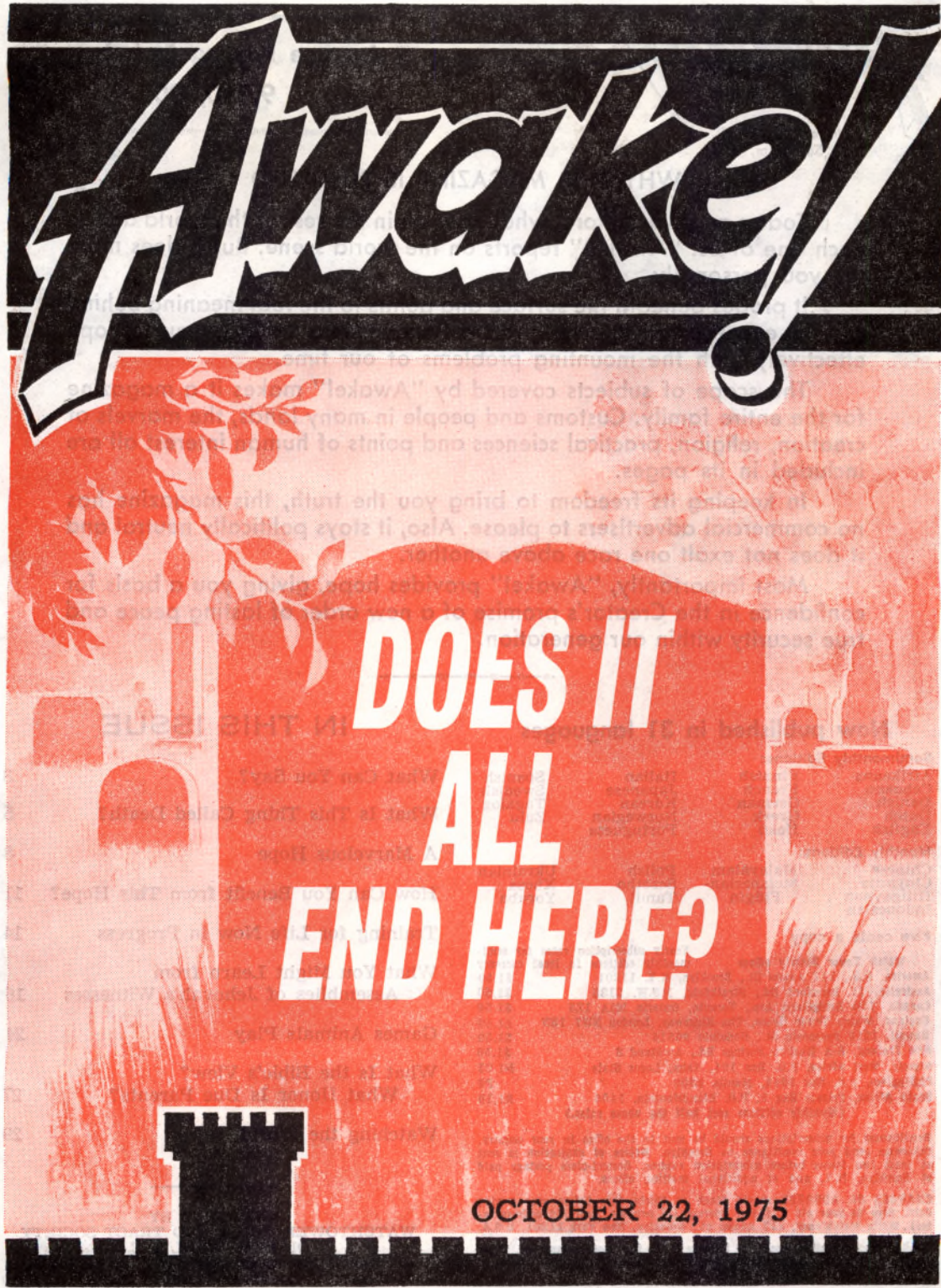
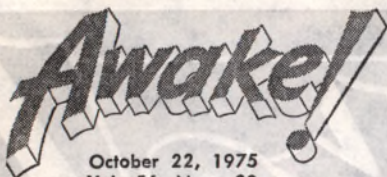


Awake!



***DOES IT
ALL
END HERE?***

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WHAT CAN YOU SAY?

PERHAPS you have a friend whose wife is dying of cancer. What can you say to comfort him? A young boy may be in great grief because his father has just died. You desire with all your heart to give comfort. Do you feel helpless? Or can you give the boy a real hope?

To give genuine comfort that really helps a bereaved one, you yourself must have a solidly based hope. You need factual, concrete answers to the questions that arise about death, for only the *truth* gives genuine comfort.

You need to know, first, the answer to the question, Where are the dead? You need answers to other questions too. Are those who have died now in heaven? Are they undergoing some sort of suffering? Are they in some shady world? Or are they actually dead? If so, are they gone forever? Is it logical that a person may live forty years or so, get a fine education, equip himself to accomplish something worth while in this world, then die? What a shame! What a waste!

What might you tell a sorrowing one? Should you say that death is an escape from an undesirable existence—that therefore the dead person is better off? This is of little comfort to the bereaved one. To answer correctly, a person must have a proper evaluation of life and know whether death is a friend or an enemy of mankind.



Life a Valuable Possession

In comforting bereaved ones a person must also realize that, generally, death is a mystery to them. One thing usually stands out: They are reluctant to accept death as ending it all. Should we regard this as unnatural, as a foolish, impractical attitude? No, it actually indicates normal, healthy thinking. King Solomon of old, who had riches and opportunity to seek life's desirable things and to observe all things occurring to humankind, good and bad, concluded: "A live dog is better off than a dead lion."—Eccl. 9:4.

Life is indeed valuable! Without it we have nothing. People naturally and rightly cling to life. The ancient Oriental man Job hopefully asked, 3,500 years ago: "Once a man is dead can he come back to life?" (Job 14:14, *Jerusalem Bible*) Life has many appealing facets, and though bad circumstances, poor health or other factors may bar a person from some activities, there are always other avenues that can provide a happy, satisfying life.

An example of what life can mean, even when a person can use only a limited part of normal human faculties, is found in the story of Helen Keller. She was less than two years old when an illness destroyed both her sight and her hearing. Cut off from the outside world! For the following five years, as she later said, she grew up "wild and unruly, giggling and chuckling to express pleasure; kicking, scratching, uttering the choked screams of the deaf-mute to indicate the opposite."

Then her father arranged for a teacher, a Miss Anne Sullivan, from the Perkins Institute for the Blind, in Boston. This dedicated young woman devised a sort of alphabet, spelling out words on Helen's hand. Soon Helen learned to connect words with objects and in three years could read Braille and write with a special type-writer. She graduated with honors from Radcliffe College in 1904, being accompanied in her classes by Miss Sullivan, who interpreted class discussions and lectures by touch.

Miss Keller then undertook, with great vigor, the work of helping the blind and deaf-blind. She gave lectures, appeared before legislatures, visited hospitals and wrote several books, bringing courage to thousands. Her desire to help the handicapped gave her a purpose and made her life well worth living. She lived to be nearly eighty-eight years of age. Certainly Miss Keller did not feel that she would have been better off had she died while young.

Helen Keller and thousands of others who use their lives well contradict the idea that death is a "friend." Nearly everyone does all he can to stay alive even when death is certain. Additionally, most people have a fear of death. This is fear, not only on the part of the individual who may die, but also on the part of his family and friends. Even doctors and nurses who attend those who are dying experience fear.

Commenting on this, Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross says:

"Seventy-five per cent of our population dies in institutions where they are surrounded by staff who usually want to avoid their problems and get away from them as quickly as possible. And this is because all of us have such an overwhelming fear of death.

"Whatever we may intellectualize this fear as, what it really amounts to is the fear of a catastrophic destructive force bearing down on us and there is nothing we can do about it."

It is clear that the Bible reveals death, along with old age, to be an enemy. (1 Cor. 15:26) The fear of death has held people in bondage. For fear of death—by starvation, for example—people have become thieves and cannibals. Some have been induced to commit wrongs to avoid being killed. Some have been forced to do things against their will because of threats that their relatives living in a dictatorial land would be killed.—Heb. 2:15.

But what if death could be eliminated? Would this make life dull, monotonous? Who has ever said: 'I feel so well today I wish I could die'? Is it not true that there are so many good and enjoyable things to do that a lifetime is not long enough to do them, even if a person lived forever?

The Bible says that "time indefinite [God] has put in [mankind's] heart." (Eccl. 3:11) Man can envision and plan for the future. Too, there is always a hope that some way will be found to abolish death. Would a loving Creator put such emotions into his intelligent creatures with no hope of fulfillment? This does not seem reasonable. Furthermore, if there is hope for the abolition of death, it is also logical that the Creator would inform people of his purpose to fulfill that hope. But before considering this matter, let us see what death is, and how and why it came about.

What Is This Thing Called **DEATH?**



MANY people consider that death is but the door to another life. They believe that the kind of existence a person will enjoy in the next life depends upon how he lives now. On the other hand, there are those who think that death rules out all possibility of ever living again.

In view of such conflicting ideas about death, can one be sure about what happens when a person dies? Certainly if we had a revelation from man's Maker about this, we could be sure. The Bible claims to be just that revelation. Hence, what it tells us about death should put an end to any uncertainty about the subject.

The opening book of the Bible, Genesis, informs us that the first humans, Adam and Eve, had set before them the prospect of endless life. Their continuing to live depended upon perfect obedience to their Maker and God, Jehovah. To test their obedience, Jehovah God required that they refrain from eating of the tree of knowledge of good and bad. It was vital that Adam and Eve be tested in this way. Only by having proper respect for God's right to set the standard of right and wrong,

good and bad, could they instill the same respect in their offspring.

It was in connection with the command about not eating fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and bad that God told Adam: "In the day you eat from it you will positively die." (Gen. 2:17) Then, when Adam ate of the forbidden fruit the sentence of death was pronounced upon him in these words: "In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground; for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return." (Gen. 3:19) Accordingly, the death of Adam meant his ceasing to live and eventually returning to the elements of lifeless dust from which he had been created.

What About the Soul?

But was there some invisible part of Adam—a soul—that continued living after he died? If Adam had a soul, there might well be a basis for a "yes" answer. But did he? Describing the creation of Adam, the Bible reports: "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.

Note that nothing is said about Adam’s having a soul. Rather, he “*came to be a living soul*” when his lifeless body was animated with the “breath of life.” So, then, Adam was himself a living soul, and that soul died. Ezekiel 18:4 confirms this understanding of matters by saying of the soul: “All the souls—to me [God] they belong. As the soul of the father so likewise the soul of the son—to me they belong. The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.”

After carefully investigating the belief about the soul’s being a separate part of man that survives the death of the body, many persons have learned that this is not a Biblical teaching. They have found that this concept has its origin in Grecian philosophy.

Le Monde of November 8, 1972, (p. 13) quotes French author and philosopher Roger Garaudy as saying that Greek philosophy “led Christianity astray for centuries.” We further read: “The dualism of soul and body and the consequent myth of immortality of the soul . . . are Platonic theories that have nothing to do with Christianity or the Bible.”

Professor Claude Tresmontant, in his book *Le problème de l’âme*, observes: “It is absurd to say, as has all Platonic and Cartesian tradition, that man . . . is composed of a soul and a body. . . . One should not say, ‘I have’ a soul, because this would make the possessor different from the soul he possesses. One should say, ‘I am a living soul.’”—Pp. 180, 181.

In a publication used for Evangelical instruction, Ernst Busch acknowledges: “The teaching that death is the separation of body and soul found its way into the

church from Grecian philosophy. . . . Man cannot be divided into body and soul so as to make death affect the body but not the soul. The entire man is a sinner, the entire man with body and soul goes into death according to the teaching of Paul in 1 Cor. 15.”

The way in which the Bible describes the condition of the dead provides additional evidence that the soul does not survive the death of the body to continue conscious existence. Lamenting his pitiable state, faithful Job exclaimed: “Why from the womb did I not proceed to die? . . . by now I should have lain down that I might be undisturbed; I should have slept then; I should be at rest.” (Job 3:11, 13) At Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6 we read: “The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all . . . Also, their love and their hate and their jealousy have already perished.”

Note that the Scriptures liken the unconscious state of the dead to sleep. Just as one who is sound asleep remains unaware of what may be going on around him, so, too, the dead are not conscious of anything. Giving support to this is what has been observed by persons who were revived after suffering what would have been a fatal heart attack. Asked how it felt to be dead, a doctor who had this experience some years ago in Cleveland, Ohio, answered: “You just don’t feel. There is no thought, no memory.”

Other people whose hearts stopped beating claim to have experienced blissful sensations. Concerning such persons, this doctor concluded: “I’m sure they must be confused. They are talking about how they felt during the period between consciousness and unconsciousness, during the period of semi-coma. When your vital functions cease, you just don’t feel.”

No Literal Torment

Since the dead are not conscious of anything, they cannot experience any physical torment. Nothing conscious that could be subjected to literal pain survives the death of the body.

Then, too, Adam was not told about any place of torment. His punishment for disobedience was to be, not torment, but death. If, in reality, his punishment was to have been eternal torture in a fiery hell, would it not have been an injustice on God's part to have withheld this information from the first man?

God, however, cannot be accused of any injustice in this regard. Death was indeed the full penalty for Adam's transgression and for all his offspring who have inherited death-dealing weaknesses and imperfections. The Bible says: "The wages sin pays is death," not torment. (Rom. 6:23) Also, "he who has died has been acquitted from his sin." (Rom. 6:7) If, though, a person continued to be tortured after his death, he could not be spoken of as having been "acquitted from his sin." He would then still be paying for his transgressions.

Furthermore, the idea that God submits the souls of wicked persons to eternal torment is contrary to the inward sense of love and justice inherent in man. For example, if you heard that a father tormented his son by pouring boiling water on him, would you feel that this was proper punishment? Regardless of how bad the son may have been, would it be easy for you to have tender feelings for that father? Would you not, rather, have a revulsion of feeling at what the father did? Is it not also true that only fiendish persons would want to see others tortured?

The fact that people generally abhor the torturing of humans and even of animals, regardless of what these might have done, should be given due weight. According to

the Bible, man was created in "God's image." (Gen. 1:27) This means that he was endowed with Godlike qualities. Hence, people's general abhorrence of cruel torture has its source in God-given qualities passed on through the first man Adam to all members of the human family. In view of this, how inconceivable it is that the One responsible for our general revulsion toward torture would submit humans to the worst tortures imaginable for all eternity!

The Bible reveals that God does not want to see bad come to any of his creatures. He finds no delight in having to punish anyone. We read: "He does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) "I do not take any delight in the death of someone dying," is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. "So cause a turning back and keep living, O you people." (Ezek. 18:32) If this is how God feels about those who deserve punishment for wrongdoing, how could he at the same time look approvingly upon the terrible anguish of those confined to a place of everlasting conscious torment? Manifestly he could never do so, for "God is love." —1 John 4:8.

Since all people die, how, then, are corrupt, hateful persons punished? The writer of the Bible book of Hebrews compares their fate to what happens to an unproductive field that is overgrown with thorns and thistles: "It ends up with being burned." (Heb. 6:8) By being burned over, that field ceases to exist as an unproductive area covered with thorns and thistles. Accordingly, the punishment of those who willfully persist in going contrary to God's ways is everlasting destruction. They will remain dead forever.

But what of those who are seeking to

do what is right? The writer of the letter to the Hebrews continues: "In your case, beloved ones, we are convinced of better things and things accompanied with salvation . . . God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name."—Heb. 6:9, 10.

Clearly, then, there must be a hope for humans who have not become so set in

bad ways that they could not be helped to change. Their death simply could not mean that all has ended for them. Otherwise their situation would be no different from that of those who persist in callously disregarding the rights and welfare of their fellowmen. This logically gives rise to the question, What hope is there for billions now dead?

A MARVELOUS HOPE

WILL death continue for all time to claim victims and occasion expressions of grief? Or, is there any hope that death will be abolished and that those now held fast in its grip will be released?

Since Jehovah God gave life to the first human pair, Adam and Eve, it logically follows that he can also restore to life those who are now sleeping in death. This is what the ancient patriarch Job believed. On account of the intense suffering he was enduring, he directed these words to God: "O that in Sheol [gravedom] you would conceal me, . . . that you would set a time limit for me and remember me! . . . You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands you will have a yearning."—Job 14:13-15.

Basis for Hope

By reason of God's creating Adam and Eve and endowing them with the ability to procreate, humans are the 'work of God's hands.' As descendants of sinner Adam, they are imperfect and subject to

death. Yet God does not want to see the human family as a whole reduced to the lifeless dust from which he created the first man Adam. He yearns or longs for the day that he has determined upon for restoring billions of dead humans to life.

That we might have confidence in his ability to resurrect the dead, Jehovah God at times empowered men to do this. He also inspired men to provide a dependable record of past resurrections. This record is contained in the Bible. What do we learn from it?

The Hebrew prophet Elijah raised the only son of a widow who lived in the city of Zarephath. (1 Ki. 17:21-23) At Shunem, in the northern part of Israel, Elijah's successor Elisha resurrected the only son of a prominent hospitable woman.—2 Ki. 4: 8, 32-37.

Many centuries thereafter Jesus Christ brought great happiness to a number of persons who had lost loved ones in death. Jairus, a presiding officer in a synagogue near the Sea of Galilee, had the joy of see-

ing his daughter raised from the sleep of death. A widow at Nain, to the southwest of the Sea of Galilee, saw her only son come to life on the very bier that the bearers were carrying to a tomb outside the city. Mary and Martha of Bethany, not far from Jerusalem, had their brother restored to them after he had been dead four days.—Mark 5:22, 35, 41-43; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:38-45.

Later, two of Jesus' apostles were instrumental in restoring dead persons to life. The apostle Peter resurrected Dorcas (Tabitha) at the Mediterranean coastal city of Joppa. (Acts 9:36-42) And at Troas, in the Roman province of Asia, the apostle Paul raised Eutychus from the dead.—Acts 20:6-12.

The most remarkable resurrection of all time was that of Jesus Christ. That resurrection was thoroughly established as fact. Upward of five hundred witnesses saw the risen Christ. So overwhelming was the evidence that the apostle Paul pointed out that denial of the resurrection meant denial of Christian faith as a whole. He stated: "If, indeed, there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised up. But if Christ has not been raised up, our preaching is certainly in vain, and our faith is in vain. Moreover, we are also found false witnesses of God, because we have borne witness against God that he raised up the Christ, but whom he did not raise up if the dead are really not to be raised up."—1 Cor. 15:13-15.

Kinds of Resurrections

The resurrection of Jesus Christ, however, was very different from that of all others who were restored to life during the first century C.E. and earlier. He experienced a change in nature. The Bible tells us that he was "put to death in the flesh" but "made alive in the spirit." (1 Pet. 3:18) Only those chosen from among mankind to be associate rulers with him share in a resurrection like his—a resurrection to immortal spirit life in the heavens. Regarding these, the Bible says: "Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years."—Rev. 20:6.

Note that this kind of resurrection is called the "first resurrection." Hence, there must be yet another resurrection involving the billions of dead humans who will come under the rulership of Jesus Christ and his associate king-priests. De-



How grand it will be when one's own family members return from the dead!

scribing this latter resurrection as he saw it in a vision, the apostle John wrote: "The sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades [gravedom] gave up those dead in them."—Rev. 20:13.

But where will all those dead persons be raised? They will be resurrected to life on earth, as were those whom the Hebrew prophets, as well as Jesus and his apostles, resurrected. That there will be a resurrection to earthly life is also confirmed by what was revealed to John about the changed conditions to exist on earth among mankind. We read: "The tent of God is with mankind . . . And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Rev. 21: 3, 4.

But might the removal of death from humankind pose untold problems due to overcrowding of the earth? No. Why not? Because God's original purpose was that the earth be filled, not overpopulated. (Gen. 1:28) So we can rest assured that the One who has the ability to restore the dead to life will have no difficulty in seeing to it that this earth will continue to be a delightful home for mankind.

What Will Be Resurrected?

Raising people from the dead is indeed a stupendous miracle. Since what humans are as persons appears to be inseparably linked with their physical bodies, many people find it hard to understand how resurrection is possible. In most cases, nothing remains of the dead person's physical organism. The corpse may even have been burned or perhaps devoured by birds, fish or beasts. So how can those who are resurrected really be the same persons who died?

The creation of Adam makes it clear that what made him a person was what God did. The elements from which Adam

was made had no personality. However, when Jehovah God energized the lifeless body composed from elements of the ground, Adam became a person with a distinct personality. The possession of the spirit of life that God put in the lifeless body when energizing it made Adam a living soul.—Compare Genesis 1:21, 24 regarding "soul."

What makes Adam's descendants the personalities that they are is not the substance making up their bodies but the hereditary estate that is transmitted within that substance—an inheritance consisting of the qualities, traits and abilities that distinguish the possessors from others as persons. Furthermore, even in life the human body constantly undergoes change. The molecules making up a person's body today are not the same ones as those that made up his body some seven years ago. Nevertheless, though his substances are different as to molecules, the person is still the same person. Why? Because the bodily organs and features are still there despite the gradual change of the molecules; even the fingerprints have remained the same.

Clearly, then, resurrection does not depend upon the preservation of the same molecules. The resurrected person can, in fact, even be of a different substance, as is the case with those raised to spirit life in the heavens. Of the heavenly resurrection, the apostle Paul wrote: "What you sow is not made alive unless first it dies; and as for what you sow, you sow, not the body that will develop, but a bare grain, it may be, of wheat or any one of the rest; but God gives it a body just as it has pleased him, and to each of the seeds its own body. . . . And there are heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly bodies is one sort, and that of the earthly bodies is a different sort. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corrup-

tion, it is raised up in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised up in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised up in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised up a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15: 36-44) However, for the resurrected ones to be the same *persons*, they must bear the personal identity of their former life.

That intangible thing—the traits and qualities making organized matter a distinct person—rests with God, and he is able to put that identical personality within the resurrection body. That is why the resurrected person is not merely a copy. He is the identical person, possessing every mental and emotional trait that made him what he was before his death.

This explains why Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body." (Matt. 10:28)

True, men can take away life, causing the body to become lifeless. But they cannot take away a person's God-given title to be a living soul. They cannot blot out anyone from God's provision for them to be awakened from the sleep of death. Only God can cancel a person's opportunity of living again as a soul. When that is the case, the person is totally destroyed. Even if the identical molecules making up a person's body could be assembled, these would be of no value without the God-given title for one to live again. God alone can supply that needed life-force.

Accordingly, the raising of the dead is possible only because God exists. While not spelling out the details, the Bible provides enough information for one to have a basis for solid faith in the resurrection. You can personally benefit from this marvelous hope both now and in the future. How?

How Can You Benefit ***from*** ***THIS HOPE?***

WHO would you say is better off—the person who views death as ending everything or the one who has the firm conviction that the dead will be resurrected?

The person without hope has nothing on which to fall back. At most he can look forward to some seventy or eighty years of life. When death strikes his family, he has nothing that can give him comfort. To him, the loss is permanent. He may be able to express sympathy to other mourning ones, but he cannot point them

to an encouraging hope. Since he himself feels that there is no hope for the dead, he may be tempted to do everything within his power to keep himself alive even if that resulted in injury to his fellowmen.

Far different it is with those who believe the Bible's teaching about death and have faith in the resurrection promise it sets forth. They know for a certainty that all in gravetombs will be awakened from the sleep of death. This knowledge has also freed them from the fears prompted by

false teachings about the dead. Knowing that the dead are unconscious and have no remembrance, those who believe God's Word have no fears about dead loved ones' suffering in a place of temporary or permanent torment. They realize that the dead can neither help nor harm them and, therefore, they are freed from any fear of the dead.

Truly, if you embrace the resurrection hope as your own, you can benefit from it even now. Should death rob you of a dear friend or relative, your conviction that he or she will be raised to life will prevent you from giving way to the kind of grief experienced by those lacking this hope. You will also be able to give real comfort to those sorrowing over the loss of loved ones.

The conviction that there is a resurrection safeguards one from living just for the present. Instead of a person's living by the precept "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die," the resurrection hope will serve as an incentive to one to live in a way that is pleasing to God. —1 Cor. 15:32.

Faith in God's power to raise the dead also liberates one from the fear of having one's life cut short by violent means. God's Word points out that Jesus Christ was instrumental in emancipating "all those who for fear of death were subject to slavery all through their lives." (Heb. 2:15) Because of being afraid that they might be executed if they did not comply with the demands of superiors, throughout the centuries many persons have sacrificed principle and gone along with things that they knew to be wrong. However, the person who has unshakable faith in the Bible's promise of a resurrection does not injure his conscience in this way. Is not the preservation of a clean conscience another fine benefit coming to those who believe in the resurrection?

Besides your gaining benefits now, your faith in God's ability to raise the dead puts before you the prospect of welcoming back the dead or personally being among those raised to life. But your being among those to witness the realization of the resurrection hope calls for your meeting certain requirements.

Not all who have died will attain to a resurrection from the dead. Jesus Christ indicated that there was no hope for those who sinned against God's spirit. He said: "Every sort of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the spirit will not be forgiven. For example, whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the holy spirit, it will not be forgiven him, no, not in this system of things nor in that to come." (Matt. 12:31, 32) There being no possible forgiveness for sin against God's spirit, all who make themselves guilty of such sin pay the full penalty for it by remaining dead forever.

Compared with the billions who have died, few of mankind have become guilty of a deliberate practice of sin that God views as being unforgivable. Still, the fact that such sin is possible should make one aware of the folly of taking risks by deliberately disregarding God's commands. Faith in God's promise of a resurrection from the dead restrains one from committing the unforgivable sin, thereby losing out on life for all eternity.

An Advance Start

There is yet another benefit of living in a way that reflects faith in the resurrection hope. It involves getting an advance start in the way of righteousness. How can this be?

The resurrection of "both the righteous and the unrighteous" to life on earth will give both groups the opportunity to at-

tain to perfection as children of God. (Acts 24:15) All can avail themselves of the help that will be given by the heavenly kingdom in the hands of Jesus Christ and his associate rulers. The person who served God wholeheartedly prior to his death and resurrection will find it much easier to submit to the rule of Jesus Christ and his associates. On the other hand, the greater a person's stubbornness was in resisting God's will, the harder it will be for him to change and to grow to perfection.

Jesus Christ pointed this out when he told unbelieving fellow countrymen: "Men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; because they repented at what Jonah preached, but, look! something more than Jonah is here. The queen of the south will be raised up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but, look! something more than Solomon is here." (Matt. 12:41, 42) Commenting on a city that would stubbornly refuse to pay attention to the message of truth, Jesus said: "It will be more endurable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on Judgment Day than for that city."—Matt. 10:15.

The resurrection of the dead, both righteous and unrighteous, makes possible a Judgment Day, during which humans can show whether they really want to submit to God's kingdom by Christ. In the case of Jesus' fellow countrymen who heard his preaching and witnessed his miracles but then rejected him, this will be very hard. They will have to swallow their pride, acknowledging that they were wrong in rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. It will certainly require humility for them to submit to the rule of the one whom they did not want as king.

The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the other hand, never had the

opportunity that was set before those who saw Jesus Christ's powerful works. In their case, pride and stubbornness will not be as great an obstacle as for the unbelieving Jews of the first century C.E. The better response of the resurrected Ninevites and that of the "queen of the south" will reprove the resurrected generation of Jesus' fellow countrymen who actually heard him preach and teach. In the past, the Ninevites in the time of Jonah and in the days of the "queen of the south" responded favorably to what God's servants said. Hence, it will be easier for them to submit to the reign of God's chosen king, one toward whom they never had prejudice.

Similarly, persons today who willingly and gladly consider what God's Word has to say and then apply it in their lives will find it much easier to make progress during the Judgment Day. Thus what persons do now can affect their everlasting future.

Any who may rebel against divine rulership after being raised from the dead forfeit the prospect of eternal life. They will experience the "second death," from which no recovery is possible. Concerning "second death," we read at Revelation 20:14, 15: "This means the second death, the lake of fire. Furthermore, whoever was not found written in the book of life was hurled into the lake of fire."

Considering that a proud, stubborn disposition could lead to one's losing life everlastingly, we should want to get an advance start in the way of righteousness. How sad it would be if a person were to lose out on everlasting life by failing to take advantage of opportunities now to cultivate fine qualities—qualities that would make it easier for him to comply with God's requirements during Judgment Day!

But you may ask, What can I do to get an advance start in the way of righteousness?

TRAINING FOR LIFE NOW IN PROGRESS

GOD always makes preparation for any new arrangement that he brings about. This is true of the new order of things that he will establish after he destroys the present system that has brought so much distress. God will have a people survive who are prepared to live according to Bible principles and who are able to teach and direct others—those resurrected—in the way of truth. These will constitute a foundation for a “new earth,” a new human society.—Rev. 21:1; Isa. 51:16.

Accordingly, a program of training for life is now in progress. Those being trained are voluntarily taking and enjoying this training. Of what does it consist?

It is a training through study of the Bible. Being a work God is having done, it is free, based on the principle Jesus set forth for his apostles when he said to them: “You received free, give free.” (Matt. 10:8) For persons desiring to look into God’s Word, Jehovah’s witnesses conduct free Bible studies in their homes. Just how is this done? With the use of your own Bible, a quiet, intelligent consideration is made of what God requires of those who want life. A six-month course usually equips a person to know who God is, what his purpose is toward the earth,

why man was created and how sin and death came upon mankind, how this will be removed and how those who now order their lives according to God’s instructions can confidently look forward to everlasting life on a beautiful, unpolluted earth.

An Educational

Program for Life

Those who love God also love people. Jehovah’s witnesses enjoy getting together. For this reason, and also for spiritual upbuilding, they arrange to gather every week at their meeting places called Kingdom Halls. These halls are clean, neat, attractive places where you can “feel at home.” They are not elaborate and imposing, as many churches are. You may ask, ‘What would I be getting into if I attended one of these meetings?’

First, you would find a friendly group of persons there. You could sit down peacefully to hear a simple, clear Bible talk or discussion free from emotional outbursts. You could *learn*. The reason for this is that Jehovah’s witnesses go to their Bible meetings for education, an understanding of the Bible. They believe that this is also what you want. Perhaps you are weary

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Hinduism—Can It Meet Your Spiritual Needs?**
- **How to Make Retirement Rewarding.**
- **I Was the Mayor.**

of the constant appeals for money, the unavoidable passing of the collection plate, the cold, formal atmosphere and, particularly, the failure to hear the Bible discussed, as is the case in most of the churches. Or you may have been turned away by the emotional displays and the efforts to make a convert of a visitor.

But when you attend a meeting of Jehovah's witnesses, you are their *guest*. You are treated as a guest, warmly welcomed and seated. Your rights and beliefs as a person are respected. What you hear said you can weigh in your own mind. If you have questions, those attending are happy to discuss them, using the Bible. You are never asked to join, or to contribute. You may be asked if you would like to have someone call at your home to study the Bible with you, because Jehovah's witnesses love their neighbors. They have found what they consider to be most priceless—the truth. It is good news that they want to share with others.

You will find that the meetings are beneficial for the entire family. Much is said about keeping the family united, how all the members of the family can be happy, the responsibilities of the husband, wife and children, proper discipline, and so forth. In some of the meetings the children, as well as the adults, share in commenting. And in one meeting, the congregation's school, anyone associated may enroll. The enrollees are assigned subjects for short talks to be presented before the audience, or, in the case of women, to be presented as a conversation with another individual, the audience listening. This is fine training that enables the

person to express his or her faith to others, to answer Bible questions, to conduct Bible studies, and, in the case of the men, to give public Bible talks. Many of the younger ones have profited from the training in this school so that they have advanced remarkably in their public-school classes in language and in speaking ability. —1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

The whole purpose of all these meetings is to enable each one to apply the Bible in everyday affairs, as a *way of life*, and to assist others to learn of the good news and to follow this way. They have benefited from the hope that God holds forth and they want others to benefit. They live, to the best of their ability, according to Bible principles now, and, as a result, they enjoy a fuller life even at the present time. But more than that, they have the sure hope of resurrection, looking forward to seeing those whom they love coming back from their graves to get on the way to life. They want training now to help these loved ones. They cordially invite you also to receive this training for life.



At weekly meetings of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, hundreds of thousands assemble to benefit from instructive Bible teaching

What You Might Learn FROM ASSEMBLIES OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

THIS past summer Jehovah's witnesses in all of the United States held ninety-eight "Divine Sovereignty" District Assemblies. All together, 990,256 persons attended.

Another twenty-one of these assemblies in Canada and the British Isles had a total attendance of 226,514. And hundreds of thousands more persons will be attending the same four-day assembly program in scores of other lands.

Were you in attendance at one of these assemblies? Whether you were able to attend one or not, what can you learn from looking at *all* the assemblies? For instance, why were millions of persons drawn to these gatherings? What attracted them? You can learn the answers, and much more, by considering an overall description of what occurred. Let us, then, reflect on what was seen, heard and felt at these assemblies. And note, please, whether these things relate to your life and happiness.

Desirable Surroundings

No doubt you prefer to live and associate with well-mannered, happy people, with persons you can trust and who have real regard for one another. When the Witnesses gathered in a convention city, did they demonstrate that they are this kind of people?

For example, over 50,000 Witnesses in Ohio and adjoining states met for the as-

sembly in Cleveland. The *Cleveland Press* quoted one woman: "I never saw so many well-mannered, nicely dressed people with well-behaved children as I saw downtown Friday." According to the paper, a local Episcopalian added: "We could use more people like them."—June 30, 1975.

But why are they like this? The Witnesses do not take the credit for themselves. As they freely acknowledge, it is application of the teachings of the Bible that has made them what they are.

In Asheville, North Carolina, over 6,000 Witnesses gathered at the Civic Center. Policewoman Betty Bryson, assigned to the parking detail, exclaimed: "I have not yet seen a group of people like this before! It's just amazing! I haven't seen a frown . . . all smiling faces. Families are together, even with babies in their arms."

If you were among such throngs of Jehovah's witnesses, you, too, would note the difference. And if you stayed and listened you would soon realize that what really makes the difference is that these people sincerely believe and endeavor to live by the Bible. The *Richmond and Twickenham Times* said regarding the assembly of more than 25,000 Witnesses in London, England: "There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between Twickenham Rugby Ground's usual crowds and the Jehovah's Witnesses."—August 1, 1975.

This contrast was particularly notice-

able to Karen Bateman, who became blind at three years of age. Of her efforts to get around among the more than 7,000 Witnesses at the Tulsa, Oklahoma, assembly, she said:

"When you're blind you rely on feel and sound, and crowds present problems. When I am in worldly crowds I am extremely afraid and uncomfortable. But the crowds here are so kind and considerate, that I feel confident, unafraid. I don't seem to lose direction and know that if I did, anyone would help me." She had reason for such confidence, because the Bible teaches people to be loving and kind.

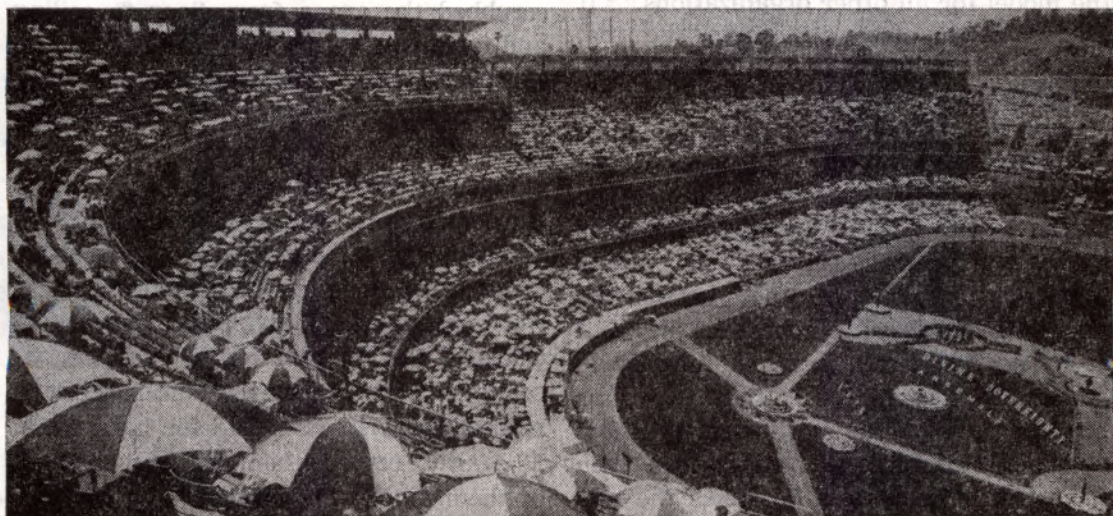
Is that what you would have expected at such large gatherings? Some visitors, hesitant at first about attending, were impressed in a most favorable way. A black person, who had opposed his wife's studying the Bible with the Witnesses, finally agreed to accompany her on Sunday to the Columbia, South Carolina, assembly. Between sessions, he saw, in the milling crowd, a crying black child. When a white

Witness went over, picked up the child and began consoling it, he turned to his wife and said: "Isn't that something!" So impressed was he that his attitude changed completely, and he, too, wanted to study the Bible with the Witnesses.

Cooperative, Willing Workers

There is much involved in putting on a large Witness assembly, and if you attended one you may have been impressed by how smoothly everything operated. Many persons were. *The Citizen* of Prince George, British Columbia, took note of "the impeccable organization of the convention." And an assignments editor of a Memphis, Tennessee, television station said: "There's something about you people—the way you work together."

An especially involved operation is the buying, preparing and serving of food to feed the assembly delegates. Often several thousand meals are served in the cafeteria in less than an hour! On this matter, Victor H. Mata, writing in the *San Antonio Light*, commented: "For those who want



At 98 assemblies in the United States, 990,256 heard the discourse
"One World, One Government, Under God's Sovereignty"



Among the Witnesses, kindness to others is a normal thing

to know how to feed 10,000 people, and do it efficiently, ask the Jehovah's Witnesses."

In Los Angeles, Leo A. Robin, Senior Public Health Sanitarian of the Central Health Center, said that when it comes to feeding large crowds the Witnesses "are the model for all other organizations." "It used to be the army, years ago," he said, "but in recent years it is Jehovah's Witnesses." Why is this so?

Observers soon notice that all the work is done voluntarily by members of the faith—none receive any pay. Harry DeFeo of the DeFeo Fruit Company in Kansas City was impressed by how all cooperated together. "What amazes me," he told the assembly purchasing overseer, "is that everyone displays a genuine interest in others." So observers learn that the results that they see are far more than the effect of experience in organization; love such as is taught in the Bible makes the real difference.

This same willing cooperation was also

evident in the many other assembly operations, such as the cleaning. The Greensboro, North Carolina, *Daily News* reported: "'You can hardly believe it unless you see it,' said members of the coliseum's staff as they watched young people clean each seat in the coliseum, then scrub its floors and walls spotlessly clean."

This is how the Springfield, Massachusetts, *Union* described this operation: "Like a white tornado, 160 Jehovah's Witnesses swept through the Springfield Civic Center Wednesday. Armed with buckets, brooms and bottles of cleanser, they scrubbed the arena from floor to ceiling and from window to seat." And noted the *Cleveland Press*: "The Stadium is probably cleaner this week than it has ever been before."

Because the Witnesses themselves have learned from the Bible, by attending these assemblies you likely could also learn about cooperating together and really getting work accomplished. Explained a man who attended the Binghamton, New York, assembly: "When I saw the enthusiasm and respect the Witnesses had for hard work, I began to respect them. I began to think of them as one big hardworking family." He even expressed a desire to be a part of this family. Would you?

People Who Love Others

There is no one who can teach us more about love than the Creator himself. His love is impartial, reaching out to persons of all kinds. So anyone attending assemblies where His example is imitated can learn much about showing genuine love to others, regardless of their race, nationality or social background. For example, there was the newspaper reporter who at random interviewed young people at the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, assembly. He asked them why they were at the assembly rather than attending *Summerfest*, an annual city festival featuring entertainment, food and drink.

One young man answered: "I am here because for the first time I have found people who are really interested in me. . . . Jehovah's witnesses must have the only true religion." An eighteen-year-old girl, whose response appeared in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, explained: "This is the most fun for me. This is a place where the most love is shown. I'll tell you that."—July 5, 1975.

At the Columbia, South Carolina, assembly a very old man, who had spent many years as a Baptist preacher, said that what greatly impressed him was the love between the black and the

white Witnesses. He had recently attended a local circuit assembly of Jehovah's witnesses, and commented:

"While eating at that assembly, I noticed beside me a white Witness whom I had known since her childhood. I was reared on her ancestral estate. She recognized me and was thrilled to know that I was studying with Jehovah's witnesses. I learned that she attended another Kingdom Hall in the area. She invited me to her home for dinner. This was just too much for me. When I worked on her father's farm, I had to go to the back door and no farther than the steps. Never did I dream that one day I would be eating in her dining room with her family!"

Yet, not only does this love manifested by Jehovah's witnesses unite people of different races, but it is also observed to help reconstruct peoples' lives in marvelous ways. If you had attended the Oakland, California, assembly, there is a possibility that you might have seen a short man with a deformed spine and with one leg two inches shorter than the other. It will warm your heart to learn how his life has been transformed by his recent association with Jehovah's witnesses. He explains:



All the workers at Witness assemblies are volunteers; none are paid

"I was deformed from birth. I never knew my own father, and when my mother arranged to get married, her husband told her that she must get rid of me. So I was sent to live with my grandmother. There I was kept isolated. I was never permitted to go outside the house, and, consequently, never talked to anyone except my mother and grandmother. My mother, in time, had several other children—my half brothers and sisters—but they have never seen me and probably do not even know that I exist. Whenever they or anyone else would come to the house, I was always locked in a room and told to be quiet until they left the house.

"When I was eighteen years old I went to live at a board-and-care home until I was twenty-four. For the past thirteen years I have been living at the old folks' home in Berkeley. While working in the workshop for handicapped people, a young lady there told me about Jehovah's witnesses and arranged for a Witness to call on me.

"I was not accustomed to communicating with people, so it was very difficult for me. But Jehovah's witnesses had the patience to teach me to read and understand the Bible. When I would want to quit trying, they were very loving and encouraging. This was a new experience. No one had ever wanted me. Now, I felt wanted. When I was not feeling well, Witnesses from the Kingdom Hall would visit me and bring me fruit and other gifts.

"You can't imagine how good it feels for a person with my background to be completely accepted, but I have been by Jehovah's witnesses. They always pick me up for the meetings, they invite me to their homes, and in every way they make me feel that I am wanted. They listen to my comments at the meetings, and help me

share in preaching the Kingdom message to others. And the young lady who introduced me to the Witnesses consented to marry me. Now I have a loving wife, loving Christian brothers and sisters and the marvelous hope of living in God's new order and seeing this terribly deformed body of mine become sound and strong under the Kingdom rule."

Certainly there is something to be learned from people who themselves imitate the qualities of mankind's Creator and who for that reason show love and concern for others.

Responding to Love Shown

Thousands of persons today are responding to this love expressed toward them, and they are dedicating their lives to serve Jehovah God. They are joining with Jehovah's witnesses in helping yet other persons to learn about and to serve God. At the ninety-eight "Divine Sovereignty" assemblies in all of the United States, 19,356 persons have given public witness to their dedication to Jehovah by undergoing water baptism. At 90 assemblies in other countries, from which reports are now available, 21,309 more persons have been baptized.

If you had talked to persons being baptized, you would have been amazed at their diverse backgrounds. Yet most of them had one thing in common: *A desire to know and to please their heavenly Father.* For example, there is the young man baptized in July at a Corvallis, Oregon, assembly, who explained:

"My wife and I had two wonderful children and a fine relationship and felt drawn to God. We had so many good things we just had to thank someone." So when, eight months before the Corvallis assembly, Jehovah's witnesses called and offered

to study the Bible with them, they gladly accepted. The man commented: "Even if a word was not spoken about the Bible, just being around the Witnesses, as at this assembly, would convince anyone that this is the only place to be." But, of course, it is the Bible that has made the Witnesses that kind of people.

If you had the opportunity to speak with them, many of these newly baptized persons would tell you that they had been praying for help and guidance. A woman baptized at the Columbia, South Carolina, assembly said that due to distressing difficulties, including marital problems, she had contemplated suicide, having even purchased a gun with which to take her life. But first she petitioned God to send someone to help her. The following day one of Jehovah's witnesses called, and she received the Scriptural guidance that transformed her life.

A young man baptized at the Los Angeles assembly in July told his experience: "I was searching for the true religion. One night I said a prayer, asking for help to find it. The next morning a knock at the door woke me. It was Jehovah's witnesses. I invited them in, took the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and read almost all of it that day. I was convinced that this was the truth, and I called the

nearest Kingdom Hall and asked the Witnesses to come back."

Many observers were amazed by the number of young people getting baptized. "I believe that three fourths were in their teens or early 20's," noted a man who watched the baptism at the Bismarck, North Dakota, assembly. A check of the

328 baptized at St. Paul, Minnesota, revealed that 75 percent were between eleven and thirty years of age.

Another thing that is astounding is the tremendous change so many made in their lives. They had practiced all forms of moral badness, yet had quit these practices, even as the apostle Paul said first-century Corinthian Christians had done.

(1 Cor. 6:9-11)

The experience of a girl who was baptized at the Tulsa, Oklahoma, assembly illustrates what has helped many persons to make these big changes in their lives. She explains:

"A little more than two years ago I became involved with worldly friends and the boy I was dating drugged me and then raped me. When I awoke I was embarrassed, thinking that I had fainted. I got up and went home not knowing that I had been raped. When I finally went to a doctor, thinking I had a tumor, I found that I was five months pregnant.

"My mother is one of Jehovah's wit-



Many young people are among those baptized by the Witnesses

nesses, but I thought they were like any other religion. I realized the seriousness of the situation, and so went to the elders of the congregation. They were so kind and loving, and wanted to help me in any way they could. They never scorned me for what had happened. They helped me to get my life straightened out by showing me from the Bible how I could please our heavenly Father. I knew I wanted to serve Jehovah God, so I made the necessary changes in my life and began to apply Bible principles.”

Yes, persons who truly desire to serve God are receiving loving assistance from Jehovah’s witnesses. Fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, drunkards and other wrongdoers are helped to change, resulting in their enjoying true contentment in life. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* observed: “The doctrine of the Jehovah’s Witnesses is stern and disheartening to those who are not members of the sect, but its practitioners . . . seem to be happy people.”

It is true, Jehovah’s witnesses do not in any way approve of today’s popular, sex-without-marriage life-style, which even some mothers in public life say they would willingly accept for their teen-age daughters. Yet the fact is, Jehovah’s witnesses do not consider their doctrine “stern and disheartening,” as you could learn from talking to assembly delegates. Rather, they are grateful for the protection that their teaching affords them, since it helps to spare them from the consequences of so much of today’s unhappiness, including the venereal

diseases, out-of-wedlock pregnancies, guilt-stricken consciences, broken marriages, and so forth. They are a truly joyful people.

Assembly Program Provides Answers

The type of instruction that Jehovah’s witnesses receive and accept is the key to their conduct. Pointing to the source of that instruction, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* Magazine, in telling about the coming to town of Jehovah’s witnesses, said: “They will bring their playbook, the Bible, and for them that is the final authority. You could call them people of the book.”

Yes, Jehovah’s witnesses accept God’s Word the Bible—every part of it. Their very lives are ordered by it, and that is why they shun lying, stealing, fornication, adultery, drug abuse, smoking and all forms of immorality and uncleanness. (Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:28; Rev. 21:8; 2 Cor. 7:1) Also, because of their high regard for God’s Word, they obey its oft-repeated instructions to love and help others. (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 7:12; John 13:34; Eph. 4:31, 32; 1 John 4:20, 21) And this



The Bible account about Samuel was dramatized to convey lessons about teaching children

is the key to their success in operating large assemblies; yes, it explains why thousands freely volunteer their services in behalf of the needs of others at these gatherings.

For persons who love righteous principles, and who welcome help to conform to the teachings of God's Word, these assemblies are most helpful. At Cicero, Illinois, a man came to the racetrack thinking the horse races were on. Discovering that the assembly of Jehovah's witnesses was in progress, he decided to stay and listen. He enjoyed it so much that he returned for the concluding two days of the program, and a home Bible study was started with him.

In Madison, Wisconsin, an aged rabbi, prominent in the community, attended the assembly. He was amazed by the excellent quality of the speeches, exclaiming: "These are more outstanding speakers than those who go to theological seminaries."

However, of greater significance is the fact that the Bible-based talks of these speakers really help people to conform their lives to God's ways. For example, after attending the presentation "Do Not Become Unevenly Yoked with Unbelievers," a college girl who is studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses resolved that she would not marry the man to whom she is engaged unless he too accepts the teachings of God's Word.

All together, the four-day program, which was the same at every assembly, had twenty-seven principal talks and four Bible dramas. Just the titles of some of these give you an idea of how practical and encouraging they were: "Keeping Your Family United in the Time of the End," "Pure and Upright Practices—Necessary to a Child's Life," "Are You Ready to Help One Another?" "Be Found Conducting Yourself as a 'Lesser One'" and "Use Every Form of Prayer and Supplication."

Spare No Efforts to Attend

Jehovah's witnesses appreciate the value of these assemblies, and it is for this reason that they make every possible effort to attend. Take, for example, a Witness in Gulfport, Mississippi, who was planning to attend the Mobile, Alabama, assembly but was faced with an important decision. The company for which he works urged him, due to an emergency, to cancel his assembly plans and care for some company business in New York. Because he refused to give up his plans to go to the assembly, another person took his place, taking Eastern Airlines flight No. 66 to New York. The plane crashed in its approach to Kennedy Airport, killing practically everyone aboard. But whether that tragedy had occurred or not, the Witness knew he had made the right decision.

Physical infirmities are an obstacle for some who attend. For instance, a Witness in Beaumont, California, stricken by polio seventeen years ago, is confined to an electrically operated rocking bed that helps him to breathe. Yet he is in regular attendance at assemblies and feels greatly rewarded. He says: "They are the highpoint of the year for me."

Often unusual measures are taken by Witnesses who are determined to be at assemblies. For example, there is the family that raises goats and who were planning this year to attend a Corvallis, Oregon, assembly. However, they could not find anyone to milk the goats while they were away. So they loaded them on a truck and brought them along to the assembly.

In many areas the district assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses are already completed for this year. But smaller assemblies will be held in the months to come. And next year, if it is the Lord's will, over one hundred district assemblies will convene in North America alone. Why not plan to attend?

Games Animals Play

A LARGE atoll of rubber bands defined the outline of where the refrigerator had stood. The two moving men looked at me with disbelief and inquiry competing for a place on their faces.

"They're the cat's," I sputtered. "She collects rubber bands."

It is true, however. My cat has some special feeling about rubber bands. Twirl one between your thumb and forefinger, and two little black paws and a black nose converge on the scene. If she claims it from you with extended front paw spread wide like a tennis racket, she will batter it about, or she will chase it hockey-style, guiding it with alternate paws, until it disappears beneath the electrically purring "goal" designed to keep our food fresh.

Do animals play? Naturalists do not agree about this. Lack of agreement is mostly because they cannot agree on how to define *play*. The anti-animal-play theorists are inclined to view what we call play as hunting practice. Yet, as I look at Nefer (that's my cat's name) I can hardly believe that even *she* looks upon the attack, capture and storage of rubber bands as a serious occupation. Too, at age ten, she can hardly be described as "practicing what will later become a serious adult activity." If called upon to do so, Nefer is capable of stalking an unwanted rodent. That's serious business. Rubber bands?

They're only used for her recreation.

So much for animals that normally tent with us humans, eating of our tidbits, sleeping on or under our furniture, and perhaps being encouraged by us to play.

Barnyard Capers

What about animals a degree more removed from human environment? Let us go into the barnyard to a creature remote from usual human contact. Few people are dazzled by pigs, and thus few hang over fences to watch their performances. Chance circumstances brought a piglet into the family of some friends of mine in Indiana. In the months that followed, they learned that pigs indeed *do* play! My friends had named her "Priscilla." This Priscilla (surnamed Pig) would do most things a cat would do. But her compact body and lack of feline flexibility changed these cat maneuvers into something very different. Cats may run and whirl, and chase their tails. But visualize, if you can, this same activity being carried on by a small rubbery-hided animal, with a taut little body the shape of a keg perched on short stiff legs! Also, pigs love to

have their backs scratched. Priscilla would present her back to any human foot dangling from a knee-crossed leg. If rebuffed, she worked out her huff in a



manner that explains why pigs are spoken of as doing jigs. She would stamp her little feet, squealing in frustration and rage.

Many animal behaviorists shy from attributing to animals such emotions as "frustration" and "rage." Nevertheless, it is of note that well-known naturalist Jacques Cousteau, while warning against attributing human qualities to animals, says, "Yet we must not demean animals by denying them all expression."



Playful Kittens of the Wild

Well, do we find the playful traits so common among the young that live close to humankind also displayed by the young of animals totally untamed? Let us leave the barnyard and travel to the African veld to ponder this question. Here we find a mother lion lounging in the grass, cubs about her, lazily activating her tail. To a cub, the tail, once in motion, is no longer mother's terminal appendage. It obviously becomes some monster needing to be subdued. Watch that little fellow, his pupils widen, his eyes glaze with inward-turning thought. He crouches, hips quivering as though the rear portion aims the front. Perhaps it does. Then, POUNCE! He's got it! His sister has perhaps misaimed, and now she has *him*! They tumble, hissing and mewling in a flurry of paws and bodies.

Playful Water Creatures

Not many of humankind have seen young wild whales at play. Biologist Victor B. Scheffer, in his book *The Year of the Whale*, takes us to sea to observe a con-

glomerate creature he names "Little Calf." At birth, Little Calf emerges from his mother tail first, for the practical reason that a cetacean, such as he is, is air breathing. Reversed, he would simply drown before the birthing process could end. At last his blunt head appears and, as he separates from his mother, all his fourteen-foot length, weighing a ton. Four months along in life, far at sea he and his contemporaries may find such an interesting thing as a log that may have drifted thousands of miles southward from Alaska. One young whale "takes the log in his mouth and whips it from side to side, growling in whale language, as if enjoying an imaginary conflict with a fearsome creature of the deep. What fun!" So writes Scheffer.

Naturalist Gerald Durrell, in *The Whispering Land* (which lyric title refers to Argentina's Patagonia), tells of another creature's playful frolics. Concerning a fur seal pup, which for ease of description he names Oswald, Durrell says: "What he lacked in inches he more than made up for in determination and personality. When I first noticed Oswald . . . he was busily engaged in stalking a long ribbon of glittering green seaweed. . . . A slight wind twitched the end of the seaweed, and . . . Oswald turned and lolloped off as fast as



his flippers would carry him. . . . Carefully he approached it again, . . . giving the impression that he was almost tiptoeing on his great flat flippers." Finally, with

mustered-up courage, Oswald lunged at the seaweed, and, as Durrell observed, he strutted off with his trophy—"the seaweed dangling from either side of his mouth like a green moustache, looking very pleased that his first bite had apparently disabled the enemy completely."

Games Others Play

Again, Durrell tells how he once observed, at close range near his camp, a couple of foxes playing with a roll of bright-pink toilet paper. "Having proved that it was not edible," he says, "they danced and whirled on slender legs, hurling the toilet roll to and fro . . . The whole camp site was taking on a gay carnival air." When the show was over, a hundred and twenty feet of pink toilet paper was left fluttering in the breeze!

The otter dwells in the northern forest. It is one creature that most naturalists agree *does* play. He plays for the sheer joy of it! If you hear a *swoosh!* followed by a *splash!*, and repeated time and time again, you are probably on hand for the best free animal act you could ever see. The swooshing sound comes from the otter as he goes tobogganing down a mud slide he has built, and from which he has painstakingly removed every stone, and which he has wet down with his fur to make it slippery. The splash comes at the end of his slide when he catapults into the pond or river. He never seems to tire of the repetition. Wintertime finds him using seasonal toboggan material, snow, for the same thrill.

Peter Marler and William J. Hamilton III say: "Play behavior has been recorded from all the vertebrate classes except fish." Still, I have watched flying fish race an ocean liner on the Pacific, and I have seen giant blue marlin erupt from the sea off Florida, seeming to stand on their tails for seconds above the waves before crashing down again. This, when done by a

fish not trying to dislodge the pain of a hook, *looks* like fun! Mr. Scheffer speaks of "dolphins at play" (cetaceans, to be sure), "bursting the placid sea and scattering a million jewels behind." If this is pleasant to the creature, even if he is a fish, could it not be his version of play?

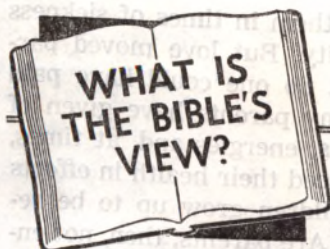
Australia's budgerigars, masquerading in other parts of the world under the name of parrakeets or lovebirds, offer a similar example of bird play. Haven't you seen them in captivity use the wire of the cage to slide down, like a fireman down a pole?

Let us see, we've looked at creatures in our own homes, in the farmyard, in the veld, the sea, the woods, and in the air. What about in the jungle?

In the jungle a mother chimpanzee will tickle her baby. He will squirm and roll over, and she will tumble him about in play. And so among the animals, play is not just within a peer group. As with humans, the older ones enjoy the younger, and many times they instigate the play.

What is play? As mentioned, not everyone agrees. A consensus would indicate that it is activity without an immediate practical end in view. Even though it may include functions that are used at other times for practical purposes (such as crouching or stalking), it does not include the full chain of action needed in the work activity. Certainly, it must include the element of pleasure—fun! Thus, as indicated in *Mechanisms of Animal Behavior*, cats, foxes and mongooses when young stalk inappropriate objects—a leaf, a piece of string, something that in itself is not threatening. They will approach it, and then jump vertically into the air.

Cervantes said: "Those who'll play with cats must expect to be scratched." I would paraphrase it this way: "Those who'll play with cats, or others of God's creatures, must expect to have their funny bone tickled."—*Contributed*.



What Honor Is Due Parents?

THE Bible commands children to obey their parents, to honor them. It emphasizes the rightness of this course and shows that it results in lasting blessings. We read: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: 'Honor your father and your mother'; which is the first command with a promise: 'That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth.'"—Eph. 6:1-3.

So honoring parents includes being obedient to them. Why is this "righteous"? Of course, the very fact that the Giver of the command to honor parents is a righteous God shows that obedience is, of necessity, right. But why has God given this command?

Really, children owe it to their parents to be obedient. What if they had been totally neglected? Could they have raised themselves? So should not children rightly show appreciation for what their parents have done for them by being obedient in all matters

that do not interfere with heeding the superior law of God and Christ?

Giving honor to parents by obeying them is also essential for preserving unity and order in the family, and in society as a whole. If children do not learn to honor parents, they are not likely to respect any other kind of authority. Their disobedience will therefore make them misfits in society, persons who disregard the rights of others. Then, too, if children refuse to obey parents who have their interests at heart, how can they be obedient to the invisible heavenly Father, Jehovah God?

Another factor that makes obedience to parents righteous is that parents have the benefit of age and experience. A child's background is definitely limited and so are its powers of reasoning and understanding. Especially in the early years of life, a child needs parental guidance and discipline to avoid trouble. That is the point made by the Bible proverb: "Foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy; the rod of discipline is what will remove it far from him."—Prov. 22:15.

Inherent in heeding the command to honor parents is the promise: "That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth." This is because parents generally want good, not bad, to come to their children. Despite their weaknesses and imperfections, most parents try to do what they can to help their offspring to avoid injury. Acting in harmony with parental instruction, children can spare themselves untold pain. Generally, obedience to parental counsel would result in one's shunning sexual immorality, drunkenness, the taking of drugs and other practices that can lead to great harm and perhaps even premature death.

But is honoring parents solely a matter of being obedient to them while one is a minor child? No. Jesus Christ pointed out that giving honor to parents is something that continues as long as they are alive. Exposing the traditional view of the Pharisees, Jesus said: "God said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Let him that reviles father or mother end up in death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother: 'What-ever I have by which you might get benefit from me is

a gift dedicated to God," he must not honor his father at all.' And so you have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition."—Matt. 15:4-6.

Similarly, the apostle Paul showed that material giving to parents and grandparents is included in giving honor to them. In connection with the responsibility of the congregation and children as regards widows, he wrote: "Honor widows that are actually widows [that is, having no family members to aid them]. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household and to keep paying a due compensation to their parents and grandparents, for this is acceptable in God's sight. . . . Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith."—1 Tim. 5:3-8.

This matter of honoring aged parents and grandparents is, therefore, something that should be viewed very seriously. It is a Christian requirement. Ignoring it constitutes a rejection of Christian faith. The person who disregards the needs of others, especially of those related to him, lacks love. If love for parents whom he sees and who have cared for him is defective, he cannot love God.—1 John 4:20.

According to honor to parents by caring for them may not always be easy. Because of infirmity and sickness, aged parents may require considerable attention. Their disposition may not always be the best. Personality differences between parents and children may become more pronounced with the passing of years and could lead to considerable friction. But would that entitle one to ignore the needs of one's parents? Certainly not.

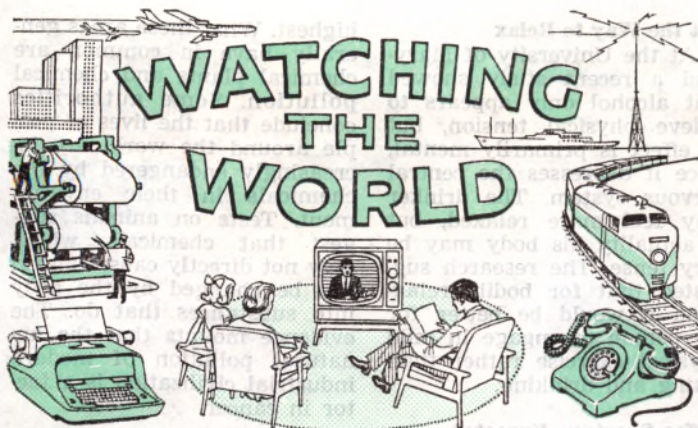
It was not always easy for parents to put up with their children's foolishness

and to care for them in times of sickness or other adversity. But love moved parents to do what no one could have paid them to do. Many parents have given of their time, assets, energies and, at times, have even sacrificed their health in efforts to help their children grow up to be responsible adults. Are parents, then, not entitled to compensation from their children?

But what if the parent is an in-law? True Christians realize that, when they marry, they also may, in time, have to take on the responsibility of caring for the needs of their mate's parents. A devoted Christian would not say, "I did not marry your relatives," and reason that he or she has no obligation toward those related only by marriage. He or she would want to honor parents on both sides of the family, appreciating that this is right.

In many lands, parents may have what they need materially. But they may yearn for companionship and reassurances that their grown-up children love them deeply. Children do well to give thought to things they might do to express thanks for what parents have done in their behalf. They should want to do what they can to make their parents feel needed and appreciated, including them in their plans and activities. By consulting with their parents on weighty matters, children are demonstrating that they value the wisdom of their father and mother. These are all ways of showing honor and esteem for parents.

Only if we accord parents the honor they deserve can we expect the blessing of Jehovah God. In this respect, true Christians in these "last days" stand out in sharp contrast to the world that lacks "natural affection." (2 Tim. 3:1-5) While young, Christian children should be exemplary in being obedient to their parents. As adults, they should be concerned about doing all within their power to contribute to their parents' happiness and welfare.



Staggering Crime Statistics

◆ For decades the number of major crimes reported annually in the United States has been increasing. It recently passed the 10-million mark. However, a Census Bureau survey shows that there is actually far more crime than reported—as many as 37 million major crimes a year now, triple the number officially reported. Half of the people surveyed said they were afraid to walk in their own neighborhoods at night; the figure was higher in cities. Among women living in the cities, 77 percent said they were afraid to go out after dark.

"Catholic Apostasy Rate Up"

◆ That headline appeared in *The Catholic Herald Citizen*. An article by Catholic priest Andrew Greeley noted that in the United States "almost a fifth of those who were raised Catholic no longer consider themselves to be part of the Church." He observed that in 1955 the apostasy rate was 7 percent, but that by 1973 it had doubled, to 14 percent. He said that the rate "apparently is continuing to climb." Greeley called this "a deadly serious problem for American Catholicism," and added, "Quite simply, people are leaving in droves and apparently are continuing to do so."

Stress Affects Heart

◆ Each year, on the average, 378 out of every 100,000 men in America die from heart attacks. That is one of the highest heart-disease rates in the world. In contrast, men living in Japan have less than one quarter that death rate. It has long been thought that the higher fat content in the diet of Americans was largely to blame. But evidence grows that stress may be as important a factor, if not more important. A ten-year study of thousands of Japanese men living in the United States revealed that, even where there was a high fat intake, those who continued to live their traditional Japanese life-style, which emphasizes acceptance of the individual's place in both family and society, experienced no noticeable increase in heart attacks. However, those Japanese men living in the United States who adopted the more aggressive and competitive traits of American men had up to five times as many heart attacks.

Predicting Earthquakes

◆ Recently, as a result of improved instruments and better knowledge, experts in the United States, China and the Soviet Union have correctly forecast a number of earthquakes. It is reported that in China, before two large

quakes, the government issued public warnings and evacuated areas that they suspected were to be affected. Since not a day passes without earthquakes of varying intensity striking somewhere on earth, it is hoped that the increased success at predicting major quakes will help to minimize injury and death.

Soviet Credit Buying

◆ Buying on credit has long been an established way of life in the Western world. Now the Soviet Union is allowing its citizens to buy some items on credit, particularly higher priced goods. But there is a difference: when a customer buys on credit in the Soviet Union, the store notifies the paymaster where he works, and the employer automatically deducts the payments from the worker's paychecks until the debt is paid off.

Adult Runaways

◆ A missing person's agency in New York estimates that from 250,000 to 1,000,000 adult Americans "run away" each year. These are persons who decide they cannot cope with their present circumstances any longer and leave without giving notice. The agency's file showed that the typical New York city male runaway was in his 40's or early 50's, college educated and an aggressive, middle-level executive or salesman making about \$25,000 a year. The pressures of life, financial worries, unhappy family situations, job dissatisfaction and other reasons were noted. While these runaways usually seek a simpler existence, they often end up in the same profession they left, out of economic necessity. The typical woman runaway was said to be in her mid-thirties, had married young, had several children early in marriage, and had been a housewife for about 15 years.

Proper Mailbox Use

◆ The United States government regulates mailbox use, limiting it to mail that bears postage. Any person who puts material into a mailbox without having properly paid the postage faces a fine of up to \$300 for each offense. The Postal Service states that without such a restriction mailboxes would become filled with all types of matter, such as advertising brochures. The law does permit other material, such as circulars, to be hung on doorknobs, placed at or under the door, or even pushed through a slot in the door. But in the mailbox itself, only mail with the proper postage is legal.

Sinking Land

◆ In various places throughout the world, land levels are sinking. Sometimes the sinking is gradual, but at other times there is a sudden collapse, destroying buildings in the area. A 4,000-square-mile shoreline area of Texas is sinking as much as a half foot a year, with Gulf of Mexico seawater claiming more and more land. Parts of California's San Joaquin Valley have dropped as much as 28 feet over the past few decades. Parts of Shanghai, Tokyo, Mexico City and other areas are also threatened. Why? Some very gradual sinking is due to forces that are always active on the earth's surface, such as shifting landmasses. Some rapid sinkings are caused when large amounts of oil and natural gas are taken from the ground. However, the main reason is man's growing need for water. Earth's exploding population has caused an increased need for irrigation, as well as fresh water for drinking and industrial use. So more and more water is being pumped out of the ground. When it is not replaced by enough rainfall, the land surface often sinks.

Not the Way to Relax

◆ At the University of Maryland a recent study showed that alcohol only appears to relieve physical tension, but its effect is primarily mental, since it depresses the central nervous system. The drinker may feel more relaxed, but in actuality his body may be very tense. The research suggested that for bodily relaxation it would be better for the person to engage in mild physical exercise rather than sitting and drinking.

Coffee Shortage Expected

◆ Earlier this year Brazil's coffee trees were severely damaged by frost. This is expected to reduce the crop for at least the next two years, raising coffee prices world wide. The 1975 crop, harvested before the frost, was estimated at about 23 million bags. The crop next year is expected to be only 8 to 12 million bags.

British Rate Foreign Products

◆ A Gallup poll in Britain showed that people there rate the products of West Germany as first in quality. Japan's products were rated as second, a huge improvement over its 23rd-place position 15 years ago. Australia was rated as third. The United States was rated as eighth, compared to its top rating 15 years ago.

Hawaiians Live Longer

◆ The population of Hawaii ranks first in longevity in the United States, the average life expectancy being 73.6 years. It is the only state where, on the average, males live longer than 70 years. Following Hawaii in life expectancy are Minnesota, Utah, North Dakota and Nebraska.

Chemicals and Cancer

◆ The National Cancer Institute has published charts showing where death rates from lung, liver and bladder cancer among men are the

highest. What these areas generally have in common are chemical plants and chemical pollution. Some authorities conclude that the lives of people around the world are increasingly endangered by the chemicals in their environment. Tests on animals suggest that chemicals, which may not directly cause cancer, can be changed by the body into substances that do. The evidence mounts that the unnatural pollution of modern industrial civilization is a factor in cancer.

Drunken Elephants

◆ Park officials in Tanzania report that elephants have been gorging themselves on fermented fruit and going on drunken rampages. The park rangers saw elephants trumpeting, screaming, knocking down trees and chasing smaller animals.

Low Arms Spending

◆ Japan is said to spend less for armaments than any other country in the developed world except Denmark, less than one percent of the nation's yearly income. In terms of dollars, Japan spends, on the average, only \$33 per person, compared to \$352 in the Soviet Union, \$404 in the United States, and \$468 in Israel.

Financing Death

◆ The \$60 million spent by the U.S. government annually for tobacco price supports amounts to about \$1,000 for each smoking-related lung cancer death, according to the Health Research Group's recent report to President Ford. "On the other hand, the Federal Government spends only \$14.30 per (smoking-related) lung cancer death annually on educating the public about the dangers of smoking," the report maintains. "At the same time, the tobacco industry spends over \$2,857 per lung cancer death on promoting the tobacco habit." Over 74,000

Americans died of lung cancer in 1973.

Fatal Curiosity

◆ Is dabbling in the occult just a harmless pastime? The recent experience of a 17-year-old California girl indicates it is not. While driving a car she poured gasoline over herself and ignited it. Shortly before dying in the hospital, she said: "I want to know what it feels like to be dead." Reportedly, she was deeply interested in the supernatural and in claimed spirit existence after death.

Doomsday Profiteers

◆ "Waiting for Armageddon," observes *Time* magazine, has been "turned to profit." Some California land speculators have arranged for those who fear the worst to purchase membership in a secret mountain hideaway for \$12,500 plus annual dues of \$300. Dehy-

drated food, water and electricity supposedly will be supplied for members when the world collapses and all approach roads to their "survival" community are dynamited.

To Satisfy Gamblers

◆ Greyhound racing is popular among Florida gamblers, reports *Sports Illustrated* magazine, but many persons do not realize that the competition is not just a "race." Says one trainer: "When eight dogs chase a lure around a race-track, they're not racing. They're running to kill." First the dogs are trained to chase down live rabbits. "Once they taste that live rabbit when they're pups, they're killers for life," says another trainer. "They're not kill-crazy 'cause we starve them. They're kill-crazy 'cause they're trained on live rabbits. People like to bet, and greyhounds like to kill. It's natural."

Cause of Economic Woes

◆ In these days of economic problems, theories abound as to possible causes and cures. One cause, however, is often overlooked. Thomas Wiseman speaks of it in his recent book *The Money Motive*: "What the studies of our economic dilemmas leave out is *money lust*, the underlying impulse, craving, obsession, whatever it is, out of which our present economizing/accumulating culture has arisen."

Rock Concert Danger

◆ The *Journal of the American Medical Association* confirms that rock concerts can be dangerous to hearing. Noise levels produced by the musicians with the aid of amplification devices are much higher than considered safe. Permanent hearing damage, or even loss, could occur, the report states.

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