

Awake!

February 8, 1995



MISSING CHILDREN When Will the Tragedy End?



MISSING CHILDREN

When Will the Tragedy End? 3-13

Each year throughout the world, there are hundreds of thousands of missing children. What happens to them? What can be done about it?



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Missing Children

How Widespread a Tragedy?

'MY CHILD IS MISSING!'

There could be few greater causes of anxiety for most parents than having to utter those words. While no exact global figure can be established for the number of children missing from their homes, we can learn how widespread a tragedy it is through published reports in many countries.

IN THE United States, from 500,000 to over 1,000,000 children, depending on how they are classified, are listed as missing from their homes each year. They may be missing a short period of time or be missing permanently. England reports that almost 100,000 children disappear annually, although some say the number is much greater. The former Soviet Union spoke of tens of thousands of children as missing. In South Africa the number is said to be more than 10,000. And in Latin America, millions of children face this tragedy.

A spokesman for the Italian Ministry of the Interior indicated the dimension of the problem there when he said, as noted in *L'Indipendente*: "They leave home on a day like many others. They go to school or to play, but they do not come back. They disappear, vanish into nothing. Family members desperately search for them, but there are only faint traces, insufficient clues, few—and uncertain—eyewitnesses."

A recent study in the United States on the magnitude of this problem revealed that the heading "missing children" includes, in actuality, several categories. One category is children abducted by strangers. Another is children abducted by a parent, as in custody cases. Then there are the throwaways, children unwanted by parents or guardians. There are also runaways, another large category. And there are those lost or otherwise separated from their family for just a few hours or for a day or two—mostly children staying out beyond the time agreed upon or children whose parents have misunderstood their intentions. Very, very few of these stay missing.

However, what happens to the missing children in the more serious categories? Why does this tragedy happen? This issue of *Awake!* examines various aspects of the tragedy and answers the question, When will it end?

When Children Are Abducted by Strangers

**"PLEASE HELP US FIND HER.
PLEASE, PLEASE HELP SARA!"**

This impassioned cry from two anguished parents was televised across the United States in an effort to recover their 12-year-old daughter, Sara Ann Wood. She had been kidnapped three weeks earlier as she bicycled home along the country road where she lived.

A MASSIVE search party combed woods, fields, and nearby lakes looking for traces of the missing girl. About the same time, Tina Piirainen, another anguished parent in a neighboring state, also went on camera pleading for her missing daughter. Lured down a wooded path, ten-year-old Holly vanished in less than an hour. Later her remains were found in a field.

Life for the parents of missing children

is an agonizing ordeal. Daily they struggle with the uncertainty of whether their child is alive, perhaps being physically harmed or sexually abused, or dead, as was the case with little Ashley. Ashley went with her family to watch her brother compete in a soccer game. Tired of watching, she walked to the playground—and vanished. Later, Ashley's body was found in a nearby field. She had been strangled.

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.

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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Horrifying Nightmare

In the United States, each year, from 200 to 300 families will experience the horrifying nightmare of having a child kidnapped and then perhaps never seeing the child alive again. While the numbers appear small in comparison with other violent crimes committed, the fright and terror that ripple through entire communities affect thousands of people. In shock they wonder, "How can such a tragedy happen here? Will my child be next?"

In the United States, the annual number of reported cases of children abduct-

ed is between 3,200 and 4,600. Two thirds or more of these are sexually assaulted. Ernest E. Allen, president of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, noted: "The primary reason is sexual, followed by intent to murder." Also, according to the Department of Justice, over 110,000 other abductions are attempted each year, mostly by motorists, usually men, trying to lure a child into their car. Other lands are also experiencing a wave of violence against children.

Does Society Share the Blame?

Concerning child killing, an Australian researcher shows that it is "not a random event." In his book *Murder of the Innocents—Child-Killers and Their Victims*, Paul Wilson states that "both the killers and the killed are caught up in a vicious cycle that society itself has created."

It might seem strange to think that society may be responsible for, or at least may contribute to, this tragedy, since most people find the exploitation of and the murder of children to be horrendous acts. Yet, industrialized societies, and even many less-developed ones, are saturated with films, TV productions, and reading material that glorify sex and violence.

There are now more and more hard-core pornographic films featuring children and even adults dressed up to resemble children. These depict explicit sex and violence involving children. Wilson further notes in



It is a horrifying nightmare when a child is abducted

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Millions of Child Prostitutes

According to the United Nations, about ten million children, mostly in developing countries, have been forced into prostitution, many of whom had been kidnapped. This evil trade has increased in Africa, Asia, and Latin America along with the increase in foreign tourism. In some areas, of the millions of tourists, especially from wealthier lands, about two thirds are "sex tourists." But there is a day of reckoning, since man's crimes are "openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting," Jehovah God.—Hebrews 4:13.

his book that there are movie titles such as *Death of a Young One*, *Lingering Torture*, and *Dismembering for Beginners*. How large an audience do sadistic violence and pornography have? It is a *multibillion-dollar* industry!

Graphic violence and pornography have a tremendous impact on the lives of those who exploit children. A convicted sex offender who had murdered five young boys confessed: "I am a homosexual pedophile convicted of murder, and pornography was

a determining factor in my downfall." Professor Berit Ås, of Oslo University, explains the effect child porn has: "We made a big mistake at the end of the 1960s. We believed that pornography could replace sex crimes by providing an outlet for sex offenders, and we took the lid off. Now we know we were wrong: such pornography *validates* sex crimes. It leads the offender to think, 'If I can watch this, it must be okay to do it.'"

An adult's desire for titillation escalates as he becomes addicted to pornography. As a result, some are willing to use either coercion or violence to obtain children for their perverted use, including rape and murder.

There are other causes for child abductions. In some lands this has increased because of bad economic conditions. Lured by large sums of ransom money paid by wealthy families, kidnappers target children. Each year many infants are stolen and sold to adoption rings that transport them out of the country.

Who make up the major portion of missing children? What happens to them? The next two articles will examine this matter.

When Parents Kidnap

AFTER suffering years of violent beatings and severe emotional abuse at the hands of her husband and then finally being betrayed for another woman, Cheryl sued for divorce.* With full custody of her children granted to her by the courts, calmness slowly settled in as she began putting the pieces of her life back together—until one day when the phone rang. It was her ex-

husband. He said: "If you want to see your children again, you must agree to remarry me!" Forbidden to return to their mother after their monthlong visit with their father in his native country, Cheryl's children were kidnapped.

Devastated, Cheryl petitioned the U.S. State Department but found no legal way to recover her children in the other country. The feelings of utter helplessness that she

* The name has been changed.

had experienced through years of battering returned. "It's almost the same thing," she explains. "You don't know how to stop it."

"Psychological Violence"

Parental kidnapping has been termed "a supreme act of psychological violence" perpetrated against a parent and a child. Carolyn Zogg, executive director of Child Find of America, Inc., said regarding such kidnappers: "Many parents who do this are getting even, and they are getting even in the worst possible way and in the most vulnerable area. That's the area that is the closest to [the parents that have legal custody]—their jewel, their children. . . . They're not thinking of the child, only of themselves and the revenge—getting even, getting back."

A child's being kidnapped not only subjects the parent to feelings of rage, loss, helplessness, and anxiety but almost always damages the child's emotional well-being to some degree. In some cases a child may be forced to live on the run, avoiding close ties and hearing distortions and lies about the other parent. The experience may produce an array of disorders, such as bed-wetting, in-

somnia, clinging behavior, fear of windows and doors, and extreme fright. Even in older children, it can produce grief and rage.

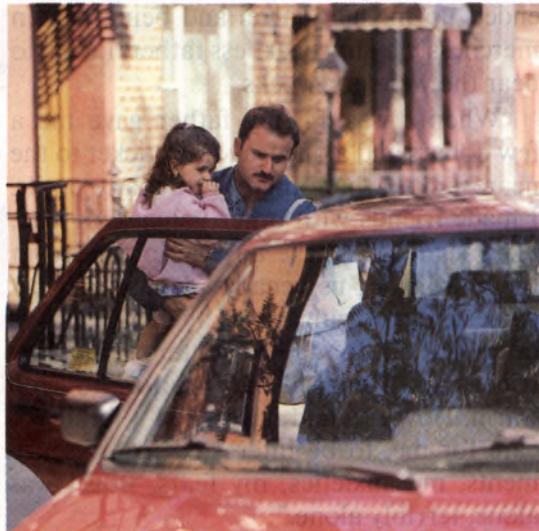
In the United States, there are over 350,000 cases each year in which a parent takes a child in violation of a custody order or fails to return the child in the time allowed. In over 100,000 of these cases, the child is concealed by a family member with the intent to keep him or her permanently from the other parent. Some are taken out of the state or even out of the country.

Other Reasons

Is it always a desire for reconciliation or a vengeful spirit that motivates parents to abduct their children? Michael Knipfing of Child Find explains that some parents fear losing a custody battle with their ex-spouse and that "out of fear they act preemptively." Or when custody has been determined and one parent keeps denying the other visitation rights, frustration sets in. Explains Knipfing: "If you love your child and you're denied seeing your child, you tend to think that you have no other alternative but to grab the child and run."

He also states that 'most people do not realize the ramifications of kidnapping a child. They don't realize they are going to have trouble getting a job. Warrants are out for their arrest. They think the problem is just between them and the other parent. They don't realize that the police get involved. They need two lawyers instead of one because now they've got a criminal charge to deal with as well as the civil problem, which is who gets custody of the child.'

Some parents may suspect that their child is being harmed by the other parent. If the legal system is slow to act, then a desperate parent might act despite the consequences. This was seen in the case of five-year-old Hilary Morgan. A child psychiatrist advised that visits between



Hilary and her father should stop, calling the evidence of abuse "clear and convincing." The courts, however, ruled the abuse tentative and prescribed unsupervised visits. Dr. Elizabeth Morgan, Hilary's mother, in violation of the court, hid her daughter. Much public sympathy is aroused for such a parent who kidnaps and flees for protection.

In the case of Elizabeth Morgan, she lost her surgical practice, spent over two years in prison, and ran up medical and legal debts of more than 1.5 million dollars. She explained to *U.S. News & World Report*: "The experts tell me that my child would now be permanently insane had I not stopped

the abuse. . . . I had to do the job that the court refused to do: Save my child."

True indeed is the observation made by researchers Greif and Hegar regarding abductions by parents: "These are exceedingly complex events that, like a deep pool of water, look slightly different depending upon the angle; each time one stares into the water something new is seen."—*When Parents Kidnap—The Families Behind the Headlines*.

In addition to children who are kidnapped by a parent or by a stranger, there are millions of other missing children all over the world—the throwaways and the runaways. Who are they, and what happens to them?

Throwaways and Runaways

"CUT my hair, dressed like a man, put chains and padlocks around my neck, and stuck a safety pin through my cheek, and in this way I began my life as a punk."

—Tamara.

If you had seen Tamara on the streets, would you have guessed that she was a lonely, abused teenager whose homelife left her void of the attention and affection she was crying out for? Would you have thought she was a rebel heading for trouble with the law and perhaps for a life of crime? Tamara reveals to *Awake!* the frightening events that led to the kind of life she lived from the age of 14, a life-style she never wished for.

Throwaways

Tamara relates: "I grew up in a small mountain town in Italy, in a family in which affection was unknown. Sadly, I witnessed

the intense arguments that exploded between my parents and the unrepeatable insults that flew on those occasions. I often ended up in the quarrel and being beaten mercilessly by my heartless father. I used to bear the welts for weeks.

"When I was 14, my father gave me a few dollars and a one-way train ticket to the nearest city, where there were many perils. I made friends with other youngsters who, like me, did not have anyone interested in them. Many of us became alcoholics. I became arrogant, vulgar, and aggressive. I was often without food. One winter evening my friends and I burned the furniture to keep warm. How I would have liked a family to care for me, to be interested in my sentiments, my anxieties, my fears. But I was alone, terribly alone."

There are hundreds of thousands of "Tamaras" in today's world. On every continent, there are children who have been abandoned by parents who have neglected their responsibilities.

Runaways

Other youngsters decide to leave home because "it is simply too terrifying a place for them to remain; it is too painful, it is too dangerous, and they run out into the streets."—*New York State Journal of Medicine*.

At nine years old, Domingos was abandoned to an orphanage when his mother remarried. Because of the beatings he experienced by the priests, he planned to escape. His mother took him back, but he was subjected to constant beatings by his step-father. Running away was the only way he found relief from the cruelty at home.

Sadly, "millions of children cannot trust the adults in their own households for a minimum standard of safe care," writes Anuradha Vittachi in her book *Stolen Childhood—In Search of the Rights of the Child*. She also writes: "Three children a day are estimated to die of abuse at the hands of their parents in the United States." In too many cases, a child's sexuality is violated rather than protected by a family member.

Exploited and Traumatized

Domingos was forced to live with other street children who were involved with robbing and stealing, as well as taking and selling drugs. Tragically, many who run away from bad conditions at home are exploited by pimps, pedophiles, and pornography rings. Hungry and lonely, these young ones are offered a place to stay and promises of belonging to a "caring" adult, only to find that they pay with their bodies in a life of prostitution. Without work skills, many learn to survive on the streets in any way they can, including being seduced and se-

ducing. Some do not survive. Drugs, alcohol, murder, and suicide claim many young victims.

Commenting on the life of street children, one former child prostitute said: "You're scared out here. You know, what gets me upset is that a lot of [people] think that when they see a kid sleeping on a train, or they see a kid hanging out all the time, they think it's 'cause they wanna be. Now that I'm older, that's not how I see it. These kids are each crying in their own special way. They don't wanna be like that, but their parents don't want them."

Seeking "Freedom"

There are other hundreds of thousands of youngsters reported missing from home who have been lured into the streets by the freedoms they imagine are out there. Some want freedom from poverty. Others desire freedom from parental authority and rules that they may feel are too restrictive.

One youth who tasted the so-called freedom from parental control and from the principles of a Christian home was named Emma. Having left for a life with her friends, she became enslaved to drugs. But after experiencing the brutality of the streets, Emma expressed the desire to return and to end her drug habit. Sadly, though, she did not cut her ties with bad company, and on a summer evening with her friends, they injected heroin. For Emma it was the last time. She went into a coma and died the next day, alone and abandoned by her "friends."

Can the future of children victimized by their parents or by others be better? Will there ever be a world that will not exploit youths? What hope is there that family life can be improved and appreciated so that youngsters will not want to run away? The answers can be found in the following article.

When Will the Tragedy End?

WHEN will children cease becoming victims of abduction, abuse, exploitation, and often the bad influence of their peers? Would more law enforcement and stiffer penalties for crimes committed against children protect them? Would more social programs to provide food, housing, and education stop the abuse and the running? Would teaching better communication skills to parents who care about their children help parents to counter the illusions of excitement that lure their children into destructive environments?

Although such measures might be of help, until the root cause of such tragedies is eliminated, children will remain subject to much suffering. According to one youth, any initiative to deal with the problem of runaway children that does not prevent the abuse or the neglect in the home is not likely to be very effective, since the damage is already done.

The Root Cause

What is at the root of all these problems? How will they be eliminated? The Bible explains that the family unit is under attack by unseen wicked spirit creatures, Satan and his demons, who take pleasure in brutality, sexual exploitation, and perversion. (Genesis 6:1-6; Ephesians 6:12) When Jesus was on earth, children were attacked by these demons. One young boy suffered the torment of being thrown into convulsions and being thrown into a fire.—Mark 9:20-22.

Even centuries before Jesus was on earth, demons reveled in the torture and the burning to death of young children offered to hideous pagan gods, such as Baal, Chemosh, and Molech. (1 Kings 11:7; 2 Kings 3:26, 27; Psalm 106:37, 38; Jeremiah 19:5; 32:35) Therefore, today, in this world that is becoming more and more depraved, it should not be surprising that demons target children for suffering at the hands of will-



ing human agents who inflict humiliation, pain, and death upon youngsters. Perpetrators of such monstrous crimes often feed their minds on pornography, which fuels their perversions.

The pressure that the demons exert upon the human race has increased in our time, for the Bible calls this period of history "the last days" of the present wicked system of things. It foretold that these would be "critical times hard to deal with." Now more than ever, the influence of the demons results in humans reflecting the depravity of these wicked spirit creatures. The Bible foretold that people in our day would be fierce, without self-control, having no natural affection, without love of goodness.—2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13.

That well describes greedy people who produce films, records, magazines, and books that glorify adultery, drugs, suicide, murder, rape, incest, bondage, and torture. Through these and other means, the demons have promoted a culture that, like vile air, has polluted the minds and hearts of young and old alike, eroding family values and godly morality.

The increase of child abduction, molestation, and killing is part of the sign of the last days. In addition, the Bible said that 'men would be lovers of themselves, not open to any agreement, disloyal, betrayers.' Hence nowadays the bonds of marriage are often broken soon after they are made. As divorces increase, so do parental kidnappings. And the battering and killing of present or former mates escalates, the vast majority of victims being women. Thus, we see a generation of children whose parents encourage them to run by neglecting and abusing them. Further, our time is marked by children who are "obedient to parents," who are "headstrong," and who prefer to run with their peers rather than respect godly values.—2 Timothy 3:2-4.

The Tragedy Soon to End

However, the influence of Satan and his demons is soon to end. (Revelation 12:12) The prophecy of Revelation 20:1-3 states that God will have Satan and his demons put out of the way. After that, God's heavenly Kingdom, in the hands of Jesus Christ, will rule this earth in righteousness, administering justice and guaranteeing security for all. (Psalm 72:7, 8; Daniel 2:44; Matthew 6:9, 10) Gone will be the greedy commercial systems that oppress the poor and exploit human weakness for a profit, for "the world is passing away and so is its desire." (1 John 2:17) All those who practice wickedness will be eliminated, as Proverbs 2:22 foretells: "The wicked . . . will be cut off from the very earth."

Micah 4:4 explains that in God's new world there will be security and peace for all: "There will be no one making them tremble." How is that possible? Through the kingly law of love. That supreme law will govern all thoughts and actions. Those living at that time will have learned to reflect the personality of Jesus and his Father, Jehovah God, since if they do not, they will not be allowed to continue living. By their clothing themselves with the 'tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, and mildness,' selfishness will be rooted out of the human make-up. (Colossians 3:12) Life will be radiant with happiness; homes glowing with warmth and affection will be the norm earth wide.

Isaiah 65:21-23 promises abundant food and good homes for everyone: "They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. . . . They will not toil for nothing, nor will they bring to birth for disturbance." No more abuse. No more suffering for children or for parents.

Benefiting Now

Even now, in the last hours of this evil system, knowledge of Jehovah and of his purpose to restore this earth to a paradise brings benefits. It has given many youngsters and parents hope and a reason for happiness, even if they have been victims of our times. For example, Tamara, mentioned in our previous article, explains what took place in her life.

"When I was 18, I got married and more or less left my circle of 'friends,' some of whom ended up in jail, in the grip of drugs, or in prostitution. But I still had the same personality, so the arguments began with my husband. However, soon after the birth of our son, something happened that completely changed my life. I found a Bible and

"Jehovah does not want children to be abused"

began to read it. One evening I read the chapter in Proverbs that says 'finding wisdom is like finding hidden treasures.' (Proverbs 2:1-6) Before I went to sleep that evening, I prayed for that wisdom. The next morning, Jehovah's Witnesses rang my doorbell. I began studying the Bible with them, but it took me some time to put into practice what I was learning from the Bible. Finally, I became determined to follow the Christian way of life and was baptized. Now, together with my husband, I help others to receive the relief that God provides."

Yes, Tamara found the Source of all relief, Jehovah God. He is a heavenly Father who will never abandon those clinging to him. Psalm 27:10 tells us: "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up."

Domingos, mentioned earlier, also found

a real family that has provided comfort, encouragement, and support. He relates: "One day I received a copy of the book *Listening to the Great Teacher* and was surprised to learn that God had a name, Jehovah.* I attended one of the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and was amazed to see that there were no class distinctions. The Witnesses began studying the Bible with me in spite of my poor clothing, rough manner, and distrust of everyone. Gradually they helped me to reject my former way of life. They even helped me to get work. Eventually I was helped to make progress toward baptism."

The congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses are like a safety net for young people. The Witnesses are happy to assist any who want to learn of the marvelous hope ahead. The comfort brought to those who seek a relationship with their heavenly Father is great, since the Witnesses are trained to provide counsel and direction from God's Word the Bible. One Witness explains that young people need to be shown that the disgusting situation they may find themselves in is disgusting to Jehovah too. The Witness states: "Jehovah does not want children to be abused. He does not want them to be unhappy. But he doesn't want them to exchange one form of abuse for another form of abuse—abuse that they get out in the streets. They can reach out to mature individuals in Jehovah's organization to talk about their problems and to be shown the way out."

For children whose hearts are receptive, God's Word provides a powerful incentive to avoid the snare of peer pressure. Frances, a 17-year-old girl, was incited by a schoolmate to play hooky from school a number of times without telling her parents. Finally, she ran away from home. After causing

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

hours of anguish for her parents, she returned. Afterward, two Witnesses from her congregation visited. They learned that the family climate was not the cause of the problem, and they lovingly provided counsel. They explained the Christian obligation of youths to respect their parents (Ephesians 6:1, 2); the need to avoid dishonesty, since she had played hooky without telling her parents (Ephesians 4:25); and the importance of avoiding bad associations. (1 Corinthians 15:33) She responded positively.

Help From on High

Cheryl also found help from Jehovah in dealing with the kidnapping of her children by her ex-spouse.* When asked what helped her to cope with this nightmare, she said: "The first thing I did was to read the Psalms, especially Psalm 35. It was comforting to know that Jehovah saw the injustice of what I was going through." Psalm 35:22, 23 says: "You have seen, O Jehovah. Do not keep silent. O Jehovah, do not keep yourself far from me. Do arouse yourself and awake to my judgment, . . . to my case at law."

After two years, with Jehovah's backing and help from the Witnesses, Cheryl faced her ex-husband, and she visited her children. She was able to provide comforting answers as to why this had happened to them and to assure them that she had not abandoned them. Because Cheryl trained her children to honor Jehovah, she was able to tell them of the confidence she had in them. She explained: "I know my children love Jehovah, and he will not let lasting harm come to them."

That was the way it worked out. With Cheryl's persistent effort in dealing with foreign immigration officials and with her

reliance on Jehovah through earnest prayer, her children were returned to her. Cheryl stated: "I would really have to say that it was only by Jehovah's hand that I got them back."

How important it is to teach our children now to know who Jehovah is and to worship him! The Bible states at 1 Peter 3:12 that Jehovah's eyes "are upon the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their supplication." Jehovah is indeed a refuge for our children. His name is "a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."—Proverbs 18:10.

Although we live in very dangerous times and do not always know what will befall our children, parents who worship Jehovah know that no lasting harm will come to their young ones who are faithful. He has even promised to bring back from the dead those who have suffered as victims of our times and to erase the pain and suffering inflicted upon them.—Isaiah 65:17, 18; John 5:28, 29.

The hope of God's new world is a marvelous one. So is the realization that soon God will rid the earth of Satan and his wicked system. Gone will be any threat to our children. One of the songs that Jehovah's Witnesses sing at their congregation meetings describes that new system this way: "When songs of children fill the air,/when joy and peace are everywhere,/then, too, you'll see the dead arise,/if you keep your eyes on the prize!"

The next time you meet some of Jehovah's Witnesses, ask them to show you how you too can learn more about the joys just ahead in God's incoming new world of righteousness. They will be happy to assist you to see how God's Word can bring much comfort now and eternal life later.—Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:4, 5.

* See article on page 6.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

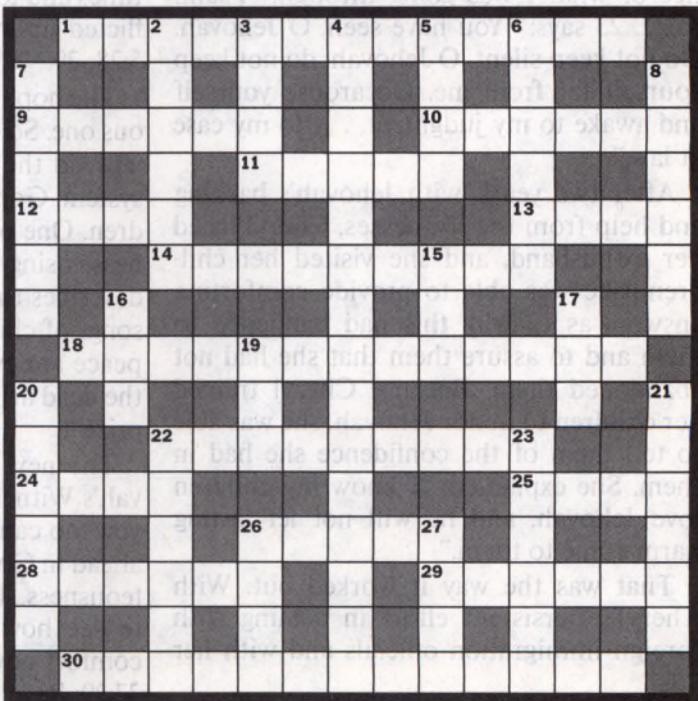
Clues Across

1. Congregation elders are not to shepherd "the flock of God" with this in mind [2 words] (1 Peter 5:2)
9. Compared to the knowledge of Christ, Paul considered all other things as this (Philippians 3:8)
10. Retaliate (Romans 12:17)
11. Mournful composition (Amos 8:10)
12. The site, noted for its great cistern, at which Saul inquired as to the whereabouts of David and Samuel (1 Samuel 19:22)
13. All families in heaven and on earth are said to owe theirs to Jehovah (Ephesians 3:14, 15)
14. Pledging (2 Peter 2:19)
15. It denotes Jehovah's supreme authority [2 words] (Revelation 6:10)
22. It was a place of instruction, not sacrifice (Matthew 12:9)
24. A historical period (Jude 18)
25. It is generally ranked as the longest river on earth (Joshua 13:3)
26. Severe (Acts 15:39)
28. Tract of wooded land (Psalm 83:14)
29. Both he and Paul were tent-makers (Acts 18:2, 3)
30. They twice felt the wrath of Jesus [2 words] (John 2:15)

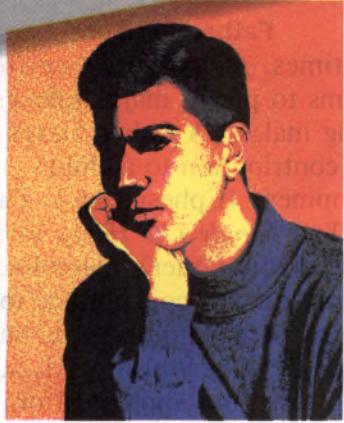
Clues Down

2. Jesus told the Pharisees that they "—the kingdom of the heavens before men" [2 words] (Matthew 23:13)
3. King David's grandfather (Luke 3:31, 32)
4. Those doing this gain ever-
5. To become weary (Galatians 6:9)
6. Performing services temporarily (Luke 1:8)
7. The place where John the Baptizer was beheaded (Matthew 14:10)
8. It can be used as food (Mark 1:6)
15. Where the neighborly Samaritan took the wounded man (Luke 10:34)
16. An adult female swine (2 Peter 2:22)
17. This land appeared on the third creative day (Genesis 1:9)
19. Those hoping in Jehovah will do this and not grow weary (Isaiah 40:31)
20. Brought to their end [2 words] (2 Peter 2:9)
21. This king controlled Damascus when Paul escaped harm by being lowered from a wall in a wicker basket (2 Corinthians 11:32)
22. A descendant of David in Jesus' genealogy (Luke 3:26)
23. To remain firm without yielding (Romans 12:12)
26. To stand firm (1 Timothy 4:16)
27. One of the things God promises to remove (Revelation 21:4)

Crossword Solutions Page 22



**Young
People
Ask...**



Why Do I Have These Feelings?

**"I feel like a war is going on inside me.
I don't know where to turn."—Bob.**

MANY youths suffer similar mental torment. Unlike their peers who seem consumed with an interest in the opposite sex, they find themselves increasingly attracted to members of their own sex. For many, this is a devastating realization.

One woman said of her daughter: "She began to fail in health, was unable to eat or sleep, and became depressed and moody.

She even attempted suicide." The major cause of this distress? "She had Lesbian feelings." For some it may not be easy to overcome such inclinations. "When I was a preteen," confesses a young man we'll call Mark, "I began having homosexual encounters with some of my friends. I continued this on into adolescence until I started studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. But sometimes I still had wrong feelings lingering inside me."

What causes a youth to be attracted to his or her own sex? And what should a youth do if he or she is afflicted with such feelings?

Nature or Nurture?

Nowadays it is popular to say that homosexuals are born that way and that sexual orientation is unchangeable. *Time* magazine, for example, dramatically announced: "A new study suggests that there is a structural difference between the brains of homosexual and heterosexual men." However, this study was made on the brains of men who had died of AIDS. Surely this does not prove the point!

Another theory involves hormones. Scientists observed that laboratory rats deprived of male hormones displayed "female" mating behaviors. They concluded that homosexuals may similarly be the victims of a biological mishap—an exposure to too many or too few male hormones before birth. Many scientists believe, though, that the odd behavior among rats is little more than a reflex—not really 'homosexuality.' Besides, humans are not rats. *The Harvard Medical School Mental Health Letter* argues: "It is extremely unlikely that prenatal hormones influence . . . human sexuality in the same direct way they organize reflexes involved in the mating behavior of rats."

Much attention has also been given to genetic studies. Among homosexual males and females who have identical twins, about half of their twins are likewise homosexual. Since monozygotic [identical] twins are genetic duplicates, it seemed logical to conclude that some mysterious gene caused the deviation. However, note that half the twin siblings were *not* homosexual. If this trait were really genetically programmed, would not *all* the twins have it? True, genes and hormones may play some role. Even so, *Scientific American* reported the findings of some that the evidence "strongly suggests that environment contributes significantly to sexual orientation."

Environmental Factors

Consider the environment of ancient Greece. Spurred on by the erotic stories about some of their mythological gods, the writings of philosophers such as Plato, and the culture of the gymnasium where youths performed unclad, homosexuality became the rage among the elite in the Greek-speaking world. According to the book *Love in Ancient Greece*, "it was considered shameful in Crete for a well-born boy not to have a [male] lover." No mysterious gene or hormone caused such decadence. It flourished because Greek culture permitted, yes, *encouraged* it! This well illustrates how powerful a role environment can play.

No doubt the flood of pro-homosexual propaganda has done much to spread that viewpoint today. Allusions to homosexuality abound in TV, movies, music, and magazines. Cable television has given some youths easy access to hard-core pornography. Androgynous (unisex) styles of dress and grooming have become chic. Some ex-

perts also feel the antimale propaganda promoted by some feminists has contributed to the rise of lesbianism. Youths may also receive exposure to bad influences by association with classmates who openly advocate the homosexual life-style.—1 Corinthians 15:33.

Father and Son

Sometimes, *faulty family environment* also seems to play a major role, especially among males.* A father makes an important contribution to a child's emotional development. (Ephesians 6:4) The book *Making Your Family Life Happy* says: "The influence of the father's masculine qualities can make a vital contribution to the development of a rounded-out, balanced personality."[#] A boy also needs acknowledgment, love, and approval from his father. (Compare Luke 3:22.) What can result when a father fails to give his child this needed attention? Emotional distress. Mental-health writer Joseph Nicolosi claims that male homosexuality is "almost always the result of problems in family relations, particularly between father and son."

It may be that a mother unwittingly aggravates the situation by disparaging her husband or by being overly possessive of her son. One study of effeminate boys made this observation: "Some of the parents had wished for a girl instead of a boy and had subtly encouraged their young son to dress as a girl or dressed him that way."

This is not to say that distorted sexual feelings can automatically be blamed on one's parents. Many men who have grown

* Relatively little research has been done on the development of female homosexuality. No doubt, though, family influences also play a role therein.

[#] Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

up with possessive mothers and negligent, absent, or abusive fathers have still developed masculine personalities. Furthermore, not all with homosexual inclinations necessarily come from dysfunctional families. It does appear, though, that some boys are wounded in a very specific way. "As a consequence of his early sense of rejection by father . . .," claims Dr. Nicolosi, "the homosexual carries a sense of weakness and incompetence with regard to those attributes associated with masculinity, that is, power, assertion, and strength. He is attracted to masculine strength out of an unconscious striving toward his own masculinity."

A young Christian man named Peter writes: "My father was an alcoholic and regularly beat my mother and, at times, us children. When I was 12 years old, he walked out. I keenly felt the lack of a father. I always longed for someone to fill the void I felt every day. When I finally developed a friendship with a fine Christian man who I thought could fill that need, I began to experience sexual feelings for him."

Interestingly, significant numbers of homosexuals are victims of childhood molestation.* Such molestation can produce lasting physical and emotional damage. For some it may create what one writer called a "distorted sexual identity." This evidently occurred in ancient Sodom, where young boys manifested a voracious appetite for perverted relations. (Genesis 19:4, 5) Clearly, they were a product of adult exploitation.

* Child exploitation was evidently a factor in the growth of homosexuality in ancient Greece. The older seducers of young boys were commonly referred to as "wolves"—the "symbol of greediness and audacious fierceness." Their young victims were called "lambs."

The Moral Issue

Scientists may never resolve exactly how much of a role nature and nurture play in same-sex attraction. But one thing is clear: All humans are born with the tendency to succumb to wrong thinking and inclinations.—Romans 3:23.

A youth who desires to please God must therefore conform to His moral standards and shun immoral behavior, though doing so may be agonizingly difficult. True, some individuals may very well be prone to homosexuality, just as some individuals are, according to the Bible, "prone to wrath." (Titus 1:7) But the Bible still condemns displays of unrighteous anger. (Ephesians 4:31) Similarly, a Christian cannot excuse immoral behavior by saying he was 'born that way.' Child molesters invoke the same pathetic excuse when they say their craving for children is "innate." But can anyone deny that their sexual appetite is perverted? So is the desire for someone of the same sex.

Youths who find themselves attracted to the same sex must therefore avoid giving in to their feelings. Why, though, does the Bible so pointedly condemn homosexuality? Is that life-style really sick and perverted? If so, what can a youth do to steer clear of it? These questions will be discussed in a future issue of *Awake!*

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

A Better Understanding of Menopause

"Now It Is Only Mia and Jehovah"

A Return Visit to Russia

When Singleness Is a Gift

I AM lonely,' laments a Christian woman who has been a widow for several years. 'I have been hoping for a mate. Keeping busy helps. Having friends helps. But I want to be married.'

When you sincerely desire to be married but your search for a mate has not been successful, singleness hardly seems to be a gift—it may feel more like you have been sentenced to a prison of negative emotions that leave you weary and depressed. Or if you already have a family of your own but are single, you may have the sole responsibility of providing for all the needs of your children.

Therefore, you may not view your single state as a gift. Some others, though, regard singleness as something very precious, and they choose to live alone. So is singleness a gift, and if so, when and why? What does the Bible say?

Roadblock to Happiness?

Marriage can be a source of great delight. (Proverbs 5:18, 19) Some "are convinced that a walk down the aisle is the only route to happiness and fulfillment," comments the *Los Angeles Times*. Is a marriage license the only "ticket" to happiness?

One mental-health

professional, Ruth Luban, says, according to the *Los Angeles Times*: "Women [and men] will be surprised at how much fulfillment they can find when they stop putting their lives on hold in the hope that a man [or woman] will rescue them from the single life." Yes, singleness is not something that stands in the way of a happy, fulfilling life. Many a divorced person would confide that marriage is not automatically a road to happiness. True happiness is the result of a good relationship with God. Thus, a Christian can be happy either single or married. —Psalm 84:12; 119:1, 2.

Besides mentioning self-induced hurdles, Marie Edwards and Eleanor Hoover, in their book *The Challenge of Being Single*, hold out another potential roadblock to happiness—social pressure. They say the "assumption is that if you aren't married you suffer from some deep, dark, emotional malaise. . . . Something's wrong with you, for sure."

Even well-meaning friends can unwittingly put enormous pressure on single people by naggingly asking, 'When are you going to get married?' or, 'How come a handsome man like you hasn't found a wife yet?' Although com-



ments like these may be spoken in jest, they may ‘stab like a sword,’ resulting in hurt feelings or embarrassment.—Proverbs 12:18.

Each One’s Gift

The apostle Paul was unmarried at the time he traveled as a missionary. Was this because he opposed marriage? Hardly. The apostle Paul was single because he chose to remain unmarried for “the sake of the good news.”—1 Corinthians 7:7; 9:23.

Paul had the power to refrain from marriage, yet he recognized that not everyone can be like him. He said: “Each one has his own gift from God, one in this way, another in that way.”—1 Corinthians 7:7.

Singleness can become a road to happiness, even though it may not be the one you had intended to travel. Certainly, marriage is included among the many gifts received from Jehovah. But the Bible indicates that singleness can also be a “gift”—if you can “make room for it.” (Matthew 19:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 7:36-39) What, then, are some benefits of singleness?

Paul said that married couples are anxious for “the approval” of their mates, whereas the unmarried are “anxious for the things of the Lord.” This highlights one of the greatest benefits of singleness—the opportunity to serve Jehovah “without distraction.”—1 Corinthians 7:32-35.

The Bible does not say that a single person lives without distractions completely. A person living alone, however, generally has fewer distractions than one who is caring for a family, since he is the only person to be taken into consideration when he makes a decision. For example, when God directed Abraham to leave Haran and move to the land of Canaan, the Bible says: “Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot the son of his brother and all the goods that they had accumulat-

ed and the souls whom they had acquired in Haran, and they got on their way.” (Genesis 12:5) Although Abraham’s family situation did not hold him back, no doubt he spent considerable time organizing his household for such a mission.

Compare Abraham’s move with that of the apostle Paul. While Paul and Silas preached the good news in the city of Thessalonica, an angry mob formed against them. That same night, the brothers sent both Paul and Silas out immediately to Berea. On another occasion, in Troas, Paul received a vision to “step over into Macedonia and help [them].” Now as soon as he had seen the vision, he left for Macedonia. Clearly, Paul’s having no wife allowed for great freedom of movement in a short period of time, something that would have been more difficult with a family.—Acts 16:8-10; 17:1-15.

Another benefit that singleness offers is greater freedom of personal choice. When you live alone, deciding where to live, what and when to eat, or even what time to go to bed is usually easier. This freedom also extends to spiritual activities. More time is available to engage in personal study of God’s Word, share in the public ministry, and take advantage of opportunities to be of help to other people.

Therefore, whether you are single because of choice or because of circumstances, be determined to use your time wisely. You will have a happier life when your singleness is spent helping others. (Acts 20:35) If you desire marriage, do not imprison yourself with negative emotions or live your life as though you were only half a person because that ‘special one’ has not yet come along. Keep yourself busy in God’s service, and as Paul said, you may find that singleness can be a gift.

AUTISM

MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF A PUZZLING DISORDER

CHRISTOPHER was a handsome, well-behaved little boy who stopped responding to his name at 18 months of age. At first, it seemed as if he were deaf, yet he always noticed the rustle of a candy wrapper.

In time, other puzzling behaviors also manifested themselves. Rather than playing with his toys in the usual ways, he would just spin their wheels over and over again. He developed an unusual interest in liquids, pouring them out at every opportunity. This, along with his love for climbing, led to many precarious situations and to a great deal of anxiety for his mother.

Most troubling of all, he was oblivious to people, often appearing to look right through them as though they weren't there. By the time he was two years old, he had stopped speaking altogether. He spent much of his time rocking himself back and forth, and he began having violent temper tantrums, often for reasons that were incomprehensible to his parents. Bewildered, they began searching for answers.

What was the matter with Christopher? Was he spoiled, neglected, mentally retarded, or schizophrenic? No, Christopher is one of at least 360,000 people in the United States who have autism. This puzzling disorder occurs in 4 or 5 out of every 10,000 children worldwide, posing a lifetime of challenges.

What Is Autism?

Autism is a disorder of the brain in which social behavior, communication skills, and thinking ability fail to develop normally. It affects the way sensory input is processed, causing people with autism to overreact to some sensations (sights, sounds, smells, and so forth) and underreact to others. The impairments of autism produce an assortment of unusual behavioral traits. Symptoms, which usually appear before the age of three, can vary greatly from child to child. Consider the following examples.

Imagine reaching out with love to your own beautiful child and getting no response. This often happens when a child has autism. Instead of interacting with people, most children with autism prefer to be alone. They may dislike being cuddled, avoid eye contact, and use people as they would tools—showing little awareness of others' feelings. In severe cases some do not seem to make any distinction between family members and strangers. They appear to live in a world of their own, oblivious to the people and events around them. The term "autism," from the Greek word *au-tos'* meaning "self," refers to this self-absorbing quality.

In contrast with their indifference to people, children with autism may become preoccupied with a particular object or activity, pursuing it for several hours at a time in a bizarre, repetitive manner. For exam-

ple, instead of pretending that toy cars are real ones, they may line the cars up in neat, straight rows or may endlessly spin their wheels. They display repetitiveness in other ways also. Many are intolerant of change in their daily routines, insisting on doing things exactly the same way every time.

Children with autism may also respond in strange ways to the events and situations that they encounter. Their responses can be baffling, since most of them are unable to describe what they are experiencing. Nearly half are mute; often those who can speak use words in unusual ways. Rather than answer a question by saying yes, they may simply repeat the question (a phenomenon called echolalia). Some use expressions that seem strangely out of place and that can only be understood by those familiar with their "code." For instance, one child used the phrase "it's all dark outside" as his term for "window." Many also have difficulty using gestures and may scream or throw a tantrum to signal a need.

Obtaining Appropriate Treatment

During the '40's, '50's, and '60's, autism was considered by many professionals to be an emotional withdrawal in an otherwise normal child. Parents, especially mothers, were saddled with most of the blame for their child's problems. In the '60's, evidence began to accumulate that strongly suggested that autism results from subtle forms of brain damage (although it is still unknown precisely what these are). This led to a shift of emphasis in the treatment of autism from psychotherapy to education. Special teaching techniques were developed, which have proved effective in reducing problem behaviors and in teaching needed skills. As a result of these and other advances, many with autism have made fine progress, and with adequate assistance and support, some are able to hold jobs and lead semi-independent lives.

However, obtaining appropriate treatment for a child with autism can be a struggle. For a variety of reasons, autism may go unrecognized or improperly diagnosed for months or, in some cases, even years. Educational programs designed for other disabilities may not adequately address the special needs of children with autism. Thus, when trying to obtain needed services for their child, many parents find themselves repeatedly venturing into the unfamiliar world of physicians, educators, and social agencies.

Daily Life

Unlike most youngsters, children with autism do not readily absorb information from their surroundings. Teaching them the basic skills needed at home or in the community is a challenging and slow step-by-step process. The day's routine can keep a parent rushing from task to task; assisting with

"Until [my son] was ten years old," one parent recalls, "I was just trying to make it through each day"

dressing, feeding, and toileting; redirecting disruptive or inappropriate behaviors; and cleaning up after accidents. "Until [my son] was ten years old," one parent recalls, "I was just trying to make it through each day."

Adding to the strain is the child's need for constant supervision. "Tommy has to be watched constantly," says his mother, Rita, "because he has little sense of danger." Since many autistic children also have irregular sleep patterns, the vigil often extends into the night. Florence, whose son Christopher was described at the outset of this article, comments, "I slept with one eye open."

Special Abilities

Children with autism sometimes show special abilities, such as an amazing memory for detail and trivia. Some have advanced musical ability and can play complex musical passages even if they can't read music. Some can tell you instantly the day of the week corresponding to any past or future date. Some are gifted in mathematics.

As the children grow older, some of these demands diminish while others may intensify. Even when progress is made, almost all those with autism continue to require some level of supervision throughout their lives. Since residence facilities suitable for adults with autism are scarce, parents of autistic children face the prospect of either providing lifelong care at home or, if this becomes impossible, placing their grown children in institutions.

Facing the Public

"Now that Joey is 18," Rosemarie observes, "the hardest thing for us is taking him out in public. Like most autistic children, he's normal in appearance, but because of his behavior, people stare, laugh, and make comments. Sometimes he'll stop right in the middle of the street and begin writing in the air with his finger. If he hears loud noises, like car horns or people coughing, he'll get very agitated and yell out, 'No! no! no!' It really puts us on edge because it can happen at any time." Another parent adds: "It's a difficult thing to explain to people. When you say, 'He's autistic,' the term doesn't mean anything to them."

Because of these difficulties, the primary-care parent (usually the mother) can easily become isolated. "I'm basically a shy person and don't like being a public spectacle," says Mary Ann. "So I would take Jimmy to

the playground at times when people usually weren't there, like early in the morning or at mealtimes." (Compare Psalm 22:6, 7.) For other parents the challenge is getting out at all. Sheila remarks: "At times I felt like a prisoner in my own home."

Keeping the Family Together

In *Children With Autism*, Michael D. Powers writes: "The single most important thing for a child with autism . . . is that her family stay together." This is a formidable challenge. The difficulties of raising a child with autism are superimposed on an unimaginable emotional trauma. Intense, painful, frightening feelings rise up that can inhibit communication between marriage partners. At a time when both need extra love and support, neither may have much to give. Despite these extraordinary pressures, thousands of couples have met this challenge successfully.

The book *After the Tears*, by Robin Simons, draws the following three suggestions from the experiences of such successful couples. First, find a way "to examine even the most painful feelings, and to share them."

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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How Others Can Help

Maintain Contact: Initially a family may be so overwhelmed that they are unable to share their feelings with others. With patience, discernment, and persistence, reach out to them. When they are ready to talk about it, listen without pressuring.

Be Slow to Offer Advice: Since children with autism may appear to be spoiled and merely in need of more-effective discipline, parents often find themselves receiving well-meaning but uninformed advice from others. Such 'simple solutions' can be crushing to struggling parents, leaving them feeling that nobody understands.

Include the Family in Activities: Families having children with autism often feel excluded from the social and recreational activities enjoyed by other families. Invite them to have association with your family. If there are needs requiring special consideration, try to accommodate them. Even if the family cannot accept a particular invitation, they will appreciate that you invited them.

Offer to Watch the Child: One of the family's greatest needs is to get a break from the unrelenting demands of autism. Start by offering to watch the child for just a few minutes at a time. Eventually you may be able to allow the family to go out for an evening or even to get away for a weekend. Such breaks go a long way in helping families to renew their energy.

More important than the specific services the family receives is the sense of being loved and valued by others. In short, *the best thing you can do for a family with an autistic child is to continue to be their friend.*

Second, reexamine household roles and arrangements, making adjustments so that the work load is reasonably shared. Third, schedule regular times to do things together, just the two of you. Dr. Powers further



states: "In setting your priorities, dividing your time, balancing everyone's needs, and deciding just how much you can take, never allow your child's needs or your devotion to her to jeopardize your family life."—Compare Philippians 1:10; 4:5.

Although the effects of autism are profound, individuals affected by it can receive help. An important factor is early recognition, leading to appropriate treatment. Efforts can then be directed into productive channels. The family will not be needlessly consumed if good communication and balanced use of resources exist. (Compare Proverbs 15:22.) The understanding of relatives and friends and their active assistance give parents much-needed support. People's awareness of autism, as well as their acceptance of individuals with autism in the community, prevents them from thoughtlessly adding to the burdens of these families. Thus all of us can play a role in meeting the challenges of autism.—Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

Bee Versus Computer



HOW smart is the common honeybee? Evidently, far smarter than today's most powerful supercomputers. And they are a marvel of miniaturization.

One of the world's most powerful computers can attain the amazing processing speed of 16 gigaflops. In layman's terms, such a computer can perform 16 billion simple arithmetic operations, such as adding two numbers, each second. In contrast,

a conservative count of all the electrical and chemical events taking place in a bee's brain shows that the lowly honeybee performs the equivalent of ten trillion operations per second. Amazing!

The bee does all of that while consuming a lot less power than a computer. According to *Byte* magazine, "a honeybee's brain dissipates less than 10 microwatts.... It is superior by about seven orders of magnitude to the

most efficient of today's manufactured computers." Hence, over ten million bee brains can operate on the power needed for a single 100-watt light bulb. The most efficient of today's computers uses hundreds of millions of times more energy to perform an equivalent number of operations.

Yet, honeybees do far more than computers. They can see in color, smell, fly, walk, and maintain their balance. They are able to navigate across long distances to locate sources of nectar and then return to the hive and communicate directions to fellow bees. They are quite efficient chemists as well. They add special enzymes to the nectar to make honey. They manufacture beeswax for use in building and repairing their hives. They prepare special food items, such as royal jelly and beebread, for their young. They protect their home by recognizing and repelling intruders.

Good housekeepers, they regularly remove garbage and other refuse from the hive. They control the climate in the hive either by clustering together for warmth in the winter or by fanning in fresh air and sprinkling water during the summer. When their home becomes overcrowded, bees are smart enough to know that some have to leave. So they raise up a new queen for the old hive, and the old queen and many of the workers swarm to establish a new colony. First, though, scouts are sent out to investigate new sites. After these return and compare notes, so to speak, "streaker" bees lead the swarm to its new home.

The lowly bees do all of this without any outside assistance or direction. They function independently. Yet, supercomputers require teams of programmers, engineers, and technicians. No contest! Bees truly are a marvel of miniaturization.



L. Fritz/H. Armstrong Roberts

A New Name for an Old Orgy

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN JAPAN

IN BRITAIN, 15-year-old Ann excitedly rips open an envelope that has just arrived in the mail. She pulls out a card. Its front is decorated with dainty hearts. The inside contains a romantic message, and it is signed: "From an admirer." With dreamy eyes and a rosy blush, Ann lets out a sigh. She is clearly flattered, and yet puzzled. "Who sent me this valentine?" Ann wonders.

In Japan, Yuko has begun working in an office. Valentine Day draws near. Yuko's calculations show that it will cost 20,000 yen (\$200, U.S.) to buy small boxes of chocolates for each of her male coworkers. Yuko spends lunchtime with her girlfriends buying what they call *giri-choco*—obligatory chocolates.

February 14th is the day on which anxious romantics around the world await to

Old-Fashioned Romantic Cuts/Dover



be told, in one way or another, "I love you." Neither Ann nor Yuko has any idea how this holiday got started. They might be surprised to find out.

The roots of what is now called Valentine Day can be traced back to ancient Greece, where worship of Pan flourished. This mythical half-man-half-goat fertility god had a wild, unpredictable nature that struck terror into humans. Aptly the English word "panic" literally means "of Pan."

Pan was supposed to watch the flocks while playing his pipes. However, he was easily distracted. Pan had many love affairs with nymphs and goddesses. One sculpture shows Pan making advances to Aphrodite, the goddess of love. Eros, the god of love, hovers above them flapping his wings—much like the Cupid found on valentines today.*

In Rome many worshiped a similar god named Faunus. He too was depicted as half man and half goat. Worship of Faunus was prominent at Lupercalia, an orgiastic festival that was observed each year on February 15. During this festival scantily clad men raced around a hill, brandishing goatskin whips. Women who wanted to bear children stood near the path of these runners. Striking a woman with a whip, the Romans believed, would ensure her fertility.

According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Lupercalia was abolished by Pope Gelasius I in the late fifth century C.E.* Yet, today we find a modern-day counterpart prospering under the title: "Saint Valentine's Day." There are various

* Herodotus suggests that Pan worship was influenced by the Egyptians, among whom goat worship was common. The phrase "goat-shaped demons" found in the Bible may allude to this form of pagan worship.—Leviticus 17:7; 2 Chronicles 11:15.

* Some say that Gelasius simply replaced Lupercalia with the "Feast of the Purification."

theories regarding the origin of this "Christianized" name. According to one story, the third-century Roman emperor Claudius II forbade young men to marry. Valentine, a priest, married young couples secretly. Some say that he was executed on



When Love Is Big Business

THE nearing of Valentine Day in Japan stirs up strong feelings—not just of romance but of big business. For decades the chocolate industry urged the public to give sweets as a token of love on February 14. Extensive advertising paid off as sales of chocolates steadily increased.

Unlike the West, the Japanese custom is for the women to buy for the men. But the business of Valentine Day does not end on February 14. One month later, on March 14, the men must reciprocate—with white chocolate. Why? *The Daily Yomiuri* answers: "The designation of white gifts prevents any stingy or sneaky men from giving back the chocolate they received and neglected to eat."

February 14, about 269 C.E. In any case, a "saintly" title cannot conceal the unsavory origin of this celebration. Valentine Day is rooted in pagan rituals and is therefore not celebrated by true Christians. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) Year-round expressions of genuine love are much more rewarding than the passing fancies of a sentimental holiday.

WATCHING THE WORLD

How Many Abortions?

"In the world some 33 million legal abortions take place annually, and if all the illegal abortions are added to this, the total would come to be between 40 million and 60 million," says the Buenos Aires morning newspaper *Clarín*. "Seventy-six percent of the world's population live in countries where induced abortion is legal." The number of lives terminated by abortion is more than the population of Argentina and comparable to wiping out the entire population of a country such as Britain, Egypt, France, Italy, South Africa, or Turkey *each year*. It compares to the toll of victims of the entire six years of the second world war, estimated to be about 50 million people.

Best Place to Live?

Canada has been judged by the United Nations as the best place in the world to live. "It's the second time in the five years the index has been compiled that Canada has topped the list of 173 countries," reports *The Toronto Star*. It adds that this "does not mean Canadians enjoyed the highest standard of living in the world, however." Why was Canada considered the best place? The report, prepared by the UN Development Program, ranks countries by three factors combined: average income, educational attainment, and life expectancy. The Canadians ranked sixth in longevity, with an average life span of 77.2 years. Canada was near the top when it came to money spent on education and health

care, as well as in ownership of such items as television sets and automobiles.

Brazil's Indian Groups

"Brazil still has 59 Indian groups totally isolated, or with sporadic and unfriendly contact with white men," reports *O Estado de S. Paulo*. "Of this total, only nine groups have been identified since the beginning of the '80's by the National Indian Foundation." New tribes continue to be found in the Amazon forests. Most of the isolated Indians live in groups of 150 persons or less. Brazil



has 532 Indian areas, 180 different ethnic groups, and 260 thousand Indians. They occupy a total of 351,000 square miles—about 11 percent of Brazil's territory—although half of these areas do not have fixed boundaries. In an effort to help tribes forge bonds and survive the encroachments of the modern world, anthropologists have been teaching tribal members how to use a video camera so that they can record village customs and share the tapes with other groups nearby. Recently, after viewing films of each other, the Waiapi and Zo'é met. Speaking similar dialects, they discussed their legends and rituals, as well as their meth-

ods of hunting, healing, cooking, and weaving.

A Successful Operation

With "entirely legitimate pride," says the Italian newspaper *La Stampa*, the medical team that operated on Pope John Paul II in April stated that the hip surgery "could not have turned out better." But operations performed on the present pope have not always had the best results. When he was operated on following the 1981 assassination attempt, John Paul II had to stay in the hospital for two months to be treated for an extremely serious cytomegalovirus infection brought on by blood transfusions. Thus, it is not surprising that, although this time, according to *La Stampa*, "blood loss was abundant," no transfusions were administered. Instead, the paper notes, "the Pope's blood was recuperated, sterilized, and retransfused during the operation."

No AIDS Cure in Sight

The 10th International Conference on AIDS, held in Japan in August of last year, acknowledged that efforts to create vaccines to prevent AIDS and to create drugs to treat it have mostly failed, and none are expected by the end of the decade. "We are only at the beginning of the H.I.V. epidemic in the world," said Dr. James Curran of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. Some 17 million people around the world were said to be infected, 3 million more than the preceding year. Sadly, one million of this num-

ber were children. If the same rate continues, a total of from 30 million to 40 million people will be infected by the year 2000, says the World Health Organization. Full-blown cases of AIDS increased by 60 percent in 12 months, bringing the mid-1994 total to four million, including those who have died. It can take up to ten years between the time of infection with HIV and the beginning of AIDS symptoms. Because of the slow progress in battling the growing pandemic, it was announced that the AIDS conference would be held every two years instead of yearly, with the next meeting scheduled for July 1996 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Children Affected Early in Life

"A child's predisposition toward the world is hugely dependent upon the degree of nurturing that he or she receives before the age of 3, which in turn has an effect on neurological development and a child's confidence and ability to solve problems creatively," reports *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto. "Youngsters living in depressed economic and social circumstances have less chance to grow into productive, well-adjusted adults." According to Dr. Fraser Mustard, president of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, such children are more likely to drop out of school and lean toward settling problems with violence. "How well you develop coping skills has an enormous impact on your ability to plug into the system," he said. The *Globe* states that studies by Yale University and the University of Montreal show that "meaningful parental interaction with children is of huge benefit to a

youngster's physical, cognitive and emotional development."

Be Attentive While Traveling

When traveling, pay attention to what is happening around you. "Baggage thieves and pickpockets have an irresistible preference for absentminded travelers," informs Brazil's *Cláudia* magazine. Likewise, "if anyone bumps into you or spills something on your clothes, keep alert. These are notorious tricks to divert attention." Also, be on guard if someone asks for information or help. A slight distraction may cost you your luggage. According to Adriano



Caleiro of São Paulo's International Airport, special attention is needed when presenting suitcases while checking in at an airport, signing papers at the car-rental counter, checking in or leaving a hotel, settling children into a taxi, looking at store windows, or having a cup of coffee. The magazine warns you to change locks immediately if your keys are stolen. The thief may say he found your luggage and even return all that was lost, but he may have made a duplicate set of keys so that he can invade your home later.

No Harm Intended

Guests visiting Japan who see signs saying "No Foreigners" should not get upset and angry, says the Japan Helpline, which

looks into complaints. Most of the signs are put up by people actually trying to be helpful. An example of this way of thinking is this explanation given by the owner of a small electronics shop in Tokyo's Akihabara area: "Since I cannot speak any [foreign languages], I have been causing trouble to many non-Japanese-speaking people who come into my store. I thought the best thing I could do would be to put up such a sign so that people would not have to be troubled." Reported the *Asahi Evening News*: "In most cases discrimination occurs with people who have had little contact with non-Japanese and who therefore think saying no is the best way to deal with the situation."

Educated Pied Pipers

Advertising to fill 76 vacancies for the post of rat killers, the Bombay Municipal Corporation ran into a problem. "A majority of the 40,000 odd applicants are graduates, matriculants and college dropouts, while the academic criterion for a rat killer is just primary school education," reports the *Indian Express*. "How could we appoint a graduate as a rat killer?" one official asked. Rats are searched out at night and killed with a club for the payment of Rs.100 (just over \$3, U.S.) for every 25 freshly killed rats. The corporation is looking for a "better recruitment scheme." But this is not the only problem the civic authorities have been facing. They have a religious one too. Members of the Jain religion, as well as others who do not believe in killing animals, have been bribing the workers to spare the rats on humane grounds.

FROM OUR READERS

Toying With Immorality Thanks for the article "Young People Ask . . . Toying With Immorality—What's The Harm?" (February 8, 1994) I was dating a boy, and he would tell me that if he didn't kiss me or touch me, he couldn't show how much he loved me. We went too far, and two weeks later, he called off our wedding. I felt so bad—and used. I wish I hadn't been so foolish. Thank you for coming out with these articles, which I desperately needed.

N. R., United States

I once got involved with heavy petting, and I thought it was harmless as long as I did not go all the way into committing fornication. This article helped me to appreciate that we cannot mock God and that he knows all things.

T. J., Nigeria

Whenever I meet members of your faith, I accept a copy of *Awake!* Such was the case with the February 8, 1994, issue. The article on immorality impressed me. The publications of my own Evangelical Lutheran Church do not cover such topics, catering more to homosexuals and Lesbians. In your magazines you broach subjects that are taboo for others. I admire your courage and strong faith.

H. S., Germany

Thank you from the heart for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Far Is 'Too Far'?" (October 22, 1993) I am dating a young Christian man. Although kissing and petting are common in our community, we set limits with each other from the very beginning. It is not easy to follow Jehovah's righteous standards, and I am sure this article will help many.

P. S. F., Brazil

Though I am 26 years old, the "Young People Ask . . ." articles are valuable to me. I had been struggling with this particular

question. I'm so glad this article says definitely and clearly how far *is* too far!

V. V., Belgium

Wetlands I was moved to write because of the article "Wetlands of the World—Ecological Treasures Under Attack." (January 22, 1994) The photos helped to stress our obligation to maintain Jehovah's creation in all its beauty. I am happy that God will soon 'bring to ruin those who are ruining the earth.'—Revelation 11:18.

Z. C. B. S., Brazil

I am a teenage boy. I read the article and realized that nature is suffering depletion in many parts of the world. I can see now that even though men talk about being united in their actions, they are unable. I, therefore, want to do my best to study the Bible so that I can be in God's future Paradise.

Y. K., Japan

Your article was a good example of how the pleasure of reading *Awake!* comes not only from its contents but also from its makeup and presentation: excellent photography, neat and tidy layouts. Thank you.

M. E., Canada

Concentration Camp Survivor I was much encouraged by the experience of Felikis Borys, "Protected by Faith in God." (February 22, 1994) Reading it literally raised goose bumps, and I had to struggle to hold back the tears. It has given me the strength to persevere under trial.

A. C., Italy

The article helped me to appreciate still more Jehovah's power to protect those putting their trust in him. How moving it was to read about the wonderful way in which Jehovah answered the prayers of Felikis Borys!

E. F., Sweden

Are You a Safe Driver?



YOUR attitude while behind the wheel of a car can strongly influence your driving ability. A study conducted by the British Automobile Association revealed that each year 22 percent of British males between 17 and 20 years of age are involved in at least one road accident.

The key factors in their unsafe driving habits? Besides alcohol, mood swings, and loud music, the deputy director-general of the Automobile Association, Kenneth Faircloth, notes: "Too many are influenced by their peers to drive dangerously." As a result, the Automobile Association recommends that

training focus more on the attitudes of the driver and less on the mechanics of driving.

For example, ask yourself: 'Do I try to impress the passengers in my car by nonchalantly taking risks? Does my mood determine my conduct behind the wheel? Do I view other drivers on the road as mere hindrances that must be outwitted?' The answers to such questions reveal what kind of driver you are.

Whether male or female, young or old, develop a neighborly attitude while driving. "Treat other people exactly as you would like to be treated by them." (Matthew 7:12, *Philips*) Doing so will help you to drive safely.

Youths Express Appreciation

THE young people pictured here are all Nigerian secondary-school students. In a letter to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Nigeria, they wrote: "We would like to thank you for the consideration you have shown to us youths in publishing the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*.

"This publication has helped us to resist the pressures of the world and to refute unscriptural teachings. It covers a wide spectrum of the concerns of youths, and its counsel is always based on the Bible. The section that discusses peer pressure has especially helped us to understand the Bible's wisdom in its counsel to walk with wise ones and to avoid association with stupid ones. The other students in our school are amazed at how we put up with one another in love and how we seek to earnestly observe the oneness of spirit in the uniting bond of peace.

"Seeking at all times to maintain our conduct fine among the students in our school, we zealously proclaim the Kingdom hope to all the students who will listen to us, regardless of those who may try to influence us in a wrong way."

The letter was signed,
"From young Witnesses of Jehovah,
All Saints Secondary School, Aba, Abia
State, Nigeria."



QUESTIONS **YOUNG PEOPLE ASK** ANSWERS THAT WORK

Answers That Work are illustrations provided by their authors. They show the illustrations used in their books. As a result, the best of these drawings are reproduced here.