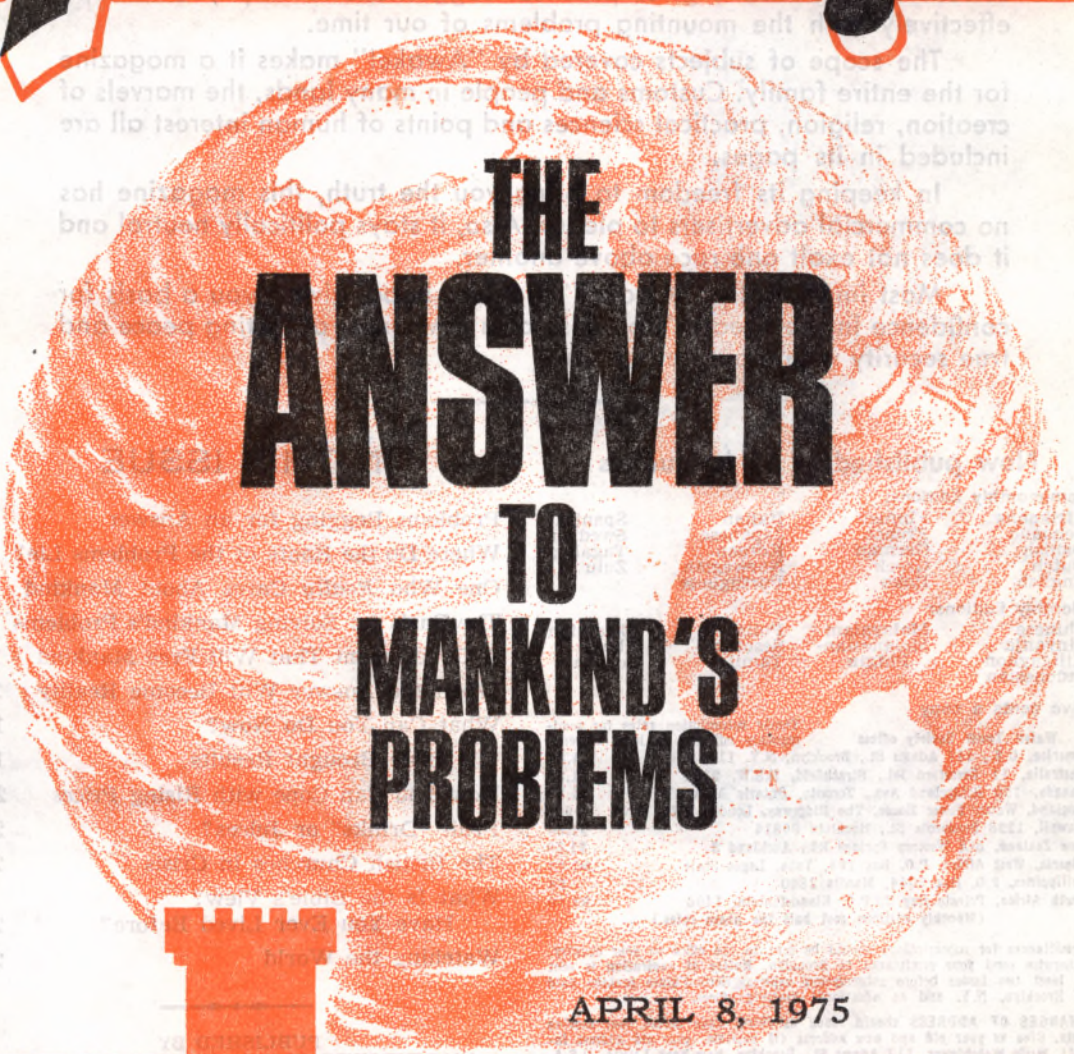


Awake!



THE ANSWER TO MANKIND'S PROBLEMS

APRIL 8, 1975



April 8, 1975
Vol. 56, Num. 7

Average Printing Each Issue:
8,900,000

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Today as never before, what goes on in the rest of the world affects each one of us. "Awake!" reports on the world scene. But it does more for you personally.

It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events. And it gives practical suggestions to help you to cope effectively with the mounting problems of our time.

The scope of subjects covered by "Awake!" makes it a magazine for the entire family. Customs and people in many lands, the marvels of creation, religion, practical sciences and points of human interest all are included in its pages.

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Five cents a copy

Watch Tower Society offices	Yearly subscription rates for semi-monthly editions in local currency
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	\$1.50
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	\$1.50
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z5	\$1.50
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	90p
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	\$1.50
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$1.50
Nigeria, West Africa, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	N1.05
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	P8
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, 1406	R1,10

(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

The Bible translation used in "Awake!" is the modern-language "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated. Printed in U.S.A.

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PUBLISHED BY
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, INC.
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary

PROBLEMS Begging For An Answer



DO YOU long for relief from the serious problems facing mankind? If you had the power to bring relief, would you not want to do that? But where would you start? There are so many problems begging for an answer.

Many millions of persons in impoverished lands, also increasing numbers in industrial countries, would like to work but simply cannot find jobs. How fine it would be if all could live active, productive lives! What relief many parents would experience if, instead of seeing their children waste away from hunger and disease, they could provide well for them! Would you not welcome the day when no one, whether yourself or others, would have to live in poverty, without adequate shelter from cold and pouring rains?

Besides earth's starving millions, many other people yearn for greater stability in life. It would be such a comfort to know for sure that what one has long worked for will not later be reduced to practically nothing because of inflation. If costs of basic necessities were to stabilize, the aged, the infirm, the handicapped and others on fixed incomes would be free of a big worry.

Then, too, even the man with a well-paying job may find little satisfaction in what he does. He may find his work dull and monotonous. Or, poor cooperation among workers and fierce competition may leave him frustrated, tense and completely exhausted at the end of the workday. What a pleasant relief it would be to do work that is really enjoyable and that contributes to the good of others! And it would indeed be refreshing to work alongside people who truly cared about one another.

Besides that, how much happier people would be if they could feel bodily secure! Many city dwellers long for the time when streets will again be safe for women and children even after dark. Think how delightful it would be to live on an earth free from all injustice, oppression, crime and war, free too from sickness, old age and infirmity, and free from pollution of water, soil and air.

If we are really to enjoy life fully, all the serious problems facing us must be solved. There is abundant evidence that this will actually happen. You may even

be among the millions to witness it. To understand how this will be possible, one must first determine the source of mankind's problems.

Where Do THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEMS Lie?

AS YOU observe what is happening today, what comes to your mind as to the reasons for mankind's problems?

Likely you have noticed that many problems are brought about by circumstances that, in effect, hold us captive. Even though people may want things otherwise, they are helpless. They must work within the framework of the existing system.

Take as an example the farmer in so-called progressive lands. To succeed, he reasons that he must use modern methods. This requires a lot of money these days. Without a sizable profit, the farmer can-

not meet the high cost of machinery, fuel and fertilizer. So if demand for his produce drops, or if he suffers heavy losses due to other problems, he may be unable to pay for what he needs to continue farming. He can lose everything if he operates on borrowed money.

And how much can the farmer do personally to relieve the suffering of earth's starving millions in today's society? In the land where he lives, tons of meat may lie in cold storage. There may be no buyers for his marketable hogs and cattle. The farmer may very much wish to see hungry people benefit from what he has. But to continue farming, he must be paid for his animals. Can he afford to give them away?

For meat from his livestock to reach any of earth's hungry people is no simple matter. Those involved in handling, processing and transporting the meat must be paid. They, too, have to

A farmer may want to help the hungry, but he cannot afford to give his crops away



make a living. Even if meat for which there is no market in the country of origin were donated, transported free to famine-stricken areas and given away to those in need, this might not solve their problems. Why? It could be against their religious beliefs to eat meat or to eat meat from certain animals.

Industry, too, is locked into a system that depends on big profits. Machinery, fuel, wages, raw materials and maintenance require large outlays of money. To compete on the world market, manufacturers must keep prices as low as possible. In some cases they cannot afford to spend large sums on things unrelated to profit making—for example, antipollution measures. Certain large companies would shut down some of their factories rather than spend millions of dollars to bring them into compliance with antipollution regulations.

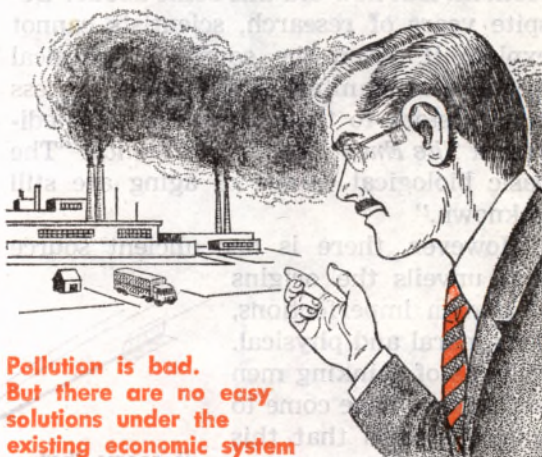
Those living in industrial areas would like to see an end to excessive noise, smoke and grit. But businessmen ask: 'What if the factories were to close down? While pollution would be curbed, unemployment problems would wreck the economy of the community.' So, despite known hazards, large-scale pollution is allowed to continue.

Many other examples could be cited. But they all point to one conclusion: We today are experiencing the composite effect of the mistakes that individuals, organizations and nations have made throughout the centuries. The problems that the present system has produced are global and threaten our very existence. On August 2, 1974, at the twentieth World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, Dr. George Wald noted: "Human life is now threatened as never before, not by one but by many perils, each in itself capable of destroying us, but all inter-related, and all coming upon us together."

Obviously a complete change in the present system is needed. But such a change

would call for tremendous sacrifices. Who could be trusted to decide what should be sacrificed for the good of humanity? Who would have the wisdom to handle matters in a way that would enable everyone to enjoy life's basic necessities? In view of the tribal, national and racial differences, what guarantee could any of us have that those involved in decision making would not try to get advantages for themselves, their relatives, friends, tribe, nation or race?

Even if there were every assurance of fair treatment for all, how many people



would be willing to take cuts in profits or wages, modify their diet and give up certain luxuries so that people in another part of the world could be saved from starvation? How many would really be content with less, glad to serve their fellowmen in this way? What about those who would be receiving the benefits of others' sacrifices? Would they really be appreciative? How many of such persons might greedily seek to have more than their share at the expense of others?

The system that now exists did not get started on its own. People are involved. Do not the problems reveal that there is a basic flaw in humankind?

A Basic Reason—Human Imperfection

Even though at heart people may want it otherwise, they repeatedly do and say things that hurt their fellowmen. Time and again they fall short of being the kind of persons they want to be. So to speak, they 'miss the mark.' The ancient Hebrews and Greeks referred to such failings by a word that literally meant just that, "to miss" the mark. In many modern languages such a 'missing of the mark' is called "sin."

No human is exempt from shortcomings. We all inherited weaknesses and imperfections. But how did this come about? Despite years of research, scientists cannot explain it. Even the source of physical weaknesses manifest in the aging process is a mystery to them. Says the 1974 edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica*: "The basic biological causes of aging are still unknown."

However, there is one ancient source that unveils the origins of human imperfections, both moral and physical. Millions of thinking men and women have come to the conclusion that this source, the Bible, gives a satisfying explanation. We read: "Just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Rom. 5:12.

Yes, the progenitor of the human race, Adam, "missed the mark" as regards maintaining perfect obedience to God. Having lost perfection, he could father only imperfect offspring. It was just as a discerning man of ancient times put it: "Who can produce someone clean out of someone unclean? There is not one."—Job 14:4. Inherited imperfections, however, do not explain fully all the problems facing man-

kind. Are not even imperfect men and women capable of expressing depth of concern for others? Have not many been willing to give up their life in attempts to render aid to fellow humans? Do we not time and again hear concerned expressions appealing to men and nations to stop following a course that may lead to disaster for all? Yet it seems that the world is bent on an insane course. Why is this?

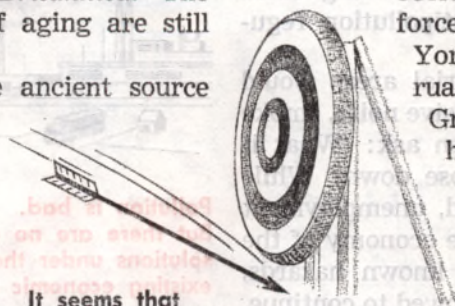
Invisible, Powerful Spirit Influence

Could it be that there are forces outside the human realm that are exerting a strong influence on the world? That is what many have felt to be the case. With reference to the horrors of the Nazi years, Arnold Weber observed that it was as if "certain forces sprang out of the ground . . . a collective supra-personal force." Writing in the *New York Times Magazine* (February 4, 1973), Andrew M. Greeley noted that the in-humanities that have been committed in today's world are out of proportion to human inclinations toward bad:

"The magnitude of the evil is not proportionate to the malice of the people involved.

Many killers are men of moderate good will who intend not evil but good. . . . Evil comes from mistakes, miscalculations, limitations, ignorance, far more frequently than it comes from malice."

But who is responsible for prodding imperfect humans to acts of violence seemingly far greater than their inclinations toward evil? Men may sense that some superhuman force exists, but they cannot identify it. The Bible, however, not only identifies this force but also shows when and how it began influencing human affairs.



It seems that people are always missing the mark as to the kind of persons they would like to be. Why is this?

According to the Bible, intelligent spirit creatures existed before the earth was formed. (Job 38:6, 7) One of these set himself in opposition to God and sought domination over the first humans and thus over all mankind. To achieve his ends, he maliciously slandered God. (Gen. 3:1-6) That is why the Bible later speaks of this one as Satan or "Resister" and as Devil or "Slanderer." At the instigation of this traitor, not only did the first humans rebel against God, but so did other spirit creatures. (1 Pet. 3:19, 20; Jude 6) These disobedient spirit creatures came to be called "demons."—Jas. 2:19.

From the Bible we learn that Satan and his demons are the source of an evil "spirit" or dominant attitude permeating the world of mankind that chooses to ignore God's law. (Eph. 2:2; 1 John 5:19) Just how powerful such a bad spirit can be might be illustrated by what happens to a mob. As individuals, those making up a mob may not all be cruel, vicious people. They may even claim to be peaceful and appear to be such on the surface. However, once the 'mob spirit' envelops them, otherwise law-abiding citizens act like crazed men and women, destroying property as well as assaulting and killing fellow humans. Many may later feel deep shame and find it hard to believe that they did such things.

In view of the terrible inhumanities of man toward man, is it not reasonable to accept the Bible's explanation that vicious spirit creatures are exploiting the sinful inclinations of imperfect humans who ignore God's law? What other reasons could there be for the horrors of the past and of this twentieth century?



A mob spirit makes people act crazed. What spirit is responsible for the inhumanities of this century?

Lack of Proper Relationship with God

Human imperfection and the influence of Satan and his demons exist because man lost a proper relationship with his Creator, God. Sound proof of this is found in this fact: Whenever God's laws, as found in the Bible, are ignored, the problems mount. The Bible, for example, sets forth commands against sexual immorality. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) What happens when these commands are ignored? There are increases in cases of venereal disease and in the number of unwanted pregnancies, broken homes, separations and divorces.

Without God's guidance, men as a whole have stumbled in the dark. Even those trying to do God's will are limited by their own imperfections and by this system.

What we humans really need is an arrangement whereby we can come into perfect unity with our Creator. We need to be freed from inherited weaknesses and imperfections as well as their painful consequences—sickness, old age and death. No man, organization or nation can provide this needed liberation. Does this mean that our situation is hopeless? Or, can we be freed from all our serious problems?

One Who really Cares About Mankind

ONLY a person having superlative wisdom could solve the many serious problems plaguing humankind. He would also have to care deeply about us, wanting to bring relief.

There is abundant evidence that such a one exists. The earth is too well suited for the continuance of life to attribute its marvelous properties, as some do, to a 'chance combination of many improbable events.' Observed Frank Allen, a biophysicist: "The adjustments of the earth for life are far too numerous to be accounted for by chance." Consider:

Each day deadly radiation emanates from the sun, and an estimated 200 million meteors plunge toward the earth. How can life continue despite these apparent hazards? An invisible shield—the atmosphere

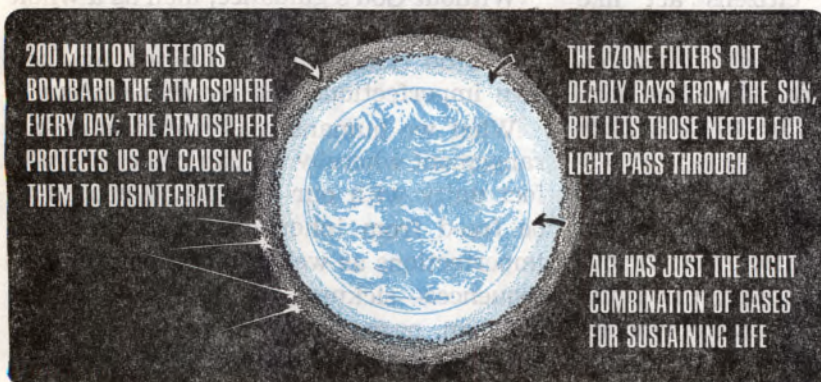
—protects life on earth. A thin layer of ozone gas filters out most of the sun's harmful rays but permits beneficial ones to pass through. Most of the meteors are burned up in their descent through the atmosphere. Very, very few ever reach the ground.

What about the gases forming the atmosphere? In themselves, some of these gases are deadly. Even life-sustaining oxygen could be dangerous. Were the concentration of oxygen in the air much greater, fires would start much more readily and would be far harder to control. The atmosphere, however, consists of just the proper mixture of gases for sustaining life. A mere accident? Hardly!

Then there is water. Without it, life on earth would be impossible. Nutrients in the

soil would be valueless if they could not be assimilated by plants. However, because water is available and nutrients in the soil readily dissolve in it, life can exist.

Impressive, too, is the fact that the provisions for sustaining life are not skimpy but generous. All around us



Does not the earth itself give evidence of having been designed by One who cares?

there are variety and beauty, things that appeal to the eye and the ear as well as to the senses of touch, smell and taste. While man's imperfect systems often prevent our benefiting fully from earth's bounties, we must agree with the words of the apostle Paul: "God . . . furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment."—1 Tim. 6:17.

Moral Guidance—More Evidence

of God's Care

Another outstanding evidence of God's care is man's being endowed with moral capacity, the faculty of conscience. That faculty serves to restrain us from harming ourselves and fellow humans. It makes us realize that we need others and that we should respect their rights and be concerned about their welfare. Think how much worse conditions would be on earth if humans had no conscience, if even such things as murder, assault, robbery and theft were accepted as normal and proper.

The conscience, however, must be trained in harmony with right principles if it is to provide sound guidance. This is so because it can both excuse and accuse.

Speaking of those without the written law of God, the Bible says: "Whenever people of the nations that do not have law do by nature the things of the law, these people, although not having law, are a law to themselves. They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused."—Rom. 2: 14, 15.

If wrongly influenced by environment, local customs or false religious views, the conscience can excuse even serious wrongs. The case of Saul, who later became the faithful apostle Paul, illustrates this. He went out with murderous intent against the disciples of Jesus Christ, thinking that he was thereby serving God.—Acts 9:1, 2; Gal. 1:13-16.

Clearly, then, a dependable standard is needed to help the conscience to assess matters properly. Because of his caring about mankind, Jehovah God provided such a standard in written form. This standard, contained in the Bible, is based on love.—Rom. 13:8-10.

THE BASIS

FOR

SOLVING MANKIND'S PROBLEMS

MANKIND'S sinful condition and the resultant problems came about through the loss of a proper relationship with God due to our forefather Adam's disobedience. The basis for solving the many serious problems facing us therefore must be a provision whereby we can regain the position of per-

fect sonship that Adam enjoyed prior to his transgression. We must be brought into perfect unity with the Creator. As the One

who really cares about us, Jehovah God has already laid the basis for this.

To understand what he has done, the reasons for it and why his arrangement will free mankind from weaknesses and imperfections, we must look at matters from his standpoint. The Bible reveals that God is righteous and "holy," pure to the superlative degree. (Ex. 39:30; Ps. 89:14; Isa. 6:3; John 17:11) Therefore those who are sinful, imperfect, unclean or impure cannot on their own merit enter into an approved relationship with him. (Col. 1:21) Only by having their sins atoned for or covered over can they do so. The arrangement for making atonement for sins would have to be in full harmony with God's righteousness and holiness. His intelligent creatures should be able to recognize the justness of God's arrangement. To appreciate what was involved, we need to go back to the very start of the human race.

The Bible tells us that when the first man Adam transgressed God's law, he sold himself and his unborn offspring into slavery to sin and death. (Rom. 5:12-19; 7:14-25) All the descendants of Adam thus came to be in need of release. Justice required the payment of a price.

To illustrate, a father might misuse his assets and incur a tremendous debt. Should his creditors be required to ignore his debt to spare his children from suffering? After the father's death, would it be right to let the family get deeper and deeper into debt without ever having to be concerned about reckless spending? Would this not have a bad effect even on persons not directly involved, emboldening them to waste their own or other people's assets?

How could matters be set straight if the children were infected with their father's ways and prone to waste assets and resources? How could the debts be paid off

and the children be aided to overcome their weaknesses?

Someone outside the family would have to step in and care for the debts. Then, in the case of the children who gave evidence of really wanting to avoid their father's course, this outsider might assume responsibility for any debts they incurred until such time as he is able to help them to overcome their weaknesses.

This is similar to what Jehovah God purposed for bringing about the release of mankind from enslavement to sin and death. The first step was making provision for the payment of the redemption price. What was the price? Adam had grossly misused his asset, his perfect human life, forfeiting it by rebellion against God. He thereby lost perfect human life for his descendants. The redemption price for his offspring, therefore, had to be of a value corresponding to that which was forfeited. This would be in harmony with the principle of justice found in the Mosaic law: "Soul will be for soul."—Deut. 19:21.

None of Adam's descendants could provide that valuable price, as none possessed perfect human life. The Bible says: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite)."—Ps. 49:7, 8.

Jehovah God, however, provided that valuable price in the person of his own Son. He transferred that one's life from the heavenly realm to the womb of the virgin Mary. In this way, the child to which Mary gave birth, Jesus, came to be a perfect human son of God. (Luke 1:35; Phil. 2:5-7) The man Jesus Christ could therefore lay down his perfect human life in sacrifice.—Matt. 20:28.

When he did so, Jesus Christ furnished the exact price needed for ransoming or

buying the human race. However, for individuals to have their "debts" canceled or their sins forgiven on the basis of the atoning value of Jesus' sacrifice, they must take advantage of this provision on God's terms. Having supplied a legal basis for forgiveness of sins, along with requirements for having them forgiven, Jehovah God maintains his own righteousness when dealing with imperfect humans who sincerely want to serve him. In no way is he encouraging lawlessness.—Matt. 6:12; Rom. 3:25, 26; 1 John 1:9.

Already over nineteen hundred years have passed since the human race was purchased with the precious blood of Jesus Christ and since his resurrection to immortal heavenly life. (Acts 13:34-37) Yet humans are still dying. Why? Because God's time is yet future for applying the atoning benefits of Christ's sacrifice to the point of liberating mankind from imperfection. (Rev. 22:1, 2) Does this mean that God has done nothing further to set the human race free from its weaknesses and disabilities?

A Government

THAT WILL

Free Mankind

FOR some nineteen centuries Jehovah God has been preparing a government that will bring relief to sinful, dying mankind. He has been selecting from among mankind the rulers in that government and bringing them into unity under his Son as head. (Eph. 1:9, 10) The prospect before such ones is resurrection to immortal heavenly life, to serve as king-priests. (1 Cor. 15:42-54; Eph. 1:3-23; Rev. 20:6) Along with Jesus Christ, these king-priests will administer the atoning benefits of Jesus' sacrifice and liberate humankind from enslavement to sin and death. Billions now dead will be included among those to benefit from their services upon being restored to life.—Acts 17:31.

What assurance do we have that the rule of Jesus Christ and his associates will have none of the undesirable features of man's governments? Why can we have

faith in the ruling body that God has been selecting for so many centuries?

When you think in terms of human rulership, you may have little confidence in any government's having the answer to our many problems. Throughout history, social standing, rank, military prowess, fame, wealth or the like have often determined who ruled. In many lands even the most qualified person would have a hard time gaining a high office without the support of strong political parties and generous campaign contributions. Men have been unable to devise a system whereby they can make sure that the persons put into office will be of such integrity that they cannot be corrupted or influenced to use their position for selfish ends.

Tested, Qualified Rulers

What about the selection of king-priests in God's government, his heavenly king-

dom? The manner in which persons attain a position of rulership in that Kingdom is altogether different from what has been true of the world's governments. The Bible clearly shows that social standing, education, rank, worldly fame, money and the like will not buy a place in that government. (1 Cor. 1:26, 27) No one can campaign for the position. The individual must be tested for the office. Under difficult circumstances, he must prove that he is a person of integrity and more concerned about the welfare of others than his own. (Acts 14:22; 1 John 3:16-18) Jehovah God, who can read the motivations of the heart, is the One who determines whether the individual measures up to the needed qualifications.—1 Sam. 16:7; John 6:44; 2 Thess. 1:11; Rev. 22:11-15.

Consider what the chief one of this ruling body, Jesus Christ, had to undergo. As the only-begotten Son of God in the heavens, he had everything. "Though he was rich," says the Bible, "he became poor." (2 Cor. 8:9) Voluntarily he gave up his high position in the heavens to become a man, and learned obedience to his Father under unfavorable circumstances. He suffered much, finally dying on an executional stake like a criminal of the worst kind. (Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 5:7, 8) Because of what he experienced while on earth, Jesus Christ really understands the needs of humans and can deal compassionately with them.—Heb. 2:17, 18.

As a man, Jesus Christ demonstrated depth of concern and love for people. He willingly and eagerly came to the aid of those in distress. (Matt. 14:14; Mark 6:34) He also proved that he was fully capable of solving the serious problems facing mankind. Empowered by God, he healed the sick, crippled and deformed; restored sight to the blind; unstopped the ears of the deaf; opened the mouths of the speechless; miraculously provided food for thou-

sands, and even raised the dead. These things really happened. They are recorded by eyewitnesses.—Matt. 11:5; 14:16-21.

As for those associated with Jesus Christ in rulership, they cannot be like men who promise much but, upon getting into governmental office, fail to keep their promises. The Bible says of those who will be in heaven with Christ: "No falsehood was found in their mouths; they are without blemish." (Rev. 14:5) As did Jesus Christ, they must prove themselves to be unselfish and self-sacrificing, being willing to die for their Christian brothers.—1 John 3:15-18.

In the case of human governments, rulers often do not really understand the problems of their subjects. But this is not so with the men and women whom Jehovah God has chosen over the past nineteen hundred years. As a group, they have come from all backgrounds and walks of life. There is not a trial or problem common to humans that some of them did not have to face. They experienced verbal and physical abuse, misrepresentation, hatred and even violent death. (John 15:19, 20) Despite their own weaknesses and imperfections, they succeeded in maintaining an approved standing before God. Knowing what it means to suffer as men and women, they can truly sympathize with imperfect humans and render needed help.

As immortal spirit persons, they will also have the *power* to assist humankind. Death will not be able to cut short the beneficial services of any of them. They will have ample time to bring the human race to perfection. The Bible shows that God has set aside a period of a thousand years for this task.—Rev. 20:6.

According to God's Word, Jesus Christ and his associate king-priests will be using earthly representatives to assist them in their vital work. (Ps. 45:16) What kind

of persons will they be? The King Jesus Christ would certainly never use arrogant, self-seeking men. He willingly died for humankind in expression of his deep love and would, therefore, never tolerate anyone as his representative who would seek to exploit others for personal gain. Jesus' attitude will be like that of ancient King David, who said: "I will not tolerate one who is conceited and arrogant. I look to the trustworthy in the land to be my associates. He who walks the path of integrity, he shall work for me."—Ps. 101:5, 6, *New Berkeley Version*.

Certain Liberation

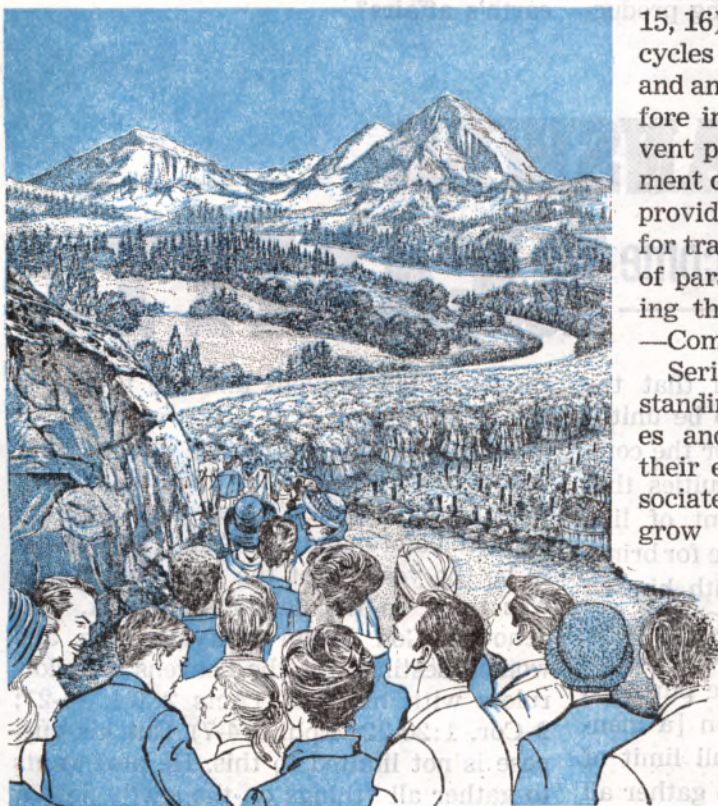
from Serious Problems

The qualifications of Jesus Christ, his associate king-priests and the Kingdom's

earthly representatives guarantee that the welfare of all who love righteousness will be safeguarded. They will not tolerate the development of a greedy commercial system based on competitive profit making. Nor will they allow anyone to interfere with a balanced distribution of food and other necessities. All mankind, not just the few, will experience freedom from want. With reference to the abundance then to be shared by all, the Bible says: "Jehovah of armies will certainly make for all the peoples . . . a banquet of wine kept on the dregs, of well-oiled dishes filled with marrow."—Isa. 25:6.

What about pollution and man's present mismanagement of earth's resources? The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ, in his pre-human existence, worked alongside his Father in creation. (John 1:3; Col. 1:15, 16) So he understands the various cycles responsible for sustaining plant and animal life. As King, he can therefore impart knowledge that will prevent pollution, as well as mismanagement of earth's resources. He can also provide man with the guidance needed for transforming the earth into a state of paradisaic loveliness and for making the best use of its productivity.—Compare Genesis 1:28; 2:15.

Serious family problems, misunderstandings and hurts due to weaknesses and imperfections will come to their end as Jesus Christ and his associate king-priests aid humans to grow to perfection. This will also result in removing all other problems stemming from inherited sin, including old age, sickness and death. By means of the Kingdom in the hands of his Son, God "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourn-



God's kingdom will soon make this earth a paradise

ing nor outcry nor pain be anymore.”
—Rev. 21:4.

No one will then need to fear becoming a victim of crime, war, injustice or oppression. Everywhere people will be learning the ways of peace. (Isa. 2:4) All will be treated fairly. Speaking prophetically about Jesus Christ’s handling of matters, the Bible tells us: “He will not judge by any mere appearance to his eyes, nor reprove simply according to the thing heard by his ears. And with righteousness he must judge the lowly ones, and with uprightness he must give reproof in behalf of the meek ones of the earth.”—Isa. 11: 3, 4.

Never again will mankind face the fierce competition, frustrations or monotony that often accompany work in this old system. People will find pleasure in doing produc-

tive work, knowing that they are in no danger of seeing everything come to nothing through adversity. The language used by the prophet Isaiah reveals that there is a God-given basis for this conviction. We read: “They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating. For like the days of a tree will the days of my people be; and the work of their own hands my chosen ones will use to the full. They will not toil for nothing.”—Isa. 65:21-23.

God’s kingdom by Christ is indeed the answer to man’s many problems. It alone can bring about conditions of peace, security and justice for all. But when will that kingdom take over complete control of earth’s affairs?

When **THE ANSWER** Will Become **REALITY**

THERE can be no question that the entire human race needs to be united so that all can work together for the common good, and overcome difficulties that take away from the enjoyment of life. Happily, Jehovah God has a time for bringing all things into harmony with himself through his Son, Jesus Christ. Of this, we read in the Bible: “It is according to [God’s] good pleasure which he purposed in himself for an administration [a managing, a stewarding] at the full limit of the appointed times, namely, to gather all things together again in the Christ, the

things in the heavens and the things on the earth.”—Eph. 1:9, 10.

Note that this gathering into a unity with Christ started “at the full limit of the appointed times,” that is, a time appointed beforehand by God. This proved to be the year 33 of the Common Era. It was then, on the day of Pentecost, that Jehovah God began unifying men and women destined for the heavens as fellow rulers with his Son. (Acts 2:1-4, 14-21; 2 Cor. 1:20-22; Eph. 2:4-7) But his purpose is not limited to this. He also wants to gather all “things on the earth” into a perfect unity with his Son.

Why in Our Generation

Since the initial stage of this unifying under Jesus Christ began at God's appointed time, should we not also expect this to be the case with the final unifying of "the things on the earth"? When we look at the present problem-racked, divided world, is it not obvious that this unifying is desperately needed right away?

Truly we are living in a period of history unlike any other. One date, 1914 C.E., stands out as the beginning of this time of unprecedented violence, uncertainty, disunity and mounting problems. Little wonder, then, that historians generally speak of 1914 as a "turning point." Writes Colonel R. Ernest Dupuy:

"In 1914 the political structure of the society of nations, teetering on the pinnacle of power balance, came shivering down like a house of cards. Before World War I ended, three great empires had dissolved in the bloodbath, obliterating with them the last decadent vestiges of the Holy Roman Empire, while a new force in world power structure was slowly rising on the leverage provided by the doctrines of Karl Marx. . . .

"World War I was a significant milestone on the highway of world events. It marked the end of one epoch and the beginning of another."

Long before the outbreak of the first world war, sincere Bible students, now known world wide as Jehovah's Christian witnesses, called attention to 1914 as the starting point of tremendous trouble for the present ungodly world. They did so on the basis of Bible chronology and prophecy. With the start of World War I, many people recognized that what these Bible

students had been proclaiming was not something to be treated lightly. On August 30, 1914, the *New York World*, in its magazine section, stated:

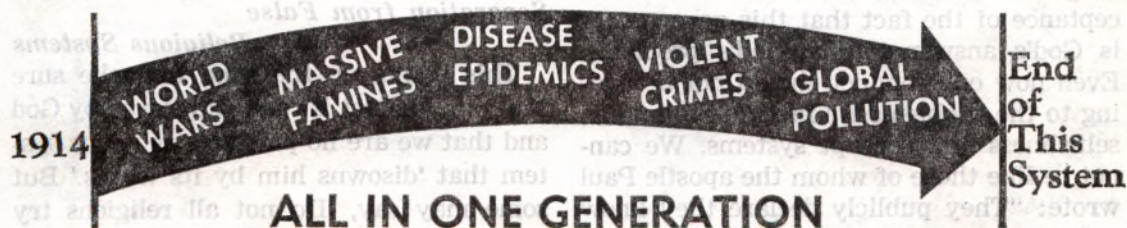
"The terrific war outbreak in Europe has fulfilled an extraordinary prophecy. For a quarter of a century past, through preachers and through press, the 'International Bible Students' . . . have been proclaiming to the world that the Day of Wrath prophesied in the Bible would dawn in 1914. 'Look out for 1914!' has been the cry of the hundreds of travelling evangelists who, representing this strange creed, have gone up and down the country enunciating the doctrine that 'the Kingdom of God is at hand.'"

Events that have taken place since then, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy, confirm that 1914 marked the start of the "last days" for the present system of things.

Well-informed men have a deep sense of foreboding and fear regarding the future. On September 5, 1974, for example, Secretary-General of the United Nations Kurt Waldheim observed that there is an "almost universal sense of apprehension" about where the world might be heading. He was greatly disturbed about the feelings of "helplessness and fatalism" accompanying this fear.

Certainly, the situation today has proved to be just as Jesus Christ foretold: "On earth nations will stand helpless, not knowing which way to turn . . . men will faint with terror at the thought of all that is coming upon the world."—Luke 21:25, 26, *New English Bible*.

What do these developments indicate about the future? Within the lifetime of many who witnessed the start of the "last



days" God's devoted servants will experience a grand liberation. After telling about the fear and anxiety among nations, Jesus Christ continued: "When all this begins to happen, stand upright and hold your heads high, because your liberation is near. . . . Look at the fig-tree, or any other tree. As soon as it buds, you can see for yourselves that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all this happening, you may know that the kingdom of God is near. I tell you this: the present generation will live to see it all."—Luke 21: 28-32, *NE*.

So, then, the time for God's kingdom to take over all of earth's affairs and to bring about a perfect unification of mankind under Christ is drawing very near. This means that everything in opposition

to that grand unification must be removed, including the Devil and his demonic hordes. The King Jesus Christ will be the chief one to crush all opposition, paving the way for the start of mankind's rehabilitation, having the atoning benefits of his sacrifice applied to them.—2 Thess. 1:6-10; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:2, 3.

Thus all the perplexing problems facing mankind are about to be solved permanently and in a way that will truly benefit lovers of right. Would you not like to be among those to enjoy the grand liberation that God's kingdom by Christ will bring about? If so, you will certainly want to take positive action. Identify yourself as being a loyal supporter of God's way for unifying "the things on the earth." But you may wonder, How can I do this?

WHAT CAN

You DO NOW?

YOU and your loved ones may soon witness the end of all serious problems facing mankind. The time is fast approaching for the King Jesus Christ and his angelic forces to destroy the present problem-racked system of things. Open to all is the opportunity of gaining the blessings that God's kingdom by Christ will thereafter shower upon mankind.

There are, however, requirements for being among the loyal subjects of that kingdom. More is needed than mental acceptance of the fact that this government is God's answer to mankind's problems. Even now our conduct should not be adding to the problems we face due to human selfishness and corrupt systems. We cannot be like those of whom the apostle Paul wrote: "They publicly declare they know

God, but they disown him by their works, because they are detestable and disobedient and not approved for good work of any sort."—Titus 1:16.

Separation from False

Religious Systems

This points up the need to make sure that our conduct is really approved by God and that we are no part of a religious system that 'disowns him by its works.' But some may say, 'Do not all religions try

to help people lead upright lives?' True, the religions of the world do not as a regular practice directly teach people to be dishonest, immoral or hateful. Yet, why is it that the majority of people usually feel no more secure in doing business with a man having a religious affiliation than with one having no such affiliation?

Have you found that many religious people are just as corrupt as many persons not belonging to any religious organization, and at times even more so? Some may claim that the churches of Christendom and other religious systems are doing all they can but that the people are simply not paying any attention. Yet what do they do in the case of those refusing to live by right principles? Do not such ones usually remain in good standing as long as they give financial support? In Christendom, are steps taken to correct clergymen who openly excuse sexual immorality and perversion? Are they at least relieved of their responsibilities so that they will not influence others in the wrong way?

The Bible clearly shows how to handle those who refuse to maintain proper conduct despite all efforts to help them. Under inspiration, the apostle Paul wrote to Christians at Corinth: "In the letter that I wrote you I told you not to associate with immoral people. What I meant was that you should not associate with a man who calls himself a brother but is immoral, or greedy, or worships idols, or is a slanderer, or a drunkard, or a lawbreaker. Don't even sit down to eat with such a person. After all, it is none of my business to judge outsiders. God will judge them. But should you not judge the members of your own fellowship? As the scripture says, 'Take the evil man out of your group.'"—1 Cor. 5:9, 11-13, *Today's English Version*.

Do the churches of Christendom with which you are acquainted clean out people

who persist in following a wrong course? Do you feel that God could approve a religious system that failed in this regard? So would it be reasonable to stay with a religion that has adopted the attitude of the world and failed to help people to conform to God's ways? Surely a person could not serve God and be part of a system that does not uphold his good principles. Then, too, would not sticking to such a system be an act of disloyalty to God and Christ, a failure to submit to their commands?

Identifying God's True Servants Today

As has been pointed out in the previous article, God's purpose is to gather persons into a unity under his Son Jesus Christ. (Eph. 1:9, 10) Does this not show that in these "last days" there must be a group of devoted Christians on earth who are enjoying such unity? In harmony with God's will, they should be busy in helping others to be united under Christ by conforming to God's Word.

Jesus Christ revealed how his true followers could readily be identified. Addressing his faithful disciples, he said: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35) Note that this kind of love is wholly unselfish, self-sacrificing.

Have you observed this kind of love in the religious organizations with which you are acquainted? Do they keep free from the very things causing today's problems? Are they pointing to God's kingdom as the answer to man's problems, and does their way of life show this? Or, are they caught up in this system's selfish, competitive spirit, and do they promote the world's ways? Are these religions really a strong

force for helping people to overcome tribal, national and racial prejudice? Do their members enjoy unity earth wide and avoid involvement with the world's conflicts?

What about the group of Christians known as Jehovah's witnesses? Do they share in the conflicts of the world? Do you hear of their participating in riots, revolutions or other uprisings? Have you not rather observed that they are no part of the world, refusing to engage in activities that foster nationalistic pride or tribal, national or racial prejudice? Growing numbers of people have come to appreciate that Jehovah's witnesses are quite different from many claiming to be Christian.

Likely you have noted that Jehovah's witnesses try to maintain exemplary conduct and show love for one another. But you may feel that they should be more concerned about the problems people are facing now—hunger, sickness, poverty and the like. You may feel that they should undertake extensive charity drives. Actually, there is a Biblical reason for your not hearing much about their charitable works. Jesus Christ told his followers: "When you practice charity, your left hand must not know what your right is doing, so that your charity will be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."—Matt. 6:3, 4, *New Berkeley Version*.

Hence Jehovah's witnesses do not solicit money and other material things from people and then take credit for the good deeds such contributions make possible. As was true of Jesus Christ, their main concern is to give spiritual aid to all whom they possibly can. (Luke 4:18-21) When a crowd of his fellow countrymen were looking for him because of the bread he had miraculously provided for them, Jesus Christ said: "Work, not for the food that

perishes, but for the food that remains for life everlasting." (John 6:26, 27) While material giving may bring temporary relief, spiritual giving can aid people to enjoy the best way of life now and to put themselves in line for benefiting from the permanent solution to man's problems that only God's kingdom by Christ can provide.

Does this mean that Jehovah's witnesses ignore others' material needs? Not at all. They recognize that material giving is a feature of true worship. Says the Bible: "The form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself without spot from the world."—Jas. 1:27.

Many people have been able to see how Jehovah's witnesses do that, coming to the aid of needy ones, particularly in times of disaster. The legal agencies used by Jehovah's witnesses, the Watch Tower Society and its branches, are in direct contact with all their congregations throughout the earth and can, therefore, quickly organize relief measures. That is why, when earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and other disasters strike, Jehovah's Christian witnesses are assured of immediate help from their brothers. At the same time relief measures undertaken in their behalf put them in position to assist other needy ones in their community.

The appreciative comments of a resident of Louisville, Kentucky, illustrate this. Relating what happened after a tornado ripped through the Crescent Hill area on Wednesday, April 3, 1974, he writes: "Outstanding were those Jehovah's Witnesses who came with their crews of men equipped with chain saws and trucks early Thursday morning to assist many of the victims, including me. They literally cut

their way through and cleared a path through three streets (Bayly, Birchwood and Kennedy) to help evacuate some of the victims and open up the streets for other cars and trucks. These men are skilled in the building business but left their jobs to offer their services free of charge. They worked with such organized precision that onlookers seemed astounded."

Take Action Now

Jehovah's witnesses in your area would like to have you investigate whether they measure up to what God looks for in those whom he approves. They would gladly assist you to increase your Bible knowledge. If you are not now having a free Bible study in your home, we encourage you to have such a study at a time convenient for you and your family.

Others may ridicule you for accepting a Bible study in your own home. As you start to apply what you learn, you may experience the fulfillment of the following words from the Bible: "Because you do

not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you." (1 Pet. 4:4) But, remember, such persons cannot solve even their own problems, let alone remove this present system and bring total liberation from human imperfections and their painful consequences. Far better it would be to face ridicule, even abuse, for the sake of God's kingdom than to maintain the favor of men by sticking with an ungodly system that is doomed to failure.

Do not delay in taking steps to gain accurate Bible knowledge and to conform your life to it. "Taste," says the Bible, "and see that Jehovah is good." (Ps. 34:8) Find out for yourself how living in harmony with God's Word leads to the best way of life even now. You, too, may be among those to see the end of the present ungodly system. Even grander it would be for you to witness how God's kingdom will thereafter solve completely and for all time the many problems that have for centuries plagued the human race.

The Bible Brought Results

● One of Jehovah's witnesses in the southern part of the United States accepted the job of driving a racially integrated school bus. Her first day on the job some of the students began calling out derogatory names to others. At that she stopped the bus, took out her Bible and began to read to them Acts 17:26: 'God made from one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth.' After reading the text, she explained that there was 'no need for them to start anything because all had come from that one man and hence all are one.'

This was apparently brought to the attention of the school superintendent and so he asked the Witness about the situation. When the matter was explained to him, he replied: "That is very good. We never had a bus driver do that before."

Later, as a circuit assembly of Jehovah's witnesses was to be held, the Witness arranged for a substitute to drive the bus. This substitute was amazed at how well behaved the students were. She commented that they were the best-behaved children she had ever driven for and asked the Witness what she had done to them.

How You Can Cope *with* RISING PRICES



AS I shook from my hands the clinging suds of dishwashing detergent, I asked myself: "How *can* I cope with rising prices?"

I nearly pushed aside the question, thinking: "That's one for the experts and/or laboratory testing." Then it occurred to me: "But *I am* an 'expert.'" Nearly fifty years, bridging the Great Depression, world conflicts, and including life on many continents, have furnished me a wealth of experience at a most important craft—housewifery, and this in the "laboratory" of my own home.

Could this experience help me to meet the challenge of today's runaway economy? Could I learn from past *mistakes* as well as successes? I decided to organize my experiences at coping with high prices. Let me share some of them with you.

I Recall Childhood Lessons

I looked down at the sink. It was now free of dishes and the water had drained off. But there, staring me in the face, was a mass of dense suds that refused to disappear. I recalled a lesson that I had learned in earliest childhood: Do not waste. But how can a person avoid losing a residue of soapsuds? I thought of two things that had helped me in the past:

(1) Do not guess; measure. I should have scorned the snipped-off top that permitted me to squirt the detergent into the sink. Measuring it out always results in savings.

(2) Reuse detergent water. In South America, for example, laundering proceeds from loads of less-soiled clothes to dirtier ones, each time reusing the suds. Finally the same soapy

water is used to scrub the floor.

Does that sound extreme to you? It is vital in countries where the price of soap and detergents is nearly out of reach.

Food is something else that many people waste. My grandmother used to sing a little rhyme that went this way: "Do not throw upon the floor the crumbs you would not eat; for many a little boy or girl would *think* them quite a treat."

One of my first household chores was to scrape the bowl clean of all batter when baking was going on. Nothing was to remain in the bowl. I now appreciate that I was learning an attitude that helped our family to survive the Great Depression of the 1930's. It can help you to cope with rising prices today.

Make the Most of What Is Available

Instead of throwing out leftovers, why not make the most of food that you have on hand? For instance, one day's menu might call for meat loaf, baked potato and coleslaw (raw cabbage salad). The remainder of the cabbage can be cooked for a later

meal; and the leftover meat loaf can be broken up, "doctored" with tomato sauce, and used on a pizza, in Spanish rice or as a meat sauce to pour over spaghetti. There is no need to buy more meat for that purpose.

Many do not realize that much of what people throw into the garbage can is the secret that has made French cooking famous the world over. Yes, elegant French "cuisine" often begins with a pot of "stock" made tasty by snips of meat trimmings, vegetable tops and bones that find their way into the soup pot instead of the garbage.

I recall a "special sale" that I once came across on a poor quality of chuck. While it was about twice the price of bare soup bones, I saw in it greater nutrition and opportunities for several meals. I cubed some of the cooked meat for soup. Half of the remainder went with a small amount of gravy (using some of the soup stock for base, thickened) to produce a pseudo-Swiss steak. Another part went with leftover barbecue sauce. Few persons would guess that these three recipes came from a common source, and at good savings.

Could a Varied Menu Help?

Have you ever considered that a change of menu from time to time might help you to cope with rising prices? This is true particularly if you prepare dishes in which meat is used rather sparingly. Besides saving you valuable food dollars, your working up such a foreign menu will probably delight your family.

The staple of the Orient, for example, is rice. The Chinese find their principal sources of protein, not in meat, but in eggs and vegetables. Meat and fish usually serve just as condiments or in sauces to give variety and flavor. I once observed a Chi-

nese cooking class where the recipe called for eight ounces of thinly sliced beef. Because the students wanted to sample the results, the recipe was doubled. Combined with vegetables, those sixteen ounces of beef made enough delicious sauce to provide a tasty small bowl of rice with a little meat for all twenty-seven students.

Skillful Buying Can Reduce Costs

Skillful buying is indispensable if you are to cope with rising prices. Whether you frequent a modern supermarket or the boat stores of Bangkok, you can save money when you buy.

A valuable principle for buying is: Do not buy more than you need. Instead of pounds or kilos, buy by ounces. Do not feel that you must purchase a certain amount of something just because it is prepackaged in that way. There is nothing wrong with summoning the storekeeper so that you can buy a reduced amount, say $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of ground beef or just one apple, if that is all you need. Buying in this way not only stretches out a limited food budget, but also safeguards you from using more than is necessary simply because it is on hand.

Do you know of stores that sell day-old bakery products? Bread purchased there is usually half the price it was twenty-four hours earlier.

Are you aware that you can buy meat in the same way? Search out the far reaches of the packaged-meat counter. A housewife visiting California reduced her meat bill by one third when she discovered a day-old bin marked "Manager's Specials." Do not let the dull gray color of some day-old meat discourage you. That does not necessarily mean that it has gone bad. When in doubt about meat, rely on your nose.

What, though, if your market does not have a day-old meat section? Why not approach the manager personally and ask about the opportunity to buy such commodities at reduced prices? You may be surprised to find out that he already has a following, and will be glad to include you.

A couple in Memphis, Tennessee, came upon an interesting way to save food money. Realizing that they gleaned most of the news from television, they canceled their subscriptions to the newspaper and to magazines that were not being read. They noted, however, that on a certain day grocery-store advertising included printed discount coupons on "leader" items, goods sold at a discount to "lead" people into the store. As these were often commonly needed goods, buying that day's paper at the newsstand rates more than paid for its cost.

Could a Garden Help You?

When food prices obliged a young couple in Indianapolis to cut expenses, a small vegetable garden seemed to be just the thing. But they lived in an apartment. What could they do?

After looking at the property of a neighbor, the young man suggested an arrangement: "If I mow your lawn throughout the summer, will you allow me to dig up that section over there to plant vegetables?" It was agreed; and that garden produced a bounty for them and for their friends and even for the man with whom they made the agreement. Could something similar help you to cope with rising prices today?

If you are thinking of growing some food, you may find helpful the technique of "multiple cropping." What is that? Instead of planting all of your seed at once, you may find it beneficial to plant it at one- and two-week intervals. Thus when one crop is ready for harvesting, another is well along the way. Harvesting mature crops leaves the field open for planting still others. Crop-production experts in the Philippines have refined multiple cropping to the extent that one acre has produced thirteen tons. This procedure can increase the yield of your vegetable garden too.

Do You Really Need That?

You have probably noticed that most cooks used finished or semifinished products as building blocks for their meals. Is it really necessary to go to that expense? While store-bought bread, canned sauces, packaged desserts and TV dinners lighten the work load, they also increase your food bill. Willingness to "start from scratch" when preparing food not only reduces costs, but brings with it a special satisfaction. The aroma of homemade bread baking in the oven and its distinctive flavor are things that no commercial product can duplicate. And it can be less expensive.

In many countries today advertisers continually pressure people to "buy," "buy," "buy." But do people really need all of the material things that are dangled before them? Do you need all of the things you now possess? These are good questions to ponder when thinking of coping with rising prices.

When a family of three in Indiana felt the squeeze of reduced buying power, they

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decided to "dial down" their living standard by selling their home and buying a smaller one at about half the price. They still have adequate living space; but their mortgage payments are a full \$100 a month less than before.

You can use a similar approach even in your present home. Wearing heavier clothing around the house and drawing drapes across drafty windows will save you money on fuel bills. Further savings will result if you switch from long-distance phone calls to writing letters. And instead of using air mail indiscriminately, why not send less-urgent correspondence by surface mail? Savings can accumulate quickly, as do expenses.

Another thing that you can do to cope with rising prices is to follow this important principle: Never borrow unless it is absolutely necessary. Of course, credit cards and charge accounts are a great convenience. And you may have been told that the cost of credit is, for instance, only 1½ percent after thirty days. But did you realize that that means 1½ percent *a month*? That is at least 18 percent a year. This is no way to defeat the rising cost of living.

I recall a TV commercial that purred generosity as it promised to loan the viewer \$5,000, payable over a thirty-month period at only 16 percent interest. Do you realize, though, that the borrower could be required to return as much as \$7,000 at that rate? Is it not much wiser to avoid buying on credit when possible?

Fruit "Drinks" or Juices?

■ Mothers once claimed that they bought "fruit drinks" for their families—not genuine fruit juices—because of their lower prices. Now that sugar costs have made the "drinks" almost as high in price as juice, it would seem that, even for economical reasons, juice would become much more popular. But not so. An article in *Women's Wear Daily* quotes a vice-president of one large grocery chain as saying: "Dopey mothers insist on buying the drinks instead of the juices."

A FAMILY Attack on High Prices

An important way of coping with high prices is to develop a *family attitude* toward the problem. How can you accomplish that?

Perhaps in your family, as in many North American homes, the children perform household chores for which they receive an allowance. However, must they be paid for helping out in the household? Is that in their best interest? Some youths also have employment outside of the home. But what motivates the children to do their work? Is it solely to have "their own" money to buy things for themselves? Such a self-oriented motive brings little benefit to the family as a whole. Parents may even consider it necessary to insist that the youths contribute to the welfare of the family, resulting in strained relations.

How much better for family members to develop an attitude based upon the time-tested Bible principle: "Let each one keep seeking, not his own advantage, but that of the other person." (1 Cor. 10:24) Following this principle, parents will not expect children to give up all their wages; and children will not wish to keep them all for themselves. What benefits result when family members work together for the benefit of one another! It makes for close-knit family life.

Coping with rising prices today indeed presents a challenge. But it is one that you can meet successfully if you are willing to make some adjustments in your way of life.—Contributed.

THE British Churches IN CRISIS



By "Awake!" correspondent in the British Isles

IS IT really correct to speak of a crisis for the churches in Britain? Outwardly one might not think so, for the traditional respectability of the churches in English life seems to have changed little; and some churches are well attended.

Yet British church leaders today continually speak of "crisis." For example, after a 1972 gathering of five hundred religious leaders in Birmingham, David L. Edwards wrote: "The conference was unprecedented, for the crisis it faced is without precedent. The recent statistics of decline in church attendance, membership and finance are alarming to anyone who is in any way involved in the organization of the Christian religion in Britain and Ireland, but most thoughtful observers expect worse statistics to come."

And things *have* gotten worse since then. What is the true condition of British churches today?

Declining Support

The results of a survey were interesting. It revealed that the Church of England claimed some 28 million baptized members. However, only about one third of this number, 9,514,000, were confirmed, and still fewer attended church services, with

a total of only 1,814,000 communicants at the peak Easter season. The so-called Free Churches (such as the Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians) are in similar straits.

Poor church attendance has given rise to another problem—unused church buildings. Many of those built in the last half of the nineteenth century are in a state of decay. The cost of restoring them is so high that some of these structures are beyond reclamation by the time all the decisions have been approved. Nicholas Adam, writing in the *Illustrated London News* for December 1973, noted what has happened to some prominent London churches. In an article entitled "Disappearing Churches," he reported that one is now a rehearsal hall for two London orchestras, another an Elizabethan theater, and others are used for storage. Many have vanished altogether to make way for development schemes and wider roads.

A report published in 1973 by the British Council of Churches lamented that these church buildings seemed "in many cases to be more of a burden than an asset." Really important matters were being overlooked as 90 percent of available resources went into buildings that were empty for 90 percent of the time.

An example of decaying church struc-

tures is Wesley's Chapel, the most important place of worship for thirty million Methodists throughout the world. The gallery is collapsing; woodworm and dry rot threaten the structure. One day a heavy coping stone fell, narrowly missing a group of visitors. Therefore, a notice now reads: "Keep Out."

"Unity at Any Price"

Another area of crisis that afflicts British churches concerns unity. After many years of discussion and dialogue, a hoped-for union between Anglicans and Methodists was rejected by the General Synod of the Church of England on May 3, 1972. Yet it appears that the desire for unity is so strong with some that they are willing to make large-scale compromises to achieve it. In the *Church Times* of November 23, 1973, Dr. Cuthbert Keet observed:

"In a misguided desire for unity, basic articles of the Catholic Faith are being undermined by those in high authority. Fundamental tenets are being lightly discarded in the mad search for unity at any price."

Why the desperate quest for unity? Perhaps it is because the very existence of some bodies is threatened if they do not unite with another group or denomination. Does it seem that British churches will ever achieve unity? With regard to the Church of England, a well-known clergyman, Dr. Leslie Paul, said in an article entitled "The Church: Aid or Obstacle?":

"The period of darkness has come upon it and reunion movements of national significance are dead in England for a decade or two, for the Church of England no longer dare advance them, and no other communions would feel confident enough to initiate them. . . . it might very well be that the Church of England would prefer to die rather than to change. It throws itself into an anguish of nostalgia when serious proposals of reform disturb it. . . . Its decline is statistically predictable . . . if it does happen it may never be noticed."

Another Crisis—the Moral Decline

An important factor contributing to the decline of British churches is their attitude on morals. Under the heading "The Moral Crisis," *Crockford's Clerical Directory* had this to say: "It cannot be overlooked that the moral crisis is within the Church itself as well as in the nation at large. Standards of sexual behaviour which have been an accepted part of Christian teaching since New Testament times are now openly called in question by some of the clergy, not only in books . . . but on the radio and television, where millions of viewers and listeners are given the impression that the Church has now abandoned its moral standards."

It is well known that the conduct of many church members has bred contempt for anything called "Christian." Even the matter of smoking has contributed to this lack of respect. Writing in the *Norwich Churchman*, Professor C. M. Fletcher called for no smoking in public at the least. "If they do smoke in public," he remarked, "then it would seem that their religion is either divorced from the needs of their fellowmen or too feeble to enable them to free themselves from their slavery to the habit."

The Problem of State-appointed Bishops

The Church of England is still 'by law established,' which means that its administration, property and doctrine are controlled by the public laws of the land. The State appoints its bishops, and even quite small changes in worship have to be approved by Parliament.

The present arrangement is that the names of two or three clergymen who are recommended as bishops are submitted to the Prime Minister by the Archbishop. During the twentieth century five commissions have reported on this question. The most recent report decries this sys-

tem as "obviously inappropriate, because bishops . . . are the representative leaders of a religious society, while the State is secular and the Prime Minister may not be a member of the Church in which the bishops are to serve."

While some consultation takes place with the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Church of England, a clergyman from Essex denounced this as merely intended to pull the wool over the eyes of a "stupid and complacent church."

Further protest followed the decision of a leading gambling firm to start a 'religious book' for betting on who would be the next archbishop. Interestingly, when representatives of this firm approached certain church dignitaries about this, they met with very little objection.

"A Sign and Foretaste of Death"

These are but a few of the symptoms of crisis that worry British church leaders today. It is no wonder that a recent conference of college principals recommended reducing the number of theological colleges from the present seventeen to ten.

Many are convinced that it is too late to do anything to assure a healthy future for Christendom's churches in England. One who feels this way, Presbyterian minister Ernest Marvin, writes:

"It is no use thinking that we can tinker with the structure of the church as it has developed, or failed to develop, over the centuries. She is dying. The pity is that before her final spasm she will have had more needless time, talent and money spent on trying to keep her alive. . . . Far from the church being a sign and a foretaste of the kingdom, she is more akin to a sign and foretaste of death, from which there is no resurrection."

Christianity Very Much Alive in Britain

The desperate situation of the British churches does not mean that the people of Britain are uninterested in God. These

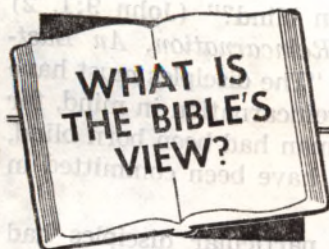
very church crises have made scores of thousands of Britons hungry for knowledge of the Word of God. When Jehovah's witnesses call at their homes offering to study the Bible with them free of charge, they willingly respond. This has caused a problem of a different type—an attendance explosion at Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's witnesses.

Since 1967 the number of baptized Witnesses in Britain has increased some 50 percent, from 50,000 to over 75,000. During the sixteen months ending in late 1974 they started sixty-five new congregations, an average of about one each week. They have no crisis in meeting attendance either, for in their 1,000 congregations attendance at meetings regularly exceeds by 30 to 40 percent the number of baptized Witnesses.

Instead of closing down buildings for religious worship, Jehovah's witnesses have found it necessary to open at least 150 new Kingdom Halls during the past five years. In some cases older buildings were remodeled, including some former churches. Frequently, though, it was necessary to put up completely new structures.

Commenting on the work of one congregation in building a new Kingdom Hall, a reporter for the *Newmarket Journal* wrote: "Much of the work on the new place of worship has been carried out by members of the congregation in their spare time at weekends . . . Neither do they hold whist drives or fetes to raise money—all funds come from voluntary donations."

Thus, while British churches are in a serious state of crisis, many people are seizing the opportunity to gain an accurate knowledge of the Bible. Would you enjoy doing that? No matter where you live, Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to conduct a free Bible study with you in your home. Feel free to contact them.



Have You Ever Lived Before?

DID you ever meet someone for the first time, only to feel that he was an old acquaintance? Or, have you traveled to a new location and yet apparently recalled it very well? English novelist Charles Dickens said this about such an experience: "If I had been murdered there in some former life I could not have seemed to remember the place more thoroughly or with more emphatic chilling of the blood."—*Pictures from Italy*.

Experiences like these have caused some people to think that they have had previous lives. While their viewpoints vary somewhat, basically such individuals believe in reincarnation. They think that human creatures have souls that pass into other bodies after death occurs.

Reincarnation was taught in ancient Egypt, and a significant teaching of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras was transmigration of the soul. Today Buddhists and many Hindus believe in reincarnation, and it is gaining increased

acceptance in the West. Some believe that the Bible supports this concept. For that matter, Cyril Richardson, professor of church history at New York city's Union Theological Seminary, commented: "I would say that reincarnation is compatible with Christianity."

So, you may wonder: Does strange familiarity with entirely new acquaintances and places prove reincarnation to be a fact? Do the Scriptures support this belief?

First, please consider the feeling that you may have had, that you already knew a person with whom you were newly becoming acquainted. Does this indicate that you knew that person in a former life? Well, have you ever mistaken one man or woman for another who is *now living*? Many individuals have had that experience because some contemporaries have similar mannerisms or even look almost identical. So, seeming familiarity with a new acquaintance is not proof of reincarnation.

Then, what about a new but apparently familiar place, perhaps a particular house? Does seeming familiarity with it mean that you lived there during a former life? No, the house may not even be old enough for that to be so. Moreover, many houses look very much alike. And, is it not true that scenery in some widely separated places looks very similar? Obviously, then, such similarities do not prove reincarnation to be a fact.

But we are not dependent upon mere deduction. When consulting the Bible, one nowhere finds the expressions "reincarnation" and "transmigration of the soul." As it is, if reincarnation did take place, the human soul would have to be immortal. Is it? Not according to the Scriptures, which say: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) As you can see, it is not said that God put an immortal soul in man. Neither here nor elsewhere in Scripture is anything said about an immortal soul as being separate and distinct from the human body.

The Bible does not say that the soul lives on when death occurs. Rather, it speaks of the deceased person as a "dead soul." (Num. 6:6) More pointedly, the Scriptures say: "The soul that is sinning—it itself will die."

(Ezek. 18:4, 20) That includes all imperfect humans who have died, for "who can say: 'I have cleansed my heart; I have become pure from my sin'?" (Prov. 20:9) Hence, the Bible shows that when a human dies, the soul dies.

What, then, is the condition of the dead? When man dies, "he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Ps. 146:4) The dead "are conscious of nothing at all," and there is neither work, nor devising, nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol, the common grave of mankind. (Eccl. 9:5, 10) Moreover, it cannot properly be said that animal souls transmigrate into humans. Why not? Because God's Word states: "There is an eventuality as respects the sons of mankind and an eventuality as respects the beast, and they have the same eventuality. As the one dies, so the other dies." (Eccl. 3:19) Yes, the dead, whether man or beast, really are dead.

Nevertheless, some people believe that Jesus Christ made statements supporting reincarnation. For instance, with reference to John the Baptist, Jesus once said: "Elijah has already come and they did not recognize him but did with him the things they wanted." (Matt. 17:12, 13) Did this mean that Christ was identifying John as the reincarnated Elijah? Certainly John himself knew he was not that Hebrew prophet, for when asked, "Are you Elijah?" he said, "I am not." (John 1:21) But, as foretold, John prepared the way before Jehovah's Messiah. "With Elijah's spirit and power," John urged the Jews to repent of their sins against God. (Luke 1:16, 17; Mal. 4:5, 6) So, when Jesus said "Elijah has already come," he was showing that John the Baptist fulfilled prophecy by doing a work like that of Elijah.

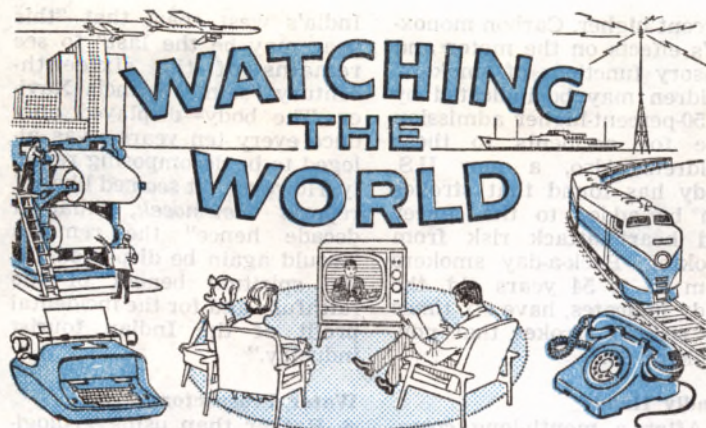
On another occasion, concerning a blind man, some disciples asked Jesus: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, so

that he was born blind?" (John 9:1, 2) Says the book *Reincarnation, An East-West Anthology*: "The disciples must have had the idea of reincarnation in mind, for obviously if the man had been born blind, his sin could not have been committed in this life."

Even if these particular disciples had not followed Jesus very long, were they thinking about transmigration of souls? Or, were they influenced by the Jewish Pharisees, who said that "the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies"? (Josephus' *Wars of the Jews*, Book II, Chap. VIII, ¶14) It is more likely that the disciples believed the Scriptures and knew that the soul is not immortal. Yet, since even a baby developing in the womb has life and was conceived in sin, they may have wondered whether such an unborn child could have sinned.—Ex. 21:22-25; Ps. 51:5.

In either event, Jesus' reply did not uphold reincarnation or any suggestion that the developing child sinned before birth. He knew that not all calamities befall persons because of sins they have committed, but that there is also an inheritance of human defects and imperfections from the sinful first man, Adam. (Job 14:4; Luke 13:1-5) So, before taking steps to effect a cure, Jesus said: "Neither this man sinned nor his parents." (John 9:3-7) Christ's answer did not support reincarnation, but harmonized with the Scriptural truth that the human soul is mortal.

It is evident, then, that you have never lived before. But Jesus did declare: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear [my] voice and come out." (John 5:28, 29) Not through reincarnation, but by restoration to life in the resurrection will dead ones live again. Why not ask Jehovah's witnesses for Biblical details about this marvelous provision of the Life-Giver, Jehovah God?



Religious Contrast

◆ Italy's largest Catholic magazine, *Famiglia Mese*, recently reported on the activity of Jehovah's witnesses: "There are in Italy about 45 thousand persons who follow the Bible precepts literally, do not smoke, refuse to serve in the army, do not take blood transfusions, and pay taxes scrupulously . . . Today the sect has real magazines, which are nice and even interesting (they are rich with news and articles from all over the world), prints small books which are up to date and also answer the most expert Catholic Bible scholars, distributes Bibles translated directly from Hebrew . . . With these methods, the Witnesses have had even enormous success . . . where the habitual Catholicism of the people actually hides a good quantity of religious ignorance."—February 1975, pp. 24-31.

Eliminating Jealousy

◆ Some have argued that the practices of "living together" without marriage and "open marriage," wherein mates allow each other sexual freedom, eliminate jealousy. Do they? A well-known family sociologist asserted that "open marriage has increased the number of persons coping with the experience of jealousy."

Writer Norman Lobsenz says in *Redbook* magazine that his research revealed similarly that unmarried couples living together "were deeply troubled by their unexpected jealous reactions." Good results never come from setting aside the Bible's high standard of morality.

Vatican Frugality

◆ Financial austerity has suddenly become the order of the day in the Vatican. Pope Paul vetoed the Vatican's 1975 budget, and demanded the preparation of a new, lower one. Proposed austerity measures reportedly include dropping lavish special services at St. Peter's Basilica, along with cars and chauffeurs. "Maybe we'll start to use car pools," said one cleric. Prices went up for meat, pasta, cigarettes and gasoline at the Vatican employee's special tax-free supermarket and gas station.

Military Waste

◆ It is often said that military spending boosts a nation's economy. A new book, *American Capitalism in Decline*, asserts just the opposite. The author shows that military spending since World War II has drained more unproductive capital funds (\$1,500 billion) from the economy than industry has invested in machinery and plants. Secondly, he notes

that the average manufacturing firm has 35 backup "overhead" employees for every 100 production workers. Yet defense contractors average almost twice as many (69.7) non-producing employees. Thus the *New York Times Book Review* observes: "It is hard to fault [the author's] statement" that military waste "elevates inefficiency into a national purpose, . . . disables the market system."

To Catch a Thief

◆ Museums and libraries world wide are experiencing a rash of thefts of often high-priced works of art and other items. The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry is no exception. Its director recently told of one case where a South American Indian arrow was missing. Where did he look for it? "This thing had curare (poison) on the tip—and when I notified the leader of a visiting church group of what it was, the arrow was back in two hours."

To Be Safe

◆ People who feel unsafe in our violent world can now purchase custom-made bulletproof vests, sports jackets and three-piece suits for about \$155 to \$295. A synthetic fabric, commonly used for radial-tire belting, is said to protect one from a high-powered pistol fired at close range. Bulletproof courtroom benches are the answer of some U.S. judges in Ohio to a recent wave of courtroom violence. Other judges say they feel safer with their own guns handy: "You can never tell when someone might try to take a shot at you."

Jobless Ph.D's

◆ Once upon a time having a Ph.D was a sure ticket to success in the academic world. But now the U.S. seems to be abounding with Ph.D's—there were 33,000 produced last year, compared with 10,000 in 1960.

"Still the Ph.D.s come," notes *The Wall Street Journal*, "with nowhere to go." Thus the Modern Language Association lists 202 possible job openings in its latest booklet. Every listed job, it is reported, draws at least 100 responses, and some get 700.

Leaders Ignore Warnings

◆ In spite of all the talk, are world leaders really going to solve the population and food problems? No, says columnist H. Peter Metzger in the *Rocky Mountain News*: "The world leaders have ignored the warnings and presumably will continue to do so until the most devastating catastrophe in human history is upon mankind—when it will be long past the time when anything can be done about it. Already launched are trial balloons of public acceptance of the tragedy. Consider the words of the president of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences, Dr. Philip Handler. 'From time to time,' he said, 'it is necessary that pestilence, famine and war prune the luxuriant growth of the human race.'"

Largest Known Object

◆ Canadian and Dutch astronomers report discovering what they claim to be the largest known object in the universe. It is a cloud of highly energetic particles surrounding a galaxy. The particles are said to stretch across more than 18 million light-years (one light-year is almost 6 trillion miles). This is about 180 times the size of our own Milky Way galaxy and 6 times as large as any previously known radio source.

Tobacco Perils

◆ An Israeli study reported in the British medical journal *Lancet* finds that babies of smoking mothers are admitted to hospitals 20 percent more often than those of nonsmokers. Their chances of bronchitis and pneumonia were 38

percent higher. Carbon monoxide's effects on the motor and sensory functions of smokers' children may be indicated by a 150-percent-higher admission rate for accidents to these children. Also, a new U.S. study has found that strokes can be added to the cancer and heart attack risk from smoking. Pack-a-day smokers from 45 to 54 years old, the study indicates, have six times the risk of strokes that nonsmokers do.

Deadly Hands

◆ After a month-long coma, a four-year-old New Jersey boy recently died, allegedly from the demonstration of a karate "training" blow. The karate instructor charged with the assault said he wanted to make the child "the world's youngest karate champion."

Resource Appetites

◆ The average American reportedly uses about twelve and a half tons of metallic and nonmetallic resources and over nine tons of fossil fuels each year. His energy consumption is almost double that of an average European, "the equivalent," says *Smithsonian* magazine, "of each citizen having 300 slaves working 24 hours per day."

"Saintly" Performances

◆ There are at least nine "saints" in Naples whose blood "liquefies" yearly, asserts the Italian magazine *Epoca*. "To what extent should one believe in . . . the supernatural of these liquefactions?" asks the writer. He cites another fifteenth-century "Saint," Bernardino, who spoke at that time of "too many drops of milk of the Madonna," preserved . . . a little everywhere." Bernardino reportedly said, "So much milk, our Blessed Madonna couldn't have had it, not even if she were a cow."

Travel advertisements warn potential pilgrims to Goa on

India's west coast that "this year may be the last" to see remains of the sixteenth-century "saint" Francis Xavier. The body—displayed only once every ten years—was alleged to be decomposing rapidly. However, "it seemed likely," reports *Newsweek*, "that a decade hence" the remains "would again be displayed for the spiritual benefit of the faithful—and for the incidental profit of the Indian tourist industry."

Water Prospectors

◆ Rather than using geological—or "divining"—methods, prospectors for water under the deserts of Soviet Kazakhstan are now putting the talents of desert ants to use. They merely find colonies of the insects and start digging. Desert ants live only where there is underground water, and tunnel as much as 100 feet down to get it.

Impartial Judging?

◆ Attractive plaintiffs can sway jurors in court, concludes a University of Michigan study. Simulated auto negligence trials used both attractive and unattractive plaintiffs. Nearly three times as many student jurors judged in favor of the attractive plaintiffs, and the average damage awards were nearly double. True justice will come only when the judging is not done 'by any mere appearance to the eyes.' That is what God's kingdom in the hands of Christ will bring. —Isa. 11:3.

Greater Blood Risk

◆ There has always been risk associated with blood transfusions. But now the dangers are compounding. Why? Because about 10 to 15 percent of the persons who receive transfusions produce an antibody; cross matching then becomes more difficult. This new antibody limits the number of future compatible donors. In some cases, Dr. Thomas Cun-

ningham, head of hematology at University Hospital in Saskatoon, Canada, says, more than one hundred units of blood may have to be tested before a suitable match is found.

Russian Baptists

◆ Sometimes Baptist Church members boast about how well their organization thrives in Communist Russia. But if they do better than some religious groups, why? One answer is supplied in a New York *Times* article discussion of Moscow's Central Evangelical Christian Baptist Church: "The immaculate church, with its wooden walls and pillars painted to resemble marble, is the showpiece of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians and Baptists, whose more than half a million baptized members carry out their witness under the scrutiny of Soviet authorities. The Bap-

tists within the council enjoy the state's tolerance—if not its blessing."

Surplus Churches

◆ Since April 1969, a total of 154 churches have been declared "redundant" or surplus by the Church of England; at least another 150 are being considered for the same classification. The number of redundant churches, it is estimated, may eventually reach somewhere between 500 and 3,000. Certain of the buildings are given away or rented at nominal cost to 'good causes.' And some are sold. The Church of England is said to have received 1,485,000 pounds (over \$3,400,000) from the sale of unwanted churches in the last two and a half years.

"Music" Can Hurt

◆ A study of Munich's three best orchestras revealed that 60 percent of the musicians

suffered adverse reaction from playing avant-garde music. The loud, unexpected electronic sounds were linked to diarrhea, stomach ulcers, heart problems and insomnia in the musicians.

Is It Worth It?

◆ Football (not to be confused with soccer) is America's most hazardous sport, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Each year it is estimated that hospital emergency rooms treat 300,000 injured players, 40 percent of them aged 15 to 19. About 20 die.

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Simple Churches

Since April 1969, a total of 124 churches have been declared "redundant" or surplus by the Church of England; at least another 150 are being considered for the same classification. The number of redundant churches is still rising, may eventually reach somewhere between 500 and 3,000. Certain of the buildings are given away or rented at nominal cost to "good causes." And some are sold. The Church of England is said to have received £485,000 pounds (over \$340,000) from the sale of unwanted churches in the last two and a half years.

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