

# Awake!

January 22, 2001



## Comfort for the Sick

Average Printing  
20,682,000

Published in  
83 Languages

## Comfort for the Sick 3-14

Having a chronic and disabling illness can be distressing indeed. How can a person cope with such an illness?



### What if My Parents Think I'm Too Young to Date? 19

Are there dangers in dating at an early age?

### Fire! Which Extinguisher Should You Use? 24

Learn about fires and how to put them out.



When a Health Crisis Engulfs You	3
Caught in a Swirl of Emotions	4
Living Successfully With Your Ailment—How?	6
Countering Setbacks by Setting Goals	11
Bringing Up Baby in the Wild	15
The Gold That Moved Mountains	22
Watching the World	28
From Our Readers	30
A Collector Who Wished to Honor the Creator	31
"Timely Counsel" for Everyone	32

# When a Health Crisis Engulfs You

**"I felt as if I had been hit with a sledgehammer."**

John, after learning that he had an impairing illness.

**"I was scared."**

Beth, after realizing the seriousness of her health crisis.

**L**EARNING that you have a chronic and disabling ailment or that injuries from an accident will leave you permanently impaired is one of life's most painful experiences. Whether you hear the news of your illness in a quiet doctor's office or are brought face-to-face with your impaired condition in a hectic emergency room, you likely find yourself in a state of disbelief. Little in life prepares you to cope with the powerful emotions that engulf you when you are rocked by a devastating health crisis.

To gather information that might be helpful for those whose health has recently suffered a severe setback, *Awake!* spoke to a number of individuals in different countries

who have successfully coped with chronic disabling illness for many years. They were asked to give their observations on such questions as: What emotions did you experience? What helped you to weather the crisis and find your balance again? What steps did you take to regain some control over your life? The firsthand knowledge gleaned from these interviews as well as some findings of researchers who are studying the effects of long-term ailments is presented for the benefit of those facing a health crisis right now.\*

\* While this cover series is especially addressed to those who are ill or disabled, the series "Chronic Illness—Coping as a Family" (*Awake!* of May 22, 2000) contained information particularly directed to those who are caring for the ill.



# Caught in a Swirl of Emotions

"AFTER being told that I had a life-threatening disease," recalls an elderly man, "I tried to put my fears aside, but feelings of uncertainty wore me down." His words highlight the fact that after an illness has delivered a physical blow, it lands an emotional one as well. Even so, there are people who are successfully coping with such blows. Many of them would like to assure you that there are ways to deal successfully with a chronic illness. But before we discuss what you can do, let us first take a closer look at some of the emotions that you may face early on.

## Disbelief, Denial, Dysphoria

The emotions that you feel may differ considerably from those of others. Nevertheless, health experts and ailing individuals note that people struck by a health crisis often experience a number of common emotions. Initial feelings of shock and disbelief may be followed by feelings of denial: 'It can't be true.' 'There must be some mistake.' 'Maybe they mixed up the lab tests.' In describing her reaction to learning that she had cancer, one woman said: "You feel like pulling the covers over your head, and you hope that when you look out again it will all be gone."

However, as reality begins to sink in, denial may give way to dysphoria, a feeling of unhappiness that hangs over you like a cloud of impending doom. 'How long will I live?' 'Am I doomed to spend the rest of my life in pain?' and similar questions may assault you. You may wish you could go back in time, before the diagnosis, but you cannot. Soon you may find yourself engulfed in a tide of other painful and powerful emotions. What are some of them?

## Uncertainty, Anxiety, Fear

A grave illness thrusts severe uncertainty and anxieties into your life. "The unpredictability of my situation makes life very frustrating at times," says a man with Parkinson's disease. "Each day, I have to wait and see what it will bring." Your illness may also frighten you. If it struck without warning, you may feel a crushing fear. However, if the diagnosis of your illness has come after you have spent long years fretting about symptoms that were misdiagnosed, the fear may be more insidious. At first, you may even feel a sense of relief that people will finally believe that you are really ill and are not making everything up. Before long, though, relief may be followed by a fearful realization of what the diagnosis entails.

**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 that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

*Awake!* (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589.

Vol. 82, No. 2 Printed in U.S.A.

© 2001 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Semimonthly ENGLISH

Fear of losing control may also worry you. Especially if you value a measure of independence, you may cringe at the thought of becoming more and more dependent on others. You may worry that your illness is beginning to dominate your life and dictate your every move.

### **Anger, Shame, Loneliness**

Sensing a growing loss of control may also trigger feelings of anger. 'Why me? What did I do to deserve this?' you may ask yourself. This blow to your health seems unfair and senseless. Shame and despair may also overtake you. One paralytic recalls: "I felt so ashamed that all of this had happened to me because of a stupid accident!"

Isolation may also close in on you. Physical isolation easily leads to social isolation. If your illness confines you to your home, you may no longer be able to socialize with old friends. Yet, more than ever, you long for human contact. After an initial burst of visits and phone calls, fewer and fewer may stop by or call you.

Since it hurts to watch friends pull away, you may have reacted to this painful experience by withdrawing into yourself. Of course, it is understandable that you may

need some time before you face others again. But if at this point you allow yourself to withdraw ever further from others, you may sink from social isolation (when others do not come to see you) into emotional isolation (when you do not want to see others). Either way, you may be struggling with intense feelings of loneliness.\* At times, you may even wonder if you can make it through another day.

### **Learning From Others**

There is hope, however. If you have recently been engulfed by a health crisis, there are practical steps you can take that will help you to regain a measure of control.

Granted, this series of articles will not resolve your chronic health problem, whatever it is. Yet, the information presented may help you to see ways to come to terms with it. A woman with cancer summed up her mental journey: "After the denial came much anger and then the search for my resources." You too can make that search, by turning to people who have traveled the same road before you and learning from them how you can tap into the resources that are within your reach.

\* Of course, many experience these varying emotions to differing degrees and in a different order.

---

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

#### **Semimonthly Languages Available by Mail:**

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech,\* Danish,\* Dutch, English,\* Estonian, Finnish,\* French, German,\* Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,\* Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,\* Swahili, Swedish,\* Tagalog, Ukrainian, Zulu

#### **Monthly Languages Available by Mail:**

Albanian, Amharic, Bulgarian, Chichewa, Cibemba, Ewe, Georgian, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Nepali, New Guinea Pidgin, Papiamento, Sepedi, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhala, Tamil, Thai, Isongwa, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Urdu, Xhosa, Yoruba

\* Audiocassettes also available.

#### **Offices of the Watch Tower Society in selected countries**

America, United States of, Wallkill, NY 12589	New Zealand, P.O. Box 75-142, Manurewa
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890	Nigeria, P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, Edo State
Britain, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	South Africa, Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740
Canada, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4	Zambia, Box 33459, Lusaka 10101
Ghana, P. O. Box GP 760, Accra	Zimbabwe, P. Bag A-6113, Avondale
Jamaica, P. O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine	

# Living Successfully With Your Ailment—How?

**B**E ASSURED that the rush of feelings you are probably experiencing is valid. Although your illness or impairment may be a physical fact, your mind resists the changes that the illness has forced on you. It may seem as though you and your illness are engaged in a tug-of-war, a contest between who you once were and what you might become. And right now it may seem that your illness has the upper hand. Yet, you can turn the tables. How?

"When there is a loss through illness," notes Dr. Kitty Stein, "it feels a lot like a death." Thus, when you have lost something as dear to you as your health, it is only normal to allow yourself time to mourn and weep, much as you would if a loved one died. In fact, your loss may involve more than your health. As one woman explains, "I had to give up my job. . . . I had to give up the independence that I had always enjoyed." Even so, keep your losses in perspective. "You've got to mourn what's lost," adds Dr. Stein, who herself has multiple sclerosis, "but you also need to understand what's still there." Indeed, once you have struggled through the initial tears, you will see that you have important resources still intact. For one thing, you have the ability to adjust.

A sailor cannot control a storm, but he can weather one by adjusting his boat's sails. Similarly, you may not be able to control the illness that has stormed into your life, but you can cope with it by adjusting your "sails," that is, your physical, mental, and emotional resources. What has helped other chronically ill ones to do that?

## Learn About Your Illness

After absorbing the initial impact of the diagnosis, many come to feel that know-

ing the painful truth is better than facing a vague fear. While fear may immobilize you, knowing what is happening to you may help you to consider what you can do—and that in itself often has a positive effect. "Notice how much better you feel about anything that worries you when you come up with a plan for dealing with it," notes Dr. David Spiegel of Stanford University. "Long before you have actually done something, you reduce your sense of discomfort by planning what to do."

You may feel the need to learn more about your condition. As a Bible proverb says, "a man of knowledge is reinforcing power." (Proverbs 24:5) "Get books from the library. Learn as much as you can about your illness," advises a bedridden man. As you learn about available treatments and coping techniques, you may find that your condition is perhaps not as bad as you had feared. You may even find some reasons for optimism.

Understanding your illness rationally, though, is not your final goal. Explains Dr. Spiegel: "This information gathering is part of an important process of coming to terms with the illness, of making sense of it, of putting it into perspective." Accepting that your life has been changed but that it is not over is a delicate and often slow process. But this step forward—from understanding your illness rationally to accepting it emotionally—is one you *can* take. How?

## Finding a Delicate Balance

You may need to adjust your view of what it means to accept your illness. After all, accepting that you are ill is no sign of failure, just as it is no sign of failure on the

part of a sailor to accept the fact that he is in a storm. Instead, being realistic about the storm prompts him to act. Likewise, accepting your illness is no failure, but it means "advancing in a new direction," as a chronically ill woman observed.

Even if your physical abilities have diminished, you may need to remind yourself that your mental, emotional, and spiritual qualities do not necessarily need to be affected. For instance, do you still have your intelligence and the capacity to organize and reason? Perhaps you still have your warm smile, your sense of caring for others, and your ability to be a good listener and a true friend. And most important, you still have your faith in God.

In addition, keep in mind that although you cannot change all your circumstances, you can still determine how to react to them. Irene Pollin of the National Cancer Insti-

tute states: "You are in charge of your responses to your disease. You have this power no matter what your disease dictates." Helen, a 70-year-old woman with advanced multiple sclerosis, confirms: "It's not so much your illness but your reaction to your illness that determines whether you find your balance again." A man who has coped with a disability for a number of years says: "A positive attitude is the keel that keeps the boat upright." Indeed, Proverbs 18:14 states: "The spirit of a man can put up with his malady; but as for a stricken spirit, who can bear it?"

### Regaining Control

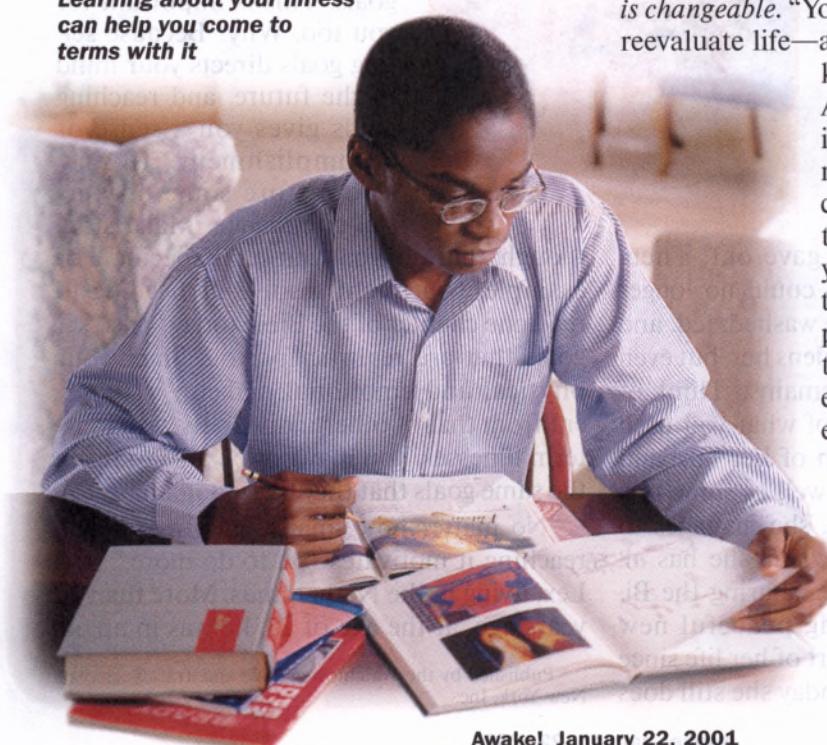
As your emotional balance returns, questions such as 'Why did this happen to me?' may yield to 'Since this has happened to me, what am I going to do about it?' At this point you might choose to take additional steps to move beyond your current situation. Let us consider a few.

*Evaluate your condition, think of what you need to alter, and then seek to change what is changeable.* "Your illness is an occasion to reevaluate life—a wake-up call, not a death

knell," states Dr. Spiegel. Ask yourself, 'What was important to me prior to my illness? How has this changed?' Ask such questions, not to find out what you can no longer do, but to determine what is still possible, perhaps by doing things differently. Take, for example, Helen, mentioned earlier.

For the past 25 years, multiple sclerosis has weakened her muscles. First, she used a walker to keep going. Afterward, when she lost control of her right hand, she switched to using her left

### **Learning about your illness can help you come to terms with it**





**With the help of others, Helen prepares encouraging letters**

**"It makes me happy to share the good news of God's Kingdom"**

one. Next, her left hand gave out. Then, some eight years ago, she could no longer walk. Now she needs to be washed, fed, and dressed by others. This saddens her, but even so, she says: "My motto remains, 'Think of what you can do and not of what you used to do.'" And with the help of her husband and her visiting nurses as well as some creative thinking of her own, she manages to continue some of the activities she has always enjoyed. For instance, sharing the Bible's promise of a coming peaceful new world has been a valued part of her life since she was 11 years old, and today she still does



this every week. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Helen explains how:

"I ask a visiting nurse to hold the newspaper for me. Together we read the obituaries and select some. Then I tell the nurse what thoughts I would like to include in a letter to the relatives of the one who died, and the nurse types the letter. With the letter, I send the brochure *When Someone You Love Dies*,\* which explains the Bible's comforting hope of the resurrection. I do this every Sunday afternoon. It makes me happy that I can still share the good news of God's Kingdom with others."

*Set reasonable and reachable goals.* One reason why Helen tries to change the changeable is that it enables her to set and reach goals. This is important for you too. Why? Because setting goals directs your mind to the future, and reaching goals gives you a sense of accomplishment. It may also restore some of your self-confidence. Make sure,

though, that the goal you set is specific. For example, you might resolve: 'I'm going to read one chapter of the Bible today.' Also set goals that are realistic for you. Since your physical and emotional makeup is different from that of other individuals with long-term illnesses, you may not be able to reach the same goals that they can.—Galatians 6:4.

"No matter how small a goal may seem, reaching it motivates you to do more," says Lex, living in the Netherlands. More than 20 years ago, at the age of 23, he was in an ac-

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

cident that left him paralyzed. During the numerous physical therapy sessions that followed, he was urged to set goals, like washing his face with a washcloth. It was tiresome to do, but he succeeded. When he realized that he had managed to reach that goal, he set another one—opening and closing a toothpaste tube by himself. Again, he succeeded. “Although it was not easy,” says Lex, “I discovered that I could do more than I thought was possible.”<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, with the support of his wife, Tineke, Lex reached greater goals. For instance, accompanied by Tineke, he now makes house-to-house calls in a wheelchair to share Bible knowledge with others. He also makes weekly visits to encourage a severely disabled man with whom he studies the Bible. “Helping others,” says Lex, “gives me much satisfaction.” As the Bible confirms, “there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.”

—Acts 20:35.

Can you too set goals to help others? Being ill or impaired may help you to be an especially skillful comforter because your problems make you more sensitive to the pain of others.

*Stay in touch with others.* Medical studies show that having social contacts is good for your health. But the reverse is also true. “The relationship between social isolation and mortality is as . . . strong as the relationship between smoking . . . and mortality,” states one researcher. He adds: “It may be as important to your health to improve your social relationships as it is to stop smoking.” No wonder he concludes that our skills at keeping social relationships “have survival value”!—Proverbs 18:1.

However, as noted in the preceding article, the problem may be that some of your friends have stopped visiting you. For your own good, you need to stem the rising tide of isolation. But how? You might start by inviting your friends to visit you.

*Make visiting you a pleasant experience.\** You can do so by limiting your discussions about your illness so that your visitors do not grow weary of hearing about it. One chronically ill woman solved this problem by imposing a time limit on conversations

\* The suggestions on how to treat visitors apply, of course, even more so to how you treat your mate, your children, or your caregiver.



***“I discovered that although paralyzed, I could do more than I thought possible.”—Lex***



with her husband about her illness. "We simply had to contain this," she says. Indeed, your illness does not need to smother everything else you can share. One visitor, after talking with his bedridden friend about art, history, and his reasons for faith in Jehovah God, said: "He's much more than his illness. It was great talking with him."

Maintaining a good sense of humor will also make it pleasant for your friends to stop by. Besides, laughter benefits you personally. "Humor helps you to cope *in* many situations and *with* many situations," says a man with Parkinson's disease. Indeed, laughter can be good medicine. Notes Proverbs 17:22: "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer." Even a few minutes of laughter will do you good. Moreover, "unlike some of the other remedies we try, laughter is completely safe, nontoxic, and fun," notes author Susan Milstrey Wells, who is chronically ill herself. "All we have to lose is a bad mood."

*Find ways to reduce stress.* Studies confirm that stress may worsen the physical symptoms of a disease, while stress reduction helps to make them more tolerable. Hence, give yourself a break from time to time. (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4) Do not eat, sleep, and breathe your illness. If you are homebound, you may try to lower the pressures of your emotions by listening to quiet music, reading a book, taking a long bath, writing letters or poetry, painting a picture, playing a musical instrument, talking to a trusted friend, or becoming involved in similar activities. Doing so will not provide a permanent solution to your problem, but it may bring you temporary respite.

If you are mobile, take a walk, go shopping, do gardening, take a drive or, if possible, go on vacation. Admittedly, taking a trip may be more complicated because of your illness, but with advance preparation and some improvising, hurdles can be overcome. For instance, Lex and Tineke, mentioned earlier, managed to travel abroad. "At

first it was a bit tense," says Lex, "but we had a great vacation!" Indeed, your illness may be part of your life, but it does not have to take over your life.

*Derive strength from faith.* True Christians who have successfully coped with serious impairment state that their faith in Jehovah God and also their association with the Christian congregation are sources of constant comfort and strength.\* Here are some of their comments about the value of praying, studying the Bible, meditating on the future, and attending Christian meetings at the Kingdom Hall.

- "Occasionally, I still get depressed. When this happens, I pray to Jehovah, and he renews my determination to continue doing what I can."—Psalm 55:22; Luke 11:13.
- "Reading the Bible and meditating on what I read helps me enormously to keep my peace of mind."—Psalm 63:6; 77:11, 12.
- "Bible study reminds me that the real life is still ahead and that I will not be disabled forever."—Isaiah 35:5, 6; Revelation 21:3, 4.
- "Having faith in the future promised in the Bible gives me the strength to deal with life one day at a time."—Matthew 6:33, 34; Romans 12:12.
- "Being at the meetings at the Kingdom Hall keeps my mind focused on positive things and not on my illness."—Psalm 26:12; 27:4.
- "Encouraging association with congregation members warms my heart."—Acts 28:15.

The Bible assures us: "Jehovah is good, a stronghold in the day of distress. And he is cognizant of those seeking refuge in him." (Nahum 1:7) Having a close bond with Je-

\* Interestingly, numerous medical studies have stated that faith enhances health and well-being. According to Professor Dale Matthews of the Georgetown University School of Medicine, "the faith factor has been demonstrated to have value."

hovah God and associating with the Christian congregation are sources of comfort and strength.—Romans 1:11, 12; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 4:7.

### Give Yourself Time

Living successfully with your grave illness or disability is a process that “occurs over time and not overnight,” observes a social worker who helps people to deal with the effects of long-term illness. Give yourself time, advises another expert, for you are learning “an entirely new skill: dealing with a grave ill-

ness.” Realize that even with a positive attitude, you may have bad days or weeks when the effects of your illness wear you down. In time, however, you may see progress. That was the case with one woman, who said: “I was so excited when I realized that I had gone an entire day without even thinking of cancer. . . . A while ago, I would never have thought that possible.”

Indeed, once you have lived through your initial fears and have set new goals, you may be surprised at how well you will be able to cope—as the following article illustrates.

## Counteracting Setbacks by Setting Goals

**A**N APARTMENT near New York’s La Guardia Airport is the home of William (Bill) Meiners and his wife, Rose. There Rose, a gracious hostess in her mid-70’s, cheerfully welcomes her visitor. Inside the apartment one cannot help but notice how the cozy living room reflects her sunny disposition. The attractive flower arrangement near the doorway and the colorful paintings on the walls convey a feeling of joy and a zest for life.

Next to the living room is a bright room where Bill, 77 years old, lies in bed, his back propped up by an adjustable mattress. On seeing his visitor, his kind eyes light up and his lips extend into a broad smile. He would love to get up, shake hands, and embrace, but he can’t. Except for his left arm, Bill is paralyzed from his neck down.

Because Bill has faced health problems since he was 26 years old, he is asked what has helped him to cope with illnesses for over half a century. Bill and Rose exchange an amused look. “We don’t know anybody

who is ill!” says Rose, as her hearty laughter fills the room. Bill’s eyes twinkle with pleasure; he chuckles and nods his head in agreement. “No one is ill here,” he says haltingly with a throaty voice. Rose and Bill swap more playful remarks, and before long, the room is filled with laughter. Clearly, the love that Bill and Rose felt for each other when they met back in September 1945 is still very much alive. Bill is asked again: “But, seriously, what setbacks have you faced? And what has helped you to cope and to keep a bright outlook on life?” After some gentle prodding, Bill agrees to tell his story. What follows are excerpts from several conversations that *Awake!* had with Bill and his wife.

### Setbacks Begin

In October 1949—three years after marrying Rose and three months after the birth of their daughter, Vicki—Bill was informed that he had a cancerous growth on one of his vocal cords, and the tumor was removed. A few months later, Bill’s doctor notified him

of another setback—the cancer had affected the entire larynx. "I was told that if I did not have a laryngectomy—that is, the removal of the entire larynx—I would have only two years to live."

Bill and Rose were told what the result of this surgery would be. The larynx, or voice box, extends from the root of the tongue to the entrance of the windpipe. Inside the larynx are two vocal cords. When air exhaled from the lungs passes through the cords, they vibrate and produce the sounds of speech. When the larynx is removed, the top of the windpipe is connected to a permanent opening made in the front of the neck. After the surgery, the patient breathes through this opening—but has lost his voice.

"When I heard this explanation, I felt angry," says Bill. "We had a little daughter, I had a good job, we had high expectations for our life, and now everything I had hoped for went down the drain." But since a laryngectomy could save his life, Bill agreed to the surgery. "After the operation," relates Bill, "I couldn't swallow. I couldn't speak one word. I was mute." When Rose visited Bill, he could only communicate by writing words on a notepad. It was a painful time. To counter this setback, they had to set new goals.

#### **Speechless and Jobless**

The laryngectomy left Bill not only mute but also jobless. He had worked in a machine shop, but now that he could breathe only through the opening in his neck, dust and fumes could endanger his lungs. He needed to find another job. Still unable to speak, he

enrolled in a school to learn watchmaking. "It resembled my old job," says Bill. "I knew how to assemble machine parts, and when making watches, you also put parts together. Only the parts did not weigh 50 pounds!" Right after finishing the school for watchmaking, he found work as a watchmaker. One goal had been reached.

Meanwhile, Bill had also begun attending an esophageal-speech class. In esophageal speech, sound is produced not by the vocal cords but by vibrations in the esophagus, the tube that carries food from the throat to the stomach. First, one learns to swallow air and force it down into the esophagus. Then, one burps up the air in a controlled manner. As the air escapes, it causes the walls of the esophagus to vibrate. This produces a throaty sound, which can be articulated with one's mouth and lips to form speech.

"Before, I burped only when I had eaten too much," says Bill with a smile, "but now I had to learn to burp on and on. At first, I managed to produce only one word at a time, like this: '[Inhale, swallow, burp] How [inhale, swallow, burp] are [inhale, swallow, burp] you?' It wasn't easy. Then, my teacher told me to drink lots of ginger ale because the fizz would help me burp. So whenever Rose went outside for a walk with Vicki, I drank and burped, drank and burped. I worked hard at it!"

Although some 60 percent of all laryngectomy patients fail to master esophageal speech, Bill progressed. Vicki, by then almost two years old, unwittingly impelled him. Explains Bill: "Vicki would talk to me and then look at me, waiting for an answer. But I

## **"After the operation, I couldn't swallow. I couldn't speak one word. I was mute"**

couldn't utter one word in reply. She would talk more, but again no answer. Annoyed, Vicki would turn to my wife and say: 'Make Daddy talk to me!' Her words pierced me and made me determined to speak again." To the joy of Vicki, Rose, and others, Bill succeeded. One more goal reached.

### Hit by Another Blow

By the end of 1951, Bill and Rose faced a new dilemma. Doctors, fearing that the cancer would recur, advised Bill to undergo radiation therapy. Bill agreed. When the treatment was over, he was eager to resume life. Little did he realize that another blow to his health was already coming his way!

About one year passed. Then, one day Bill's fingers felt numb. Next, he could not climb stairs. Soon thereafter, he fell down while walking and could not get back on his feet. Tests revealed that the radiation treatment that Bill had received (which, at the time, was not as accurate as it is today) had damaged his spinal cord. He was informed that his condition would worsen. One doctor even told him that his chances for survival were "not worth a nickel." Bill and Rose were shattered.

Even so, in an effort to counter this setback, Bill entered a hospital for six months of physical therapy. Although the therapy did not change the course of his physical condition, the hospital stay did change the course of his life—a change that eventually led him to getting to know Jehovah. How did that happen?

### Fortified by Understanding the Cause of Setbacks

For those six months, Bill shared a room in a Jewish hospital with 19 paralyzed men—all Orthodox Jews. Every afternoon these men discussed the Bible. Bill, a Baptist churchgoer, just listened. But by the time he left the hospital, he had heard enough to conclude that Almighty God is only one person and that the Trinity doctrine contradicts



**Bill and Rose today**

the Bible. As a result, Bill never went back to his church. Nevertheless, he felt the need for spiritual guidance to cope with life's setbacks. "I kept on asking God for help," says Bill, "and my prayers were answered."

One Saturday in 1953, Roy Douglas, an older man who was once a neighbor and had heard of Bill's plight, stopped by. Roy, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, asked Bill to study the Bible with him, and Bill agreed. What Bill read in the Bible and in the book "*Let God Be True*"\* opened his eyes. He shared what he learned with Rose, and she joined the study. Recalls Rose: "In church we had been told that sickness was a punishment from God, but our Bible study showed that this was not true. We felt so relieved." Adds Bill: "Learning from the Bible the cause of all troubles, including my illness, and finding out that a better future will come about helped us to accept my condition." In 1954, Bill and Rose reached another goal. They were both baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses.

\* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; now out of print.

### **Making More Adjustments**

Meanwhile, Bill's paralysis had spread to the point where he could no longer hold his job. To make ends meet, Bill and Rose reversed roles: Bill stayed home with Vicki, and Rose began to work at the watchmaking company—a job she held for 35 years!

"Taking care of our daughter gave me much joy," relates Bill. "Little Vicki enjoyed it too. Proudly, she used to tell everyone she met: 'I take care of Daddy!' Later, when she went to school, I helped her with her homework, and we often played games. Moreover, I had a fine opportunity to give her Bible instruction."

Attending Christian meetings at the Kingdom Hall was another source of joy for Bill and his family. It would take him one hour to limp from his home to the Kingdom Hall, but he did not miss meetings. Later, after moving to another part of the city, Bill and Rose bought a small car, and Rose drove the family to the hall. Even though Bill could speak for only short periods of time, he enrolled as a student in the Theocratic Ministry School. Explains Bill: "I wrote out my talk, and another brother delivered it. After the talk, the school overseer counseled me on its content."

Different ones in the congregation also helped Bill to share regularly in the preaching work. And, not surprising to those observing his devotion, Bill was later appointed as a ministerial servant in the congregation. Then, when his legs gave out and the paralysis engulfed him further, he became confined to his apartment and was eventually bedridden. Could he counter this setback?

### **A Satisfying Distraction**

"Being home all day, I looked for a distraction," says Bill. "I used to enjoy taking photographs before I became paralyzed. So I thought of trying to paint pictures, even though I had never painted anything in my

life. Also, I'm right-handed, but my entire right hand and two fingers of my left hand were paralyzed. Anyway, Rose bought a stack of books on painting techniques. I studied them and set out to paint with my left hand. Lots of my paintings ended up in the incinerator, but eventually I began to learn."

The fine collection of watercolor paintings that now adorn the apartment of Bill and Rose shows that Bill succeeded beyond his expectations. "About five years ago," Bill adds, "my left hand began to tremble so much that I had to put down my brush for good, but for many years this hobby gave me much satisfaction."

### **A Remaining Goal**

Bill recounts: "Over 50 years have now passed since my health problems began. Bible reading still comforts me, especially when I read the Psalms and the book of Job. And I enjoy reading the publications of the Watch Tower Society. I also receive much encouragement when members of our congregation and traveling overseers visit and share uplifting experiences. In addition, a telephone hookup with the Kingdom Hall allows me to listen to the meetings, and I even receive videotapes of convention programs.

"I'm grateful that I have been blessed with a loving wife. Throughout the years, she has been my close companion. Also, our daughter, who now serves Jehovah together with a family of her own, is still a source of much joy. I especially thank Jehovah for helping me to stay close to him. Today, as my body and my voice grow ever weaker, I often think of the apostle Paul's words: 'We do not give up, but even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day.' (2 Corinthians 4:16) Yes, to stay spiritually awake as long as I may live—that remains my goal."

# BRINGING UP BABY *in the Wild*

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN KENYA

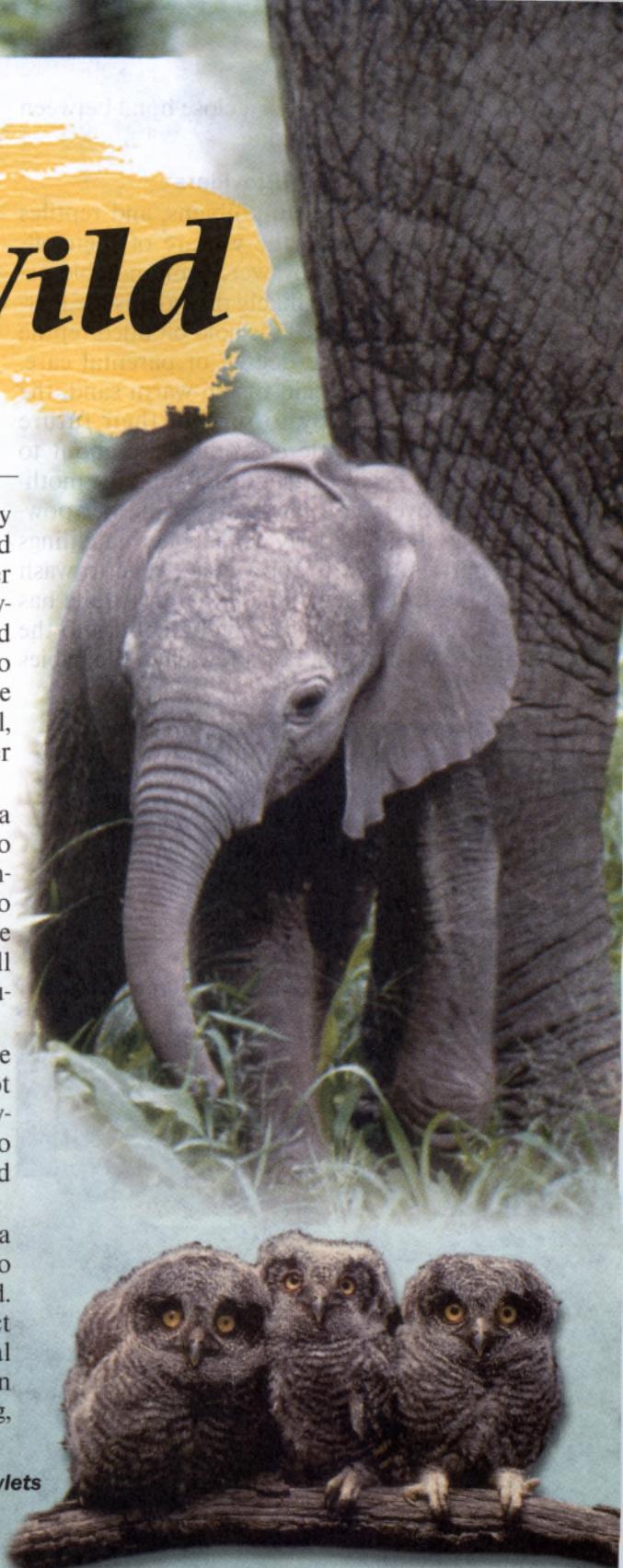
**O**N THE vast grassy plains of Africa, a baby is born. With a thud it drops to the ground in the early morning sunlight. Gently, its mother reaches down and lifts her wet and shiny newborn onto its wobbly feet. Other mothers and sisters rush close to get a good look and to touch and smell the tiny baby. Weighing a mere 260 pounds and standing less than three feet tall, an elephant calf stirs excitement among other members of the herd.

Thousands of miles away, in the Americas, a miniature nest the size of a thimble clings to the branch of a tree. Here a pair of bee hummingbirds, no larger than flying insects, tend two small chicks. Flying at astonishing speeds, the colorful birds are courageous parents and will attempt to drive off large animals and even humans who get close to their minute young.

Baby animals appeal to all of us. Children are fascinated by the birth of puppies. Who is not amused by the playful antics of a kitten, the lovable appearance of a tiny monkey clinging to its mother's fur, or a baby owl staring wide-eyed from the security of its nest?

Animal babies are not always as helpless as a human baby. Some are born with the ability to run soon after their tiny feet touch the ground. Others are left totally on their own to protect themselves and survive. However, the survival of many young animals and insects depends on parental nurturing, protection, feeding, training,

Owlets



and care that result from a close bond between parents and their offspring.

### Unlikely Providers

Most insects, fish, amphibians, and reptiles take little interest in the welfare of their offspring. There are, however, some notable exceptions. One very unlikely provider is the fearsome Nile crocodile. This cold-blooded reptile shows a remarkable degree of parental care. After the eggs are laid in the warm sand, the parents stay nearby to protect their future progeny. When little crocodiles are about to hatch, they begin to grunt, signaling the mother to uncover the eggs. Later, using her powerful jaws, she tenderly collects her hatchlings and carries them to the water's edge to wash the sand from them. The father crocodile has also been known to take the hatchlings to the water to wash them. For a few days, the babies

stay close to their mother in the water, following her like ducklings. They thus benefit from her formidable power to protect them.

Surprisingly, some fish also make what we would consider to be good parents. Most tilapias, which are freshwater fish, lay their eggs and then store them in their mouths for safe-keeping. Upon hatching, the tiny fry swim about freely, while staying close to their parents. If danger approaches, the parent fish opens its mouth wide, allowing the babies to dart in and hide. When the danger passes, the young again emerge and resume their normal activities.

Ants, bees, and termites also show a remarkable inclination to care for and protect their young. Known as social insects, they live in colonies, build shelters for their eggs, and provide food for their young to feed on. The honeybee is a well-known example of this. Thousands of these busy bees work together caring for the young of the hive. Instinctive wisdom enables them to build, repair, and clean the nursery, even controlling its temperature and humidity.

### Parenting on the Wing

Most birds make very good parents, investing enormous amounts of time and energy in selecting a nest site, building the nest, and raising their family. One devoted male African hornbill was observed making more than 1,600 visits to his nest site, delivering some 24,000 pieces of fruit to his mate during the entire 120-day breeding period!

Courtesy LSU Agricultural Center

**Tilapias store  
their eggs in  
their mouth**

**Crocodiles carry  
their babies**

© Adam Britton, <http://crocodilian.com>

The wandering albatross is another dependable provider. The parent bird will literally fly thousands of miles searching for food while its faithful mate waits patiently at the nest for its return.

In desert areas some birds use an effective method to quench the thirst of their young. Flying to a water hole, they soak their breast feathers and then return to the nest, where the chicks drink from their wet feathers.

When the task of feeding many mouths becomes too great a burden, some bird species enlist the help of other birds to "chick-sit" their young. These helpers are usually grown-up offspring of the parents and are willing to assist in feeding and protecting the chicks.

#### Parental Protection

Protecting baby birds is also a full-time job. Avian parents will often cover the nest with outstretched wings during a downpour, keeping their chicks warm and dry. Starlings are excellent housekeepers. To protect their nest from lice and fleas, these ingenious birds collect material from certain toxic plants and deposit it in and around the nest. This acts as an insecticide that kills or deters the harmful insects.

A mother woodcock shows a remarkable degree of resourcefulness when protecting her offspring. When threatened, she grasps her chick firmly between her legs and body, opens her wings, and simply flies away carrying her precious cargo to a safer location. Some brave parents cleverly feign injury to distract a predator from approaching their chicks. Flapping on the



Albatross  
and chick



ground as if injured, the mother will lure the predator away from the nest, only ending her act and flying to safety when the danger passes. Ground-nesting birds may use vocal tricks to scare away predators. The North American burrowing owl hisses like a snake when its hole is investigated. Early settlers were certain that the little owls shared their homes with rattlesnakes, and they stayed clear!

#### Maternal Mammals

In the animal kingdom, parental care reaches its highest level among mammals. Elephant mothers are devoted to their offspring, forming a close bond that can last for 50 years. The calf is very dependent on its mother. The mother shades it from the hot sun with her huge body, gently suckles it, and allows it to reach up with its miniature trunk and pluck out bits of vegetation from her mouth to eat. Regularly she washes baby down by squirting water over its back and scrubbing it with her trunk. Raising an elephant calf is a family affair, as other females in the herd play an important part in feeding, teaching, and protecting the youngsters within the herd.

#### Woodcock



Hornbill



Starling



© Joe McDonald

**Mother hippos are fiercely protective**

**Baboon mothers groom their babies**

Another large mammal, the hippopotamus, may give birth to its calf underwater. Babes are well able to nurse totally submerged, come up for air, and then resubmerge and continue nursing. The mother hippo is fiercely protective of her newborn calf.

Vervet monkeys also make good mothers. After giving birth, the mother securely holds her baby during the first hours with at least one of her arms around its neck or shoulders. For the first week, the baby may spend most of its time clinging instinctively to its mother's fur. The mother may allow her baby to be held by other females, who may spend time touching, grooming, cuddling, and playing with the cute new arrival.

Indeed, many creatures are “instinctively wise” and display a remarkable degree of aptitude in the way they care for their young. (Proverbs 30:24-28) Their ability to perceive a need or assess a situation and react to it in an intelligent way could never have resulted from blind chance. It is the result of intelligent design from an intelligent source—the Creator of all things, Jehovah God.—Psalm 104:24.

#### **Vervet monkeys**

© Joe McDonald



## YOUNG PEOPLE ASK . . .

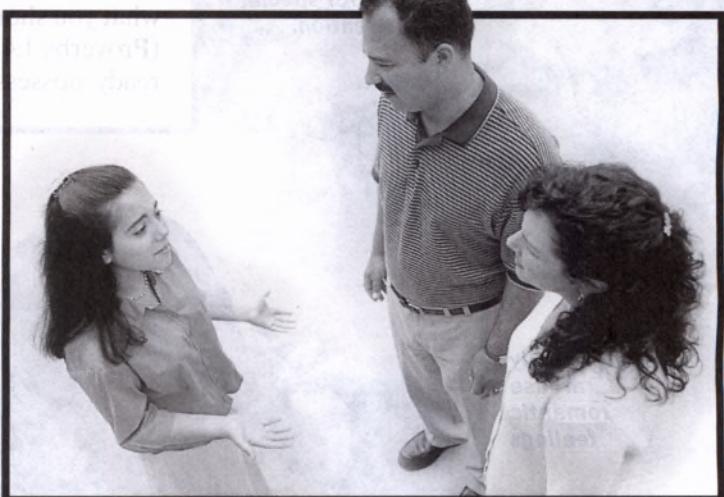
**"You're old-fashioned, Mom. This isn't the '50's. Everyone's dating! I'm not your little girl anymore."**

**—16-year-old Janie.\***

**I**T CAN be frustrating to be told that you're not ready to date. "I want to do as the Bible says and honor my father and mother," says one youth, "but I don't think they're right. I don't even know how to discuss this with them." Like this young man, you may feel that your parents are being unreasonable and unsympathetic. Maybe you've met someone that you really like and you want to get to know him or her better. Or perhaps you feel that getting into the dating scene would help you to fit in better with your peers. "There's pressure," says Michelle. "If you're not dating, kids in school think you're weird."

One family counselor observed about dating: "There is no area in which parents seem more unreasonable." But just because your parents may seem to be unreasonable, does that mean that they really are? After all, God holds your parents responsible to teach, train, protect, and guide you. (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7) Could it be that your parents have some legitimate concerns about your well-being? "I see the danger looming," says one parent, "and it's very frightening." Why does early dating alarm so many parents?

\* Names have been changed.

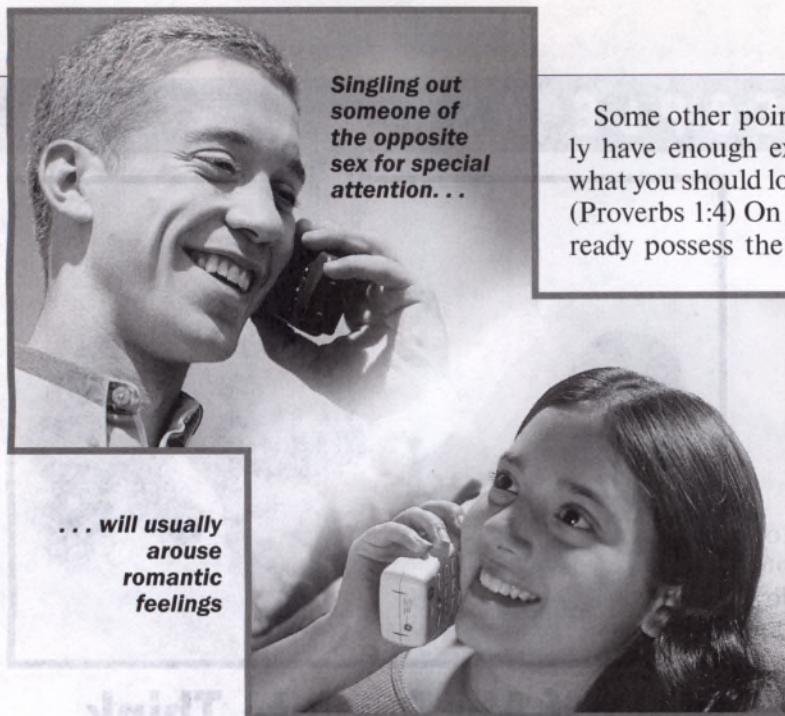


## What if My Parents Think I'm Too Young to Date?

### Dangerous Feelings

"My parents make it seem like there is something wrong with liking someone," complains 14-year-old Beth. However, if your parents are Christians, they well know that God designed the sexes to be attracted to each other. (Genesis 2:18-23) They know that this attraction is natural, that it works in harmony with our Creator's purpose for mankind to "fill the earth."—Genesis 1:28.

Furthermore, your parents understand how strong sexual desires can be when you are in "the bloom of youth." (1 Corinthians 7:36) They also know that you have had little experience in learning how to control those desires. If you begin spending a lot of time with someone of the opposite sex in person, on the phone, or even through letter writing or E-mail, the attraction will likely grow. 'What's so bad about that?' you may ask. Well, what legitimate outlet do you have



**Singling out  
someone of  
the opposite  
sex for special  
attention...**

**... will usually  
arouse  
romantic  
feelings**

for those desires? Are you really prepared to take those feelings to their logical conclusion—marriage? Not likely.

Early dating thus poses some serious dangers. The Bible warns: “Can a man rake together fire into his bosom and yet his very garments not be burned?” (Proverbs 6:27) Far too often, premature dating leads to pre-marital sex, exposing youths to the possibilities of out-of-wedlock pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. (1 Thessalonians 4:4-6) Young Tammy, for example, thought her parents were being unfair when they would not allow her to date. So she secretly began to date someone in school. Soon, though, Tammy was pregnant—and her life was changed. Now she confesses: “Dating is not all that it’s cracked up to be.”

But what if a young couple carefully avoid inappropriate contact? Even then, there is still the danger of awakening or arousing feelings of love prematurely. (Song of Solomon 2:7) Fanning the flames of desires that can only be legitimately fulfilled *years* in the future can result in frustration and misery.

Some other points to ponder: Do you really have enough experience in life to know what you should look for in a marriage mate? (Proverbs 1:4) On the other hand, do you already possess the qualities and skills needed to be a husband or a wife that will truly be loved and respected? Do you really have the patience and determination needed to maintain a long-term relationship? Not surprisingly, most teenage romantic relationships are painfully short-lived. Few result in long-lasting marriages.

Eighteen-year-old Monica therefore sums it up well when she observes: “All my friends in school would tell me their stories about their boyfriends. But they either got married young or ended up in a terrible breakup because they weren’t ready to go to the next level.” A youth named Brandon also observes: “When you realize that you’re not ready to commit to someone but you feel that you already have because you’re dating, it’s very frustrating. How do you back away without hurting the other person?”

Your parents are no doubt trying to spare you that pain and frustration by insisting that you do not date until you are old enough to make a marriage commitment. Really, they are only acting in harmony with the inspired advice at Ecclesiastes 11:10: “Remove vexation from your heart, and ward off calamity from your flesh.”

#### **‘Widening Out’**

This does not mean, though, that you cannot enjoy the company of the opposite sex. But why narrow your association down to one person? The Bible, in another context,

encourages us to "widen out" in our associations. (2 Corinthians 6:12, 13) That is good advice for young people. One way to do so is to associate in mixed groups. "I think it's more fun that way," observes Tammy. "It's better to have a lot of friends." Monica says: "The group idea is a really good idea because you get to see people with different personalities and it makes you realize that there are many people out there that you haven't met yet."

Your parents may even be willing to help you arrange for wholesome good times with other young ones. Anne, a mother of two, explains: "We always make sure that our home is a fun place where the kids want to be. We invite their friends over, give them snacks, and let them play games. This way they don't feel that they have to get out of the house to have fun."

Of course, even in a group you still have to be careful about showing too much attention to one person. Some youths reason that as long as they're with other people, they're not really dating. Avoid such self-deception. (Psalm 36:2) If you are pairing off with the same person every time you get together with your friends, it amounts to dating.\* Work at using sound judgment in your friendships with the opposite sex.—1 Timothy 5:2.

### The Value of Waiting

It is not easy to be told that you are too young to begin dating. But your parents are not trying to hurt you. On the contrary, they are doing everything they can to help and protect you. So instead of trusting your own heart and rejecting their advice, why not utilize their experience?

\* For further information, see pages 232-3 of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

For example, why not seek their advice the next time you have a problem dealing with the opposite sex? Proverbs 28:26 reminds us: "He that is trusting in his own heart is stupid." Young Connie says: "When a guy likes me, what helps me resist the pressure to date is talking about it with my mom. She shares experiences of what happened to her friends and family in the past. It really helps me."

Waiting a while before you date will not hinder your emotional development or stifle your freedom. Because you have not yet taken on the adult responsibilities of courtship and marriage, you have the freedom to 'rejoice in your youth.' (Ecclesiastes 11:9) Waiting will also allow you time to develop your personality, maturity and, most important of all, spirituality. (Lamentations 3:26, 27) As one Christian youth put it, "you should be committed to Jehovah before you commit to anyone else."

As you get older and your advancement becomes obvious to everyone, your parents will begin to view you differently. (1 Timothy 4:15) And when you are truly ready to date, you will no doubt be able to do so with their blessing.

**Instead of narrowing your interests down to one person, widen out in your friendships**





Gold coin (aureus) bearing the head of Emperor Augustus

# THE GOLD THAT MOVED MOUNTAINS

**"A cathedral of clay with multiple pinnacles has been sculptured out of the mountain. Gold and Rome were to blame. Time and beauty have forgiven them."**

—Pedro García Trapiello.

By Awake! writer in Spain

**I**N THE northwest of Spain lies a strange rock formation gouged out of golden sandstone. A carpet of verdant chestnut trees creates the illusion that the rugged cliffs and soaring towers have been carved by the forces of nature. Only the occasional opening to a tunnel hints at an ancient secret. Here, in a place now called Las Médulas, once stood the greatest gold mine of the Roman Empire.

Gold has always had a fascination, which has compelled men to go to great lengths to get their hands on it. The Bible book of Job describes how millennia ago 'men dug the shafts of mines, dug mountains away at their base, and tunneled through the rocks' in search of gold, silver, and precious stones.—Job 28:1-10, Today's English Version.

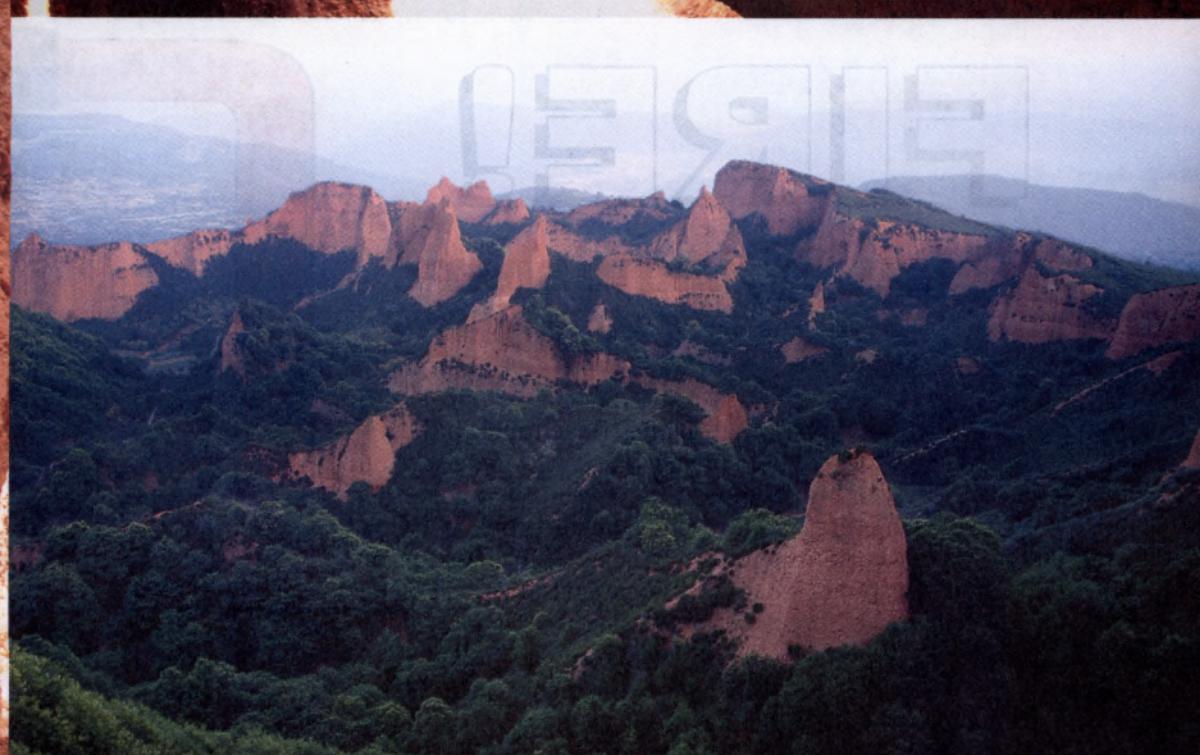
Centuries later when Rome ruled the world, gold was still at a premium. Emperor Augustus wanted a stable economy, and the silver denarius and the gold aureus were the trustworthy coins that he needed to oil the wheels of Roman commerce. To mint sufficient coins, of course, he required gold and silver. Thus, hard on the heels of the conquering Roman legions came the gold prospectors.

When the legions finally subdued northwest Spain, not long before the start of the Common Era, they discovered new reserves of gold. Unfortunately, the precious metal lay buried in mountainous alluvial deposits that did not give up their gold easily. It would take two and a half centuries of toil and sweat to unearth the hidden treasure.

The Romans, however, were undaunted. Labor was cheap, and mining techniques of the time—though laborious—made the project feasible. Their plan was to extract the gold by gradually washing away the mountain. To achieve their aim, they constructed over 50 canals, built several large reservoirs high in the mountains, and dug hundreds of miles of tunnels.

Once a network of tunnels had been built inside a portion of the mountain, the engineers flooded them with water under pressure. The surging waters broke away tons of earth. The gold-bearing sand and rock was washed down the mountain, where the gold could be separated from the gravel by panning and sifting. Then the whole process would be repeated with the construction of another set of tunnels.

Was the effort worth it? The Romans patient-



### ***Las Médulas, the location of the greatest gold mine of the Roman Empire***

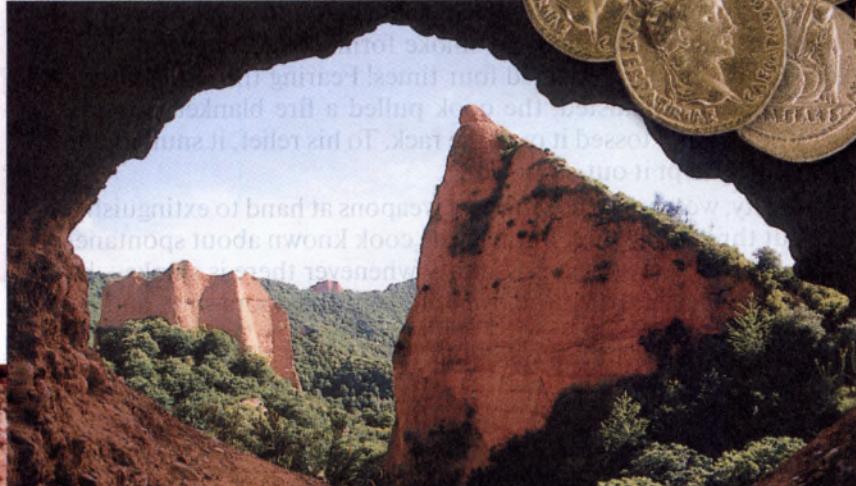
ly extracted some 800 tons of gold from Las Médulas. To obtain all that gold, thousands of workers literally moved mountains—more than eight billion cubic feet of earth. And for every ten tons of earth that they excavated, they obtained one troy ounce of gold.

Nowadays, little remains but the tunnels and the jagged scars of the ruptured mountain,

which have been polished by erosion and clothed by forests of chestnut trees. Ironically, these sweet chestnuts that the Romans introduced into Spain have proved much more durable than the gold.

All coins: Musée de Normandie, Caen, France

**Part of the ancient tunnel system**



# FIRE!

## Which Extinguisher Should You Use?

**H**OW often we walk right past that silent little sentinel on the wall without ever sparing it a thought! Yet, one day it might save our office or factory or even our home from going up in smoke. Portable fire extinguishers can help prevent a small problem—a pan aflame on the stove or curtains ignited by a heater—from getting out of hand. Like rapid-response weapons, they are designed to snuff out a cruel enemy before it gathers strength.

Because this enemy comes in many forms—wood fires, oil and gas fires, electrical fires—portable extinguishers also come in many forms. Naturally, you want to know both your enemy and your weapons. This does not mean having the insight of a professional fire fighter, but it does mean knowing a few basic principles. For example, what would you have done in the following situation?

A pastry cook was heating a rack of 20 new, well-oiled pans in an oven when preparing to bake bread. The thermostat was faulty, however, and the temperature soared, making the oil smoke. The cook, with gloved hands, quickly opened the oven and pulled the rack out. But in doing so, he immersed the smoking oil in a rich bath of air. *Whoof!* Spontaneous combustion sent flames shooting toward the ceiling. Unharmed, the cook dashed off and returned within seconds armed with a carbon dioxide fire extinguisher and quickly put the fire out. But immediately more smoke formed, and the oil ignited again. This cycle was repeated four times! Fearing the extinguisher would soon be exhausted, the cook pulled a fire blanket from its nearby holder and tossed it over the rack. To his relief, it snuffed out the fire—and kept it out.

Naturally, we want to use the best weapons at hand to extinguish a small but threatening fire. But had the cook known about spontaneous combustion—a strong possibility whenever there is smoke—he might simply have turned the oven off, kept the doors shut, and let



*There are many multipurpose fire extinguishers for the home*

Above illustration: Reprinted with permission from NFPA 10 - 1998, *Portable Fire Extinguishers*, Copyright © 1998, National Fire Protection Association, Quincy, Massachusetts 02269. This reprinted material is not the complete and official position of the NFPA on the referenced subject which is represented only by the standard in its entirety.

the contents of the oven cool down naturally. Or he might have employed the fire blanket first and then, if necessary, the carbon dioxide extinguisher. Whatever the case, the experience shows the value of a basic knowledge of fires and how best to put them out.

### The "Triangle" That Spells Fire

What is called the fire triangle is a common-sense formula that sets out the conditions for combustion: *fuel plus oxygen plus heat equals fire*. Remove just one component, and you not only put out the fire but also prevent further fire. Let's see how this works.

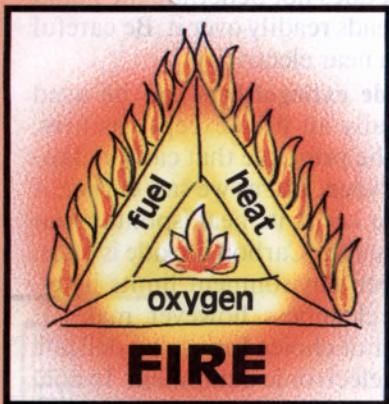
**FUEL:** Like us, fires die without food. Firemen exploit this principle in forest and brush fires when they create a fire-break in the path of the main fire. In a kitchen setting, eliminating the fuel may simply mean turning off the gas. In other settings, however, eliminating the fuel may be difficult if not impossible.

**OXYGEN:** Once again, like us, a fire must breathe. Toss a shovelful of dirt or a fire blanket over a fire, and you smother it. The oxygen level, incidentally, need not go down to zero for a fire to suffocate. If you reduce the oxygen level from the normal 21 percent in the air around us to 15 percent, many substances—flammable liquids, for example, and even some solids—will no longer burn.

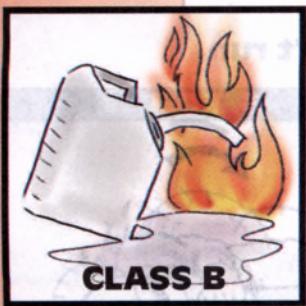
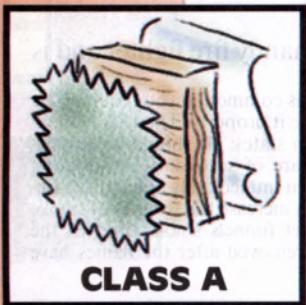
**HEAT:** The heat source to start a fire could be a space heater, a stove, wires to an overloaded electrical outlet, a spark or cinder, lightning, or the heat generated by decaying vegetation, volatile chemicals, or any number of other things. Remember, if you see smoke, especially if it is rising from fats or cooking oils over a heat source, spontaneous combustion could be just seconds away.

### Tailor-Made for Every Kind of Small Fire

While many homes do not have fire extinguishers, factories, offices, and public buildings are often required by law to be equipped with them. The basic types are water, wet chemical, foam, dry powder, and carbon dioxide. Halon extinguishers are being phased out because it is thought that they are destructive to the ozone layer in the earth's atmosphere. To help users choose the correct extinguisher in an emergency, most models have picture symbols showing where they can and cannot be used, or they may be color coded. And most have a letter, such as A, B, or C, showing a specific fire classification. The propellant, pressurized gas, forces the active ingredient out through the nozzle at high velocity when the trigger handle is squeezed. Because extinguishers contain gas under pressure, they need to be tested from time to time. And extinguishers should always be mounted near exits and should be easy to access.



▲ Chubb Fire Safety ▼



Let's now take a brief look at each type of extinguisher.

**Dry powder extinguishers** chemically inhibit combustion and come close to being the universal fire retardant. Not only is dry powder effective against both class A and class B fires but it is also useful in combating class C (electrical equipment) fires. Understandably, this multipurpose extinguisher offers excellent protection for your home. Dry powder tends to make a mess—but then a mess might be a small price to pay!

**Pressurized water extinguishers** are ideal for fires involving paper, wood, plastics, rubbish, or fabrics. These are often called class A fires. Water's potency as an extinguishing agent stems from its great capacity for absorbing heat. In sufficient volume, water simply steals heat faster than the fire can regenerate it, and thus the fire dies out. But do not use water on flammable liquids. You merely spread the fire—explosively! Also, because water conducts electricity, you should not use it or any extinguisher that incorporates it where there may be live electrical wires.

**Wet chemical extinguishers** employ a pressurized solution of alkali salts in water and are particularly effective against fats and cooking oils but not against petroleum products. They are also effective against class A fires.

**Foam extinguishers** work well, not only on class A fires but especially on fires involv-

ing flammable liquids (industrial lubricants, fuels, paints), generally known as class B fires. There are two kinds of foam extinguishers, so check which one best suits your needs. When applied to a burning liquid, the foam coats it with an impervious film that arrests flammable vapors and also keeps oxygen away. Thus, foam must be applied more gently so that it does not penetrate the liquid but, rather, spreads readily over it. Be careful not to use foam near electricity.

**Carbon dioxide extinguishers** can be used against practically all fires except gas fires. They work on the principle that carbon dioxide displaces oxygen. But as we saw earlier, if the combustible keeps its heat, spontaneous reignition is possible. Carbon dioxide is a gas, so a breezy, open environment limits its effectiveness. Its cleanliness, however, makes it the extinguisher of choice for use on delicate machinery and electronic equipment. In confined spaces, though, carbon dioxide can asphyxiate, so if you use it in such a setting, be sure to leave when the fire is out and shut the door behind you.

**The fire blanket\*** is a handy fire fighter and is

\* If the use of a fire blanket is common in your country, be sure that you know how to use it properly. The U.S. National Fire Protection Association states: "It should be emphasized that . . . fire blankets are of secondary importance. They should be used only when immediately at hand. . . . Improper use of fire blankets can increase the severity of smoke and fire injuries if the blanket funnels smoke towards the face or if the blanket is not removed after the flames have been extinguished."



### 1. STOP



### 2. DROP



### 3. ROLL

ideal for small, contained fires such as you might have on the top of a kitchen stove or in a small patch of carpet. Just pull the blanket from its tidy little wall-mounted holder, stretch it out in front of you to protect yourself from the flames, and place the blanket over the fire. Of course, if you have not already done so, turn the heat source off immediately if at all possible.

Fire blankets are also lifesavers should your clothing catch fire. In that event, remember this vital rule: "Stop, drop, and roll." *Never* run; you simply fan the flames. If you or anyone else is able to wrap a fire blanket around you as you roll, you will snuff the fire out even more quickly.

### Better Than Extinguishers

The best protection against fires is, of course, fire prevention; so use good sense. Keep matches and lighters away from children. Remove all materials on or near your stove that could catch fire. Never cook while wearing clothes with loose, dangling sleeves that may catch fire. Install smoke detectors in your home.

Here are some additional tips. Never overload electrical outlets or extension cords. Never leave fats or oils frying unattended on a hot stove. Be careful where you place space heaters. If you have bottled gas cylinders near the house, point the safety valves—a potential blowtorch in a fire—away from the building. Use electrical fuses of the correct size. Replace damaged electrical cords.

Have you considered home fire drills? These can indeed save lives. Arrange for the family to meet at a specific location—any clearly defined safe spot that is easy to find day or night. And delegate responsibilities: Who will help infants or disabled individuals to safety? Who will call the fire department? Yes, drills save lives because they rehearse the right response, making it automatic and speedy.

### Should the Worst Happen

Remember, goods can be replaced but lives cannot. Do not risk your life to fight a fire. If, however, it is safe for you to go ahead and fight the fire, do so from a position that will allow you access to an exit. But if you doubt that the extinguisher you have is the correct one or if you fear that the fire is too big for it, get out fast and call the fire department.

Note, too, that smoke, especially toxic smoke from synthetics, kills more people than flames—it can kill in less than two minutes! So when escaping from a burning building, stay low. There is less smoke near the floor, and the air is cooler. If possible, hold a damp cloth over your mouth. Before using a door, touch it with the back of your hand. If it's hot, fire is on the other side; find another exit. And shut all doors behind you as you go. This limits the oxygen flow to the fire. Elevators, of course, are an absolute no-no in a fire—they might trap you and become an oven!

So if you intend to purchase fire protection for your home, car, or business, it may be best to discuss the matter with your local fire authorities. More specific details may vary from country to country and so are outside the scope of this article.

In any case, next time you see one of those silent little sentinels, stop and get better acquainted. You may be deeply indebted to it one day.

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Should Marriage  
Be a Lifelong Union?**

**Killer Waves  
—Myths and Realities**

**Coping Joyfully  
in a Hectic World**

## WATCHING THE WORLD

### Storehouse of Seeds

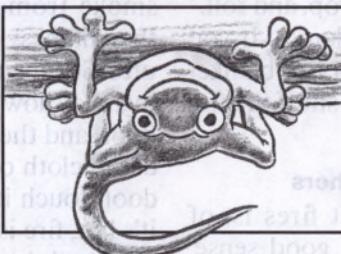
"Scientists are predicting that up to 25% of the world's flora could be condemned to extinction within the next 50 years," reports the *National Post* of Canada. To protect the endangered plants, the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, England, has formed the Millennium Seed Bank (MSB). "The MSB project is to collect and store more than 25,000 species of plants—over 10% of the world's seed-bearing plants," explains the paper. MSB organizers hope to use the seeds when needed to restore overharvested land, reduce the likelihood of famine, and supply plants used in traditional and pharmaceutical medicines. Roger Smith, head of the seed bank project, notes: "It is often the plants that are most useful to humans and animals that disappear first."

### Painless Heart Attack

Many people are alert to the most common physical sign of a heart attack—a viselike pressure in the chest. However, far fewer know that "a third of all patients won't feel any chest pain during a heart attack," reports *Time* magazine. That helps to explain why "heart-attack victims who don't experience chest pain typically put off going to the hospital—by an average of two hours," says a study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. However, any delay in getting potentially lifesaving treatment is dangerous. What should you watch for? "Prob-

ably the next biggest tip-off is extreme shortness of breath," says *Time*. Other possible signs include nausea, profuse sweating, and "any 'heartburn' that gets worse if you walk around or otherwise exert yourself physically," says the article.

### Sticky Toes



Gecko lizards can easily run across a ceiling as smooth as glass. How do they do it? Scientists, who have attempted to answer that question for decades, now feel that they may have an explanation. A team of scientists and engineers has determined that "a surprisingly large sticking force arises when tiny hairs, or setae, on gecko feet rub up against surfaces," reports the magazine *Science News*. "From each seta sprout even tinier stalks, called spatulae. When a gecko gloms a foot onto a surface, the billion-or-so spatulae that carpet its sole snuggle so close to the surface that intermolecular forces . . . may come into play." Researchers also note that the way geckos set their toes down "apparently both presses the setae against the surface and tugs them parallel to it." This action increases "each seta's grip 10-fold com-

pared with just pressing," the magazine says.

### Greek Orthodox Church Upset Over Ruling

Removing Greek citizens' religious affiliation from "state identity cards has raised the ire of the Greek Orthodox Church." So states a report from Newsroom.org. The decision follows a 1998 report by the Helsinki International Federation for Human Rights that "claimed that Greece discriminates against non-Orthodox churches and that the mandatory religious designation on identity cards leads to bias in employment practices and in treatment by police." The Greek government says that the change will "bring the cards into conformity with European Union standards and the country's 1997 privacy protection law," says the article. However, the leader of the Greek Orthodox Church has portrayed those who want religion removed from the cards as belonging to "the forces of evil."

### China's Fight Against Dust Storms

Dust storms originating in desert areas in Inner Mongolia have swept across northern China in recent years, destroying millions of dollars' worth of crops and livestock, reports *China Today*. In 2000, several dust storms reached as far as the capital city, Beijing. A sandstorm in 1998 damaged over 82,000 acres of grain crops and killed 110,000 domestic animals. Man's mis-

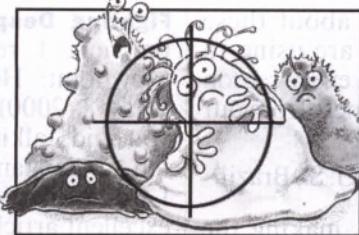
management of land has been named as the chief cause. Vast areas have been stripped of vegetation and turned into desert. In 1984, for example, the people in Ningsia Hui Autonomous Region, located in northern China, began digging for licorice to use as a Chinese herbal medicine. "In less than 10 years," says *China Today*, "600,000 hectares [1,500,000 acres] of grassland were destroyed and 13,333 hectares [32,940 acres] of farmland were turned into desert areas." Other desert areas have been created by overgrazing and by overusing local water resources. To combat the problem and to curb the expansion of desert areas, great efforts have been made to replant trees and grasses.

### Identity Theft

Beware of criminals who assume your identity in order to defraud creditors, warns a report in the newspaper *El Economista* of Mexico City. After obtaining personal information by stealing your mail or your wallet, criminals apply for credit cards in your name and have them sent to their own addresses. Then they use your identity to purchase items or rent properties via telephone or the Internet. Those who fall victim to this crime may spend years, perhaps decades, straightening out their life, says the paper. How can you protect yourself from identity theft? *El Economista* advises: Do not carry important documents with you unless you are going to use them, keep a record of all credit card transactions and use them to check your billing statements, tear up

credit card receipts before discarding them, do not send personal data via electronic mail, and keep a list of all your credit card numbers, expiration dates, and telephone numbers of the card issuers in order to report lost or stolen cards.

### Bacteria War Unjustified



"American consumers are waging a misguided war on microbes in the home," reports *USA Today*. According to the paper, Tufts University physician and microbiologist Stuart Levy says that "the proliferation of antibacterial products . . . threatens to foster the emergence of bacteria that are resistant not only to the antibacterial soaps, but also to antibiotics." Using antibacterial products to sterilize the home environment is like taking "a mallet to a fly," says Levy. On the other hand, household cleaners such as bleach, hydrogen peroxide, and hot water and soap remove dirt but don't induce bacteria to mutate into other forms that resist the products. "Bacteria are our allies," says Levy. "We need to make peace."

### Britons Are Top TV Watchers

"Nearly a quarter of Britons spend as much time watching television as they do at work during the average week," reports London's news-

paper *The Independent*. According to researchers, the average Briton spends 25 hours each week watching television, while 21 percent watch their sets for more than 36 hours. "It was not just young people who were watching excessive amounts, as the findings held true for men and women and older people," the paper says. One family, who watch about 30 hours of television a week, said that television provided "necessary escapism." Such heavy viewing habits, however, come at a price. In a study of 20 countries, the United Kingdom "easily tops the TV-watching list," reports *The Guardian Weekly* of London. Yet, "Britain is well into the bottom half in the three most crucial yardsticks of literacy."

### Early Sex Education

Toddlers in Bangkok, Thailand, will soon be given sex education in kindergarten, reports the *Bangkok Post*. According to Dr. Suwanna Vorakamin of the Family Planning and Population Control Division, "teachers and health workers will be specially trained to teach and talk about sex in a scientific manner," says the report. She adds: "Introducing sex education right from the kindergarten level [is] not intended to encourage sexual behaviour among children from an early age. . . . The knowledge given to the children at a young age will enable them to ward off undesired behaviour and the dangers of unwanted pregnancy when they grow into teenagers," reports the paper.

## FROM OUR READERS

**Land Mines** I was moved by the series "Land Mines—What Can Be Done?" (May 8, 2000) It is appalling that so many innocent civilians are being killed every year as a result of land mines.

E. U., Finland

I felt ashamed when I read about these fiendish devices that humans are using to harm their fellowmen. God has every reason to intervene and remove wickedness from our earth.

G. S., Brazil

This series was a landmark, making the public aware of a major issue. The cover photo had strong drawing power.

R. H., United States

**Transfusion-Free Medical Treatment** The article "You Are Going to Die!" (May 8, 2000) reminded me of my father's experience. Years ago he had a stroke while driving a car. His car rolled over, and when he regained consciousness, the doctor told him he had to have a blood transfusion. When my father refused, the doctor said: "If you don't take this transfusion, you will die." My father still refused. The next day the doctor came into his room and asked: "How are you?" My father said: "I'm alive!" My father is still alive and serving Jehovah to the best of his ability.

T. M., United States

I have a rare blood cancer, and when it was diagnosed, the doctor told me that I was going to die in six months if I did not immediately begin taking blood transfusions. That was back in 1991. I found a doctor who has respected my beliefs on blood, and I made a personal decision to take, under his direction, weekly injections of erythropoietin, which has helped raise my blood count.

E. G., United States

I read Leanne Karlinsky's story, and as a physician, I was appalled by the inhumanity of those who neglected her postoperatively [because she refused blood transfusions]. It is hard to imagine such closed minds!

C. C., United States

**Fighting Despair** Since I suffer from depression, I read the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: How to Cope With Despair" (May 8, 2000) as soon as I received it. As you said, talking with someone who will listen understandingly is very encouraging. I would like to express my thanks for your excellent articles.

A. D., Lithuania

**Lactose Intolerant** My wife visited her doctor because she was experiencing severe symptoms. The doctor said that she might be lactose intolerant. I had never heard of that before, so we are grateful for the article "Are You Lactose Intolerant?" (May 8, 2000) This excellent information could not have come at a better time.

E. P., United States

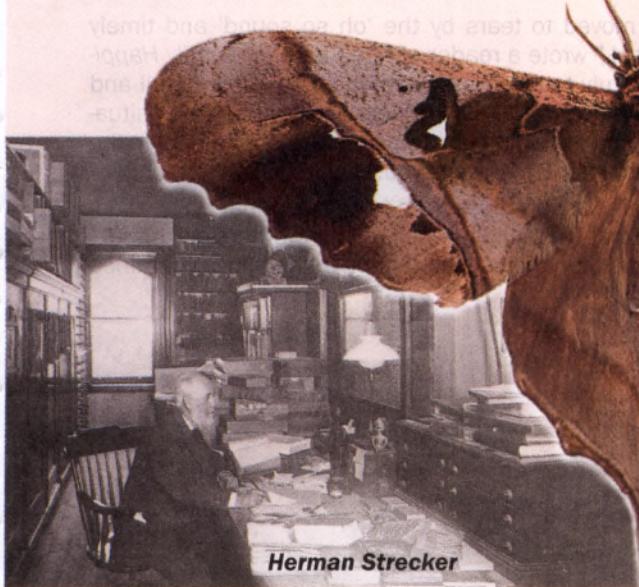
**Brazil** The article "The Pantanal—A Fascinating Sanctuary" (September 8, 1999) aroused my desire to see this part of Jehovah's creation firsthand. My sister and I thus planned a visit to Brazil, and the article "The Dramatic History of a 'Land of Contrasts'" (May 8, 2000) came two weeks before we arrived there. It served as an excellent guide to the best places to visit.

E. V., England

**Birds and Prisoners** I have had the joy of raising—and releasing back into the wild—a number of birds. The article "What Can a Bird Teach a Prisoner?" (May 8, 2000) brought to mind how even a small creation of Jehovah can teach us so much.

E. D., United States

# A Collector Who Wished to



WHEN American sculptor and butterfly collector Herman Strecker died a century ago, he left behind what was at the time the largest and most important collection of butterflies and moths in the Americas. His collection, some 50,000 specimens strong, now belongs for the most part to the Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. One species of giant silk moth from South America stood out in the collection because of its name. In his book *Lepidoptera*, Mr. Strecker explained that he did not name this species after some individual who might have rewarded him with a dinner or a loan of money.\* Rather, he named it after the Creator. That way, this "most wonderful" species would direct the thoughts of those who see it to God. Thus, as a result of Mr. Strecker's wish to honor the Creator, today that silk moth bears the scientific name *Copiopteryx jehovah*.

\* The complete title of Mr. Strecker's book is *Lepidoptera, Rhopaloceres and Heteroceres, Indigenous and Exotic; With Descriptions and Colored Illustrations* (1872).



## Honor the Creator

However, some of Mr. Strecker's contemporaries objected to his use of God's name because, as one critic wrote, "the name brings up to serious and contemplative minds everything that is sacred." To that, Mr. Strecker responded: "If such be the case, then indeed am I happy in my selection, for methinks anything that would lead us to think of the Creator . . . cannot but be well; and what better than to reflect on sacred things,—on the evidences of the majesty and power of the Supreme Being?" Therefore, collector Strecker concluded: "That there should be any reasonable objection to the bestowal of the Creator's name on one of the most interesting of His works, I cannot possibly surmise."

Strecker's piety and his reverence for the Creator are noteworthy. Christians today are careful to use the majestic name Jehovah in ways that dignify it.

Herman Strecker: From the book *The Passing Scene*, Vol. 8/The Historical Society of Berks County

(Actual size)

# "Timely Counsel"

## FOR EVERYONE

"I WAS moved to tears by the 'oh so sound' and timely counsel," wrote a reader of *The Secret of Family Happiness*. "I'm truly touched and overwhelmed by its detail and sensitivity in dealing with (in principle) every trialsome situation that could develop in the family. . . . I stopped right in the middle of chapter 8 to write to you. I couldn't wait any longer."

This appreciative reader from North Carolina, U.S.A., added: "I pray that my family, as well as many others earth wide, will pay more than the usual attention to the things contained in this book."



Human Solutions

W

With American families still facing a difficult year, many are looking for ways to improve their financial situation. One reader from the U.S.A. offers advice to those who are struggling to make ends meet.

John and Linda have been married for 20 years and have three children. They live in a modest home in a rural area where John works as a carpenter. Linda is a homemaker and they have been trying to save money for a vacation. They recently sold their car and are now driving a used one. They are also trying to reduce their expenses by cutting back on non-essential items like eating out and buying new clothes. They are also trying to increase their income by taking on extra work at home. They are grateful for the support of their family and friends, which has helped them through tough times.

Their story is just one example of how families are facing challenges in today's economy. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, there are resources available to help you. Contact your local government office or non-profit organization for information on programs that can assist you.