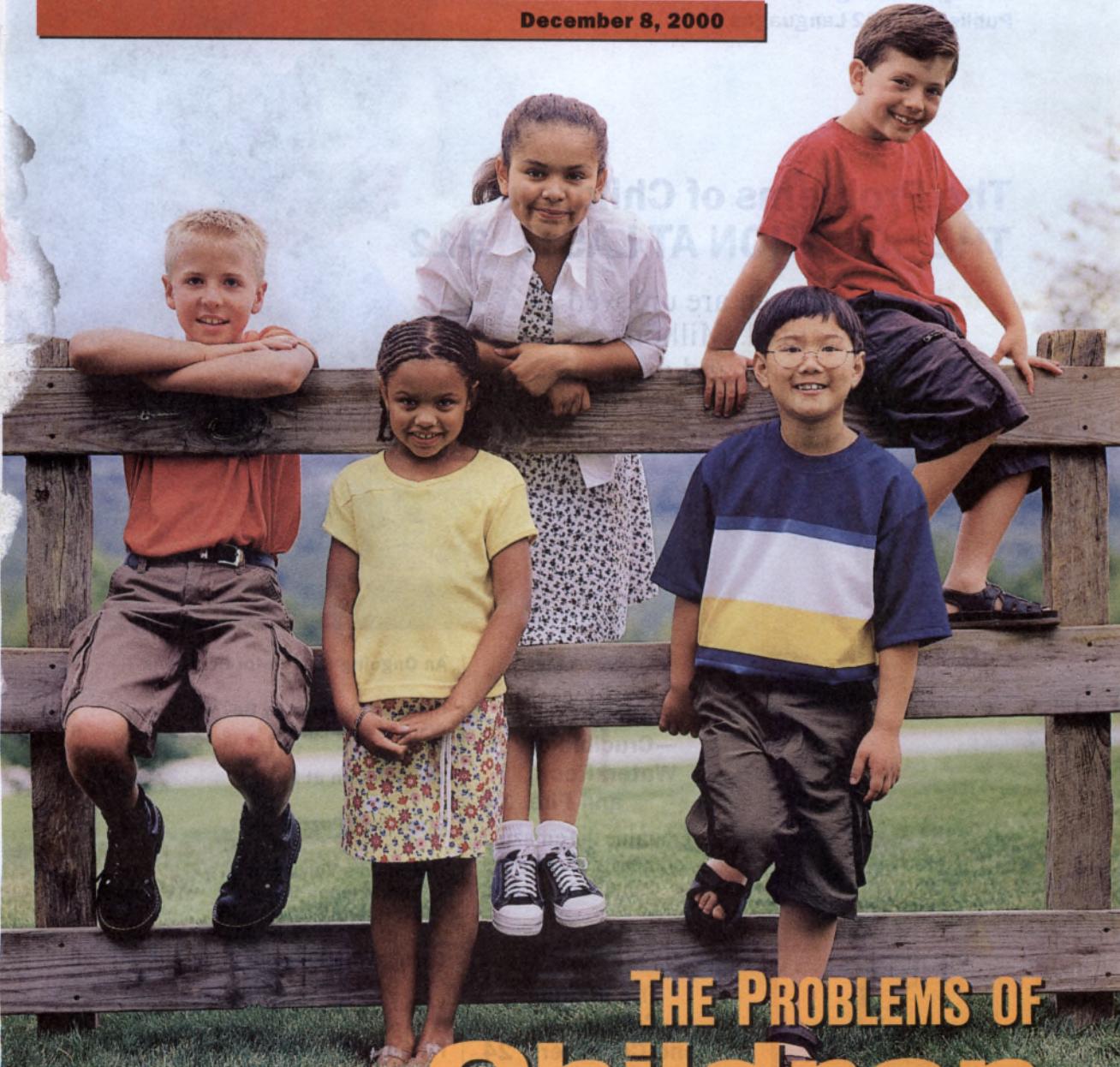


Awake!

December 8, 2000



**THE PROBLEMS OF
Children
THE SOLUTION AT LAST!**

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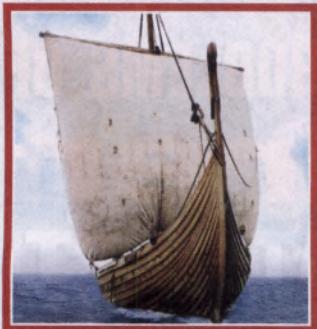
The Problems of Children THE SOLUTION AT LAST! 3-12

Many children are unloved and unwanted. Millions live in poverty and die prematurely each year. Will their needs ever be met?



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Examine the amazing creations seen in this famous park.



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What happened to them?

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An Ongoing Search for Solutions

FROM its very inception, the United Nations organization has been interested in children and their problems. At the end of 1946, it established the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) as a temporary measure to care for children in areas devastated by war.

In 1953 this emergency fund was turned into a permanent organization. Although it is now officially known as the United Nations Children's Fund, it retained its original acronym, UNICEF. Thus, for over half a century, UNICEF has been providing children throughout the world with food, clothing, and medical care and has been trying to look after children's needs in general.

The needs of children were given greater prominence in 1959 when the United Nations adopted a Declaration of the Rights of the Child. (See box, page 5.) It was hoped that this document would generate interest in the problems of children and

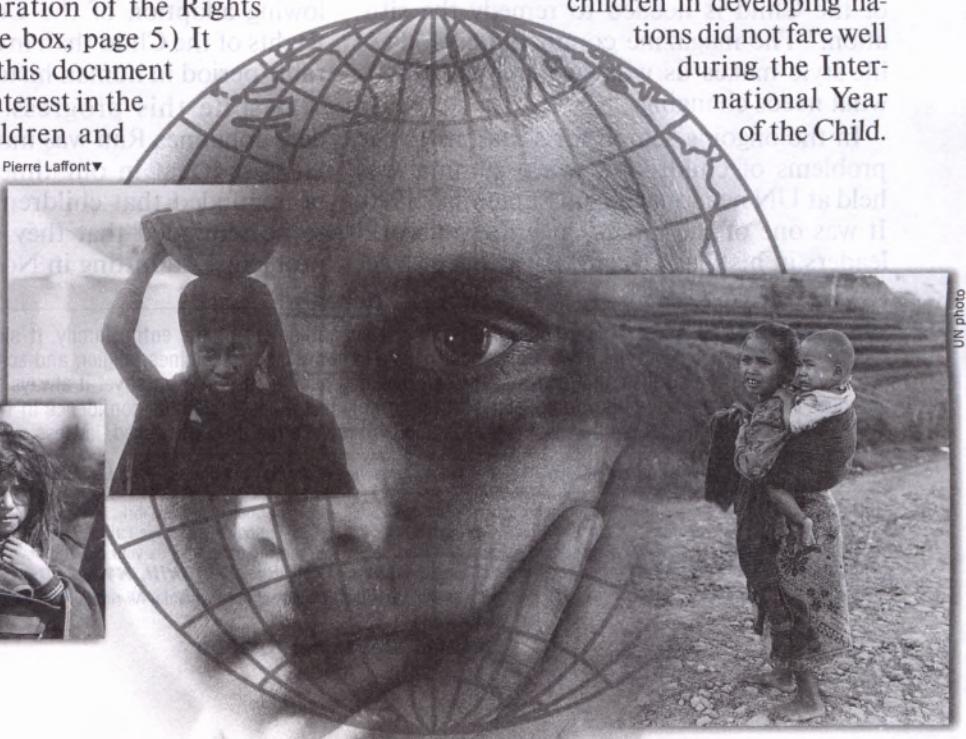
would help solve them by encouraging public support, financial and otherwise.

But "twenty years later," according to Collier's *1980 Year Book*, "these 'rights'—especially those relating to nutrition, health, and material well-being—were still largely unrealized by many of the world's 1.5 billion children." So in recognition of the continuing need to solve the problems of children and in accord with its declared goals, the United Nations designated 1979 the International Year of the Child. Government, civic, religious, and charitable groups all over the world were quick to respond to the search for solutions.

Was It All Just a "Cruel Joke"?

Sad to say, according to a UNICEF report, children in developing nations did not fare well during the International Year of the Child.

UN PHOTO 148038/Jean Pierre Laffont ▼



UN photo

**"It is sad that in our time
we still have to be
reminded that children
have rights"**

At year's end, some 200 million of them were still malnourished, and

half the deaths of the 15 million who died under the age of five could be attributed to malnutrition. Of the 100 children born each minute that year in those countries, 15 would be dead before the end of their first year. Fewer than 40 percent would finish elementary school. Commenting on the UNICEF report, an editorial in the *Indian Express* newspaper complained that the Year of the Child turned out to be a "cruel joke."

Some individuals foresaw this failure. For example, at the very beginning of the year, Fabrizio Dentice wrote in the magazine *L'Espresso*: "Something more than the Year of the Child is needed to remedy the situation." The magazine commented: "Today's life-style makes us what we are, and this is what needs changing."

In the ongoing search for solutions to the problems of children, a world summit was held at UN headquarters in September 1990. It was one of the largest meetings of world leaders in history. Over 70 government lead-



Photos on pages 4 and 5
Giacomo Pirozzi/Panos Pictures

ers were present. The gathering was a follow-up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted on November 20, 1989, and went into force on September 2, 1990. By the end of that month, the agreement had already been ratified by 39 nations.

"The Convention," UNICEF recently noted, "has rapidly become the most widely accepted human rights treaty ever, creating a global momentum for children." Indeed, as of November 1999, the Convention had been adopted by 191 nations. UNICEF boasted: "More progress was made in realizing and protecting children's rights in the decade following adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child than in any other comparable period in human history."

Despite this progress, German President Johannes Rau was moved to comment: "It is sad that in our time we still have to be reminded that children have rights." Or to be reminded that they still have serious problems! Admitting in November 1999 that

Awake!®

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

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

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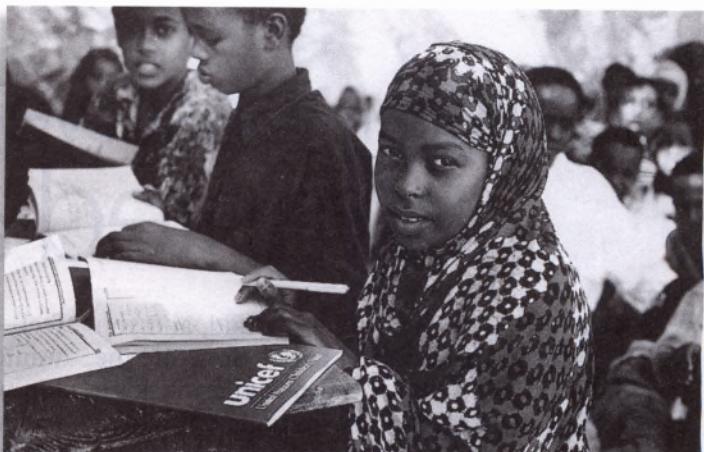
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Semimonthly ENGLISH

The UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child:

- The right to a name and nationality.
- The right to affection, love, and understanding and to material security.
- The right to adequate nutrition, housing, and medical services.
- The right to special care if disabled, be it physically, mentally, or socially.
- The right to be among the first to receive protection and relief in all circumstances.
- The right to be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty, and exploitation.
- The right to full opportunity for play and recreation and equal opportunity to free and compulsory education, to enable the child to develop his individual abilities and to become a useful member of society.
- The right to develop his full potential in conditions of freedom and dignity.
- The right to be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace, and universal brotherhood.
- The right to enjoy these rights regardless of race, color, sex, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, and property, birth, or other status.

Summary based on *Everyman's United Nations*



"much remains to be done," UNICEF explained: "Globally, an estimated 12 million children under the age of five die every year, mostly of easily preventable causes. Some 130 million children in developing countries are not in primary school . . . About 160 million children are severely or moderately malnourished. . . . Many unwanted children languish in orphanages and other institutions, denied education and adequate health care. These children are often physically abused. An estimated 250 million children are engaged in some form of labour." Mention was also made of the 600 million children living in absolute poverty and the 13 million who will have lost at least one parent to AIDS by the end of 2000.

Satisfactory solutions to these problems seem to elude political leaders. Yet, children's problems are not limited to developing lands. In Western nations many children suffer deprivation of another sort.

**Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address.
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Children Deserve to Be Wanted and Loved

GIVE a little love to a child, and you get a great deal back." So wrote the 19th-century English writer and critic John Ruskin. Probably most parents will agree that it pays to love one's children, not only because of the love received in return but, more important, because of the positive effect this love will have on them.

The book *Love and Its Place in Nature* observed, for example, that without love "children tend to die." And Ashley Montagu, noted British-born anthropologist, went so far as to say: "The child who has not been loved is biochemically, physiologically, and psychologically very different from the one who has been loved. The former even grows differently from the latter."

The *Toronto Star* reported on a study that reached similar conclusions. It said: "Children raised without being regularly hugged, caressed or stroked . . . have abnormally high levels of stress hormones." Indeed, physical neglect during infancy "can have serious long-range effects on learning and memory."

These findings emphasize the need for the physical presence of parents. Otherwise, how can strong ties develop between parent and child? But sorry to say, even in affluent parts of the world, the tendency now is to try to supply a child's needs apart from his or her parents. Children are sent away to school, sent away to Sunday school, sent away to work, sent away to summer camp, and given money and sent away to places of recreation. Thrust out of the family nucleus, circling in orbit at a distance, as it were, millions of children naturally come to

feel—if only subconsciously—neglected, unwanted, and unloved, surrounded by a hostile world of grown-ups. Such a prevailing feeling among children may be one reason why there are an estimated 3,000 street children in Berlin. Typical is young Micha, who said: "No one wanted me anymore." A nine-year-old German boy similarly complained: "I would rather be our dog."

Mistreatment of Children Takes Many Forms

Child neglect is a form of mistreatment that betrays a lack of what the Bible calls "natural affection." (Romans 1:31; 2 Timothy 3:3) And it can lead to more sinister forms of mistreatment. For example, since the International Year of the Child in 1979, more attention has been directed to the problems of physical mistreatment and sexual abuse of children. Of course, accurate statistics are difficult to come by, and they vary from place to place. But there is little doubt that the scars sexually abused children carry into adulthood are difficult to erase.

Regardless of the form mistreatment takes, it sends children the message that they are unloved and unwanted. And this problem seems to be growing. According to the German newspaper *Die Welt*, "more and more children are growing up to be social cripples." It adds: "Children lack the warmth of the nest. According to [Gerd Romeike, the director of a Hamburg child-guidance center], the emotional bonding between children and parents is becoming weaker, or it is never established in the first place. Such chil-

dren feel neglected, and their desire for security goes unfulfilled."

Children who are denied their right to be wanted and loved may become bitter, taking out their frustrations on those who have neglected them or possibly on society as a whole. Fully a decade ago, a Canadian task-force report signaled the need for immediate action lest a whole generation "who think society doesn't care about them" be lost.

Unloved and unwanted youngsters may be tempted to run away from home to escape their problems, only to find bigger ones in cities plagued with crime, drugs, and immorality. In fact, over 20 years ago, police estimated that 20,000 runaways under 16 were living in one U.S. metropolitan area alone. They were described as "the products of broken homes and brutality, often inflicted by alcoholic or drug-addicted parents. They take to the streets, use their bodies for survival and then, beaten by pimps and bereft of self-esteem, live in fear of reprisal if they attempt to escape the racket." Sad to say, despite honest efforts to change this deplorable situation, it still exists.

Children growing up in the circumstances described above develop into unbalanced adults, often being unable to rear children of their own properly. Being unwanted and unloved themselves, they later produce more of their own kind—children

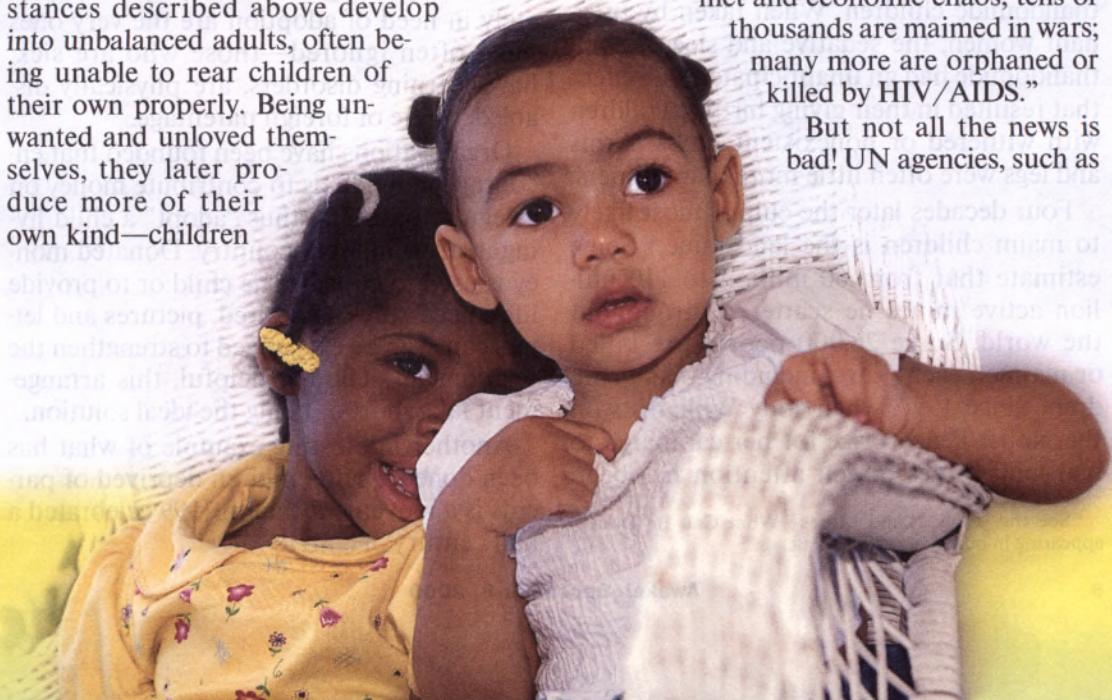
who feel unwanted and unloved. A German politician succinctly expressed it this way: "Children without love become adults full of hate."

Of course, millions of parents are doing their best to make sure that their children know that they are wanted and loved. They not only tell them so but prove it by giving their children the loving care and personal attention that every child deserves. Still, problems remain—problems clearly beyond the ability of individual parents to solve. For example, in some parts of the world, imperfect human economic and political systems fail to provide children with adequate health care, suitable education, and sufficient food, as well as protection from the scourge of child labor and deplorable living conditions. And all too often these conditions are amplified by greedy, corrupt, selfish, and inconsiderate grown-ups.

Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the United Nations, mentioned some of the major problems children face today when he wrote: "Millions of children continue to endure the dreadful indignities of poverty; hundreds of

thousands suffer the effects of conflict and economic chaos; tens of thousands are maimed in wars; many more are orphaned or killed by HIV/AIDS."

But not all the news is bad! UN agencies, such as





A child needs and deserves the love of both parents



the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization, have worked hard to improve the lot of children. Annan noted: "More children are born healthy and more are immunized; more can read and write; more are free to learn, play and simply live as children than would have been thought possible even a short decade ago." Still, he warned: "This is no time to stand on past achievements."

Those Deserving Special Attention

Some children deserve special attention. In the early 1960's, the world was shocked to hear reports from over a dozen countries about the birth of thousands of so-called thalidomide children. When taken by pregnant women, the sedative and sleeping pill thalidomide had an unanticipated side effect that resulted in their giving birth to children with withered or nonexistent limbs. Arms and legs were often little more than flippers.

Four decades later the culprit most likely to maim children is the land mine.* Some estimate that from 60 million to 110 million active mines lie scattered throughout the world. Some 26,000 people are killed or maimed each year—including many children. Since 1997, when Jody Williams won the Nobel Peace Prize for her campaign to ban land mines, much attention has been

given to this problem. But minefields still exist. A German politician said regarding efforts to rid the world of land mines: "It's like trying to empty a bathtub with a teaspoon while the tap is running."

Another group of children needing special attention are those who have been deprived of their parents. Jehovah God, man's Creator, purposed that children grow up with the loving attention of both a mother and a father. A child needs and deserves such balanced parenting.

Orphanages and adoption agencies try to address the needs of children deprived of both parents. Sad to say, however, some of the underprivileged children most desperately in need of adoption are the very ones most often ignored—those who are sick, have learning disorders, are physically disabled, or are of foreign parentage.

Organizations have been founded that encourage individuals to contribute money on a regular basis and thus "adopt" a child living in a less affluent country. Donated money is used to educate the child or to provide life's necessities. If desired, pictures and letters can even be exchanged to strengthen the relationship. Though helpful, this arrangement falls short of being the ideal solution.

Another interesting example of what has been done to help children deprived of parents is a movement that in 1999 celebrated a half century of activity.

* See the series "Land Mines—What Can Be Done?" appearing in our May 8, 2000, issue.



The SOS Children's Village

In 1949, Hermann Gmeiner founded in Imst, Austria, what he called the SOS Children's Village. From this small beginning, his organization has grown to include nearly 1,500 villages and similar institutions located in 131 African, American, Asian, and European countries.

Gmeiner based his undertaking on four guiding principles—the mother, the siblings, the home, and the village. A “mother” forms the basis for a “family” of five or six—possibly more—children. She lives with them and tries to show them the love and attention expected of a real mother. The children remain together in the same “family” and with the same “mother” until the time arrives for them to leave “home.” Children of different ages are included in the “family.” Having both older and younger “brothers” and “sisters,” the children learn to care for one another, thus helping them to avoid becoming self-centered. Efforts are made to integrate the children into a “family” at as early an age as possible. Fleshly brothers and sisters are always kept together in the same “family.”

Villages are composed of about 15 “families,” each living in its own house. All the children are trained to assist their “mother”

in doing the necessary chores around the home. Although a father may be missing, provision is made for male support to give fatherly advice and to administer necessary discipline. The children attend local schools. Each “family” receives a set monthly allowance to cover expenses. Food and clothing are purchased locally. The aim is to introduce the children to typical family life with all its problems and joys, enabling them to lead, as far as possible, a normal life. This prepares them for founding families of their own once they reach adulthood.

Still in Search of the Ideal Solution

Adoption agencies, orphanages, SOS Children's Villages, UNICEF, and similar organizations or groups serve a good purpose when they try to provide support to underprivileged children. But none of them can do away with the fact that some people are underprivileged. As much as they might like to, they cannot furnish the crippled child with healthy limbs, activate the mind of the mentally disabled child, reunite a child with his separated or divorced parents, or place him back in the loving embrace of a deceased parent.

Try as they may, humans cannot provide the ideal solution to the problems of children. But they will be solved! Yes, and possibly sooner than you may expect. But how?

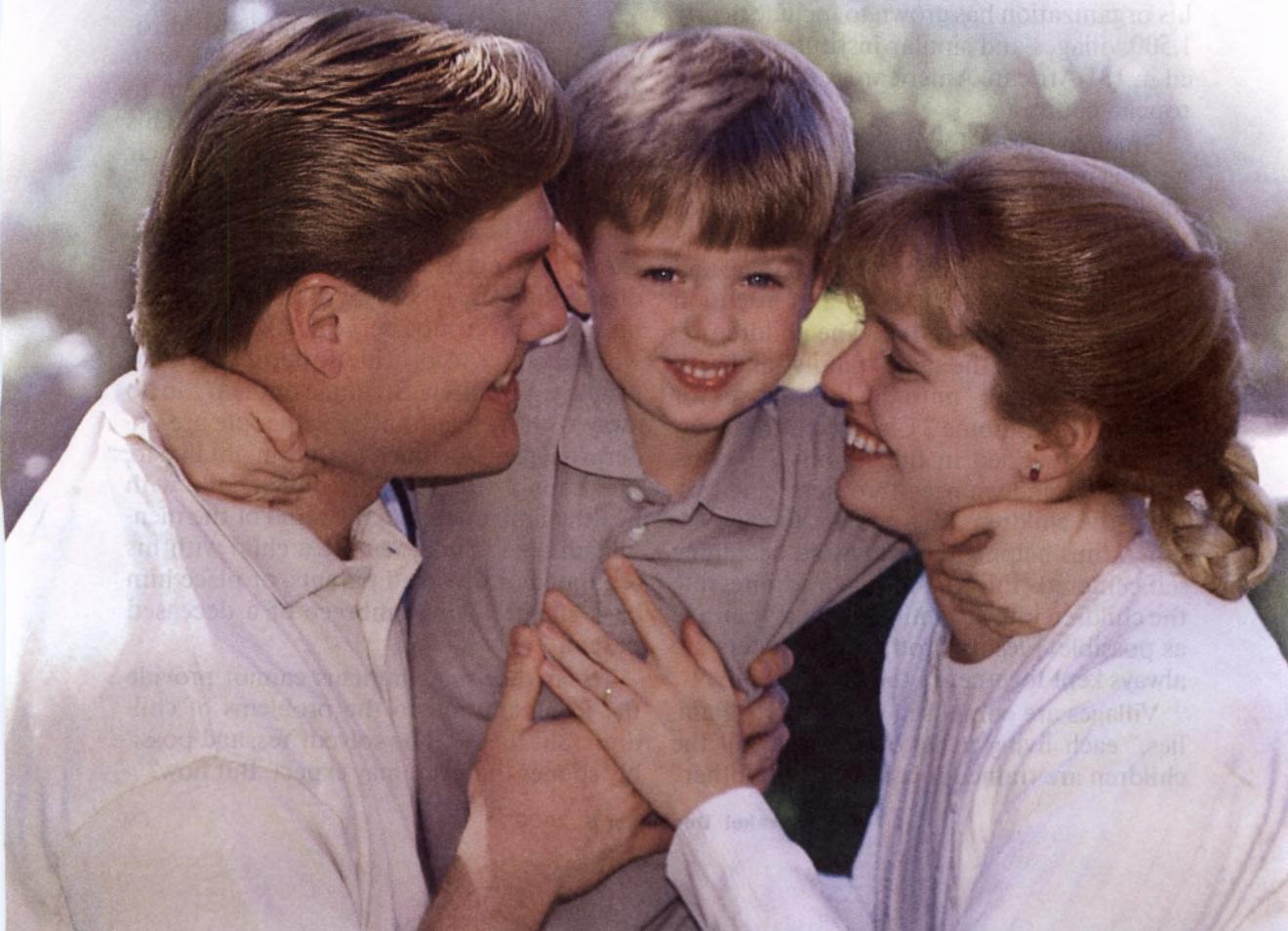
The Solution at Last!

IMAGINE a world in which every child is truly wanted, is truly loved, and is blessed with caring, loving parents who have a sincere desire to provide the best possible guidance and direction for their child. Imagine a world where every child is both physically and mentally sound, where street children are nowhere to be found, and where children are no longer robbed of childhood by the economic need to work! This can be a harsh reality for many children around the world.

Desirable? Of course. Believable? Jehovah's Witnesses think so, and this for two reasons.

Parents Can Provide Part of the Solution

You will no doubt agree that grown-ups do have the power to solve—at times even to prevent—some of the problems of children. Of course, this is provided that they, the adults, are willing to do so. Yes, par-



ents themselves hold one of the keys to the problem.

For example, grown-ups who are able to follow the Bible counsel that "a wife should not depart from her husband . . . and a husband should not leave his wife" do not have children who suffer because of living in a home broken by separation or divorce.
—1 Corinthians 7:10, 11.

Grown-ups who are willing to follow the Bible counsel to "walk decently, not in revelries and drunken bouts," do not have children who suffer the distress that goes along with having drunken or drug-addicted parents.—Romans 13:13; Ephesians 5:18.

Grown-ups who are willing to follow the Bible counsel to "abstain from fornication" help reduce the risk of their children growing up unwanted, possibly in a one-parent family.—1 Thessalonians 4:3; Matthew 19:9.

Grown-ups who are willing to follow the Bible counsel, "Do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become down-hearted," and who "love their children" will not have children who experience the physical or mental pain of abuse in any of its various forms.—Colossians 3:21; Titus 2:4.

In summary, if all grown-ups were willing to follow the Bible counsel given by Jesus, "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them," would there be millions of unwanted and unloved children?—Matthew 7:12.

Happily, there are many grown-ups who are willing to do all the above. But, sad to say, not all are, and therein lies the problem. And even those who are willing find that their efforts are often frustrated by human imperfection and things beyond their power to control. Humans can provide part of the solution to the problems of children, but they are clearly incapable of providing the complete solution.

A Divine Government to Provide the Complete Solution

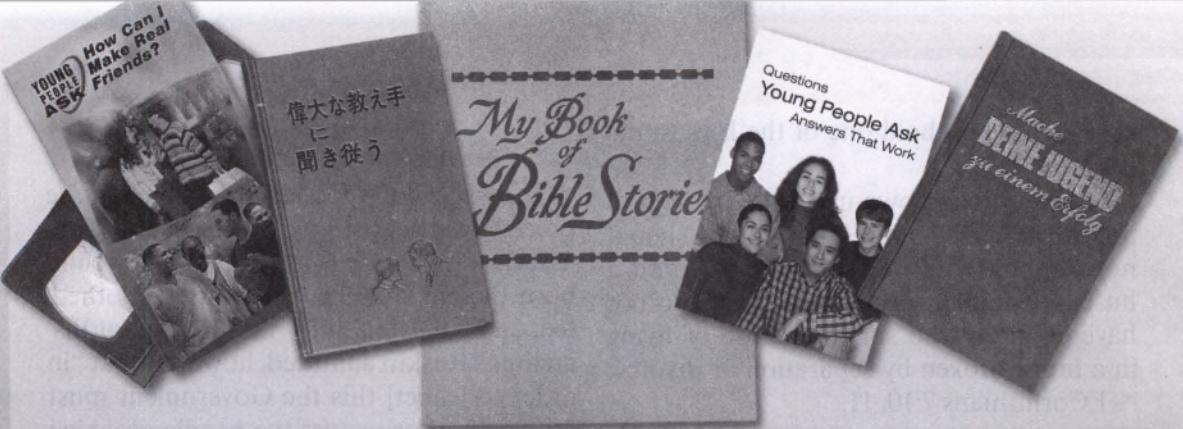
The writer John Ruskin, mentioned in the preceding article, strongly believed that "the first duty of a State is to see that every child born therein shall be well housed, clothed, fed, and educated, till it attain years of discretion." Ruskin admitted, however, that "in order to [effect] this the Government must have an authority over the people of which we now do not so much as dream."

Only a government with divine backing could have the benign authority about which Ruskin spoke. And just such a government has been promised—the one that Jesus mentioned at Matthew 6:9, 10. Once this government of God's making has taken total control of earth's affairs, it will exercise its authority over all peoples—housing, clothing, feeding, and educating all its subjects, including children. (Isaiah 65:17-25) But this perfect government will do even more.

Under God's Kingdom humans will be enabled to rear children in a balanced way. (Job 33:24-26) Young folks will be raised in the spirit of peace and universal brotherhood, the ideal set forth in the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child. (Psalm 46: 8, 9) Never again will there be the need for an International Year of the Child or for a Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Restoring perfect health to parents and to disabled children will be a simple task for Christ Jesus, the King of this heavenly government. The miracles of healing that he performed while he was on the earth are a guarantee. (Luke 6:17-19; John 5:3-9; 9:1-7) Even resurrecting dead children and dead parents will not be beyond his power to accomplish!—Matthew 9:18-25.

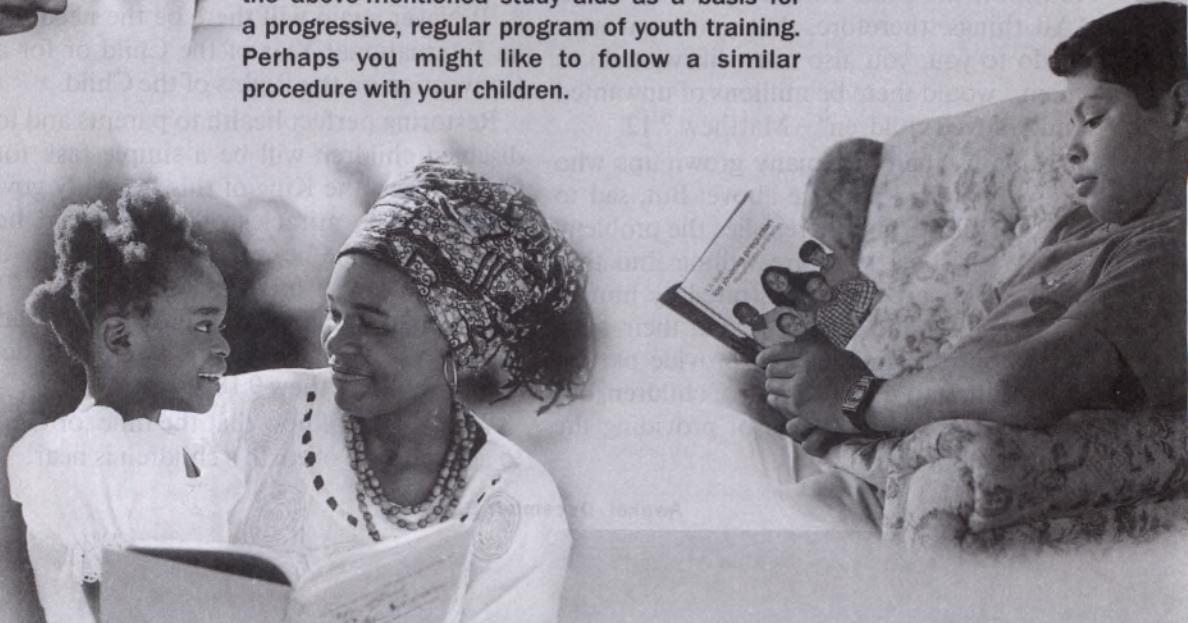
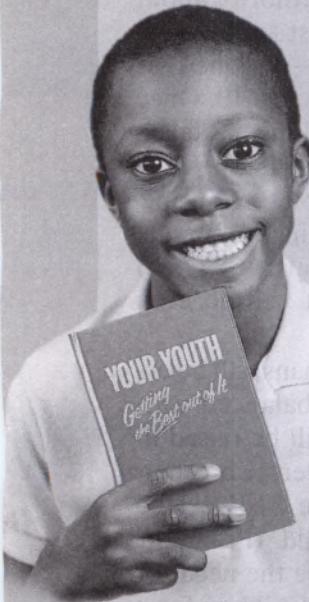
What a joy to know that the time for God to act in behalf of earth's children is near!



Help for Young People

Jehovah's Witnesses are keenly interested both in helping young people to avoid problems and in showing them how best to cope with problems that are unavoidable. Over the years they have therefore published a number of aids designed to meet the needs of young people—from preschoolers to teenagers. These publications include the books *My Book of Bible Stories* and *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work* as well as a video entitled *Young People Ask—How Can I Make Real Friends?* These can be obtained from Jehovah's Witnesses living in your locality or by writing to the publishers of this magazine.

As for their own children, Jehovah's Witnesses show them that they are wanted and loved by regularly discussing their problems with them. Parents often use the fine material presented in the above-mentioned study aids as a basis for a progressive, regular program of youth training. Perhaps you might like to follow a similar procedure with your children.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

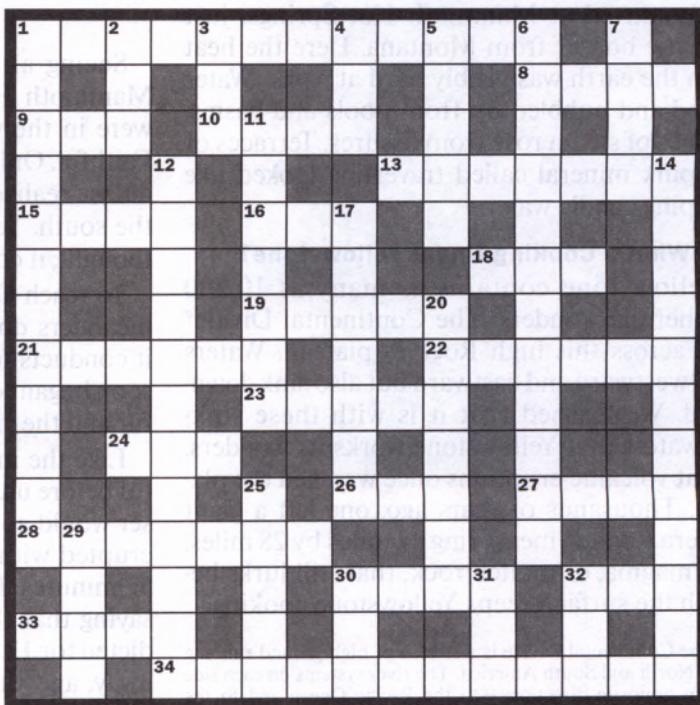
Clues Across

1. The ones selected first by Jehovah in the procedure that eventually led to Achan's admission of guilt [3 words] (Joshua 7:14-21)
2. After his older brother, Er, was put to death by Jehovah, he too was put to death for refusing to produce an heir for his brother (Genesis 38:7-10)
3. He thought righteous Hannah was drunk and rebuked her (1 Samuel 1:13, 14)
4. Of those returning from Babylonian exile with Zerubbabel, 98 are listed as sons of this man (Ezra 2:16)
5. Jesus said that the scribes, for a pretext, made theirs long (Luke 20:47)
6. He wrote the two books of Chronicles (Nehemiah 12:26)
7. To the point of depletion (Isaiah 40:31)
8. Used figuratively in the Bible to represent the ability to exert strength or power (Jeremiah 32:17)
9. Plural of the term designating the measure of land that a span of bulls could plow in a day (Isaiah 5:10)
10. By feasting on these parts, the wild beast and the ten horns reduce the harlot, Babylon the Great, to a lifeless skeleton (Revelation 17:16)
11. Detached (Ruth 2:15)
12. The area called the Negeb (Exodus 26:18)
13. Jesus said that a father would not hand his son a scorpion if he asks for this (Luke 11:12)
14. The Egyptians, the Ethiopians, and the Canaanites descended from this son of Noah (Genesis 10:6)
15. He and his brothers incited the city of Shechem to rebel against Abimelech (Judges 9:28)
16. They shield the eyeball (Job 16:16)
17. Drive (Deuteronomy 7:22)
18. The lunar month in which Solomon's temple was completed (1 Kings 6:38)
19. A plant that played an important role in David's defeat of the Philistines in the low plain of Rephaim (2 Samuel 5:24)
20. In this additional way, the fourth horseman of Revelation reaps his own victims [2 words] (Revelation 6:8)

Clues Down

1. Speaking of the Nephilim in this way refers, not to a favorable standing with God, but to the dread they spread among men [4 words] (Genesis 6:4)
2. This son of Bela was a mighty man of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chronicles 7:7)
3. Seventh letter of the Greek alphabet
4. The container in which an omer of manna was deposited "before Jehovah" so that future generations could see it (Exodus 16:32, 33)
5. This Israelite's daughter Shelomith married an Egyptian, and their son was stoned for abusing Jehovah's name (Leviticus 24:10-16)
6. Timothy knew these "from infancy," and they could make him "wise for salvation" [2 words] (2 Timothy 3:15)
7. Pleasing to the eye (Daniel 4:12)
8. The equivalent of 48 hours [2 words] (Exodus 16:29)
9. Courageous men from this town rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, where they had been hung by the Philistines, and gave them a respectful burial (1 Samuel 31:11-13)
10. Location where Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to be his followers [3 words] (Matthew 4:18-22)
11. By means of (Matthew 2:15)
12. Plans (Proverbs 6:18)
13. This son of Shiza was the head of 30 Reubenites in David's army (1 Chronicles 11:42)
14. The length of time that Paul and Barnabas first spent in Antioch teaching the people (Acts 11:26)
15. The king of Assyria who was given tribute by Menahem, king of Israel, so that he would leave Israel alone (2 Kings 15:19)
16. One of four sons of Aram (Genesis 10:23)
17. Beseech (Luke 8:28)

Crossword Solutions Page 23



Y e l l o w s t o n e

CRUCIBLE OF WATER, ROCK, AND FIRE

Speak of firsts and superlatives—the world's first national park, the world's best-known and tallest geysers, and North America's largest mountain lake.

Then speak of Yellowstone.

By Awake! writer in the United States

WITH unbridled curiosity my wife and I drove to the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, U.S.A. Since our childhood, the name Old Faithful and terms such as "geyser" and "hot spring" had intrigued us. Would reality match our expectations?

At the main entrance to the park, we saw a massive stone arch. Inscribed across its top were the words: "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people." Opened in 1872, Yellowstone was the world's first national park.

We started at Mammoth Hot Springs, just over the border from Montana. Here the heat from the earth was visibly hard at work. Water boiled and bubbled up from pools and basins. Plumes of steam rose from fissures. Terraces of the pink mineral called travertine looked like dripping candle wax.

What's Cooking Under Yellowstone?

Yellowstone contains as many as 10,000 geothermal wonders. The Continental Divide* cuts across this high Rockies plateau. Waters flow westward and eastward but also sink downward. We learned that it is with these sinking waters that Yellowstone works its wonders. Great volcanic eruptions once wracked the plateau. Thousands of years ago, one left a giant caldera (crater) measuring 47 miles by 28 miles. The magma, or molten rock, that still lurks beneath the surface keeps Yellowstone cooking.

* The Continental Divide is a stretch of high ground running along North and South America. The river systems on each side flow in opposite directions—to the Pacific Ocean and to the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Arctic Ocean.

Park exhibits explain that surface water works its way down through porous rock until it reaches a layer of rock that is extremely hot, just above the magma. The heat forces the water back upward. Where it finds a vent, a hot spring forms. When obstacles in the rock restrict the upward flow of heated water, pressure builds up and a geyser forms. In other places the moisture is expelled as steam. These vents are called fumaroles. Mud pots bubble where acidic gases and water decompose soil into mud and clay. What a spectacular display!

Old Faithful

Seeing all the geothermal activity around Mammoth Hot Springs, we assumed that we were in the vicinity of the famous geyser Old Faithful. Only when we checked our travel map did we realize that Old Faithful was 50 miles to the south. Yellowstone is much larger than we thought; it covers 2.2 million acres.

To reach Old Faithful, we took the road that meanders down the western part of the park; it conducts tourists past five geyser basins. We soon began to accept as normal the smell of sulfur and the sight of escaping moisture.

Like the millions who had visited Old Faithful before us, we wanted to know when the geyser would go off. We had always thought that it erupted with precise regularity—exactly every 57 minutes. But looking around, we saw a sign saying that the geyser's next eruption was predicted for 12:47 p.m. That was well over an hour away, and the time was a mere prediction! We asked Rick, a park ranger, about it.



Old Faithful

▲NPS Photo►

Lower Falls

"The precise regularity of Old Faithful is a myth," he said. "The time between eruptions has always varied, and over the years it has lengthened because of earthquakes and because of vandals' throwing objects into the spouter. Today the average interval is about 80 minutes. Our staff can only predict the eruptions one at a time."

It was now 12:30 p.m. We walked toward Old Faithful to catch its next predicted show. Hundreds of people were sitting in the spectator area or were on their way there. Old Faithful kept us waiting ten minutes. But when it erupted, it had a beauty that no photograph can convey. After clearing its throat with a few fitful bursts, it gained momentum. Everybody clapped. The eruption lasted about three minutes, and to our delight it was exceptionally

high. The water and the spray rose and fell in crescendos, reaching from 120 feet to 150 feet. The spray caught the sunlight and drifted away in shifting patterns.

When it was over, we went to the lobby of the nearby hotel. Old Faithful, however, continued to assert its presence. For the rest of the day, whenever its predicted moment drew near, all the guests stopped what they were doing and walked out to watch it. It gave us several eruptions of exceptional length and height and beauty, especially one in which the dancing waters were silhouetted against the setting sun. We found the old geyser to be duly faithful.



"There are fewer than 500 geysers on the planet, and about 300 of them are in Yellowstone," Rick, the park ranger, told us. "And 160 of those are in this one little valley, the Upper Geyser Basin, which is only a mile and a half long. Other geysers come and go—they're active or they're dormant—but Old Faithful is still here." Even so, Old Faithful's neighbor, Grand, sends jets as high as 200 feet. Steamboat can shoot up nearly 400 feet, three times as high as Old Faithful—but it can remain inactive for



years. At Norris, a geyser named Echinus occasionally showers its admirers with warm water.

To Outrun a Buffalo

The next morning we reviewed a tourist brochure. It said: "Scalding water underlies thin, breakable crusts; pools are near or above boiling temperatures. Each year, visitors off trail in thermal areas have been seriously burned, and people have died in the scalding water." Another read: "Warning: Many visitors have been gored by buffalo. Buffalo can weigh 2,000 pounds and can sprint at 30 mph, three times faster than you can run." We hoped we wouldn't have to outrun a buffalo anytime soon!

At Yellowstone, animals have the right of way on roads. When an animal is sighted, cars suddenly stop and traffic jams form at unexpected points. One was just ending as we arrived, and tourists were climbing back into their cars. When we asked a woman what everyone was looking at, she said: "A big bull moose, but he's gone."

Afterward we watched some elk trying to coax their

two-week-old calves across a stream. They were moving into the lower park from the mountains where they had spent the winter. The calves didn't want to go—they hadn't bargained on crossing water. The mothers kept calling to their young, and the calves eventually crossed.

"My Own Littleness, My Helplessness"

Next we drove to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. We got out of our car at various lookout points along the 1,200-foot-high rim and peered—not always willingly—down. In his expedition journal of 1870, Nathaniel Langford spoke of "my own littleness, my helplessness" as he gazed at this 20-mile-long gorge with garish ocher walls—the source of the Yellowstone River's name—and two lofty waterfalls. We felt as little and helpless as he did.

The next day we swung east. Once again the park's landscape changed. Here it became high forest, and the road twice crossed the Continental Divide. We continued to see buffalo and other big animals, the buffalo often standing in classic profile. Regrettably, we didn't see any bears—Yellowstone's other big tourist attraction. What happened to them?





Morning Glory Pool

NPS Photo

Over the years the close proximity between humans and bears there resulted in some tourists' getting hurt or killed. The situation was not good for the bears either. So in the early 1970's, the National Park Service closed the garbage dumps, thereby weaning the bears from dependence on human food. This sent the bears into the wild. The program has succeeded. The bears are now on a natural diet, and they are healthier. However, they continue to meet tourists in certain places, like Fishing Bridge, where the eating, sleeping, and fishing interests of man and bear coincide.

We had made Fishing Bridge our last destination. It was there that the park sprang its last big surprise on us. As we looked across Yellowstone Lake—the largest mountain lake in North America—to the snow-topped Tetons, we thought for a moment that we were in northern Italy; the lake and its setting had that same alpine majesty. No bears around, however.

It was time to leave Yellowstone. The eye and the spirit had been abundantly rewarded. Reality had surpassed our expectations.



The Fires of 1988

In late July and August of 1988, minor Yellowstone fires quickly developed into eight devastating blazes beyond human control. Drought was one reason, as the summer of 1988 was the driest in Yellowstone's recorded history. High winds were the other reason. Gusting to 50 miles an hour, they propelled the fires as much as 14 miles in a day. They blew embers ahead of the fire for distances that fire fighters had never experienced. These embers started new fires.

At its peak the \$120-million effort to fight the fires involved almost 10,000 civilian and army fire fighters and more than 100 fire engines. Helicopters and aerial tankers dropped about 1.4 million gallons of fire retardant and 10 million gallons of water. Mocking these efforts, the flames hurtled through the park, narrowly missing a number of communities. Day after day a thick blanket of smoke hung in the air. By late summer the park resembled a war zone. Not until mid-September, after 1.4 million acres had burned, did cool air, autumn storms, and light snow put the fires out.

The fires scarcely harmed the animal population, and the tourist population has since risen steadily. When the smoke lifted, autumn foliage brought color to newly opened vistas, and in the spring wildflowers bloomed profusely where none had been seen before. In the years since the fires, an abundant new growth of trees has blanketed the formerly burned-out areas.



Can Science Bring Everlasting Life?

YEARS AGO, such a question would have seemed preposterous. Now, though, some people are considering the prospect seriously. Already, scientists have been able to double the life spans of fruit flies and worms by using techniques that some feel might be applied to humans.

Research has shown that normal human cells are mortal, dividing only a finite number of times.

After that they stop dividing. It is a process that has been compared to an internal clock that controls when people age and die. Scientists are now working to reset this clock.

One popular theory holds that the key to aging lies at the ends of each DNA strand, a region called the telomere. The telomeres have been compared to the plastic caps at the end of shoelaces, designed to protect the laces from unraveling. Scientists have observed that each time some cells divide, the telomeres shorten like a burning fuse. Eventually, it seems, the telomeres shorten to the point where the cell stops dividing. With the presence of a certain enzyme, how-



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ever, telomeres do not shorten. Thus, according to the theory, this could give the cells the potential to continue dividing indefinitely. An official of one company involved in this work said: "This is the first time that we can conceive of human immortality." But not all scientists agree.

How Death Came to Be

Of course, people who have faith in the Bible have believed in the possibility of everlasting life for humans for millenniums. Their trust is not in human scientists but in the Master Scientist, who created all living things, Jehovah God.—Psalm 104:24, 25.

The Bible shows that human death was not a part of the Creator's purpose. The first human couple were created in God's image and placed in a paradise garden. They were perfect, with no defect of mind or body. As such, they had the prospect of living forever on earth. That was God's desire for them. He instructed them to bear children and gradually to extend Paradise throughout the earth.—Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:8, 9, 15.

As shown in Genesis chapter 3, Adam, knowing that the penalty was death, de-

liberately rebelled against God. Moreover, by pursuing a course of disobedience, he brought sin and death upon his unborn offspring. The apostle Paul explained it this way: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Romans 5:12) In other words, because Adam sinned, his body was no longer perfect. He gradually grew old and died. His offspring inherited that defect.

Human death thus came as a result of Adam's rebellion and the subsequent judgment of God. Humans will not succeed in reversing that judgment. Though science has made many medical advances, the inspired words of Moses, written 3,500 years ago, still ring true: "In themselves the days of our years are seventy years; and if because of special mightiness they are eighty years, yet their insistence is on trouble and hurtful things; for it must quickly pass by, and away we fly."—Psalm 90:10.

Jehovah's Provision for Everlasting Life

Happily, there is hope! Though at present all humans eventually die, it is not Jehovah's purpose that this situation continue indefinitely. While Adam and Eve deserved to die, God knew that there would be many among their unborn children who would respond appreciatively to his loving oversight. For such people he made provision for endless life on earth. The psalmist wrote: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." (Psalm 37:29) But how will this be accomplished?

This was not to occur as a result of humans' unlocking the mysteries of DNA. Rather, everlasting life is a gift that Jehovah will bestow upon those exercising faith in him. Recognizing that the offspring of Adam and Eve needed rescuing, he provided a means for them to gain everlasting life—the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Jesus

referred to this provision when he said: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

Like Adam, Jesus was a perfect human. Unlike Adam, Jesus was perfectly obedient to God. Jesus was thus able to sacrifice his perfect human life to pay for Adam's sin. By means of this loving act, which balanced the scales of justice, Adam's children could be released from condemnation to death. Consequently, all who exercise faith in Jesus will receive God's gift of everlasting life.—Romans 5:18, 19; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

If humans were able to overcome imperfection and bring about everlasting life for themselves, there would be no need for the ransom. The Bible gives this wise counsel: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish. Happy is the one who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in Jehovah his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, of the sea, and of all that is in them, the One keeping trueness to time indefinite."—Psalm 146:3-6.

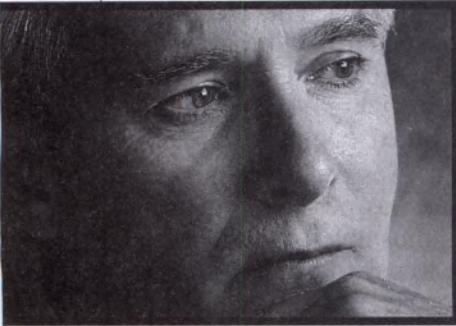
Everlasting life will result, not from scientific research, but from Jehovah. Whatever God sets out to do, he can and will accomplish. "With God no declaration will be an impossibility."—Luke 1:37.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Education That Leads
to a Better Life**

Rowing to Death

**Provided With a Hope
That Sustains Me**



COPING WITH PROSTATE PROBLEMS

"When I was 54 years old, I started to urinate frequently, sometimes every 30 minutes. This symptom led me to consult a doctor, and I discovered that I would need to have my prostate removed." Similar stories are common in prostate clinics around the world. What can a man do to prevent prostate diseases? When should he seek medical advice?

THE PROSTATE is a walnut-shaped gland that is located below the bladder and surrounds the urethra. (See the illustration of the male pelvis.) In a normal adult man, it weighs two thirds of an ounce and measures, at most, 1.6 inches along its transverse axis, 1.2 inches along its vertical axis, and 0.8 inches along its horizontal axis. Its function is to produce a fluid that makes up approximately 30 percent of the volume of semen. This fluid, containing citric acid, calcium, and enzymes, probably improves sperm motility (ability to swim) and fertility. Moreover, the fluid secreted from the prostate includes zinc, which scientists theorize protects against genital-tract infections.

Recognizing a Sick Prostate

A number of pelvic symptoms in men are related to inflammatory or tumorous prostate disease. *Prostatitis*—inflammation of the prostate—can cause fever, uncomfortable urination, and sacral or bladder pain. When the prostate is very swollen, it can prevent the patient from

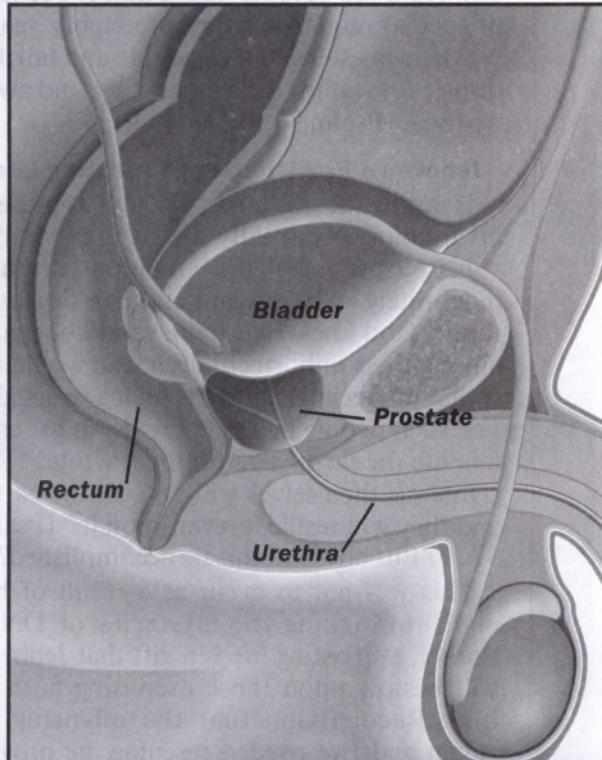


Diagram of male pelvic region

Symptom Index for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH)

Directions: Answer the questions below by circling the appropriate number.

Questions 1-6 are to be answered:

0—Not at all

1—Less than one time in five

2—Less than half the time

3—About half the time

4—More than half the time

5—Almost always

1. During the past month, after you finished urinating, how often did you have the sensation that you had not emptied your bladder completely?

0 1 2 3 4 5

2. During the past month, how often did you have to urinate again within less than two hours after you finished urinating? 0 1 2 3 4 5

3. During the past month, how often did you find that you stopped and started again several times when you urinated? 0 1 2 3 4 5

4. During the past month, how often did you find it difficult to postpone urination? 0 1 2 3 4 5

5. During the past month, how often did you have a weak urinary stream?

0 1 2 3 4 5

6. During the past month, how often did you have to strain to begin urination?

0 1 2 3 4 5

7. During the past month, how many times, on average, did you have to get up to urinate, from the time you went to bed until the time you got up in the morning? (Circle the number of times.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

The sum of the numbers circled is your BPH symptom score.

Mild: 0-7, moderate: 8-19, severe: 20-35.

From the American Urological Association

urinating. If inflammation is caused by bacteria, the disease is called *bacterial prostatitis*, and it can be acute or chronic. It is usually associated with urinary tract infection. However, in a greater number of cases, the cause of the inflammation is not detected, and for that reason the disease is called *nonbacterial prostatitis*.

Common prostate problems are an increase in urinary frequency, urination during the night, a decrease in force of the urinary stream, and the sensation that the bladder is not completely empty. These symptoms usually indicate *benign prostatic hyperplasia* (BPH)—noncancerous prostate enlargement—which can affect men over 40 years of age. The incidence of BPH increases with age. It is present in 25 percent of men aged 55 and in 50 percent aged 75.

The prostate can also be attacked by malignant tumors. Generally, prostate cancer is discovered in a routine examination, even when there are no prostate symptoms. In more advanced cases, there can be urinary retention with swelling of the bladder. When cancer has spread to other organs, there may be backache, neurological symptoms, and swelling in the legs because of obstruction of the lymphatic system. In a recent year, the United States alone reported about 300,000 new cases of prostate cancer and 41,000 deaths caused by it. Scientists believe that 30 percent of men between the ages of 60 and 69 and 67 percent of men between 80 and 89 will develop prostate cancer.

Who Is More Likely to Develop It?

Research reveals that the chances of developing prostate cancer increase rapidly after age 50. In the United States, this cancer is about twice as common among black men as among white men. The incidence of this disease varies around the world, being high in North America and European countries, intermediate in South America, and low in Asia. This suggests that environmental or

Treatments for BPH

- **DRUGS:** Many different medicines are used, according to the symptoms of each patient. Only your doctor can prescribe them for you.
- **WATCHFUL WAITING:** The patient has only periodic medical examinations and does not use drugs.
- **SURGICAL TREATMENT:**
 - (a) In *transurethral resection of the prostate (TURP)*, the surgeon inserts through the urethra an instrument (resectoscope) that contains an electrical loop that cuts tissue and seals blood vessels. No external incision is needed. It takes about 90 minutes. Transurethral procedures are less traumatic than open forms of surgery.
 - (b) *Transurethral incision of the prostate (TUIP)* is like TURP. However, this procedure widens the urethra by making a few small cuts in the bladder neck and in the prostate gland itself.
 - (c) *Open surgery* is used when a transurethral procedure cannot be used because the prostate is very enlarged. Open surgery requires an external incision.
 - (d) *Laser surgery* is the use of lasers to vaporize obstructing prostate tissue.

The patient must make the final decision as to which, if any, treatment he will accept. A recent report in *The New York Times* noted that some experts are uncertain about even testing for prostate cancer, especially in older men, in that it "can be an indolent disease unlikely to cause lasting harm to the health, while its treatment can often produce serious side effects."

dietary differences may be important in prostate cancer growth. If a man immigrates to a country with greater incidence, his personal risk can increase.

Men with relatives affected by prostate cancer have a greater probability of developing it. "Having a father or brother with prostate cancer doubles a man's risk of developing this disease," explains the American Cancer Society. Some risk factors are age, race, nationality, family history, diet, and physical inactivity. Men who have a diet rich in fat and who are sedentary increase their chances of developing the cancer.

Preventing Prostate Diseases

Although scientists still do not know exactly what causes prostate cancer, they believe that

Questions You May Ask Your Doctor Before Surgery

1. What operation are you recommending?
2. Why do I need the operation?
3. Are there alternatives to surgery?
4. What are the benefits of having the operation?
5. What are the risks of having the operation? (Hemorrhage or impotence, for example)
6. What if I do not have this operation?
7. Where can I get a second opinion?
8. What experience do you have in performing this operation without blood transfusion?
9. Where will the operation be done? Do the hospital physicians and nurses respect the patient's rights about blood transfusions?
10. What kind of anesthesia will I need? Does the anesthetist have experience in surgery without blood transfusion?
11. How long will it take me to recover?
12. How much will the operation cost?

genetic and hormonal factors may be involved. Happily, we can control two risk factors—diet and physical inactivity. The American Cancer Society recommends “limiting your intake of high-fat foods from animal sources and choosing most of the foods you eat from plant sources.” It also recommends eating “five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day” as well as bread, cereals, pasta, other grain products, rice, and beans. Tomatoes, grapefruits, and watermelons are rich in lycopenes—antioxidants that help prevent damage to DNA and may help lower prostate cancer risk. Some experts also claim that certain herbs and minerals may help.

The American Cancer Society and the American Urological Association believe that prostate cancer screening can save lives. Treatment is most likely to be successful when the cancer is detected early. The American Cancer Society recommends that men over 50, or over 45 in the case of those in high-risk groups, undergo an annual medical examination.*

The examination should include a prostate-specific antigen blood test (PSA). This antigen is a protein produced by prostate cells. Its level increases in prostate diseases. “If your PSA test is not normal, ask your doctor to discuss your cancer risk and need for further tests,” says the American Cancer Society. A digital rectal exam (DRE) is also included. Through the patient’s rectum, the doctor can feel any abnormal area in the prostate gland, since this gland is located toward the front of the rectum. (See the illustration of the male pelvis on page 20.) A transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) test is useful “when the PSA or DRE indicates an abnormality” and the doctor needs to decide whether he should recommend a biopsy of the prostate gland. This test takes about 20 minutes.

In addition to detecting prostate cancer, the annual urologic examination can discover BPH, referred to previously, at an early stage,

A healthy diet and moderate exercise may help lower the risk of prostate cancer



which would permit less aggressive treatment. (See the box “Treatments for BPH.”) Morally clean conduct protects a person from venereal diseases, which can cause prostatitis.

Certainly your prostate deserves to be protected and cared for. The man mentioned at the beginning of this article related that he has recovered fully from his operation. In his opinion “all men should undergo an annual preventive medical examination,” even if they do not have any symptoms.

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

T	R	I	B	E	O	F	J	U	D	A	H	F
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B	A	C	A	N	U			U	E	E		E
R	D	E	A	D	L	Y	P	L	A	G	U	E

* If this is your age group, you are invited to consider the box “Symptom Index for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH).”

THE VIKINGS

CONQUERORS AND COLONIZERS

IT WAS a June day in the year 793 C.E. The monks on the small island of Lindisfarne, also called Holy, off the coast of Northumberland, England, were quietly going about their business, unaware of the sleek, low ships approaching rapidly over the waves. The ships slid up onto the beach, and fierce-looking bearded men wielding swords and axes jumped out and ran toward the monastery. They fell upon the terrified monks and inflicted a great slaughter. The raiders looted the monastery of gold, silver, jewels, and other treasure. Then they headed out into the North Sea again and vanished.

The pillagers were Vikings, and their brutal hit-and-run raids thrust them onto the public stage of Europe and marked the beginning of the Viking era. Soon the Vikings evoked such terror that throughout England echoed the prayer: "From the fury of the Northmen deliver us, O Lord."*

Who were these Vikings? Why did they suddenly appear on the

* Outside Scandinavia the Vikings were usually called heathen, Danes, Northmen, or Norsemen. As most modern historians use the term "Viking" for all Scandinavians of the Viking era, we have adopted that term in this article. The origin of the term "Viking" is obscure.

pages of history as if out of nowhere, remain prominent for three centuries, and then seemingly vanish?

Farmers and Pillagers

The Vikings' ancestors were Germanic peoples who, some 2,000 years before the Viking era, began migrating from northwestern Europe into Denmark, Norway, and Sweden—Scandinavia. Like their forebears, the Vikings were farmers, even those who went on raids. In colder parts of Scandinavia, they depended more on hunting, fishing, and whaling. Viking merchants lived in larger communities, and from these they plied Europe's trade routes in their robust sailing craft. What, then, would take such seemingly innocuous people from obscurity to notoriety in just one generation?

One possibility is overpopulation, but many histori-



A replica of a
Viking longship

Pages 2 and 24: Antonion Otto Rabasca, Courtesy of Gunnar Eggertson

ans feel that this would have been true only of western Norway with its limited arable land. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings* says: "Most of the first generations of Vikings were seeking wealth, not land." This was especially true of kings and chieftains who needed a substantial income to retain their power. Other Vikings may have left Scandinavia to escape family feuds and local wars.

Another factor may have been that it was common for wealthy Viking men to have more than one wife. As a result, they had many children. Usually, however, only the firstborn son received the family inheritance, leaving his younger siblings to fend for themselves. According to the book *The Birth of Europe*, disinherited sons "made up a large and dangerous warrior élite who were obliged to make their own way by any means, be it conquests at home or piracy abroad."

The Vikings had the right vehicle for hit-and-run raids—the longship. Historians praise the longship as one of the finest technological achievements of the early Middle Ages. Of shallow draft and powered by sail or oars, these sleek vessels made the Vikings the masters of every sea, lake, and river within their sweep.

Viking Expansion

Some historians say that the Viking era dawned in the middle of the eighth century, just prior to the Viking raid on Lindisfarne. Whatever the case, the Lindisfarne raid helped bring the Vikings into the public consciousness. From England they turned to Ireland, once again targeting treasure-filled monasteries. With their longships filled with loot and slaves, the Vikings sailed home for the winter. In 840 C.E.,



**Viking
implements
of war**



A Viking helmet

however, they broke with tradition and wintered in their plundering grounds. The Irish city of Dublin, in fact, began as a Viking enclave. In 850 C.E., they also began to winter in England, their first base being the Isle of Thanet at the mouth of the Thames River.

Soon both Danish and Norwegian

Vikings arrived in the British Isles, no longer as raiding parties but as armies in flotillas of longships. Some of these ships may have been 100 feet long and may have carried up to 100 warriors. In the following years, Vikings subdued northeast England, an area that came to be known as the Danelaw because Danish culture and law were dominant there. However, in the south of England in Wessex, Saxon King Alfred and his successors held the Vikings at bay. But then, after a great battle at Ashington in 1016 and the death of King Edmund of Wessex later that same year, the Viking leader Canute—a professed Christian—became sole king of England.

Deep Into Europe and Beyond

In 799 C.E., Danish Vikings began raiding the area then called Frisia—the coastal region of Europe that stretches roughly from Denmark to the Netherlands. From there they rowed up such rivers as the Loire and the Seine and pillaged towns and villages deep in the heartland of Europe. In 845 C.E., Vikings even plundered Paris.

Frankish King Charles the Bald paid them 7,000 pounds of silver to withdraw from the city. But they returned and raided even beyond Paris as far as Troyes, Verdun, and Toul.

Vikings also sailed to Spain and Portugal, where their first known raid occurred in 844 C.E. They sacked several

War implements and helmet: Artifacts on display at the Museum of National Antiquities, Stockholm, Sweden



Mountain High Maps® Copyright © 1997 Digital Wisdom, Inc.

small towns and even occupied Seville temporarily. "However," says the *Cultural Atlas of the Viking World*, "the Arab defenders put up such fierce resistance that the Vikings were quickly repulsed, their forces almost destroyed." Nonetheless, they returned in 859 C.E.—this time with a fleet of 62 ships. After ravaging parts of Spain, they raided North Africa; and even though their ships were now brimful of loot, they went on to Italy and sacked Pisa and Lina (formerly Luna).

Vikings from Sweden sailed east across the Baltic and into some of the great waterways of Eastern Europe—the Volkhov, Lovat', Dnieper, and Volga rivers. These eventually took them to the Black Sea and the rich lands of the Byzantine Empire. Some Viking merchants even reached Baghdad by way of the Volga River and the Caspian Sea. Eventually, Swedish chieftains became the rulers of the vast Slavic lands of the Dnieper and the Volga. The invaders were called the *Rus*, a term that some hold to be the origin of the word "Russia"—"Land of the Rus."

To Iceland, Greenland, and Newfoundland

Norwegian Vikings focused on many of the outer islands. For instance, they occupied the Orkneys and the Shetlands in the eighth century and the Faeroes, the Hebrides, and eastern Ireland in the ninth century. Vikings even colonized Iceland. There they established the par-

liamentary body the Althing. Still existing as the governing body of Iceland, the Althing is the West's oldest parliamentary assembly.

In 985 C.E., a Viking named Erik the Red established a colony in Greenland. Later that year fellow Norseman Bjarni Herjolfsson set off from Iceland to join his parents in Greenland. But he was blown off course and overshot Greenland. "Bjarni was probably the first Norseman to sight North America," says the *Cultural Atlas of the Viking World*.

On the basis of Bjarni's report, and probably after the year 1000, Leif Eriksson, son of Erik the Red, sailed westward from Greenland to Baffin Island and then down the coast of Labrador. He came to a promontory of land he called Vinland, after the wild grapes or berries growing there.* Leif wintered there before returning to Greenland. The following year Leif's brother Thorwald led an expedition to Vinland, but he was killed in a skirmish with natives. A few years later, however, between 60

* At L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of Newfoundland, turf-covered Norse buildings have been reconstructed, based on archaeological evidence found there in the early 1960's. This evidence indicates a Viking presence a thousand years earlier, but there are doubts that this settlement was part of the legendary Vinland.—See *Awake!*, July 8, 1999.

VIKING RELIGION

Vikings worshiped many mythical gods, including Odin, Thor, Frey, Freya, and Hel. Odin, the god of wisdom and war, led the pantheon. His wife was Frigga. Thor was a slayer of giants and ruler of winds and rain. Frey was an immoral god of peace and fertility. His sister Freya was goddess of love and fertility. Hel was goddess of the underworld.

Norse mythology is the basis for the names of certain days of the week in English and some

other languages. Tuesday is named for Tyr, son of Odin (also known as Woden); Wednesday is Woden's day; Thursday, Thor's day; and Friday, Frigga's day.

Like their worshipers, Viking gods supposedly obtained their wealth through theft, daring, and guile. Odin promised that those who died valiantly in battle would have a place in the celestial realm of Asgard (a home of the gods), in the great hall of Valhalla. There they could feast and fight to their hearts' content. Viking nobles

were often buried with a boat or with stones laid out in the form of a boat. Food, weapons, ornaments, slaughtered animals, and perhaps even a sacrificed slave were also interred. A queen's maid might be buried along with her.

The horned helmet often associated with the Vikings predates the Viking era by over 1,000 years and was apparently only worn ceremonially. Viking warriors wore simple conical helmets made of metal or leather, if they chose to wear a helmet at all.

and 160 Vikings established a settlement in Vinland, but because of the ongoing hostility of the indigenous people, they stayed only about three years, never to return. Almost 500 years passed before an Italian explorer in the service of England, John Cabot, claimed North America for England.

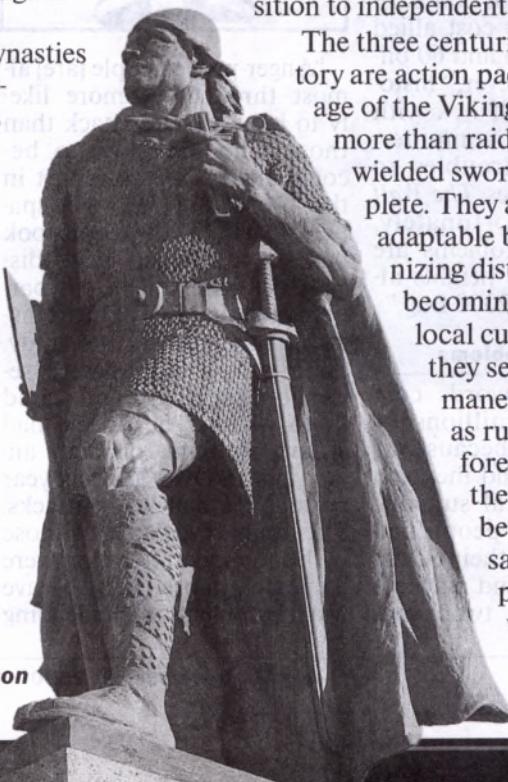
The End of the Viking Era

By the end of their era, the Vikings had created a number of new political states over which Scandinavian dynasties ruled. But they did not remain foreigners for long, for many Vikings were eventually assimilated into their newfound cultures, even religiously. For example, Viking chieftain Rollo, who seized part of the territory on the French coast that is called Normandy (meaning "Land of the Northmen," or Normans), converted to Catholicism. One of his descendants was William, Duke of Normandy. After the battle of Hastings in 1066, which pitted descendants of Norman and English Vikings against one another, victorious Duke William was crowned king of England.

William promptly blocked all further Scandinavian influence in England and introduced a new feudal era involving medieval French systems of government, land ownership, and economics. Hence, "if one date has to be chosen to mark the end of the Viking Age," says the book *The Vikings*, by Else Roesdahl, "it has to be 1066." The 11th century also saw the original Viking kingdoms in Scandinavia make the transition to independent nation states.

The three centuries of Viking history are action packed. Yet, the image of the Vikings as being nothing more than raiding barbarians who wielded sword and ax is not complete. They also proved to be adaptable by eventually colonizing distant lands and even becoming absorbed by the local cultures. As farmers they settled down to permanent residences, and as rulers they sat on foreign thrones. Yes, the Vikings proved to be masters not just of sail and sword but of plow and politics as well.

Leif Eriksson



WATCHING THE WORLD

Costly Bug

Computer engineers heaved a sigh of relief as most computer systems successfully passed from 1999 to 2000. Certain analysts had predicted that many computer programs, unable to distinguish between 1900 and 2000 because of a programming technique that left off the first two digits of year dates, would crash and cause all manner of disruptions. (See the February 8, 1999, issue of *Awake!*, pages 21-3.) To prevent this, programmers labored to repair faulty systems before the fateful date. How much did this cost? According to an article in the French daily *Le Monde*, one finance group puts the figure at "between 300 and 600 billion dollars worldwide." The United States spent about 100 billion dollars; and France, 20 billion dollars. In comparison, the Gulf War cost allied forces "between 46 and 60 billion dollars." However, "history will repeat itself . . . with a parade of new computer-related number troubles to worry about," states *The Wall Street Journal*. Fortunately, "none of these problems are likely to reach the heights attained by the Year 2000 Bug."

Password Problems

Forgotten passwords cost U.S. businesses millions of dollars annually because of lost productivity and the need to provide technical support. "Twenty years ago, people had to remember only their Social Security number and maybe a phone number or two," says

The New York Times. But now, using passwords to gain access to computer files and E-mail services at work has become a way of life for many. In fact, it's not uncommon for people to accumulate dozens of passwords, access codes, and personal identification numbers. One network administrator reportedly maintains 129 active passwords. Some companies are therefore replacing password-based systems with fingerprint scanners and other hi-tech security devices.

Anger and Your Heart



"Anger-prone people [are] almost three times more likely to have a heart attack than those who are slow to become angry," says a report in the *Globe and Mail* newspaper. Nearly 13,000 people took part in a six-year heart disease risk assessment. All participants were free of heart disease at the start of the study. Each person was asked a series of questions and rated as to whether he or she had a low, medium, or high anger index. Over the six-year period, 256 had heart attacks. The study revealed that those with the moderate rating were 35 percent more likely to have heart problems. The leading

author of the study, Dr. Janice Williams of the University of North Carolina, says: "Anger could potentially lead to heart attacks, especially among middle-aged men and women with normal blood pressure." Therefore, the researchers recommended that anger-prone people should consider using stress-management techniques.

Smoking Update

"After a century-long buildup in cigarette smoking, the world is turning away from cigarettes," reports a *Worldwatch Issue Alert*. From 1990 to 1999, the consumption of cigarettes declined 11 percent worldwide. This downward trend has continued in the United States for close to two decades, with 42 percent fewer cigarettes smoked in the United States in 1999 than in 1980. The report cites antismoking campaigns, growing awareness of the dangers associated with smoking, and higher prices as reasons for the decrease. In addition, "the number of cigarettes smoked per person has dropped 19 percent in France since peaking in 1985, 8 percent in China since 1990, and 4 percent in Japan since 1992," says the report.

Illness Ignored by Uninsured

A recent study in the United States showed that people who do not carry medical insurance are more likely to ignore signs of sickness and are less inclined to seek medical help, reports Reuters news ser-

vice. The study, originally published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, was based on data collected by the National Center for Health Statistics. Research showed that even when there were indications of serious sickness, such as blurred vision or the appearance of a lump in the breast, those without health insurance were much less likely to seek medical care than those who had insurance. The report stated: "It is ironic that at a time when our country is establishing a 'Patient's Bill of Rights' we still have not established the right to be a patient."

London's Medieval Zoo

Excavations beneath the famous Tower of London have revealed new details of "a medieval menagerie which held an extraordinary array of animals," reports *The Sunday Times* of London. Researchers say that there is evidence that 100 different species, including rhino, antelope, tigers, ostriches, snakes, and alligators, were once kept beneath what is now the West Tower. Experts have been aware of the zoo's existence for some time, but new research in royal, university, and church archives, along with information gleaned from the dig, has clarified a number of points. The menagerie was founded about 1210 by King John and closed in 1835 when London Zoo was opened in Regent's Park. Some animals were then transferred to the new zoo, while others were shipped to America. The longevity of the menagerie was mainly due to the interest of successive monarchs and the relatively stable state

of the country. Geoffrey Parrott, chief archivist at the Tower, says: "It was clearly London's longest-running show, which entertained both royalty and commoners for centuries."

Instant Justice



Three judges in the state of Espírito Santo, Brazil, are testing a computer program that is designed to help dispense instant justice, reports *New Scientist* magazine. The program, called the Electronic Judge, runs on a laptop computer. When a minor accident occurs, police call a judge and a court clerk to the accident scene. The program is designed to help the human judge weigh the evidence and dispense justice right there on the spot. It does so by presenting the judge with a series of questions, such as "Did the driver stop at the red light?" or, "Had the driver been drinking alcohol above the acceptable limit of the law?" It then prints out its decision and the reasoning behind it. According to *New Scientist*, the program can also issue "fines, order damages to be paid and even recommend jail sentences." It is hoped that the computer program will help human judges to be more efficient and thus help to reduce the burden of Brazil's overloaded legal system.

Water as a Sales Incentive

Some merchants in India have been taking advantage of a recent drought to attract customers. They are offering free water with purchases of major home appliances. *The Times of India* reported that one retailer promised 130 gallons of water four days a week for two summer months to any customer who purchased an oven, a refrigerator, a washing machine, or a television set. Another store offered 'free water for the rest of the summer' with any purchase of a refrigerator or a television. Reeling under one of the worst water crises ever, the northwest part of Gujarat State found that water was a much more enticing draw than gifts of gold, silver, or free holidays. In the city of Rajkot, businessmen claimed that offering water as an incentive had increased their sales threefold.

Diamond Mystery Solved

The hardest natural substance known to mankind, diamond, is formed when carbon is subjected to extreme temperature and pressure. But what does a diamond itself become when it is put under pressure? Scientists have been trying to answer that question for 40 years—that is, until recently. "It turns out that when enough pressure is applied at the proper angles," reports *The Buffalo News*, "the hardest known natural substance turns into graphite, the same carbon . . . from which it is formed." Scientists say that they hope to use what they have learned through their experiments to make better diamond tools.

FROM OUR READERS

To begin my article need over

Twentieth Century Congratulations on the informative and educational work you are doing. As a political and military affairs correspondent, I am always critical about the articles I read. But the series "The 20th Century—Critical Years of Change" was second to none. (December 8, 1999) The cover illustration well reflected the most significant events of this century.

A. P., Angola

Melatonin and Depression The "Watching the World" item "A Long Night" (March 8, 2000) caught my attention. I work at an institute where melatonin is being researched, and it appears that your item was inaccurate. If melatonin is involved in seasonal depression, it is an excess rather than a lack of this hormone that is to blame.

X. Y., France

It now appears that the exact relationship of melatonin to seasonal depression—if any—is unconfirmed. Recently, researchers have suggested that the issue may be, not the level of melatonin, but how a lack of light might disrupt the cycle of melatonin production. Obviously, more research will need to be done before any firm conclusions can be drawn.—ED.

Art Error? I was in the hospital reading the January 8, 2000, issue, with the cover series "Bloodless Medicine and Surgery—The Growing Demand," when a senior cardiologist and a team of students came in. He said that the EKG (electrocardiogram) strip on the cover was backward.

J. T., England

The strip appeared as an artistic device. It was shown to some health-care workers before its publication; however, the consensus among other medical personnel who have seen the drawing since then is that it was drawn incorrectly. We apologize for the error.—ED.

Quitting Smoking Until quite recently, I have been hooked on cigarettes, marijuana, alcohol, and cocaine. I tried many times to quit on my own but without success. It wasn't until I started to study the Bible with one of Jehovah's Witnesses that I began to feel that I was worth something. With the help of Jehovah, I have not done any drugs or smoked since January. The withdrawal symptoms have been agonizing. Since January, I haven't had a good night's sleep. The March 22, 2000, issue with the series "How You Can Quit Smoking" helped me to see that my difficulty with sleep is a withdrawal symptom and that I am not going crazy! Thanks so much.

D. M., United States

When I read your description of nicotine withdrawal, it reminded me of what I went through. At first I couldn't think of anything but cigarettes. Gradually days, then weeks, and then months passed without cigarettes ever coming into my mind. Jehovah definitely helped me after I promised myself that I would never smoke again. That was 20 years ago, and, in fact, I have never smoked again.

D. A., Italy

Moths Thank you very much for printing the article "When Love Is Blind," about the emperor moth. (March 22, 2000) I found one in my backyard. When a second one came along, I took a photo that was shown on local TV. I deeply appreciate the hard work and research involved in providing the magazines.

I. K., United States

El Niño I want to thank you for the informative article "What Is El Niño?" (March 22, 2000) To be honest, I'd heard everyone talk about El Niño in 1998, and I didn't have a clue as to what it was all about. Well, the explanation was delivered right to my door! Your article was short yet very informative.

U. N., United States

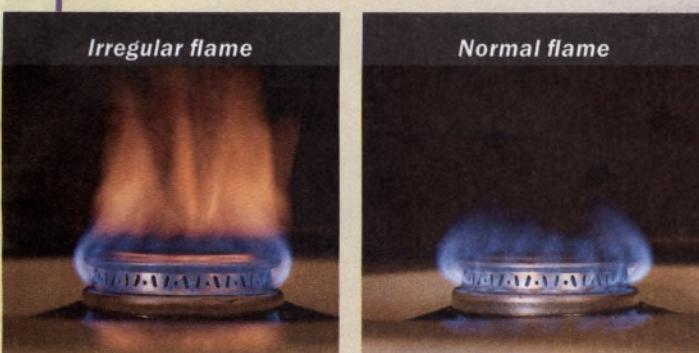
Carbon Monoxide The Silent Killer

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BRITAIN

EVERY year about 50 people in Britain die of carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty home heating appliances. "After asbestos, carbon monoxide is the most common single cause of poisoning at work and in the home," reports

ing—and in severe cases, weak pulse, coma, and respiratory failure. If a person is suddenly overcome, prompt administration of oxygen and respiratory assistance are essential before asphyxiation—insufficient oxygen reaching the brain—causes death.

What can be done to avert the dangers of carbon monoxide? Have all appliances fitted and checked regularly by an expert. If a gas flame burns yellow rather than blue, consider it a warning of irregular burning and possible carbon monoxide emissions. Domestic carbon monoxide alarms of different types are now available. Never become complacent when using appliances that can emit carbon monoxide.



London Hazards Centre Trust. What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a gas that is formed when incomplete combustion occurs, whether in an automobile engine or in heating appliances that burn coal or other fossil fuels, especially gas. It is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. So how does it kill?

Red blood cells carry vital oxygen to the body's tissues. The toxicity of carbon monoxide lies in the fact that it is absorbed by red blood cells in preference to oxygen. Carbon monoxide poisoning occurs as the body becomes starved of oxygen. Exposure to low emissions of carbon monoxide over a period of time can result in permanent brain damage. Symptoms include headache, drowsiness, weakness, dizziness, nausea, and faint-

Domestic carbon monoxide alarms of different types are now available



"I Am Addicted to Your Magazines"

A letter recently received by the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Germany read in part:

"I must admit that I am addicted to your magazines. It's the same story every year. Just before going on vacation, I decide to hold back the last two issues for reading on the beach. A firm decision!

"But as soon as I get my hands on them, the problem starts. Just a peek at the table of contents. Wow, a life story! Well, maybe I'll read it just as an appetizer but nothing more. Oh, but the next article looks especially interesting. Stop! I need the magazines for vacation reading. Oh well, just one more article. And the "Watching the World" items are always so informative! Finally, as you can imagine, by the time I get to the beach, there is not a single article left."

The appeal of *Awake!* is demonstrated by the fact that about 20,300,000 copies are printed per issue in 82 languages. Readers enjoy its positive outlook. "Why *Awake!* Is Published," which appears in each issue, explains that "this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world."



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