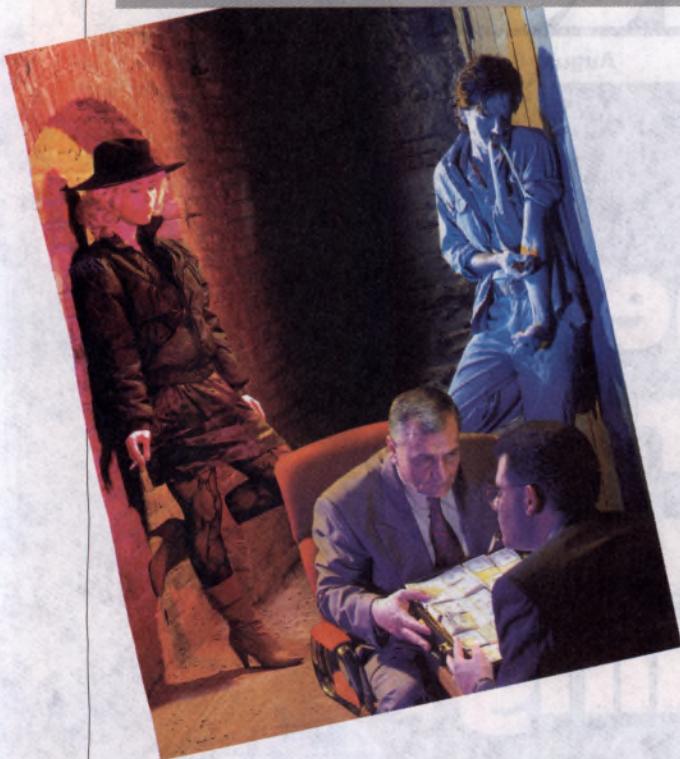


# Awake!

August 8, 1993

## Where Are Morals Heading?





## Where Are Morals Heading? **3-10**

In all areas of life—religious, economic, political, social, sexual—morals are adrift. Why is this so? Where is it all heading?



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# What Has Happened to Morality?

**G**OVERNMENT officials. Political candidates. Religious leaders. We expect men of such stature to be models of behavior. In recent times, though, men from these ranks have served as the leading players in a series of shocking scandals. Their misconduct has run the gamut of vices—from adultery and brazen lying to devious financial dealings and embezzlement.

Laments the book *The Death of Ethics in America*: “While the nation has been preoccupied with the deadly disease . . . Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, another kind of AIDS [Acquired Integrity Deficiency Syndrome] seems to have become epidemic. Yet it has not prompted similarly urgent calls for a cure.” (Italics ours.) *Time* magazine claims that the United States is “wallowing in a moral morass.”

The moral morass is hardly confined to the United States. In recent times China, Germany, Greece, France, India, Indonesia, Israel, and Japan have also been rocked by scandals involving prominent men. And it should come as no surprise that the unethical conduct of society’s leaders simply mirrors that of the general public. Thailand’s prime minister called corruption in his country “cancerous.” He added that all of society is suffering from a malady rooted in greed and distorted social values.

People rightfully wonder: ‘What is behind this global drifting of morals? More important, where is it all heading?’

## When ‘Stealing Isn’t Stealing’

In Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., the rear door of an armored truck flew open, and two bags of money fell out. As an estimated two million dollars fluttered in the wind and littered the highway, dozens of motorists dashed from their cars to stuff their pockets and purses with bills. Some motorists summoned others by CB radio to join in the pilfering.

Official pleadings and a 10-percent reward offered for return of any of the money were virtually ignored. Most opted to play “finders keepers.” Only a fraction of the money was ever recovered. One man even justified the theft by saying the money was “a gift from God.” Incidents like this are not isolated, though. Passersby displayed similar greed when money spilled from armored cars in San Francisco, California, and in Toronto, Canada.

That normally honest and upright people so easily stoop to thievery has disturbing implications. At the very least, it indicates how skewed the popular concepts of morality are. Thomas Pogge, an assistant professor of philosophy at Columbia University in New York, argues that while most people see it as immoral to steal from an individual, they somehow view stealing from an institution as far less reprehensible.

## Sexual Mores Adrift

A skewed view of morals is seen on the sexual front too. A recent survey showed that people are surprisingly tolerant of political candidates who indulge in adultery. One writer

suggests that such voters may hesitate to condemn adultery because 'they are so busy trying it themselves.'

Indeed, recent statistics reveal that 31 percent of all married people in the United States have had or are currently having an extramarital affair. A majority of Americans, 62 percent, "think that there's nothing morally wrong" with doing so. Views toward premarital sex are equally permissive. A survey in 1969 showed that 68 percent of the U.S. public then disapproved of premarital sex. Today, only 36 percent disapprove. In the 1960's, about half of the women surveyed were virgins on their wedding day. Today, only 20 percent are.

### **What Is Ethical?**

Moral drift is also apparent in the business sector. Two decades ago, only 39 percent of college freshmen surveyed thought that "financial success was important or essential." By 1989 the figure virtually doubled. Clearly, making money dominates the thinking of many young people—with alarming moral consequences.

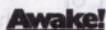
When 1,093 high school (secondary school) seniors were surveyed, 59 percent said they would be willing to negotiate an illegal deal worth ten million dollars—even at the risk of six months of probation! Further, 67 percent said they would pad a business expense account; 66 percent said they would lie to achieve a business objective. Yet, youths are merely responding to the ethical tone set by

their elders. When 671 business managers were asked their view of business ethics, nearly a quarter contended that ethics can impede their quest for a successful career. More than half admitted to bending the rules to get ahead.

In an attempt to stem this disturbing trend, some colleges offer courses on ethics. But many are skeptical as to the effectiveness of such efforts. "I just don't see how ethics classes are going to help," stated one prominent Canadian businessman. "Students with sound values won't learn much that is new to them, and the students who don't have integrity to begin with may just use the insights they gain to find another way of dealing with immoral acts they are going to commit anyway."

Along similar lines, many businesses have established official codes of ethics. Experts claim, though, that such codes are mere window dressing and are rarely given much attention—except in the wake of a damaging scandal. Ironically, a recent survey revealed that firms with written codes of ethics were charged with unethical conduct more frequently than firms without them!

Yes, on all fronts morals are clearly adrift, and no one seems to know where they are heading. Says one business executive: "The landmarks that told us right from wrong aren't there anymore. They've been hammered away." Why have such moral landmarks vanished? What is replacing them? These issues will be examined in the following articles.



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# Where Are Morals Heading?

FOR centuries the Bible was unquestioned as the standard of morality in many lands. While not everyone lived up to its lofty principles, the Bible did give the society that recognized it a common moral language, a touchstone for judging conduct. But Jesuit university president Joseph O'Hare lamented: "We've had a traditional set of standards that have been challenged and found wanting or no longer fashionable. Now there don't seem to be any moral landmarks at all."

What caused Bible-based morality to fall from grace? One potent factor was the widespread acceptance of the theory of evolution. The book *American Values: Opposing Viewpoints* says: "For all of known civilization, people believed in two worlds: one that you could see, and one that was invisible. . . . The invisible world provided the basis for meaning and value . . . It was the source of cohesion for

their society. However, about the middle of the last century, people began to be told that there was no invisible world. It did not exist and never had." Especially from that time on, there were unprecedented attacks on the Bible and its morality. The so-called higher criticism of the Bible and the publishing of Darwin's *Origin of Species* were among these philosophical attacks.\*

Evolution thus diminished the Bible's authority in the minds of many. As an article in *Harvard Magazine* put it, the Bible was now seen as no more than "a lovely allegory." The impact on morality was devastating. Evolution became what well-known scientist Fred Hoyle called "an open charter for any form of opportunistic behaviour."

Of course, evolution is just a part of the

\* Convincing evidence in favor of creation is given in the publication *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

## Belief in evolution was a factor in causing Bible-based morality to fall from grace

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picture. Two world wars further fueled a widespread disillusionment with religion. The industrial revolution brought about great social—and moral—changes. Moreover, the rapid growth of the powerful mass media has made it possible to expose people to decadent morals on a large scale.

### **Everything Is Relative?**

Little wonder, then, that many people have no moral reference point. They are adrift like a ship without a rudder. Many, for example,

## **'Between 10 and 23 percent of the clergy have engaged in sexual contact with parishioners, clients, employees, etc.'**

ride the popular current of moral relativism, the view that "ethical truths depend on the individuals and groups holding them." According to this philosophy, there are no moral absolutes—everything is relative. 'What's wrong for you may be right for somebody else,' relativists assert. Because their moral compass points in just about any direction, they are quick to validate virtually any sort of behavior as acceptable.

Thus, an act that formerly would have been described as "sinful" or "wrong" is now simply "stupid." The action may be excused as being "sick" but not condemned as "immoral." One is reminded of the days of the ancient prophet Isaiah when there were those "saying that good is bad and bad is good, . . . putting darkness for light and light for darkness."—Isaiah 5:20.

### **Blame Shifting**

Another moral current is blame shifting. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve, in turn, blamed

the serpent. Today's offenders likewise play the game of evading responsibility, and they are often helped to do so by the legal and psychiatric professions. An article in *U.S. News & World Report* chided the psychiatric community for "inventing new diseases that cast offenders in the role of helpless victims." For example, the American Psychiatric Association reportedly gave serious consideration to labeling rapists as victims of a disease fancifully termed "paraphilic rapism." Some felt this would have amounted to a legal license to rape with impunity. "Women raised such a fuss that rapism was quickly found not to be a disease after all."

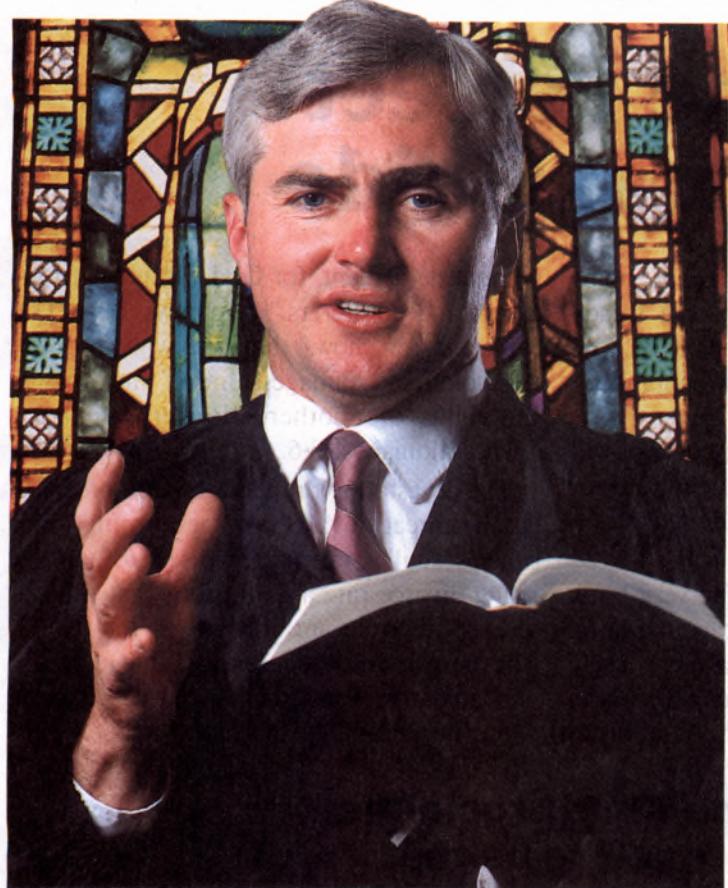
This is not to deny the obvious fact that childhood traumas can have an adverse effect on one as an adult. But it is erroneous to claim that the past excuses violent or immoral adult behavior.

### **Youths—No Moral Compass**

The world's moral confusion has left its mark particularly on impressionable youths. Researcher Robert Coles of Harvard University found that there is no one underlying set of assumptions that guides the moral life of American children. They are guided by a variety of moral compasses and value systems. Almost 60 percent of a group of school-age youths polled said they were guided by what gets them ahead or what makes them feel good.

At times the schools contribute to such moral confusion. Consider an influential program labeled "values clarification," which was instituted a few years ago in U.S. schools. Its basic teachings? Children should be free to choose their own moral values.

The moral emptiness of such a stance is apparent from the experience of one New York City school student who decided to turn in a purse she found that contained \$1,000 in cash. What was the response of her fellow



**The clergy have promoted a moral system based on human wisdom instead of the Bible**

students in a moral-values class? She was teased and chided for doing so! Worse yet, not one teacher or school official praised her honest conduct. One teacher excused this deafening silence by saying: "If I come from a position of what is right and wrong, then I am not their counselor."

### **Can the Churches Halt Moral Decay?**

Not surprisingly, the world's lamentable moral state has caused a backlash. Many now clamor for a return to traditional values, meaning for some a return to religion. However, the churches have a poor record in providing moral leadership. The General Assembly for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.) admitted: "We are facing a crisis terrible in

its proportions and implications." The nature of this crisis? "Between 10 and 23 percent of clergy nationwide have engaged in sexualized behavior or sexual contact with parishioners, clients, employees, etc."

Widespread disillusionment with religion thus prevails. The president of the

U.S. Business and Industrial Council summed it up when he declared: "Religious institutions have failed to transmit their historic values, and in many cases, have become part of the [moral] problem, promoting liberation theology and non-judgmental views of human behavior."

It is clear, then, that the uninstructed human conscience is not sufficient to guide mankind. Today's morals are drifting toward nothing less than total moral collapse. We need a guide that comes from someone higher than ourselves.—Compare Proverbs 14:12; Jeremiah 10:23.

Such a guide exists. It is accessible to all who want it.

# The Perfect Moral Guide

**A**SHIP navigator needs reliable maps and instruments to chart a steady course. Likewise, humans need a reliable guide in order to make the moral decisions they face daily. A moral guide that is whimsical or inconsistent will not do, nor will a guide that works only in certain cultures or societies. The perfect moral guide must transcend race and culture.

It is ironic that the Bible—the very book that has been rejected by millions, the book that has been called by some a mere lovely allegory, the book that has been subjected to more criticism than any other book in history—is that perfect moral guide. The Bible proclaims itself to be the Creator's moral guide for man, the "lamp" that can light our way in "the tracks of righteousness."

—Psalm 23:3; 119:105.

Is there any proof to back up such an outstanding claim? Is there evidence that living by Bible standards is superior to living by man-made ethics?

## **The Bible and Sexual Morality**

Consider the matter of sexual morality. The Bible mandates abstinence from sexual relations outside of marriage, saying: "Flee from sexual immorality." (1 Corinthians 6:18, *New International Version*; Ephesians 5:5) It counsels married couples: "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be

without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers." (Hebrews 13:4) The Bible further shows that one who disobeys this command damages himself and violates the rights of another.—Proverbs 6:28-35; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6.

The devastating problems of teen pregnancy, the threat of AIDS, herpes, syphilis, and other sexually transmitted diseases, and the rising divorce rate are all proof that this advice is still relevant for life in the 1990's. The person who adheres to Bible morality is spared many heartaches and much pain. More important, he preserves a good con-

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science. (1 Peter 3:16) "I have self-respect and the satisfaction of doing what's right before God," says 24-year-old Jonathan. He is one of Jehovah's Witnesses. "With many young people dying of AIDS, remaining morally chaste may literally save my life."

God-fearing couples have found that following Bible morality has had a good effect on their marriage. Says one 23-year-old wife: "My husband and I were virgins when we got married. I feel we had something very special to share together, something few young people can share with a mate these days. I know this has strengthened the bond of love between us."

## The Bible and Business

The Bible also has its own code of business ethics. While it acknowledges that dishonest people may seem to prosper, it still urges us to stay honest. (Psalm 73:1-28) "Two sorts of

## The Bible's moral guidelines work in any land or culture

weights [an accurate one for buying and an inaccurate, dishonest one for selling] and two sorts of ephah measures—they are both of them together something detestable to Jehovah." (Proverbs 20:10) Jehovah's Witnesses thus steer clear of shady business tactics.

True, a Christian may encounter inconveniences in doing so. It may be difficult for him to compete with less scrupulous businessmen. Others may think his honesty strange, even foolish, but he maintains a good conscience—something more valuable than money. He has peace of mind and can enjoy a good night's sleep. He is not tormented by a gnawing fear of being caught and punished for dishonesty.—Compare Proverbs 3:21-26.

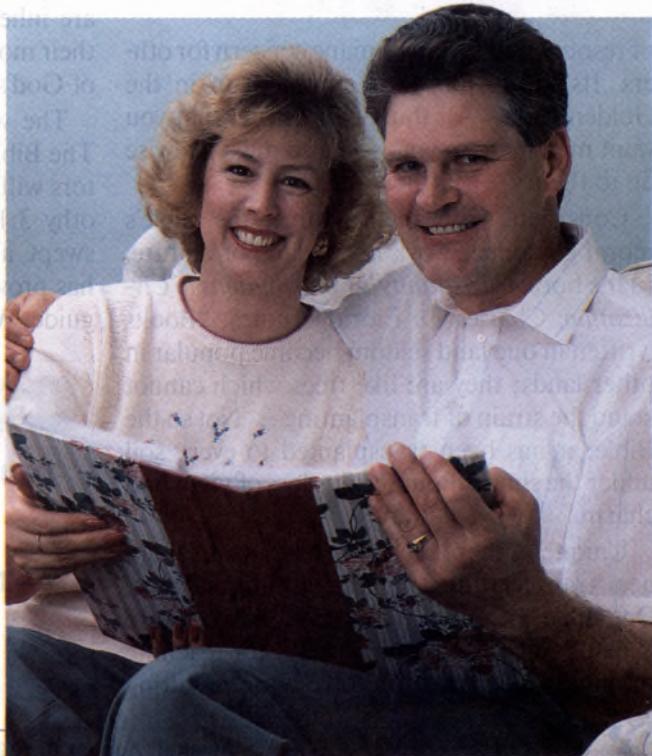
Furthermore, many Witnesses have found that one can uphold Bible morality and do well financially. An honest person often gains the confidence of employees, customers, suppliers, and creditors. This can work to his advantage.

**God-fearing couples have found that following Bible morality has a good effect on their marriage**

## Finders Keepers?

As we noted earlier, the finders-keepers mentality has made thieves out of potentially honest people. The Bible, though, told God's people in ancient times: "When you see a fellow-countryman's ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it but take it back to him. If the owner is not a near neighbour and you do not know who he is, take the animal into your own house and keep it with you until he claims it, and then give it back to him. Do the same with his ass or his cloak or anything else that your fellow-countryman has lost, if you find it."—Deuteronomy 22:1-3, *The New English Bible*.

Jehovah's Witnesses continue to follow this principle today. One Witness in Brooklyn, New York, found a bag containing \$25,000 lying in the street. During a minor accident, it had fallen unnoticed from an armored car. Even though the money was used bills in small denominations—hence impossible to



trace—he turned the money over to the police. His fellow workers chided him for his decision. Surprisingly, the police ridiculed him for his honesty. But this Christian man explains: "I try to uphold the teachings of the Bible in my daily life." The Bible says at Hebrews 13:18: "Carry on prayer for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things."

### **Universal Appeal!**

The Bible also offers sound guidelines on other moral issues. It encourages kindness, fairness, justice, truth, honor, decency, a sense

**"All things, therefore,  
that you want men to do  
to you, you also must  
likewise do to them."**

—Matthew 7:12

of responsibility, and humane concern for others. Its moral advice is summed up in the Golden Rule: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them."—Matthew 7:12.

Consistent with their Source, the Bible's moral guidelines work in any land or culture. In the book *Christianity's Contributions to Civilization*, Charles D. Eldridge notes: "Books written in one land seldom become popular in other lands; they are like trees which cannot stand the strain of transplanting... Not so the Bible: it has been transplanted to every soil under the sun without serious loss of vigor and charm."

Uniquely, then, the Bible has universal appeal, transcending language, culture, and race. One Bible writer put it this way: "All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the faith and correcting error, for re-setting

the direction of a man's life and training him in good living." (2 Timothy 3:16, *Phillips*) True, sometimes the Bible is hard to understand. In ancient times one diligent Bible reader was asked if he knew what he was reading. He replied: "Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?"—Acts 8:29-35.

That man received personal help in understanding the Bible. Today, such personal assistance is available through the Bible educational work of Jehovah's Witnesses. Already they have helped millions of people in over 200 lands to come to a knowledge of God's Word. And they invite you also to become better acquainted with that Sacred Book by visiting a Kingdom Hall near you.

Interestingly, it has been said that ethical behavior "can be learned through good example,... or just 'being with' ethical people." This is yet another powerful reason to become acquainted with those attending your local Kingdom Hall. Not that Jehovah's Witnesses are inherently better than other people, but their moral success is a testimony to the power of God's Word.—2 Corinthians 4:7.

The world's morals will continue to drift. The Bible predicts: "Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse." (2 Timothy 3:13) However, you do not have to be swept along by this destructive tide. God has provided a reliable compass, an infallible guide. Will you follow it?

### **In Our Next Issue**

**Will All Races Ever Be United?**

**Kidney Stones  
—Treating an Ancient Malady**

**AIDS—Am I at Risk?**

# Is the “New Testament” Anti-Semitic?

**A**n American evangelist once stated: “The institutional church has sinned through much of its history and has much to answer for at the Judgment, especially for the anti-Semitism practiced against the Jewish people.”

Why has anti-Semitism had such a long and ugly history, persisting even into the 20th century? Some blame the Christian Greek Scriptures, the so-called New Testament. For example, Krister Stendahl, dean of Harvard Divinity School, claimed: “That . . . New Testament sayings have functioned as ‘divine’ sanction for hatred against the Jews is well-known and a commonly accepted

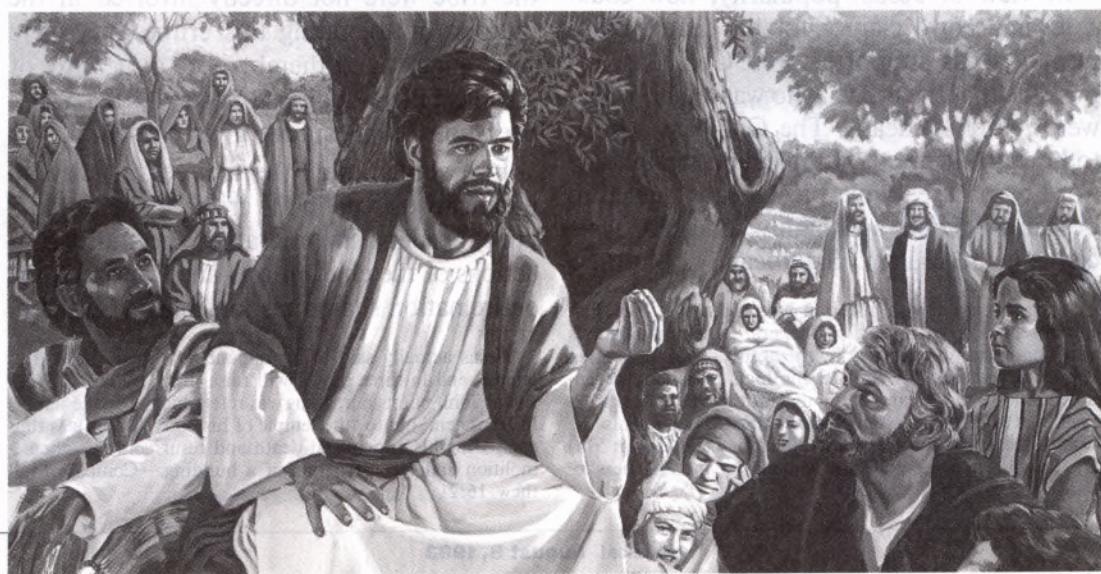
fact.” Though this may be commonly accepted, is it really true?

### Who Was Blamed for Jesus’ Death?

One passage often cited as evidence of “New Testament” anti-Semitism is Matthew 27:15-25. There we are told that a Jewish crowd demanded that the Roman governor Pontius Pilate have Jesus impaled, even crying: “His blood come upon us and upon our children.” Was the “New Testament” there teaching that all first-century Jews were responsible for Jesus’ death and that Jews should forever be known as Christ-killers?

First of all, how did most Jews react to Jesus during his ministry? The “New

***Neither Jesus nor his disciples promoted anti-Semitism***



Testament" reveals that Jesus was extremely popular with the Jewish crowds, particularly in Galilee, where he conducted most of his ministry. (John 7:31; 8:30; 10:42; 11:45) Just five days before his arrest and execution, a Jewish crowd welcomed him into Jerusalem as the Messiah.—Matthew 21:6-11.

Who, then, wanted Jesus put to death? The "New Testament" notes that Jesus was unpopular with the chief priests and many of the Pharisees and Sadducees because he exposed their hypocrisy. (Matthew 21:33-46; 23:1-36)\* High Priest Caiaphas was one of the foremost opposers of Jesus. No doubt he had suffered personal economic loss when Jesus chased the money changers from the temple. (Mark 11:15-18) In addition, Caiaphas feared that Jesus' popularity with the Jewish crowds would eventually lead to Roman intervention and to his personal loss of power. (John 11:45-53) Thus, the chief priests and other religious leaders plotted Jesus' death and handed him over to a Roman court for execution. (Matthew 27:1, 2; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66-23:1) How ironic that Jesus' popularity with the Jewish masses led to his death!

In view of Jesus' popularity, how could a Jewish crowd clamor for his death? Since most of Jesus' supporters were Galileans, it is possible that the crowd who wanted him dead were mainly Judeans. The Galileans tended to be warmhearted, humble, and straightforward by nature, while the Judeans tended to be haughty, rich, and highly educated, especially in Jerusalem. Significantly, Matthew

\* First-century Jewish historian Joseph ben Matthias (Flavius Josephus) records that by this era, Israel's high priests were appointed and deposed by the agents of Rome as often as once a year. In this climate, the high priesthood degenerated into a mercenary office that attracted the worst elements of society. *The Babylonian Talmud* documents the moral excesses of some of these high priests. (*Pesahim* 57a) The Talmud likewise notes the tendency of the Pharisees toward hypocrisy. (*Sotah* 22b)

reveals that the crowd was incited by "the chief priests and older men." (Matthew 27:20) What lie could they have told the crowd so as to arouse them in this way? Was it the lie that they earlier presented at Jesus' trial and that was repeated during Jesus' execution, namely, that Jesus said he would destroy the temple?—Mark 14:57, 58; 15:29.\*

### Community Responsibility

If this Jewish crowd was not the entire Jewish people, why did the apostle Peter, when speaking to a large crowd of Jews assembled some 50 days later in Jerusalem for the Festival of Weeks, say: "You fastened [Jesus] to a stake by the hand of lawless men"? (Acts 2:22, 23) Surely Peter knew that most of them had little to do with the events that led up to Jesus' execution. So, what did Peter mean?

According to the Scriptures, an unatoned murder brought culpability not only on the murderer but also on the community that failed to bring him to justice. (Deuteronomy 21:1-9) For example, the entire tribe of Benjamin had once been judged as bloodguilty for failure to punish a group of murderers in their midst. Although the great majority of the tribe were not directly involved in the murder, by tolerating this crime, they were condoning it and thereby bore a measure of responsibility. (Judges 20:8-48) Indeed, it has been noted that "silence gives consent."

In a similar way, the first-century Jewish nation acquiesced in the crime of their bloodguilty leaders. By tolerating the murderous actions of the chief priests and Pharisees, the entire nation shared responsibility. No doubt

\* Jesus actually said to his opponents: "Break down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19-22) But as John points out, Jesus was referring, not to the temple in Jerusalem, but to "the temple of his body." Jesus was thus comparing his anticipated death and resurrection to the demolition and reconstruction of a building.—Compare Matthew 16:21.

this was why Peter called upon his Jewish audience to show remorse.\*

What were the consequences of such a rejection of Jesus as the Messiah? Jesus said to the city of Jerusalem: "Your house [the temple] is abandoned to you." (Matthew 23:37, 38) Yes, God withdrew his protection, and the Roman armies subsequently destroyed Jerusalem with its temple. Just as a man's family would feel the consequences if he squandered all his possessions, the loss of divine protection was felt not only by those who cried out for Jesus' death but by their families as well. In this sense Jesus' blood did come upon them and their children.—Matthew 27:25.

However, nothing in the "New Testament" claims that future generations of Jews would bear special guilt for the death of Jesus. On the contrary, because of his love for their forefather Abraham, God showed the Jews special consideration, offering them the first opportunity to become Christians. (Acts 3:25, 26; 13:46; Romans 1:16; 11:28) When this opportunity was eventually extended to non-Jews, God ceased dealing with any person on the

## **Anti-Semitism in Christendom is practiced by people who are Christian in name only**

basis of national origin. Peter said: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) The apostle Paul later wrote: "There is

\* Similar responsibility has been noted in modern times as well. Not all citizens of Nazi Germany were directly involved in the atrocities. Nevertheless, Germany recognized a community responsibility and voluntarily chose to indemnify victims of the Nazi persecution.

no distinction between Jew and Greek." (Romans 10:12) Jews then had the same status before God as non-Jews, and that is still true today.—Compare Ezekiel 18:20.

### **Why Anti-Semitism in Christendom?**

It can therefore be seen that the "New Testament" is not anti-Semitic. Instead, the "New Testament" records the teachings of a man who lived and died as a Jew and who taught his Jewish followers to respect the ideals of the Mosaic Law. (Matthew 5:17-19) But if the "New Testament" is not to blame, why has there been such persistent anti-Semitism in Christendom?

Christianity itself is not to blame. In a way similar to that of the false Christians in the time of Jude who were "turning the undeserved kindness of God into an excuse for loose conduct," professed Christians throughout history have dragged the name of Christ into the mire of bigotry and prejudice. (Jude 4) Thus, the anti-Semitism in Christendom has been due to the selfish prejudices of people who have been Christian in name only.

Interestingly, Jesus himself foretold that some would claim to have performed all sorts of powerful works in his name but would really be "workers of lawlessness"—no friends of his! (Matthew 7:21-23) Many of these have tried to use the "New Testament" as a justification for their hatreds and prejudices, but reasoning people can see through that hollow pretense.

False Christians will have to answer to God for their anti-Semitism. But just as the existence of counterfeit money does not disprove the existence of real money, the existence of imitation Christians in no way diminishes the fact that there are, indeed, true Christians, people who are known for their love, not for their prejudices. Why not get acquainted with such people at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses near you?

## Crossword Puzzle

### Clues Across

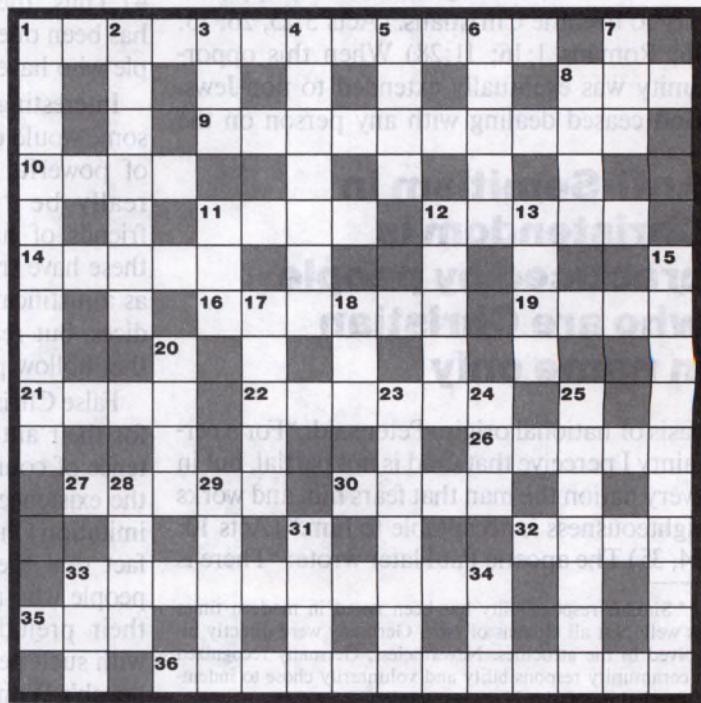
- With Jesus, it was the changing of water into wine [2 words] (See John 2:11)
- New Jerusalem is said to have no need of it (Revelation 21:23)
- An inhabitant of Bethlehem (1 Samuel 17:12)
- Indifferent (Habakkuk 1:4)
- It is promised that this result of imperfection will be no more (Revelation 21:4)
- To enhance the appearance (1 Peter 3:5)
- A son of Gad who accompanied Jacob to Egypt at Joseph's invitation (Genesis 46:16)
- The age at which Jesus amazed the teachers at the temple with his understanding (Luke 2:42-47)
- That of Jesus is 'kindly and light' (Matthew 11:30)
- This wicked king of Israel built the city of Samaria (1 Kings 16:23-26)
- "Fearful" ones were foretold by Jesus for the time of the end (Luke 21:11)
- In order to show Pharaoh this, God let him remain (Romans 9:17)
- Satan accused God of putting up one around Job (Job 1:10)
- Marry "— in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39)
- The first word Jephthah uttered when his only child met him upon Jephthah's return from victory over Ammon (Judges 11:35)
- The city where Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptian military forces (Jeremiah 46:2)
- The lunar month in which Solomon completed the construction of the temple (1 Kings 6:38)
- Jehovah will not leave unpunished the one who takes up his name thus [2 words] (Exodus 20:7)

### Clues Down

- Some rejoiced and some wept over the construction of this part of Zerubbabel's temple (Ezra 3:10-13)
- A storage city that the Israelites were forced to build in Egypt (Exodus 1:11)
- A part of the body upon which some of the ram's blood was put at

- the installation of the priesthood in Israel (Leviticus 8:23, 24)
- A name of a family in Judah from which two of David's mighty men came (2 Samuel 23:38)
- He lived for 930 years (Genesis 5:5)
- A son of Jahath and a descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:2)
- Something that rightfully belongs to one (1 Corinthians 7:3)
- One differs from another in glory (1 Corinthians 15:41)
- A prostitute is spoken of as one because of her ensnaring men (Proverbs 23:27)
- Watchful (Luke 11:35)
- A rare stone (Job 28:16)
- This quality was manifest in caring for needy ones in the early Christian congregation (2 Corinthians 8:2)
- The condition of the earth before the creative days (Genesis 1:2)
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### Crossword Solutions Page 21



**Young  
People  
Ask...**



# I'm Hooked! How Can I Stop Gambling?

**"**I STARTED playing fruit [slot] machines when I was 13," confesses David. "I got to the stage where I couldn't pass an amusement arcade without going in to gamble on the fruit machines." Admits another former gambler, named Thomas: "I even stole from friends, family, and workmates to support my habit. I gambled on just about anything."

Both David and Thomas were raised as Christians. Both got hooked on gambling—trapped by a deadly compulsion. Researchers say that alarming numbers of youths have

fallen victim to the cunning psychological ploys that lure young people into gambling. Says *Time* magazine: "Gambling researchers say that of the estimated 8 million compulsive gamblers in America, fully 1 million are teenagers." Some believe that in the United States, from 4 to 6 percent of all teenagers are pathological gamblers.

Youths pursue many different forms of this vice. In Japan, despite strict laws that prohibit minors from betting, youths "have become conspicuous for their increasing presence as gamblers both on the [racetrack] and at off-track betting establishments, in a disturbing growing trend," according to the *Mainichi Daily News*. Playing the lottery, betting on sports events, and card playing are also popular ways among youths of surrendering to the betting urge.

## **Gambling Addiction —The Consequences**

Gordon Moody, of Gamblers Anonymous, says: "At first, [gambling] is a wonderful new experience, like making a great discovery or falling in love. . . . Playing with chance is exhilarating and captivating." (*Quit Compulsive Gambling*) Yes, to many people it is exciting to experience a winning streak and the accompanying rush of adrenaline. But you cannot beat the odds forever. In the long run, the gambler loses. And debt and financial ruin are just the beginning of his problems.

An addictive pastime, like an addictive substance, can do untold spiritual, emotional, and moral damage. It can develop in you what Gordon Moody calls a "deviousness which . . . will, eventually, make you a slave." We are reminded of the words of the apostle Paul: "Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him?" (Romans 6:16) The translation by J. B. Phillips renders the verse this way: "You belong to the power which you choose to

obey." Imagine, being under the tyranny of a habit you cannot control!

Because a youth often resorts to lying, deviousness, and thievery to support his habit, his family relationships are also bound to suffer. The British magazine *Young People Now* observes: "When you realise you've become a thief, a liar, and a liability, to the people you love and who love you, your self-esteem plummets." Not surprisingly, *The Harvard Mental Health Letter* reports that compulsive gamblers are prone to "severe depression, anxiety disorders," and a host of physical difficulties, such as "digestive problems, insomnia, headaches, hypertension, asthma, backaches, and chest pains."

The most devastating consequence of all, however, is the damage to one's spirituality. The Bible condemns greed and the love of money. (1 Corinthians 5:10, 11; 1 Timothy 6:10) Like any addiction, compulsive wagering is a "defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Corinthians 7:1) The more you bet, the more you damage your conscience and your relationship with God.—Compare 1 Timothy 4:2.

### The Will to Quit

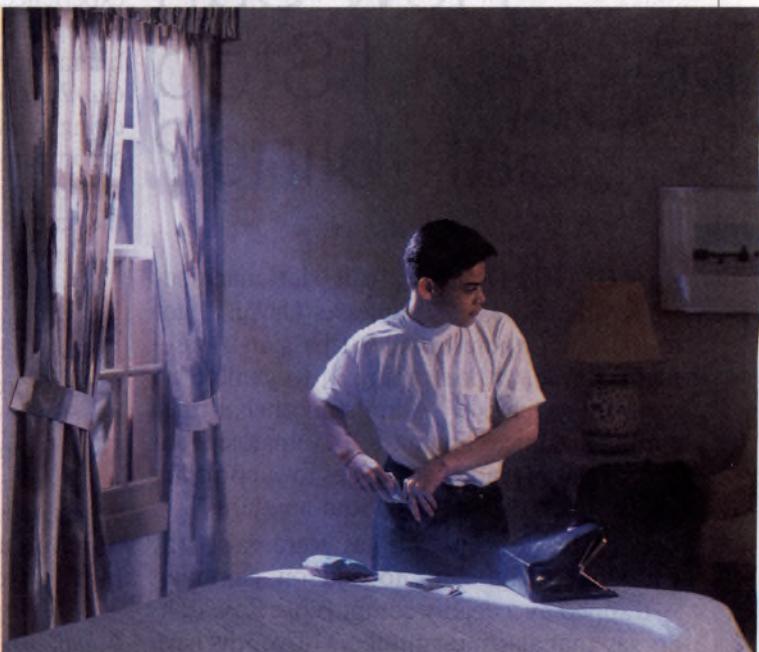
How can you break the vise-like grip of this habit? First of all, you must really want to quit. "No addiction can ever be overcome unless the addict actually wants to change," says Liz Hodgkinson in her book *Addictions*. This means learning to "hate what is bad," to detest gambling. (Psalm 97:10) How?

**Gamblers often resort to lying and thievery to support their gambling habit**

By thinking about, not its pleasures, but its consequences. Is "the temporary enjoyment of sin"—the thrill of winning some game—worth losing out on everlasting life? (Hebrews 11:25) Thinking along these lines can help you develop the resolve to quit.

Researcher Liz Hodgkinson notes, however: "Addictions of any kind can become so ingrained that removing them is rather like tearing off a limb." But Jesus said: "If, now, that right eye of yours is making you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you. For it is more beneficial to you for one of your members to be lost to you than for your whole body to be pitched into Gehenna." (Matthew 5:29) Anything that jeopardizes your relationship with God must be cut out of your life!

This means cultivating self-control. The apostle Paul had recurring desires that he could have allowed to overwhelm him, but he refused to be a slave to his desires. He said, "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave."



(1 Corinthians 9:27) You too must learn to get tough with yourself, not letting your desires control you.

### Getting to the Root of the Problem

Winning this fight, however, will require more than willpower. Addictions often reflect yet deeper problems. Says a compulsive gambler named Dick: "My childhood was very strange. There was no love in my family whatsoever. . . . I was always put down. I had a very low opinion of myself." As a result of such stress, his outlet was gambling.

Many in the field of mental health now link various addictions to the emotional trauma of child abuse and neglect. Whatever the case, getting to the root of your problem may help you overcome it. Prayed the psalmist: "Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my disquieting thoughts, and see whether there is in me any painful way, and lead me in the way of time indefinite." (Psalm 139:23, 24) Discussing your disquieting thoughts with a mature Christian, perhaps a congregation elder, may do much to help you understand why you gamble and what you must do to change your thinking and behavior patterns.\*

### "Something Better"

According to the book *Quit Compulsive Gambling*, quitting "is only the first [step] in the battle against the problem." Drastic changes in your life-style will also have to be made. To prevent a relapse, you must steer clear of former gambling partners and stay away from old gambling hangouts, such as casinos, pool halls, and the like. (Proverbs 13:20) This does not mean isolating yourself. (Proverbs 18:1) Work at developing healthy, supportive friendships within the Christian congregation. Keep yourself busy with pro-

ductive work, spiritual activities, and wholesome recreation.

Hodgkinson reminds us, though, that the addict will win in his fight only when he "perceives that there is something better out there—that life has more to offer than the attempt to satisfy the addiction." Well, what could be better than the hope that the Bible offers?

A man named Roddy found this to be true. He describes himself as having been a "completely addicted gambler" for 25 years, starting from when he was a teenager. Roddy tried just about every form of gambling—horse races, dog races, football pools, gambling casinos. But then he began applying the truths in God's Word that he learned from Jehovah's Witnesses. "In just three months," says Roddy, "a remarkable metamorphosis took place." He quit gambling, and today he serves as an elder in the Christian congregation.

Perhaps, though, you already have some knowledge of the Bible's teachings. Like David and Thomas, mentioned at the outset, you may have till now failed to make the Bible's truths your own. If so, why not 'prove to yourself the good and acceptable and perfect will of God' by making a serious study of the Bible? (Romans 12:2) Once David and Thomas began applying what they had learned and developed real faith and conviction, they were able to overcome compulsive gambling. You can too!

Applying yourself to a study of the Bible will make the Bible's hope for the future—something better than gambling—more real to you. At the same time, it will help you develop a personal relationship with God. You will thus feel free to "pray incessantly" to him for help, confident that he understands your feelings. (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Psalm 103:14) He will reward your diligent efforts by giving you the strength needed to win the fight against compulsive gambling.—Galatians 6:9; Philippians 4:13.

\* Most in the field of mental health believe that professional counseling is needed to break the hold of an addictive behavior. If a Christian chooses a therapy that does not conflict with Bible principles, this is strictly a personal decision.

# Growing Old With Understanding



**A** TRUE-LIFE story of an aged Middle Eastern man who had suffered many hardships and disasters closes with the assurance that he died "old and satisfied with days." He had lived to be well over 140 years of age.—Job 42:16, 17.

Another man, also in the Middle East, lived to the ripe old age of 175 years. The

record says that he "expired and died in a good old age, old and satisfied." Yes, it is possible for people to live a satisfying life even into their advanced years.—Genesis 25:7, 8.

At an age we would now consider very old, one of the above-mentioned men volunteered to leave a comfortable urban home and, with his entire household, moved to a different

country. The first leg of that journey covered over 600 miles, and that without the aid of modern transportation. The other man suffered very severe health problems. Both men raised families during their later years.

One of those men saw part of the land in which he was dwelling overrun by the combined armies of four invading kings. He had to muster a force of some 300 men to chase after them and rescue a dearly loved relative. Later, he saw two prosperous cities destroyed by an act of God. Twice, this same man had his beautiful wife temporarily taken from him by powerful kings.

Both of these elderly men—Job and Abraham—successfully went through distressing events and yet lived on to be “old and satisfied.” What was their secret?

### **Modern Problems of Old Age**

Are the problems facing older people today really all that different from those experienced by men of old? Don’t some people of advanced age today suffer the loss of wealth or even lose the means to make a living?

Some lose their homes and have to move to unfamiliar surroundings. Close relatives, friends, and marriage mates die. Health problems are a major factor with which to contend. Sadly, some children abandon their parents, withdrawing support and leaving them to fend for themselves.

We need not further rehearse such problems, for they are all too familiar. But we can wisely seek solutions.

### **Attitudes Toward Aging**

A person’s attitude may need to be adjusted; it could be at the root of his unhappiness. For instance, some elderly people insist on living alone well beyond their ability to care for themselves. One woman who was disabled and was living alone on a large piece of property posted a sign on her door that said:

“Keep Out!” She felt that all anybody wanted was her money or property; she distrusted everyone.

Such a person is not growing old with understanding. What a sad situation! True, not everybody can be trusted. But how much wiser it is to accept the fact that some can be trusted and to receive the friendship and assistance of those genuinely trying to be helpful!

Some elderly ones may feel that they have lived out their lives. But they are still living, and they will find it beneficial to keep their minds active and to use their thinking abilities to the full. Learning new things is not beyond their capabilities and can be enriching, although it may take longer for them to learn than when they were young.

### **Old Age Is a World of Its Own**

A vocational school’s instructions on geriatrics says that older ones need to feel that they have independence of mind and body. They must also feel that they are loved and needed, that they are useful and can do things for themselves. Moreover, those instructions say that the elderly need the sense of belonging that can be had in a family and with friends and that they would benefit from religious association.

What, then, is the best attitude for aging people to display? An optimistic viewpoint can be a real help. One who apparently looked upon old age as a new chapter in life was the 90-year-old mother of a former U.S. president. In her memoirs she wrote: “Old age need not be feared . . . It can be rich and fulfilling . . . The qualities of our later life will be determined by the life we have already shaped.” Such a disposition adds more meaning to the later years of life.

Hence, the previously noted instructions on geriatrics observed that happy oldsters are

the ones who have managed to educate themselves by embarking on new and satisfying interests, learning and cultivating challenging hobbies, enjoying meaningful experiences and friendships, learning to appreciate life and to live within their physical capabilities.

What about enduring life's inevitable problems? The book *On Growing Old* says: "It surely goes without saying that if a man has access to higher values and especially to the power which is inherent in belief he will be better able to endure . . . Old people above all should seek to strengthen their religious bonds."

Some people put living life to the fullest ahead of everything else. One white-haired 61-year-old indulged a passion for high-powered motorcycles by being a member of a motorcycle club exclusively for people over 40. Of course, *Awake!* does not recommend motorcycles for the aged!

One elderly couple has a motto: "Don't be miserable about your age—and don't fold up when you retire." Living up to that motto, they pedaled bicycles from Los Angeles to New York in 1980. During the four years following their retirement in 1976, the man, 69, and his wife, 64, biked more than 15,500 miles through Canada, the United States, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Germany, France, and Britain. Here too we are not recommending that someone fill his life with such pursuits, as that could leave little or no time for learning about and being involved in the true worship of God. But this example does demonstrate that some older people have a great capacity for living.

Productive activity and doing things for others can help a person to grow old gracefully. A group of retired craftsmen, some over 70, kept up their skills by providing low-cost home repairs for pensioners in the Greater Vancouver, Canada, area. Concerning the ef-

fect this work had on the craftsmen themselves, one man said: "It's good therapy. It keeps them active." The newspaper report said they are "not tired, just retired." These men also think that watching TV for the rest of one's life is only for the very tired.

### The Role of Appreciation

Appreciation for life comes into the picture too. An alert 87-year-old from British Columbia, Canada, showed much appreciation for just being alive. His maxim for growing old with understanding was: "Keep an active mind, and remain young at heart. Live one day at a time." He never actually prepared ahead for old age but simply kept busy in the open air tending his fruit trees. To adapt to his changed circumstances, he maintained a lively interest in other people and always endeavored to keep abreast of the news.

Even though the position of older persons in the family and in society undergoes change, there is no need for them to lose all interest in life or to fall into deep mental depression. If friends and relatives are supportive at this time, it can do a great deal of good, for in this way oldsters can share their experiences and pleasures. An elderly man who lives alone in his own home in British Columbia commented: "If older people are neglected by their families, there is a tendency to live in the past, and this is not good." He appreciates his widespread family and their faithfulness in keeping in touch. "The telephone," he said, "is a wonderful instrument for older persons."

One man forced into early retirement by severe heart problems commented on the danger of living in the past. His life had been a very active one, managing a successful business as well as serving as an appointed elder in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Did he live with regrets over lost activities? "No," he said, "not really. I'm satisfied that I did my

best. I laid the groundwork for others to build on."

This man's relationship with his married daughters and their families has, in his words, become a "closer closeness" as the years have rolled by. He and his wife appreciate their loved ones and have learned to leave the family decisions of their grown children where they belong—with those adults. Failure to do so would only cause friction and unhappiness, plus the well-known in-law problem.

How much joy is missed by grandparents if their role is not appreciated! But what happiness comes with hearing a grandchild say, as this grandfather did after a long session in the hospital: "*Bompa!* Where have you been? We've missed you!"

Because selfishness and lack of natural affection are so prominent in today's world, not all sick and aging people have the moral and physical support so much needed to face problems with serenity. This is how the supervisor of an acute-care center in Canada appraised the situation: "Many of these older persons leave a lovely home to come here, where they only have a bed and cupboard. When they leave, via the undertaker, all that remains is one small box containing all their worldly possessions. It is a traumatic experience." Yet, in certain cases these facilities may be the only answer for families seeking care for their aged loved ones.

### Facing the Future With Understanding

According to some prognosticators, the time will come when a medical prescription will combat aging, just as some other health problems are controlled today. But do such will-o'-the-wisp predictions of imperfect men provide a real, sustaining hope for a person whose life span is nearing "threescore years and ten" or "fourscore years"?—Psalm 90:10, King James Version.

Thousands of older folk have found life-sustaining hope in God's Word, the Bible. They now trust in the sure promises of "the Ancient of Days," Jehovah God. (Daniel 7: 9, 13) One such promise is that an older person's flesh will "become fresher than in youth," and he will "return to the days of his youthful vigor." (Job 33:25) Even those sleeping in death will awaken to that kind of life in God's righteous new world, which will soon replace the present unsatisfying system of things. (Acts 24:15; 2 Peter 3:13) It was this sound hope that enabled Abraham and Job to live out their days "old and satisfied."

Truly, living today according to such heart-satisfying values is like building a bank account for the future. Too, by having a supportive family and friends and suitable activities, an older person can thrive. Above all, a close relationship with the One who has promised relief from aging and death makes it possible to grow old with understanding. Indeed, those having God's favor "will still keep on thriving during gray-headedness."

—Psalm 92:14.

### CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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# Should My Family Be Immunized?

**“**T'S time for baby shots," says the doctor. That is perhaps an ominous statement for a small child to hear, but it has generally resulted in a reassuring smile and a knowing nod from the parents.

Recently, however, questions have arisen regarding commonly accepted practices of immunization of children and of adults. Which shots are really necessary? What about side effects? Is blood in any way involved in the production of a vaccine?

These are good questions for a concerned Christian family to consider. The answers can have a direct bearing on your children's health and future as well as on your own.

## The Background

In the 1950's an effective vaccine was introduced that virtually put an end to the fear of polio in most lands. By 1980 the scourge of smallpox was declared eradicated from the whole world, the result of effective vaccination programs. This seemed to bear out the words of Benjamin Franklin: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Today, immunization programs have been generally effective in controlling many diseases—tetanus, polio, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough), to name a few. Furthermore, it has been shown that when immunization has for some reason become lax, the disease has returned. In one country that happened with whooping cough.

What do these immunizations do? Basically, in one of two ways, they shore up the body's defenses against the invasion of infectious agents called pathogens, which include

germs and viruses. The first way is called active immunization. In this case the shot contains a weakened or killed pathogen (or its poison) modified in such a way that it is not dangerous to the body. The body's own defense mechanisms begin to form killer molecules called antibodies that can fight the real disease agent, should it come along. If the immunizing shot contains an extract of the pathogen's poison (toxin), it is called a toxoid. If it is made from live weakened (attenuated) pathogens or from killed organisms, it is called a vaccine.

As you can imagine, these shots do not create immediate immunity. It takes a period of time for the body to make protective antibodies. These active immunizations include all the baby shots and the injections that are commonly considered as vaccinations. With one exception (discussed later), these do not involve the use of blood in any step of production.

The other procedure is called passive immunization. This is usually reserved for situations in which a person has been exposed to a serious disease, such as rabies. In that case, there is no time for the body to build its own immunity. So someone else's antibodies, already made, can be injected to fight the pathogens in the individual who has been exposed. Gamma globulin, antitoxin, and hyperimmune serum are other names for shots produced from extracts of the blood of immune humans or animals. These borrowed, or passive, immunizations are intended to give the body immediate, but only temporary, help to fight off the invader. The borrowed antibodies



are soon eliminated from the body as foreign protein.

### Should My Child Get Shots?

Given this background, some may still wonder, 'Which immunizations should my child receive?' In most parts of the world where childhood shots are readily available, routine immunizations have resulted in dramatic declines in the incidence of targeted childhood diseases.

For several years the American Academy of Pediatrics, in general agreement with similar bodies around the world, has recommended routine immunization for the following diseases: diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. The three are usually combined and given as one shot—DPT—with three booster (reinforcement) DPT shots given at intervals of at least two months. Separate from that, immunization for measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) is given as one shot—MMR—to children after one year of age. Also, four doses of oral polio vaccine (OPV) are administered on a schedule similar to DPT.\*

In many places this routine series is mand-

tory, though the number of boosters required may vary. Recently, as a result of several measles outbreaks, additional boosters of measles vaccines have been recommended under some circumstances. You may need to consult a doctor in your area for details.

In addition to these, there is a pneumonia vaccine (Pneumovax). This appears to provide lifetime immunity for children and adults who, for some reason, are susceptible to certain kinds of pneumonia.

Another vaccine for children is called Hib vaccine. It is given to protect against a common pathogen of childhood, Hemophilus influenza. This germ causes several diseases in babies, most notably a severe form of meningitis. The vaccine has proved generally safe, and it is increasingly being recommended as part of the series of baby shots.

Incidentally, there is as yet no routine immunization for chicken pox. And vaccination for smallpox is no longer available because, as mentioned earlier, a worldwide program of vaccination has wiped out this deadly disease.

### What About Side Effects?

What about the issue of immunization side effects? With most of the shots, beyond the usual sudden cry and momentary tears of the child, the side effects are usually limited and temporary—at the most a day or so of fever. Yet, many parents have anxieties about the risks of these shots. One medical study surveyed parents' concerns about the health of their children and found that 57 percent of the surveyed parents worried about reaction to immunizations.

Recently, great concern has been publicized

\* The World Health Organization is now recommending routine immunization against hepatitis B for infants in many parts of the world.

regarding one component of DPT, namely, the pertussis, or whooping cough, part. The success of this vaccine has resulted in remarkable decline of a formerly feared disease—from 200,000 cases per year in one country alone before the vaccine to 2,000 per year following the widespread use of the vaccine. Nevertheless, serious side effects—seizures and even brain damage—have occurred in about 1 in 100,000 doses given.

While this reaction is very rare, it causes some anxiety on the part of many parents who find they have little choice but to allow their child to receive the shot in order to qualify for school. Because the disease pertussis, though uncommon, is so devastating when it strikes a community, experts have concluded that for the average child, "the vaccine is far safer than catching the disease." Such experts advise that the immunization be given except "when a previous dose resulted in a convulsion, encephalitis, focal neurologic signs, or collapse. Nor should infants who experience 'excessive somnolence, excessive screaming (persistent crying or screaming for 3 or more hours duration), or temperature more than 105° F (40.5° C)' receive additional doses of vaccine."<sup>\*</sup>

In many lands the real solution to the problem is an acellular vaccine, such as is presently being administered in Japan with very hopeful prospects. This new and apparently safer vaccine is becoming available in other countries as well.

Other routine baby shots have been proved time and again to be effective and relatively safe.

### **What About Adult Immunizations?**

Once a person reaches adulthood, there are

\* A family history of seizures does not seem to correlate with reactions. And though respiratory infections do not seem to predispose to reaction, it might seem prudent to withhold the shot if the child is even slightly ill.

### **Immunizations Not Derived From Blood**

Baby shots  
(DPT, OPV, MMR)

Hib vaccine

Pneumovax

Toxoids

Flu shots

Recombivax-HB

### **Immunizations Derived From Blood**

Heptavax-B

Rhogam

Antitoxins

Antivenins  
(for snake and spider venom)

Immune globulins  
(for various diseases)

Gamma globulin

Hyperimmune serum preparations  
(antirabies serum, for example)

just a few active immunizations he should keep in mind. Ideally, all adults should already have immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella as a result of exposure or immunization in childhood. Should a question about such immunity arise, a doctor might recommend an MMR shot for an adult.

A shot of tetanus toxoid every ten years or so is considered a good idea as a preventive against lockjaw. Older persons and those with a chronic disease may want to check with their doctor about yearly influenza immunizations. Those traveling to certain parts of the world should consider immunization against

such things as yellow fever, cholera, anthrax, typhoid, or plague if such diseases are endemic where they are going.

One other active immunization deserves attention because it is the only active immunization made from blood. It is a hepatitis-B vaccine called Heptavax-B. This immunization is intended for some individuals, such as health workers, who might accidentally be exposed to blood products from patients infected with hepatitis B. Though hailed as a major advance, the vaccine caused concern to many because of its method of production.

Basically, the blood of selected hepatitis-B-virus carriers is pooled and treated to kill any viruses, and a certain hepatitis-B antigen is harvested. This refined, inactivated antigen can be injected as a vaccine. Many people refuse to take the vaccine, however, fearing the risk of taking in blood products from infected people, such as those who are sexually promiscuous. Furthermore, some conscientious Christians objected to the vaccine on the ground that it is derived from the blood of another person.\*

Such objections to hepatitis vaccine have been effectively removed by the release of a different but equally potent hepatitis-B vaccine. This one is made by means of genetic technology in which the vaccine is produced in yeast cells, with no involvement of human blood. If you work in the health-care field or are for some other reason considered a candidate for hepatitis-B vaccine, you may want to discuss this matter with your physician.

### Blood in the Production of Vaccines

This raises an important point for Christians, who are concerned with the Bible's prohibition on misuse of blood. (Acts 15:28, 29) Are any other vaccines made from blood?

As a general rule, with the exception of

\* See "Questions from Readers" in *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1990.

Heptavax-B, active immunizations are not produced from blood. This includes all baby shots, for example.

The opposite is true of passive immunization. One can assume that when one is advised to have a shot after likely exposure, such as after stepping on a rusty nail or after being bitten by a dog, the shots (unless they are just routine boosters) are hyperimmune serum and have been made using blood. This is also true of Rh immune globulin (Rhogam), which is often recommended for Rh-negative mothers who for some reason are exposed to Rh-positive blood, as at the birth of an Rh-positive baby.

Since these passive immunizations are those of concern regarding the issue of blood, what stand would be taken by the conscientious Christian? Previous articles in this journal and its companion, *The Watchtower*, have presented a consistent position: It would be up to the Bible-trained conscience of the individual Christian as to whether he would accept this treatment for himself and his family.\*

### Should My Family Get Immunized?

Christians have great respect for life and sincerely desire to do the best for their family's health. Whether you conscientiously decide to have your family immunized is your personal decision to make.—Galatians 6:5.

One expert has summarized the situation well: "Parents should be informed about each medical intervention for their child. They are more than just legal guardians of their child. They are responsible for the well-being and protection of their offspring during that period of life in which the offspring is dependent." In this matter of immunization, as well as in all other medical matters, Jehovah's Witnesses take that responsibility very seriously.—Contributed by a physician.

\* See *The Watchtower*, June 15, 1978, pages 30-1.

# "Let's Send a Card"

**W**HAT a pleasant weekend that was!" Returning home after visiting with friends, you have happy memories of that relaxing time. How hospitable your hosts were! To express your appreciation, you say to your family: "Let's send a card."

Off to the local shops you go to buy a card. You find a vast but confusing array. 'What card should I pick?' 'Which one has just the right words?' Not an easy choice by any means!

So why not make your own card?



## A Distinctive Decoration

Decorating with pressed flowers can enhance your cards. This is a simple, inexpensive means of giving your cards a distinctive style. You need very little equipment.

### Collecting the Flowers

- Make sure you have permission to pick the flowers you want.
- Avoid picking in the rain.
- Do not pick old flowers or leaves.
- Do not waste flowers.

Some flowers do not press well if they are fleshy (bluebells, lilies, orchids) or have an awkward shape (daffodils, lilac, large roses, thistles).

### Pressing the Flowers

- Place flowers between sheets of blotting paper clamped between two sheets of plywood. Adding a few layers of newspaper will help absorb the moisture. Tighten the clamps daily as the flowers dry.
- Wait for at least a week before opening the press.
- Briefly check to see that the flowers are properly

## Making Your Own Cards

This is easier than you may at first think. All you need is a sheet of plain paper or a thin card, a writing instrument, and, of course, a message. With a design of your choice, you can add the personal touch. How? Here are two suggestions.

(1) Choose a picture you like. It may be a scene from a magazine that you can cut out and attach to your card. One wife surprised her husband with a novel card to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. She cut out two small photographs of her husband and herself and stuck these on a simple card to convey an expression of her happiness for their shared life.

(2) Use flowers. They are already well designed. After pressing and drying them, attach them to your card to add pleasure and taste.

—See box.

Whatever the decoration you choose, surely it is the message that is most valuable. Making your own cards gives you the opportunity to compose words that truly express your sentiments.

## A Fitting Message

King Solomon of old "sought to find the delightful words and the writing of correct words

of truth." (Ecclesiastes 12:10) Such word choice will make your written message "as apples of gold in silver carvings" to the recipient. —Proverbs 25:11.

Choose words that will have a pleasant effect. You may well include some of the Bible's inspired words to convey your sincere feelings. They will be most welcome.

How you pen those words on the card also transmits a message. Making them neat and legible says much about you, the sender.

## Occasions for Sending Cards

Weddings are happy events to which couples may want to invite their friends and relatives. If they will be having a reception, they can express care for the welfare of those visiting from far away by including in the invitation an indication of the time it will begin and end.

The birth of a child can be another occasion for sending a card. This lets the new arrival's parents know that you share their joy.

In addition to such occasions, how thoughtful it is to express thanks for kindnesses people have shown you. You can also comfort the sick and those who are in the hospital, reassuring them of your love and concern. Your cheery greetings and the pleasant picture your card brings can help to ease depression and anxiety. Truly, as the ancient proverb says, "a word at its right time is O how good!"—Proverbs 15:23.

When far away or even nearby, convey your sympathies to those who have lost a loved one in death. A reminder of the wonderful resurrection hope that the Bible offers may be appropriate.

Therefore, whenever you feel moved to convey your feelings to others, why not send a card? This does not, of course, preclude speaking directly to the person when possible. It is, rather, an added opportunity to be kind.

pressed, and if needed, reposition on dry paper.

- Close the press tightly again, and leave it in a warm, dry place for two or three weeks more before removing the flowers.

## Mounting the Flowers

- Use a minimum of adhesive.
- Handle the dried flowers with care, perhaps using a pair of tweezers.

## Watching the World

### Water Gives Life

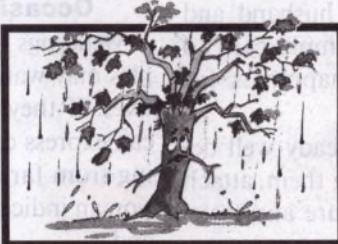
The Brazilian magazine *Claudia* says that without water a person may die in just 48 hours. Scientists estimate that water makes up 70 to 80 percent of the human body's weight. The water is primarily within the cells. A smaller percentage is in the interstitial fluid that fills the space between the cells. Water carries proteins, hormones, fats, salts, and sugars. Hence, without water, normal biochemical reactions cannot occur. Furthermore, lack of water, according to *Claudia*, can seriously damage the joints and cause thickening of the blood, which places an undue burden on the heart; the kidneys become exhausted in trying to eliminate fluids full of toxins, resulting in fatigue and indisposition. Doctors recommend a daily consumption of two to three quarts of water.

### Women Detectives

"The next Sherlock Holmes may be a female," says Japan's *Asahi Evening News*. In a new school in Tokyo, three hundred students are training to become detectives, and over two thirds of them are women, mostly in their early 20's to early 40's. Sleuthing appeals to them for different reasons. A 46-year-old housewife was reported as enrolling in the school because "she was not satisfied with conventional courses that teach women how to arrange flowers and how to put on a kimono properly." For others, though, the study is more than a hobby. Over half the housewives in the school have not told their husbands. Some of them are acquiring skills to check up on their cheating mates.

### Trees Under Attack

A study of the trees in 24 European countries reveals a worsening problem. *The European* reports that 1 tree in 5 has suffered an abnormal loss of its leaves. Outside the EC (European Community), most damage has occurred in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Lithuania. Within the EC, France and Spain are home to the



healthiest forests, whereas the most damaged are located in Britain. In 1988 a quarter of the trees in that country showed signs of damage. By 1991 more than half had lost 25 percent or more of their leaves. Although acid rain is widely blamed, successive dry summers in Britain have added to the trees' problems.

### Salmonella on the Increase

"In Germany there are 60,000 to 100,000 cases of salmonella infection each year, of which at least 200 end in death," reports the monthly magazine *Kosmos*. These figures were released by Professor Hans-Dieter Brede of the Georg-Speyer-Haus Chemotherapeutic Research Institute in Frankfurt. The illness has been on the increase in recent years, mainly because of inadequate hygiene where animals are kept or processed. Undercooked eggs or poultry contaminated with salmonella is a common cause. "Salmonella

[bacteria] die at a temperature of not lower than [160 degrees Fahrenheit]," the magazine explained.

### Employee Burnout

"Poor supervision is a leading cause of employee burnout and low productivity," reports *The Toronto Star*. A bad supervisor "can ruin your day, and even upset your personal life. . . . Poor supervision was much more likely to cause bad job performance than personal problems such as the death of a close relative or a rocky marriage," states the *Star*. It can cost a company "increased accidents, absenteeism and stress-related illnesses." On the other hand, a good supervisor is a good communicator and motivator and can produce "a more creative and productive work force." Experts suggest that supervisors establish clear goals and provide necessary resources to do the job. They should be accessible, be good listeners, not play favorites, and not be afraid to learn from their employees.

### A Pattern of Abuse

About half of all physical attacks on older women in the United States are committed by their own husbands. During 1991 "more than 700,000 women over the age of 50 were hit by their husbands," according to the magazine *New Choices for Retirement Living*. A significant number of husbands in their 50's, 60's, and even 70's hit their wives on an average of three or four times a year. "It's become part of the marriage ritual," says Richard Gelles, director of the Family Violence Research Program at the University of Rhode Island. Said a woman of her experience: "What I found much more

devastating was the mental and verbal abuse. That was constant."

### Sharing Earrings —A Health Risk

"Earrings contaminated with blood are a potential source of infection with numerous organisms [including] hepatitis B and human immunodeficiency virus," claim Philip D. Walson and Michael T. Brady, doctors at Ohio State University and Children's Hospital. In a joint letter published in the American medical journal *Pediatrics*, concern was expressed over the apparently widespread practice of sharing nonsterilized earrings. Adolescents and young adults who share earrings may be aware of the health risks associated with sexual activity and the sharing of needles—but not so with this practice. It "has potential for transmission of bloodborne diseases," claim both doctors. They recommend that physicians "dissuade their patients from this practice."

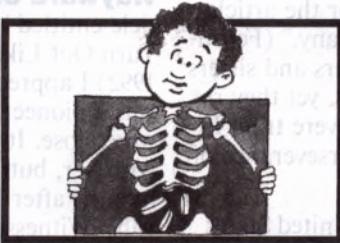
### Canadians Have Trouble Sleeping

Nearly 1 in every 4 adult Canadians had sleep problems in 1991, according to a recent study of social trends by Statistics Canada. Stress was the primary cause. *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto said that "painful health problems" caused sleep disorders for 44 percent of those surveyed. Of the women surveyed, 28 percent had trouble sleeping. There was a 19-percent incidence among men who responded. Lone mothers, the poor, the elderly, shift workers, and those looking for work had a particularly high rate of sleeplessness. Dr. Jeffrey Lipsitz, of the Sleep Disorders Centre of Metropolitan Toronto, whose clinic sees over a thousand new patients a year, noted that as people worry

more about job loss or money, they begin to lose sleep.

### Coin Eaters

Each year tens of thousands of young children are taken to hospital emergency rooms for costly X rays after swallowing coins. Most of these coins pass through the body safely, but occasionally a coin gets stuck in the esophagus, causing internal bleeding, infection, and sometimes death when it perforates the esophagus. A simple and completely safe hand-held metal detector, similar to those



sometimes used by airport security, has been designed so that pediatricians can pinpoint the swallowed coin. Dr. Simon Ros, a director of pediatric emergency medicine in Illinois and one of the technique's developers, says the device may eliminate a trip to the emergency room, "where detection can cost more than \$300." This technique, reported in the *Journal of Pediatrics and Pediatric Emergency Care*, is likely to be widely used soon because of its efficiency and low cost.

### Troubled Youngsters

A rise in the number of suicides in Hong Kong has officials "shocked, bewildered and frightened," reports *The Toronto Star*. Children between the ages of 8 and 15 are jumping out of buildings to their death. What is troubling these youngsters? Some blame the education system. Thomas Mul-

vey, director of the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society, says: "In Hong Kong, schools have been described as a mental health hazard to children, making unreasonable demands on students and being insensitive to their needs." Parents also "put a high value on educational success" and show "little concern for their children's feelings," states Mulvey. Children "feel emotionally isolated, lonely and neglected." The *Star* reports that government officials are convinced that "the root of many problems lies in the home."

### Abortions in Colombia

In Colombia, about a million and a half women have had at least one abortion. That is close to 20 percent of all women of childbearing age in that country. Many women die as a result of abortion-related complications. The Colombian magazine *Semanal* reports that in the "Maternal-Infantile Institute of Bogotá, abortions generate the larger number of maternal deaths." It is estimated that about 400,000 abortions are performed every year in Colombia. That is an average of about 45 abortions every hour.

### Harmful Entertainment

"Shame on Hollywood for an endless stream of films filled with profanity, nudity, sex, violence and killings." This statement was part of a full-page advertisement published recently in the newspaper *USA Today*. According to the ad, one major TV network has allowed a program that "is a favorite with young people to put on skits about masturbation, morticians having sex with dead people," and other objectionable subjects. The ad noted that by viewing TV programs, the "average child of 16 [has] seen more than 200,000 acts of violence and 33,000 murders."

## From Our Readers

**Hurricane Andrew** What a fabulous article! ("Things Hurricane Andrew Could Not Destroy," January 8, 1993) Having had the privilege of helping out with the relief work, I especially enjoyed the quotes from the local residents. The seven days I spent there strengthened my trust in Jehovah and encouraged me to love my Christian brothers and sisters more and more.

M. J., United States

**Nazi Persecution** Thanks for the article "Keeping Integrity in Nazi Germany." (February 8, 1993) Our Christian brothers and sisters have gone through so many trials, yet they remain faithful! If ever I suffer a severe trial, I hope to have the strength and perseverance of Josef Rehwald and his family.

D. J., United States

Today I read the life story of Josef Rehwald. I had tears in my eyes as I thought about how Jehovah sustains his servants in times of distress. I could not hold back from thanking Him!

V. M., Italy

**Entertainment** The articles on "How Does Entertainment Affect Your Life?" (November 8, 1992) were very timely. I especially appreciated the information on movies. I work at a video-rental store, and the movie *Basic Instinct* that you mentioned in your article was one of the store's biggest rentals. I cannot believe how such corrupt movies have become big business!

D. M., United States

**Modern Art** Reading the item "Modern Art Fails a Test" ("Watching the World," November 8, 1992), one could get the impression that acrylic paints are not very useful. That is not the case. Indeed, they have many impor-

tant advantages over other types of paint. For example, they do not oxidize. Additionally, commercial canvas uses an acrylic primer. The danger of flaking comes when acrylic paint is applied incorrectly, perhaps to a dirty or greasy surface. This may have been the case with the artists named.

J. W., Switzerland

*We appreciate this clarification.—ED.*

**Wayward Siblings** Thank you for the article entitled "Young People Ask . . . Will I Turn Out Like My Brother?" (December 22, 1992) I appreciated it very much. My sister was a pioneer [full-time evangelizer], and we were close. It was a goal of mine to pioneer with her, but my goal soon faded. Four months after I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, she was disfellowshipped [excommunicated] from the congregation. This was very hard for me, particularly when friends would ask about her. I was no longer proud of her. The article made me realize that I can (and *will*) be different!

L. S., United States

I had a difficult time when my brother was disfellowshipped. However, I did not turn out like him. Now I have graduated from high school and am able to pioneer. I also get to help out in constructing Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses. I would like to work hard and persevere in doing what is fine.

K. M., Japan

I have two disfellowshipped brothers. Sometimes I was afraid of getting baptized because I thought I would turn out like them. Jehovah answered my prayers through this article. In January, I was baptized. Thus I was able to demonstrate publicly that I have dedicated myself to Jehovah, and I will be careful not to make the same mistakes as my brothers.

R. C., Italy

# Appreciating Godly Parents

Parents who work hard to raise their children to be responsible and God-fearing adults are gratified when their efforts are successful. They are also very pleased when their children express appreciation for that good upbringing.

Following is a letter sent by a son and his wife, after their wedding, to his parents:



*"Dear Dad and Mom:*

*"Oh, where do we begin? Let's start by saying how much we appreciated your love, support, and generosity on our wedding day. It truly was a special day, and your presence was invaluable. Additionally, as if that weren't enough, you assisted us in making our honeymoon so enjoyable. All the above is further evidence of what outstanding, loving, reasonable, and fun-loving parents you are and have always been!"*

*"Have you ever wondered why I have been able to stay on the straight and narrow? Because, besides my love for Jehovah God, I have always had great respect for you both. This respect has been so strong that coupled with your discipline, it has caused me always to think twice when doing things and making decisions. The success of my life in doing God's will is indeed due in large part to your consistent love and discipline of me and your undying devotion to Jehovah and his organization."*

*"If I were to take all the memories of my childhood about the two of you and were to combine them, they would say that although I may not remember everything you said, I do remember your outstanding conduct, especially your love for others and for Jehovah."*

*"We love you very, very much."*

*"Your son and daughter-in-law,*

*"L. and W."*

# Does God Care?

**Why does he permit suffering?**

**Will it ever end?**



Intriguing questions, aren't they? They appear on the cover of a brochure published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Have you read it? Already it has given comfort and hope to many. A woman from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., writes concerning this brochure:

"I didn't know it was possible to bring words together so beautifully and in such a heart-touching way. It's as if I were in a dark room and suddenly someone turned on a light; I realized: 'God *does* care!'

"I was always a scientifically oriented person. Therefore, discourses, articles, or films with a scientific slant have renewed my spirits if ever I became discouraged. However, not only has this brochure renewed me but also it's touched me in a soft, loving way.

"The first thing that catches your eye is the cover. It's effective because those are *real* people. Each of their faces reflects concern about the question in bold black print, 'Does God Really Care About Us?' These people have facial expressions that mirror the way everyone feels these days.

"The material is very easily understood. It's simple, to the point, and it makes sense. It's reasonable. It's so pleasant and so easy to read that once you start reading it, you can't put it down."