Awake!

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Self-Medication

CAN IT HELP OR HARM YOU?

Awake!

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Self-Medication
Can It Help or Harm You? 3-9

Self-medication is almost the only type of treatment available in many isolated parts of the world. In others, there are several choices of treatment. But what care should be taken in choosing medications?

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What Is Wrong With Flirting? 20

What is the difference between being friendly and being flirtatious? Why is flirting dangerous and selfish?

Bird-Watching—A Fascinating Hobby for Everyone? 23

With over 9,600 species of birds worldwide, bird-watching can be a thrilling and educational experience. Is it for you?

Self-Medication—Benefits and Risks 3

How Can You Enjoy Good Health? 5

Is Perfect Health Just a Dream? 9

Jehovah's Witnesses—Courageous in the Face of Nazi Peril 10

Calcutta—Vibrant City of Contrasts 15

A Deadly Alliance 19

Watching the World 28

From Our Readers 30

When Dead Means Dead 31

***Awake!*—"An Invaluable and Essential Tool" 32**

Self-Medication
BENEFITS AND RISKS

By *Awake!* correspondent in Brazil

"WORLDWIDE the self-medication market is expanding," claims the president of a large pharmaceutical company. "People want to be in control of their own health." Although this may be so, are there any risks you should be aware of?

Of course, if used properly, medicine can bring relief. For example, insulin and antibiotics as well as even the inexpensive and simple formula of oral rehydration therapy save countless lives. The challenge of self-medication is to determine when the benefits outweigh the risks.

Admittedly, in some lands qualified medical aid may be either too far away or too expensive. Hence, many people rely on the opinions of friends and relatives or on self-help books for information regarding medication. Also, "publicity campaigns convey the idea that through the purchase of a simple capsule, it is possible to have health and well-being," says Fernando Lefèvre, a professor at São Paulo University, Brazil.* As a result, to overcome the effects of overwork, poor nutrition, and even trivial emotional problems, many resort to drugs. Lefèvre adds: "Instead of improving the quality of their life, people try to solve their problems with products off the shelves." And who knows if the patients even have the right diagnosis?

Besides using medication to treat such illnesses as headaches, hypertension, and upset stomach, many resort to medication to cope with anxiety, fear, and loneliness. "People seek the help of a doctor because they think that a pill will solve the problem," says Dr. André Feingold. "Even health professionals are inclined to prescribe formulas and recommend countless tests. There is no effort to get to know the history of the patient, who in the majority of cases has a chaotic, stressful, and unwholesome lifestyle." Admits Romildo Bueno, of the World Council for Prevention of the Abuse of Psychotropics (drugs that alter perception or behavior): "There is limited time to see patients, and the doctor gets rid of the person, treating only the symptom." Using drugs "is a medicinal way of [solving] social problems." However, another doctor cautions that many patients do need carefully prescribed psychotropic drugs.

After discussing the "Prozac Fad," the Brazilian daily *O Estado de S. Paulo* says: "A remedy that becomes a fad, just like a new hairstyle, is, to say the least, strange." It quotes psychiatrist Arthur Kaufman: "Lack of perspective and purpose in life creates a phenomenon that makes an effective remedy the salvation from all ills." Kaufman adds: "The human being is becoming more and more concerned with immediate remedies, and therefore, having lost interest in finding the causes of his problems, he prefers taking a pill to solving them." But is it safe to self-medicate?

* In many lands, "direct to consumer" advertising of prescription drugs has recently increased dramatically despite criticism of this approach from many doctors and medical organizations.

Herbal Home Remedies

For thousands of years, people in many cultures have treated their sicknesses with herbal remedies, using plants found in the fields and forests. Even many modern drugs are made from plants, such as digitalis, which is used for treating heart problems. Thus, Penelope Ody, a member of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists in the United Kingdom, states in her book that "there are more than 250 safe treatments to help alleviate common complaints—from ordinary coughs, colds, and headaches to special treatments for skin conditions, digestive problems, and children's illnesses."

She writes: "Herbalism has always been regarded as the 'medicine of the people'—simple remedies that can be used at home for minor ills or to supplement more potent remedies prescribed by professionals for chronic and acute conditions." She continues: "Although most herbs are intrinsically quite safe, they should be treated with respect. Do not exceed stated doses or continue with home remedies if conditions are persistent, are worsening, or if the true diagnosis is in doubt."—*The Complete Medicinal Herbal.*

"There is no effort to get to know the history of the patient, who in the majority of cases has a chaotic, stressful, and unwholesome life-style."

—Dr. André Feingold

Self-Medication—A Risk?

"One of the striking characteristics in the medical field in the 20th century has been the development of new drugs," says *The New Encyclopædia Britannica.* But it also says: "Probably more poisoning is due to medicines than to any other cause." Indeed, just as medicine can cure, it can also harm. Anorexia diet pills "act on the nervous system and therefore can trigger such adverse symptoms as insomnia, changes in conduct, and in some cases even hallucinations," explains writer Cilene de Castro. She adds: "But anyone who thinks that anorexia pills act only as appetite inhibitors is fooling himself. One capsule may be the beginning of a vicious circle of remedies, each one neutralizing the effect of the other."

Many commonly used drugs can cause irritation of the stomach and even nausea,

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

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vomiting, and bleeding. Certain drugs can be habit-forming or cause damage to the kidneys and liver.

Even popular health products may be suspect. "This fad for vitamin supplements is extremely dangerous," warns Dr. Efraim Olszewer, president of a Brazilian medical association. "Not only is the population medicating itself but some uninformed doctors are prescribing dubious formulas, disregarding the dangers involved." Another doctor, however, states that vitamin supplements in appropriate doses may be necessary or beneficial in treating certain illnesses and deficiencies.

Safe Self-Diagnosis—How?

Since we cannot see a doctor every time we feel discomfort, health education and rational self-medication can be beneficial to our families. However, before any medication is taken, correct and effective self-diagnosis is vital. If there is not a doctor nearby or you cannot afford to see one, consulting an adequate medical reference book might help you to make a correct diagnosis. For example, the American Medical Association publishes a family medical guide that includes a 183-page section of symptom charts. These lead the patient through a series of questions that can be answered either yes or no. By this process of elimination, a problem can often be identified.

But what about the role of doctors? When should we seek professional help? How can we avoid the extremes of being either too worried about our health or negligent? Really, in a world where illness and psychosomatic sickness are prevalent, how can we enjoy a measure of good health?

How Can You Enjoy Good Health?

THERAPIES are a popular topic of conversation. It seems that nearly every friend or neighbor has a pet solution to each medical situation. Understandably, the urge to self-medicate can be very strong. However, there are people who "seek a doctor only when the condition is critical," says a Brazilian doctor. "They may have lesions on the skin that do not heal despite months of self-medication. When they do seek a doctor, it is found that they have a kind of cancer that should have been treated in the beginning."

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Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565
Britain, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN
Canada, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4
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Since early diagnosis often saves lives, delay can cost dearly. "A 30-year-old woman experienced delayed menstruation and moderate pain in the lower abdomen. She self-medicated heavily with analgesics and anti-inflammatories, and the pain decreased," relates a surgeon. "But three days later, she suffered hemorrhagic shock and was taken quickly to the hospital. I operated on her immediately, diagnosing pregnancy in the Fallopian tube. She was saved just in time!"

A young woman in São Paulo thought that she was anemic, but her problem was chronic kidney insufficiency. Because she delayed treatment, a transplant became the only possible solution. Concludes her doctor: "Often the patient hesitates to seek medical treatment, self-medicates or looks for other means indicated by laypersons, and ends up with serious health problems."

Certainly, we do not want to minimize the signals our body conveys. Yet how can we avoid being obsessed with therapies or self-medication? Health is defined as "the condition of being sound in body, mind, or spirit" or as "freedom from physical disease or pain." Interestingly, it is acknowledged that to a greater or lesser degree, today most diseases are preventable. According to Dr. Lewis Thomas, "far from being ineptly put together, we are amazingly tough, durable organisms, full of health." Hence, rather than 'becoming healthy hypochondriacs and worrying ourselves half to death,' we should cooperate with the body and its extraordinary ability to heal itself. A competent doctor or health practitioner may also help us.

When to Seek Medical Aid

A Brazilian doctor suggests professional help "if such symptoms as fever, headaches, vomiting, or pain in the abdomen, thorax, or pelvis do not subside with ordinary medicine and recur frequently without any apparent reason or if pain is acute or very intense." Another doctor recommends medical aid whenever we are unsure about how to deal with our symptoms or feel that

Benefits of Balanced Self-Care

Your health to a large extent depends on what you eat and drink. If you try to run a car on watered-down gasoline or add sugar to the gas, you will soon ruin the engine. Likewise, if you try to survive on junk food and junk drink, you will eventually pay the price in impaired health. In the computer world, this is called GIGO, which means "garbage in, garbage out."

Dr. Melanie Mintzer, a professor of family medicine, explains: "There are three different kinds of patients: those who consult physicians for things they could just as easily manage by themselves at home, those who use the health-care system appropriately, and those who don't consult physicians even when they should. Those in the first group often waste physicians' time and their own time and money. Those in the third group may risk their lives by delaying appropriate professional care. Doctors wish more people were in the middle group."

"The seven keys to optimal health are: eat and drink right, exercise regularly, don't smoke, get adequate rest, manage your stress load, maintain close social ties, and take prudent precautions to reduce your risk of illness and accidents." —*Before You Call the Doctor—Safe, Effective Self-Care for Over 300 Medical Problems*, by Anne Simons, M.D., Bobbie Hasselbring, and Michael Castleman.

A Home Medicine Chest

"It has been estimated that about 90 percent of the symptoms—aches, pains, bruises, and other signs of discomfort or disease—felt by otherwise healthy adults are simply shrugged off and never reported to anyone. . . . Often some quick remedy is used, like 2 aspirins for a headache."

"What often makes this all possible is the home medicine chest. It saves needless and costly trips to the doctor or clinic." —*Complete Home Medical Guide,* The Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

This same source recommends a home medicine chest that includes Band-Aids, tape, sterile gauze pads, cotton balls, bandages, various ointments and creams, antiseptic rubbing alcohol, scissors, an oral thermometer, and other practical items.

For medications, it recommends pills to reduce fever and pain, antacids, cough syrup, an antihistamine/decongestant, a mild laxative, and antidiarrheal medication.

something is different from other times. He adds: "When a child becomes sick, instead of medicating the child themselves, parents generally prefer to get professional help."

But are drugs always necessary? Will the use of drugs be counterproductive? Are there any side effects, such as irritation of the stomach or damage to the liver or the kidneys? What about interactions with other drugs? "Few patients view their own problems unemotionally or even perceptively," says *The New Encyclopædia Britannica.* Yet, a conscientious doctor can help us see that all drugs are potentially harmful and that there are few drugs used today that have no side effects. Just read the

1. Vendor's medicine chest

2. Open-air medication vendor

3. Bags of herbal remedies

Remember that no herb or drug is entirely harmless

A Word of Warning

"Even though they don't require a prescription, OTC [over the counter] medications are *real* drugs. Like prescription drugs, some should not be combined with others or with certain foods or alcohol. Like other drugs, some can mask more serious problems or cause dependency. And sometimes an OTC drug simply should not substitute for a visit to the doctor.

"Nevertheless, most are safe and effective . . . They do the job and do it well." —*Using Medicines Wisely.*

warnings of possible side effects on the label of the next prescription drug you buy! Even over-the-counter medicine can cause harm or death if used improperly or overused.

The need for caution is emphasized by a report by Richard A. Knox in *The Boston Globe:* "Millions of arthritis sufferers who take daily painkillers are at risk of sudden and potentially fatal bleeding, Stanford University researchers report." He adds: "Moreover, the researchers warn, combining the painkillers with antacids or popular acid-blocking pills does not protect against serious stomach complications and may even increase the danger."

What about common self-medication? Says a doctor in Ribeirão Prêto, Brazil: "I think it would be very beneficial if all could have a small home pharmacy . . . However, these medications should be used with good judgment and common sense." (See box, page 7.) Also, basic health education contributes to a better quality of life. Since conditions differ with each person, *Awake!* does not recommend specific drugs, therapies, or natural remedies.

Good Health—What Can *You* Do?

"The best doctors in the world are Doctor Diet, Doctor Quiet and Doctor Merryman," wrote Jonathan Swift, an 18th-century author. Indeed, a balanced diet, proper rest, and contentment are important ingredients in good health. In contrast, despite the claims of clever advertising, we cannot buy good health just by taking drugs. "Unnecessary and even dangerous use of pharmaceutical products" may weaken the immune system.—*Dicionário Terapêutico Guanabara.*

However, by assuming responsibility for our life-style and avoiding drug abuse, smoking, heavy drinking, and too much stress, we can do much to improve our well-being. Says Marian, in her 60's and a long-time missionary in Brazil: "I have enjoyed reasonably good health by living moderately and eating a variety of healthful foods." She also explains: "I generally like to get up early, so getting to bed early is essential." Common sense and good habits should not be minimized, neither should the importance of periodic medical checkups and good communication with a qualified family doctor.

Although wanting to remain healthy, Marian is careful neither to neglect her health nor to be overly concerned about it. She says: "I also pray for Jehovah's guidance in any health decisions I need to make, so that I may do what is best in the long run and not spend excessive time and resources in attempts to improve my health." She adds: "Since keeping active is vital, I pray that God help me to be reasonable as to how I use my time and my strength, so that I do not spare myself unnecessarily and, at the same time, do not go beyond my limits."

To be truly happy, we cannot ignore the future. Even if we are favored with relatively good health now, disease, pain, suffering, and eventual death remain. Is there any hope that we will ever enjoy perfect health?

Is Perfect Health Just a Dream?

HAVE you ever been seriously ill or gone through a serious operation? If you have, likely you now appreciate life even more. But whatever your physical condition, do you believe it is possible to enjoy perfect health? This may seem unrealistic in view of the prevalence of such debilitating illnesses as cancer or heart disease. Indeed, most of us get sick from time to time. Yet, complete well-being is not merely a dream.

Man was created to enjoy excellent health, not to struggle with sickness and death. Hence, to counteract sickness and death, Jehovah provided the basis for perfect health and eternal life by means of the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus. "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Those who live forever in God's promised new world will not struggle with poor health or old age. That being so, what will happen to infirmities?

Relief From Sickness

The way in which Jesus Christ healed the infirm provides a pattern. About such cures it was said: "The blind are seeing again, and the lame are walking about, the lepers are being cleansed and the deaf are hearing, and the dead are being raised up, and the poor are having the good news declared to them." (Matthew 11:3-5) Yes, all disabled ones who approached Jesus "were made completely well." (Matthew 14:36) As a result, "the crowd felt amazement as they saw the dumb speaking and the lame walking and the blind seeing, and they glorified the God of Israel." —Matthew 15:31.

Really, although no one today can perform cures like these, we can be confident that under God's rule mankind will be elevated to perfection, healed of all mental and physical diseases. God's promise is recorded at Revelation 21:3, 4: "Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And 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."

Imagine a world where there is no need for any pharmaceutical industry or for hospitals, surgery, or therapy! Furthermore, in the restored Paradise, depression and mental illnesses will be things of the past. Life will be a real delight; and happiness, a permanent sentiment. Indeed, God's infinite power will activate the body's regenerative processes, and the benefits of the ransom will eliminate sin's debilitating effect. "No resident will say: 'I am sick.'"—Isaiah 33:24.

What a marvelous hope—to enjoy perfect physical and spiritual health under God's Kingdom! As you maintain a balanced and healthy life-style now, look forward to the blessings of God's new world. May Jehovah 'satisfy your lifetime with what is good, and may your youth keep renewing itself just like that of an eagle'! —Psalm 103:5.

Jehovah's Witnesses

Courageous in the Face of Nazi Peril

BY *AWAKE!* CORRESPONDENT IN GERMANY

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES are well-known for their firm adherence to God's Word, the Bible. This often calls for courage, and it certainly affects their lives and their relationships with others.

For example, the Witnesses have deep regard for people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. They love God and their neighbor. (Matthew 22:35-40) Indeed, they are in full agreement with the apostle Peter, who declared: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him."—Acts 10:34, 35.

Jehovah's Witnesses are also known worldwide for their respect for law, order, and governmental authority. They have never been a seedbed of insurrection and never will be. This is true even when they are persecuted in some lands because of their taking the apostolic position: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29; Matthew 24:9) At the same time, the Witnesses recognize the right of others to worship in harmony with the dictates of their conscience.

The courageous Christian stand of Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany and other lands dominated by Adolf Hitler is a matter of record. A notable event in Berlin, Germany, in 1933 illustrates their courage, their love for God and neighbor, and their respect for law, order, and religious freedom.

No Compromise With Hitler

It was more than 50 years ago that Hitler's monstrous 12-year reign of racism and murder came to an end. Yet, that Nazi regime inflicted wounds that grieve humanity to this day.

History recognizes that only a few groups courageously stood up and spoke out against Nazi terror. Among them were Jehovah's Witnesses, described as "a tiny island of unflagging [moral] resistance existing in the bosom of a terrorized nation." Their courageous stand is well documented by respected historians.

A few critics, however, including some former associates of Jehovah's Witnesses, charge that the Witnesses attempted to compromise with the Hitler regime in its early days. They claim that representatives of the Watch Tower Society tried unsuccessfully to curry favor with the new government and that, at least for a time, they endorsed the racist ideology of the Nazis, which eventually led to the murder of six million Jews.

These serious allegations are absolutely false. The following is a frank examination of the events in question, based on available documentation and historical context.

Looking Back

Jehovah's Witnesses have been active in Germany for more than 100 years. By 1933, there were about 25,000 Witnesses worship-

ing Jehovah God and distributing Bible literature throughout Germany.

Despite the freedoms granted by the German constitution of that time, Jehovah's Witnesses were frequently the target of defamation campaigns, launched primarily by religious opponents. As early as 1921, the Witnesses, then called *Ernste Bibelforscher* (Earnest Bible Students), were accused of being linked with the Jews in subversive political movements. The Bible Students were branded as the dangerous Bolshevik "Jewish worm," though no proof of the charges was ever produced. Swiss theologian Karl Barth later wrote: "The accusation that Jehovah's Witnesses are linked with the Communists can only be due to an involuntary or even intentional misunderstanding."

A church magazine in Germany charged that the Witnesses and the Jews were coconspirators in revolutionary movements. In response, the April 15, 1930, German edition of *The Golden Age* (forerunner of *Awake!*) stated: "We have no reason to regard this false accusation as an insult—as we are convinced that the Jew is at least as valuable a person as a nominal Christian; but we reject the above untruth of the church tabloid because it is aimed at deprecating our work, as if it were being done not for the sake of the Gospel but for the Jews."

Thus, professor of history John Weiss wrote: "The Witnesses were free of German racial nationalism and had not brooded for centuries over the failure of the Jews to convert. The Witnesses still held to the original, if patronizing, Christian belief of the need to persuade all potential converts to Christ."

What Happened When Hitler Came to Power?

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Germany's new chancellor. In the beginning, the Hitler government worked to conceal its violent and extremist nature. Hence, the Witnesses, along with millions of other Germans in early 1933, viewed the National Socialist Party as the legitimate ruling authority of the time. The Witnesses hoped that the National Socialist (Nazi) government would realize that this peaceable, law-abiding Christian group posed no subversive threat to the State. This was no offer to compromise Bible principles. As has been the case in other lands, the Witnesses wanted to inform the government of the true nonpolitical nature of their religion.

It quickly became apparent that Jehovah's Witnesses were to be among the first targets of brutal Nazi suppression. The Witnesses were again branded as accomplices in an alleged Bolshevik-Jewish conspiracy. A campaign of persecution began.

Why would such a small religious community attract the fury of the new regime? Historian Brian Dunn identifies three fundamental reasons: (1) the international scope of the Witnesses, (2) their opposition to racism, and (3) their position of neutrality toward the State. Because of their Scriptural views, the German Witnesses refused to give the Hitler salute, to support the National Socialist Party, or later on to participate in military activities.—Exodus 20:4, 5; Isaiah 2:4; John 17:16.

As a result, the Witnesses endured threats, interrogations, house searches, and other harassment by the police and SA (Hitler's *Sturmabteilung,* storm troopers, or Brownshirts). On April 24, 1933, officials seized and shut down the Watch Tower office in Magdeburg, Germany. After a thorough search yielded no incriminating evidence, and under pressure from the U.S. State Department, the police returned the property. By May 1933, though, the Witnesses were banned in several German states.

Witnesses Take Courageous Action

During this early period, Hitler carefully cultivated his public image as a champion of Christianity. He proclaimed his commitment to religious freedom, promising to treat Christian denominations "with objective justice." In order to enhance his image, the new chancellor made appearances in churches. This was a time when many people in countries that later would be at war with Germany were expressing admiration for Hitler's achievements.

Concerned about the rising tensions in Germany, Joseph F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society, together with the Germany branch office manager, Paul Balzereit, decided to mount a campaign to inform Chancellor Hitler, government officials, and the public that Jehovah's Witnesses posed no threat to the German people and the State. Rutherford evidently believed that Hitler was unaware of the attacks against Jehovah's Witnesses or that he had been misinformed by religious elements regarding the Witnesses.

Therefore, the Magdeburg office arranged a convention to make use of the German citizens' right of petition. On short notice, Jehovah's Witnesses from all over Germany were invited to the Wilmersdorfer Tennishallen in Berlin on June 25, 1933. About 5,000 delegates were expected. Despite the hostile atmosphere, more than 7,000 courageously attended. The delegates adopted a resolution entitled "Declaration of Facts." This document protested the restrictions that had been put on the work of the Witnesses. It made a clear statement of their position and denied charges of seditious links with political causes of any sort. It stated:

"We are wrongfully charged before the ruling powers of this government . . . We do respectfully ask the rulers of the nation and the people to give a fair and impartial consideration to the statement of facts here made."

"We have no fight with any persons or religious teachers, but we must call attention to the fact that it is generally those who claim to represent God and Christ Jesus who are in fact our persecutors and who misrepresent us before the governments."

Convention of Courage or Compromise?

Some now hold that the 1933 Berlin convention and the "Declaration of Facts" were attempts on the part of prominent Witnesses to show support for the Nazi government and its hatred of the Jews. But their assertions are not true. They are based on misinformation and on misinterpretation of the facts.

For instance, critics claim that the Witnesses decorated the Wilmersdorfer Tennishallen with swastika flags. Photographs of the 1933 convention clearly show that they displayed no swastikas in the hall. Eyewitnesses confirm that there were no flags inside.

It is possible, however, that there were flags on the building's exterior. A Nazi combat troop had used the hall on June 21, the Wednesday prior to the convention. Then just the day before the convention, crowds of young people along with units of the SS (*Schutzstaffel,* originally Hitler's Blackshirt bodyguards), SA, and others celebrated the summer solstice nearby. So Witnesses arriving at the Sunday convention might have been greeted with the sight of a building decked with swastika flags.

Had there been swastika flags decorating the hall's exterior, corridors, or even its interior, the Witnesses would have left them alone. Even today, when Jehovah's Witnesses rent public facilities for meetings and conventions, they do not remove national symbols. But there is no evidence that the Witnesses themselves hung any flags or that they saluted them.

Critics further state that the Witnesses opened the convention with the German na-

tional anthem. Actually, the convention began with "Zion's Glorious Hope," Song 64 in the Witnesses' religious songbook. The words of this song were set to music composed by Joseph Haydn in 1797. Song 64 had been in the Bible Students' songbook since at least 1905. In 1922 the German government adopted Haydn's melody with words by Hoffmann von Fallersleben as their national anthem. Nevertheless, the Bible Students in Germany still sang their Song 64 occasionally, as did Bible Students in other countries.

The singing of a song about Zion could hardly be construed as an effort to placate the Nazis. Under pressure from anti-Semitic Nazis, other churches removed Hebrew terms such as "Judah," "Jehovah," and "Zion" from their hymnals and liturgies. Jehovah's Witnesses did not. The convention organizers, then, certainly did not expect to win favor with the government by singing a song extolling Zion. Possibly, some delegates may have been reluctant to sing "Zion's Glorious Hope," since the melody of this composition by Haydn was the same as that of the national anthem.

A Statement of Intent

With the government in transition and the country in turmoil, the Witnesses wanted to make a clear statement of their position. By means of the "Declaration," the Witnesses strongly denied accusations of financial involvement or political ties with Jews. Thus, the document stated:

"It is falsely charged by our enemies that we have received financial support for our work from the Jews. Nothing is farther from the truth. Up to this hour there never has been the slightest bit of money contributed to our work by Jews."

Having mentioned money, the "Declaration" went on to denounce unfair practices of big business. It said: *"It has been the commercial Jews of the British-American empire that have built up*

Actual photos of the convention attended by Jehovah's Witnesses in 1933 at the Tennishallen

and carried on Big Business as a means of exploiting and oppressing the peoples of many nations."

This statement clearly did not refer to the Jewish people in general, and it is regrettable if it has been misunderstood and has given cause for any offense. Some have claimed that Jehovah's Witnesses shared the hostility toward the Jews that was commonly taught in the German churches at the time. This is absolutely untrue. By their literature and conduct during the Nazi era, the Witnesses rejected anti-Semitic views and condemned the Nazi mistreatment of the Jews. Certainly, their kindness toward Jews who shared their lot in the concentration camps provides a resounding rebuttal to this false accusation.

The "Declaration" defined the Witnesses' work as religious in character, stating: *"Our organization is not political in any sense. We only insist on teaching the Word of Jehovah God to the people."*

The "Declaration" also reminded the government of its own promises. The Witnesses upheld certain high *ideals,* and these happened to be publicly espoused also by the German government. Among these were family values and religious freedom.

In this regard, the "Declaration" added: *"A careful examination of our books and literature will disclose the fact that the very high ideals held and promulgated by the present national government are set forth in and endorsed and strongly emphasized in our publications, and show that Jehovah God will see to it that these high ideals in due time will be attained by all persons who love righteousness."*

Thus, the Witnesses never expressed *support for the Nazi Party.* Moreover, in the exercise of religious freedom, they did not intend to stop their public preaching. —Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20.

According to the account in the *1974 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses,* some German Witnesses were disappointed that the language of the "Declaration" was not more explicit in tone. Had the branch office manager, Paul Balzereit, weakened the text of the document? No, for a comparison of the German and the English texts shows that this is not the case. Evidently, an impression to the contrary was based on the subjective observations of some who were not directly involved in the preparation of the "Declaration." Their conclusions may also have been influenced by the fact that Balzereit renounced his faith only two years later.

It is now known that a ban on Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany had been issued on Saturday, June 24, 1933, just the day before the Berlin convention. The convention organizers and the police learned of this ban a few days later. In view of the climate of tension and the evident hostility of Nazi officials, it is remarkable that the convention was held at all. It is no exaggeration to say that 7,000 Witnesses courageously put their liberty at risk by attending the gathering.

Following the convention, the Witnesses distributed 2.1 million copies of the "Declaration." Some Witnesses were arrested immediately and sent to labor camps. Thus, the Nazi government fully revealed its oppressive, violent nature and soon launched an all-out attack on this small group of Christians.

Wrote Professor Christine King: "Brute force could not suppress the Witnesses, the Nazis were to learn." It was as the "Declaration" stated: "The power of Jehovah God is supreme and there is no power that can successfully resist him."*

* Space does not allow us to supply full documentation for this historical account. However, a list of complete references is available upon request from the publishers. You may also find it enlightening to view the videocassette documentary entitled *Jehovah's Witnesses Stand Firm Against Nazi Assault.*

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Calcutta

Vibrant City of Contrasts

By *Awake!* correspondent in India

TO British author Rudyard Kipling, it was the "city of dreadful night," "the packed and pestilential town." But to the famed Urdu poet Mīrzā Ghālib, it was "a city so refreshing," "that heavenly city." Author Dominique Lapierre found each visit to the city "a new magical experience," whereas Peter T. White, writing in *National Geographic,* quoted others as calling it "dreadful, gruesome, frightening. The world's largest slum." Without a doubt, Calcutta (Bengali, *Kalikata*) is a city of contrasts.

The Founding of the City

Calcutta, which lies on India's northeast coast in the state of West Bengal, was not a part of India's ancient past. Compared with cities like Delhi and Thanjavur, it is a young city. As is so often the case with cities, Calcutta was born because of a river, the mighty Ganges. Nearing the Bay of Bengal, the Ganges divides into two tributaries and then into many more, to form the largest delta in the world. The western edge of the delta is the river earlier known as Bhagirathi-Ganga, later the Hooghly, which flows south into the sea.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Portuguese, Dutch, and British traders sailed up the Hooghly and, with the permission of local rulers, set up trading posts. Job Charnock, an officer of the British East India Company, chose the village of Sutanuti as a center for trade. After some setbacks, he sailed into Sutanuti and, drawing in the villages of Govindpur and Kalikata, laid the foundation for the

Science City

Victoria Memorial

establishment of a British settlement rather than just a trading post. It was August 24, 1690. Calcutta was born!

Right of tenancy was legally acquired in 1698, and until 1757 the British paid rent to the Mogul rulers. The British built Fort William to give military protection to the developing city. Merchants, feeling the security of Fort William, began to build large villas. By then the population of the town and surrounding villages had reached 400,000, and trade brought nearly 50 ships a year up the Hooghly.

The Black Hole of Calcutta

In 1756 a rash, young local ruler, Sirāj-ud-Dawlah of Bengal, attacked Calcutta. Most of the residents fled, but some Europeans, who had taken refuge in Fort William, surrendered and were imprisoned in a small lockup in the stifling heat of June. The next day, it was found that many had suffocated. The lockup became known as the Black Hole of Calcutta.

This incident aroused the wrath of the East India Company, and in 1757, Robert Clive led a force of British soldiers to retake the town. It is said that the ensuing Battle of Plassey marked the start of British rule in India. And the result to Calcutta? In 1773 it became the capital of British India, remaining so until 1911.

Calcutta Gets a Face-Lift

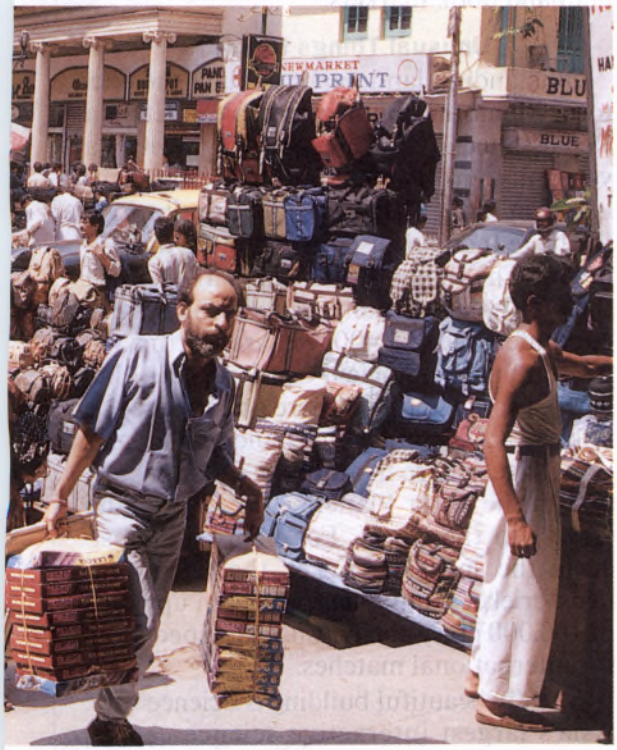
As great wealth poured into the city, magnificent buildings were constructed, giving Calcutta the name City of Palaces. Wide roads were built, and museums and libraries were established. Many of the impressive buildings still standing today are evidence of this.

After 190 years of British rule, India, under the leadership of Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, gained its independence in 1947, and with it came partition. Under Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the Muslim state of Pakistan (East and West Pakistan) was formed. Then, in 1971, East Pakistan became Bangladesh. These events caused a flood of refugees to pour into Calcutta; today the metropolitan area has a population estimated at over 12,000,000.

The sudden influx of so many without means of support led to enormous problems. Lack of housing meant that literally millions were living in the poorest of slums, in dwellings made of cardboard and jute, with little or no sanitation, electricity, or water. Other thousands lived on the streets. In 1967, nine international town planners reporting on the state of affairs in Calcutta said that it was "rapidly approaching the point of breakdown in its economy, housing, sanitation, transport and the essential humanities of life." The future looked grim.

In an effort to increase available housing, especially for low-income groups, a vast area of salt marsh was reclaimed. Also, by dredging up silt from the river to create a landfill, navigation was improved.

A bustling market scene



A sidewalk barber shop

The early 1990's saw much international investment in India, and Calcutta did not want to be left out. So a massive cleanup began. Slum dwellers were relocated outside the city, garbage was used to produce electricity and fertilizer, and polluting vehicles were banned as were smoke-producing open-air ovens. Roads were widened, and shopping malls were built. Citizen groups cleared and scrubbed and painted. Calcutta was pulled back from the brink of disaster and given a new lease on life—so much so that the once 'dying,' 'disaster' city became vibrant again. In a 1997 report on advantages and civic amenities, it was ranked way above India's other major cities.

Metropolis of Trade

With refugees from neighboring countries, immigrants from other states of India, the local Bengalis, and the longtime resident Chinese and Armenians, the metropolis has become a melting pot of languages, cultures, religions, and cuisine. What drew all these millions of people to Calcutta? Trade! Ships from around the world came to this port where East met West. Exports included saltpeter, jute, tea, sugar, indigo, cotton, and silk. By road, rail, and sea, vast quantities of goods entered and left Calcutta. After independence, huge iron and steel foundries were developed, and valuable

minerals for home use and export were mined.

Basic to the increase in trade was the port. Originally the British anchored their ships in the deeper part of the Hooghly and sent small boats upriver to transfer goods. In 1758 the nucleus for what would in time be India's major port was set up at Calcutta. Ongoing modernization and increased water flow from a dam on the Ganges have served to expand Calcutta's international, coastal, and inland waterway traffic.

Transport—Ancient and Modern

In a city of more than 12 million people, transportation is a major problem. Calcutta has all the means of transport usually found in a modern city—and more! To visitors, the hand-pulled ricksha is a source of wonderment as they see agile men wend their way through heavy traffic—often getting passengers to their destination faster than the impeded bus or taxi. Introduced in 1900 to move goods, the ricksha was soon used to carry people; there are, it is believed, about 25,000 rickshas on the city streets! Although they slow down the traffic, they provide employment for perhaps 50,000 men and transport for many more.

Daily, small ferryboats carry thousands of commuters between Calcutta's main railway station and the central business district. River transport is being increased to ease road traffic problems, as over 50,000 cars and thousands of trucks fight their way each day over the world's most heavily used bridge, Howrah Bridge.

Perhaps best loved in the city are the electric trams. An excellent system of nonpolluting, high-capacity, energy-efficient vehicles moves hundreds of thousands of people around the city each day, though not always in comfort. Hanging off the side of a tram requires special skills! Great improvement came with the recent completion of the Metro Rail System, which conveys more than 60,000 passengers an hour through the center of the city in cool comfort.

Calcutta's Varied Culture

Educational opportunities in Calcutta have led many into the fields of science and law, and the arts flourish in what has become a cultural center of the subcontinent. More than a quarter of a million students attend the 140-year-old University of Calcutta, one of the largest in the world.

If Mumbai is India's center for commercial cinema, Calcutta is certainly the home of high-quality art cinema. Such names as Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen are known worldwide for their contribution to the arts. Calcutta boasts more poets than Rome and Paris combined, more literary magazines than New York and London and, on College Street, one of the world's largest secondhand book markets.

Unusual Things to See

Outstanding landmarks include the Victoria Memorial, built of marble in Italian Renaissance style. Opened in 1921, it is a vast museum of memorabilia of the British raj in India. Calcutta's museums include the huge Indian Museum and more than 30 others. The Indian Botanical Gardens with their 240-year-old banyan tree, which has a circumference of 1,400 feet, are worth a visit, as are the Zoological Gardens. The Maidan—a sprawling 1,280-acre open space—is known as Calcutta's lungs and as the largest village square in all India. Calcutta also boasts the Birla Planetarium, one of the largest in the world. For people interested in the sport of cricket, the Eden Gardens' cricket ground has packed in upwards of 100,000 noisy and enthusiastic spectators for international matches.

A really beautiful building is Science City, Asia's largest interactive science center,

which allows visitors to experience an earthquake, see an island submerged, witness the forming of a tornado, and learn fascinating facts about the environment and the habits of many creatures. But for Hindus the biggest draw of all in Calcutta is the Durga Puja festival, when the city bursts into five days of frenzied religious gaiety, which brings most normal activity to a standstill.

What can you find if you go shopping in Calcutta? Just about anything! But be ready to jostle with noisy crowds, and be sure to notice the women in their beautiful multicolored saris. You can buy leather goods at reasonable prices, including fine leather shoes in Chinese shops. Stainless steel items, textiles, exquisite crockery, and beautifully crafted jewelry are only a few of the items a patient shopper can find in the huge markets of this "shopper's paradise."

Gourmet Fare

Calcutta has also been described as a gourmet's paradise, so we cannot leave it without tasting some of its delicious food. It has been said that Bengalis venerate food and grade people on the excellence of their culinary skills! Fish is a must in Calcutta fare, and huge markets provide a variety of fish, meats, and vegetables. Fresh spices, carefully blended, add subtlety to the taste of the simplest vegetables. Chinese food is plentiful. And at the pinnacle of Calcutta's culinary delights are its famous sweets. *Rasagollas,* balls of drained curd, flavored and soaked in sugar syrup, are a symbol of Bengal. And don't miss *mishti doi,* a delightful sweetened yogurt that is a popular ending to a meal. Does your mouth water? Can you catch some of the good aromas of those restaurants? Yes, Calcutta is, indeed, a vibrant, fascinating city of contrasts!

A **Deadly** Alliance

BACK in 1959, health workers in the United States predicted that tuberculosis (TB) would soon be eradicated. Indeed, in subsequent years the disease declined so sharply that many people assumed it was under control. But TB is back, and it has found a deadly ally—HIV, the virus that weakens the immune system and usually leads to AIDS.

Although over two billion people—approximately a third of the world's population—carry TB bacteria, when first infected these people have only a 10-percent *lifetime* chance of actually contracting the disease. Interestingly, people with HIV have an 8-percent *annual* risk of developing active TB. As more people contract HIV, therefore, more are in imminent danger of contracting TB.

Dr. Richard J. O'Brien of WHO (World Health Organization) notes that during recent years there has been approximately a 15-percent increase in TB cases in the United States. This, he says, is "largely attributed to the interaction between HIV and TB." The threat is most serious, however, in the developing world. A full 90 percent of each year's eight million new cases are found in the poorest countries, and about three million of these patients die.

New Jersey Medical School —National Tuberculosis Center

Worldwide, some 4.4 million people are struggling with the deadly pair. WHO predicts that in the near future, TB will annually take a million lives among those with HIV. "These dual epidemics have together become the most serious public health threat of the decade," said Peter Piot, executive director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

What Is Wrong With Flirting?

"WHY DO WE THINK OF FLIRTING AS MANIPULATIVE OR DECEITFUL OR BAD? IT'S NOT! IT'S A GAME! AND IT'S A WIN-WIN GAME BECAUSE YOU'RE MAKING THE OTHER PERSON FEEL GOOD."

—*Susan Rabin, director of the School of Flirting, New York City.*

MANY people view flirting as normal, innocent, and even necessary in forming and maintaining human relationships. In Western countries, there is a recent proliferation of books, magazine articles, and special courses that teach the gestures, postures, glances, and stares that are integral to the "art of flirting."

What is flirtation? There are various definitions and interpretations. One dictionary defines it as "frivolously amorous or sexually enticing" behavior. Another dictionary defines flirting as behaving "amorously without serious intent." Thus, it seems to be a generally accepted notion that a flirt is one who signals romantic interest with no intention of marriage. Should flirting be viewed as harmless? What is the Bible's viewpoint of flirting?*

Although flirting is not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures, we can determine God's view. How? By examining Bible principles that bear on the matter. We thus develop our 'perceptive powers so as to distinguish right from wrong.' (Hebrews 5:14) First, let us consider whether flirting is appropriate behavior for people who are married.

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* Flirting should not be confused with being friendly or gregarious, without any amorous motive.

If One Is Married

It is quite natural for married couples to behave amorously with each other in private. (Compare Genesis 26:8.) But directing such attentions to individuals outside the marriage goes contrary to God's principles. Jehovah purposed that married couples enjoy a close and trusting relationship. (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:21-33) He views marriage as a sacred, permanent union. Malachi 2:16 says of God: "He has hated a divorcing."*

Is flirting by a married person compatible with God's view of marriage? At the very least, the married flirt shows disrespect for the sacredness of God's marital arrangement. Then, too, Ephesians 5:33 commands the Christian husband to "love his wife as he does himself" and the wife to "have deep respect for her husband." Does flirting, which arouses jealousy, show love or respect for one's mate?

Even more sobering is the fact that flirting can lead to adultery, a sin that Jehovah roundly condemns and describes as treacherous. (Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 20:10; Malachi 2:14, 15; Mark 10:17-19) Indeed, Jehovah considers adultery to be so serious that he permits victims of marital infidelity to divorce. (Matthew 5:32) Can we imagine, then, that Jehovah would approve of so dangerous a pastime as flirting? God would not approve of it any more than a loving parent would approve of his small child playing with a sharp kitchen knife.

Concerning adultery the Bible warns: "Can a man rake together fire into his bosom and yet his very garments not be burned? Or can a man walk upon the coals and his feet themselves not be scorched? Likewise with anyone having relations with the wife of his fellow-man, no one touching her will remain unpunishable." (Proverbs 6:27-29) However, even if adultery is never committed, a married person who flirts invites a further danger—becoming involved in what has been termed "an emotional affair."

Emotional Affairs

Some people have cultivated relationships outside their marriage in which romantic feelings develop, although there is no sexual contact. However, Jesus warned: "Everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28) Why did Jesus object to passion that goes no further than the heart?

One factor is that "out of the heart come . . . adulteries." (Matthew 15:19) However, such a relationship is harmful even if it has not progressed to the point where adultery is imminent. How so? One book on this subject explains: "Any activity or relationship that drains too much time and energy from life with your partner is a form of unfaithfulness." Yes, an emotional affair robs one's mate of time, attention, and affection. In view of Jesus' command that we treat others as we wish to be treated, the married flirt does well to ask himself, 'How would I feel if my mate behaved this way with another?' —Proverbs 5:15-23; Matthew 7:12.

If a person has formed an inappropriate emotional bond like this, what should he do? A married person with an improper emotional attachment is like a driver falling asleep at the wheel. He needs to wake up to his situation and take immediate, decisive action before his marriage and his relationship with God are wrecked. Jesus illustrated the need for drastic action when he said that even something as precious as an eye should be torn away or a hand cut off if it would destroy one's good standing with God.—Matthew 5:29, 30.

It would thus be wise to limit where and how often you see the other person.

* See the article "What Kind of Divorcing Does God Hate?" in the February 8, 1994, issue of *Awake!*

Certainly, avoid being isolated with the individual, and if in a work environment, limit the nature of conversation. It may even be necessary to terminate all contact with the person. Thereafter, strict self-control must be applied regarding one's eyes, thoughts, feelings, and behavior. (Genesis 39:7-12; Psalm 19:14; Proverbs 4:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:4-6) Job, a married man, set an excellent example when he said: "A covenant I have concluded with my eyes. So how could I show myself attentive to a virgin?" —Job 31:1.

Clearly, it is hazardous and unscriptural for a married person to engage in flirting. However, what is the Bible's view of flirting between people who are single? Is it to be considered normal, innocent, or necessary to establish relationships with the opposite sex? Could any real harm result from it?

What About the Unmarried?

There is nothing wrong with two single people showing romantic interest in each other, provided that they are contemplating marriage and that they avoid unclean conduct. (Galatians 5:19-21) Such interest may take place during the early stages of courtship when marriage may still be only a remote possibility. This is not necessarily inappropriate when the intentions are good. Such behavior is not really flirtatious.

What, though, if single people send romantic signals to each other just for amusement? It may seem harmless, since they are unmarried. However, consider the potential for emotional injury. If the flirt's manner is taken more seriously than intended, it can result in excruciating pain and heartache. How true are the words of Proverbs 13:12: "Expectation postponed is making the heart sick, but the thing desired is a tree of life when it does come"! Even if two people claim to have an understanding that neither one has serious interest in the other —can either of them be certain of what the other is really thinking or feeling? The Bible answers: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?"—Jeremiah 17:9; compare Philippians 2:4.

Consider, too, the danger of fornication, with its possible consequences of disease or illegitimate pregnancy. Fornication is forbidden in the Scriptures, and those who willfully practice it lose God's favor. The apostle Paul wisely cautioned Christians that to resist temptation, they should "deaden" their "body members . . . as respects fornication" and avoid "covetous sexual appetite," which leads to fornication. (Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5) At Ephesians 5:3, he advises us that fornication "not even be mentioned," that is, in such a way as to arouse wrong desire. Flirting does not harmonize with this counsel. God even forbids unwholesome conversation about sex.

Bible principles reveal that flirting can be cruel to fellow humans and disrespectful to Jehovah, the Originator of marriage. The Bible's view of improper flirting is certainly loving and reasonable, as it protects people from injury. Lovers of God will therefore refrain from inappropriate flirting and treat the opposite sex with chasteness and respect.—1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 5:1, 2.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Bringing Phobias Under Control

Have Scientists Really Found Black Holes?

Dengue—A Fever From a Bite

BIRD-WATCHING
A Fascinating Hobby for Everyone?

"The bird-watcher's life is an endless succession of surprises."
W. H. Hudson—*The Book of a Naturalist.*

AT Kosi Bay, near the border between South Africa and Mozambique, Keith, Evelyn, Jannie, and their guide walked 15 miles to see a bird. This was not just any bird! They were in search of the palm-nut vulture—a large black-and-white bird with red skin around the eyes. It feeds on dead fish and the fruit of oil palms.

Keith relates: "After the long walk, we came home disappointed at having seen only one —and that at a distance in flight. Upon arrival back at our camp, what did we find? Three palm-nut vultures sitting in a palm tree above us! We enjoyed their company for about half an hour before they took off, giving us a wonderful display with wings fully outstretched. The same day, we also saw a Pel's fishing owl for the first time. Yes, an owl that catches fish!"

A Thrill for Anyone

The world over, birds are beautiful to watch and hear. The more than 9,600 species provide opportunities for any alert watcher. Who does not thrill to see the darting flash of color of a hummingbird or a kingfisher? Who does not stop when captivated by the repertoire of a mockingbird, a nightingale, or an Australian superb lyrebird or by the distinctive call of the cuckoo or the musical gurgling of the Australian magpie?

Bird-watching (birding, as it is commonly called in the United States) is the observation of wild birds. It can be as vigorous as you decide to make it. You may have no desire to slosh through swamps or climb mountains to find rare birds. However, many people find birding in their backyard or garden to be satisfying and refreshing. Many put out water and a bird feeder to attract the local bird life. Each year the number of enthusiasts increases. More and more people believe that it is worth the effort.

Why Is It So Popular?

According to the book *An America Challenged,* by Steve H. Murdock, between the years 1990 and 2050, bird-watching is expected to grow at a faster rate than the U.S. population. *New Scientist* magazine reported that "more and more people in India are taking to the pursuit of the feathered bipeds." And Gordon Holtshausen, chairman of the Publications Committee of BirdLife South Africa, believes that "in South

Bird drawings on pages 23-7: *The Complete Encyclopedia of Illustration*/J. G. Heck

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C./Glen Smart ▸

SNOW GOOSE
North America

HUMMINGBIRD
North/Central America

BLUE JAY
North America

BALD EAGLE
North America

CARDINAL
North/Central America

PELICAN
The Americas

MACAW
Central/South America

TOUCAN
South America

Courtesy of Green Chimney's Farm

TAWNY EAGLE
Africa, Asia

GREAT EGRET
Worldwide

SCARLET IBIS
South America
Courtesy of San Diego Wild Animal Park

FRANKLIN'S GULL
The Americas

Map: *The Complete Encyclopedia of Illustration/* J. G. Heck

CHAFFINCH
Europe, North Africa
MANDARIN DUCK
China
STORK
Europe, Africa, Asia
BLACK-CROWNED CRANE
Africa
FLAMINGO
Tropics
Courtesy of
San Diego
Wild Animal Park
GOULDIAN FINCH
Australia
KOOKABURRA
Australia
OSTRICH
Africa
PEACOCK
Worldwide
ROSELLA
Australia

Africa . . . [bird] books are second only to the Bible."

Once you see a bird through a bird-watcher's eyes, you will be hooked! Birding is contagious. It can be an inexpensive diversion that takes you outdoors into the open spaces and challenges your mind. It has the appeal of the hunt without the killing. Since children and adults pick it up quickly, it can be enjoyed by families or by groups of friends. It can even be enjoyed alone. Birding is a clean, wholesome, healthy pastime and can be done year-round just about anywhere.

Basics for Birding

Do you sometimes see a bird and wonder what it is called? A sense of satisfaction comes from learning the names of not just imposing eagles, peacocks, and swans but also the easily overlooked nightjars and earthcreepers. There are also the look-alike sandpipers and fall plumage wood warblers and all those in between.*

In order to identify them, you will need a field guide to the birds of your country or region. This is a pocket-size book with illustrations and descriptions of the male and female of each species. The better guides also include immature and seasonal plumage.

What else does a beginner need? A good pair of binoculars is to a birder what a fishing rod or net is to a fisherman. You will be astonished by the details in your neighborhood birds when you see them through binoculars. For example, in Africa a huge hippopotamus is hard to miss. But unless you are using binoculars, you may not see the small red-billed oxpecker feeding on parasites while clinging to the hippo's back.

Not all binoculars are designed for birding, and there is no substitute for actually comparing how various models perform. Among birders, two popular models are 7 x 42 and 8 x 40. The first number refers to the power of magnification, and the second, to the diameter of the large lens in millimeters. The National Geographic *Field Guide to the Birds of North America* explains that "a ratio of 1 to 5 between magnification power and lens size is generally considered ideal for light-gathering capability." This allows you to pick out colors even in poor lighting conditions. Thus, higher magnification is not necessarily better. Clarity is what you want.

Basic Guide for Identification

When first spotting an unfamiliar bird, it may be helpful to try to answer some of the following questions:

1. What kind of coloration does the bird have —solid, streaked, spotted or speckled?
2. In which habitat is the bird located—water, swamp, marsh, meadow or forest?
3. What size is the bird? Compare with a familiar bird—sparrow, robin, pigeon or hawk.
4. How does the bird behave—darts after insects, soars, bobs tail, holds tail up or down, or walks on the ground?
5. What shape is the bill—short and pointed, short and stout, long, curved or hooked?

By looking at these "Field Marks" and referring to a basic bird guide, even the novice can begin to recognize the common species. —*Exhibit Guide, Merrill Creek Reservoir, New Jersey, U.S.A.*

* Birds are divided into eight main visual categories: (1) swimmers—ducks and ducklike birds, (2) aerialists—gulls and gull-like birds, (3) long-legged waders—herons and cranes, (4) smaller waders—plover and sandpipers, (5) fowllike birds—grouse and quail, (6) birds of prey—hawks, eagles, and owls, (7) passerine (perching) birds, and (8) nonpasserine land birds.—*A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies,* by Roger Tory Peterson.

Where to Start Looking? Your Neighborhood

The person who knows the birds in his own neighborhood will be much better prepared for a trip to some other place to find less common or less visible birds. Do you know which species are the permanent residents around your home? Which ones are the flyovers that never seem to land, perhaps on their way to a nearby lake or marsh? What migratory transients pass through in their seasonal travels? Christopher Leahy, in his book *The Birdwatcher's Companion,* wrote: "In North America, [migration] involves about 80 percent of the approximately 645 species of breeding birds."

Some of these migrants may make a stopover near your home to refuel and rest up. Avid birders in some areas have identified more than 210 species of birds in their own backyard! You will find it interesting and educational to keep a log of the dates when you see a species for the first and last time each year.

Ways to Watch Birds

With binoculars around your neck and a field guide in your pocket, you are now ready to explore beyond the backyard. Bird checklists are often available at parks and nature reserves. These usually indicate in which seasons species are seen there and what the likelihood is of your finding them. A checklist will be a useful tool to verify your sightings. If the bird that you think you have just seen is listed as rare, then it would be good to scrutinize it, especially if you are a beginner.(See the box "Basic Guide for Identification.") On the other hand, if it is listed as abundant, likely you have identified it correctly.

Try to obtain in advance a map showing the trails and the types of habitats you will encounter. The bird life is usually richer where two or more habitats meet. Whether you walk around or remain stationary, endeavor to blend in with the surroundings, and wait for the birds to come to you. Be patient.

In some places there is a telephone number that enthusiasts can call to listen to reports of interesting recent sightings in the area.

Advance Preparation Pays Off

Targeting specific birds is rewarding, but it is to your advantage to read up beforehand on those that you would like to see. If you are in the Caribbean, perhaps your heart is set on finding the tody, whether it be the Cuban, Puerto Rican, or Jamaican variety. It is a chunky little jewel of brightly colored green and red feathers. Herbert Raffaele's *Guide to the Birds of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands* tells us that it "is difficult to see, but is often heard." The Cuban todies are known for their voracious appetites and the rapid rate at which they feed their young. After describing the bird's method of feeding, Raffaele gives this advice: "Knocking two stones together will often attract them."

You may want to time a field trip so you can witness a certain event in the life history of a species, such as the striking aerial display of one of the woodcocks in the early spring. Or it could be the impressive numbers of white storks at Gibraltar or the Bosporus preparing for their flight to Africa in the fall. Or the migration of birds over Israel.

Admittedly, planning to find a special bird is unlike visiting a historical monument that you know will always be there. Birds are constantly on the move. They are full of life. And variety. And surprises. But the search and the wait are worth the effort!

All of this is what makes bird-watching exciting. Despite your planning, the birds may not be there when you are—at least not the birds you are hoping to see. But no one can say what other unexpected discoveries await you. One thing is for sure, birds will never disappoint you. Just be patient. Happy bird-watching! And don't forget their Designer!—Genesis 1:20; 2:19; Job 39:13-18, 27-29.

Threat to Religious Liberty in Europe

At a recent press conference in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., Massimo Introvigne, a Roman Catholic scholar from Turin, Italy, said that antisect lists or reports are being compiled in several countries. Organizations targeted as "dangerous sects" include Baptists, Buddhists, Catholic charismatics, Hasidic Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, Quakers, and the Young Women's Christian Association. A German report cites 800 groups; one in Belgium, 187; and one in France, 172. Introvigne writes that in France "teachers have been fired from public schools after years of honorable service only because they were members of the Jehovah's Witnesses." As reported by Compass Direct news service, Introvigne expressed concern about public sponsorship of anticult movements. He said: "It is abundantly clear that these movements are responsible for spreading misleading and often simply false information about religious minorities, and an intolerant worldview."

Smart Windows

Researchers at Australia's University of Sydney have developed a window that closes automatically when a low-flying airplane approaches. After the offending noise source has passed, the window opens again. An outside microphone, aided by software built into the window, can recognize the particular frequencies of other offending noises as well, such as the sound of heavy trucks. Tests indicate that these windows can reduce noise by as much as 20 decibels, hopefully sufficient to ensure undisturbed sleep. *New Scientist* magazine comments: "One of the big advantages of the system is that buildings can be both soundproofed and ventilated without the need to install expensive air conditioning."

TV's Effect on Children

"Cartoons and video games influence the behavior of 6- to 12-year-old children more than school, since they spend up to 38 hours a week watching TV as opposed to 23 hours in the classroom," reports the Mexican newspaper *El Universal*.

Researcher Omar Torreblanca noted that TV teaches children which attitudes to adopt in particular situations—but without the child's being aware of whether those attitudes are good or bad. He explained: "If the child sees cartoons or a film in which one of the characters is tied up with satisfactory results, the child will most probably imitate this practice." Torreblanca's investigation indicated that "kids apply in their daily life what they learn every day from TV but not what they learn at school, since they consider school as just an obligation."

Walking May Lengthen Life

Walking every day can significantly lengthen one's life, says *Asiaweek*. A 12-year study focused on 707 nonsmoking men between the ages of 61 and 81 who were able to walk. Those "who walked just 3.2 km (two miles) per day—even at a leisurely pace—reduced their risk of death from all causes by half," notes the report. Those who did not walk were 2.5 times as likely to die from all types of cancer as those who walked at least two miles a day. The study, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine,* found that even walking as little as a half mile a day reduced mortality. Previously, some fitness experts questioned the value of such low-intensity exercise. Now, the new study concludes: "Encouraging elderly people to walk may benefit their health."

Music Helps Children

Teaching three- or four-year-old children to play music can help them to reason and think, says Gordon Shaw, physics professor at the University of California, Irvine. At this young age, brain connections are readily formed, and researchers have demonstrated that regular practice for even ten minutes a day helps to produce "a long-term improvement in how a child reasons and thinks." In a nine-month test, children who had taken piano lessons were compared with groups who had received either computer lessons or no training at all. Those who had learned to play the piano improved their intelligence test scores by 35 percent, while the

other two groups showed little or no improvement, reports London's *Sunday Times.*

Beach Ecology

Is it possible to destroy a beach by making it too clean? Yes, says a study of Swansea Bay, in Wales. The key to a healthy beach is the strandline, where debris accumulates twice daily at high tide. The debris can include trees, driftwood, algae, grass, and even dead animals, all mixed in with seaweed. This mixture is home to tiny invertebrates that help break down the decomposing vegetation, which is then dispersed by the wind and waves to act as a binding agent for the sand. The strandline also provides food for birds and for such animals as voles, mice, hares, and even foxes. It was the decline in wading birds feeding on the strandline that alerted conservationists to the fact that regular scouring of the beach upsets its delicate ecological balance. Many beach lovers desire an unrealistically clean beach. *The Times* of London reports that one visitor even expected pebbles to be removed from the sand.

Our Global Food Dish

Have you ever wondered how much the world's population eats every day? The Greek newspaper *To Vima* reported some startling statistics about daily consumption. Worldwide, two billion eggs are produced and consumed! The world devours 1.6 million tons of corn. Potatoes are also popular, 727,000 tons of them! Rice is the basic staple of a large portion of earth's population, with 1.5 million tons produced daily. Of this, 365,000 tons are consumed by the Chinese. The 7,000 tons of brewed tea leaves fill about three billion cups. The privileged of the world enjoy 2.7 tons of caviar. The average adult in the Western world takes in 4,000 calories a day —compared with the 2,500 calories recommended—while in Africa the average is only 1,800.

Eels at Work

Eels have been put to work testing water quality in Japan, reports *The Daily Yomiuri.* Five years ago Professor Kenji Namba of Hiroshima University discovered that eels react to slight variations in water quality. Harmful substances such as cadmium or cyanide cause an eel's heartbeat to slow down, whereas cancer-causing trichloroethylene rapidly raises its heart rate. A machine is now being marketed that utilizes this unique sensitivity. The eel lies in an acrylic tube in the machine. As the water flows through the tube, electrodes attached to the tube monitor the eel's heart rate, and any changes are relayed by pager to a technician. Eels selected for this job are from especially clean waters and are replaced monthly to maintain accuracy.

Safety Belts and Traffic Death

Costa Rica's Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court recently struck down a mandatory seat belt law, ruling that it violated guarantees of personal freedom, reports *The Tico Times* of San José, Costa Rica. Since the decision, the percentage of drivers in the country using seat belts has dropped from 87 percent to only 44 percent, while accidents and resulting deaths have climbed. The Highway Safety Council of Costa Rica has mounted an emergency effort to reduce the injury rate, but that effort is frustrated when passengers do not wear seat belts, states the report. Says Council representative Manfred Cervantes: "We're really trying to make people understand that they can protect themselves and save their own lives by being responsible drivers."

Tobacco Deaths

About 1.1 billion people worldwide smoke tobacco, says Professor Judith Mackay, of the Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control. As reported in the *British Medical Journal,* at the tenth world conference on tobacco and health, it was estimated that there were three million tobacco-related deaths in 1990. That toll is expected to rise to ten million between the years 2025 and 2030. The *Journal* states that over the next three decades, the increase in smoking-related deaths will shift from the developed to the developing nations. According to Professor Richard Peto, a professor of medical statistics at Oxford University, "China already has more tobacco deaths than any other country."

FROM OUR READERS

Pet Safety In the article "Are Children Safe With Your Dog?" (July 8, 1997), you suggested putting the dog's bed in the kitchen. In previous articles, however, you have stated that we should avoid having pets in food-preparation areas for hygienic reasons.

R. H., Spain

We appreciate this observation. Our article was focusing on the safety of children, and hygienic concerns were not addressed. We would therefore suggest that readers give consideration to the article "Make Your Eating Safe" (June 22, 1989), which stated: "Pets and other animals should be kept away from food-preparation areas." Perhaps an outside kennel or a room outside the kitchen would be a more appropriate place for a dog to bed.—ED.

Life Down Under I want to say a big thank-you for the warm, yet lively, article about Australia, called "Life Is Different Down Under." (October 8, 1997) Although I have read a lot about this fascinating and colorful country, your article helped me to see how grateful we should be to Jehovah for his wonderful creation.

L. K., Germany

Trouble-Free Paradise I am so grateful for the series "A Trouble-Free Paradise —When?" (October 8, 1997) My grandmother died before I was born. She died of cancer. But in the Paradise, there will be no more sickness. This article encouraged me to stay faithful so I can see her in Paradise.

M. J., Trinidad

Animal Slumber I want to express my appreciation for the article "Secrets of Animal Slumber." (October 8, 1997) It was funny —and I learned some marvelous things about creation.

J. G., Puerto Rico

I own a pet fish, and I have always wanted to know if fish sleep. So I was happy to discover that when I see it quite still, it is only resting up.

A. P. L. M., Brazil

Aching Feet Your article "Help for Aching Feet" (October 8, 1997) seemed to be written primarily with women in mind. However, a few days after reading the article, my husband complained about his feet hurting—as he has for the past seven years. With the article in mind, we went to a shoe store. Would you believe it—he was wearing an 8 medium when he needed a 9 wide! He has already experienced relief, thanks to *Awake!*

S. J., United States

I am on my feet nearly all day at work, and I was beginning to have problems because of wearing high heels. This month I served as an auxiliary pioneer (part-time evangelizer), and thanks to the article, I obtained three pairs of comfortable shoes. Thanks for being interested in our health and for keeping us informed.

C. L., Germany

War and Children Thank you ever so much for the series "What War Does to Children." (October 22, 1997) It really helps us to see how much we need Jehovah's Kingdom to put an end to the devastating effects of war. Truly an eye-opener, showing us the cruelty that many of us are not aware of in other lands.

Y. C., England

I do not like reading about the mistreatment of children. Right now I am on the verge of tears. It really sickens me to see the world developing into a mindless society of apathetic humans. I commend you for your candor in presenting this eye-opening article.

K. E., United States

When Dead Means Dead

"A live dog is better off than a dead lion. For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten."
—Ecclesiastes 9:4, 5.

MANY people have some vague belief about a soul living on after death or going through cycles of reincarnation. Some even believe that one can return from a death experience. Thomas Lynch, a mortician, was recently asked his thoughts on the afterlife question. He said: "Those people who see tunnels of light and so on didn't come back from the dead —they just went beyond our ability to measure their vital signs. Because 'dead' is what you are when you don't come back."—*The New York Times Magazine*.

The Bible has had it right for millenniums. "A live dog is better off than a dead lion. For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten." (Ecclesiastes 9:4, 5) A short walk around any ancient graveyard will soon confirm that truth.

Does that mean there is absolutely no hope for the dead? The Bible certainly offers no basis for belief in an immortal soul that survives death. (Genesis 2:7; Ezekiel 18:4, 20) However, Jesus Christ did preach about resurrection to life on a restored paradise earth. His Jewish follower Martha, whose brother, Lazarus, had just died, believed in the resurrection, for she said of Lazarus: "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." (John 11:24) To this, Jesus answered: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life; and everyone that is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25, 26) Earlier, he had said: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." But notice, Jesus made no mention of an immortal soul!—John 5:28, 29; Luke 23:43.

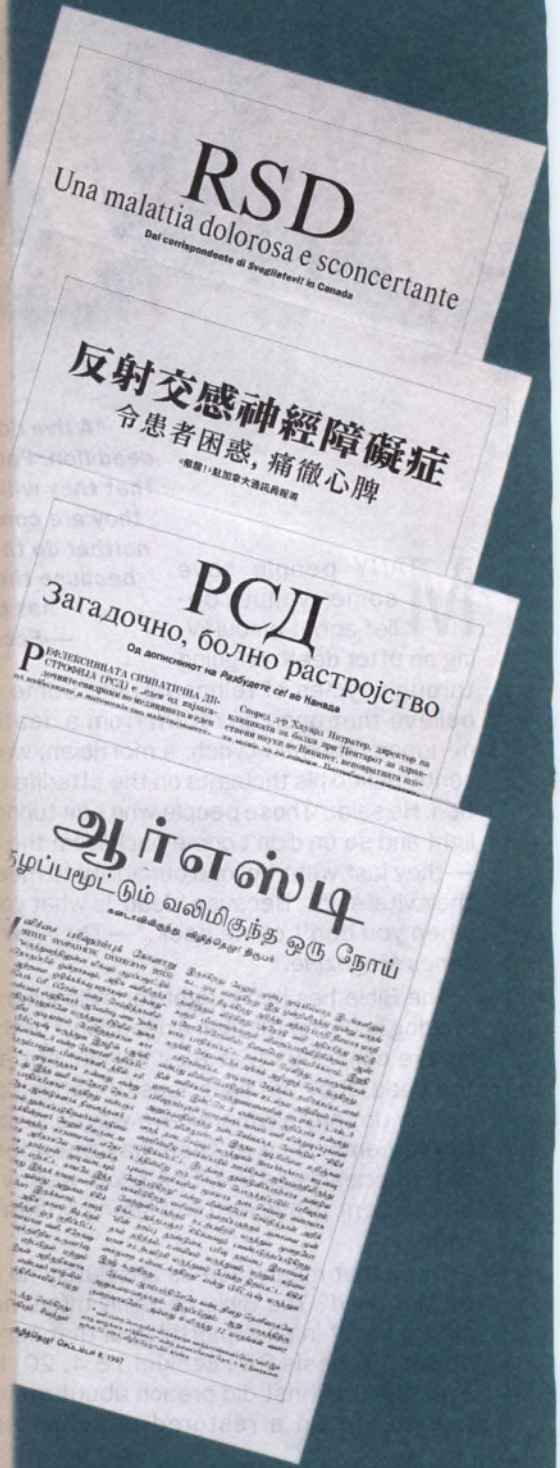
"'Dead' is what you are when you don't come back."
Thomas Lynch, mortician

Awake! —"An Invaluable and Essential Tool"

"THANK YOU for your article entitled 'RSD—A Puzzling, Painful Disorder,' in the September 8, 1997, issue. As a court reporter, I am often called upon to record testimony on many diverse and complex issues. Recently I reported the deposition of an anesthesiologist specializing in pain management. The entire subject matter of the testimony was RSD [Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy]. Because of regularly reading *Awake!*, I was immediately familiar with the terminology and treatment methods, which were all clearly explained in the September issue. I was later able to share this article with some of the attorneys involved in the case.

"I consider *Awake!* to be an invaluable and essential tool in my continuing education. It keeps me well-informed on a myriad of subjects.—G. M. A."

RSD
A Puzzling, Painful Disorder


RSD
Una malattia dolorosa e sconcertante
Dal corrispondente di Svegliatevi! in Canada

反射交感神經障礙症
令患者困惑，痛徹心脾

РСД
Загадочно, болно растројство

ஆர்எஸ்டி