straight line and never skip letters. How many can you find and encircle?

Word-Search-Game
Solutions page 27.



Are You Thankful for Green Plants?

PERHAPS you are not very fond of plants and not particularly interested in them. However, even if botany bores you, there is good reason for you to be thankful for green plants.

Why, even a die-hard city dweller knows that green plants are just the thing to make a dingy office or apartment look livable. And when temperatures soar, the urbanite is delighted to sit under the shade of a tree, even if he has to fight for a patch of green in a congested park.

Out in the country, though, you can really appreciate the splendor of earth's greenery. It decorates the world we live in like an exquisitely designed carpet. Who is not awestruck when contemplating green-clad mountains, valleys and plains? And are you not delighted by the sights and smells of forests, hills and dales? You need only visit areas man has greedily stripped to appreciate just how much earth's verdure beautifies our home.

Like most of us, you probably trample over grass and shrubbery without giving thought to the fact that our very life depends on these green plants. How so?

Green Is for Growing

Pluck a green leaf from any tree or plant and examine it closely. Admire its symmetry and simple beauty. Observe its "plumbing" system of veins that gives the leaf firmness. It's hard to believe

that you hold in your hand a compact solar-powered factory, a laboratory of chemical wonders. But unlike ugly, smog-belching, noisy factories of today, that leaf carries out its work silently. And it *enhances* rather than pollutes its environment. How does it work?

First of all, it has been engineered to have a large surface area so it can collect energy from the sun. Usually, the side of the leaf facing the sun has a waxy feel. It is water-repellent and thus this retards water evaporation. To probe further, study the diagram on page 26. It gives you a 'microscope's-eye' view of the leaf's cross section.

You can see that a leaf is built like a layer cake. Under the waxy layer, there is the "palisade" layer of tiny, cylindrical cells. They stand upright like a line of marching soldiers. It is in these tiny cells that a chemical miracle takes place: *photosynthesis*.

Any plant lover knows that plants need light. Why? So that light passing through the shiny layer can hit these cylindrical cells. You see, within these tiny cells are yet smaller units called chloroplasts. They are filled with a remarkable pigment called chlorophyll. This pigment gives plants their green hue—and their life. Chlorophyll absorbs the energy from the sun. And before you can say "photosynthesis," incredibly complex chemical reactions begin. Molecules of carbon dioxide (the gas you exhale from your



Man has turned this . . .

. . . into this!

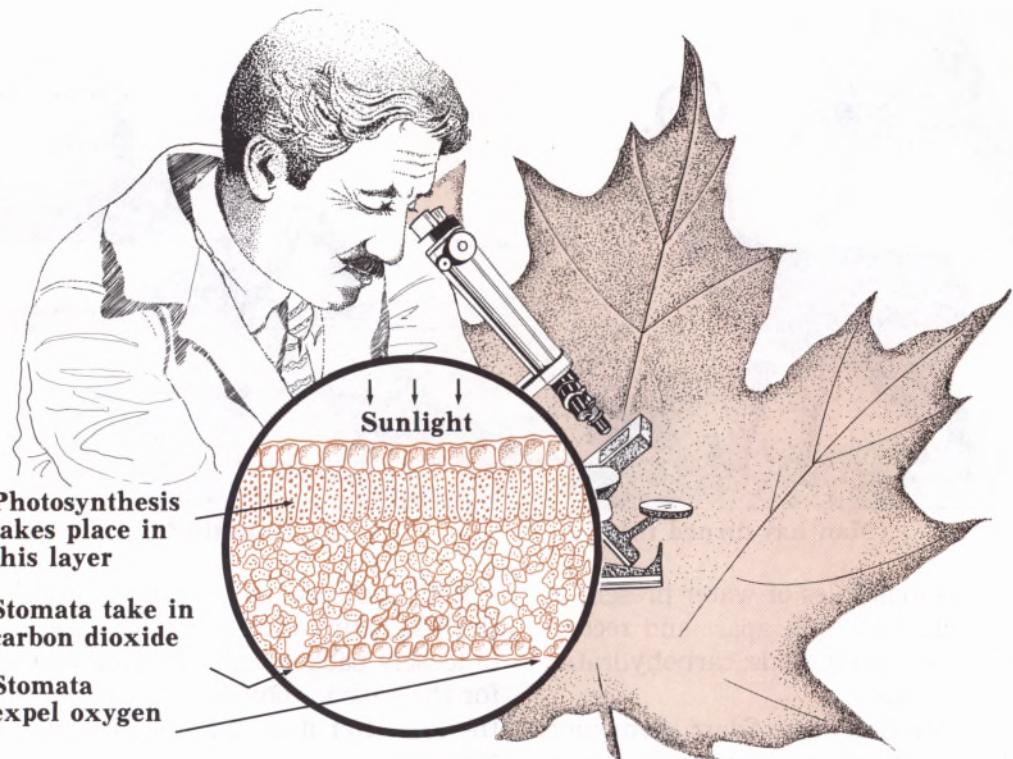
lungs) and molecules of water present in the leaf are now split apart and recombined to form plant foods: carbohydrates, sugars and fats.

Ever since God gave Adam permission to eat "all vegetation bearing seed," man has depended on these plant products for his very survival. (Genesis 1:29) Take, for example, the lowly grass. You may think there is little use for grass, other than for decorating lawns. Yet, perhaps the sugar with which you sweetened your morning cup of coffee is a grass product: sugarcane. Probably your breakfast cereal was also a grass, if it was made of wheat, barley, oats or rye. So is the rice you'll be having with supper. No wonder the *Encyclopedia Americana* claims that "grass is the most important of all plants to man." Botanist Lauren Brown further states: "Of the 15 major crops that stand between us and starvation, 10 are grasses." And that's just grass, not to mention apples and apricots, bananas and blueberries, carrots and cabbages, dates and dandelions, and so forth.

Let's continue our tour of the leaf. The third section consists of a spongy layer of loosely packed cells. This allows room for the carbon dioxide to move through the leaf after it is "inhaled" by the bottom section.

Yes, take a look at the dull side of the leaf. You can't see them, but there may be millions of perforations (called stomata) that act as adjustable intake and exhaust valves. The "intake valves" actually suck in carbon dioxide from the air for the photosynthesis reaction. When that reaction is complete, "exhaust valves" pump out an invaluable by-product—**PURE OXYGEN**!

Stop and think. Only about 20 percent of the air you breathe is oxygen. In just 24 hours you may inhale some 3,000 liters of oxygen. But you'll only consume about one fourth as much, or 750 liters of the oxygen, for the body's needs. Multiply that 750 liters (one day's consumption) by the population of the world and you can see that a whole lot of oxygen is depleted by breathing



alone. Some even estimate that 10 thousand tons of oxygen are consumed *each second* by breathing and other uses of oxygen, such as combustion to run your automobile. So what prevents us from using up the world's oxygen supply and slowly suffocating?

It is the oxygen-producing photosynthesis that takes place in the leaves of plants on land and in water!

Plants—Past and Future

Man has not always fully appreciated his dependence on earth's greenery. But in 1648 man started to penetrate the inner workings of the plant. In that year Belgian chemist van Helmont planted a five-pound (2 kg) willow shoot in a pot. The soil weighed in at 200 pounds (91 kg). Five years later he again weighed the

willow: 169 pounds, 3 ounces (77 kg). The soil still weighed in at 200 pounds (91 kg)! Van Helmont now realized that plants do not grow by sucking in matter from the soil. So quite logically (but, alas, incorrectly!) he concluded that the growth of the tree was the result of its assimilating the water he had poured in the pot over the years!

Joseph Priestly came closer to the truth in 1772. This preacher and part-time chemist discovered that a burning candle consumes oxygen in a sealed container. A mouse placed in this oxygen-deprived container quickly died. But when a plant was placed in the container, the oxygen was replenished, and a mouse could live in the sealed environment.

Dutch physician Ingen-Housz further

discovered that a plant must be exposed to light in order to produce this oxygen. He further noted that only the green portions of the plant (containing chlorophyll) responded in this way. By then man was on his way to understanding photosynthesis.

However, many discoveries and 200 years later, man still doesn't fully understand how photosynthesis works. But, spurred on by scientific curiosity, concern

In many parts of the world forests are being stripped far faster than nature can replace them

for man's future and visions of Nobel prizes, scientists by the hundreds steadily work to crack this intriguing mystery. Some hope to copy nature and manufacture all the food mankind could ever want. Others hope to tap an inexhaustible energy source. Already a number of different approaches are being studied.

It is ironic that such great interest in plants comes at a time when man is steadily wasting and destroying this great resource. In the United States, for example, reportedly 85 percent of the agricultural land is devoted to feeding not hungry people but fattened animals. This is in order to satiate the public's appetite for red meats. (Per capita United States consumption of meat is 129 pounds (60 kg) a year, according to one writer.) Though nutritionists warn of health dangers in eating so much meat, the trend continues. Economists even fear that weaning people from a heavy meat diet could have dire economic consequences for farmers.

In other parts of the world, such as

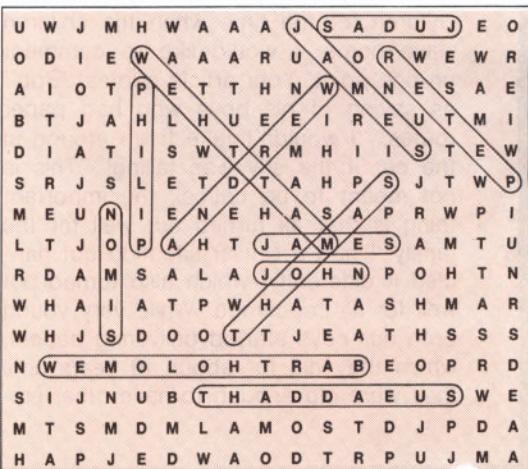
Brazil, forests are being stripped far faster than nature can replace them. In Germany air pollution, with its resultant acid rain, is threatening the life of its forests.

We can thus be glad that God will never permit this planet to become desolate and sterile. God "did not create it [the earth] simply for nothing." (Isaiah 45:18) To the contrary, the prophet Joel assures us: "Do not be fearful, . . . for the pasture grounds of the wilderness will certainly grow green. For the tree will actually give its fruitage."—Joel 2:22.

In the meantime we have many reasons to be thankful for earth's green mantle. The lowly grass, the majestic oaks and sequoias, even the modest plant decorating your table, do more than just beautify. They feed and clothe us. They purify the air we breathe. They are vital to our survival.

So take a good look, an appreciative look, at earth's beautiful covering. Be thankful that these green plants are there to serve us. Thank the Creator, "the One making the mountains to sprout green grass."—Psalm 147:8.

Word-Search-Game Solutions



From Our Readers

When They Leave Home

Thank you so much for the fine articles on "Why It's So Hard for Parents to 'Let Go'" in the February 8, 1983, issue. So realistic. You knew my feelings and made me appreciate my present role, no longer a caretaker but now an adviser, yet always a parent of four.

M. M., New Jersey

Your articles on "When They Grow Up and Leave Home" have truly been a blessing to me. Our only child, a daughter, will be 19 years old in a few months. The thought of her leaving home hurts me deeply. With the help of these well-written articles I feel I can make the needed adjustments in my attitude and be better prepared for my child's departure from home.

A. R., Oklahoma

My wife and I enjoyed very much your articles on children growing up and leaving home. The articles tell it like it is, and encourage all to train their children properly and prepare both parents and children for the time when the children leave home. I would like to comment on one point. Your article quotes "Bob" as saying of his boys who had paper routes: "I wouldn't take them around in the car if the sky was falling!" This is not meant to be critical; the important thing is that all turned out well for the family. I had a similar situation but handled it differently, which also turned out well for all concerned. While very young both our boys started delivering papers, which they did for about 10 years until they were old enough to have other em-

ployment. When they discontinued the paper routes they had a combined total of 485 daily customers. Yes, I did help them during torrential rain, illness and early on Sunday mornings so that we could all be at congregation meetings on time. I received good compensation, their cooperation, their help in many ways and their willingness always to run errands.

G. K., West Virginia

We agree that there can be several different correct and successful ways of dealing with similar situations. Happy is the parent who discerns what is needed.—ED.

Paramedics

Thank you very much for the article "A Paramedic Tells His Story." (January 22, 1983) I was in a serious automobile accident in 1969 and this type of service was not available yet. Experiences such as these are very helpful in today's activities. They serve as an encouragement for us.

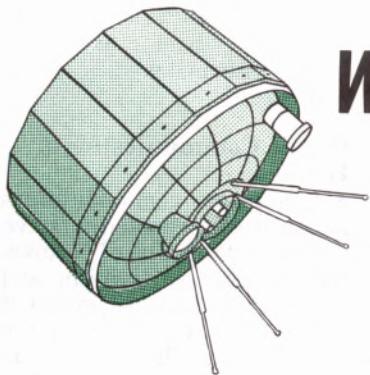
D. W., South Carolina

You couldn't have had better timing! The day my husband finished his paramedic training we received the magazine in the mail. We had to read it right away. Paramedics are involved in a lifesaving work physically, but there is a far more important work of saving spiritual lives.

W. P., Colorado

Your article "A Paramedic Tells His Story" was most absorbing. I found the person's sincerity and dedication both to his position and to his convictions most moving, and it has given me fresh impetus to review my own convictions.

D. B., England



Watching the World



God's Name Found in Jerusalem

● Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkay has announced the finding of a tiny silver scroll said to contain the first inscription of God's name to be found in Jerusalem. He had found two of the little scrolls dating from the sixth century B.C.E. some time ago in a tomb chamber opposite Mount Zion. But "to unroll them without causing damage was a technical challenge that laboratories in Israel and Germany would ponder for three years" before succeeding, reported the *Jerusalem Post*. "They were very difficult to decipher, but on one of the scrolls Barkay was able to make out distinctly the Hebrew word for God: the letters yud-heh-vav-heh transliterated as Yahwe or Jehovah." The *Post* explained that the name was seldom found in Israel because "the material on which the name was commonly written, papyrus, had long since disintegrated." An Associated Press report also noted that "devout Jews refrain from uttering God's name, and it is written in such a way as to be impossible to pronounce correctly."

'Amazing Transformation'

● Richmond Barbour, who writes the "You and Your Problems" column for *The Tribune* of San Diego, California, recently was asked, "Will my dad stay converted? He used to drink, swear, fight, and generally raise [havoc]. Then two folks from Jehovah's Witnesses converted him. Now... he prays, reads the Bible, and studies the church literature. The transformation is amazing. Will it last?"

Barbour's reply notes that for a lasting change, "the church involved must keep the convert busy doing worthwhile things" and "all concerned must continue to make the individual feel important." The columnist's opinion in this case? "Jehovah's Witness churches provide both of those factors. Your dad's conversion may well be permanent."

Lifesaving Work

● In addition to receiving spiritual assistance from the door-to-door preaching of Jehovah's Witnesses, communities also may benefit from their being in the right place at the right time. "A four-year-old boy, believed to have started a fire with a cigarette lighter when

he was left alone in his Muskegon [Michigan] home Sunday night," reported *The Muskegon Chronicle*, "was pulled from the building by three Jehovah's Witnesses who were canvassing door-to-door in the neighborhood." The Witnesses reportedly kicked in the front door, crawled to the little boy through heavy smoke and carried him out just before flames engulfed the room.

Inflation Staggers Argentina

● Argentina's dizzying rate of inflation has forced the government to remove four zeros from their battered currency denominations. Ten thousand pesos will become just one new Argentine peso on June 30. This is the second time in 14 years that authorities have had to take such action. But in 1969 only 100 old pesos became one new peso. Argentine inflation was 210 percent in 1982, the world's highest. With the value of the peso at the official exchange rate of 53,000 to one U.S. dollar, a worker making the minimum wage earns a seemingly astronomical million pesos a week, but it amounts to just \$19.

"In the Name of Religion"

● The well-known American commentator Paul Harvey recently wrote about "what Prof. Howard Didsbury of Kean College calls 'the tyranny of the righteous' [that] justifies 'killing for religion.'" His column in the newspaper *Grit* noted the situation in a number of nations such as Ireland, where "people kill people in the name of religion."

On a similar theme, priest Russell Becker spoke at New York's St. Francis of Assisi Catholic church. According to *The New York Times*, he told worshipers that "early Christian theologians such as Tertul-

lian and Clement of Alexandria forbade believers from serving in the military forces" and "when the church grew to be a temporal as well as religious power, it endorsed warfare in the name of the faith." "The church's involvement in war is the shameful part of our history," the priest declared, "when the church went into the world and became like the evil we were to overcome."

Church and Nazis

● The *Enciclopedia del Novecento*, edited by the Institute of the Italian Encyclopedia, discusses tensions between Hitler's Nazi regime and the Roman Catholic Church under the heading "National Socialism." This authority states: "But since the episcopacy, after agreeing to an unusually obliging concordat [with the Nazis], was hesitant to go openly against the regime, and since Secretary of State cardinal Pacelli (later pope Pius XII) looked favorably on the anti-Bolshevik aspect of the Third Reich . . . the tension never exploded into a formal rupture. . . . Nevertheless relations between the regime and the churches, who avoided absolutely uttering a word against the persecution of Jews and Jehovah's Witnesses, were in a state of suspension, since Hitler, against Bormann's view, forbade actions clearly anticlerical until the war would be over. . . . The majority of the clergy of the two creeds, [Lutheran and Catholic] maintained behavior that was outwardly loyal to the regime . . . In foreign politics the conciliatory attitude of the Vatican was of valid support to the regime, especially during the stage of its rise to power." —Volume IV, page 519.

Body "Wisdom"

● Recent findings indicate that certain body parts and bodily

reactions to injury or disease formerly thought unnecessary or harmful actually are evidence of the body's inherent "wisdom." Note these examples:

- When a person loses consciousness for an extended period after being hit hard on the head, he is said to be in a coma. "Now scientists have evidence that coma results from activation of a specific brain system that suppresses normal behavior," reports *Science News*. "Existence of a coma-producing brain center suggests that unconsciousness may be something other than a destructive process to be avoided at all costs." One possible reason may be that "because brain injuries frequently depress respiration, unconsciousness prevents active muscles from competing with the brain for the limited oxygen available," notes the article.
- "New findings [by the U.S. National Institutes of Health] raise serious questions about the wisdom for most people of taking aspirin or acetaminophen for fevers below 104 degrees," reports *The New York Times*. "Indeed, a number of physicians, including pediatricians, are now suggesting that moderate fevers be allowed to run their course, for they may shorten the illness, potentiate [assist] the action of antibiotics and reduce the chances of spreading the infection to others."
- In the past, if a person had a damaged spleen, surgeons seldom hesitated to take it out, as they thought it was of little use in adults. But "they have recently found that the spleenless come down with severe infections more often than the general population, and more often die of them," says the magazine *American Health*. "The mortality rate, in fact, runs close to

50%." The conclusion? "Future science may bank more on the body's wisdom," predicts *American Health*.

Occult Communications Banned

● Colombian communications authorities reportedly have banned broadcasts of fortunetelling, sorcery, spiritism and hypnotism. The rapid spread of occult practices prompted the ban, causing the minister of communications to declare that broadcasts on the subject "disturb the minds of the people." Stations that put communication with the spirit world ahead of normal radio communication were warned that they would face suspension of their licenses.

Politicians or Churchmen?

- "The Archbishop of Canterbury gave his clerical approval to the Falklands war yesterday," reported London's *Daily Mail*. In the first address an archbishop has ever given to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Robert Runcie told the assembled diplomats that "it was right to send a task force after the Argentine invasion." He went on to advise them on how to handle the nuclear threat and disarmament.
- "A commission of Canadian [Catholic] bishops has made a stunningly silly plunge into criticism of economic policy, thereby undermining respect for the teaching role of the church," writes *Washington Post* columnist George F. Will, a Catholic. Will notes the bishops' claim that their criticisms of government tax and budget policies are "inspired by the Gospel," but asserts that "there is no surer trivialization of the mysteries of Christianity than the pretense that the faith, properly scruti-

nized, supports this or that fiscal and monetary policy."

VD Plague

● A recent national survey by Dr. Mazuru Gundidza of the University of Zimbabwe revealed that half of the adult women in Zimbabwe and some 20 percent of the entire population have suffered or are suffering from sexually transmitted diseases (STD). "Worst hit in the capital was Kopje high-density area," reported the *Zimbabwe Herald*. "There the survey had proved 99.9 percent of the inhabitants were STD victims." Dr. Gundidza said the survey paints a "gloomy and appalling" picture of a situation that continues to deteriorate with the spread of penicillin-resistant strains.

Camel Comeback

● In the Middle East, camels reportedly are being sold for the highest prices ever, as much as \$1,000. They are ideal as a desert vehicle. "A good, strong camel can work for 25 years," declared one Cairo camel trader, "so this is a more important investment than buying a car." As for their usefulness, he said, "They're stupid animals, no brains at all, but at work they are not afraid."

Tiny Thugs Freed

● Though the attackers of a 78-year-old woman in Bolton, England, were caught, they will not be prosecuted. Three boys aged six, eight and nine tried to steal Mary Brindle's purse, knocking her to the ground and

kicking her until she bled. In England, they are too young to be charged with crime.

Whose 'Smoking Problem'?

● When high school students in the Xanthi area of northern Greece asked for a smoking room at the school, surprised teachers replied that smoking is not allowed. But the student council insisted, claiming that they did not want to use the rest rooms for taking a puff because of the cold in winter, the odor and risk of disease. "Following this," reported *Athens News*, "the school called a meeting of the P.T.A. (Parents-Teachers Association), which convened with members lighting cigarettes to tackle the students' 'smoking' problem!"

of their life from the Sabbath.

Considerable effort is made to make Sabbath services interesting and attractive. The meetings are usually held in a church or hall, but sometimes in a more informal setting such as a home. The meetings are conducted in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. The speakers are usually laymen who have been specially trained to speak on Sabbath topics. The meetings are usually held on Saturday evenings, and the speakers are usually laymen who have been specially trained to speak on Sabbath topics.

After the Sabbath service,

the members of the congregation are invited to participate in a social gathering. This is a time for fellowship and for sharing experiences. The meetings are usually held on Saturday evenings, and the speakers are usually laymen who have been specially trained to speak on Sabbath topics.

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