

Awake!

April 22, 1994



Addictions

What's Behind Them?



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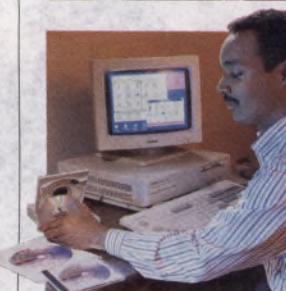
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Millions are addicted either to substances or to activities. What is often responsible for people's addictions, and how can they conquer them?



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Who Gets Hooked, and Why?

WHILE driving your car down a highway, you hear a peculiar rattle coming from the engine. How will you respond? Will you look under the hood to examine the problem? Or will you simply turn up the volume of the radio to drown out the noise?

The answer seems obvious, yet people who are addicts consistently make the wrong choice—not with their cars, but with their lives. By means of addiction to such substances as drugs, alcohol, and even food, many attempt to drown out their personal problems rather than successfully cope with them.

How can a person tell if he or she is addicted? One doctor describes it this way: "Basically, use of a drug or activity is an addiction

if it's causing problems in your life but you keep doing it anyway."

When this is the case, often there is a much more serious problem under the hood, so to speak, that needs to be examined before the addictive behavior can be changed.

Drugs and Alcohol

What starts a person on the path of addiction to drugs and alcohol? Peer pressure and curiosity often play a significant role, especially for youths. Indeed, the reason many people become addicted is their bad association with those who are abusing alcohol and drugs. (1 Corinthians 15:33) This may explain a U.S. survey that revealed that 41 percent of high school seniors go on an alcohol binge every two weeks.

However, there is a difference between *abuse* and *addiction*. Many who *abuse* substances are not addicted.* These can stop the abuse and then not have a compulsion to return to it. But those who are addicted find that they cannot stop. Furthermore, any euphoric pleasure they once derived is overshadowed by anguish. The book *Addictions* explains: "The classic path for addicts is that, somewhere along the line, they start to hate themselves, and they become hideously tormented by the hold their addiction has gained."

Many who are dependent on alcohol or drugs use them as escape routes from emotional crises. Such crises are all too common today. And this should not really surprise us, since the Bible identifies these days as "the last days" of this system of things, when there would be "critical times hard to deal with." The Bible foretold that men would be "lovers of money," "haughty," "disloyal," "fierce," " betrayers," and "puffed up with pride." (2 Timothy 3:1-4) These traits have created an environment that is fertile soil for addiction.

Susan's emotional crisis resulted from mistreatment during her past. Thus, she turned to cocaine. "It gave me a phony sense of control and self-esteem," she says. "It gave me a

* Of course, abuse of alcohol or other drugs—whether it leads to addiction or not—is defiling and must be shunned by Christians.—2 Corinthians 7:1.

sense of power that I didn't feel on a daily basis."

A study of male adolescent addicts revealed that more than a third had been physically abused. Another study of 178 adult alcoholic women found that 88 percent had been severely mistreated in one way or another. The Bible at Ecclesiastes 7:7 says: "Mere oppression may make a wise one act crazy." A person suffering emotionally because of some terrible life experiences may later irrationally turn to drugs or to alcohol for relief.

But drugs and alcohol are not the only addictions.

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders (which some experts call addictions) sometimes serve as a distraction from unpleasant feelings. For instance, some use excess weight as a scapegoat for personal disappointments. "Sometimes I think I stay fat because everything that is wrong in my life can be attributed to that," says Jennie. "This way if someone doesn't like me, I can always blame it on my weight."

For others, food provides a false sense of control.* Food may be the only arena in which an individual feels any authority. Many with eating disorders think that they are somehow defective. To build feelings of

* Additional information on eating disorders can be found in *Awake!* issues of December 22, 1990, and February 22, 1992.

Awake!

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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self-worth, they strive to subdue their body's craving for food. One woman said: "You make out of your body your very own kingdom where you are the tyrant, the absolute dictator."

The experiences cited above are by no means a total explanation of addiction to drugs, alcohol, and food. A variety of factors may be involved. Some experts even suggest a genetic link making some more vulnerable

to addiction than others. "What we see is an interaction of personality, environment, biology and social acceptability," says Jack Henningfield of the National Institute on Drug Abuse. "We don't want to be fooled by looking at only one factor."

Whatever the case, no addict—no matter what the cause of his or her addiction—is physically or emotionally doomed. Help is available.

A Worldwide Plague of Addiction

- A survey in Mexico revealed that 1 out of 8 persons between the ages of 14 and 65 is alcoholic.
- Social worker Sarita Broden reports a proliferation of eating disorders in Japan. She says: "Between 1940 and 1965, the incidence of eating disorders increased steadily with a subsequent jump in both in-patients and out-patients between 1965 and 1981. Since 1981 though, the increase in anorexia and bulimia has been dramatic."
- In China the number of heroin users seems to be rising rapidly. Dr. Li Jianhua, who works at the Kunming Drug Abuse Research Center, says: "Heroin has gone from the border area to the interior, from the countryside to the cities, and to younger and younger people."
- In Zurich, Switzerland, an experimental open drug market ended in disappointment. "We thought we'd ferret out the dealers, but we failed," says Dr. Albert Weitzenstein, lamenting that they were simply attracting dealers and users from far away.

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Conquering Substance Addiction

GIVING up an addiction is like moving from the house you were raised in. Even if the house is old and dilapidated, leaving it is difficult. It was your home.

If you are an addict, addiction has likely been your emotional home. Although it has undoubtedly been chaotic, it is familiar. "Intoxication is normal to me. Sobriety is abnormal," says Charles, a recovering alcoholic. Moving away from addiction will be difficult, but it is worth the effort.

The first step is abstinence from addictive substances.* Do not delay or simply promise to taper off. Dispose of all supplies and related paraphernalia at once. A brief period of withdrawal will follow, which at times may best be accomplished under medical supervision. This is the beginning of lifelong abstinence. But do not think that it is impossible. Start by setting a goal that is within reach: abstinence for a month, a week, or even a day. At the end of each period, without returning to use, renew your resolve.

This is just the beginning in changing addictive be-

havior. The Bible exhorts us to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Corinthians 7:1) Addiction is more than a defilement of the flesh. The spirit, or mental inclination, is also affected. What can help you to recover, both in flesh and in spirit?

Continued Effort Necessary

"Addiction is a disorder of the entire self," says Dr. Robert L. DuPont. Hence, conquering addiction must address the whole person. It must change your entire value system. This takes time. There is no shortcut to recovery. Any promise of hasty recovery will only foster a hasty relapse.

The fight to do what is right is ongoing. The Christian apostle Paul wrote: "I behold in my members another law warring against [in continual conflict with," Phillips] the law of my mind." (Romans 7:23) He

also wrote that Christians should be "perfecting holiness." (2 Corinthians 7:1) The book *Word Pictures in the New Testament* notes that the word "perfecting" here denotes, "not a sudden attainment of complete holiness, but a continuous process." The conquering of addiction is therefore gradual.

**"Recovery is
more a matter of
changing [one's]
entire value
system."**

Dr. Robert L. DuPont.

* Of course, those with eating disorders cannot abstain from food. However, they can stop using food as a mood changer. Patterns of overeating, starving, purging, and thinking obsessively about food can be replaced with a reasonable diet.

Seeking the Cause

For many, addiction is an attempt to bury painful events in the past. "Bulimia [an eating disorder] distracted me from the memories," says Janis. "It became my survival technique." For Janis, ignoring the past simply perpetuated her addiction. Understanding the reasons for her behavior helped Janis to change her addictive behavior.

Some change former habits and are able to cope successfully without examining the past. Others find that the feelings rooted in their previous environment continue to fuel addictive craving. They may feel similar to the psalmist David, who wrote: "Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my disquieting thoughts, and see whether there is in me any painful way, and lead me in the way of truth indefinite." —Psalm 139:23, 24.

Dealing With Feelings

Have you ever stepped out of a dark building and into direct sunlight? You wince at the sudden assault of brightness. Similarly, when beginning to cope with addictions, you may find that you are suddenly and painfully bombarded with a full range of feelings. Love, anger, pride, jealousy, fear, resentment, and other emotions that have long been masked now blaze with full intensity.

Anxiety may tell you to retreat to the familiar darkness of substance abuse. But you need not run from your feelings. They can be a helpful source of information for you. Feelings are often merely a signal that something needs attention. So if necessary, think your feelings through. What are they telling you? If the message is unclear or if feelings seem overwhelming, confide in some mature friend. (Job 7:11) You do not have to face your feelings alone.—Compare Proverbs 12:25.



The first step is abstinence from addictive substances

Remember that feelings are not necessarily your enemies. Jehovah God himself has intense feelings, and man—created in God's image—experiences the same. (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 78:21, 40, 41; 1 John 4:8) Like the sudden glare of sunlight, feelings may at first be painful. But in time they will also become, like sunlight, a source of guidance and warmth.

Problem Solving

Walking a tightrope is petrifying to a person who is afraid of heights. To the addict beginning recovery, life can seem like a terrifying tightrope walk. The elevated responsibilities of sobriety may bring on a fear of heights, as it were. Anticipation of failure may cause you to reason: 'I'm going to fall anyway. Why not get it over with?'

But remember, problems are not personal assaults. They are merely situations that need to be dealt with. So do not panic. Confront



When feelings overwhelm you, talk them out

your problems one at a time. This will help you to put them in perspective.—1 Corinthians 10:13.

Self-Worth

Marion, a recovering alcoholic, had to address her feeling of low self-worth. "Underneath," she says, "I always felt that if I really shared myself, [people] wouldn't like me."

Breaking the grip of addiction demands that you learn—perhaps for the first time—your worth as a person. This is difficult if your life has been torn apart by addiction. What can help?

The Bible is a book that provides consolation to the downhearted. It can help you to build healthy self-respect. (Psalm 94:19) For example, the psalmist David wrote that humans are crowned with "glory and splendor." He also said: "In a fear-inspiring way I am

wonderfully made." (Psalm 8:5; 139:14) What beautiful expressions of healthy self-value!

Treasure your body, and you will take care of it in the spirit of the scripture: "No man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it." (Ephesians 5:29) Yes, you can face the challenge of recovery from addiction.*

However, addiction can include more. Activities can be pursued with the same devotion and for the same purpose that drugs, alcohol, and food are pursued. Some of these activities will now be considered.

* To maintain abstinence and progress in recovery, some have sought out a rehabilitation program. There are many treatment centers, hospitals, and other resources that offer such programs. *Awake!* does not endorse any particular treatment. Those desirous of living by Bible principles would want to be careful not to become involved in activities that compromise Scriptural principles.

When Activities Become Addictive

ADDICTION to substances and addiction to activities are like two trains going the same direction on a common track.* Each has the same destination or purpose: to alter moods and obscure painful feelings. Let us consider some examples of addiction to activities.

Workaholism

Workaholism has been called the respectable addiction. After all, workaholics make excellent employees. Inside, however, they may feel unfulfilled. Work can become either a distraction from painful feelings or an obsessive quest for approval.

Ice protects the skater from drowning in water; activity protects the workaholic from drowning in feelings. Like the skater, the workaholic can put on a dazzling show. But it is all on the surface. What often lurks below? Mental-health counselor Linda T. Sanford writes: "When the work addict is not consumed with work, he or she may be flooded with dreaded feel-

* There is much debate over what can and cannot be called an addiction. Some prefer to call addictive activities "compulsions." In these articles we have been exploring the role of addictions as emotional "escape routes." Since activities can be used for the same purpose, we will herein refer to them as "addictions."

ings of depression, anxiety, rage, despair and emptiness."

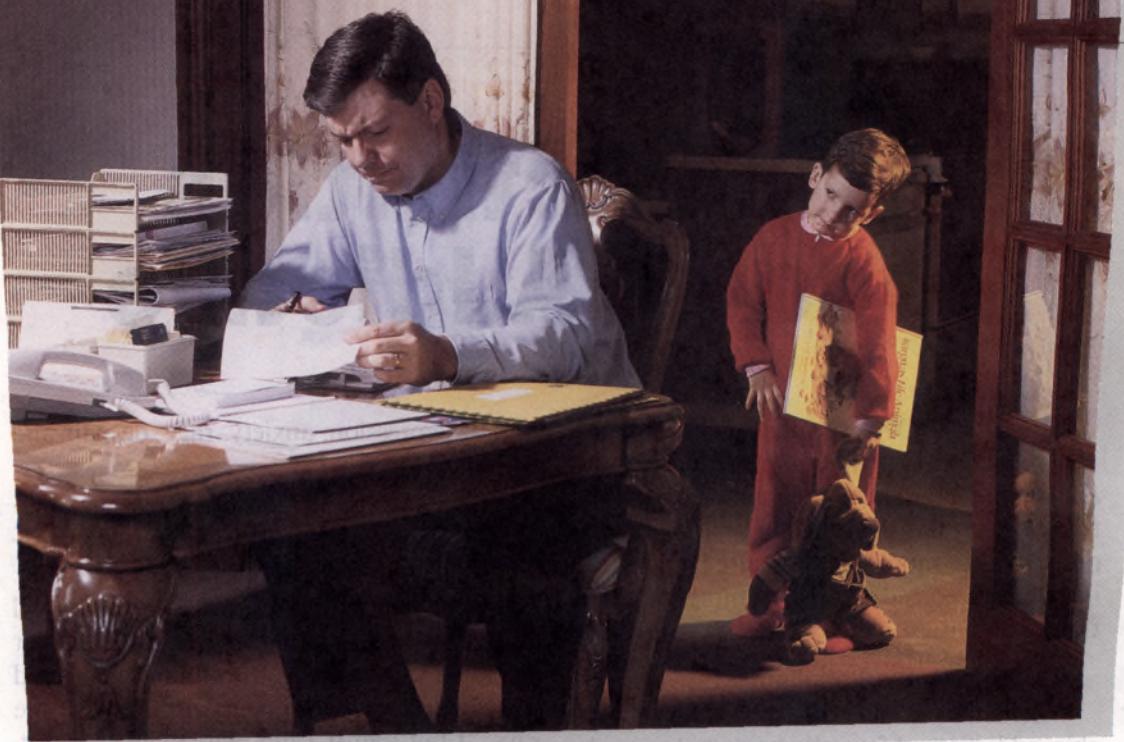
The ingrained compulsion of many workaholics suggests that it is a long-term characteristic, possibly rooted in one's upbringing. This was true with a woman whom we will call Mary. From age six she tried to earn her alcoholic father's love through cooking and housework. "It became compulsive," she says. "I felt that if I did *more* or if I did *better*, he would love me. All I got in return was criticism."

As an adult Mary still struggles with this erroneous thinking. "I still feel worthless inside," she confesses. "I still feel I have to *earn* love, that I'm not worth anything unless I'm producing. At gatherings I exhaust myself cooking and serving, as if I'm trying to earn my right to be there."

**'The term
addictions can
be applied to
all kinds of
compulsive
behavior.'**

Dr. J. Patrick Gannon.

For those like Mary, a balanced view of work is essential. The Bible does commend hard work. (Proverbs 6:6-8; 2 Thessalonians 3:10, 12) Jehovah God himself is productive. (Psalm 104:24; John 5:17) But he is never compulsive. Jehovah saw good in his creative works not just when they were completed but even during the creative process.—Genesis 1:



**To a workaholic, work
seems more important than family**

4, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31; compare Ecclesiastes 5:18.

Jehovah God's Master Worker, his Son, Jesus, likewise reflected personal satisfaction in his work. (Proverbs 8:30, 31) Jesus promised his followers that they too would find refreshment in working with him. Together they shared a high-priority assignment. But this did not prevent them from resting.—Matthew 11:28-30; Mark 6:31; compare Ecclesiastes 4:6.

Perhaps a parent implied that your worth depended on your performance or that love would be withheld until it was earned. You will be relieved to know that this is not Jehovah's view of proper parenting. His Word counsels: "Fathers, do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted ['feel inferior,' *The Amplified Bible*.]" (Colossians 3:21) Jehovah is not one



**Gambling can alter one's mood
and cause a druglike high**

who withholds love until it is earned. His love is not something that he bestows only after one begins to love and serve him. Indeed, the Bible tells us that "he first loved us," yes, even "while we were yet sinners," God took the initiative in loving us. (1 John 4:19; Romans 5:6-8) Furthermore, Jehovah does not criticize our sincere efforts to do his will. Therefore, our service to him becomes a genuine expression of our love for him.

Television Addiction

Some call excessive TV viewing an addiction. "Not unlike drugs or alcohol," writes Marie Winn in *The Plug-In Drug*, "the television experience allows the participant to blot out the real world and enter into a pleasurable and passive mental state."

Of course, there is nothing wrong with being distracted from life's responsibilities—temporarily. But some viewers never come back to reality. One husband who suddenly couldn't watch TV when the set broke confessed: "I feel that my mind was completely mummified for all those years. I was glued to that machine and couldn't get loose, somehow." A youngster named Kai describes a similar compulsion: "I don't want to watch television as much as I do but I can't help it. It makes me watch it."

Excessive TV viewing impedes thinking ability. The Bible recommends meditative pondering, which requires a measure of solitude. (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2, 3; 145:5; Matthew 14:23; Luke 4:42; 5:16; 1 Timothy 4:15) This frightens many people. They become jittery when surrounded by silence. They fear being alone with their own thoughts. They frantically search for anything to fill the void. TV becomes a quick fix. Even at its best, however, TV is just a substitute for real life.

Compulsive Gambling

Gambling is rooted in greed. But compulsive gambling is often much more than a

money matter.* "I needed the 'high' to escape from reality," says Nigel. "It was exactly like taking a drug." To the compulsive gambler, the process of gambling is often a reward in itself. The consequences are irrelevant. Nigel lost his friends. Others lose their families. Many lose their health. And virtually all lose their money. But few stop, since winning or losing is not the issue. It is playing the game—the process—that alters the mood and administers a druglike high.

Gambling may be a distraction from life's problems, but it will not make them go away. A seriously injured man needs more than a painkiller. His wounds must be treated. If there are wounds that have led a person to gamble, he should identify them and treat them. This takes courage, but it is ultimately rewarding.

Break Free

To break free from any addiction, the internal anguish that often fuels the addiction cannot be ignored. The addict must try to treat the problem at its source. This is a challenge. "You don't just walk away from 30 years of drugs and alcohol," says one former addict, "especially when your addiction was camouflaging a deep-seated problem."

Yet, breaking free of addiction is worth the effort. Mary, the compulsive worker mentioned earlier, describes it well. "For years," she says, "I was running from things I was scared to face. But now that I've faced those things, it's amazing how small they've become."

This has been the experience of many who have successfully overcome addiction. Rather than continuing as "slaves of destructive habits," they have prayed for "power beyond what is normal" to face successfully the challenge of conquering addiction.—2 Peter 2:19, *Today's English Version*; 2 Corinthians 4:7.

* In contrast with work and TV viewing, Christians avoid gambling entirely, in all its forms. (Compare Isaiah 65:11.) For more information, see *Awake!*, June 8, 1992, pages 3-11.



HOW PEOPLE CAN LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE



IT WAS September 1944, and the world was filled with hate. World War II was raging, and millions were suffering terribly. I was a German prisoner of war in France.

Once I was put before a firing squad. But after a time the would-be executioners began to walk away. They were only bluffing. I was in a state of shock, yet grateful to be alive. A few weeks later, I was put through the same procedure. Although I survived, scores of fellow prisoners were executed or died of disease and starvation. How did I come to be in these situations?

Capture

A few months earlier, in June 1944, Allied troops had crossed the English Channel and successfully established a beachhead on the French coast. Their subsequent breakout and invasion of northern France forced the German Army to retreat. I was a sergeant major in the German Air Force. In August part of our company, including me and 16 others,

were captured by the French underground, known as Maquis. After a few months in one prisoner-of-war camp, we were transferred to another near Montluçon in southern France.

Prisoners were forced to do physical labor, but as an officer I was exempted. However, I volunteered to work and was put in charge of the kitchen. One day a new group of prisoners arrived, and among them was a youngster named Willy Huppertz from my hometown. I asked the officer in charge if Willy could help me in the kitchen, and that arrangement was made.

Later, Willy and I came to enjoy the kind of friendship that can bind all people together in peace. Before explaining how I came to learn about this way to peace, let me tell about inconsistencies in life that bothered me.

Why So Much Disunity and Hate?

As a lad growing up in Aachen, Germany, I was disturbed by the religious disunity, which existed even in my own home. Father

was a Lutheran, but Mother was a Roman Catholic. So Mother saw to it that my sister and I were educated in the Catholic faith. From my early years, I regularly attended the Catholic Church, although I could never understand why Father followed a different faith. As time went by, I often wondered, 'Why are there so many religions if there is only one God?'

When World War II began in 1939, I was drafted into the German Air Force. After preliminary training in Germany, I was sent to Vienna, Austria, where I joined a training corps for new recruits. Then, in December 1941, I was sent to northern Holland (now the Netherlands). There I met Jantina, a young woman from Den Helder. Despite the fact that our countries were enemies at war, we fell in love.

Shortly, in April 1942, I was suddenly transferred to La Rochelle in southern France. By then I held the rank of sergeant major, and our battalion was responsible for training new recruits and protecting the local airstrip. As a result, I never saw combat at any time during the war. For this I am grateful, since I never wanted to kill anyone.

What disturbed me during those war years, though, was seeing clergymen of practically all denominations—Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, and so forth—blessing the aircraft and their crews before they took off on missions to drop their deadly cargo. I often thought, 'Whose side is God on?' Yet, I never actually asked the chaplains, since I felt sure they didn't know anyway.

German soldiers wore a belt with a buckle (see top left on page 12) on which was inscribed *Gott mit uns* (God is with us), but I wondered, 'Why wouldn't God be with soldiers on the other side who were of the same religion and who were praying to the same God?'

The years passed, and the war dragged on. Occasionally I was able to get over to Holland to see Jantina, the last time being in December 1943, when we became engaged. By 1944 the tide of battle began to turn, and with the landing of Allied troops in France, for the first time the possibility that Germany would lose the war dawned on us. The thought was quite a shock! Then came that August when 17 of us were captured.

Prison Life

Eventually we prisoners in the camp near Montluçon were permitted to correspond with loved ones. Thus Jantina and I regained contact. In time, along with several other prisoners, I volunteered to work on a collective farm where we were still regarded as prisoners of war. I even found that life on the farm began to appeal to me. It was quite a change in life-style for a city boy.

The war in Europe came to an end in May 1945, but the French government held us as prisoners of war until December 1947. We were then given the choice of joining the French Foreign Legion or staying on in France as voluntary workers until the end of 1948. I chose the latter, becoming a farmhand on a collective farm along with several other prisoners. Under this arrangement, we enjoyed more freedom than when working on the farm as prisoners of war. However, we were still confined and under restrictions. So our greatest joy was in receiving mail from loved ones.

Reunion With Jantina

One day in 1947, I received a letter from Jantina in which she inadvertently included a small printed slip listing several house numbers and a record of books and magazines. 'Well,' I thought, 'Jantina is making some money selling books.' Little did I know that she had been contacted by Jehovah's

Witnesses and was now active in preaching from house to house and distributing Bible literature, not 'selling books.'

Shortly afterward, in December 1947, we prisoners received a pleasant surprise—we were given four weeks' compassionate leave to visit our homes. Of course, this was granted on the condition that we return to France to fulfill our work commitment. Jantina traveled from Holland to Germany to spend those weeks with my parents and me. As you can imagine, after more than four years of separation, this was a very emotional reunion for us. It was then that I learned the meaning of the printed slip I had found in her letter. Jantina told me that she was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and eagerly explained to me the wonderful things she had learned.

Although I could sense the ring of truth in what she was saying, I told her that I was happy to remain a Catholic. I did not see how she could know more than the priests who had studied religion for many years. And to make things more difficult, my family did not take kindly to Jantina's new beliefs. In fact, they were very opposed, and their prejudice influenced me.

A Turning Point in My Life

When my four weeks' leave was over, I returned to France. Upon unpacking my clothes, I found a book called *Deliverance* in among them. Jantina had placed it there when she packed my suitcase. To please her I sat down that night and began reading it. It was not long before I found, to my amazement, that many of the questions I had been thinking about during my imprisonment were being answered. I could hardly wait to read the entire book.

A scripture Jantina had quoted to me came to mind: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) Indeed, I felt I was beginning to learn the truth about

many things. All people are one family, regardless of race. (Acts 17:26-28) True Christians love one another and don't fight and kill anyone as I had seen so many professed Christians do. (John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:10-12) Clearly, then, nationalism is an instrument of the Devil that divides people and prevents true brotherhood.

I began to see that true peace would come only when all people apply the teachings of Jesus Christ. Since the nations will never do this, the only hope for peace is through the government of God, for which Jesus taught his followers to pray. (Matthew 6:9, 10) Already I began to experience a feeling of real freedom and contentment from learning such things. How grateful I was to my dear Jantina for putting the book in my suitcase! But what would I do now?

Making Spiritual Progress

Well, I needn't have worried. A few days later, a man named Lucien came to the farm where I was working and introduced himself as a minister of Jehovah's Witnesses. He explained that he had been directed by the Witnesses' branch office in Paris to contact me at the request of my fiancée. Lucien was a kind, genuine man, and I felt at ease with him immediately. Fortunately, by now I spoke French fluently, and this made things a lot easier.

I agreed to have a Bible study with him, and so each Sunday Lucien and his wife, Simone, would pick me up at the farm and take me to their home for the study. Afterward we would go for walks, during which we would talk about Jehovah's wonderful creation. They were both good teachers, and they also gave me something that I had missed for so long—real friendship. And this provided by a French couple—people I had trained men to bomb and kill!

With Jantina today

I made good progress in my studies, and Lucien invited me to attend the annual Memorial celebration of Christ's death on March 25, 1948. I was very impressed with this simple yet serious meeting and have not missed a Memorial since.

Jantina was delighted with my spiritual progress, and so she joined me in France. There we were married in November 1948. Lucien and Simone provided a beautiful wedding meal for us, and two pioneers (full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses) shared this happy occasion with us. That unforgettable evening reinforced my conclusion that the Witnesses do indeed demonstrate the kind of love that Jesus said would identify his true disciples.—John 13:35.

To Germany, Then to a New Land

In December 1948, we returned to Germany, and the Christian ministry became our way of life. Although my family continued to oppose our activity, we did not let that stop us. We kept on helping meek, humble ones to learn the only way humankind can enjoy true peace and security.

In 1955, Jantina and I migrated to Australia. We initially settled in the pretty island state of Tasmania, across Bass Strait from the southern tip of the vast mainland. With the loving assistance and patience of our spiritual brothers and sisters there, eventually we were able to add English to the languages we knew.



In 1969, after spending 13 years in Tasmania, we moved to the northern state of Queensland, where we have lived ever since. I currently serve as a Christian elder in the local congregation and cherish Jantina's company as we serve Jehovah together. Whenever we returned to Germany on vacation, we would look up Willy Huppertz and study the Bible with him. Eventually he too dedicated his life to serve Jehovah, and we have come to enjoy the kind of friendship that can bind all people together in peace.

When I look back over my life since those years as a prisoner of war in France, I am indeed grateful that I was able to come to know our loving Creator, Jehovah God. How happy I now am that Jantina took the initiative to put that *Deliverance* book in my suitcase and then wrote to the Witnesses in France to arrange for me to be contacted! As a result, my life personally and our life together as husband and wife have been enriched and rewarded in many ways.—*As told by Hans Lang.*



"Science Takes a Lesson From Nature"

THE above was a heading in *The New York Times* of August 31, 1993. The article noted that a growing number of scientists who design new materials have become involved in the field of biomimetics. The *Times* defined biomimetics as "the study of the structure and function of biological materials as models for artificially created ones."

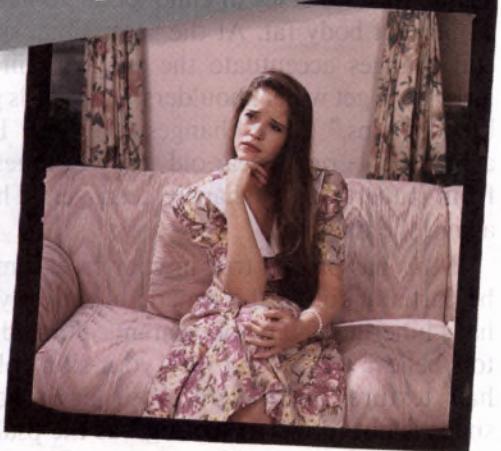
The article acknowledged that lowly sea animals and spiders make materials that are superior to similar substances that today's scientists can make. The abalone, for example, draws calcium carbonate, the powdery component of chalk, from water and makes microthin plates. It then cements many such plates together with a mortar of protein and sugars. Dr. Mehmet Sarikaya says the shell's structure is 30 times stronger and tougher than the ordinary calcium carbonate made in the laboratory. "We don't have the technology to make the layers of material as thin as they are in sea shell," he admits.

Similarly, spiderweb silk is stronger than steel and more durable than nylon. Scientists are studying the silk in hopes of making fibers stronger than Kevlar, the substance used to make bulletproof vests. However, the complex manufacturing processes of the spider are as yet beyond human duplication.

"Spiders produce silk using water as a solvent in the open air, at ambient temperatures and pressure, and it goes through all these stages to become a stable, water-resistant web of great strength," noted Dr. Christopher Viney of the University of Washington in Seattle. "Yet to produce a tough fiber like Kevlar, you have to make it under high pressure using concentrated sulfuric acid." Thus, this scientist admits: "We have a lot to learn."

Think about it. If the best of human technology is unable to produce what lowly sea creatures and spiders can, doesn't it seem reasonable to believe that these creatures are the product of a superior intelligence? Wisely, we will give credit to the Great Designer—whose work today's scientists are striving to imitate—for his incomparable ingenuity in filling the earth with his productions.—Psalm 104:24.

Young People Ask...



Why Am I So Fat?

"I feel really fat, though when I look at weight charts, I'm not overweight according to these."—Patti.

"Being fat... lowers your self-esteem to the level of pond scum. I've been overweight since fourth grade... That was when all the name-calling started."—Judd.

WEIGHT. It is virtually an obsession among some young people, particularly girls. When one group of school-age girls was polled, 58 percent of them considered themselves fat.

According to one U.S. survey, 34 percent of overweight teenage girls have taken diet

pills to lose weight. Almost 1 out of 4 has resorted to vomiting! Reporting on another survey, *The New Teenage Body Book* says: "Shockingly, almost half of the nine-year-olds and about 80 percent of the ten- and eleven-year-olds were dieting. Some 70 percent of the girls aged twelve to sixteen were trying to lose weight—and 90 percent of the seventeen-year-olds were on a diet."

The Thinness Craze

For centuries, a somewhat plump figure was considered attractive in both men and women. But during the 1920's, the U.S. fashion industry underwent a revolution of sorts. The thin figure suddenly became the ideal. Decades later, thin continues to be in. TV and magazines have helped promote this view with their constant barrage of slick ads that feature slim male and female models. Never mind that many of these lithe specimens keep themselves in a state of near starvation! Millions of youths (and adults) have been subtly trained to believe that attractive equals thin. Little wonder, then, that not-so-thin youths commonly think of themselves as fat and unattractive.

The pressure from peers doesn't help either. Overweight teens are often subjected to endless teasing, ridicule, and prejudice, causing what one writer described as "considerable psychological pain"—pain that can linger into adulthood.

Who Says You're Fat?

Fortunately, the question of whether you are genuinely overweight or not involves more than how you look in a bathing suit—at least from a medical point of view. Doctors generally define a person as obese if he weighs 20 percent more than his ideal weight. Standard height-weight charts are based on averages, though, and can give only a rough idea of what a healthy person should weigh.

Some doctors therefore prefer to measure obesity not merely in terms of weight but also in terms of excess body fat. According to *A Parent's Guide to Eating Disorders and Obesity*, "fat should account for 20 to 27 percent of body tissue in women and 15 to 22 percent of body tissue in men."

Some researchers believe that relatively few youths are really overweight. From the perspective of health, there may be no reason at all for you to lose weight. In the survey mentioned at the outset, more than half of the girls polled considered themselves overweight, but only 15 percent truly were.

Why Do I Look This Way?

This may be of little comfort when you look at yourself in the mirror; you simply may not have what you consider an attractive body. One teenage girl lamented: "I would like to lose weight, get taller, and have a more shapely body."



Many imagine that they are overweight because they do not have the figure of models in fashion magazines

Remember, though, that because you are a teenager, your body is rapidly changing. "Both boys and girls normally gain weight at puberty," explains Dr. Iris Litt. "But while boys gain mostly muscle tissue, girls develop fat tissue. At puberty, a girl goes from having about eight percent body fat—an average shared by both sexes in childhood—to about 22 percent body fat. At the same time, skeletal changes accentuate the weight gain in girls. Boys get wider shoulders, while girls get broader hips." These changes take time. But a plump 11- or 12-year-old girl can emerge from puberty as a shapely teenager. Then again, she may not.

If this has proved true in your case, it may be partially due to the genetic blueprint you have inherited from your parents. Some doctors believe that, along with your skin color, hair texture, and height, your basic body shape is put "down in writing," as the psalmist wrote, in the genetic code at conception.

(Psalm 139:16) Dr. Lawrence Lamb, making the same point the psalmist was inspired to write, says in his book *The Weighting Game*: "You were born with a life script that determines what you should weigh, and how much fat you should have, at various stages of your life."

Studies have verified the influence of genes on body shape. Adopted children tend to have body types like their biological parents, regardless of the shape their adoptive parents have. And since twins

have the identical genetic blueprint, it should be no surprise that twins tend to weigh the same.

What does this mean for you? Suppose, for example, that both of your parents are obese. Then you have an 80-percent chance of being obese yourself. The odds are cut in half if only one parent is obese. Exercise and diet can help up to a point. But for the most part, we are more or less stuck with our basic body shapes. If you are an ectomorph, you are thin and angular by nature. But if your genes have designated you to be an endomorph—someone with a rounder figure and with more body fat—you were simply not meant to be thin. Even at your medically ideal weight, you will look heavier than you may prefer.

Coming to Terms With Your Body

Discouraging? Perhaps. But the good news is that Jehovah God created the first human couple, Adam and Eve, perfect in physical form. Even though they became imperfect and passed imperfection on to their offspring, God will see to it that any inherited physical flaws will be corrected in his righteous new world.—Job 14:4; Romans 5:12; 2 Peter 3:13.

Remember, standards of beauty may be the product of social conditioning and personal preference. Thus, what is considered beautiful varies throughout the world and may change with the passage of time. So why “let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold”? (Romans 12:2, Phillips) Why yield to its often warped standards and viewpoints?

There is really no need for you to put yourself down or to become depressed simply because you are not thin. God does not judge us by our physical height or shape. “Mere man sees what appears to the eyes,” the Bible says, “but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is.” (1 Samuel 16:7) Yes, it is “the secret person of the heart” that counts with God—not

“I’m Too Thin”

Not all youths agree that being thin is glamorous. “I’m a 15-year-old guy who’s skinny and constantly teased,” complains young Mark. Thinness is often nothing more than a side effect of puberty. A growing body consumes a tremendous number of calories. A youth may not begin to fill out until after the growth spurt halts. Genetics also plays a role. Of course, illness or hormonal imbalance can also cause excessive thinness, and a doctor’s attention is essential in such cases. Professional help may likewise be in order for youths who stop eating because they are depressed or are suffering from a serious eating disorder, such as anorexia nervosa.

Whatever the case, if you think you are excessively thin, get a doctor’s opinion. It may be that you only have to learn to accept—and perhaps even learn to like—your appearance.

the size of your hips or your waistline. (1 Peter 3:4) And if you are cheerful, mild-tempered, generous, and concerned about others, people will generally be attracted to you.

This is not to say that there is nothing you can do to improve your looks. But if you are not entirely happy with your physique, you need not punish your body with some fad diet. Perhaps you merely need to be more careful about what styles and colors you wear, selecting clothes and colors that downplay what you consider to be flaws and that accentuate your assets.

Still, you may feel that it would be worth your while to lose just a little weight. Or you may have a genuine problem with obesity and should lose weight not merely to look better but for reasons of health. How you can do so safely will be the topic of our next article.

THE COMPACT DISC

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?



EVER since its introduction to the mass market in the early 1980's, the laser-read digital compact disc has been hailed as the greatest breakthrough in sound recording since Edison invented his tinfoil-cylinder phonograph in 1877 or since the advent of stereophonic sound in the early 1960's.

In the United States, a report in the trade journal *Billboard* shows that in 1992, manufacturers shipped over 414 million compact discs but only 22 million vinyl records. The sales are so lopsided that some record companies are no longer producing vinyl records. Still, the shiny little disc remains a mystery to many people. What is digital sound? Is it really as good as it is reputed to be? How does the disc work? And could related technology be used to store and retrieve libraries of infor-

mation, such as from *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*?

Digital Recording—What Is It?

To understand what digital recording is all about, we first need to have some idea of how the old analog recording works. On the familiar vinyl record, music is recorded as a continuous, undulating groove, like a picture, or analogue, of the sound wave. To reproduce the music, the needle, or stylus, of the record player is placed in the groove on the spinning disc. The stylus follows the groove, and the wiggle of the groove causes the stylus to vibrate. This, in turn, generates a tiny electrical signal that is a replica of what the microphone picked up in the recording studio. The signal is then amplified—and there is music!

Digital recording takes a different approach. A digital recorder samples and measures the magnitude of the signal at precise intervals—tens of thousands of times per second—and records these measured values as numbers, or digits. The measurements are recorded in binary numbers—the language of computers—consisting of 0's and 1's only. The stream of numbers, or digits, is then processed by a computer and stored, usually on tape. For playback, a computer reads the digits and reconstructs a signal like the original one. This signal is then amplified and—once again—there is music!

This process is less affected by the limitations of the recording and manufacturing hardware than is analog recording. This means less noise, less distortion, and fewer other factors that degrade the quality of recordings. In addition, information in digital form can be stored in a very compact format and retrieved easily. Digital recording, one might say, is the natural outcome of the union between a computer and a recorder.

For years record companies have been

making digital recordings in their studios. But the playback equipment is far too complicated for home music systems. The real breakthrough in digital recording, as far as consumers are concerned, was in coming up with a playback system economically and technically feasible for the average home user. The result is the digital compact disc (CD) and the compact disc player.

The binary numbers, or bits, are encoded as a series of microscopic pits and flat spaces on the surface of a plastic disc with a shiny aluminum layer. The disc is just four and three quarters inches in diameter. The aluminum layer is sealed under a protective layer of clear plastic. For the music to play, the silvery disc is slipped into a CD player. Instead of a needle, a finely focused laser beam tracks the stream of pits. When the beam hits the microscopic pits, it is scattered, but when it hits the smooth surface, it is reflected back to a sensor. In this way the pits and flats on the surface of the CD are translated into a series of electrical pulses to be deciphered by the sophisticated electronic circuits in the player.

The Miniature World of the CD

The name compact disc is no misnomer. On the gleaming surface of this palm-sized disc are five to six billion microscopic pits laid out in a spiral. If stretched out, the string would be over 3.5 miles long. Coiled into 20,000 spirals going from the inside of the disc toward the outside, the tracks are packed so tightly together that 60 of them could fit into the groove of an LP (long-playing record). It has been estimated that if each pit were the size of a grain of rice, the disc would be larger than four football fields.

Because of such minuscule dimensions, CDs must be made in clean rooms where the

air is thoroughly filtered. An average dust particle, about five times the size of a pit on the CD, can obliterate enough of the codes to cause error in the recording. "In comparison to our standards of cleanliness," says an engineer, "a surgical operating room is a pigsty."

Since the disc spins at up to 500 revolutions per minute as it is played, it is a staggering feat to focus the laser on the tiny pits and to keep it from drifting from the tightly coiled track. To do so, the laser beam is controlled by an amazingly complex guidance system.

How Good Is It?

But is the CD really better than vinyl records? Well, consider: Since the CD is played using a beam of light rather than a diamond stylus, there is no wear and tear no matter how many times the music is played. Even small blemishes and marks on the surface of the disc will not adversely affect the sound, since the laser beam is focused on the pits and not on the surface of the disc. Gone are those annoying ticks, pops, and scratches that anyone who ever listened to an LP (long-playing record) is only too familiar with. All of this gives the CD a degree of permanence that the LP cannot match. Theoretically, the compact disc should last forever—if it is properly manufactured and handled.

The CD's longer playing time and smaller size are also points in its favor. Over an hour of music can be played without having to get up and flip a record! The CD, being less than a fifth the size of an LP, is also easier to handle and store. In addition, because CD players operate like a computer, many of them can be programmed to play sections of a CD in any preferred sequence or to repeat them. Some players also have search functions that can be used to find any spot in the music quickly. Such convenience features are highly favored by many users.

But what about the sound? Almost everyone who hears a CD for the first time marvels at how clear and lifelike the sound is. The music emerges from a silent background in breathtaking detail. One reason for this is that on a CD the range between the quietest and the loudest music that can be recorded—called the dynamic range—is much greater than that on an average LP. This, along with the freedom from noise and distortion, lends greater realism to the music heard on CDs.

On the other hand, an average CD may cost considerably more than an LP. Yet, it

must be said that the CD has brought to the general public a degree of refinement in sound reproduction that only a few avid hi-fi enthusiasts have enjoyed in the past.

Compact Discs and Computers

Recently CDs have taken on an entirely new face because the same technology can be used to store vast amounts of information, or data. Such contents on a compact disc can be easily accessed through a computer having an installed or attached CD reader. Just as any part of a music CD can be accessed quickly on a CD player, with a different type of CD reader, any part of the stored information can be read, searched, or quoted in a matter of seconds by means of properly designed computer programs.

The compact disc has incredible storage capacity. In computer language, it can store over 600 megabytes, the equivalent of 1,000 floppy disks or 200,000 printed pages. In other words, ten sets of a 20-volume encyclopedia converted into digital form can be stored on just *one* compact disc! But its advantage is not limited to its huge capacity.

By about 1985, CDs for use in computers began to appear on the market. These were called CD-ROM, which stands for compact disc read-only memory. They contained mostly reference material, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories, catalogs, bibliographic and technical data, and archives or collections of various sorts. To begin with, because of their high cost, they were used mostly by libraries and other academic or government institutions. In fact, a disc that a few years ago would have cost several hundred dollars may today be purchased for a small fraction of that.

It did not take long for CD-ROM to expand beyond being just for storage of text. In the last few years, CD-ROM discs with color graphics and sound effects began to come on

the market. Now not only can you read a biography and see a picture of a certain person but you can also hear a speech by that person. And there are, of course, computer games of all sorts with sound effects and moving color pictures. These so-called multimedia, interactive systems, which combine the com-

puter and home entertainment, seem to be the wave of the future.

The digital compact disc is truly a technological marvel that can be most useful both for educational and for recreational purposes. Whether it will fulfill its potential remains to be seen.

Watchtower Library—CD-ROM

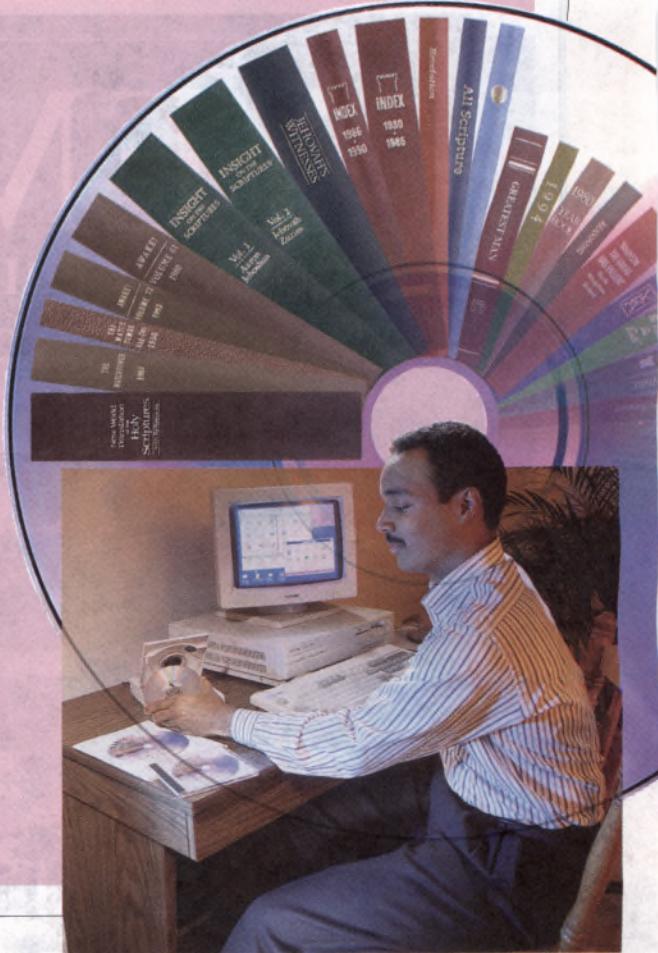
The Watchtower Society has always seen fit to use appropriate technological developments in advancing Kingdom interests. In the past the Society was among the first to use color motion pictures, radio networks, and the portable phonograph in proclaiming the good news. Now, the Watchtower Society has released in English the *Watchtower Library—1993 Edition*. We feel sure it will prove to be a marvelous tool for Bible study and research.

This new release is truly a library. It contains the text, in electronic form, of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, the annual bound volumes of *The Watchtower* from 1950 to 1993 and *Awake!* from 1980 to 1993, the two-volume Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures*, and numerous other books, booklets, brochures, and tracts published by the Watchtower Society since 1970. In addition, it contains an index to all Watchtower publications from 1930 to 1993.

Along with this large data base, this CD-ROM also provides an easy-to-use search program that will enable you to search for a word, a combination of words, or a Scripture citation in any of the publications in the *Watchtower Library*. You can also open directly to any specific publication, right down to a certain chapter, article, or page. The search results can be viewed on the computer screen or copied to a word processor for use in a talk or letter. The program also has a feature for organizing material for per-

sonal study projects and for entering your own notes.

It is our hope that with this new instrument, many more will be able to persist in peering into "the perfect law that belongs to freedom" and be blessed for doing so.—James 1:25.



THE Arabian Peninsula! When people think of this exotic part of the world, they often envision sand dunes, camels, and caravans. But while desert dunes and sizzling temperatures do characterize much of this region, it also has other features that might very well surprise you.

Consider, for example, the country of Yemen, the elbow of land facing the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Far from being a barren expanse of sand, Yemen is a land of mountains and canyons; a land of grapes, apricots, and other tantalizing fruits; a land of fascinating architecture. Although searing desert heat does scorch Yemen's coastal strips, it may surprise you to know that in its

highlands a pleasant temperate climate prevails. Of particular interest to Christians, though, is its rich history—a history that goes back to Bible times.

The Frankincense Route

In ancient times great wealth came to this part of the world by means of a quirk of nature—the trade winds of the Indian Ocean that carried dew to the southern coastline of Arabia. These moisture-laden winds helped create ideal growing conditions for the resinous trees whose bark yielded the gum resin called frankincense.* When burned, frankincense produces a sweet-smelling odor, mak-

* These trees belong to the genus *Boswellia*, a family of trees related to the turpentine, or terebinth, trees.

YEMEN

A COUNTRY FULL OF SURPRISES



ing it much in demand for use in religious ceremonies. The land now called Yemen became prominent in the frankincense trade.

Yemen may also have been the location of ancient Ophir—once the source of the very finest gold. (Job 22:24; 28:15, 16; Psalm 45:9) Whatever the case, Yemen was the crossroads for ancient camel caravans carrying gold, frankincense, and spices to far-off places, such as ancient Palestine and Tyre. (Ezekiel 27:2, 22-25) This brought great wealth not only to the traders themselves but also to various kingdoms along the road that exacted tribute from the caravans.

The kingdom of Sheba, believed to have been located in what is now the eastern por-

tion of Yemen, came to dominate the caravan route. It became renowned for trading in frankincense, myrrh, gold, precious stones, and ivory. (Isaiah 60:6) In Solomon's day, the queen of Sheba traveled from "the ends of the earth" to hear that king's wisdom firsthand. (Matthew 12:42) According to the historical Bible account, she went to Jerusalem with "a very impressive train, camels carrying balsam oil and very much gold and precious stones." (1 Kings 10:1, 2) The memory of this ancient queen is still alive among Yemenis today. Although she is unnamed in the Koran, Islamic tradition calls her Bilqīs—a name appearing on many commercial products in Yemen.



Bab-el-Yemen,
San'a's gate to
the old section
of town

Right: A dagger market in San'a

Below: Small towns blend into their surroundings



Centuries of Decline

For centuries Yemen enjoyed great wealth, so much so that the Romans gave it the Latin name *Arabia felix*, or "Happy Arabia." But when the Romans made apostate Christianity the State religion, the demand for frankincense diminished. Further accelerating Yemen's decline was the catastrophic collapse of the great dam at Marib—the focal point of a huge irrigation system that had watered this region since the eighth century B.C.E.

Yemen was briefly brought back into the limelight by the rising popularity of yet another commodity—coffee. About 1610 the Europeans discovered the appealing aroma and taste of these exotic beans from Yemen's highlands. The city of Mocha at the southern end of the Red Sea became the main port for coffee export. "Mocha" thus became synonymous with Arabian coffee and a household word in the Northern Hemisphere.

It wasn't long, though, before coffee plants were exported and successfully grown in other countries. The city of Mocha, as a result, entered a decline. While coffee is still a major export of Yemen, the city of Mocha today is

little more than a sleepy fishing port.

A Look at Yemen's Capital

While its former glory has faded, Yemen still has many fascinating—and surprising—features. The capital city, San'a, is situated on a lofty plateau over 7,000 feet high, enjoying a pleasant temperate climate.

Most of Yemen's 12 million people—making up about a third of the population of all Arabia—live, not in the torrid desert, but on this plateau and on the many mountains that dot this land.

San'a is thousands of years old, its antiquity being quite apparent in its architecture. Buildings of stone are adorned with white-washed tracery along the windows, latticed arches, and multicolored glass mosaics. In some sections of town, old and new buildings stand side by side, virtually indistinguishable from one another. But in the labyrinth of the old section of San'a, buildings—some standing eight or more stories high—that have clearly been around for centuries can be seen.

Leaving San'a's old section, one passes through the massive medieval gate and circles the mountainous countryside. With round dwelling towers that stand four or more stories high and having protective walls that were built without cement or mortar, each village looks like a huge castle built into the mountainside. Indeed, some villages blend so well into their surroundings that they can be perceived only up close.

A person may be surprised that people could live at such lofty heights. But looking even further up, one sees another string of citadel-like settlements nestling at an even higher altitude. Walled terraces on the steep slopes surround these mountain villages.

The People of Yemen

Western visitors do expect the Yemeni people to be exotic. But the reality may even exceed expectations. Mountain tribesmen can seem quite threatening in appearance at first. They wear the *fiuta*, a skirtlike wraparound garment, and a wide belt into which is tucked a very conspicuous dagger. In the villages many even carry big machine guns on their shoulders.

Yes, Yemeni men take pride in their weaponry. Entire sections of the marketplace are devoted to selling the *jambiyah*, a curved dagger. Generally it is worn by boys from age 14 onward as a sign of manhood. However, even little boys can be seen wearing them. The dagger handle may be made of plastic, wood, or very expensive rhinoceros horn, and the sheath is often adorned with beautiful silver-work. The blade is quite sharp. Fortunately, the knives serve mainly as decoration. Yemeni men are actually quite hospitable and appreciate any attempt by visitors to converse.

To the Western eye, Yemeni women are no less exotic in appearance. They dress in dark colors and are completely veiled, not showing even their eyes. They do not have an easy life. In the mountain villages, the women labor long and hard carrying water, food for the animals, and fuel. Large families are traditional.

A visit to the markets provides another chance to observe how these fascinating people live. The spice shops have delightful smells. The mouth waters at the sight of pomegranates, peaches, apricots, grapes, and almonds. Artisans are busy working with leather, gold, silver, and other metals.

In the marketplace, one can also find numerous suqs, or markets, that sell khat leaves. When chewed or sucked, khat acts as a mild stimulant; some say it is habit-forming. Nevertheless, chewing khat is a big part of

Yemeni life. Large sections of the mountainsides are devoted to growing khat. Groups of men will spend hours chewing the leaves while they enjoy conversation. Some also chew khat while working—or even while driving.

However, chewing khat is a very expensive habit, costing up to a third of a Yemeni family's income. And some point out health dangers, including deformed cheeks, sleep and appetite disturbances, and intestinal illness. Certain government officials have therefore spoken out against this drug. But thus far there are few signs that khat is losing its hold on the Yemeni people.

There is evidence, though, that the traditional way of life is beginning to give way to Western modernization. Numerous men have left to work abroad. Some families have moved to the cities, exposing youths to the influence of imported music and foreign videos. Understandably, not all are eager to see their country make a transition into the modern world.

It will therefore be interesting to see what the future holds for this land. Relatively little has been done to explore the country's archaeological ruins, and perhaps future excavations will yield some fascinating secrets of Yemen's renowned past. In the meantime, Yemen offers ample reason for the adventurous traveler to visit this land of surprises.

—Contributed.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

What Hope for the Children?

How Can I Lose Weight?

Is It Wrong to Grieve?

WATCHING THE WORLD

Blood Transfusion Scandal

Germany, which consumes more blood products per person than any other country, has been rocked by a scandal that has "turned one of the world's most dependable branches of medicine into a target for criticism," reports the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. The scandal involves a blood processing company that, for some years, has sold huge amounts of improperly tested blood products to hospitals. Hence, thousands of hospital patients who have used these products have been exposed to the risk of HIV infection. Federal Health Minister Horst Seehofer has advised that "anyone who wishes to make certain he has not contracted HIV through infected blood or plasma products during an operation" should undergo a test. *Die Zeit* reports that "71 percent of the population are now afraid of getting AIDS out of a transfusion bag."

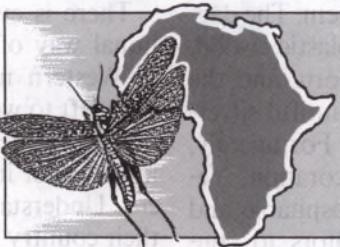
Wanted: Monks

For the first time in Japan's religious history, monks are to be publicly recruited. "Anyone who is pious and not worldly-oriented can become a chief priest," said a high-ranking monk of the Buddhist Tendai sect. The sect plans to have "entrance exams" for applicants beginning in 1995. According to an official of the sect, little knowledge of religion is needed to pass the exam. Traditionally, sons of priests took over their fathers' position as temple priests. "Recently, however, the sons of priests in all sects are said to be reluctant about becoming monks," reports the *Mainichi Daily News*. Commenting on this trend, Hiroo Takagi, an

expert on religion, said: "Now that the hereditary system is falling apart, Buddhist sects are worried about the shortage of youths willing to become priests."

Locusts Return

Egypt's eighth plague, locusts, "is again poised to swoop on Africa," reports *The Weekly Mail & Guardian* newspaper. Already 200,000 acres have been plundered in Yemen, and swarms have arrived at Chad, Niger, and Mali. A



spokesman for an agricultural research unit said the damage threatens to be much greater than the severe plague of 1986-87 that destroyed crops in 28 countries in northern Africa. He added: "If the ecological conditions remain favourable, the swarms could expand tenfold in a single generation (45 days)." The locusts could attack all the Sahel's food crops in 1994.

Preventing Suicide

"Suicides of youths increase," reports the Brazilian paper *O Estado de S. Paulo*. A study by Brazil's Ministry of Justice shows that "the main reason for suicide is illness, followed by disappointment in love, alcoholism, and financial difficulties." Since the help of family members and friends is essential in preventing suicide, psychiatrist Christian Gauderer suggests:

"Do not disregard the possibility of a suicide. And since communication can relieve the tension, 'ask for the reasons of the depression, why the person is thinking of killing himself, how he intends to do it.'"

Pregnancy After Menopause?

Is pregnancy possible after menopause? The answer would appear to be yes, according to a medical report in the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*. The report says that "there are an apparently increasing number of women who find themselves pregnant after having been confirmed as menopausal." The French study, involving 6,000 gynecologists and obstetricians, revealed that a woman has a significantly higher potential for a post-menopausal pregnancy if she is receiving HRT (hormone replacement therapy). Statistically, these women on the average had stopped menstruating for two years, the majority had experienced menopause relatively early, and 71 percent were receiving HRT. Interestingly, Dr. Christian Jamin, who headed the study, said that every woman has the potential of having a child even after menopause.

Pope John XXIII Praised Mussolini

For some time now, a struggle seems to have been under way within the Catholic Church between those who are favorable to the canonization of Pope John XXIII and those who are opposed to it. It was recently made public that before becoming pope, John XXIII, in a number of letters dating back to the 1930's, praised Benito Mussolini, the Fascist leader of Italy

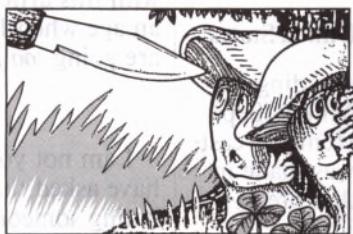
during the 1930's and 1940's. The then future pope said Mussolini seemed to be guided by "Providence." These letters had been published years ago, but the editor, the former personal secretary of John XXIII, had censored the praise directed to the Fascist dictator to "avoid"—he now says—"political exploitation." Some think that the censored passages have been made public only now in order to impede the course of the proceedings that could lead the present pope to proclaim John XXIII "blessed." In any case, points out the Milan newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, the revelation of those passages "does not add much to what was already known about the attitude of the ecclesiastical authorities toward Fascism."

Flammable Rain Forests

Fires in East Kalimantan, Indonesia, ravaged 8.6 million acres of forest land in the drought years of 1983 and 1991. But fires in the damp Amazonian rain forest are a much greater cause for alarm. Why? Normally the rain forest canopy effectively traps the moisture-laden air beneath it, keeping the wood so damp that fire fails to ignite it. In the last five years, reports the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, the eastern Amazonian forest has been riddled with a network of roads as timber cutters have searched for and cut down prize mahogany trees, and the wet atmosphere escapes. The unwanted branches and crowns of trees lying on the forest floor are burned, making the forest vulnerable. According to one survey, cutting down a mere 2 percent of the trees destroys as much as 56 percent of the forest canopy. Brazilian farmers have reported flames that ran for three miles through the standing trees.

Mushrooms Threatened With Extinction

"Of the roughly 4,400 types of mushrooms found in Germany, one third appear on the list of species threatened with extinction," comments the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In fact, scientists are warning that there is a danger that not only the mushroom but also many other kinds of



fungi will die out in Europe. Why? It appears that pollution and over-exploitation are exacting a high toll. Other forms of life, such as oak and pine trees and many varieties of beetles, are dependent upon fungi for survival. So a widespread disappearance of the fungi would mean ecological disaster.

Scientific Basis for Belief

"It is possible to be a scientist and believe that there is a God," states the South African newspaper *The Star*. The article reported on a 90-minute lecture by Professor David Block, an astronomer at Johannesburg's University of the Witwatersrand. Block explained that science confirms how "finely tuned and balanced" the universe is. For Block and many other scientists, this clearly indicates purposeful design, which, in turn, strongly suggests a Designer. According to *The Star*, Block concludes that there is such overwhelming evidence for God's existence "that a man who does not believe in a Creator would have to have more faith than one who does [believe in a Creator]."

Egyptian Monuments Threatened

Ancient monuments throughout Egypt are being threatened by rising groundwater. At risk are 400 historic monuments in Cairo, as well as monuments much farther south, such as the Temple of Luxor. The Sphinx has already lost a paw, reports *The UNESCO Courier*. The problem is partly due to the construction of the Aswan High Dam, which keeps the Nile waters flowing and the water table high. Before the dam's construction, the river received no water for nine months of the year and shrank to a low level. Also at fault is Cairo's hundred-year-old sewage system, which leaks and often overflows. When the water penetrates a building's foundations, capillary action sucks it many feet up into the structure, where chemical reactions take place to form salts that attack the walls.

This Is Justice?

"Michael Charles Hayes killed four people in a North Carolina shooting rampage—and now, his victims' families complain, he's living better than he's ever lived, at taxpayers' expense," says an Associated Press dispatch. Judged insane and committed to a state mental institution, Hayes became eligible for Social Security disability benefits and receives \$536 a month. This has allowed him to purchase a motorcycle, a huge wardrobe, and a room full of expensive stereo and video equipment because he is already provided with the shelter and food that the disability benefits are supposed to cover. The government gives about \$48 million a year to the criminally insane. Prosecutor Vincent Rabil calls it a "strange twist of justice" and adds: "Taxpayers are paying the killer. It doesn't make very good sense."

FROM OUR READERS

A God of War? Thanks for the fine article in the November 8, 1993, *Awake!* "The Bible's Viewpoint . . . Is Jehovah a War God?" That is a question many have posed over the years. We used to discuss it on occasion as a family. Your article, along with other research I have done, has helped answer my questions.

S. T., United States

Breast-Feeding We enjoyed reading the article "The Case for Mother's Milk." (September 22, 1993) My wife is currently breast-feeding our child. No mention was made in the article, though, of the fact that breast-feeding drains the mother physically. Perhaps not every woman can breast-feed at night. In our case, for example, if my wife gets too little sleep, it is very difficult for her.

T. K., Germany

Thank you for your observations. Previous articles have touched upon some of the difficulties new mothers might experience in this regard. See, for example, "Awake!" of June 8, 1983, and March 22, 1986.—ED.

Too Far? I would like to thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Far is 'Too Far'?" (October 22, 1993) I've been a baptized Christian for almost a year now, and I have often wondered about Jehovah's viewpoint on this. I appreciate very much your addressing this subject. Even though it will not be easy, I am determined to live up to Jehovah's standards.

C. S., United States

For months I have been looking for such an article. I have been dating for nine months, and when the article arrived, I immediately phoned my boyfriend. Thank you very much for instructing us on these sensitive and delicate matters.

A. P. G. S., Brazil

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the article. It came out just when I needed it. I am 16 years old, and there is a boy I like. I was thinking of making advances toward him. Of course, I knew fornication was wrong, but I had a feeling that kissing and hugging was not really going too far. But with this article, I can see that until I reach an age when I can get married, such things are going *too far!*

M. H., Japan

I am not young, but I am still single, and I have asked that same question. I have been dating someone, and as a full-time evangelizer, I should know the answer. But when you get emotionally involved, your judgment can get blurry. The article was very timely and has helped me tremendously in talking about this subject with the Christian man I'm dating. We have read it over together and want to keep things honorable before all.

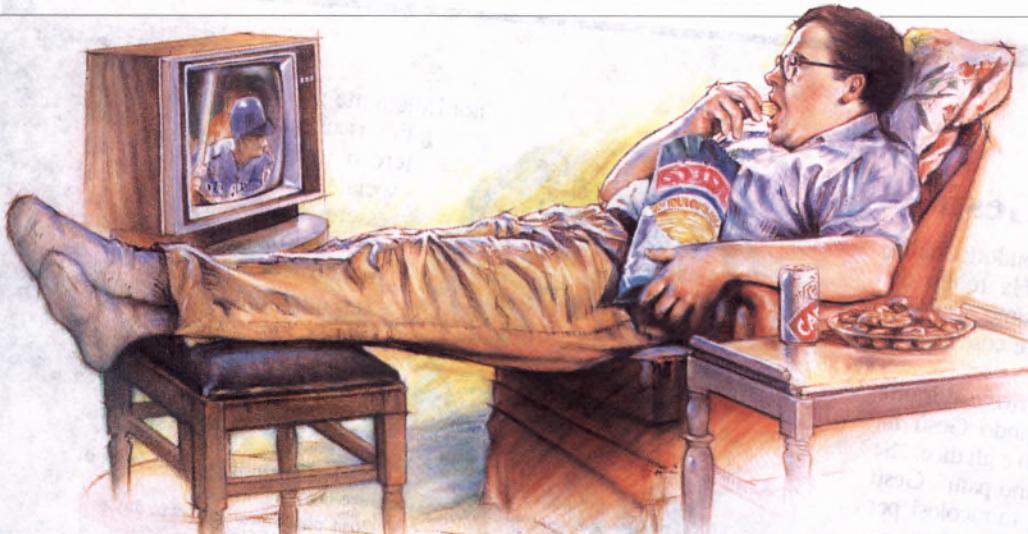
M. R., United States

I had been praying to have an explanation of this subject. When I saw the title of the article, my heart 'stopped.' I devoured the article, and now I know exactly how I should behave.

S. G., Italy

Nonblood Medical Management I want to thank you very much for the article "Jehovah's Witnesses and the Medical Profession Cooperate." (November 22, 1993) As I read it, tears of appreciation welled up in my eyes. The article described some of the hard work that many of us do not know about because we have never had this problem. But for those of us who may one day face a test of our faith over the blood issue, it is a great comfort knowing that our brothers are working diligently in our behalf.

B. B., United States



PHYSICAL INACTIVITY CAN KILL YOU

THAT is the message from both the American Heart Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. For decades, smoking, high blood pressure, and high blood cholesterol were listed as the only major alterable risk factors for heart disease. But in 1992 another factor was added—physical inactivity. Perhaps it is the easiest one to control.

"Just do it and do it regularly," said Dr. John Duncan of Dallas, Texas. Unfortunately, most don't exercise regularly. "There is a misimpression in America that in the fitness fad of the last three or four years, more Americans are engaged in physical activity," said Tom McMillen, cochairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. "That is not true. About 250,000 deaths each year are attributed to inactivity."

"Only 22 percent of Americans are active today to levels recommended for good health benefits," according to Dr. Walter R. Dowdle, acting director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. "A national effort is needed to combat the high level of physical inactivity in the United States."

Strenuous activity is not required, as Canada's *Medical Post* reported: "New research has confirmed that even a leisurely stroll can pro-

duce health benefits." Dr. Anthony Graham, chief of cardiology at the Wellesley Hospital in Toronto, Canada, explained: "We're talking here about modest physical activity, some form of regular activity that may be as modest as working in your garden several times a week on a regular basis, or taking relatively short walks. . . . We're now learning even this amount of activity done on a regular basis will reduce one's individual risk. It's sort of a 'something for everyone' approach to exercise."

Dr. Russell Pate of the University of South Carolina concurred, saying: "I'm convinced that millions and millions of people out there have the view that if they can't join a spa and spend five hours a week there, forget it. I think we have to officially sanction the idea that a nice, comfortable walk around the block after dinner is a very desirable thing to do."

Since even modest physical activity is beneficial to your health, can you regularly take a walk or walk up and down stairs instead of taking an elevator? Why not park a distance from your destination, perhaps the grocery store, and walk the rest of the way? "Anything is better than nothing," observed Dr. Robert E. Leach, chairman of orthopedics at Boston University Medical Center.

riamo zioni di Gesù

Gesù viene condotto dallo della Giudea. Ha molto da del suo battesimo 'i cieli si potesse discernere cose celesti. e'

O notti nel deserto, e durante illa. Allora, quando Gesù ha incina per tentarlo e gli dice: "Se le pietre divengano pani". Gesù dei suoi poteri miracolosi perciò non si lascia tentare.

into. Fa un altro tentativo. Sfida to del tempio affinché gli angeli Ma Gesù non si lascia indurre a ettacolare. Citando le Scritture alla prova Dio in questo modo. iavolo, in qualche maniera miraregni del mondo e gli dice: "Ti ostri e mi fai un atto di adorazio- uita di cedere alla tentazione di fare fedele a Dio.

a queste tentazioni di Gesù. Esse il Diavolo non è, come sostengono del male, bensì una reale persona oni di Gesù rivela inoltre che tutti i proprietà del Diavolo. Infatti, se in suoi, come o che li offr to: Il Diav in cambio a tutti i re era simile,

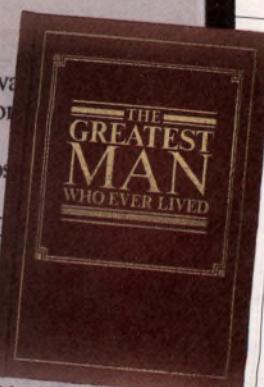
They Wanted Personal Copies

ONE of Jehovah's Witnesses who works at Italy's Milan Linate Airport took the book *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived* to work with him. A number of his colleagues said that they would like to have a personal copy of this publication on the life of Jesus Christ. A few days later, books, one of his workmates told him that employees at several airlines said they would also like to have the book. So the Witness asked her to make a list of all those who wanted it. Some days later the list was given to him.

The number of books requested was not im-

noi l'allettante prospettiva guire ricchezza mortale o un'elevata sociale. Ma dimostrare essere saggi seguire l'esempio di Cristo nendo fedeli a Dio e a qualunque

Matteo 3:16; 4:1-12, 13; Luca 4:1-13



■ Su quali cose evidentemente medita Gesù durante i 40 giorni nel deserto?

■ In che modo il Diavolo cerca di tentare Gesù?

■ Cosa possiamo imparare dalle tentazioni di Gesù?



mediately available, but two weeks later the Witness had obtained them. He and a fellow Witness visited everyone on the list, and altogether 461 books were delivered! As they were being distributed, arrangements were made for 13 persons to be visited by Witnesses living nearby to start home Bible studies with them.