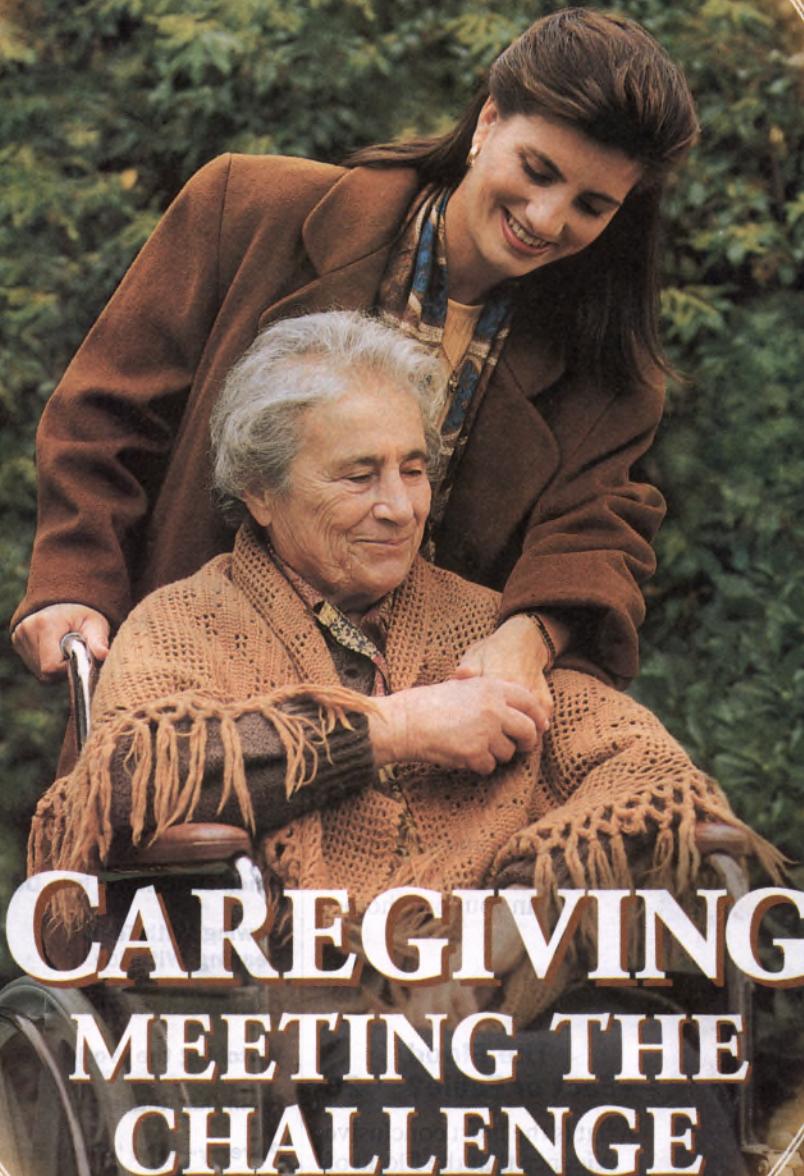


Awake!

February 8, 1997



**CAREGIVING
MEETING THE
CHALLENGE**

CAREGIVING Meeting the Challenge **3-13**

With the senior-citizen population growing and the fact that catastrophic illness can strike at any age, families today face serious decisions about the care of relatives. What help can be given to caregivers?



Grow Your Own Sprouts 23

With little time and effort, you can grow sprouts right in your own home.



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What is the most conclusive evidence that the Flood of Noah's day is a fact? Read the Bible's viewpoint.

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Noah: L. Chapons/Illustrirte Familien-Bibel nach der deutschen Uebersetzung Dr. Martin Luthers



The Challenge of CAREGIVING

AT TIMES I wished I could escape from the situation. But he needed me more than ever. At times I felt very alone."—Jeanny, who nursed her 29-year-old husband for 18 months before he died of a brain tumor.*

"There are times when I feel irritated with Mom, and then I get disgusted with myself. I feel like a failure when I do not cope well."—Rose, 59, who cared for her frail 90-year-old mother, who had become bedridden.

The news of terminal or chronic illness can be devastating to family and friends. "At the time of diagnosis every family feels alone. They may not know anyone else who has had this problem," says Jeanne Munn Bracken, in *Children With Cancer*. They are also often "numb and disbelieving," as Elsa was when she found out that her 36-year-old close friend Betty had cancer. Sue, whose father was ill, felt "a sick, hollow feeling" in her stomach when she finally realized that her father was dying of cancer.

Family members and friends may suddenly find themselves thrust into the role of caregivers—providing for the physical and emo-

tional needs of the one who is ill. They may have to prepare nourishing meals, supervise medication, arrange transport to the doctor, entertain the patient's visitors, write letters for the patient, and much, much more. Often such activities are crammed into an already busy schedule.

As the patient's condition deteriorates, however, the work of caregiving becomes even more demanding. What might this include? "Everything!" exclaims Elsa about her bedridden friend Betty. "Washing and feeding her, helping her when she vomits, emptying her urine bags." Kathy, despite holding down a full-time job, had to care for her ailing mother. Sue, mentioned earlier, tells of "taking and recording [her father's] temperature every half hour, sponging him down when the temperature was rising, and changing his clothes and bed linen every few hours."

The quality of the care that the patient receives will depend to a large extent on the well-being of those providing the care. Yet, the feelings and needs of those who look after the sick are often overlooked. If caregiving merely resulted in sore backs and strained shoulders, it would be difficult

* Some of the names have been changed.

enough. But, as most caregivers will confirm, the care is provided at enormous emotional cost.

"It Was Very Embarrassing"

"Studies frequently describe the distress resulting from the [patient's] wandering, embarrassing behavior, and verbal outbursts," reports *The Journals of Gerontology*. For example, Gillian describes what happened after a friend at a Christian meeting asked to meet her aged mother. "Mother just looked blank and did not respond," recalls Gillian sadly. "It was very embarrassing and brought tears to my eyes."

"It is one of the most difficult things to cope with," says Joan, whose husband has dementia. "It makes him a little insensitive to etiquette," she explains. "When we are dining out with others, he sometimes goes to other tables in the dining room, tastes the jam, and puts the used spoon back into the jam dish. When we visit neighbors, he may spit on the garden pathway. It's very difficult to rid myself of the thought that others are probably talking about these habits and perhaps regard him as sadly lacking in manners. I tend to curl up inside."

"I Was Afraid That If We Were Careless . . ."

Caring for a seriously ill loved one can be a very frightening experience. The caregiver may be afraid of what will happen as the illness advances—perhaps even afraid of the death of his loved one. He may also fear that

he will not have the strength or ability to meet the patient's needs.

Elsa describes the reason for her fear this way: "I was afraid that I might hurt Betty physically, thereby adding to her suffering, or that I would do something that might shorten her life."

Sometimes the patient's fears become the caregiver's fears. "My father had a great fear of choking and would sometimes get panicky," confided Sue. "I was afraid that if we were careless, he would choke and thus experience his greatest fear."

"You May Grieve for the Way They Used to Be"

"Grief is a normal experience for people coping with a loved one who has a chronic illness," states *Caring for the Person With Dementia*. "As the patient's illness progresses, you may experience the loss of a companion and a relationship which was important to you. You may grieve for the way they used to be."

Jennifer describes how her family was affected by her mother's steadily declining health: "We felt hurt. We missed her vivacious conversation. We were very saddened." Gillian explains: "I didn't want my mother to die, and I didn't want her to suffer. I cried and cried."

"I Felt Rejected, Angry"

A caregiver may wonder: 'Why did this have to happen to me? Why don't others help? Can't they see I'm not coping well?

Awake!

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

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Don't Take Them for Granted!

"WE KNOW that 80% of the caregiving to the elderly that takes place in the home is done by women," says Myrna I. Lewis, assistant professor in the department of community medicine at Mount Sinai Medical School, New York.

One study of women caregivers, published in *The Journals of Gerontology*,^{*} showed that 61 percent of the women reported receiving no help from family or friends. And more than half (57.6 percent) said they did not receive enough emotional support from their husbands. In *Children With Cancer*, Jeanne Munn Bracken points out that while the mother may be bearing much of the caregiving burden, "the father may well be retreating into his work."

However, there is a significant proportion of caregiving done by men, says Dr. Lewis. For

example, husbands with wives who have Alzheimer's disease are a fairly large group. And they are certainly not immune to the stresses of caring for a sick loved one. "These men are perhaps the most vulnerable of all," Lewis continues, "because they are usually older than their wives and may be in poor health themselves. . . . Most of them are not trained in the practical aspects of caregiving."

Families need to guard against the tendency to burden one member who seems to handle the challenge well. "Often it is a particular member of a family who becomes a carer, sometimes several times over," states the book *Care for the Carer*. "A high proportion of these are women who are already growing older themselves. . . . Women are also generally seen as the 'natural' carers . . . , but families and friends should never take this for granted."

Can't the patient be more cooperative? At times, the caregiver may feel very angry about what seem to be growing and unfair demands made on him by the patient and by other family members. Rose, mentioned in the introduction, says: "I am more often angry with myself—in my head. But Mom says it shows on my face."

The one providing the care may bear the brunt of the patient's own frustrations and anger. In the book *Living With Cancer*, Dr. Ernest Rosenbaum explains that some patients

"may at times experience rage and depression that will seek as their target the nearest available person . . . This anger is usually manifested as irritation over trivial matters that in normal times would not even concern the patient." Understandably, this can put added strain on the frayed nerves of the loved ones who are doing their best to look after the patient.

Maria, for example, did commendable work nursing her dying friend. On occasion, though, her friend seemed oversensitive and

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jumped to wrong conclusions. "She would be very cutting and rude, embarrassing loved ones," Maria explains. How did this affect Maria? "At the time, one seems to 'understand' the patient. But on thinking it over later, I felt rejected, angry, unsure—and not inclined to show needed love."

A study published in *The Journals of Gerontology* concluded: "Anger has the potential to mount to a high level in caregiving situations [and] sometimes results in actual or contemplated violence." The researchers found that almost 1 out of every 5 caregivers feared he might become violent. And more than 1 in 20 actually did get violent with his patient.

"I Feel Guilty"

Many caregivers are plagued by feelings of guilt. Sometimes the guilt comes on the heels of anger—that is, they feel guilty because they feel angry at times. Such emotions

may drain them to the point that they feel they can't go on.

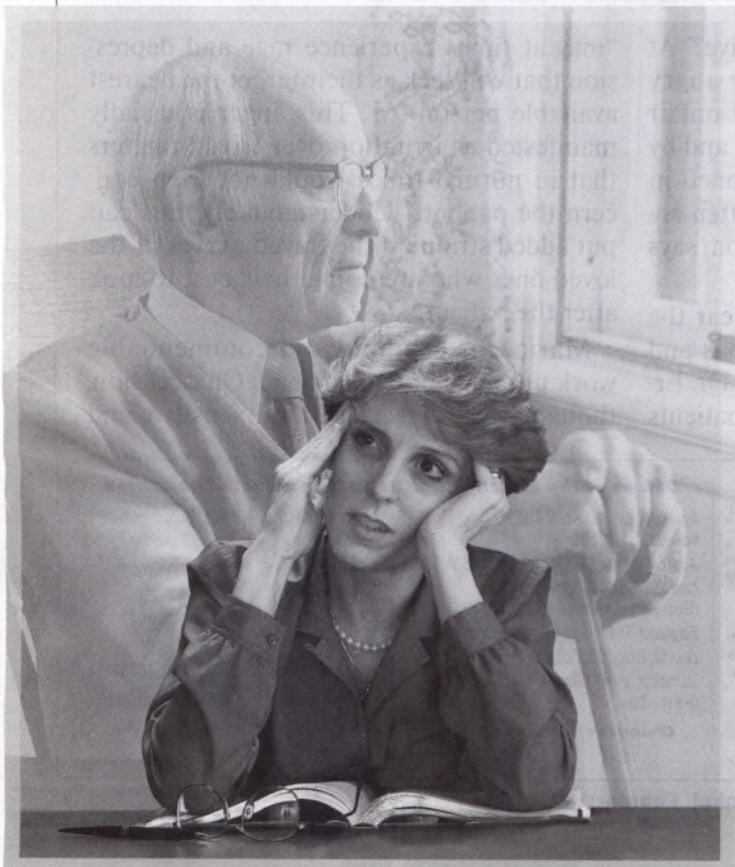
In some instances, there is no alternative but to have the patient cared for in an institution or a hospital. This can be a traumatic decision that can wreak havoc with a caregiver's emotions. "When finally forced to take Mother to a home, I felt I was betraying her, discarding her," says Jeanne.

Whether the patient is hospitalized or not, his loved ones may feel guilty that they are not doing enough for him. Said Elsa: "I often felt bad that my time was so limited. Sometimes my friend just wouldn't let me go." There may also be concern over neglect of other family responsibilities, particularly if the caregiver spends a great deal of time at the hospital or must work longer hours to help pay for mounting bills. "I have to work to help with the expenses," lamented one mother, "yet I feel guilty because I can't be at home for my children."

Obviously, caregivers have a desperate need for support, especially after the death of the one cared for. "My most critical responsibility [after a patient's death] . . . is to alleviate feelings of guilt in the caregiver, which often go unspoken," says Dr. Frederick Sherman, of Huntington, New York.

If these feelings remain unspoken, they could be damaging to both the caregiver and the patient. What, then, can those providing care do to cope with these feelings? And what can others—family members and friends—do to help them?

Caregivers need support in coping with feelings of guilt and anger





How to Deal With FEELINGS

ARE you currently caring for a seriously ill loved one? If so, you may be experiencing some confusing and frightening emotions. What can you do? Consider the feelings that some caregivers struggle with and the practical suggestions that have helped them cope.

Embarrassment. Occasionally, the behavior of a person who is ill may embarrass you in front of others. But explaining the nature of your loved one's illness to friends and

neighbors may help them to understand and may also move them to show "fellow feeling" and patience. (1 Peter 3:8) If possible, talk to other families who are in a situation similar to yours. You may feel less embarrassed as you exchange experiences. Sue explains what helped her: "I felt such pity for my father—it eclipsed any feelings of embarrassment. And his sense of humor also helped." Yes, a sense of humor—on the part of the patient and those who care

Encouraging Words From Caregivers

"DON'T be distressed by negative thoughts about yourself. They are normal under such circumstances. Certainly you shouldn't bottle up your feelings. Confide in someone about how you feel, and if you can, take a break—go away for a while—so that you can feel refreshed."—Lucy, whose work in a clinic has involved assisting a number of caregivers as well as patients.

"If there are family members or friends who are available and willing, let them help. It is vital that you share the load with others."—Sue, who nursed her father before he died of Hodgkin's disease.

"Learn to cultivate a sense of humor."—Maria, who helped care for a dear friend who died of cancer.

"Keep spiritually strong. Draw close to Jeho-

vah, and pray incessantly. (1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 4:8) He provides help and comfort through his spirit, his Word, his earthly servants, and his promises. Try to be as organized as possible. For example, it helps to make schedules for medicines and rosters for helpers."—Hjalmar, who cared for his dying brother-in-law.

"Learn all you can about the nature of your patient's sickness. That, in turn, will help you to know what to expect of the patient and yourself and how to care for your patient."—Joan, whose husband has Alzheimer's disease.

"Realize that others have coped before you and that Jehovah can help you cope with whatever happens."—Jeanny, who took care of her husband before he died.

"Confront and control your fears. Fear of what might happen is often worse than the reality"

for him—is a marvelous tool to ease jangled nerves.—Compare Ecclesiastes 3:4.

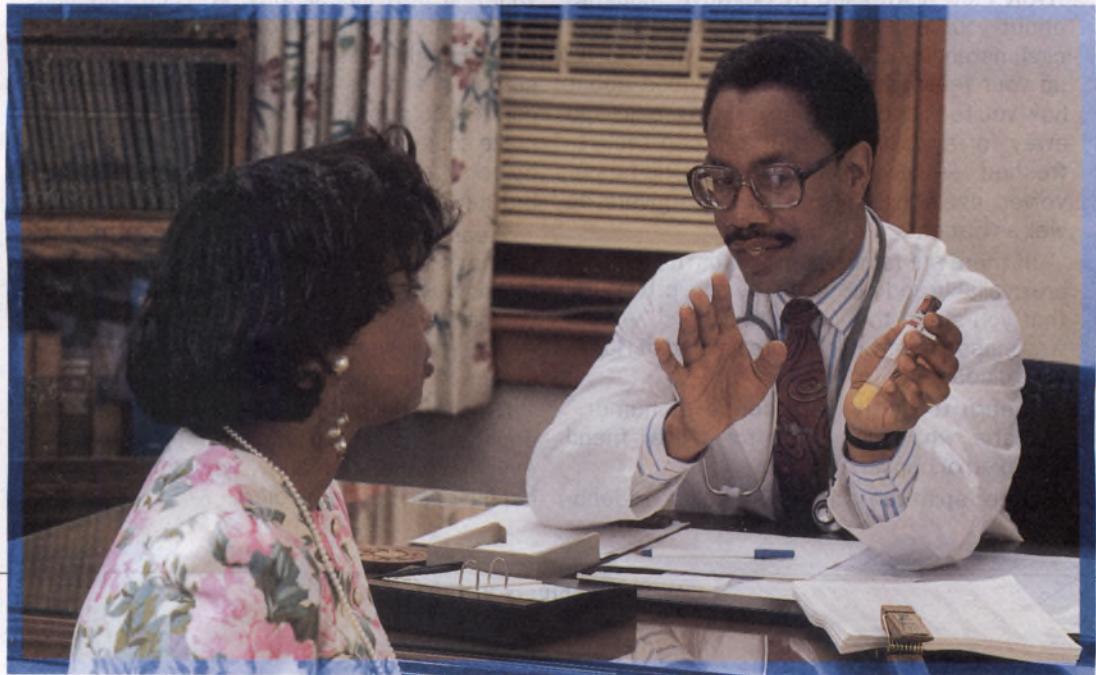
Fear. Ignorance about the disease can be terribly frightening. If possible, seek professional advice on what to expect as the illness progresses. Learn how to provide care under those circumstances. For Elsa, one of the most important factors in coping with her fear was talking with other caregivers and the hospice nurses about what to expect as the patient's condition deteriorated. Jeanny advises: "Confront and control your fears. Fear of what *might* happen is often worse than the reality." Dr. Ernest Rosenbaum recommends that whatever causes them, your fears should "be talked about as they arise."—Compare Proverbs 15:22.

Grief. It is not easy to deal with grief, particularly in the caregiving situation. You may grieve over the loss of companionship, especially if your sick loved one can no longer talk, understand clearly, or recognize you. Such feelings may not be readily understood by others. Talking about your grief to an understanding friend who will listen patiently and sympathetically can bring much-needed relief.—Proverbs 17:17.

Anger and Frustration. These are normal responses to caring for a seriously ill person whose behavior may be difficult at times. (Compare Ephesians 4:26.) Realize that it is often the disease, not the patient, that is responsible for distressing behavior. Lucy recalls: "When I really got angry, I would end up in tears. Then I would try to remind myself of the patient's condition and illness. I knew that the patient needed my help. That would help me carry on." Such insight may 'slow down your anger.'—Proverbs 14:29; 19:11.

Guilt. Feelings of guilt are common among caregivers. Be assured, though, that

To calm your fears, find out as much as you can about the illness





Talking to an understanding friend can bring much relief

you are performing an essential but very difficult job. Accept the fact that you will not always react perfectly in word or in deed. The Bible reminds us: "We all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body." (James 3:2; Romans 3:23) Do not allow feelings of guilt to prevent you from taking positive action now. When you feel upset about something you have said or done, you will very likely find that saying "I'm sorry" will make you and your patient feel better. One man who cared for a sick relative advised: "Do the best you can under the circumstances."

Depression. Depression is very common—and understandable—in families coping with serious illness. (Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:14.) A caregiver who suffers from depression explains what helped her: "Many would thank us for providing care. Just a few words of encouragement can give you a boost to carry on when you are very tired or depressed." The Bible states:

"Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down, but the good word is what makes it rejoice." (Proverbs 12:25) Others may not always sense your need for encouragement. So, at times, you may first have to openly express the "anxious care" in your heart in order to receive "the good word" of encouragement from others. If feelings of depression persist or become more severe, though, it may be advisable to consult a doctor.

Helplessness. You may feel helpless in the face of a debilitating illness. Accept the reality of your situation. Acknowledge your limitations—the patient's health is not yours to control, but you can provide compassionate care. Don't expect perfection of yourself, your patient, or your supporters. A balanced approach not only eases feelings of helplessness but also eases the work load. Wisely, many who have cared for a loved one advise: Learn to face one day at a time.—Matthew 6:34.



CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

How Others Can Help

LAWRIE and I have been married for 55 years—a long time—and what happy years! If I could possibly have kept him at home, I would have. But my health started to deteriorate. In the

end, I had to arrange for him to go into a nursing home. The emotional pain of relating this is almost too much for me. I love and deeply respect him and visit him as often as I can. Physically, I can do no more.”



Support caregivers by shopping and cooking for them or by helping them care for the patient



—Anna, a 78-year-old woman who for more than 10 years has cared for her husband who has Alzheimer's disease and has also for the past 40 years cared for their daughter who has Down's syndrome.*

Anna's case is by no means unusual. A survey in the British Isles revealed that "in some age groups (the 40s and 50s) as many as one in every two women is a carer." As discussed earlier, the emotional turmoil and problems that caregivers face may seem unbearable at times.

"I think at least 50% of caregivers get depressed in the first year of caregiving," says Dr. Fredrick Sherman, of the American Geriatrics Society. For elderly people such as Anna, their own diminishing strength and deteriorating health can make the situation considerably more difficult to handle.

To help caregivers cope with their responsibilities, we need to be aware of their needs. What are those needs, and how can we respond to them?

Caregivers Need to Talk

"I needed to unburden myself," said one woman who helped care for her dying friend. As shown in the preceding article, problems are often easier to face and deal with when they can be talked over with an understanding friend. Many caregivers who feel trapped by their circumstances find that talking about their situation helps them clarify their feelings and ease the pent-up pressure.

"I appreciated it when friends realized that *both* of us needed moral support," recalls Jeanny of the time when she was taking care of her husband. She explains that those giving care need encouragement and, at times, a shoulder to cry on. Hjalmar, who helped nurse his sick brother-in-law, agrees: "I needed someone who would listen to my

* Some of the names in this article have been changed.

The sick person's well-being depends directly on your well-being

fears and problems and understand how I felt." Concerning a close friend, Hjalmar adds: "It was very nice to visit him, even for just half an hour. He would listen to me. He really cared. I would feel refreshed after that."

Caregivers can derive tremendous encouragement from an understanding listener. "Be swift about hearing, slow about speaking," the Bible wisely advises. (James 1: 19) A report in *The Journals of Gerontology* revealed that "just knowing that support is available is often enough to provide substantial relief."

Besides a listening ear and moral support, though, what else do caregivers need?

Providing Practical Help

"Patient and family benefit from any means by which love and encouragement can be expressed," observes Dr. Ernest Rosenbaum. To begin with, such "love and encouragement" can be expressed during a personal visit, during a telephone call, or in a short note (possibly accompanied by flowers or some other gift).

"It was comforting when our friends made brief visits," recalls Sue of the support her family received when her father was dying of Hodgkin's disease. "One of my friends," she continues, "answered the phone and helped with the washing and ironing for all of us."

Support for caregivers can, and should,

The support of good friends will do much to keep you going during the hardest times

Specific offers of help can include specific, tangible assistance. Elsa recalls: "I found it helpful when friends offered practical aid. They did not merely say: 'If ever I can do anything, let me know.' Rather, they said: 'I'm going shopping. What can I bring to you?' 'May I care for your garden?' 'I'm available to sit with the patient and read to her.' Something else we found practical was arranging for visitors to leave written messages in a notebook when my sick friend was tired or sleeping. That brought all of us a great deal of pleasure."

Specific offers of help can include any of a number of chores. Rose explains: "I appreciated help in making beds, writing letters for the patient, entertaining visitors of the

patient, obtaining medication, washing and setting hair, washing dishes." Family and friends can also help the caregiver by taking turns providing meals.

Where appropriate, it may also be practical to help with basic aspects of nursing care. For example, the caregiver may need help with feeding or washing the patient.

Concerned family members and friends may offer practical help early in the illness, but what if the sickness is long-term? Getting caught up in our own busy schedules, we may easily overlook the ongoing—and possibly mounting—pressure that caregivers face. How sad it would be if the much-needed support began to wane!

If that happens, it may be advisable for the caregiver to call a family meeting to discuss the care of the patient. It is often possible to recruit the help of friends and relatives who have indicated a willingness to assist. This is what Sue and her family did. "When needs arose," she relates, "we remembered those who had offered to assist and phoned them. We felt that we could ask them for help."

Give Them a Break

"It is absolutely essential," states the book *The 36-Hour Day*, "both for you [the caregiver]

Caregiving Can Be Rewarding

'REWARDING?' some may wonder. 'How can it be?' Please note what the following caregivers told Awake!:

"Forgoing one's own pursuits and desires does not mean less happiness. 'There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.' (Acts 20:35) It can be very fulfilling to care for someone you love."—Joan.

"I was grateful that I could assist my sister and brother-in-law in a time of real need—without their being able to repay me. It drew us closer together. I hope that someday

I can use the experience I have gained to help someone else in a similar situation."—Hjalmar.

"As I told my ill friend Betty more than once, I received far more than I gave. I learned empathy and patience. I learned that it is possible to maintain a positive attitude under the most difficult circumstances."—Elsa.

"I became a stronger person. I got to know more fully what it is like to depend on Jehovah God daily and have him satisfy my needs."—Jeanny.

er] and for [your patient]—that you have regular times to ‘get away’ from twenty-four-hour care of the chronically ill person. . . . Taking time off, away from the care of the [patient], is one of the single most important things that you can do to make it possible for you to continue to care for someone.” Do caregivers agree?

“Definitely yes,” answers Maria, who helped care for a close friend who was dying of cancer. “Periodically, I needed to be ‘let off the hook’ and to have someone else take over the care for a while.” Joan, who cares for her husband who has Alzheimer’s disease, is of the same opinion. “One of our greatest needs,” she notes, “is to have time off now and then.”

How, though, can they get time off from the pressure of their responsibilities? Jennifer, who helped care for her aged parents, indicates how she got relief: “A family friend sometimes took mother for a day to give us a break.”

You may be able to give the caregiver a break by offering to take the patient out for a while, if it is practical to do so. Joan says: “I find it refreshing when someone takes my husband out so that I can be on my own once in a while.” On the other hand, you may be able to spend time with the patient at his home. Either way, make it possible for the one providing the care to get much-needed relaxation.

Bear in mind, though, that it is not always easy for caregivers to take a break. They may feel guilty about being away from their loved one. “It’s not easy to break away from the situation and engage in recreation or rest,” admits Hjalmar. “I felt that I wanted to be there all the time.” But he found greater peace of mind by taking a break when his brother-in-law required the least attention. Others have arranged to have their loved

When Visiting a Caregiver

- Listen with empathy
- Give heartfelt commendation
- Offer specific help

one looked after in an adult day-care center for a few hours.

The End of All Sickness

To be sure, caring for a loved one who is seriously ill is a tremendous responsibility. Nevertheless, caring for a loved one can be very fulfilling and satisfying. Researchers as well as caregivers point to strengthened relationships with family and friends. Invariably, caregivers learn new qualities and abilities. Many experience spiritual benefits as well.

Most important, the Bible indicates that Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ, are the most compassionate caregivers. Bible prophecy assures us that the end of all sickness, suffering, and death is near at hand. Shortly, man’s caring Creator will reward earth’s righteous inhabitants with everlasting life in a perfectly healthy new world—one in which “no resident will say: ‘I am sick.’”—Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:4.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Help for Children
With Learning Disabilities**

The Truth About Lying

**Romanian Conventions
Held Despite Opposition**

WHEN LAND TURNS INTO D·E·S·E·R·T

IT IS said that land in nearly 100 countries is slowly turning into desert, affecting the lives of more than 900 million people and causing an estimated annual loss of \$42 billion in global income. Though poor areas are hardest hit (81 of the countries are developing lands), desertification threatens countries on every continent.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) calls desertification "one of the most serious global environmental problems." At the same time, researchers also say that "the desert is *not* advancing." How can that be?

Deserts Move, and Definitions Change

After the long drought in Africa's Sahel region (1968-73), the image of deserts marching across farmland was etched in people's minds. However, the "gloom and doom scenarios" that scientists painted at the time, says Donald A. Wilhite, director of the International Drought Information Center at the University of Nebraska (U.S.A.), were "based on scanty data over a relatively short period of time that provided an inaccurate picture."

Advanced satellite images that detect biomass (the amount of living matter) show that vegetation fluctuates during dry and wet seasons. These variations, say experts,

"give the impression that the desert is expanding or contracting." So deserts are "moving" but not always "advancing." Even so, stresses Dr. Wilhite, "desertification is occurring." But what exactly does this mean?

Desertification

"Desertification" is often confused with the expansion and contraction of deserts. However, desertification, explains one group of researchers, refers to a different phenomenon. While expansion and contraction take place at the fringes of existing deserts, desertification occurs in excessively dry regions, some of which may be situated far away from any desert. Vast areas of such agricultural dry land, which forms 35 percent of the earth's land surface, are slowly turning into deserts. That phenomenon is now viewed as desertification.

Yet, despite this broader view as to where desertification takes place, the confusion about the two phenomena continues. Why? Panos, a London-based information organization specializing in development issues, points to one reason. At times, policymakers keep the vivid image of the advancing desert alive because it is "an image around which political mobilisation is easier than the more complex process of 'desertification.'"

"Changing knowledge," points out Panos, "has provoked considerable debate as to what 'desertification' actually is." The issue? Humans versus climate. First, the UN proposed to define desertification as "land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting mainly from *adverse human impact*." (Italics ours.) This definition displeased many countries, says Camilla Toulmin, director of the Drylands Project at the International Institute for Environment and Development, because it puts the responsibility for desertification on man. Thus, recently, the last part of the definition was changed to "resulting from *climatic variations and human activities*." (Italics ours.) This new definition puts the blame for desertification on both humans and climate, but it did not end the debate. Why not?

"Some experts believe," says Panos, "that the proliferation of definitions and the subsequent controversy is really an attempt to secure extra funding for a greater number of countries deemed to be at risk." The result of

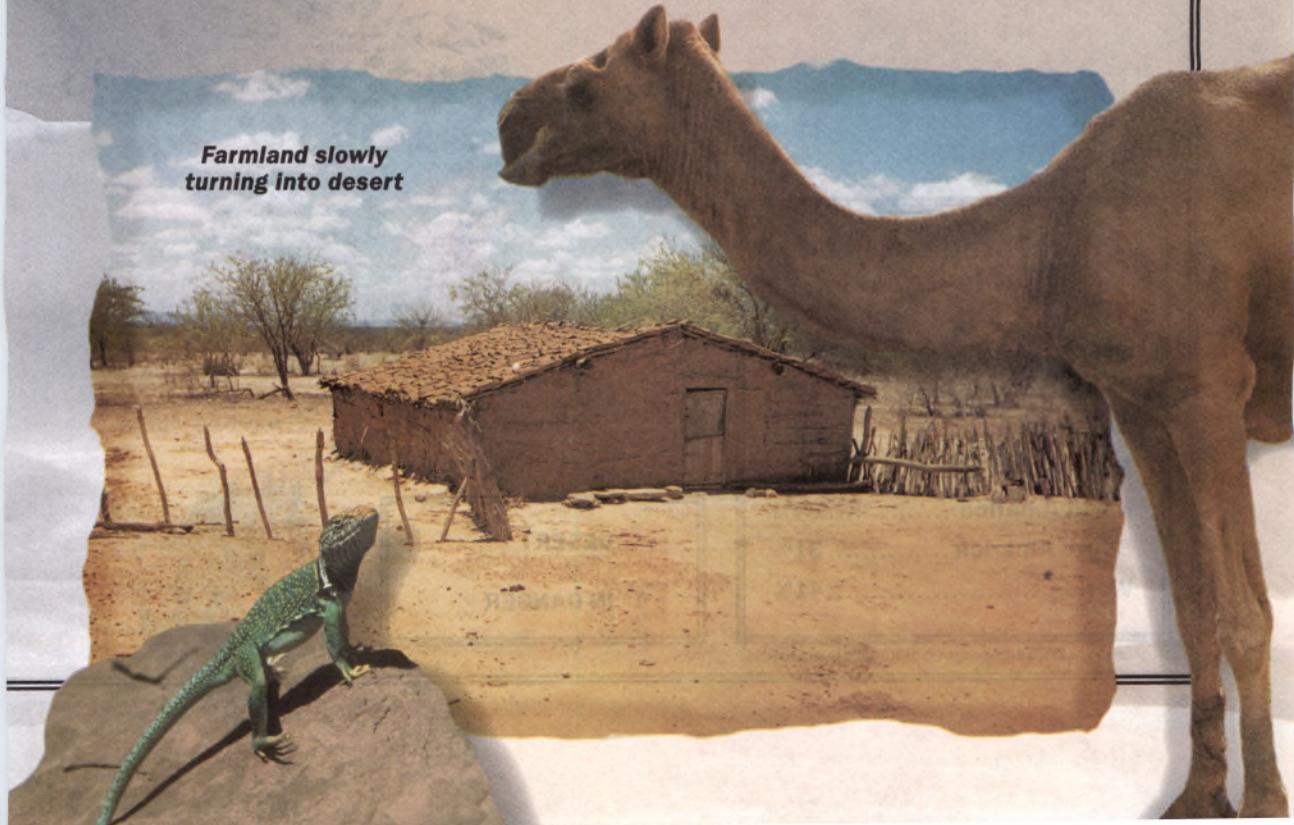
the continuing controversy is that "the term itself has been rendered almost meaningless." There are those who even feel that the term "desertification" should be abandoned altogether. Yet, replacing the word will, of course, not solve the problem or erase its causes. What are the causes of desertification?

Roots and Results

The book *Desertification*, by Alan Grainger, says the root causes are overcultivation, overgrazing, deforestation, and poor irrigation practices. When two or more of these causes occur together, desertification usually results. Moreover, contributing factors—such as changes in population, climate, and socioeconomic conditions—make the problem more acute.

One obvious result of desertification is the destruction of the food-producing capacity of dry land. It is happening worldwide but especially in Africa, where 66 percent of the continent is desert or dry land.

Farmland slowly turning into desert



Desertification, however, has additional bitter consequences. It leads to war. "In the complex web of causes leading to social and political instability, bloodshed and war," observes the book *Greenwar—Environment and Conflict*, "environmental degradation is playing an increasing role."

Even efforts to prevent wars exact an environmental toll, aggravating poverty. How? "Faced with political instability caused by struggles over dwindling resources resulting from land degradation," explains Panos, "governments often respond with military methods to suppress the violence. In this way, governments direct resources into military budgets rather than into poverty alleviation." However, instead of combating the consequences of desertification, what can be done to fight its causes?

No Quick Fix

After pondering that question for 13 months, representatives of more than 100

countries adopted the "UN Convention to Combat Desertification," a plan that according to the UN is "an important step forward" in countering desertification. The convention called for, among other things, the transfer of antidesertification technologies from developed to developing countries, research and training programs and, especially, a better use of local people's knowledge. (*UN Chronicle*) Will this new agreement halt the degradation of dry land?

To make a difference, says Panos, words as well as tangible support are needed. Hama Arba Diallo, one of the convention's organizers, reported that between 1977 and 1988, some \$1 billion per year was spent on anti-desertification measures. To make real progress, however, according to UNEP, the 81 developing nations need to spend some four to eight times that amount.

Percentage of Land That Is Desert or Dry Land

Africa.....	66%
Asia	46%
Australia.....	75%
Europe.....	32%
North America.....	34%
South America	31%
World.....	41%

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But who will foot the bill? "There will be little new money from the industrialised countries for anti-desertification work," warns Panos, adding that it is "unrealistic for poor countries suffering from desertification to expect an easy or quick fix from the convention." Nevertheless, concludes Panos on a positive note, the fact that desertification is now being discussed worldwide raises the profile of the problem, "which is an achievement in itself."

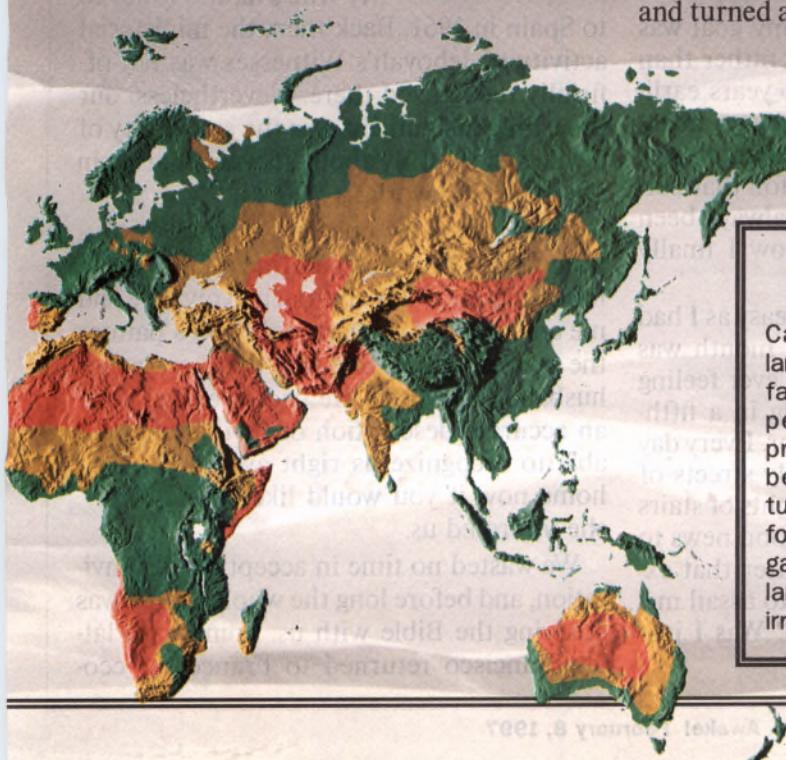
'The Wilderness Will Exult'

Indeed, during the last decades, many men and women have succeeded in making mankind more conscious of the catastrophe that continued desertification would bring. Slogans such as "Man is preceded by forest, followed by desert" challenge people to turn that order around.

Yet, informed people also recognize that the problem of desertification is complex. They are realistic enough to appreciate that

man, no matter how well-intentioned, has limitations when it comes to dealing with the causes of today's global problems.

At the same time, however, it is heartening for people concerned about our planet's future to know that earth's Creator has promised to deal effectively with this and other environmental problems. And since God's promises, recorded in the Bible, have always proved true, it is realistic to look forward to the fulfillment of what Jehovah inspired the prophet Isaiah to write regarding the future of deserts and degraded land: "The wilderness and the waterless region will exult, and the desert plain will be joyful and blossom as the saffron. . . . For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. And the heat-parched ground will have become as a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water." (Isaiah 35:1-7; 42:8, 9; 46:8-10) What a joy it will be to witness, in the near future, the process of desertification being halted and turned around!



Irrigation Turning Land Into Desert?

Can irrigation—watering the land—turn land into desert? Yes, faulty irrigation does. This happens when irrigated land is not properly drained. First, the soil becomes waterlogged; then, it turns salty; and later, a salt crust forms on the surface. "Faulty irrigation," notes Panos, "is turning land to desert as rapidly as new irrigation systems are opened."



SOWING WITH TEARS, REAPING WITH JOY

“ENJOY your retirement in sunny Spain!” Millions of Europeans have taken up this tempting offer and have moved there. When I reached 59 years of age, I too decided to sell everything and move from England to Spain, but I was looking for something more than sunshine and leisure.

I chose to go to Santiago de Compostela—one of the wettest cities of Spain—since my goal was to serve as a full-time minister rather than to relax in the sun. Twenty-two years earlier, circumstances had forced me to abandon my evangelizing service in Spain, where I had gone because the need for that service was greater there. It had always been my intention to return, and now I finally succeeded.

But the adjustment wasn't as easy as I had thought it would be. The first month was a nightmare! I don't remember ever feeling so tired in my life. I was living in a fifth-floor apartment, with no elevator. Every day I trudged up and down the hilly streets of Santiago, climbing countless flights of stairs in my endeavor to preach the good news to as many people as possible. After that exhausting month, doubts began to assail me. Had I made the right decision? Was I just too old for this sort of activity?



In the second month, however, I found that my strength was returning. It was almost like the second wind of a long-distance runner. In fact, I entered into one of the happiest periods of my life. I began to experience the joy of reaping, after many years of tearful sowing. (Psalm 126:5) Let me explain.

A Time of Joy

My wife Pat and I moved to Spain in 1961. Back then, the ministerial activity of Jehovah's Witnesses was not officially recognized there. Nevertheless, our preaching assignment was the sunny city of Seville, where only about 25 were sharing in the preaching work.

In our ministry one day, I spoke with a Frenchman who was painting a house. The following day a lady approached my wife and me and asked if we had spoken to a painter the preceding day. She said that he was her husband, Francisco. He had given her such an accurate description of us that she was able to recognize us right away. “He is at home now if you would like to visit him,” she informed us.

We wasted no time in accepting this invitation, and before long the whole family was studying the Bible with us. Some time later, Francisco returned to France for eco-

nomic reasons. We were worried. Would he lose contact with the Witnesses? Soon after his departure, however, we received a letter from him that put our minds at rest. He said that his new boss had quizzed him about how many religions existed in Spain.

"Well, there are two, the Catholic and the Protestant," Francisco explained cautiously. Since our work was still not legalized, he thought it unwise to say more.

"Are you sure?" asked his boss.

"Well, really, there are three," Francisco replied, "and I belong to the third—Jehovah's Witnesses."

"That's just fine," his boss responded. "I am a servant in your congregation!" That very evening Francisco was at the congregation meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1963 we were transferred from Seville to Valencia, and shortly thereafter, to Barcelona. There I received training to serve as a traveling minister. Then, we were sent back to Valencia to serve in the traveling work in that area. But after a couple of years in this delightful field of activity, Pat began to have difficulty keeping her balance. Soon, she had trouble walking. Thus began a time when we 'sowed with tears.'—Psalm 126:5.

A Time of Tears

Reluctantly, we left Spain to get medical treatment in England. The cause of Pat's symptoms? Multiple sclerosis, a degenerative disease that gradually disables a person more and more. In time, because of side effects and related problems, death may result.

We had a very difficult time adjusting our lives and coming to terms with this disease. But through it all, we learned the truth of the psalmist's words: "Jehovah himself will sustain him [anyone who acts with consideration toward the lowly one] upon a divan of illness."—Psalm 41:3.

For about ten years, we moved from one house to another. Pat was very sensitive to noise, and we were trying to find an ideal place for her to live—which we eventually realized was impossible. Pat had to get accustomed to using a wheelchair. Although she was able to cook and accomplish many other tasks, she was depressed by her lack of mobility. Having been a very active person, she found that this physical disability was a constant source of emotional stress.

Strength With Tears

I learned how to help Pat get up, sit down, get dressed, wash herself, and get in and out of bed. Attending Christian meetings regularly was a real challenge. It required a major effort to get ourselves ready. But we knew that the only way for us to keep spiritually strong was to associate with our Christian brothers.

For 11 years I cared for Pat at home, while working as a draftsman during the day. Finally, we realized that because of the deterioration of her health, she needed specialized care that I could not provide. So she stayed in a hospital during the week, and I would look after her at home on the weekend.

Each Sunday after lunch, I took Pat to the Public Meeting and the *Watchtower* Study, which by this time were the only meetings she could manage to attend. Afterward, I would take her back to the hospital. The routine was very exhausting for me, but it was worthwhile, for it kept Pat spiritually strong. Sometimes I wondered how long I could keep it up, but Jehovah gave me the strength to continue. Every Saturday morning I would lead a group out into the preaching work before picking Pat up from the hospital. I found that during this traumatic time, my Christian routine helped me keep going.

Meanwhile, Pat was doing what she could to preach the good news. In the hospital she was able to start two Bible studies with nurses who looked after her. One, named Hazel, progressed to the point of dedicating herself to Jehovah. Sadly, Pat was not able to attend Hazel's baptism because she died shortly before, on July 8, 1987.

Pat's death was a time of both relief and sorrow. It was a relief to see an end to her suffering, but I felt deep sorrow at losing my companion. Her death left a huge void.

Joy Anew

Strange as it may seem, Pat and I had already decided what I should do next. Since we both knew that her life was nearing its end, we spoke about how I could best serve Jehovah after her death. Our joint decision was that I should return to Spain, the assignment that we had been forced to abandon.

Three months after Pat's death, I traveled to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Spain to find out where I could best serve. I received an assignment as a special pioneer minister and was assigned to the ancient, rainy city of Santiago de Compostela.

Not long afterward, I received a note from the branch office, giving me the address of an interested person named Maximino. After trying to find him at home for three weeks, I finally met him. Maximino, who was a porter in a local hospital, had obtained the tract *Life in a Peaceful New World* and had then requested the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*.^{*} When I visited him, he had already read the book three times. He apologized for not having read the Bible very much—the 'old part' only once and the 'new part' twice. He did all of this while he was waiting for someone to visit him.

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

He also told me that he had gone to the Kingdom Hall with the intention of attending one of our meetings. However, since he was very shy, he had not entered the meeting place. I began a Bible study with him, and he attended the meetings the same week. He drank in the truth, but he had a real problem fighting his addiction to tobacco. With Jehovah's help, he was finally able to give up the smoking habit, and he is now a baptized Witness.

More Joy, More Tears

Just a year after my return to Spain, I was invited to serve as a traveling overseer again. But before taking up that assignment, my life took an unexpected turn. I met a pioneer named Paquita, who was serving near Santiago. She was a widow who had been in the full-time ministry for many years. We soon discovered that we had a lot in common. In 1990, just six months after I began the traveling work, we were married—joy again.

Like me, Paquita had been 'sowing with tears.' Her first assignment as a special pioneer was marred by tragedy. While transporting furniture to Orense, their new home, her husband was killed in a car accident—an oncoming truck crossed over into his lane. Paquita and her ten-year-old daughter were already in Orense when they received the news of his death. Despite the terrible loss, two days after the funeral, Paquita started her assignment as planned.

Over the years, Paquita continued in the full-time ministry. Then, tragedy struck again. Another car accident took the life of her daughter, who was then 23 years old. The pain was great, and the grieving process prolonged. As before, her Christian routine and the support she received from fellow Christians were crucial to her recovery. I became acquainted with Paquita in 1989, just two years after her daughter's death.

Paquita and I enjoy our ministry together

Since our marriage in 1990, we have served in the traveling work in Spain. Although these last few years have been one of the most satisfying periods of our lives, we do not regret having lived through trials. We are convinced that they have molded us in a positive way.—James 1:2-4.

Lessons I Have Learned

I believe that even the most severe trials have positive aspects, for they teach us lessons. Above all, trials have taught me the importance of empathy, a vital quality for a Christian overseer. Not long ago, for example, I spoke with a Christian brother who has a disabled son. I understood perfectly the great effort he was making every week in taking his son to all the meetings. After our conversation, he thanked me and said it was the first time that someone had really understood the difficulties he and his wife were facing.

Another important lesson I learned was to rely on Jehovah. When everything is going well, we may tend to rely on our own strength and ability. But when a severe trial continues year after year and you cannot cope with it in your own strength, you learn to lean on Jehovah. (Psalm 55:22) God's helping hand enabled me to keep going.

Of course, this does not mean that it was always smooth sailing. I must admit that during my first wife's illness, sometimes I got angry and frustrated at my situation, especially when I was tired. Afterward, I

felt guilty about my feelings. I spoke about them with a compassionate elder who had professional experience in treating patients with long-term illnesses. He assured me that I was doing well in my circumstances and that it is very common for imperfect humans to err in this way when they face prolonged emotional strain.

Although Paquita and I are now enjoying our full-time service immensely, I don't think we will ever take our blessings for granted. Jehovah has rewarded us in many ways and has given us a satisfying work to do, one that we can do together. Over the years we both sowed with tears, but now, thanks to Jehovah, we are reaping with a joyful cry.—*As told by Raymond Kirkup.*



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Clues Across

2. Because of this, Jesus did not perform many powerful works in his home territory [3 words] (Mark 6: 5, 6)
8. One of two plants mentioned by Jesus in reference to the scrupulous tithing of the Pharisees (Luke 11:42)
9. An animal used prophetically to show how Jesus would stand "mute" while being afflicted (Isaiah 53:7)
10. High priest who honored his sons more than Jehovah (1 Samuel 2: 27-29)
11. A Jairite listed as "a priest of David" (2 Samuel 20:26)
13. When "rebuked" by Jesus, this left Simon's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38, 39)
14. First part of a procession (Exodus 14:19)
15. What the transitory nature of man's life is likened to (1 Peter 1:24)
16. The wilderness region where the Sabbath law was put into effect (Exodus 16:1, 29)
18. Something idols cannot do (Psalm 115:5)
19. One of the places whose people look with selfish interest at the planned plundering of God's people by Gog of Magog (Ezekiel 38:13)
23. They were denied entry into the Promised Land [3 words] (Numbers 20:12)
26. Although this descendant of King Saul had but three sons, the sons of his son Ulam had 150 sons and grandsons (1 Chronicles 8:39, 40)
29. Employment (Matthew 6:7)
31. Used figuratively to represent the ability to exert strength or power (Isaiah 51:9)
33. What Paul said that Levi paid while still in Abraham's loins (Hebrews 7: 9, 10)
34. "To — upon Jehovah's throne" meant to represent his theocratic rule (1 Chronicles 29:23)
35. What the fourth living creature of John's vision resembled (Revelation 4:7)
36. What was in store for the earth after the Devil was cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:12)
37. A place mentioned by Jehovah when he told Moses what the eastern boundary of Israel would be (Numbers 34:11)
38. The means by which the Promised

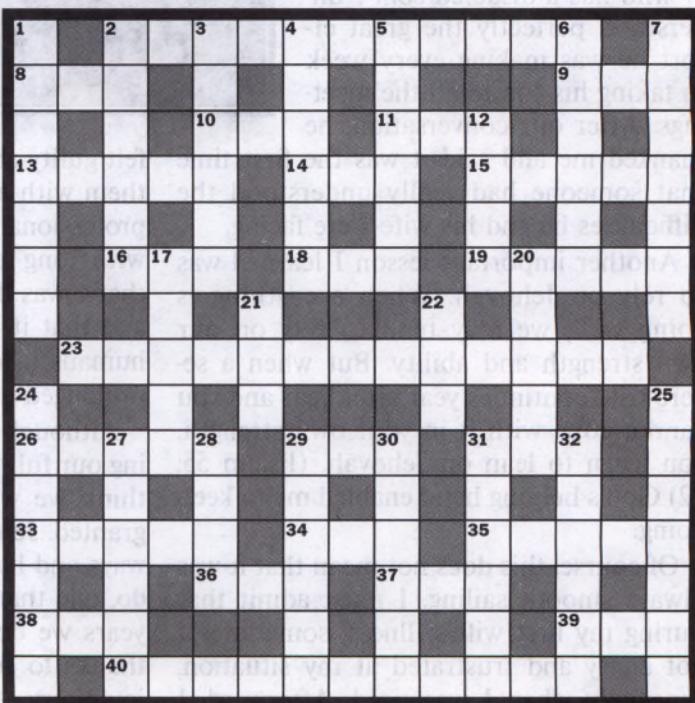
Land was divided (Numbers 26: 55, 56)

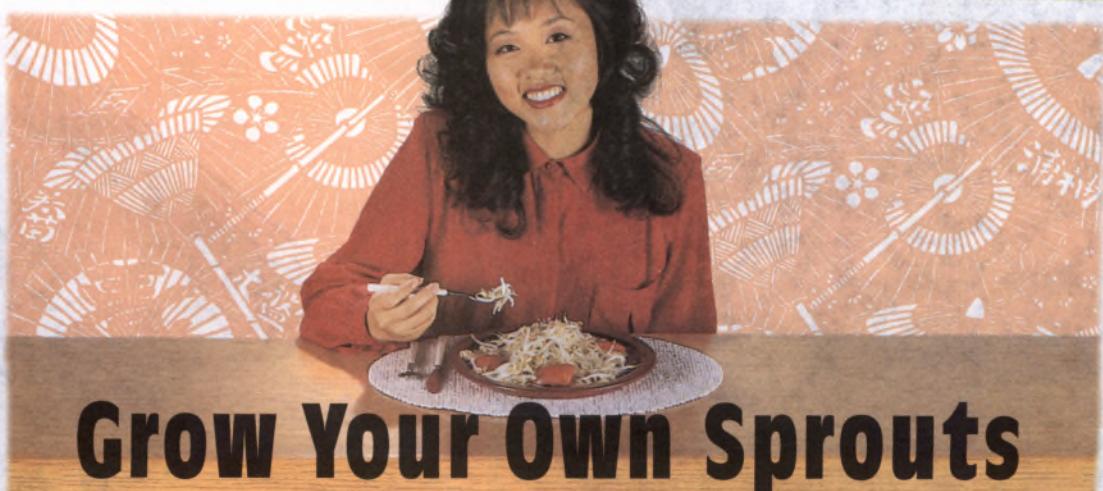
39. This bird can view an object with both eyes at once (Psalm 102:6)
40. Timothy was told that if he applied himself to spiritual things, this would be evident to others (1 Timothy 4:15)

Clues Down

1. A position that Daniel held in the Babylonian government (Daniel 2:48)
2. What Adam and Eve sewed together to make clothing (Genesis 3:7)
3. A son of the Horite sheikh Dishon (Genesis 36:26)
4. James said that a fig tree cannot produce these (James 3:12)
5. Sick people had only to touch this part of Jesus' garment to be made completely well (Matthew 14:36)
6. An official crier (Daniel 3:4)
7. The heavenly bodies were to serve as indicators of this (Genesis 1:14)
12. Men and women who had reached this stage of life were to be noted for
17. Emanate (Mark 7:23)
20. According to Isaiah, when people are pardoned for this, "no resident will say: 'I am sick'" (Isaiah 33:24)
21. General name for several poisonous snakes (See Romans 3:13)
22. The sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet
24. One who is not a Jew (Romans 2:9, 10, *King James Version*)
25. An Italian port where Paul spent a week while on his way to Caesar (Acts 28:13, 14)
27. Ancestor of a family of temple gatekeepers (Nehemiah 7:45)
28. Had knowledge of (Romans 1:21)
29. Paul advises us to keep our eyes on these things (2 Corinthians 4:18)
30. Property (Genesis 47:26)
31. What Christians do not do for themselves (Romans 12:19)
32. Jesus said that this does not die in Gehenna (Mark 9:48)

Crossword Solutions Page 25





Grow Your Own Sprouts

BY A WAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN HAWAII

DO YOU sometimes search in vain at your local market for vegetables that are fresh, crunchy, and nutritious? Well, search no more! With a minimum of time and effort, you can actually grow vegetables right in your own home or apartment. How? By growing sprouts!

Sprouts are so easily maintained that a child can do it. They require little space, no digging, no weeding, and no fussing with complicated chemicals. Best of all, you can eat your produce just four or five days after it begins to grow! But the benefits go beyond mere convenience.

For one thing, sprouts are nutritious—perhaps even more so than plain beans or seeds. Says *The Beansprout Book*, by Gay Courter: "As the seeds begin to sprout, their vitamin content also begins to grow. The first early shoots of soybeans (per 100 grams [about 4 ounces] of seed) contained only 108 milligrams of vitamin C in one study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania. But after 72 hours the vitamin C content had soared to 706 milligrams!"

Sprouts are also economical. In fact, you probably already own all the equipment that you will need.

Setting Up

First, you need a container. A large glass or plastic jar, a nonmetallic pot, a glass or ceramic bowl, or a deep dish will do just fine. It is even possible to use a shallow dish, spreading out one layer of seeds between two layers of wet cheesecloth or paper towels to prevent drying. Whatever vessel you choose, make sure it is large enough to allow the seeds to sprout and still have room for some air to circulate around them. I have found that a glass jar works well for tiny seeds like alfalfa. Larger seeds, such as mung beans, may do better in a deep dish or pot. This provides the extra space they need and protects the sprouts from rotting or turning sour.

You will also need a covering for your container. A plastic screen, a piece of cheesecloth, or even an old nylon stocking will do the job. All it takes to attach it to the mouth of the container is a strong rubber band or string. Of course, as the seeds must be rinsed at least twice a day, you will also need water and perhaps a colander for draining the container.

Finally, you will need seeds. Almost any edible seed can be sprouted. (I am careful,

Japanese Stencil Designs



**DAY ONE: Gather
seeds and soak them in
water for eight
to ten hours**

though, to avoid seeds that have been treated with chemicals.) The best seeds for a beginner to try are mung beans or alfalfa seeds. They are easy to sprout and very tasty! Now, let me tell you how it's done.

Growing Your Own Sprouts

DAY ONE: First, rinse the seeds carefully. Then, fill your container with water until it covers the seeds or beans by about two inches. Soak the seeds for at least eight to ten hours. You might put the seeds in to soak just before bedtime. After eight to ten hours, the seeds will bulge and the skins will split open slightly. They are ready to be sprouted.

DAY TWO: In the morning, secure the covering and drain the water out of the container. (Since the water contains vitamins, I usually use it to water my plants.) Now, refill the container with water. Shake it a few times, and turn it upside down, allow-

ing the excess water to drain out. Fill the container with water again and again, rinsing and draining the seeds a total of three times. If you have transferred the soaked seeds to a shallow plate, gently pour water over the cheesecloth, and drain it by putting the dish on an incline. Later on, repeat the rinsing process again so that the seeds are thoroughly rinsed twice a day.

DAY THREE: By now, you should be able to see your seeds sprouting. Continue rinsing them twice a day.

DAY FOUR: You can begin eating the sprouts! You can allow the mung-bean sprouts to grow quite tall with no bitter taste developing in them. Just make sure that you keep rinsing the sprouts twice daily. You can also put your sprouts in the sun for about an hour and then refrigerate them. The tiny leaves will turn a beautiful shade of green—very appetizing!



DAYS TWO AND

THREE: Rinse seeds thoroughly twice a day

DAY FOUR: Sprouts (seen here from the side, on cheesecloth base) are ready to eat!

Having tasted success, you may now want to experiment with other types of grains and seeds. Each is a little different in taste and in sprouting time. For example, you may try sprouting hulled sunflower seeds. These sprouts are best eaten in two days, when they are just a half-inch long. If they grow any longer than that, they may acquire a bitter taste.

How to Serve the Sprouts

Most sprouts can be eaten raw in salads, sandwiches, or any dish in which beans and seeds are used. Bean sprouts, though, can be steamed for 10 to 15 minutes before you eat them. Or you can stir-fry them with just a little oil, garlic, and salt. This makes a very tasty dish! Wheat and rye sprouts are very sweet and make a good addition to breads and muffins.

Cultivating sprouts is thus a healthy and economical hobby. You may very well find

doing so to be exciting and rewarding. After all, the success rate is high and the results are delicious!

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

P	L	A	C	K	O	F	F	A	I	T	H	S
R	U	E	H	L	R					E	W	E
E	A	E	L	I	I	R	A	R	A			
F	E	V	E	R	V	A	N	G	R	A	S	S
E	E	A	E	G	E	L						O
C	S	I	N	S	E	E		D	E	D	A	N
T	S	S	A				W	R			S	
	M	O	S	E	S	A	N	D	A	A	R	O
G	U	P				W	O				P	
E	S	H	E	K	U	S	E	A	R	M	U	
N	A	N	N	N	S	V	A				T	
T	I	T	H	E	S	I	T	E	A	G	E	
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E	A	D	V	A	N	C	E	M	E	N	T	I

The Flood Fact or Fable?

'And all the animals went into the ark to Noah, two by two.'—Genesis 7:8, 9.

WHO has not heard of the Flood of Noah's day? Probably you have known the story from childhood. Indeed, if you go to the local library to investigate the Flood, you may find many more books written for children on the subject than for adults. Thus, you may decide to treat the Flood account as merely a bedtime story. Many feel that the Noachian Flood account, along with much of the rest of the Bible, is nothing more than a fable or, at best, a moral lesson concocted by man.

Surprisingly, even some who claim to rest

their religious beliefs on the Bible doubt that the Flood actually occurred. Catholic priest Edward J. McLean once stated that the story of Noah was meant to be interpreted, not as history, but as "an allegory or literary form."

However, is the Flood narrative in the Bible only an allegory, never meant to be treated literally? Does the Bible itself permit such a view?

Credible Details

Consider first the record made by Moses in the book of Genesis. There, we find the

L. Chapons/Illustrirte Familien-Bibel nach der deutschen Uebersetzung Dr. Martin Luthers



specific year, month, and day when the torrent began, when the ark came to rest, and when the earth dried off. (Genesis 7:11; 8:4, 13, 14) Although specific dates are not always recorded elsewhere in Genesis, these dates emphasize the fact that Moses viewed the Flood as a real event. Contrast the Bible's ring of truth with the classic opening words of many a fable, "Once upon a time . . ."

As another example, consider the ark itself. The Bible describes a vessel about 437 feet long, with a length-to-height ratio of 10 to 1 and a length-to-width ratio of 6 to 1. (Genesis 6:15) Now, Noah was no shipbuilder. And remember, this was more than 4,000 years ago! Yet, the ark was built with proportions that were ideal for its function as a floating container. In fact, modern naval architects have found similar ratios suitable for structural integrity and stability on the open seas. Although the Bible does not specify the exact length of time Noah spent building the ark, the account allows for construction that took 50 or 60 years. (Genesis 5:32; 7:6) These factors stand in stark contrast with the well-known story found in the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. The epic describes a massive, ungainly cube some 200 feet on each side that was built in only seven days. Unlike that Babylonian legend, the Bible's Deluge account engenders confidence in its accuracy.

Outside the Genesis account, the Scriptures refer to Noah or the global Deluge ten times. Do these references indicate that the inspired writers viewed the Flood as genuine history or as a fable?

Authenticity Affirmed

In the Scriptures, Noah appears in two genealogies of the nation of Israel, the second culminating in Jesus Christ. (1 Chronicles 1:4; Luke 3:36) Ezra and Luke, the compilers of these genealogies, were both skilled his-

torians and must have believed that Noah was a real person.

Elsewhere in the Bible, Noah is listed alongside historical characters, being cited as a man of righteousness and faith. (Ezekiel 14:14, 20; Hebrews 11:7) Would it make sense for Bible writers to include a mythical figure as an example to follow? No, for this could easily lead those reading the Bible to conclude that faith is beyond the power of humans and can only be displayed by storybook characters. Noah and the other men and women of faith were listed *because* they were humans with frailties and feelings like our own.—Hebrews 12:1; compare James 5:17.

In the remaining Scriptural references, Noah and the Flood are referred to in the context of the destruction God brought on the faithless generation that surrounded Noah. Notice Jesus' reference to the Deluge, recorded at Luke 17:26, 27: "Just as it occurred in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of man: they were eating, they were drinking, men were marrying, women were being given in marriage, until that day when Noah entered into the ark, and the flood arrived and destroyed them all."

Jesus Christ was an eyewitness of the events he described, having existed in heaven prior to his life on earth. (John 8:58) If the Deluge were merely a fable, then either Jesus was implying that his future presence was make-believe or he was speaking an untruth. Neither conclusion is compatible with the rest of the Scriptures. (1 Peter 2:22; 2 Peter 3:3-7) Therefore, Jesus Christ, as a result of personal observation, believed the Bible account of the global Flood to be authentic history. For true Christians, this is without doubt the most conclusive evidence that the Flood of Noah's day was fact, not fable.

WATCHING THE WORLD

Pope Says Individuals, Not Church, to Blame

In a letter addressed to church leaders, civil authorities, and the population of Rwanda, Pope John Paul II tried to absolve the Roman Catholic Church from responsibility for the genocide there in 1994. "The church in itself cannot be held responsible for the misdeeds of its members who have acted against evangelical law," he claimed. However, the pope also stated: "All the members of the church who have sinned during the genocide must have the courage to bear the consequences of the deeds that they have committed." This is apparently the first time the pope has publicly addressed the charge that priests in Rwanda participated in and actively encouraged the slaughter that took the lives of some 500,000 people and the charge that the Catholic hierarchy took no action to stop it. Vatican commentator Luigi Accattoli, writing in the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, said that the pope's statement for Catholics not to try to escape justice "touches a sensitive spot," in that "among those accused of genocide, there are also priests who have taken refuge abroad." Most of the people in Rwanda are Catholic.

Families in Transition

"The typical Canadian family has changed its look so dramatically that married couples with children account for just 44.5 per cent of all families," reports *The Globe and Mail*. In contrast, "in 1961, married spouses with children accounted for almost 65 per cent of all Canadian families." Another startling figure is the increase in the number

of common-law marriages, which almost tripled, from 355,000 in 1981 to 997,000 in 1995. The survey, which was conducted by Statistics Canada, also noted: "If the incidence of divorce, remarriage and common-law partnership continues to remain high, more volatility in family forms can be expected."

France's Fascination With the Occult

"Why are the French spending so much time with seers and psychics these days?" asks *The New York Times*. "The French are reportedly consulting clairvoyants and numerologists in greater numbers than ever.... The Government has evidence that magic is thriving. Last year, the tax authorities said that close to 50,000 taxpayers, the highest number



ever, had declared income from their work as stargazers, healers, mediums and similar occupations. By comparison, the country had fewer than 36,000 Roman Catholic priests and some 6,000 psychiatrists." To some, the activity indicates fear of what may happen at the end of the millennium. Others view it as a result of the erosion of established institutions, such as religion. The practitioners of these crafts say that their clientele has changed greatly in recent years. In the past, most clients were women. Now there is about an equal

number of both sexes. And rather than asking about sickness and affairs of the heart, people now ask about their jobs.

Japan's Vending Machines

"There is almost nothing that is not available in a vending machine in Japan," says *The Washington Post*. Vending machines dispense gift-wrapped items, CDs, beer, boxer shorts, eggs, pearls, stuffed elephants, panty hose, disposable cameras, and just about anything else you can think of. There are "no-bending vending machines" that deliver items chest-high, low-built machines that will not block views, and even machines that are decorated with flowers or other motifs. "Japan is only about the size of Montana, but there are nearly as many vending machines here as in the entire United States," the article adds. "Most Japanese vending machines are placed outdoors; there's even one atop snowy Mount Fuji." High-priced items can be dispensed outdoors because vandalism rates are low in Japan. Space is expensive, so shop owners use vending machines to stretch their shelf space. They can be found on nearly every street corner in Tokyo. However, some groups are upset that liquor, beer, and cigarettes can be obtained by any child able to pop in some coins.

Coming Teenage "Crime Storm"

"Violent crime in the United States is a 'ticking time bomb' that will explode in the next few years," states *The New York Times* regarding a report by the Council on Crime in America, an organization of prosecutors and law-enforcement experts. "While

adults are committing less violent crime, the rate of violent crime among teen-agers has skyrocketed over the last decade. . . . Each generation of teenagers since the 1950's has been more violent than the last." By the year 2005, the number of 14- to 17-year-old males will increase by 23 percent, and it is this jump that worries the experts. Concerned that the most serious criminals are males who start their criminal ways at a very early age, John J. DiJulio, Jr., a professor of politics and public affairs at Princeton University, stated: "We are in the lull before the crime storm." His report, compiled for the Council on Crime in America, pointed out that about a third of all violent crimes are committed by people who have been apprehended but who are on parole, probation, or pretrial release. Government has the responsibility to protect its citizens, the report said, but is failing to do so.

Bloodless Surgery Gains Momentum

In late 1996 a hospital in Hartford, Connecticut, U.S.A., joined 56 others across the country that have "bloodless centers for Jehovah's Witnesses," reported *The Hartford Courant*. "After studying the idea, hospital administrators realized that the wishes of Jehovah's Witnesses were no longer so different from those of most other patients." With the aid of drugs and advanced surgical techniques, doctors perform organ transplants and joint replacement as well as open-heart, cancer, and other surgeries—all without the use of blood. In addition, many health-care professionals now openly acknowledge the dangers of receiving a blood transfusion. Dr. David Crombie, Jr., chief of surgery at

Hartford Hospital, candidly admits: "I was raised in medicine at a time when blood was thought of as a tonic. Now it's thought to be a poison." The Bible consistently forbids taking blood into the body.—Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:14; Acts 15:28, 29; 21:25.

Are You Technostressed?

Cellular phones, pagers, fax machines, home computers, and modems have revolutionized communication. However, Dr. Sanjay Sharma, who has a special interest in stress management, feels that this new technology has also invaded people's privacy and relaxation time. The result is technostress. As reported in *The Toronto*



Star, "stress is a major contributor to illness, loss of productivity and premature death." The effects include high blood pressure, heart disease, mood swings, headaches, muscle tension, insomnia, depression, and weakening of the immune system. How can you avoid being technostressed? Of course, it is always wise to consult your doctor. In addition, the report recommends regular exercise, taking a weekend vacation, and getting daily sunlight, which "triggers release of hormones that combat depression and stress." Finally, "turn off the ringers on your phone and fax machine. Let the answering machine take calls."

Blackbird Car Alarm

Blackbirds are causing an unusual problem in England's

North Yorkshire town of Guisborough—they jolt people from their early morning slumber by mimicking car alarms. "When the owners rush out to confront the thieves they often find a blackbird in mid-song," reports *The Times* of London. "It had the tone and pitch just right," commented one local resident. "We'll all be driven crackers." And there may be little respite. As one bird passes a new song on to a neighbor, the sound can become a lot more common. Actually, about 30 of Britain's bird species are capable of mimicking other sounds. The common starling is the most gifted of them all and can easily mimic the calls of other birds. One was known to imitate the ring of a telephone so convincingly that it was impossible to tell the imitation from the real thing.

Pagan Feast Still Popular

Saint John the Baptist's Day "has less to do with the Catholic saint than one imagines," reports Brazil's *Folha de S. Paulo*. Although the feast "coincides with the day on which the saint is said to have been born, . . . the real commemoration is of agricultural and pagan character." Summarizing the findings of anthropologist Câmara Cascudo, the journal says that "Germanic and Celtic solar cults" celebrated the feast at harvesttime "in order to turn away the demons of sterility, grain plagues, and droughts." Years later, the feast was brought to Brazil by the Portuguese. One feature of the feast that persists in some countries is the lighting of Saint John's fires. Where did this practice originate? "The tradition . . . is linked to the worship of the sun-god, venerated in order for him not to move too far away from the earth and to avoid a hard winter," says the paper.

FROM OUR READERS

Balance After reading the article "God's Gift of Balance" (March 22, 1996), I felt moved to thank you. I am currently studying audiology, and not one of my textbooks has information that is as complete and easy to understand as the *Awake!* article. The drawing of the ear was also excellent.

J. P. A., Brazil

Neckties Thank you so much for the article "Who Invented the Necktie?" (May 8, 1996). As a minister of Jehovah's Witnesses, I have worn a necktie in 90-degree-plus heat while engaging in the door-to-door preaching work. I have often theorized that the necktie must have been invented by some cruel 13th-century inquisitor who in order to wring a confession from a heretic threatened him with either the rack, thumbscrews, being boiled in oil, or wearing a necktie on a summer afternoon.

W. B., United States

Some may feel that wearing a tie is torture in any weather. Commendably, though, in cultures where a necktie is considered proper attire, Jehovah's Witnesses generally put up with the inconvenience of wearing a tie while engaging in the ministry and while attending Christian meetings.
—ED.

Smokeless Tobacco In our school health class, we were studying about drugs. I showed my teacher a copy of the April 22, 1996, issue of *Awake!* with the article "Young People Ask . . . Smokeless Tobacco—Is It Harmless?" He let me make 30 copies of the article so he could give them out and read the article with his classes. The kids in my class enjoyed it, and I even placed a few magazines with them.

M. C., United States

Sexual Harassment Thanks for the series "When Sexual Harassment Will Be No More!" (May 22, 1996). In sharing the magazine with others, I found that many women

were grateful for the suggestions on how to avoid harassment and what to do when harassed. Some weeks later I personally experienced molestation at work and reported it to the police. I was commended for the way I handled the situation.

Name withheld, Germany

I'm truly grateful for the articles. I'm now in my second year of secondary school, and I've experienced harassment, though I've never told anyone about it. These articles encouraged me to confide in my parents and my teachers. Now I am able to take a stand against harassers.

K. Y., Japan

I am a 21-year-old secretary and was recently sexually harassed by my employer. While I was trying to figure out how to approach him to express my feelings, I received this issue of *Awake!* I gave my employer a copy, which he read. He apologized and promised never to do what he did to me again.

D. N. I., Nigeria

I appreciate your bringing this important matter to light, but according to your photos, only men are doing the harassment. Clearly, you are presenting a biased view.

H. T., United States

Most researchers say that women greatly outnumber men as victims of sexual harassment. Even so, the articles acknowledged that men too can be harassed, citing specific examples.—ED.

Most articles on this subject emphasize only what females should do to protect themselves but neglect to teach males to respect females. After all, if there were no harassers, there would be no harassment. Your article discussed "Proper Conduct for Men." For this, it is deserving of applause.

O. C., Taiwan



POVERTY *The 'Silent Emergency'*

"WE HEAR a lot about loud emergencies of global warming and ozone layers and ocean pollution," said United Nations adviser Dr. Mahbub Ul-Haq, but he added: "Global warming and many other loud emergencies have yet to kill anybody [while] the silent emergencies are wasting many lives in the developing countries every day." Dr. Ul-Haq commented on one of those silent emergencies. "Poverty," he said, "is really the greatest killer." How so?

For many of the 1.3 billion people worldwide who scrape along on one dollar or less a day, poverty indeed turns into a deadly disaster. Up to 18 million people, reports the magazine *UN Chronicle*, die of "poverty-related causes" each year. This number is staggering! Imagine the "loud" headlines if, for instance, the entire population of Australia, some 18 million, starved in one year! Yet, the deaths of these millions of poor, commented a UN Radio broadcast, are "not talked about much." This is, in fact, a 'silent disaster.'

To break the silence, representatives from

117 countries attending the first-ever World Summit for Social Development spoke about ways to tackle the world's poverty problem. "One hundred and fifty years ago the world launched a crusade against slavery," reminded James Gustave Speth, the United Nations Development Programme administrator. "Today we must launch a world crusade against mass poverty." Why the concern? Poverty, he warned, is "breeding despair and instability and [is] imperiling our world."

However, even as the delegates were discussing ways to end poverty, a 'poverty clock,' keeping track of the number of babies born into poor families every day, showed that the global poverty picture was darkening. The clock, displayed at the convention site, indicated that during the week-long summit, nearly 600,000 newborns were added to the ever-swelling ranks of the poor. At the end of the summit's final day, the clock display was turned off; but in reality, as Speth noted, "the clock ticks on." The question now is, Will it be heard?

What Do You Know About JESUS?



An 84-year-old woman living in the United States said regarding *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*, a 448-page illustrated book about the life of Jesus Christ: "I have read the Bible completely at various times, and the *Greatest Man* has helped me to understand my Bible reading better." The book makes the Bible's accounts of Jesus' life come alive for her.

"I never get tired of reading the book," she wrote. "I have read it seven times and have started to read it again. My heart is moved by the marvelous qualities of Jesus. When I read the chapters about Jesus' last week on earth, I

am pained by the mistreatment he received, especially during his final hours, and by his death on the torture stake. Yet, he glorified our heavenly Father, Jehovah."

Jesus' life and teachings are presented in a way that is easy to understand and inspiring. The book shows how Jesus lived a perfect life, even though he faced many challenges and difficulties. It also highlights the love and compassion that Jesus had for all people, regardless of their social status or background. The illustrations are beautiful and help to bring the stories to life. Overall, this book is a wonderful resource for anyone who wants to learn more about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.