

Awake!

October 22, 1993



IS A NEW WORLD NEAR?



Is a New World Near? 3-11

World leaders speak about creating a new world order. Can they do this? Why can we be confident that a new world is near?

Cubs: Courtesy of
Hartbeespoortdam
Snake and Animal Park



Show Business Was My God 12

See how show business became a god to one performer, and learn about the dramatic changes he made.

Probing the Secrets of the Eel 17

It starts life in a different form, migrates thousands of miles, then returns many years later to spawn and die.



A New World—Will It Ever Come?	3
What Kind of World Do You Want?	5
When the New World Will Come	10
Young People Ask . . . How Far Is "Too Far"?	20
Does Exercise Benefit the Elderly?	23
The Fascinating Beauty of the Opal	24
"Man's Most Useful Tree"	26
Watching the World	28
From Our Readers	30
AIDS and Celebrities	31
"A Gift Worthy of Anyone"	32



A NEW WORLD WILL IT EVER COME?

ON APRIL 13, 1991, George Bush, then president of the United States, gave a speech in Montgomery, Alabama, entitled: "The Possibility of a New World Order." In conclusion, he stated: "The new world facing us . . . , it's a wonderful world of discovery."

Two months later *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* said that with the fall of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, "a new world order based on peace, justice, and democracy seemed at hand."

Such talk of a new world has continued into 1993. *The New York Times* reported in January on a treaty that pledged reductions in nuclear arms. The newspaper said: "That puts America and Russia 'at the threshold of a new world of hope,' in President Bush's well-chosen words."

Two weeks afterward the new U.S. president, Bill Clinton, proclaimed in his inaugural address: "Today, as an old order passes, the new world is more free but less stable." He even claimed: "This new world has already enriched the lives of millions of Americans."

So there has been a lot of talk about a new world—a different and better one. By one

count, during a relatively short period, George Bush spoke 42 times in public statements of a "New World Order."

But is such talk unique? Has it been heard before?

Nothing Really New

In May 1919, right after World War I, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America held a meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, at which 'the possibility of a new and a better world' was announced. One speaker asserted: "It will be a new world in which the principle of competition shall have given way to the principle of association and fellowship. It will be a new world in which the principle of unity shall have replaced the principle of division . . . It will be a new world in which brotherliness and friendship will have displaced all antagonisms except the war against evil."

How did the churches believe this new world would come? By means of God's Kingdom government promised in the Bible? No. They looked to a political organization to bring such a new world. "What we speak of today as the League of Nations," one church leader said, "is an indispensable and unavoidable implicate of all our Christian faith and

endeavor in the world." Church leaders of that period even promoted the League of Nations as "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth."

On the other hand, a powerful leader in Germany, Adolf Hitler, opposed the League of Nations and in the 1930's established Germany's Third Reich. He claimed that the Reich would last a thousand years and would accomplish what the Bible says only God's Kingdom can. "I am beginning with the young," Hitler said. "With them I can make a new world."

Hitler had a mammoth stadium built in Nuremberg for displaying Nazi might. Significantly, 144 gigantic pillars were erected on a platform nearly 1,000 feet long. Why 144 pillars? The Bible speaks of 144,000 who would rule with "the Lamb" Jesus Christ, and that their rulership would be for a thousand years. (Revelation 14:1; 20:4, 6) Evidently, the erecting in the Nuremberg stadium of 144 pillars was no numerical accident, since the use of Biblical language and symbolism by Nazi officials is well documented.

What was the result of the efforts of men to fulfill what the Bible says will be accomplished only by God's Kingdom?

Failure of Man's Efforts

History testifies eloquently that the League of Nations failed to usher in a new world of peace. That organization collapsed when the nations became engulfed in World War II.

Further, after just 12 years, the Third Reich lay in ruins. It was a complete failure, a disgrace to the human family.

Throughout history human efforts to create a peaceful new world have invariably been unsuccessful. "Every civilization that has ever existed has ultimately collapsed," former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger observed. "History is a tale of efforts that failed, of aspirations that weren't realized."

What, then, about the new world order that world leaders have recently been touting? Explosions of ethnic violence have made a mockery of the very idea of such a new world. For example, this past March 6, columnist William Pfaff ridiculed: "The new world order has arrived. It is well and truly new, consecrating invasion, aggression and ethnic purge as acceptable international conduct."

The terrible strife and the atrocities that have occurred since the fall of Communism are appalling. Even George Bush, shortly before leaving office in January, acknowledged: "The new world could, in time, be as menacing as the old."

Reason for Hope?

Does this mean that the situation is hopeless? Is a new world only a wishful dream? Clearly, humans have been unable to create a new world. But what about the Creator's promise to do so? "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting accord-

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 pass away.

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

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., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **Awake!**, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589. Printed in U.S.A.

ing to his [God's] promise," the Bible says.
—2 Peter 3:13.

The new heavens that God promises is a new rulership over the earth. This new rulership is God's Kingdom, his heavenly government for which Jesus taught people to pray. (Matthew 6:9, 10) That heavenly government will then be composed of Jesus Christ and 144,000 rulers, and the new earth will be a new society of people. Yes, they will live in a glorious new world loyally supporting God's rulership.

God's Kingdom government will rule over the promised new world. So this new world

will not be of man's making. "The kingdom of God never means an action undertaken by men or a realm which they set up," explains one Bible encyclopedia. "The kingdom is a divine act, not a human accomplishment nor even the accomplishment of dedicated Christians."—*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*.

The new world under God's Kingdom is sure to come. You can rely on the promise of its coming because that promise is made by "God, who cannot lie." (Titus 1:2) Please consider what kind of world God's new world will be.

WHAT KIND OF WORLD DO YOU WANT?

IF YOU had the power, would you create a new world, a world free from all the problems afflicting humans today? If you would, is it not logical to expect that our loving Creator, Jehovah God, who does have the power, will create a new world of righteousness?

The Bible says: "Jehovah is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works. You are

opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145:9, 16) What are some of your desires? What kind of world do you long for?

In their book *A Sane and Happy Life: A Family Guide*, Abraham and Rose Franzblau wrote: "If we were to take a poll of the world population and consult humanity on the kind of world we would all like to live in, it is very

Semimonthly Languages Available by Mail:

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English (also audiocassettes), Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Slovak, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Yoruba, Zulu

Monthly Languages Available by Mail:

Chicheŵa, Chinese, Cibemba, Croatian, Ewe, Gujarati, Hili-gaynon, Igbo, Indonesian, Kannada, Malayalam, Myanmar, New Guinea Pidgin, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Xhosa

Subscription requests should be sent to Watch Tower at the appropriate address below.

America, United States of, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	New Zealand, P.O. Box 142, Manurewa
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	Nigeria, P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, Edo State
Canada L7G 4Y4, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario	South Africa, Private Bag 2067, Krugersdorp, 1740
England NW7 1RN, The Ridgeway, London	Zambia, P.O. Box 33459, Lusaka 10101
Ghana, Box 760, Accra	Zimbabwe, 35 Fife Avenue, Harare

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).

© 1993 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

likely that we could all agree on certain minimum requirements."

Let's examine the requirements listed by these doctors and see if they aren't the same things you want. As we do this, we will also see if our loving Creator has promised to provide these very things.

The First Requirement

The doctors listed first "*a world without war*." After suffering a number of horrible wars, many long for a world in which people will never again fight and kill one another. Their hope is expressed in an inscription on the wall of the United Nations Plaza in New York City, which reads: **THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOW-SHARES. AND THEIR SPEARS INTO PRUNING HOOKS: NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION. NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE.**

Did you know that those words are part of a promise made by Jehovah God? The words are recorded in the Holy Bible at Isaiah chapter 2, verse 4, in the *King James Version*. By also reading Psalm 46:8, 9, you will see that it is God's purpose to destroy all weapons and to make "wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." In the peaceful, warless world of God's making, this delightful Bible prophecy will be fulfilled: "They will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble." —Micah 4:4.

Would you not list "*a world without war*" as a basic requirement for the kind of world that you want? And just think, our Grand Creator has promised it!

A World of Plenty

What would be your second requirement? Would it be the same as the next given, "*a world without hunger, from which famine and*

want would be banished forever"? Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was never again a starving child? Surely you would like to live in a world of plenty. But who can guarantee this?

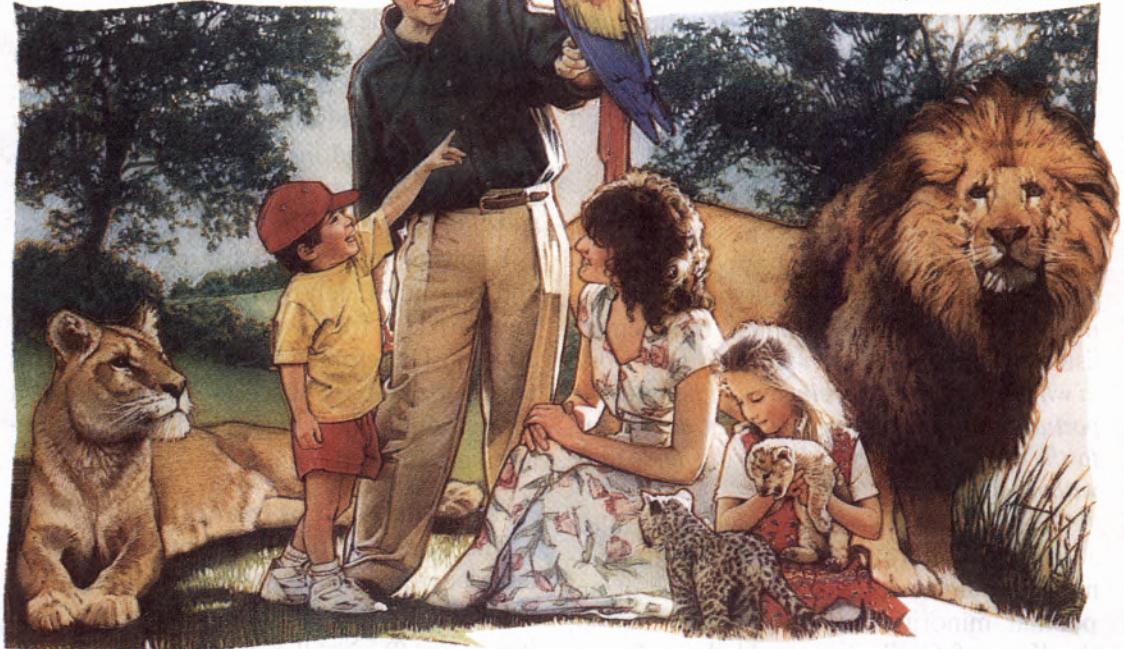
Consider what God promises: "The earth itself will certainly give its produce." "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth." (Psalm 67:6; 72:16) Yes, in God's new world, fine food will be abundant. The Bible assures us that Jehovah "will certainly make for all the peoples . . . a banquet of well-oiled dishes, a banquet of wine kept on the dregs, of well-oiled dishes filled with marrow."—Isaiah 25:6.

While a world without hunger is beyond the capacity of men to provide, it is not beyond the power of God to bring about. His Son, Jesus Christ, demonstrated that providing food for all will be no problem under God's Kingdom. When he was on earth, Jesus fed thousands by miraculously multiplying a few loaves of bread and a few fishes.—Matthew 14:14-21; 15:32-38.

A World Without Sickness

You wouldn't find a sick person anywhere in the kind of world all of us want. So the third requirement is not surprising. "*It would be a world without disease*," the doctors wrote, "*a world in which all would have the chance to grow up in health and live out their days free of preventable and curable illnesses*."

Think of the relief if no one ever got a cold or any other affliction! Humans cannot wipe out sickness, but Jehovah God can. And he promises that in his new world "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" Instead, "at that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness." (Isaiah 33:24; 35:5, 6) Yes, God will "wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be



In the new world, there will be peace, perfect health, and prosperity

no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.”—Revelation 21:4.

When Jesus Christ was on earth, he demonstrated what we can expect on a grand scale in God’s new world. He restored sight to the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, loosed the tongues of the speechless, enabled the lame to walk, and even restored the dead to life.—Matthew 15:30, 31; Luke 7:21, 22.

Satisfying Work and Justice for All

No doubt, satisfying work and justice for all would exist in the world that you and almost everyone else would want. So the doctors wrote: “Fourth, it would be a world with work for those who wish to earn a livelihood to provide for themselves and their families.” And they added: “Fifth, it would be a world in which every man would enjoy freedom under law, with justice for all.”

Human rule has never been able to fulfill these requirements for happy living. But

God’s new world will. The Bible promises regarding the beneficial work that people will do at that time: “They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. . . . The work of their own hands my chosen ones will use to the full. They will not toil for nothing.”—Isaiah 65:21-23.

What about freedom and justice for all? No matter how earnestly human rulers have tried, they have failed to provide these for everyone. Injustice and oppression continue to reign worldwide. So humans can never satisfy this need. But Almighty God can. His appointed Ruler is the resurrected Jesus Christ, and of him Jehovah says: “My chosen one, whom my soul has approved! . . . Justice to the nations is what he will bring forth.”—Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:18.

Yes, the Bible promises that under God’s Kingdom “the creation itself also will be set

free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God." (Romans 8:21) What a happy new world it will be when there is freedom and justice for all!

Opportunities and Leisure

Surely in the kind of world you want, all citizens would enjoy equal opportunities regardless of race or nationality. Not surprising, therefore, a sixth minimum requirement listed by the doctors is: *"It would be a world in which every human being would have the opportunity to develop his capacities and talents to the full, and be rewarded for his endeavors, without prejudice."*

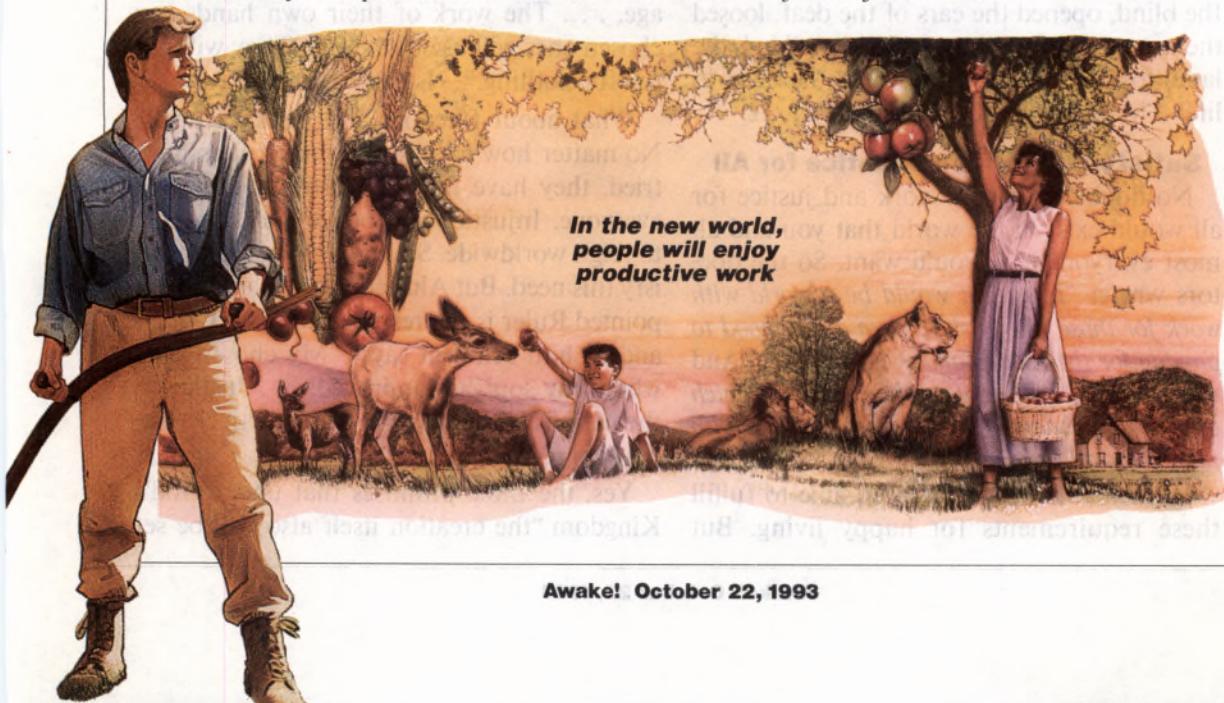
Humans have never been able to establish a world in which all people enjoyed fair treatment. Prejudice and even persecution of unpopular minorities continue unabated. Yet, the King of God's new world, Jesus Christ, will copy the example of Jehovah, his Father, who "treats none with partiality nor accepts a bribe." (Deuteronomy 10:17; Romans 2:11) What will make the coming new world so marvelous is that not only will all people be taught to imitate the impartiality of Jehovah God but they will practice it.—Isaiah 54:13.

Often people's lives have been devoted to grinding labor with little or no relief. So you will surely agree with the next minimum requirement, namely: *"Seventh, it would be a world in which all men would have ample leisure to enjoy those things they regard as the good things in life."*

Knowing man's need for periods of rest and relaxation, Jehovah God in his ancient Law provided for a weekly rest day. (Exodus 20:8-11) Therefore, we can be sure that in his new world, God will see to it that our need for relaxation and wholesome forms of recreation are fulfilled.

The Kind of Inhabitants

The last essential given by the doctors describes qualities possessed by those who would inhabit "the kind of world we would all like to live in." See if you don't consider vital the qualities they list. *"Eighth, it would be a world in which the highest premium would be placed upon those qualities which distinguish man from the lower orders of life, such as intelligence and creativity, honor and integrity, love and loyalty, self-respect and unselfishness, and concern for his fellow men."*



In the new world, there will be time for leisure activities



Would you not enjoy living in a world in which everyone exhibited the moral qualities of integrity, love, loyalty, unselfishness, and concern for fellow humans? Surely this is the kind of world you want! No human rulers could ever provide this. Only Jehovah God can. And he will because his new world is not an unrealistic, pie-in-the-sky dream.—Psalm 85:10, 11.

When Will It Come?

As noted in the preceding article, a close companion of Jesus Christ wrote: “There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to [God’s] promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell.” (2 Peter 3:13) The time for the fulfillment of this promise will be, as Jesus noted, “in the re-creation, when the Son of man sits down upon his glorious throne.”—Matthew 19:28.

God originally instructed Adam and Eve, the first human pair, to enlarge the Paradise garden in which He placed them. He wanted them to bear children and with them to make the entire earth a beautiful garden of Eden. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7-9, 15) Although Adam and Eve failed to carry out this purpose, there will be a restoration of the earthly Paradise in the re-creation, with Christ ruling in the Kingdom. Eventually, Edenic conditions will be extended earth wide. Thus our loving Creator will fulfill his original purpose to have a peaceful, righteous world. But when will it come?

Do you think like many who say, ‘Oh, it will come sometime but not in our lifetime.’ Yet, how do you know? Could our time of unprecedented world distress be a sign that God’s new world is at hand? How can we know?

WHEN THE NEW WORLD WILL COME

GOD'S new world will come when this present one passes away. But you may ask, 'Can we really believe that this world will end?' Well, consider, has one ever ended before?

Yes, according to conclusive evidence, a world once ended. "The world of that time [Noah's day] suffered destruction when it was deluged with water," the Bible says. God "did not hold back from punishing an ancient world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world of ungodly people."—2 Peter 2:5; 3:6.

Notice that it was "a world of ungodly people," or a wicked system of things, that perished. It was not the planet Earth, the starry heavens, or the human family that ended. As the Flood survivors increased in number, another world (our present one) came into existence. What will happen to it?

After saying that the world of Noah's day suffered destruction, the Bible continues: "By the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire." (2 Peter 3:7) Fire signifies destruction for the world. Indeed, "the world [the one existing today] is passing away." (1 John 2:17) But when?

A time of great trouble immediately precedes the new world

Jesus' apostles wanted to know, so they asked: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3, *King James Version*) In answer Jesus gave a sign that would enable people living at the time of its fulfillment to know that one world was soon going to end; a new world would take its place. What was that sign?

The Sign

The sign included many parts, yes, many events were foretold. For the sign to be fulfilled, all of these would have to occur in a notable way at essentially the same time, during one generation. (Matthew 24:34) What are these events?

Some named by Jesus were: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another pestilences and food shortages." "Then people will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name. . . . Because of the increasing of lawlessness the love of the greater number will cool off."—Luke 21:10, 11; Matthew 24:7-9, 12.

The apostle Paul gave other conditions that would mark "the last days" of this world. He wrote: "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, . . . headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power."—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Surely, you have seen or heard about all of these things—international conflicts eclipsing former wars, great earthquakes, widespread pestilences and food shortages, hatred

and persecution of Christ's followers, an increase of lawlessness, and critical times of unsurpassed magnitude. Besides these things, the Bible foretells that God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11:18) And humans are ruining the earth right now!

Last November, newspapers carried headlines like this: "Top Scientists Warn of Earth's Destruction." Dr. Henry Kendall, a Nobel laureate and chairman of the Union of Concerned Scientists, said: "This warning is no exaggeration, and it is not alarmist." One newspaper article reported: "The list of 1,575 scientists who drafted the warning reads like a who's who in the international scientific community." Their warning of complete ruination for our earth is not to be ignored!

There can be no question about it. The sign in all its parts is being fulfilled, including Jesus' key prediction: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come," yes, the end of this world. (Matthew 24:14) It will come, Jesus said, when the good news of God's Kingdom has been preached worldwide. And that preaching is now being done on the foretold scale by Jehovah's Witnesses!

What You Need to Do

All evidence, therefore, points to the fact that God's new world is very near. Yet, if you are to survive the end of this world and are to enjoy life in the new world, you need to do something. After saying that "the world is passing away," the Bible shows what is required of you, explaining: "He that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

So you need to learn God's will and do it. Jehovah's Witnesses will be delighted to help you do this. Then you can survive this world's end to enjoy eternally the blessings of God's new world.

THE loud, sustained applause was music to my ears. It lifted my spirits, making all the countless hours of practice seem worthwhile. I was a flier in a trapeze act, and I was intoxicated with success.

Part of my act also was to somersault over elephants, to stand on my head on a pole precariously balanced on the shoulders of another man, to perform a complicated juggling act, and to bring peals of laughter from the audience as a clown.

That was over 45 years ago, when I was only 17. I marvel now at what feats an agile young body can perform with disciplined practice and a strict regimen of careful living. Show business had, in effect, become my whole life, my god, and it remained so for more than 20 years.

Introduction to Circus Life

I was born in Kempsey, New South Wales, Australia. We were poor—our house had whitewashed corn bags for walls and old pieces of tin for a roof. A few years later, we moved farther south, to Taree. Ours was not a religious family, although we were nominal members of the Church of Christ.

In 1939 my father joined the army. Mother then packed the only things we possessed, our clothes, and with my three sisters and me moved to Sydney. There I attended a school for acrobats and showed surprising natural ability. In just a few months, I became an expert acrobat. Then, in 1946, I was offered a job in a circus to learn to be the flier in a trapeze act.

Show Business Was My God



The circus played a different town almost every night. The crowds came to see the glamour of the big top, but, of course, what they did not see were the fights and drunken brawls behind the scenes. Nor did they know of the loose moral behavior of many of the artists they so much admired.

I was continually at parties and always seemed to get involved in fights. I am grateful that heavy drinking never appealed to me. I also avoided the habit of using bad language and could not stand to hear anyone swear in the presence of a woman. This was the cause of many of my fights.

In every sizable town where we performed, someone was sent around to the local Catholic priest with free passes for him and a donation to the church. This was supposed to bring good luck and ensure that the circus would be well attended.

A Change to Vaudeville

In 1952, I was told by some vaudeville artists that the way to make more money and achieve greater success was to do vaudeville acts. So I began doing numerous traveling vaudeville shows. Then I worked the club circuit and finally performed at many leading theaters in Australia and New Zealand. I was appearing with big-name artists, while, at the same time, making quite a name for myself as a juggler and an acrobat.

I felt that changing to vaudeville had been the right choice, but I was disappointed that parties, immorality, and heavy drinking were even worse in vaudeville than in the circus. I now came in contact with homosexuals and Lesbians. Drugs also began to appear on the scene, but I am glad that I never became involved with them.

All I thought about was making a name for myself and improving my act. Show biz and the adulation I received were all I wanted.

They gave me all the highs I needed. I even determined that I was never going to marry. No responsibility for me—I was having too good a time. Show business was my god. But the best-laid plans can go awry.

Marriage

One day, while I was looking for talented ballerinas to join a traveling vaudeville show, I met one of the most beautiful girls I had ever seen. Her name was Robyn. Not only was she a capable ballet dancer but she was also a talented contortionist. To my delight she readily accepted the job and became my partner in a successful two-person act. Five months later, in June 1957, we were married. For the next three years, we worked the clubs, toured in shows, and appeared on television.

After we were married, we kept to ourselves as much as we could, avoiding mixing with other artists on a social level as far as possible. Even when appearing in the clubs, I made sure Robyn stayed in the dressing room until we had to go on stage. The comics told filthy jokes, and some of the musicians were on drugs. Most of them continually drank and used bad language.

Working in Other Countries

In 1960 we were offered a contract to perform overseas. ‘This is our big break,’ I thought. Yet, by now we had a little daughter, Julie, to think about. Nevertheless, I dragged my family around the Far East, living out of suitcases, sometimes doing up to five shows a night. This lasted for more than a year, and then we returned to Australia.

Now that we had attained the status of an international act, our show was in great demand. But there were limited opportunities in Australia because of its relatively small population. So in 1965 we went overseas again. This time we had not only Julie but



The girl I married was a contortionist

another little daughter, Amanda. During the next five years, we worked in 18 different countries.

The hardships I put my family through because of my obsession to be the best were terrible. Once I paid a man to stand guard with a shotgun to protect our children, who were only 200 feet from where we were performing. Often I argued with club owners who wanted Robyn to sit with customers to encourage them to drink, but those revelers expected more. We worked in clubs with strippers, prostitutes, and homosexuals, some of whom would make lewd propositions either to me or to my wife. And the rock-band musicians were often high on drugs.

During our travels, I had plenty of time during the day to sightsee. I was constantly visiting zoos, mosques, temples, churches, or religious festivals. I visited these out of curiosity, since I wasn't really religiously inclined. It astonished me that so many different things were worshiped. There were statues of men with animal heads, and animals with men's and women's heads. In one country, people even worshiped the genital organs of men and women, apparently believing this would increase the worshipers' own sexual and reproductive powers.

In another country, boys and men would hit themselves on the back with three-bladed knives until blood poured out. The day I was there, three men lost their lives because of losing too much blood. In one well-known cathedral, I was disgusted to see on the confession boxes this sign: "One confession, 1 franc; two confessions, 2 francs; three confessions, 2.50 francs." I thought to myself: 'If that's religion, they can keep it!'

Return to Australia

In 1968 we sent Julie home, but it took us another 18 months to save enough money to pay the fares for the rest of us to return. In 1970 we arrived home with very little money or fame to show for all our hard work. Most of our money had gone for costumes, music, travel, accommodations, and corrupt agents. All we had were our stage props and what we could carry in our suitcases.

After returning to Australia, I expanded my activities and also became a theatrical agent. I obtained a contract as a clown in a long-running television show called *The Yellow House*. I wrote and produced children's pantomimes and clown shows for various clubs, while continuing with Robyn in our act. Show business was still my god. Robyn and the children began to suffer; it was as if I were neither husband nor father.

The Challenge of Religion

One day my mother-in-law, who was living with us, showed Robyn the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. "Read this," she said. "It's about religion, but it's different." Robyn refused, saying that after what we had seen overseas, she wasn't interested in religion. Her mother, however, did not give up. She followed Robyn around for a week, insisting that she read the book. Finally Robyn gave in, mainly to please her mother.

It was as if Robyn's eyes had suddenly been

opened, she later explained. She was so impressed with the answers to so many of her questions that she wanted to know more. Two weeks later her mother arranged for two of Jehovah's Witnesses to call at our home. After a couple of visits, they invited us to one of their assemblies held nearby. I reluctantly agreed to go. Actually, I was so impressed that we began to attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall.

Yet, show business was still my god, so I soon realized there was no future for me with the Witnesses. Robyn, however, wanted to continue to learn Bible truths, even if I didn't. I was outraged. 'What right,' I felt, 'do these people have to come between me and my wife, filling her mind with religious garbage?'

Even my threats to walk out on our marriage were to no avail. Robyn stood her ground and continued studying. She even began going out talking to others from door to door about her beliefs. The last straw was when she told me that she wanted to get baptized and become a dedicated Witness. However, she was advised to wait till after she gave up working in show business.

'Aha!' I thought. 'I've won. They won't have her. She will never give up her act.' But I was wrong. Robyn gave me one year, after which, she said, she would quit. I laughed, believing she would never leave the act that she liked so much. But again I was wrong. One year later she left show business and was baptized. And so were our daughter Julie and Robyn's mother.

My Fight Against the Truth

After that I verbally abused Robyn, telling her that she had let me down, that she didn't care for me. "Show business is my whole life. There is nothing else I can do," I lamented. "My troubles are all your fault." I even threatened to beat up the Witnesses, whom I

blamed for breaking up our act and causing all our problems.

Robyn started leaving Bible magazines around the house, hoping I would read them. This didn't work, so she eventually gave up. But she never gave up praying to Jehovah that somehow I would learn the truth and that we could all be together as a family in the new world.

In time, I began to tolerate the Witnesses when they visited the house, and occasionally I allowed the children to persuade me to go with them to a meeting. But I was critical of all I heard there. Yet, I admitted to myself that the people at the Kingdom Hall, who included many nationalities—Arabic, Greek, Italian, English, as well as Australians—all seemed to get on well together. They were always friendly, and no one used bad language or engaged in immoral talk.

Robyn and me today



Helped by a Real Christian

Eventually I agreed to a regular Bible study with Ted Wieland, an outstandingly kind, humble man. He served at Bethel, the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses. Once when I was giving Robyn a particularly hard time, Ted called me down to his car, reached into the trunk, and gave me a box of mangoes. Mangoes happened to be my favorite fruit, but I don't think Ted knew that. This went on for weeks: a box of mangoes every time Ted came by. One day he reached into the trunk for what I thought was the usual box of fruit, then calmly turned around and said: "Do you think you could hang this on the wall?" It was the Bible text for the year, which the Witnesses display in their homes. What could I say? I hung it on the wall.

As my Bible study with Ted progressed, he showed me from the Bible that show business offered no real future. The only sure hope for a happy future, he explained, was in the fulfillment of the Bible prophecies regarding the Kingdom for which Christ taught us to pray. (Matthew 6:9, 10) Though I still had show-business contracts to fulfill, I began attending congregation meetings regularly. I enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School and even began sharing in the house-to-house ministry.

I began to see that show business had nothing to offer. I had gained nothing materially in all the years that I had devoted to what had been my god. My family had suffered—being dragged around the world and living out of suitcases. Indeed, show business had almost broken up my marriage. But now the Supreme One of the universe was offering me the opportunity to live forever on a paradise earth under the rule of his Kingdom.

So I made the most important decision of my life. When I had finished my show business contracts, I completely cut all ties with the world of entertainment. I never went back to a club or associated again with those who

made that business their way of life. Ted went through the questions with me that baptismal candidates consider. However, Ted died, and shortly afterward I was baptized, on July 26, 1975. I'm looking forward to meeting that wonderful man in the new world when he is resurrected.—John 5:28, 29.

No Shortage of Blessings

Jehovah has provided us with more than we ever received from all our years in show business. He has freed me from the corrupt, immoral world of entertainment. He has rewarded the prayers of my faithful wife, who stuck by me and never gave up. He has blessed us in that my wife's mother and our two older daughters and their husbands are all active in the Christian ministry. Our youngest daughter, Letitia, and the oldest of our three grandchildren, Micah, are both unbaptized proclaimers of the good news. Jehovah has also blessed me with the privilege of serving as an elder in the Christian congregation.

Robyn and I can never repay Jehovah for what he has done for us. We can, though, warn others—especially younger ones—of the dangers of the world of show business and the wrong type of entertainment. We can warn them, from our own personal observation, of the misery that follows immorality, drugs, heavy drinking, the wrong type of music, songs that emphasize illicit sex, and the dangers involved when one frequents clubs or rock concerts. All these things are part of a world completely under the control of Satan the Devil.—2 Corinthians 4:4.

It is easy to become ensnared in the worship of Satan unknowingly, as I was when I made show business my god. Now, however, my wife and I are happy to encourage all younger ones to worship Jehovah, the one God who can satisfy all the desires of the heart—the God who really cares for us in every way.—*As told by Vivian A. Weekes.*

PROBING THE SECRETS OF THE EEL

By Awake! correspondent in Ireland



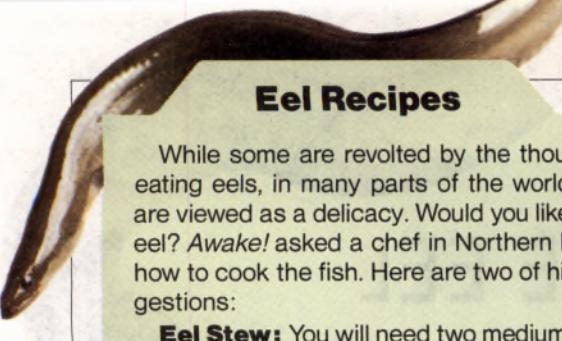
Ireland's River Bann teems with millions of eels

EELS baffled Aristotle, the ancient Greek philosopher. However much he examined these smooth-skinned, snakelike fish, he found neither sex organs nor eggs. "The eel," he said, "is neither male nor female, and can engender nothing." He concluded: "Eels are derived from the so-called 'earth's guts' that grow spontaneously in mud and in humid ground."

Modern researchers have solved this particular mystery about the eel. Christopher Moriarty of the Department of the Marine in

Ireland explains that while most fish show very distinct eggs, the eel shows no sign of even a small egg. "The ovary of the eel," he says, "is inconspicuous—almost invisible in young specimens, and forming no more than a whitish, frilled ribbon in more mature ones."

Since no spawning eel has ever been caught, even up to modern times, you can understand why Aristotle was puzzled. Not having a microscope, he had no way of finding out where eels came from.



Eel Recipes

While some are revolted by the thought of eating eels, in many parts of the world, they are viewed as a delicacy. Would you like to try eel? *Awake!* asked a chef in Northern Ireland how to cook the fish. Here are two of his suggestions:

Eel Stew: You will need two medium-sized eels about 20 inches or so in length. They need to be skinned and boned and cut into two-inch pieces. You will also need four tablespoonfuls of olive oil; several crushed garlic cloves; one bouquet garni; juice of one orange; some grated orange rind; a pinch of red chili pepper; a pinch of salt; five fluid ounces of red wine.

Put the olive oil in an earthenware casserole or thick-bottomed pan large enough to hold all the ingredients. Add the crushed garlic, bouquet garni, orange juice and rind, and red chili pepper. Season the pieces of eel with salt,

and put them in the casserole. Pour the wine over them, and add enough water to cover the eels. Cook uncovered over a moderate heat for about 30 minutes until the eel is cooked. Serve on heated plates.

Jellied Eels: Put at least a cup of skinned, boned, chopped eels into a saucepan. Add a chopped onion, a carrot, a stick of celery, a bay leaf, some parsley, salt and pepper, and enough water, white wine, or cider to cover the ingredients. Bring this slowly to a boil, and simmer covered for about an hour. Put the cooked eel pieces into a container. Boil the remaining ingredients until they reduce by a quarter, then strain the liquid over the pieces of eel. Discard the vegetables and herbs. Cool the pieces of eel and the liquid to form a jelly. Eat it with lemon juice and buttered toast, just like pâté.

While scientists have solved this particular mystery about the eel, they have uncovered others that are still puzzling. Take a look, for example, at the life cycle of the European freshwater eel, and see if it does not intrigue you.

The Mystery of Its Origin

Each spring, millions of tiny eels two or three inches long—called elvers—arrive near the shores of Western Europe and North Africa. Where do they come from? Until the 1920's, no one knew.

However, near the end of the 19th century, a startling discovery was made that contributed to a solution of this mystery. It was observed that the eel, like the frog and the butterfly, starts life in a different form. Biologists discerned for the first time that a slim, transparent fish called leptocephalus, with a tiny head and a body shaped like a willow leaf, metamorphosed, or changed form, to become a tiny transparent larva called a glass eel.

Once the connection between the lepto-

cephalus and the glass eel was made, it was possible to track the eel larvae back to their source. In 1922, Danish oceanographer Johannes Schmidt discovered that the spawning ground of all Atlantic eels is the Sargasso sea, a vast, weed-strewed area of ocean in the North Atlantic. Both the American and the European eels spawn there, and therein lies another mystery.

Take Different Routes

American and European eel larvae go their different ways somewhere near Bermuda. "How they know which way to go when neither has ever seen its 'home' is an unanswered question," says *The Fresh & Salt Water Fishes of the World*. The book goes on: "For the American eels, the trip is about 1,000 miles; the journey requires about a year. European eels travel 3,000 miles or more, their trip taking nearly three years. Equally astonishing is the fact that the growth rates of the two eels [which are almost impossible to tell apart] differ so that each has developed to about the

same size by the time they reach their destination."

Some amazing instinct directs the two types of eels to go their separate ways. Of this mysterious event, the book *Fishes of Lakes, Rivers & Oceans* says: "How and why they manage this astonishing maneuver is as much a puzzle as their origins were in Aristotle's time."

Life in Freshwater

When the growing elvers, now yellow-brown in color, finish their ocean crossing, they instinctively travel upriver to reach the lakes, ponds, and streams where they will grow to maturity over the next 15 years and more. They overcome all obstacles to reach their objective.

The book *The Royal Natural History* describes "the banks of the rivers being in places black with these migrating little fishes." It continues: "These young eels have been observed to ascend floodgates of lochs, to creep up water-pipes or drains . . . and they will even make a circuit over a wet piece of ground in order to attain a desirable spot."

In the River Bann in Northern Ireland, fishermen have laid down elver ladders made of straw at the most difficult part of the river. Here, the elvers climb these ropes into special tanks where they are counted—20,000,000 of them every year!

Transformation and Migration

When the eels reach maturity, something else very mysterious happens. "A series of remarkable changes associated with the onset of maturity take place," says the book *Fishes of the Sea*. "The eye increases in diameter and becomes specialized for vision in deep ocean waters; the gut begins to atrophy and the gonads enlarge. The colour also changes from a yellow brown to a silver grey."

Each autumn, mature eels begin a 3,000-

mile migration back to the Sargasso sea. How they accomplish this remarkable feat of navigation no one knows. They stop feeding and during the six-month journey survive on the fat deposits they have built up.

Biologists say that once back in the deep waters of the Sargasso sea, the female eel lays from 10 to 20 million eggs, and the male fertilizes them. Then the adults die. The fertilized eggs float to the surface and hatch as the leaf-shaped leptocephalus, and the cycle is complete.

Why has no spawning eel ever been caught? "They are no longer feeding, since their digestive organs have wasted away, so they cannot be caught with baited lines," says Christopher Moriarty. "They spawn at great depths," he continues, "and since the area of the Sargasso Sea is greater than that of the British Isles, and eels are elusive creatures, they will always have a good chance of escaping fast-moving trawls."

Perhaps one day all the mysteries surrounding this remarkable creature will be solved. In the meantime, according to researcher Moriarty, when it comes to fascinating fish, 'the eel is really outstanding.'

Did You Know?

The mature female European eel measures about 36 inches long, but the male is only half that size.

Some mature eels living in landlocked ponds or lakes never migrate. They can live in such places for 50 years or more.

Eels can survive for 48 hours out of water.

The oldest eel on record was a female named Putte. She died in an aquarium at over 85 years of age.

Eels have an exceptionally keen sense of smell, at least as sensitive as a dog's.

Young People Ask...



How Far Is "Too Far"?

"Could you please warn people about the dangers of going too far? . . . All the 'in between' needs to be addressed, because it's what leads to sex. My question is, where is the limit?"

That is what one girl asked a magazine for teenagers. But perhaps it's a question you have also wondered about.

If you are a Christian, you take seriously the words at 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6: "This is what God wills, the sanctifying of you, that you abstain from fornication; . . . that no one go to the point of harming and encroach upon the rights of his brother in this matter,

because Jehovah is one who exacts punishment for all these things."

So although you may realize that sexual intercourse by unmarried Christians is wrong, you may still wonder how God views kissing, hugging, or caressing someone of the opposite sex.

A Part of Growing Up?

First of all, it is good to keep in mind that the Bible does not condemn legitimate, clean expressions of affection free from sexual overtones. Ancient Christians were quite demonstrative of their love for one another. They would commonly "greet one another with a holy kiss." (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20) Even Christians of the same sex would kiss and embrace.—Compare Acts 20:37.

In a number of cultures, kissing and embracing are still considered appropriate ways to show affection for someone. However, many youths today show affection in ways that go beyond a reasonable definition of what is appropriate. One U.S. survey found that over two thirds of teenagers polled said that they had engaged in some form of petting involving the caressing of intimate body parts. Many started doing so as early as age 14. As found in another survey, 49 percent had engaged in petting to the point of sexual climax.

Some justify such sexual experimentation as simply a part of growing up. According to the book *The Family Handbook of Adolescence*, "sex play and exploration are commonplace among virtually all normal adolescents." Some people even recommend petting. The book *Growing Into Love*, by Kathryn Burkhardt, claims: "Because it stops short of intercourse, most petting can be experienced free from anxiety and serve as a wonderful outlet for sexual energy."

The question is, though, How does God view such behavior?

What's in a Kiss?

When you are in "the bloom of youth," sexual desire runs strong. (1 Corinthians 7:36) Therefore, it is only natural to be curious about what it feels like to kiss or touch someone of the opposite sex. But *The Family Handbook of Adolescence* points out: "Sexual ability precedes, sometimes by many years, emotional maturity." Indeed, many youths do not fully appreciate that a kiss or a caress has the power to arouse strong romantic feelings or sexual urges.

Wisely, therefore, you must consider the consequences of engaging in conduct that arouses sexual feelings. What if you are too young to marry? Then why kiss or do *anything* in a way that would arouse you sexually? All that this would accomplish is to cause you frustration. This is because there is no way for you as a true Christian to take those romantic feelings to their logical conclusion—sexual intercourse. The Bible makes clear that such relations are proper only within marriage.—1 Corinthians 6:18.

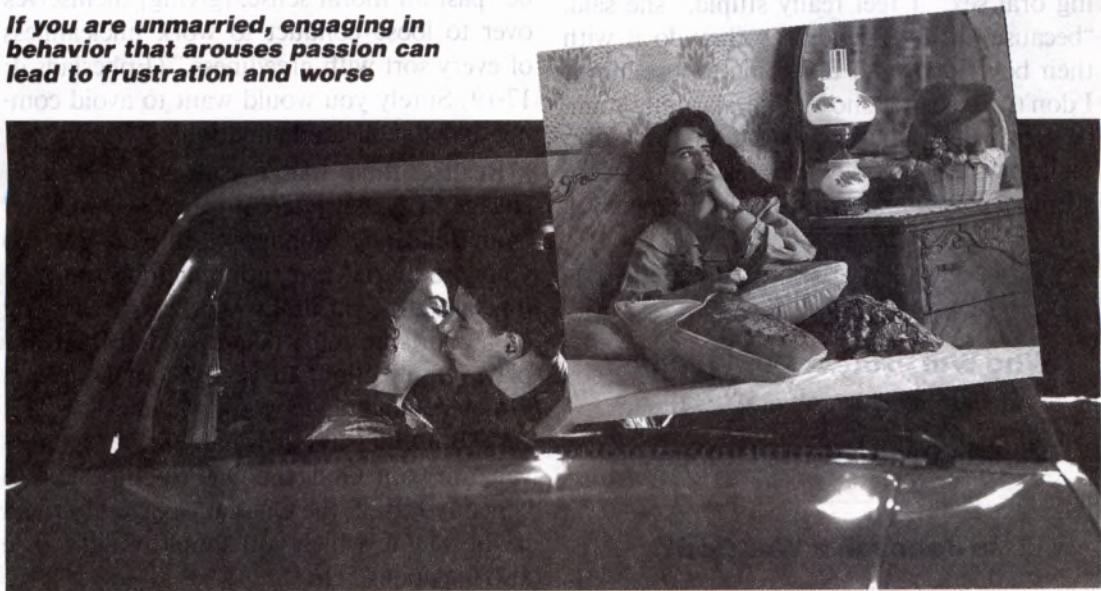
Consider, too, the other person, who might

If you are unmarried, engaging in behavior that arouses passion can lead to frustration and worse

be aroused sexually by your romantic activity. Is it not deceitful, and even cruel, to kiss or caress someone you are not in a position to marry or may not even seriously consider as a potential marriage mate? (Compare Proverbs 26:18, 19.) The Bible warns: "The cruel person is bringing ostracism upon his own organism."—Proverbs 11:17.

It shouldn't be any secret to a Bible student that a romantic touch or a kiss can arouse strong sexual desire. The Bible tells of the seduction of a young man by a prostitute. It says: "She has grabbed hold of him and given him a kiss." (Proverbs 7:13) Such a kiss or touch can trigger a profound physical response. As intimacies progress a boy or a girl becomes increasingly aroused. Frankly, the body is getting ready for sexual intercourse.

If a couple are married, they can satisfy their passions in a delightful and honorable way. But when an unmarried couple indulge in passion-arousing sexual play, problems are sure to result. In one survey, writer Nancy Van Pelt found that many youths who got involved in petting openly admitted they had



simply got, as they put it, "carried away." Typical is a young girl who was pressured into going further than she ever had before. Although she did not engage in sexual intercourse, she did allow the boy to touch her intimately. She says: "Now I feel terrible." Was what she permitted the boy to do to her really wrong?

What Is "Too Far"?

Some youths believe that as long as they don't engage in sexual intercourse, they haven't gone too far, that what they do isn't really wrong. *The Bible shows otherwise.* At Galatians 5:19-21, the apostle Paul said: "The works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct . . . those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom."

What is fornication? The original Greek word for fornication is *por-nei'a*. It refers to sexual activity involving the use of the genital organs carried on outside the bonds of marriage. One girl quoted in *Seventeen* allowed her boyfriend to pressure her into performing oral sex. "I feel really stupid," she said, "because all my friends say they do it with their boyfriends and I'm going to lose him if I don't." Research shows that alarming numbers of youths have engaged in that form of immorality. Nevertheless, such acts constitute *por-nei'a* and bring God's disapproval.

The apostle Paul also linked fornication with "uncleanness." The original Greek word, *aka-tharsi'a*, covers impurity of any kind, in speech or action. Surely it would be unclean to allow one's hands to stray under someone's clothing, to remove someone's clothing, or to caress another's intimate areas, such as the breasts. Why, in the Bible the caressing of the breasts is associated with the pleasures reserved for married couples.—Proverbs 5:18, 19; compare Hosea 2:2.

Some youths nevertheless brazenly defy these godly standards. They *deliberately* go too far, or they greedily seek out numerous partners with whom they can practice sexual uncleanness. They are thus guilty of what the apostle Paul called "loose conduct."

Various authorities show that the original Greek word for "loose conduct" (*asel'geia*) means 'outrageous acts, excess, insolence, unbridled lust, and outrageousness.' Youths who practice loose conduct are like the pagans Paul referred to. Because of "the insensibility of their hearts," those pagans came to be "past all moral sense, [giving] themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness." (Ephesians 4:17-19) Surely you would want to avoid coming under such condemnation!

Realize, then, that one does not have to engage in sexual intercourse to go "too far" from Jehovah's standpoint. If you are too young to marry, romantic touching and kissing should be off-limits. And those carrying on a courtship must take care that their displays of affection do not become unclean. Granted, holding to godly standards is not easy. But God says at Isaiah 48:17: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk."—See also Galatians 5:16.

In Our Next Issue

Who Will Protect Our Wildlife?

Visible Proof of the Holocaust

Is Jehovah a War God?

Does Exercise Benefit the Elderly?

"Can Exercise Alter the Aging Process?" That was a headline in *The New York Times* nearly five years ago. The article reported: "Medical scientists from Tufts University [in Boston] have found that people as old as in their 90's can become stronger and even increase the size of their muscles if they are put through an aggressive weight-training regimen."

The evidence that the elderly can indeed benefit from exercise has continued to mount. The February 1991 issue of the *Harvard Health Letter* reported on a 1990 study, saying: "Nine [nursing home residents] between the ages of 87 and 96 completed two months of high-intensity resistance training using weights." Regarding this study, the *Mayo Clinic Nutrition Letter* explained: "Participants nearly doubled leg muscle strength, increased thigh

muscle size by 9 percent and improved performance on mobility tests."

The researchers reported: "The favorable response to strength training in our subjects is remarkable in light of their very advanced age, extremely seden-

tary habits, multiple chronic diseases and functional disabilities and nutritional inadequacies." The value of exercise has been proved time and again.

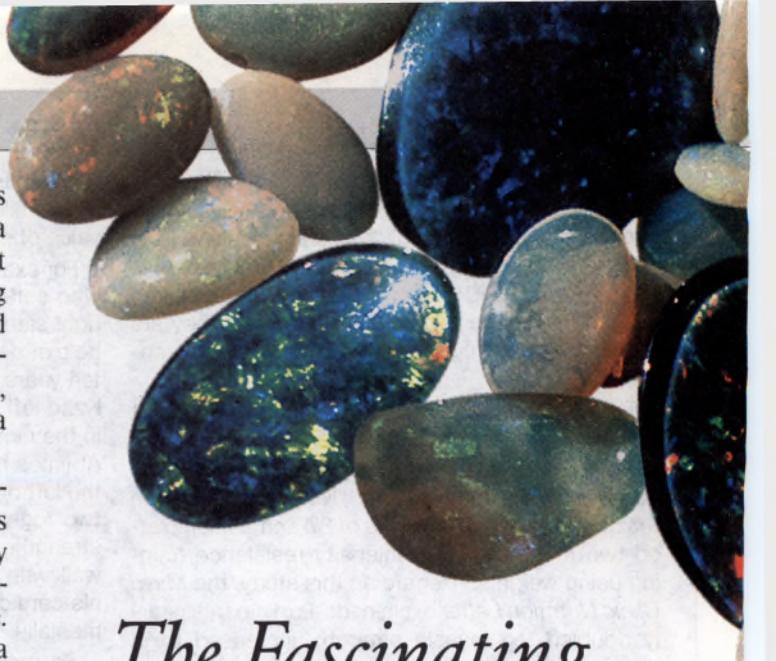
For example, consider 90-year-old Jack Siebert, who suffered a stroke in 1979 that paralyzed his right side and left him unable to walk without the help of a walker. Practically every morning for over ten years, he has lain in bed and held his unparalyzed left leg aloft, moving it for about 20 minutes in the motion one would use in pumping a bicycle. At times he will support the paralyzed right leg on the left one (as seen in the picture) and rotate the two together. Not only has this regular exercise strengthened his leg muscles so that he can still walk with a walker but it has helped him to maintain his cardiovascular system and has kept him alert mentally.

So, remember, it is never too late to start exercising. True, you may never run the Boston Marathon—a 26-mile, 385-yard race—in five hours and five minutes, as did 82-year-old John Kelley in 1990. Nor is it likely that you will even be able to complete that distance in seven hours and nine minutes, as did the 84-year-old great-grandmother Mavis Lindgren in 1991. Nevertheless, *Circulation*, a journal of the American Heart Association, urged last year: "It's important to get in the habit of looking for ways to be active."

The journal explained: "Even low-intensity activities performed daily can have some long-term health benefits and lower the risk of cardiovascular disease. Such activities include walking for pleasure, gardening, yard work, house work, dancing and prescribed home exercise."

An elderly disabled person can benefit from exercise, as has this 90-year-old stroke victim





A POPULAR lyric says that 'diamonds are a girl's best friend.' But diamonds are not alone in being able to dazzle their enchanted owners. Why, for flashing colors and breathtaking beauty, the multicolored opal is in a class of its own!

Opal is a form of noncrystalline silica. Chemically, it is much the same as ordinary sand. However, it contains water within its mineral structure. Centuries ago, a watery silica gel seeped into crevices and cracks in rocks. As the water evaporated, the gel eventually hardened to become opal.

Prospecting for Opal

Freeing opal from its rocky home is no easy task, however. It is found mostly in remote, semidesert areas, where heat, myriads of buzzing flies, and limited water supplies often make life unpleasant. And as with most prospecting endeavors, success depends to a large extent upon chance.

Furthermore, 95 percent of all opal discovered is common opal. It is dull and valueless. Of the remaining opal unearthed, only a tiny percentage is precious opal, or gem opal.

So while fabulous wealth has been the reward of some prospectors, countless others have dug in vain. Picks, shovels, and

The Fascinating Beauty of the Opal

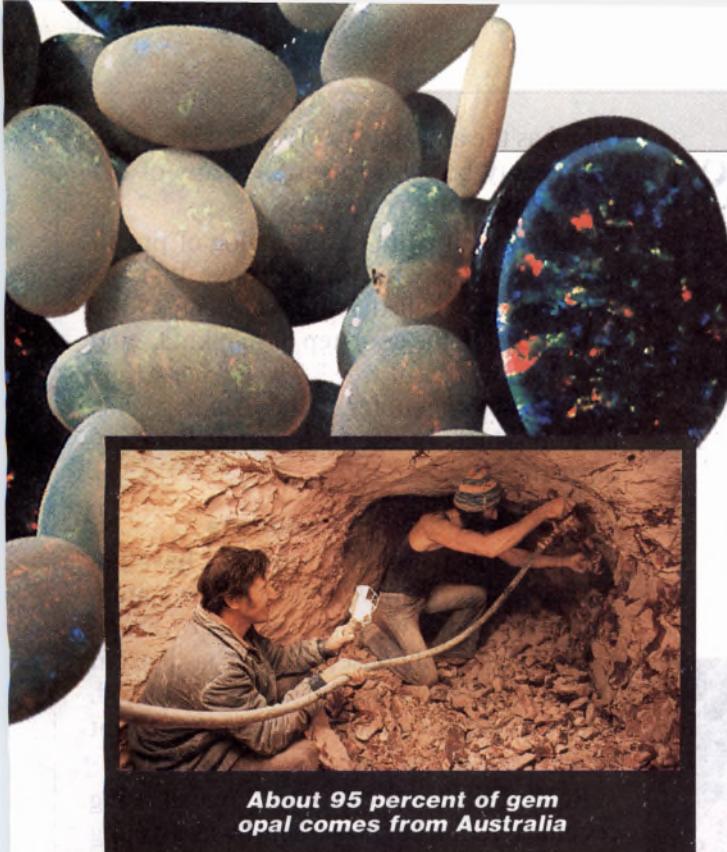
By Awake! correspondent in Australia

hammers have been the prospector's basic tools for decades. First, he digs a narrow shaft into the hard, dry ground until he reaches the clay level where opal is likely to be found. Then he tunnels horizontally, lamp in hand, looking for the flash of color that indicates he has hit a trace of opal.

This method has given way to more expensive equipment. Some commercial companies now reach the opal level by plowing the ground with bulldozers. Most shafts are now sunk with large mechanical drills mounted on trucks. Sophisticated tunneling machines are also used to follow the seams.

Achieving Its Beauty

Of course, opal in the rough is a far cry from the finished product. The rough opal must be cut and polished. Thus it can serve well in rings, pendants, and other jewelry. Notes *The World Book Encyclopedia*: "Since the beauty of the opal lies in its internal color flashes, it is never cut with facets, like a dia-



About 95 percent of gem opal comes from Australia

Photos: By courtesy of Australian Overseas Information Service

mond. Instead, it is cut with a gently rounded convex surface."

How an opal produces its dazzling displays of color was for many years a mystery. By means of electron microscopes, however, scientists have begun to unlock the opal's secrets. A diamond produces its colors by refraction, that is, by bending light at the surface of the gem. The opal's external and internal structure diffracts light, breaking it up into many colors within the stone.

The book *Australian Opals in Colour* observes: "If the gemstone is tilted around, all of the colours will change. We call this the 'play of colour' and it is this property of ever-changing colours which gives opals their distinctive attraction."

Factors That Affect Price

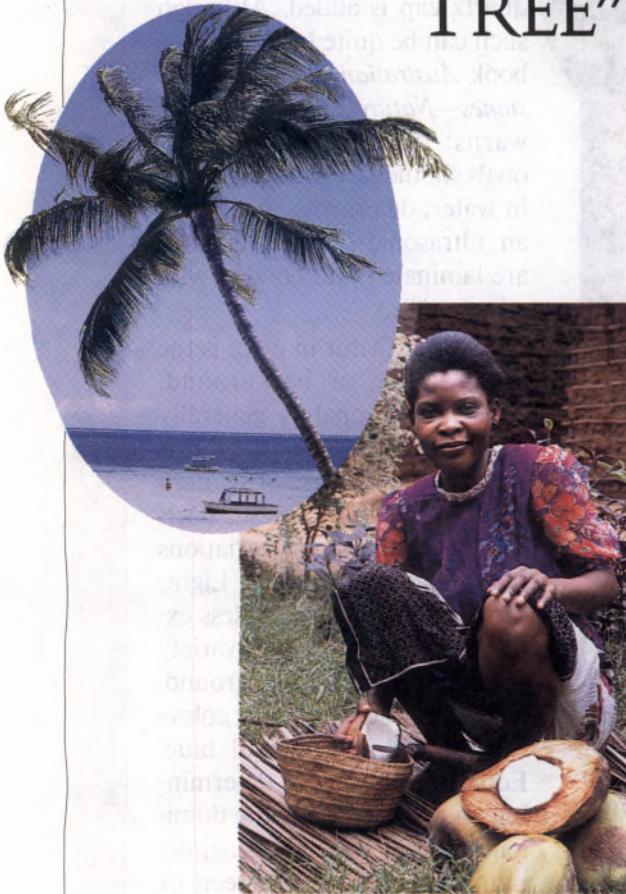
Before purchasing an opal, however, you should realize that not all opals are solid. A doublet is a thin

layer, or veneer, of precious opal cemented to a common opal backing. Triplets are similar to doublets, but to protect them from abrasion, a colorless quartz cap is added. Although such can be quite beautiful, the book *Australian Opals & Gemstones—Nature's Own Fireworks* warns: "Doublet and triplet opals should never be immersed in water, detergents, alcohol or an ultrasonic cleaner, as they are laminated and bonded with a cement."

Another factor in price is the stone's base, or background, color. Black opal is generally the most expensive variety. It is called black because of its dark background, but the stone itself has spectacular color variations that are almost limitless. Light, or white, opal is usually less expensive. Although this variety has a pale or white background, it still produces brilliant colors—pink, red, green, and blue. Equally important in determining an opal's value is the dominant fire color (red is generally more expensive than green or blue) and the color pattern.

But whether it is a lustrous solid or a more modest doublet or triplet, a shimmering red gem or a modest blue, an opal is a thing of beauty for you to behold and enjoy.

"MAN'S MOST USEFUL TREE"



By Awake! correspondent in Kenya

TO MOST people a coconut palm is a lazy-looking tree—the very symbol of rest and relaxation. But to the people living on Mombasa Island along the coast of Kenya, it is much more. Some refer to this gentle giant as a "tree of life." For these coastal dwellers, the

palm has the amazing ability not only to provide beauty but also to supply many of the basic needs of human life.

The coconut palm has a catalog of practical uses. It is not surprising, then, that the palm has been called a "tree of plenty," "the milk bottle on the doorstep of mankind," and "man's most useful tree." *The Coconut Palm—A Monograph* notes: "It perhaps yields more products of use to mankind than any other tree."

Made From Coconuts

The people of the Kenyan coast have put the coconut palm to work for them in a number of ingenious ways. Consider, for example, Kadii, a local housewife. She has lived in this tropical environment since childhood. "Has the coconut always played an important role in your home?" we ask.

Replies Kadii: "I can vividly recall using coconuts in our kitchen when I was a young girl. Because the shell is very hard and quite durable, it served nicely for cups, spoons, and ladles. The larger shells were used for soup bowls and scoops. A part of our education in school was to learn how to design and make these items for home use."

Kadii's husband, Mbagah, also raised on the coast, has much to say about the use of the coconut palm outside the kitchen. "As a boy growing up," recalls Mbagah, "I saw this tree as an indispensable part of life."

For example, of the palm-tree wood, which is hard and tough, he says: "We use it for rafters, supports, pilings, posts, and various other building components."

What about the palm fronds? "In most villages there are women who earn a living hand plaiting these leaves and making them into large shinglelike pieces of roofing material," Mbagah explains. Even though a house may be fully exposed to the blazing tropical

sun, inside the house the occupants will be cool and comfortable. The thatched roof not only shields them from the sun but also allows a breeze in to cool the home. It is hard to imagine a more efficient roof. Plaited palm fronds serve nicely as walls, fences, and doors.

"Let us not forget the coconut husks," Mbahah adds with a proud smile. "These are obtained by impaling the coconut on a sharp wooden or iron spike fixed to the ground. We take the coconut with both hands, thrust it downward against the spike and twist it so that the husk is loosened from the actual nut." The husk yields a beautiful golden fiber, which can be used for making floor mats, rugs, carpets, brushes, brooms, and even stuffing for mattresses.

"More Delicious Than Wine"

Coconut is also an important part of the diet and is consumed throughout almost all its stages of growth. The immature coconut (called *dafu* in the local language, Kiswahili) contains a pure, wholesome, and nutritious beverage having a very pleasant taste. The beverage can be served in its natural container simply by punching a hole in the top of the nut—just the right drink for a tropical thirst! Famed explorer Marco Polo reportedly said concerning this drink: "The liquid is as clear as water, cool and better flavored, and more delicious than wine or any other kind of drink."

Tourists often express similar sentiments when they sip this local beverage for the first time. And when the liquid is finished, a broken part of the shell can be used to scoop out the gelatinous pulp. This is tender, sweet, and refreshing. While the delicacies of the immature coconut are a novelty for visitors, for coastal dwellers the beverage is an everyday drink, and it is greatly appreciated when drinking water is scarce.

Coconut Cuisine

The most valuable part of the mature coconut is its meat, or fruit. It may be eaten as it comes from the shell, grated in various dishes, or pressed to extract its precious milk.

Kadii recalls: "As a young girl, I had to make sure that coconut milk was always on hand for cooking." Traditionally, coconut milk has been added to enhance the flavor of fish, chicken, beans, rice, potatoes, cassava, and bread. It also does wonders for the taste of curry. But we are curious to know how Kadii obtained the milk.

"We would use the *mbuzi*," explains Kadii. *Mbuzi* is a colloquial expression in Kiswahili that refers to a small wooden seat that stands about six inches off the ground. It has a sharp serrated edge that protrudes from it, specifically designed for the grating of coconut by hand. "It was fun for us children to sit on the *mbuzi*. We would take a halved coconut and scrape the inside against the serrated blade until the shell was cleaned of all the coconut meat. The next step was to take the grated coconut and put it into a long funnel-like sieve that was made of palm fronds. Then we would squeeze out that delicious coconut milk."

The coconut is really a fruit, and it is very compatible with other tropical fruits. One's taste buds begin watering by just contemplating a fruit dish of freshly sliced papaya, pineapple, mango, banana, orange, and passion fruit topped off with freshly grated coconut or even coconut cream.

Says an old proverb: "He who plants a coconut tree plants . . . food and drink, a habitation for himself and a heritage for his children." The lazy-looking coconut tree is thus far from lazy. And while it might be debated as to whether it really is man's most useful tree or not, it certainly is a horn of plenty in this African land!

Watching the World

Tuberculosis Alert

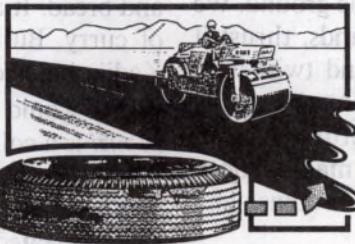
The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared tuberculosis a global emergency, warning that over 30 million people will die of the disease in the next ten years unless something is done to curb its spread. Although TB is preventable and treatable, the number of cases has risen sharply in recent years. Now, eight million people develop the disease each year. According to WHO, the resurgence of the disease is partly due to public-policy neglect and poorly managed control programs. Another factor in the increase is the strong link between TB and HIV infection (the virus that leads to AIDS). A person infected with HIV has a 25-fold increased risk of developing a potentially fatal case of TB. More than 95 percent of TB deaths occur in the developing world.

Parts of Bible in Over 2,000 Languages

The United Bible Societies (UBS) announced that during 1992, parts of the Bible have been translated into 31 more languages; so the total number of languages in which at least one book of the Bible is available reached 2,009. Soon, this number will increase further because the UBS is translating parts of the Bible into 419 additional languages. Complete Bibles are now available in 329 languages and the "New Testament" in 770 others. "Estimates of the total number of languages in the world," writes *Ecumenical Press Service*, "range from 5,000 to 6,500." Interestingly, as of 1993, the total number of Bibles produced in whole or in part by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., numbered over 83 million.

Useful Old Rubber Tires

In Brazil, 17 million car tires have to be replaced annually. However, the magazine *Superinteressante* reports that such old tires can be put to good use, namely, by recycling the rubber and mixing it with asphalt that is to be used to



resurface highways. Although the concept of recycling rubber tires is not new, using tires in asphalt is. It is hoped that this procedure will "greatly reduce the enormous mountains of trash that accumulate on the planet."

AIDS in Southern Africa

The spread of AIDS in the southernmost regions of Africa continues unabated. During 1992, more than 50 persons a day in South Africa were found to have been infected with the AIDS virus. As this does not include those living in that country's densely populated independent states, the daily number of potential AIDS victims is much higher. *The Star* of Johannesburg, South Africa, reports that "the rapid spread of Aids through southern Africa is widely regarded as one of the most pressing challenges of the coming decade."

Rabies Comeback

Rabies, once eradicated from South Africa's Natal province, is

now escalating. In Natal and neighboring Mozambique, many have left the rurals and migrated to urban areas, bringing their pets with them. Vaccination programs have not been able to reach all these displaced people. In 1992 over 300 cases of rabies were reported in the area. Most of the resulting 29 deaths involved children. Paul Kloeck, regional director of veterinary services, notes grimly: "It is extremely difficult to reach the many people living in informal settlements." He says: "Political violence, cultural objections and a fear of gatherings inhibit our programmes."

Buddhism With Jazz

In an odd combination, a thousand Buddhist priests from all over Japan assembled with top jazz musicians in Tokyo's huge Nippon Budokan to put on a concert of *shomyo* and jazz. *Shomyo* is basically the improvised singing or chanting of sutras, Indian style, far removed from Western music. Even with their different types of music, the jazz musicians had no difficulty in merging their music with the sutras. "I think improvisation is somehow closely connected to spiritual awakening in religion," *The Daily Yomiuri* quoted a popular jazz pianist as saying. He added: "Sometimes I feel that I am not playing the piano but that some strange power from a different world is."

Fear of Crime in Germany

Two out of 3 Germans consider extremist groups a danger to democracy in that country. Well over half the population would like to see the State take a firmer hand in dealing with violent demonstra-

tors. Almost 50 percent agree that the police should resort more often to the use of truncheons and irritant gas. As for the fight against organized crime, nearly 60 percent approve of the use of bugging equipment for listening to conversations in private homes. Those were results of an opinion poll of almost 3,000 persons carried out late in 1992 by the Emnid Institute and reported on by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

Love Story Twist

Love stories dealing with "romance" between men have become popular in Japan during the last two years. The most avid readers are women, particularly from the teens to the early 20's. *Asahi Evening News* says that this trend in novels is upsetting the country's homosexuals. It quoted a homosexual writer, Masaki Sato, as saying: "In sexual descriptions of the teenage stuff, men are treated as objects of women's curiosity." He further complained: "Women object to images of women depicted by men in pornographic novels. Now (gays) are in a similar situation."

Missing Children

In Italy every year hundreds of children disappear without a trace. Many leave home in the morning to go to school and never come back. In 1992 alone, 734 minors disappeared, 245 more than the previous year. According to a report by the Italian Ministry of the Interior, the total number of new cases opened was 3,063. More girls disappear than boys.

What Makes You Happy?

Evidently, having more money does not make people happier. Says the magazine *Psychology Today*: "Once above the poverty line, increases in income have surprisingly little relation to personal hap-

piness." The following factors are said to be important to happiness: an optimistic, though realistic, outlook; being outgoing and making friends; feeling in control of one's life, which includes "effective management of one's time"; and having "an active religious faith."

Never Too Late to Quit

The sooner you quit smoking, the less likely you are to die of lung cancer. A recent study of 900,000 Americans, reports *The Lancet*, revealed the following. Among non-smokers the number of people who died of lung cancer before the age of 75 was less than 50 per 100,000. For men who stopped smoking in their 30's, the death rate rose to



about 100 per 100,000. For those who quit in their 60's, deaths increased to 550 per 100,000. Among smokers who did not quit at all, the number of lung cancer deaths was 1,250 per 100,000. Lung cancer death rates for women were lower but showed a similar pattern.

Mistakes in the Laboratory

Hundreds of thousands of people each year die or become seriously ill because of errors made in medical laboratories, states the World Health Organization. Labs play an important role in the testing of blood and human tissue in order to detect and confirm disease. False test results can lead to wrong diagnosis and treatment. In April more than 90 experts from around the world met in Geneva, Switzerland, to discuss the problem.

"Megacities"

"By the turn of the century, there will be 21 'megacities' with populations of 10 million or more," says *Time* magazine. "Of these, 18 will be in developing countries, including some of the poorest nations in the world." Thirteen countries are listed as already having ten million or more people in their metropolitan areas. Tokyo leads, with almost 26 million inhabitants, followed by São Paulo, New York City, Mexico City, Shanghai, Bombay, Los Angeles, Buenos Aires, Seoul, Beijing, Rio de Janeiro, Calcutta, and Djakarta. Some cities in Africa are growing by 10 percent annually—the swiftest rate of urbanization ever recorded—says the World Bank. Larger populations are often accompanied by increased pollution and the threat of disease.

Titanic Claims

Owners were given three months to claim any of the 1,800 objects retrieved from the *Titanic*, seven years after the sunken ship was located in the frigid waters off Newfoundland. Since the ship sank on its maiden voyage in 1912, most claimants are likely to be heirs of the 687 people who survived the tragedy or of the 1,513 who perished. The collection includes watches and various kinds of jewelry, coins, leather goods, and items for hairdressing. However, proof of ownership will be difficult, as few items are inscribed with names. Besides, anyone who wished to repossess an item and could offer proof of ownership would have to contribute toward the \$5.5 million cost of the expedition, based on the market value of the object. Objects not claimed will become the property of the consortium that financed the project. Interestingly, none of the day-to-day objects recovered were made of plastic.

From Our Readers

Surrogate Motherhood In your article "Surrogate Motherhood—Is It for Christians?" (March 8, 1993), you quote Leviticus 18:20 as saying: "You must not give your emission as semen to the wife of your associate." However, the *King James Version* simply says: "Thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife." *The New English Bible* and *New American Standard Bible* read similarly. You are changing the Scriptures. What did the original Word of God say?

S. S., United States

Most translations paraphrase this verse. The "New World Translation" renders it literally, as do both "The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament" and "The Interlinear Hebrew/Greek English Bible." The latter renders this verse: "And you shall not give your seed of copulation to the wife of your neighbor."—ED.

Tears The article "Why All the Tears?" (September 22, 1992) deeply moved me. For some time I'd been wanting to know why we cry and what the role of tears is. Thanks to this well-written article, I finally understand. It made me feel an immense gratitude to Jehovah for the way he so marvelously created us.

F. G., Portugal

Home Schooling I want to thank you so much for the article "Home Schooling—Is It for You?" (April 8, 1993) I am presently schooling two of my four children at home. Many times others have told me that I am protecting my children too much. Your neutral stand on this matter is therefore greatly appreciated.

B. W., United States

Life Story The experience of Marlene Pavlow, "Drawing Close to God Helped Me Cope" (March 22, 1993), was probably the most encouraging article I have read. I loved the honest and forthright way she described

her life. Having had similar problems, I felt a bond with Marlene. Thank you for having such wonderful articles for just plain people like us. It makes me feel that there is hope if there are others who have the same joys and agonies as we.

R. H., United States

I have never read an article that touched me so much. Word for word, it describes my own life. It was just what I needed!

K. B., New Zealand

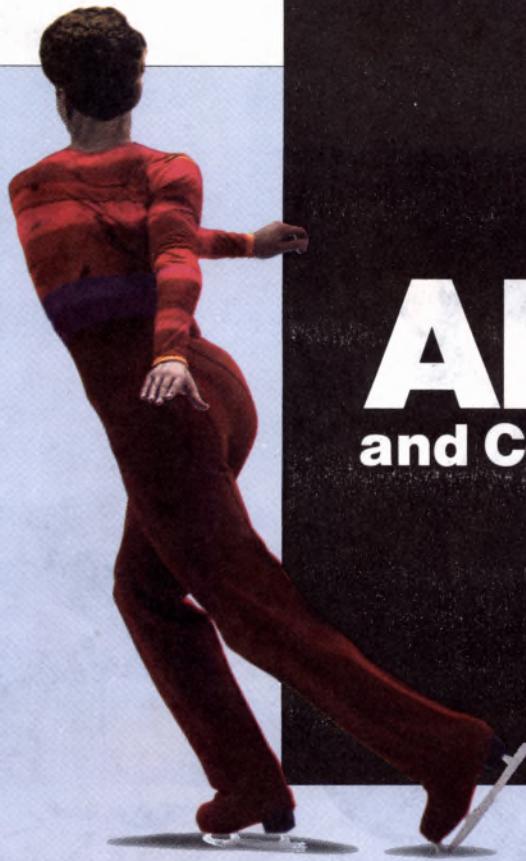
Entertaining I'm writing to commend you for the article "Would You Like to Entertain Your Friends?" (April 22, 1993) As an amateur musician, I benefited greatly from it. My friends often invite me to liven up social gatherings by playing and singing. Your suggestions about developing a repertoire and involving the audience in the presentation were simply excellent!

P. S. S. M., Brazil

Pets In the article "Does Your Child Want a Pet?" (January 22, 1993), you stated: "Domestic cats infect some 3,300 expectant mothers a year with toxoplasmosis, resulting in a 15-percent fetal death rate." According to one reliable source, the transmission rate of this disease is quite small. Are you not exaggerating the dangers of owning a cat?

K. T., Japan

The statement you cite was quoted from "U.S. News & World Report." While only a relatively small number of pregnant women are infected by cats, the "Wellness Letter" published by the University of California at Berkeley still cautioned pregnant women against "close contact with a cat." Fortunately, the disease is rarely transmitted simply by touching a cat. Says the "Wellness Letter": "The disease is most commonly transmitted when you come in contact with cat feces, as when disposing of cat litter."—ED.



AIDS and Celebrities

Focus On Sports

THOSE who read the obituaries are often amazed at the number of celebrities who die from AIDS. *Newsweek* of January 18, 1993, confirmed that many such people are dying, saying: "In every branch of culture—dance, theater, literature, music, design, fashion, art, television, movies—the devastation from AIDS continues."

Newsweek also noted: "Paris is more like New York or Los Angeles: one study showed that more than 60 percent of the deaths of Parisian men between 25 and 44 in the professions of journalism, arts and entertainment were caused by AIDS."

People magazine of January 23, 1993, in its article "Fear on the Ice" told of the devastation that AIDS has wreaked on professional ice skating. It said: "Their sport ravaged by more than 40 deaths, North America's top figure skaters agonize over the loss of their friends and the grim toll of AIDS."

John Curry, a British Olympic gold medalist, was identified in the magazine as "the most celebrated skater with AIDS." He was quoted as saying: "My whole circle of friends died from AIDS." Why have so many skaters contracted AIDS?

Their life-style is the reason. *People* revealed this when it said: "As skaters, coaches and officials privately mourn the deaths of their friends, they remain confused and fearful about dealing publicly with AIDS and with the issue of homosexuality in skating."

Indeed, promiscuous sex—both homosexual and heterosexual—is the major cause of AIDS. In December 1991, two doctors in Canada revealed that a woman who had died from AIDS named up to 70 National Hockey League players with whom she had had sexual contact. "The episode has caused deep uneasiness on some N.H.L. squads," reported *The New York Times* of December 5, 1991. "This was reflected in the somber groups of players and coaches who gathered to discuss the issue at practices today."

What should be done? "The message we should be sending out to kids is not safe sex, it should be save sex," said one Montreal Canadiens hockey player. "Don't have sex until after you're married." That is not new advice, for the Bible urges: "Flee from fornication."—1 Corinthians 6:18.



„Ihrt eine Samariterin“

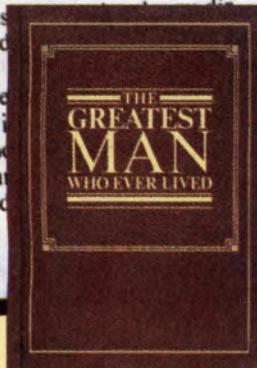
udäa nach Galiläa kommen Jesus und
h das Gebiet von Samaria. Von der
det, machen sie gegen Mittag in der
einem Brunnen halt. Dieser Brunnen
hunderte zuvor gegraben worden. Er
halten geblieben und befindet sich in
Stadt Nablus.

ruht, gehen seine Jünger in die Stadt, ausen. Als eine samaritische Frau zum Brunnen kommt, bittet er sie: „Gib mir

nariter verkehren im allgemeinen nicht
den Seiten unüberwindliche Vorurteile
agt daher sichtlich überrascht: „Wie
wohl du ein Jude bist, mich um einen
ch eine samaritische Frau bin?“

„erwidert Jesus
en‘, so hättest du
sser gegeben.“

„du hast nicht
id der Brunnen i
sser? Du bist do
der uns den Bru
id seinem Vieh o



“A Gift Worthy of Anyone”

That is what an 82-year-old man in Switzerland wrote regarding the book *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*. The book, which was first published in 1991, presents within 133 chapters every event in Jesus' earthly life as set out in the four Gospels. Why was the reader so thrilled?

"The book makes for good reading," he wrote. "It has legible type and excellent grammar, which is not the case with many other books." The man also marveled at the more than 200 color illustrations, which "are so true to life." He added: "The gestures, the facial expressions, and the gentle colors are so realistic."

The elderly gentleman suggests that people give the book to others as a present. He considers this "marvelous and instructive book . . . a gift worthy of anyone." So do we.