Awake!

A LOOK AT THE "GAY" WORLD —IS IT REALLY GAY?

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SURVIVING AMID CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON

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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.

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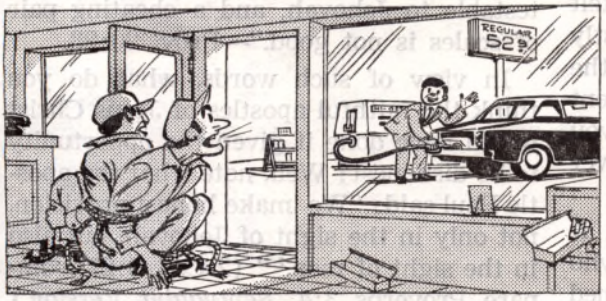
What Would *YOU* Have Done?

IT WAS a holiday season of supposed cheer and goodwill. The place was a busy service station in a major city of the United States. During the early morning hours, thieves had robbed the station, leaving its two attendants bound. Scores of motorists eventually came along. Some laughed at the plight of the attendants, but did nothing to aid them. Before one customer had summoned the police, about a hundred motorists reportedly had helped themselves to gasoline and cigarettes without paying for a single thing. If given a similar opportunity to get something for nothing, what would you have done?

Consider another situation. In just a one-year period, a hotel in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, reported the loss (and probable theft) of 7,665 pieces of cutlery, as well as some 2,800 ashtrays. Faced with the possibility of helping yourself to such items, what would you have done?



Imagine the hotel owner's surprise when he received a stolen ashtray by mail one day. A covering letter stated: "I am humbly returning your ashtray to you which I did steal from you several years ago. I am very sorry that I stole it and ask your forgiveness. The reason I am returning it is that I became one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses and I am trying to live according to the Bible now."

What an individual will do about past errors must be decided personally. As it is, no human alive has a perfect record. "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah [God], who could stand?" asks the Bible. (Ps. 130:3) Yet, Jehovah's Witnesses in general endeavor to act honestly. Why?

These Christians are not trying to make a name for themselves by being honest. They are not seeking praise from others. Nor are they merely following the old adage "honesty is the best policy." Definite benefits result from honesty. And there is a very important reason why these Christians are honest.

First, please consider certain benefits of honesty. The Bible says: "The one making unjust profit is bringing ostracism upon his own house." (Prov. 15:27) A per-

son who is greedy for dishonest gain, perhaps in the form of bribes, may believe that his course is beneficial. However, when others find out about the man's dishonesty, they no longer trust him and do not want to have further dealings with him. In fact, he may be punished for his dishonest practices, and consequently his entire family may suffer for his wrongdoing.

On the other hand, people are inclined to trust a person known for his honesty. Honest practices have even resulted in material benefits. To illustrate: Years ago, a foreign student attending a college in the midwestern United States bought an automobile from a local car dealer. Some fifteen years passed. By then the former student was the only purchasing agent of the Iranian Contractors Association. How surprised that same auto dealer was when the former student placed with him a multimillion-dollar order for 1,100 trucks! Why? Because that onetime student felt that the dealer had treated him honestly years earlier. "It's unbelievable," said the dealer. "He was just an ordinary student and we sold him an automobile. When you cast your bread on the waters, you never know how it will come back to you."

Honesty makes other people happy. It also has a way of rewarding the one who is honest. The car dealer just mentioned cited a Biblical expression when he spoke of casting bread on the waters. We read in Scripture: "Send out your bread upon the surface of the waters, for in the course of many days you will find it again." (Eccl. 11:1) Yes, if we treat others with kindness, honesty and the like, they will probably respond in the same way. In other words, 'we reap what we sow.' (Gal. 6:7) Jesus Christ said: "Practice giving, and people will give to you. They will pour into your laps a fine measure, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing. For with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you in return."—Luke 6:38.

Another benefit: The honest person is able to maintain a clear conscience. He does not have to 'live a lie,' only pretending to act with honesty. Nor does he have to worry about being caught in some dishonest practice. No sleepless nights for him on that account!

But suppose honesty never materially or physically seemed to benefit anyone practicing it. Those governing their lives by the Bible would still be honest. Why? Because they have a very important reason for acting honestly. They desire to please Jehovah God, and he requires honesty of all persons wishing to have his approval. This is made clear in God's inspired Word. For instance, it says: "Two sorts of weights [one giving a person when buying an unfair advantage and another enabling him to cheat when selling] are something detestable to Jehovah, and a cheating pair of scales is not good."—Prov. 20:23.

In view of such words, what do you think the faithful apostles of Jesus Christ would have done if given the opportunity to be dishonest? Well, note what the apostle Paul said: "We 'make honest provision, not only in the sight of Jehovah, but also in the sight of men.' " (2 Cor. 8:21; compare Proverbs 3:4, *Septuagint Version.*) Obviously, the apostle would not resort to dishonest practices, but believed in working to "make *honest* provision." But there is more to Christian honesty than that.

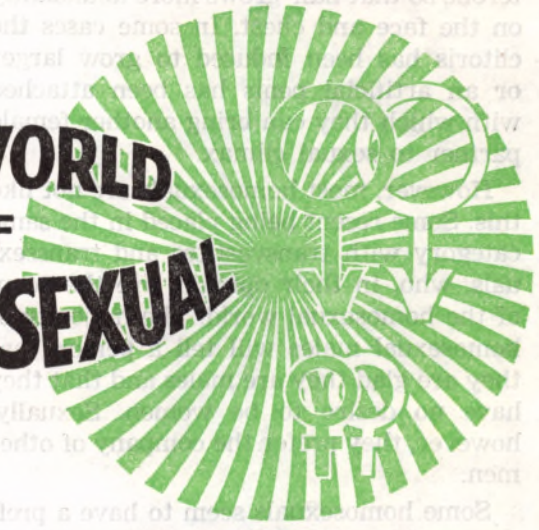
Paul also wrote: "We have renounced the underhanded things of which to be ashamed, not walking with cunning, neither adulterating the word of God, but by making the truth manifest recommending ourselves to every human conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. 4:2) Certainly, Paul was not devious in dealing with others. A devious person strays from a proper godly

course. Individuals of that kind do not enjoy God's favor, for the Scriptures say: "The devious person is a detestable thing to Jehovah, but His intimacy is with the upright ones."—Prov. 3:32.

So, then, a person who desires to have a close, intimate relationship with the Most High God, Jehovah, will strive to conduct himself honestly in all situations. We know that the apostle Paul would have done that, because he wrote: "Carry on prayer for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things."—Heb. 13:18.

Looking into

THE WORLD OF THE HOMOSEXUAL



HOMOSEXUALITY—what does that word bring to your mind? Most persons have a rather limited understanding of the subject. While homosexuals are calling out as never before for consideration and understanding of their point of view, few people are willing to look into their world and find out why homosexuals (or "gays") are the way they are.

Many people may know basically what a homosexual is. But that is about all they know. The first part of the term homosexual is drawn from a Greek word *hómoios,* meaning "one and the same." A homosexual is thus a person who prefers to have sexual connection with persons of the same sex. Male homosexuals prefer other males. Female homosexuals or lesbians desire sexual activity with other females rather than with men. But there is much more to learn on the subject.

The world of the homosexual must be seen in just that way—as a whole world, a culture or way of life uniquely its own. It is not solely a matter of sexual preference. An outsider, or someone the homosexual calls a "straight," can only partially understand this world. Nevertheless, increasing light has been shed on it in recent years. Particularly in the last five years have homosexuals themselves revealed more about their ways.

Who Are Homosexuals?

First of all, it is wise to get some distinctions clearly in mind. Not all homosexuals are to be confused with transvestites. The latter is a person who may wish he were of the opposite sex and who may even dress and carry on as though he were. Some individuals go so far as to become transsexuals. That is, they actually undergo an operation to have themselves physi-

cally changed. Males will receive hormones to enlarge the breasts and soften the skin; their sex organ is surgically removed and an artificial vagina formed, sometimes from sensitive penile or scrotal material. While they are, of course, incapable of bearing a child, a measure of sexual orgasm is possible in intercourse.

Female transsexuals have taken testosterone so that hair grows more abundantly on the face and chest. In some cases the clitoris has been induced to grow larger or an artificial penis has been attached with which they can bring another female partner to sexual climax.

However, most homosexuals are not like this. Some resent being placed in the same category with transvestites and transsexuals, who, in their opinion, are the scum of the homosexual world. The majority of homosexual males will tell a person that they are glad they are males and that they have no desire to be women. Sexually, however, they prefer the company of other men.

Some homosexuals seem to have a preference for certain occupations, such as hairdressing, interior decorating, fashion designing and the performing arts. In the 1967-68 New York Broadway theater season at least 31 percent of 58 Broadway shows were said to be produced by homosexuals; 38 percent had homosexual directors.

But homosexuals are by no means limited to these professions. One homosexual writer admits: "Most homosexuals I've known worked in such standard pursuits as business, finance, the legal and medical professions, the ministry, and law enforcement—and several were professional athletes." Interestingly, certain homosexuals actually prefer so-called "he-man" jobs, perhaps so that others will not readily identify them as homosexuals.

How Many in the "Gay" World?

The desire of many to remain hidden and unknown as homosexuals makes it impossible to ascertain their exact number. New York city is considered to have one of the largest gatherings of them in the United States; the number in that city is variously estimated to be anywhere from 50,000 up to several hundred thousand. The New York City Police Department, when asked about the number of homosexuals in their city, said that they "wouldn't even hazard a guess." It is claimed that one Texas city of over 800,000 population has a homosexual community of 50,000, though only 600 "known" homosexuals live there.

Why do so many homosexuals keep their identity a secret?

There are many reasons. They fear that they might lose their jobs or families and that strong social pressure would be leveled against them. Such homosexuals are, according to the peculiar language of the homosexual world, "in the closet." They have not publicly declared themselves to be homosexuals. Many manage to hide their secret life even from their marriage partner; these individuals, referred to as "bisexuals," are willing to copulate with persons of either sex.

Over twenty-five years ago, Dr. A. Kinsey found that 25 percent of the American men that he interviewed had had "more than incidental homosexual experience." Today, Dr. Wardell Pomeroy, one of the original researchers on the Kinsey team, insists that the actual percentage of those who are homosexuals has not really increased, but that more persons formerly secret homosexuals are now operating in the open. That they have become more visible in the last five years is hardly open to challenge. But, at the same time, it seems equally hard to believe that, because of this same openness, there has not been

a corresponding increase in the actual number of homosexuals. What has contributed to this "openness" and no doubt the increase of homosexuality?

One primary factor appears to be the popular support it is gaining. In the United States and other countries much was done to increase the civil rights of various minorities during the nineteen sixties and early seventies. Not just racial and other ethnic groups were affected, but so were the homosexuals.

The mass media has told about their protest demonstrations and sometimes presented their complaints in a favorable light. The different treatment accorded them in such fields as housing and employment has been publicized. Some have pointed out what appears as inconsistency in view of official toleration for drug addicts and prostitutes.

At the same time more noted professional men like doctors, writers and lawyers have openly declared themselves to be "gay." This has lent a certain credence to the movement, in the eyes of many persons.

Then, too, there has been much sexual experimentation in recent years, part of a so-called "sexual revolution." Young men and women have done just about everything in their search for "kicks." It should not be too surprising to find that a considerable number have also engaged in homosexual activity. For many persons this has started out with masturbational sex "play," alone at first, and then with a person of the same sex, perhaps in a school dormitory or a gymnasium shower room. After this, one step led to another as they became increasingly involved in the homosexual world.

In time such individuals found themselves locked into, not just certain sexual modes, but an entire homosexual culture. Slowly, more and more of the friends they made were homosexuals. This, in turn, influenced their style of dress and the music to which they listened, and so forth. Yes, finally they found themselves full-fledged members of the "gay" world.

The Widening Homosexual World

That world has so broadened that now when a homosexual comes into any sizable city he can usually find persons with a life-style similar to his. For instance, in many large cities there are scores of exclusively homosexual bars, restaurants and clubs. A homosexual can consult the "gay" world's travel agencies, resorts and dating services. He can read the "gay" newspapers, some of which have a circulation in the tens of thousands of copies. Or he can read books written by and for homosexuals and even check a dictionary, *The Queen's Vernacular,* to find the meaning of terms identified with his way of life.

"Gay" art and fashion shows have appeared. Homosexual business people know that the "gay" world is not poverty-stricken. Not long ago *After Dark,* an American magazine slanted for a homosexual reading audience, reported that its subscribers had a median income of $18,000. Sixty-three percent were college graduates and over 70 percent owned stocks, bonds or mutual funds shares. Some 40 percent had traveled to Europe in the previous five years. The magazine's circulation, incidentally, rose from 49,500 to 71,300 in just one recent year.

Additionally, a homosexual, whether openly declared as such or not, is likely to make homosexual contacts in his daily business. The lawyer, doctor and dentist he consults may be homosexual. And, yes, homosexuals even have their own church. The Metropolitan Community Church headed by Troy Perry claims to have one of the largest church attendances in Los Angeles; it now has some fifty branches

in cities in the United States, Canada and Great Britain.

Thus it can be seen that the "homosexual world" involves more than merely personal sexual orientation. It is an entire way of life. Every aspect of this world is conditioned to make the homosexual believe that "gay is good."

But *is* "gay" really good? Do homosexuals themselves believe that? One just being introduced to the homosexual way of life may think so. But it makes sense to ask: Will homosexuality make one's life more satisfying? Does it hold promise of a secure future? Those are necessary questions. In fairness homosexuals *themselves* should be given opportunity to state how they would answer them.

What do they say? And what have their experiences revealed?

Is the "Gay Life" Really Gay?

LIFE must be faced as it is, not as one wishes it would be. Many homosexuals may wish that the world would accept them as they are—simply as people—without any regard as to whether they choose males or females as bed partners. But the fact of the matter is that the world does not, generally speaking, fully accept a person known to be a homosexual.

The homosexual may call this unfair or discriminatory. But most people are not attracted to the homosexual way of life. If anyone is involved in it or just starting to be so involved, that is a necessary point to keep in mind. The view of homosexuality held by most people will create real problems for such a one.

Effects of Employment and Social Life

Suppose, for instance, that the homosexual wants to hold down a good job as a schoolteacher. What has happened in such circumstances? Sometimes parents and school administrators have wondered: "What happens if a male homosexual has a job of teaching young boys? What kind of influence will he have on them?" The homosexual may think that that is a very unfair question. But can you really blame others for asking? A person may have chosen to be a homosexual. But suppose that the parents do not want that for *their* children?

Or, here is another situation that comes up. In most companies a young man today is expected to bring a wife, girl friend or fiancée to any social functions. What does the secret homosexual do in this case? Often he does bring a girl, dishonestly feigning interest in her.

Thus a Dallas, Texas, homosexual, says: "There are plenty of very sought after young men in this city who make it a point to date the prettiest girls they can find. Many a girl would like to marry them, but their object is to be seen. In order to keep an embarrassing situation from occurring, they have to keep switching girls." But a man cannot follow a course of action like that indefinitely. Eventually what happens? He answers:

"The pressure is intense. I did this for

Will a homosexual teacher affect my child?

a long time and finally gave up. It wasn't fair to me and wasn't fair to the girls I was dating. But survival is the main thing and we all have our own ways of doing it."

Frankly now, is that what you want in life? People like that are living a lie. They do not live this lie just when they may be with their homosexual friends. But twenty-four hours a day they are trying to provide themselves a "cover." Eventually many, like the one from Dallas, must cave in and stop trying to hide behind a facade of respectability.

Family and Personal Problems

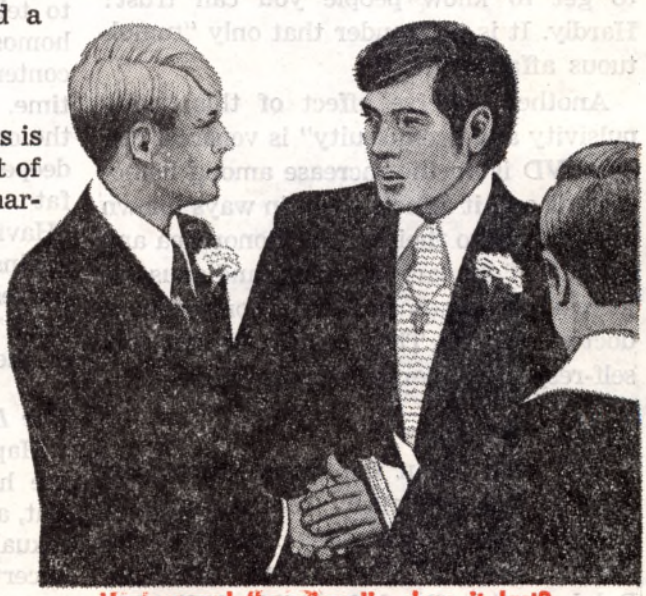
Further aggravating such problems is the fact that some do not "come out of the closet" until after they do get married and have a family. Then a brokenhearted marriage mate must be faced. Children must be told. Counselors admit that some of their most frustrating work is with young people who have learned of a parent's homosexuality.

But what about homosexual "marriages"? Do they not replace the usual heterosexual relationships? Not according to homosexuals. They say that the homosexual relationship is very uncertain and unstable. True, there are some isolated examples of lifelong homosexual "marriages"; but they are the exceptions and are themselves sometimes marked by "infidelity." Do you doubt this unstable condition? Then consider what homosexual William Carroll writes:

> "While the homosexual couples I have known have usually struggled to maintain a loving and enduring relationship, very often these 'marriages' turned out to be tumultuous affairs, with each partner seeking a position of dominance in the relationship. Because of emotional conflicts, and various societal stresses and strains, most such love affairs do not last very long—six months to two years is probably the average."

Why are "most such love affairs" short-lived and "tumultuous affairs"? Well, consider how homosexuals make their contacts, as Carroll explains:

> "Say it is a pleasant afternoon and you're strolling along the street taking in the sights. You happen to notice that among the people up ahead, coming your way, is a young man who seems to be looking rather fixedly at you. As he approaches, for a split second, his eyes roam your body, and just



Homosexual "marriage"—does it last?

as quickly become riveted to yours. This eye-to-eye communication—he's trying to tell you something—continues until he passes you. Well, sir, you've just been 'cruised.' Anyone who is cruised and finds himself interested would casually stop, perhaps to examine a store window, then slowly look back. The young man with the roaming eyes will also have stopped down the street, and he, too, will be looking back."

Sophisticated homosexuals may say that such practices as "cruising" are beneath their dignity. But Carroll disagrees:

"I don't think it is putting it too strongly to say that cruising in streets, offices, stores, theater lobbies, or at parties—and certainly in gay bars—goes on almost continually for most gay men . . . The compulsivity and promiscuity implied by all of this activity is part and parcel of the whole gay world."

As a consequence of the "compulsivity and promiscuity" homosexuals admit that they often have no idea with whom they are going to bed. They sometimes do not even know each other's name.

Does that strike you as the way to develop a meaningful and lasting relationship with another person? Is it the way to get to know people you can trust? Hardly. It is no wonder that only "tumultuous affairs" follow!

Another adverse effect of this "compulsivity and promiscuity" is venereal disease. VD is on the increase among homosexuals and it affects them in ways known almost only to their world. Gonorrhea and syphilis of the larynx, mouth and anus are increasingly common among homosexuals, doctors report. That hardly strikes any self-respecting person as appealing.

A "Gay" Future?

And what about the future? Most persons, as they get older, want a degree of security. Do homosexuals feel this confidence? Most of them reveal otherwise. Ralph S. Schaffer brings this feeling on their part to light in an article in *Gay Sunshine*. He writes:

"At hundreds of gay liberation meetings in four cities, I have quietly raised my voice to speak of the youthism of gay life . . . It is the most vicious and entrenched of our [problems] . . . It is tragic because it leaves half our gay people lonely, alienated, and unwanted. . . . We hear a lot about the gay spirit, a spirit of a special tender love. Where is it? How can you speak of such a thing when millions of gays over 30 are lonely, isolated, rejected, unloved and unwanted! . . . Of course, young people don't really believe they will someday be a hoary 33 years old! Believe me, it comes faster than you think. . . . In gay liberation I've known more gay people than in all my life. [But] I have never been so lonely."

Schaffer feels the futility and hopelessness that faces every homosexual. Long-lasting, trustful relationships—anything even approaching security—rarely exist among them.

Not surprisingly, many homosexuals lapse into deep depression. The Tucson *Daily Citizen* asked a local homosexual to discuss his life in an article. He opens his story: "How ironic that I've been asked to tell the story of what it's like to be homosexual at a time when I have been contemplating ending my life . . . It's crisis time. Again. As a male homosexual ages, the critical periods come quicker, sharper, deeper. I'm nearly 40, which is too old, too fat . . . too ugly to . . . attract a lover. (Having a lover is about the only hedge against the sickness of loneliness that proves terminal to nearly every homosexual.)." Other homosexuals agree, speaking of the "dread of growing old alone."

The Bible's View—Is It Harsh?

Happiness and any degree of security are hard to come by for anyone today. But, as the life accounts of so many homosexuals show, their course is even more uncertain and, in fact, self-defeating. Compare their own confessions with the state-

ments made by the apostle Paul concerning homosexuality: "God has abandoned them to degrading passions . . . and [they are] experiencing *in their own persons* the inevitable penalty of what they have done." (Rom. 1:26, 27, *An American Translation*) Do not the admissions of actual longtime homosexuals and the results seen in their own course of life show up the truthfulness of these Biblical words? Does it not lead to an "inevitable penalty" of frustration and hopelessness? Yes—according to the homosexuals.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the Bible says that homosexuality is "degrading" and that "those practicing such things are deserving of death." (Rom. 1:32) Of course, it is up to God and his glorified Son to execute any such death penalty at the proper time.—2 Thess. 1:6-10.

"But is this not harsh on God's part?" some persons ask. After all, a person cannot help it if he is a homosexual, can he? It is true that many feel that change is all but impossible and so may conclude that God is being overly stern with homosexuals. They may argue that a person "is born a homosexual" and claim that there is a genetic inclination toward the practice. But if that is the case, why is it that some individuals are homosexual for only part of their life, maybe in their later years? If homosexuality were inherited, would it not be evident all through life and remain with them? That seems logical. So something other than inheritance must figure into the cause of their homosexual actions.

One study suggests that homosexual men tend to have less of the male hormone testosterone in their blood and fewer sperm than do heterosexual men. However, even if that were true, the point raised in *The New England Journal of Medicine* is valid: Are men homosexual because they lack testosterone? Or do men lose testosterone once they have become homosexuals? That cannot be positively determined.

Some defenders of homosexuality argue that the practice must be considered normal since, as they say, it is even found in the animal world. Male monkeys, for instance, have been observed mounting other male monkeys. Of course, just because animals may engage in a certain practice does not mean that humans should use that as an excuse to imitate or "ape" them, does it? But does the abundance of gathered evidence really indicate that animals are homosexual? No. The 1974 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says: "This great mass of data, however, cannot answer the question whether any of these animals is a homosexual. No adult animals other than human beings are known to prefer orgasmic intercourse regularly with their own sex."

Others have said that lack of a strong father to lead the family contributes toward homosexuality. It cannot be denied that ideally a boy should have a manly example after which to pattern his life. (Eph. 6:1-4) However, if there were several boys in one family who had no father, should not all of them turn homosexual if that is the sole cause of the problem? Yet that rarely happens. Many boys have been reared with a lack of close fatherly direction and yet they did not turn to homosexuality.

There is virtual agreement among experts on this point: the exact cause of homosexuality is unknown. It is no doubt a combination of factors that turns a person from normal heterosexual relationships to homosexual ones. There is, however, in the last analysis, another fact to keep in mind: Homosexuals have *chosen* their way of life. Darrel Johnson, an editor of *Gay-Vue* magazine, shows that this is the case:

"A person apparently has the potential for conforming to any one or all of the various sexual modes. This being true, somewhere along the line a person finally settles on a preference."

Warren Blumenfeld, coordinator of the national Gay Students Center, even compares the choice between "sexual modes" to buying an automobile; he says, 'One person likes a Cadillac and another likes a sports car.'

People are "gay," then, because that is what they *want*. As the Bible says, it is "in keeping with the desires of their hearts." Therefore, the Bible's condemnation of this practice is justified when it says that both male and female homosexuals receive "in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error"; they "will not inherit God's kingdom."—Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

It logically follows that they can change if they really want to change, does it not? The Bible is correct when it refers to some who carried on in such practices in the first century and says, "that is what some of you *were*. But you have been washed clean."—1 Cor. 6:11.

Find the Real Life

Are you a member of the homosexual community? Can you say that you have honestly found satisfaction and fulfillment in that way of life? Thousands of homosexuals have learned in the hard way that the "gay life" is not gay. Their course, says homosexual William Carroll, "can lead to cynicism, despair and even suicide." Why let that happen to you? Why not change course like those first-century homosexuals and really enjoy life?

Any person who is truly desirous of bringing his life morally into alignment with God's will and finding true happiness is invited by the publishers of this magazine to contact Jehovah's Witnesses. They want to help you to learn how you "might have life and might have it in abundance." —John 10:10.

SHOULD THOSE WHO WORSHIP GOD BE VEGETARIANS?

"VEGETARIANISM: GROWING WAY OF LIFE, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE YOUNG." So read a page-wide headline in the New York *Times*, March 21, 1975. The article went on to tell that nowadays vegetarians "have some powerful supporters on their side, including Dr. Jean Mayer, the

Harvard nutritionist." The *Times* also noted that some vegetarians "are members of religious groups such as the Seventh Day Adventists and Hare Krishna, whose members refrain from eating meat."

This raises some interesting questions. Should those who worship God be vegetarians? If so, what kind of vegetarians should they be? That there are many categories of vegetarians was particularly noticeable last August at a World Vegetarian Congress held in Orono, Maine. Among those present were "fruitarians . . . who eat only fruit; ovo-lacto vegetarians, who eat eggs, milk and cheese in addition to vegetarian fare; vegans . . . who use no food or clothing from the animal kingdom; natural hygienists, who do not use salt, sugar, refined flour, condiments, and do not believe in combining fruits and vegetables in meals; the Jain vegetarians from India, who do not use any food that grows below ground, such as potatoes and carrots," and also others. (New York *Times,* August 22, 1975) The report went on to say that "occasionally the vegetarians here will argue among themselves, usually good naturedly, over which is the 'true way.'"

While there are thus seen to be many variations, by and large, as Dr. Jean Mayer notes, vegetarianism is an idea "that has three things going for it all at once—economics, health and compassion." The doctor might have added that with some it is also a matter of religion.

The Economic Factor

The argument on the basis of economics cannot be lightly dismissed and is two-pronged. First, it costs less for a person to live on a vegetable diet than on a diet including meat, and, of course, the more that meat plays a role in one's diet, the greater the difference in cost. This may be considered a strong argument in favor of a vegetarian diet, since we eat to live and do not live to eat. But the fact remains that it is not always convenient to live by such a diet. For example, people living in the Arctics would have to emigrate to more temperate zones if they wanted to become vegetarians. Besides, there is the matter of the pleasure derived from eating.

Second, there is the greater economic reason relating to the production of food itself. Thus we are told that in the course of a year an acre (.4 hectare) of land can produce about 200 pounds (91 kilos) of meat, but ten times as much grain and a hundred times as much in the way of potatoes. But this is all part of a system, and while, if all people became vegetarians, there would be plenty of food for all, how much good can true worshipers, who comprise but a very small fraction of the world's population, accomplish by not eating meat? As long as the world is run by selfish men under the power and influence of Satan the Devil, its god, there is no likelihood of any equitable distribution of food. —2 Cor. 4:4.

The Health Factor

Many have become vegetarians because of the health factor. Dr. Mayer, in an article appearing in the New York *Daily News,* May 14, 1975, said that he had a tremendous response to a previous article on the growth of vegetarianism, and he further assured his readers that a "vegetarian diet is nutritional." It is a fact recognized by the medical profession in general that the average Argentinean, American and Canadian in particular eats too much meat. But whether everyone would be better off by not eating any meat at all is debatable. And there is also the matter of how practical it would be in view of the eating habits of the population at large. Dr. Mayer went on to show how people

have lost weight by becoming vegetarians, for, while they may be eating more carbohydrates, they eat far less fat, which has twice the calories of carbohydrates.

However, a strictly vegetarian diet often is deficient in vitamin B_{12}, which is "essential to prevent the type of pernicious anemia that eventually causes degeneration of parts of the brain and spinal cord." And "a vegetarian diet also may be deficient in vitamin D . . . It also may lack iron because the best and most readily available supply comes from meat, particularly liver, shellfish and other animal foods." Concludes vegetarian Mayer, "in general, the more restricted any diet, the more likely it is to be unbalanced and deficient in one or another nutrient. This rule applies to vegetarian diets as well as to bizarre, weight-loss diets."

The Compassionate and Religious Factors

With not a few vegetarians the strongest argument in favor of their way of life is the one based on compassion for animals. Such vegetarians produce and distribute auto stickers reading, "Love Animals—Don't Eat Them," and buttons, "Be Kind to Animals—Don't Eat Them." To support their position, vegetarians point not only to such men as Buddha, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Ovid, Voltaire, Shaw and Schweitzer, but even to such men of military fame as Field Marshal Montgomery and Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding (RAF, "Battle of Britain").

The matter of compassion no doubt is the most serious objection to eating meat, but is it truly sound? Or is it being too sentimental? Above all, does this position find support in God's Word, the Bible?

It seems that here is another instance where the inspired wisdom found at Jeremiah 10:23 and 8:9 applies: "To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." "The wise ones [of this world] . . . have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?" God's Word gives us a balanced understanding of the subject, for it contains divine wisdom. So, turning to this source, what do we learn?

First of all, it shows that human life is sacred and that whoever deliberately takes the life of another person must forfeit his own life. At the very time that God, for the first time, gave this law to mankind, as represented by Noah and his family of flood survivors, God authorized meat to be eaten. (Gen. 9:3-5) In other words, in the same breath, as it were, that he strictly forbade the taking of human life and pronounced the penalty therefor of capital punishment, God authorized the killing of animals for food.

This distinction between man and animals we find throughout the Scriptures. In fact, from earliest times animals were offered as sacrifices with God's approval. (Gen. 4:2-5; 8:20, 21) Much slaughtering of animals was involved in the many kinds of sacrifices required under the law of Moses. And did not God require that the Israelites eat meat, lamb or kid, at least once each year at the Passover celebration, not to say anything of their frequent eating of meat when making communion sacrifices? In particular were the priests meat eaters, as they partook of each one's communion sacrifice. To carry this a step farther, God himself is represented as sharing symbolically in eating flesh in that the portion that was burned on the altar was represented as being his share.—Ex. 12:3-9; 34:25; Lev. 7:11-15.

In keeping with the foregoing is the example of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There is no question about his love and

compassion for humankind. (Phil. 2:5-8) He revealed God's will for us and at the same time served as our model. (1 Pet. 2:21) Did he object to the eating of meat? No, for as a faithful Jew he ate meat at least on every Passover. More than that, he had no scruples against catching and eating fish, for on two occasions he caused his disciples to catch a large netful of fish. Also, on two, if not more, occasions he caused a few fish to multiply miraculously so as to feed thousands of men, women and children.—Mark 8:18-20; Luke 5:4-6; John 21:6-11.

The question of eating meat came up among the early Christians, but not out of compassion for animals. As Jews they had been forbidden to eat certain kinds of meat and it became necessary to show them that they were no longer under the law of Moses in these matters. (Acts 15: 19, 20) And there was also the problem of eating meat offered to idols. That worshipers of God were not to be judged on the basis of whether they ate meat or not the apostle Paul makes clear: "One man has faith to eat everything, but the man who is weak eats vegetables. Let the one eating not look down on the one not eating, and let the one not eating not judge the one eating." Let it be noted that the foregoing Scriptural counsel and examples effectively refute the position of those who, on religious grounds, would object to the eating of meat.—Rom. 14:2, 3.

From the foregoing it is clear that the slaying of animals to serve human need is not against the will of God. His Word, however, does encourage showing consideration for animals. (Prov. 12:10) But it does not require us to "love" animals to the extent of putting them on the same level as humans. Why, while Adam and Eve were still in the garden of Eden, God apparently caused animals to be slain to provide coverings for them. (Gen. 3:21-23) In particular does it seem to show a lack of balance for persons to crusade energetically against the killing of animals for food while having no objection to blood-spilling wars that cause untold misery, hardship, suffering and death to millions of men, women and children, by means of guns, torpedos and bombs.

To the question, 'Should worshipers of God be vegetarians?' the answer must be that it is an individual, personal matter. If a person is convinced of the value of it from the standpoint of cost, economics or health, and finds it practical, he may adopt a vegetarian regimen. But he cannot find ethical support for his restricted diet in God's Word. If he becomes involved in that aspect of vegetarianism, he is losing sight of God's way of viewing things.

What is important today is not whether one eats meat or not. Rather, it is whether one is worshiping the true God Jehovah with spirit and truth, in the way that He sets out in his Word, the Holy Bible. Jesus Christ illustrated that way for us. He ministered to the needs of people, humans, both materially and spiritually, but especially spiritually, for, as he said, "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." His is the example all true worshipers of God will want to follow.—Matt. 4:4; John 4:24.

IN COMING ISSUES

- ***A Mixed-up World —Can You Change It?***
- ***World Council of Churches —A House Divided.***
- ***Spotting the Furious Typhoon.***

SURVIVING AMID CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON

As told by "Awake!" correspondent in Lebanon

FOR months Lebanon has teetered on the brink of collapse. The country resembles a scarred battlefield, particularly its capital city, Beirut. The property damage and revenue loss run into the thousands of millions of dollars.

Worse still is the horrible human toll—by early spring some 15,000 to 20,000 had been killed and thousands more wounded in the yearlong war. Since Lebanon has a population of only a little more than three million, it would be comparable if the United States lost well over a million people in a civil war! That would be more than three times the U.S. battle deaths during all of World War II!

From my observations, many people here feel that this war really started on Sunday, April 13, 1975. On that day a busload of Palestinian commandos entered the Maronite Christian suburb of Ain-el-Rummaneh. The bus was riddled with machine-gun fire, killing all of the some thirty occupants. This incident sparked a nearly week-long battle in Beirut.

The war since then has been a series of battles, or "rounds," as they came to be called, interspersed with cease-fires—over thirty of them so far. This spring 2,000 were killed and 4,000 wounded in a two-week period, as fighting grew progressively more severe. Lulls have come toward the end of each month, evidently so that order can be reestablished long enough for banks to reopen and gunmen can pick up their paychecks.

Religion a Factor

As in Ireland, this is a war pitting one religious group against another. In Lebanon's case, it is professed Christians versus Moslems. Back in 1943, when I was only thirteen years old, Lebanon gained independence from France. At that time, professed Christians were said to be a slight majority of the population, and it was agreed that they would prevail over Moslems in the legislative and executive branches of government by a 6 to 5 ratio. It was also agreed that Lebanon would have a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni Moslem premier and a Shiite Moslem speaker of parliament.

But circumstances have changed. Moslems now outnumber professed Christians, and they believe that adjustments in government should be made accordingly. Also, some 400,000 Palestinian refugees now live in Lebanon, and many of these are heavily armed. It's a complex situation, with various competing factions. And the repeated outbursts of violence have caused thousands to flee the country.

My wife and I have chosen to remain so that we can share in bringing the comforting message of God's kingdom to the distressed Lebanese people. Besides us, there are some 1,800 others of Jehovah's Witnesses who are doing the same thing. Our completely neutral position has been a protection, although there are isolated incidents of Witnesses being hurt, and even killed.

One Witness died by sniper fire as she was hanging out her wash. And another, who ignored warnings not to leave the house where the Witnesses had gathered, was shot dead when he returned home. Other Witnesses have been wounded by bullets and shrapnel, one by a bayonet. But we are grateful that such incidents have been remarkably rare.

The religious aspect of the war has been felt very strongly, and it is perhaps the most frightening feature of the whole conflict. In areas where the Moslems predominated, professed Christians were taken from their homes in the middle of the night and many of them were never seen again. Professed Christians did the same to the Moslems. But Jehovah's Witnesses are known to be different.

"The religious aspect of the war has been felt very strongly."

Peaceable with All

We have always tried to deal with everyone alike, whether nominal Christian or Moslem, applying the Bible counsel: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." (Rom. 12:18) On one occasion members of the Maronite League visited a Witness in an effort to persuade him and his children to join the vigilantes and to contribute 300 Lebanese pounds for ammunition.

The Witness told them: "I cannot share in anything to do with war. And besides your war isn't God's. In fact, God soon is to bring to an end all men with their guns and usher in a peaceful system under Christ's rule." Later, when conditions in the area improved, the Witness noted that his firm and neutral position had won the respect of his neighbors.

This neutral stand has repeatedly worked to our benefit. For example, one evening a Witness offered a ride home to a Moslem fellow worker. They were stopped by armed men who were going to kill the Witness because he was a Christian. But his Moslem companion pleaded for his life, explaining: "This man is different from the others who call themselves Christians. He is neutral. He doesn't involve himself in politics."

When the gunmen refused to listen, the Moslem man said: "If you won't leave us alone, you will have to kill both of us." Because of this sincere plea, they both were set free.

Another Witness relates that he had no food in his house, and because of the armed men everywhere it wasn't safe to venture outside. But then a young Moslem boy from a nearby village appeared at his home. "My parents," he said, "sent you this bread. And whatever else you need, please tell us. We are ready to get it for you."

Reputation of Witnesses Spreads

In the north of the country there is a "Christian" village that is surrounded by Moslem villages. There are two congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in this village. When the Moslems attacked the village and came to the house where the Witnesses had gathered, the gunmen were told: "We are Jehovah's Witnesses. We have no weapons and we are completely neutral. Here are our houses, do to them as you see fit." The gunmen were very surprised and promised not to harm them.

In a village I later visited, even the Catholic priest had armed himself with a machine gun. Extreme pressure was put on the Witnesses to give up their neutral position and also to arm themselves for an anticipated attack. Because they wouldn't, one rightist leader said: "When this war is over we will turn our attention against you!" Yet what happened when the attack began on January 20, 1976?

Regular defenders of the village fled. The priest discarded his weapon and hid. Other villagers who had armed themselves sought to hide their weapons; still others threw theirs away. One rightist leader tried to give his gun to a Witness, saying: "It's known that Jehovah's Witnesses don't have weapons."

Also, many persons sought refuge in Witness homes. In one such home over sixty persons gathered! After one of the Witnesses offered prayer asking Jehovah's protection, a daughter of the political leader remarked: "Now I feel at ease, for Jehovah is the God who can protect." Though armed men entered the home and stole some valuables, no one was harmed.

In another Witness home about fifty persons gathered. The presiding overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses there reports: "I heard a Moslem neighbor tell the armed men, 'Don't touch this house. They are

"The priest discarded his weapon and hid."

Bible students, different from the others.' Later, though, gunmen appeared. But I had opened all the doors purposely. So when they called I answered quickly, inviting them in. I spoke kindly and unhesitatingly, explaining that we were Jehovah's Witnesses. Finding no weapons, they left." All the homes in the neighborhood were looted except this one.

In the northern city of Tripoli clashes between the fighting factions were extremely violent. Hundreds of shops and homes were looted and burned, including those of my fleshly brothers. It was particularly dangerous for Christians, so one Moslem neighbor told a Witness: "These people don't know that you're Jehovah's Witnesses. So tell us what you need and we will get it for you."

Getting Away Safe

On occasion the fighting became so severe that flight seemed the wise course. A Witness in Tripoli reported that the four cars in which she and fellow Witnesses were fleeing were stopped on the outskirts of the city by thirty to forty gunmen. She recognized some of them, knowing them by name. So these men spoke up in behalf of the Witnesses. Later, one of them told her: "God was with you. You don't know how many pieces you would have been."

Some were forced to flee their homes on several occasions as fighting became very intense. One Witness in a Beirut suburb tells of one of his escapes during the early morning of October 27:

"We discovered that we were surrounded. Out the front window I saw gunmen, and from the back window I saw a rival

faction. Neither was aware that the other group was there, but I knew they would soon find out. So my wife and I immediately laid flat on the floor, escaping the bullets that began flying.

"Fortunately none of the gunmen entered our house. We don't know why, but we thank Jehovah God that they didn't. At about 9:30 a.m., when the shooting was not so intense, a neighbor, apparently unaware of what was going on, arrived in his car. Just then heavy firing began again. I quickly opened the door and he joined us on the floor.

"When there was another lull in the fighting, we decided to run for it. We rushed for his car, and though there was some shooting as we fled, we weren't hit. I had sold my car a few days before, and so felt that this man, who provided us a way of escape, was heaven-sent."

Strange things often occur in the midst of this strange war. A Witness reports the following episode during a fierce exchange of gunfire in a Beirut suburb on December 10: "To our surprise we heard some shouting through a loudspeaker requesting that both sides stop shooting. The speaker was saying, 'We are brothers, stop fighting.'

"We looked and saw an unarmed army officer accompanied by a priest. As they were walking down the street, many of the fighters came down from their strongholds and joined the march for a cease-fire. Shooting stopped. People were on their balconies welcoming the peace. But after only three hours the fighting began again."

The renewed battle lasted for many days, and Witness families were in the heart of the area. Eventually they were able to flee. Their homes were riddled with bullets and shrapnel, but none of them were hurt.

We always have our bags packed so as to be ready if we have to make a quick getaway. But only on one occasion have we personally left for safer ground. We remained four days, then returned when conditions apparently improved. Mainly we came back because we wanted to be with our Christian congregation.

Later, the place that we had gone to as safer became a battleground. A friend of ours there told us what happened one Monday morning in December. "At 11 a.m. a huge explosion shook the house. My husband called the children and me together and said, 'That was a very close call. Let's thank Jehovah that we're still alive,' and we all joined him in prayer.

"After the fighting died down, we opened our front door and saw our veranda covered with broken glass and shrapnel. The mortar shell had landed next to the bedroom where, during the night, we all had been sleeping! Our beds were covered with plaster, glass and shrapnel. If the shell had landed when we were sleeping, we would surely have been seriously injured, if not killed."

Headquarters Family in Danger

We were interested in our fellow Christians living at the branch headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in a Moslem section of Beirut. Before moving from there recently to a safer place outside the city, the headquarters family had some scary experiences. One family member on February 6 described conditions this way:

"For about a month we didn't even bother to go to bed in our rooms. When it was time to sleep we put mattresses in the little entranceway, as it was the safest room in the house. We all curled up there and slept in our clothes, since we never knew

"People were on their balconies welcoming the peace."

"It got down to real street fighting."

what the night would bring. When that phase of the fighting passed, the rightists tried to get control of strategic buildings on our side of town.

"Then it got down to real street fighting, from street to street and from house to house. It looked like the rightists would come up the street in front of us and the leftists behind us, so we decided to evacuate. However, there was no way to get completely out of the area, but there were safer houses, so we went to the home of a Witness about a mile (1.6 kilometers) up the street from us. We stayed there for two weeks and then we were able to go back home."

One night was especially harrowing for the headquarters family. It was a night that the main commercial center of Beirut was set aflame, and the section around the branch home was also marked for destruction. Witnesses at the branch give some of the details:

"About 10:30 p.m. we were startled by a burst of machine-gun fire right in front of the house. As two members of our family looked from the veranda, they saw five or six gunmen come out of the hotel directly in front of us—then, suddenly, a loud explosion. What a racket when seven floors of glass windows and doors came shattering down in front of us!

"Then shop after shop was set afire, and gunmen drove back and forth in front of the shops adding fuel to the flames, making sure they burned. They shot at anyone who tried to put the fires out. The night sky was red from all the blazes.

"As we were watching the fires from one of the back bedrooms, we were rocked by another explosion. We rushed to the front of the house and saw that a bomb had exploded in a grocery shop in our building. Our own building was on fire! What worried us most was a gas storage room in the building. If the fire reached it, it would probably bring down our building and the one next to us. All the neighbors on the street cooperated and we got the fire out before it did much damage."

Roadblocks and Kidnappings

When there was a break in the fighting, the city was still paralyzed by mobile roadblocks, kidnappings and snipers. Several carloads of gunmen would suddenly appear on the streets, blocking traffic, and people would be dragged from their cars. Pedestrians, too, were kidnapped right off the city sidewalks. A member of the headquarters family of Jehovah's Witnesses reports:

"We watched many of the kidnappings from the window of our house. Flying barricades would stop right on our corner and the gunmen would start snatching innocent people. The terrible thing about it was that many who were taken would never return. A few Witnesses were kidnapped and some were beaten, but no serious harm came to any."

Another member of the headquarters family tells about an experience he had:

"Seven floors of glass windows and doors came shattering down in front of us!"

"After one of the many cease-fires, the government radio announced that the roads were safe. So I left that Saturday morning for the downtown post office, since part of my job at the branch office was to check the postbox. I reached the post office safe-

ly, but there I heard talk about kidnappings on the very streets I must use on my return trip.

"I asked a policeman about the safest road back home. He answered: 'I don't know. I might tell you about a road that is safe now, but in five minutes it might not be.' Those mobile roadblocks were set up quickly and were moved from place to place.

"So I decided to follow the traffic. On the way I escaped two roadblocks by turning around and going down one-way streets the wrong way. The next day I read that many of those kidnapped and murdered were on the same roads I had taken! It came to be called 'Black Saturday,' because on that day hundreds of persons were kidnapped or killed outright."

Under these circumstances every trip is potentially dangerous—and survival is an immediate question. A missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses tells about returning with a woman who had fled her home to pick up some belongings. "As we stepped out of the hired car, the doorkeeper of the neighboring building shuffled over and muttered in an undertone, 'Don't stay in the area; there is going to be trouble.'

"So we quickly finished our business, and got back into the car, our knees shaking. As we reached the corner, I saw a young man, his face a strange red color. The thought went through my mind, 'Poor thing, he must have been badly burned.' Then I looked again, and realized that he had a woman's colored stocking stretched over his face. And he was not alone!

"There were others with the same gruesome-looking head coverings. Was it a roadblock? I froze! No one in the car spoke. The driver drove as fast as possible, but his hands were shaking. It was as though we passed between those gunmen without their seeing us. We heaved a sigh of relief as we got into the area where we were staying."

Christian Meetings and Preaching

Throughout the war we have been able to hold our Christian meetings in small groups, and we even have had our circuit assembly program. Meetings are often opened and closed, as it were, with machine-gun fire. Actually, we can sometimes hear gun fire, mortar and other explosions all during our meetings, at times close by. Once when returning from a meeting we turned into a blacked-out street right into the face of two machine guns! We kept going, but our hearts were in our throats.

"We watched many of the kidnappings from the window of our house."

Also, we have been regularly sharing in our preaching work, showing others the comforting news in the Bible that God's kingdom will soon solve, not only Lebanese problems, but those of the rest of humankind as well. At first we were hesitant about going out of the house. But soon we did so as a matter of course, taking what precautions we could and trusting in Jehovah God for protection. And we have had many evidences of that protection.

Other Witnesses live with me in my home in a suburb of Beirut. Once, while I was away, the wife of a traveling minister who lives with me was on the balcony hanging out the wash. She happened to look down, and just below were two young men crouched with machine guns. She fell back and went running to the front of the house, catching my wife just before she left the house to go in the preaching work.

If she had left at that moment, she would have been caught in the cross fire. For half an hour they remained in the hallway as the gunfire went on.

As another example: My wife and I had a Bible study with a family of eleven not far from our home. The day after one of our studies a rocket came through the roof and exploded in the very room in which we had been the night before! Sad to say, however, two children were playing on the roof; one was killed and the other suffered a head injury.

We have always been able to get our Bible literature. How? Well, those lulls in fighting at the end of the month, which allow the gunmen to pick up their paychecks, have permitted us to transport our Bible literature to where it is needed.

Of course, there is danger in doing this, but in this activity, too, we have felt the protection of Jehovah God. On one occasion a shipment was stopped at a Moslem checkpoint. The gunmen asked: "What are those books?"

The traveling overseer, who was carrying the shipment, explained: "These books are about the Gospel." The armed men said: *"Imshi, Maa Salami,"* that is, "Go in peace."

Traveling Ministers' Visits

We have also been regularly receiving the upbuilding visits of our traveling ministers, or circuit overseers, as they are called. One of them explained to me:

"Due to the continuous heavy fighting, it has been very difficult to have a regular full week of activity with each congregation. I often go to a congregation, and as soon as the fighting subsides a bit, the elders quickly congregate the brothers and sisters and we hold all our regular meetings at one time.

'The day after one of our studies a rocket exploded in the very room in which we had been.'

"I remember once when I was serving a group of Witnesses in the mountains. My next visit was to be to a congregation in Beirut that was situated in an area of heavy fighting. So it was decided to let the Witnesses in Beirut come up to the mountains for their circuit overseer's visit.

"We could sense trouble in the air."

This had to be planned just right, for there was only one road open from Beirut to the mountains; the others were closed due to the presence of gunmen.

"The elders of the congregation assigned a set time for each family to arrive at our place of meeting. That Sunday morning, in a very orderly way, the Witnesses from the city began to arrive. What a wonderful sight to see over sixty in attendance! The meeting started at 9 a.m. and lasted till 2 p.m., and the brothers and the sisters were ready for more. Some of them had not seen one another for quite a while, so it was very touching to see them greeting one another. We didn't have the heart to break them apart, yet we had to encourage them to leave and get back home before it got dark and the road would be closed.

"Often we had close calls and narrow escapes. Once when visiting another congregation in a Moslem community, we could sense trouble in the air. So we shortened the meeting to give us all an opportunity to return home before it got too dark. The family that I was staying with and myself were the last ones to leave.

"Christian-Moslem hatreds run deep."

Incidentally, the week before, many atrocities had taken place in that same area.

"By the time our turn came to leave, it had gotten dark. So, as we headed home, we felt very uneasy. We were the only ones on the road, and we could hear the echo of every step we were taking. We felt as if eyes were looking at us from all directions. The closer we got to the house, the faster we picked up the pace. As we made the last turn, we suddenly heard voices shouting at us to stop.

"Fearing that we might be shot, we obeyed immediately, asking 'Who do you mean, us?' 'Yes,' they said, and ordered us to follow them. They were three young men with machine guns and who had their faces covered.

"They never really took a close look at us, but just told us to come with them. We did so, with our knees knocking, and with prayers in our hearts to Jehovah God. As we continued walking behind them, the mother of the family I was accompanying spoke a few words to her son. At that, suddenly, one of the armed men turned. He had recognized her voice and realized that she was a neighbor. He quickly apologized, and told her that they thought we were outsiders coming to spy out the neighborhood. But since she was from the area, they advised her to go home quickly, which, of course, we did."

Confidence in the Future

At this writing, the fighting goes on despite periodic cease-fires. Kidnappings, murders, looting and other crimes are rampant. One news report observes: "Moslems on the left and Christians on the right live and die by the gun. . . . Christian-Moslem hatreds run deep. Their thirst for revenge runs strong. A quick return to anything resembling normalcy is unlikely."

The breakdown of law and order has contributed to a weakening of moral standards. For example, a military camp came under siege by gunmen and was overrun. The camp had a commissary with food, clothing and other items. When those in the area saw what had happened, they joined in the looting.

A family of Jehovah's Witnesses was encouraged to share, but they declined. This amazed the neighbors. In fact, they couldn't believe them, and so they brought things from the army camp to the Witnesses. However, the offer was refused, with the explanation that taking these things would violate their Bible-trained consciences. —Heb. 13:18.

Yes, one thing is sure, Jehovah's Witnesses in Lebanon are holding fast to a course of *true* Christian integrity and *complete* neutrality. And we will continue to share with *all* Lebanese people the comforting message that soon God's kingdom will remove all reason for sorrowing by ushering in a righteous new system. Serving as ambassadors of that kingdom has helped us to survive amid civil war in Lebanon.—2 Cor. 5:20.

"Like a Thistle Whirl"

REGARDING the enemies of God's people, the psalmist prayed: "O my God, make them like a thistle whirl, like stubble before a wind." (Ps. 83:13) In the psalmist's homeland one may often see during the fall a number of star thistles being blown about as a rolling, whirling mass. This is probably what the psalmist had in mind by his prayerful expression.

MEET MIGHTY LEVIATHAN

"I NEED hardly mention his limbs," reads an ancient description of Leviathan, "his strength, and the fitness of his armor. . . . Who can force open the doors of his mouth, close to his terrible teeth? . . . Should the sword reach him, it will not avail; nor will the spear, nor the dart, nor the javelin."—Job 41:4-18, *New American Bible.*

What creature has a set of fear-inspiring teeth and hide so tough that ancient swords, spears, darts and javelins were almost powerless to penetrate it? The creature is a reptile, one of the largest in existence. Since the ancient description of Leviathan was committed to writing in the Middle East, the creature meant was doubtless the Nile crocodile. This crocodile may attain a length ranging from thirteen to sixteen feet (3.9 to 4.8 meters).

The real power of the crocodile resides in its triangular snout. What a sight greets the eye when the hinged lower jaw drops open, revealing perhaps a full set of sixty-six sharp teeth! When the jaws clamp shut, the pressure exerted is tremendous. In his book *Nature Parade,* F. W. Lane writes: "In experiments in France a 120-pound [54-kilo] crocodile exerted a pressure between its jaws of 1,540 pounds [698 kilos]." —Pp. 83, 84.

The toughness of the crocodile's armor is indeed amazing. Naturalist R. L. Ditmars observes: "Against javelins and arrows the hide is undoubtedly invulnerable." (*Reptiles of the World,* 22nd printing, p. 16) Although not bulletproof, the plates, if struck obliquely, will often cause the bullet to ricochet. (*Library of Natural History,* Vol. V, p. 2381) Just what is the makeup of the crocodile's hide?

Tough horny scales imbedded in bony plates cover the upper parts of the back and the tail. The horny scales are arranged in rows. Most of them have a ridge or keel.

The underside consists of smooth horny scales. These usually have no bony plates beneath them. Especially toward the throat, however, there may be some small bony platelets.

The sides of the crocodile's body are covered with small knobby scales. On account of these scales the sides can stretch or expand—a vital requirement for breathing and, in the case of the female, an essential for accommodating the expansion resulting from pregnancy.

Because of its valuable hide, the crocodile has been slaughtered ruthlessly by men seeking quick profits. For leather goods, only the undersurfaces are used. Whenever small bony platelets are present in

the underside, the commercial value of the hide may be reduced.

Well-equipped for Its Existence

The crocodile is ideally equipped for its twofold existence on land and in water. The submarine-shaped body and powerful paddle tail enable it to swim rapidly. Situated on the highest part of the crocodile's head, the eyes, ear openings and external nostril openings can be above water while the rest of the head is submerged. That is why the crocodile can both see and breathe even though nearly the entire body may be beneath the surface of the water.

When the crocodile is totally submerged, special muscles or valves close the external nostril openings. Likewise, scaly flaps close the reptile's ears. The translucent inner eyelid (nictitating membrane) protects the surface of the crocodile's eyeball from water and at the same time enables the reptile to have a measure of vision.

The internal nostril openings at the end of the crocodile's long nasal passage open, not into the roof of the mouth, but into the throat. What prevents the respiratory system from being flooded when the crocodile opens its mouth under water? A special valve arrangement comes to the rescue. A flap projects from the roof of the mouth just in front of the interior nostril openings, and there is a corresponding fold on the tongue. When the crocodile is submerged, the lower fold is pressed snugly against the upper flap, thereby preventing the water from getting into the throat. Because of this, the crocodile can still breathe when the mouth is open beneath the water while the nostrils are above water.

A Vital Role Among Living Things

Scientific investigation of the feeding habits of crocodiles has brought to light that, despite their being predators, they are not especially destructive. Comparatively lazy creatures, adult crocodiles expend relatively little energy. Their food requirements are far less than what many people might imagine. One researcher, Hugh Cott, stated: "Bearing in mind the fact that crocodiles feed mainly upon fish only during part of their life-cycle and that eventually many other foods are also taken, we are left with the surprising conclusion that the overall daily fish consumption of an individual crocodile is less in bulk than that of a white-breasted cormorant (which consumes at least one kilogram of fish per day)."

Crocodiles often feed on fish that prey on other fish and on those fish that are less valuable to humans. Whenever crocodiles disappear from a certain area, various kinds of fish get out of hand and threaten the existence of other varieties. By eating large water beetles, dragonfly nymphs and crabs that feed on newly hatched fish, young crocodiles allow more fish to mature.

Studies of the American alligator, a close relative of the crocodile, indicate that these mighty reptiles contribute much to the preservation of plant and animal life.

For example, in the Everglades, situated in the southern section of Florida, alligators keep the bony-scaled spotted garfish in check. Without control on the gar population, these fish would eat up all the valuable bass and bream, as well as other game fish.

The alligator contributes toward the preservation of living things by digging basinlike holes in areas where the water table fluctuates greatly. In the Everglades, these "gator holes" constitute the deepest pools. During periods of drought they are the last to dry up and so provide a refuge for various fish, amphibians and reptiles. Once the drought passes, the creature life preserved in the "gator holes" can begin to multiply. These holes also supply food and water for birds and mammals.

Nutrients derived from the alligator's droppings and remnants of its meals enrich the soil and contribute to the support of luxuriant vegetation. On the banks formed by material dredged from "gator holes" plants can start to grow that differ from those of the immediate surrounding area.

Even the movement of the alligator through its habitat has a beneficial effect on the landscape. Being a large reptile, the alligator makes channels through the plant life and thereby retards the processes that transform a pond into a marsh.

Truly, mighty "Leviathan" is an impressive creature. Its protective armor and the strength of its jaws are awe-inspiring. This reptile is marvelously suited for its existence and contributes a valuable part in preserving the present balance of living things. While perhaps not especially attractive to many people, mighty Leviathan should make one aware that it is unwise to underestimate the value of any creature. Especially now, since man's ruthless slaughter has exterminated this reptile in many areas, is its importance beginning to be discerned.

Who Is He?

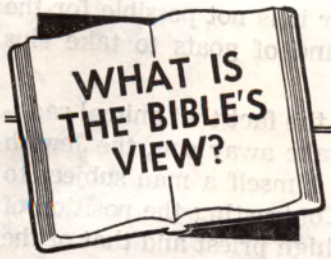
● In biblical usage the word "who" often involves far more than a question requesting a person's name. This is well illustrated in a number of Scriptural passages.

The man Nabal, for example, angrily turned David's messengers away with the words: "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? Nowadays the servants that are breaking away, each one from before his master, have become many." (1 Sam. 25:10) Nabal was acquainted with David, so he was not asking for an identification of the man. Rather, he was saying, 'Who does he think he is?' or, 'What does David amount to, so that I should grant him any favors?'

Naomi once asked Ruth, "Who are you, my daughter?" (Ruth 3:16) It may be that this was because Naomi did not recognize her in the dark. On the other hand, the question may have referred to Ruth's possible new identity in relationship to Boaz, her repurchaser.

After David had already served as harpist in his court, King Saul asked Abner: "Whose son is the boy?" (1 Sam. 17:55) On the significance of this question, a commentary by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch states: "It was not the name of David's father alone that he wanted to discover, but what kind of man the father of a youth who possessed the courage to accomplish so marvellous a heroic deed really was; and the question was put not merely in order that he might grant him an exemption of his house from taxes as the reward promised for the conquest of Goliath (ver. 25), but also in all probability that he might attach such a man to his court, since he inferred from the courage and bravery of the son the existence of similar qualities in the father. It is true that David merely replied, 'The son of thy servant Jesse of Bethlehem;' but it is very evident from the expression in ch. xviii. 1, 'when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul,' that Saul conversed with him still further about his family affairs, since the very words imply a lengthened conversation."

As is evident from the above examples, "who" often calls for giving a person's identity and reputation and not just the mere name.



Can a Perfect Law Have a Fault?

THE Law that God gave to the Israelites was perfect. Regarding that Law the Scriptures tell us: "The Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good." (Rom. 7:12) Yet it may be asked, Why, then, does the Bible also say that the Law covenant had a weakness, a fault?

We read: "If that first covenant had been faultless, no place would have been sought for a second." (Heb. 8:7) "There occurs a setting aside of the preceding commandment on account of its weakness and ineffectiveness. For the Law made nothing perfect."—Heb. 7:18, 19.

To understand how a perfect law could be spoken of as 'weak' and 'ineffective,' we must keep in mind that perfection can be relative. For example, a perfectly round peg is unsuitable to *fill a square hole.*

Similarly, in the case of the Law, it could not do that for which it was not designed. Nevertheless, it was holy, righteous, good, yes, faultless, as regards God's purpose respecting it. What purpose did it serve?

Answering this question, the apostle Paul wrote: "It was added to make transgressions manifest, until the seed should arrive . . . the Law has become our tutor leading to Christ." (Gal. 3:19, 24) "The Law has a shadow of the good things to come, but not the very substance of the things."—Heb. 10:1.

The Law fulfilled perfectly its purpose to make transgressions manifest. It set bounds, pointing out clearly what Jehovah God required as to the conduct of his people. Being imperfect, the Israelites were unable to keep that Law perfectly. Hence, it made their transgressions manifest. The Law showed undeniably that the Israelites needed to be forgiven of their transgressions, also that a sacrifice was required that really could atone for their sins.

As a tutor, the Law served to prepare the Israelites to receive the Messiah or Christ. In ancient times, the tutor or pedagogue was not the teacher, as a teacher in a school is. His responsibility was to keep the child from physical and moral harm. He could discipline the child and instruct it in matters of conduct. But he did not provide all the instruction needed. The tutor accompanied the child to school, turning it over to the instructor there.

Now, the Law did function like an ancient tutor. Its regulations were designed to safeguard the Israelites against damaging their relationship with Jehovah God and injuring themselves thereby. They were told: "In all the way that Jehovah your God has commanded you, you should walk, in order that you may live and it may be well with you and you may indeed lengthen your days in the land of which you will take possession."—Deut. 5:33.

The Law was also a strict disciplinarian. Wrongdoers did not go unpunished. Regarding serious violations of the Law, such as adultery, murder and kidnapping, we read: "Any man that has disregarded the law of Moses dies without compassion, upon the testimony of two or three." (Heb. 10:28) Speedy execution of deliberate transgressors served to fill observers with a healthy fear and acted as a restraining force on lawless action.

When the Messiah arrived, a repentant Jewish remnant willingly received him as their instructor. In their case, the Law fulfilled its purpose as a flawless tutor.

Various aspects of the Law, including festivals, the tabernacle and sacrifices, had a shadow that represented greater things to come. A shadow gives some idea of the general shape or design of the reality that casts it. Likewise the shadows of the Law aided right-hearted Israelites to identify the Messiah, as they could see how he fulfilled these shadows. Writing to Christians at Colossae, the apostle Paul pointed this out: "The reality belongs to the Christ." —Col. 2:17.

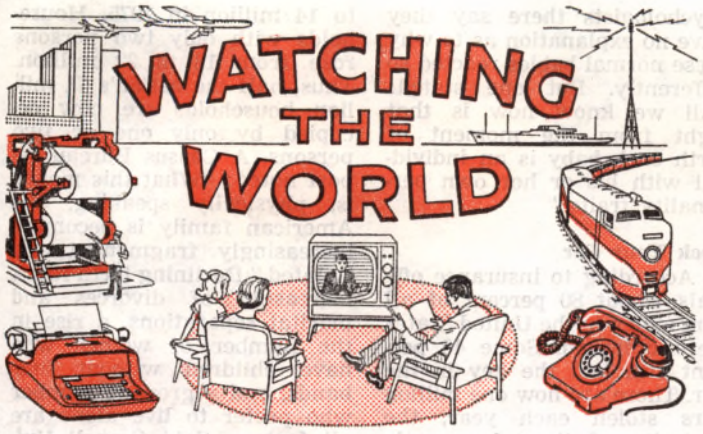
However, though the Law perfectly served the purpose of God, it could not do what it had not been assigned to accomplish. Something else was needed to bring about permanent cleansing from sin and to give individuals a clean conscience before Jehovah God. The new covenant, which God brought in through Christ Jesus, was, therefore, superior to the old Law covenant. The new covenant was validated, not by animal sacrifices, but by the sacrifice of the perfect man Jesus Christ. That perfect human sacrifice can purify from sins and give a clean conscience to those exercising faith in its atoning value.

The animal sacrifices offered under the Mosaic law arrangement merely foreshadowed the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ. At Hebrews 10:1-4 this is made plain: "Men can never with the same sacrifices from year to year which they offer continually make those who approach perfect. Otherwise, would the sacrifices not have stopped being offered, because those rendering sacred service who had been cleansed once for all time would have no consciousness of sins anymore? To the contrary, by these sacrifices there is a reminding of sins from year to year, for it is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take sins away."

In addition to the fact that animal sacrifices could not take away sins, the Jewish high priest was himself a man subject to sin and death. Contrasting the position of Jesus Christ as high priest and that of the Jewish high priests in the line of Aaron, Hebrews 7:26-28 states: "Such a high priest as this was suitable for us, loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners, and become higher than the heavens. He does not need daily, as those high priests do, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for those of the people: (for this he did once for all time when he offered himself up;) for the Law appoints men high priests having weakness, but the word of the sworn oath that came after the Law appoints a Son, who is perfected forever."

So the Law was 'weak' in the sense that its priesthood of dying men and its animal sacrifices could not completely or perfectly relieve the Israelites of all consciousness of sin. Only the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ and his superior priesthood could accomplish that.

The Holy Scriptures thus make it clear that the Law given to Israel was perfect in a relative sense. There was no flaw in its carrying out the purpose for which it had been given. It made transgressions manifest, foreshadowed a greater reality, made identification of that reality possible, and readied a people to receive the Messiah. Serving a preparatory role, the Law was replaced by the reality centering around Jesus Christ. Compared with that reality, the Law was weak and had a fault. However, when viewed from the standpoint of the purpose for which it was provided, the Law was perfect, flawless.



'False Patriotism'

◈ The persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Malawi has been widely criticized in the world press. Some commentators have suggested that this is evidence that many newly independent nations of Africa are not "civilized" enough for self-rule. But the Charleston *Gazette* reminds its American readers of their own past: "All of us should protest the treatment accorded the Witnesses in Malawi. But we should remember that we, too, were once moved by a false sense of patriotism to persecute, to a lesser degree, a harmless religious sect." That persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States took place during the late 1930's and early 1940's. So such things can happen even in a democracy unless freedoms guaranteed by law are guarded.

Evolutionists Wrong Again

◈ Some years ago evolutionists proclaimed that at last the crucial missing link between beast and man had been found, labeling the 'ape-man' Australopithecus. But in recent months, fossils discovered in East Africa show that modern-type man existed at the same time as the supposed 'ape-man.' The New York *Times* says: "Researchers said the new fossils provided conclusive evidence that Australopithecus, an extinct species once thought to be transitional between ape and man, was, instead, a contemporary of early man that became an evolutionary dead end." It is to be expected that promoters of evolution will come to such 'dead ends,' since their theory is not based on the truth.

Oil Independence?

◈ When an Arab oil embargo went into effect after the October 1973 Middle East war, proposals were made in the United States to become more independent of imported oil. However, the opposite has occurred. Domestic oil production has actually declined in recent years, and during one week in March of this year, for the first time in its history, the United States imported more oil than it produced. So instead of becoming more independent of outside oil sources, it has become more dependent than ever.

Catholics Disagree

◈ Priest-sociologist Andrew Greeley attributes much of the sharp decline in church attendance to the pope's anti-contraception encyclical "Humanae Vitae" in 1968. Catholic columnist Mary Carson, writing in the Catholic newspaper *Tablet*, stated that Catholics should ignore the pope's "mistaken" teachings on birth control. She added: "The day we have a woman Pope who has had 17 children, that day the church's position on birth control will change."

'Dead' Without Bingo

◈ New York priest Thomas Coyne notes that the falloff in church collections has put many parishes in a severe financial squeeze. He quotes a neighborhood priest as saying: "If they ever outlaw bingo in this archdiocese, we're dead." The National Opinion Research Center claims that the overwhelming rejection by the laity of the 1968 papal ban on artificial birth control is responsible for a drop of about one billion dollars a year in the Church's income.

Increased Surgery Risk

◈ Dr. Alan Pierce, lung specialist at Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, says that cigarette smokers have a much higher risk of pulmonary complications from surgery than do nonsmokers. He said that these include lung collapse and infections leading to such diseases as pneumonia. Dr. James Patterson of Portland also stated: "People do not realize how bad smoking is for them, how terrible the increase in cardiovascular troubles and lung disease. They don't realize that in their later years they will be unable to do activities they planned on."

Vanishing Forests

◈ "Despite all the warnings about pollution it is man's search for firewood which is likely to become the environmental problem of the 20th century," the Melbourne *Herald* observes. About half the timber cut in the world still fulfills its ancient role as fuel for cooking and for heating. And because of huge population increases, the destruction of forests is picking up speed, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's journal *Ceres*,

Dr. Erik Eckholm observes: "Trees are becoming scarce in the most unlikely places. Nepalese foresters told me that in some of the most remote villages in the world, deep in the once heavily forested foothills of Nepal, journeying out to gather firewood and fodder is now an entire day's task. Just one generation ago the same expedition required no more than an hour or two."

Deserts on the March

◈ Deserts are expanding. It is believed that among the main causes are harmful agricultural practices due to increasing population pressures. A study shows that about 43 percent of the earth's land surface is dry and barren, but only 36 percent is due to climatic conditions. The 7 percent difference is attributed to degrading by man. Among the causes of desert expansion are overgrazing by livestock and cultivation of land that can support agriculture only in good years. The result, when drought years come, is eradication of the vegetation, erosion, and the formation of permanent desert.

Rodents Attack Crops

◈ The French press agency reports that a plague of rats ravaged vast crop-growing regions of Senegal, West Africa. It was viewed as a national disaster unparalleled since the recent drought years that affected many West African countries. In one area near Dakar, experts said, there were 80,000 rats per acre.

Babies Differ

◈ Tests conducted in a Quebec hospital showed a great difference in reactions by babies to the same rocking motion. Some babies reacted with a faster heartbeat, some with a slower heart rate, and others had no reaction at all. Some of the babies cried, others relaxed drowsily. Doctors and psychologists there say they have no explanation as to why these normal babies reacted so differently. But one stated: "All we know now is that right from the moment of birth each baby is an individual with his or her own personality traits."

Lock Your Car

◈ According to insurance officials, about 80 percent of all cars stolen in the United States were unlocked. Some 40 percent still had the key in the car. There are now one million cars stolen each year, the majority of them by people under the age of twenty-one who take advantage of unlocked vehicles.

Farmers Are Older

◈ In times past, many young American couples would begin farming on a small amount of acreage, perhaps borrowing money to start out. Now farming has become such a large-scale and competitive industry that younger persons find it almost impossible to start a farm on their own. It is reported that the "start-up" cost of an American farm now runs at as much as $250,000. That is one reason why the average age of farmers in the country is now 50.3 years.

Family Breakups Increase

◈ More than a million divorces—1,026,000—were recorded last year among Americans, a 6-percent increase over the previous year. That is an all-time high, twice what it was ten years ago. Marriages decreased 4 percent last year, to 2.1 million, the lowest level since 1969. So there is now one divorce for every two marriages in the nation, testifying to the general breakdown of family life.

More Live Alone

◈ The number of Americans living alone is rising dramatically, from 11 million in 1970 to 14 million in 1975. Households with only two persons rose from 18 to 22 million. Thus, half the nation's 71 million households are now occupied by only one or two persons. A Census Bureau report noted: "What this means is, physically speaking, the American family is becoming increasingly fragmented and isolated." Declining birth rates, increasing of divorces and marital separations, a rise in the number of women who have children without husbands, and a growing number who prefer to live alone are all factors. Said Cornell University psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner: "All of these things splashed together mean an unraveling of the social fabric, and that means trouble."

High Kite Toll

◈ During the past New Year's season, power utility companies in Japan claimed to have suffered well over a million dollars in damage from Western-style kites, says the *Daily Yomiuri*. About 70,000 workers were mobilized to remove 92,000 kites caught on power lines throughout Japan. Five persons were killed when they tried to retrieve their own kites, and others were injured.

Football Can Be Deadly

◈ In one year 218,000 football-related injuries were treated in hospitals. The American Football Coaches Association reports that each year nearly 20 football players die from head and neck injuries suffered while playing football, and about 10 others die from football-related causes such as heart failure and strokes.

Lightning Danger

◈ Police in Salisbury, Rhodesia, say that about a hundred persons have been killed by lightning in that country in less than a year. The worst incident occurred when 21 peo-

ple in the same hut were killed by a bolt of lightning.

Pesticide Effectiveness Down

◈ The National Academy of Sciences in the United States says that chemical control of *important* insect pests is losing its effectiveness. A spokesman states that the decline has now become alarming. One factor was the appearance in many insects of genetic resistance to the pesticides. Also, the heavy use of chemicals kills the pests' natural enemies. The Academy recommended increased efforts at developing a "new generation of chemical pesticides," alternating crops to interrupt the life cycle of insects, and employment of biological weapons such as viruses and microbes and other insect enemies.

Afraid to Testify

◈ A law-enforcement research team in the United States says that because of the fear of reprisals, 23 percent of the eyewitnesses to crimes they interviewed deliberately provided police with incorrect names and home addresses. The result: numerous criminal cases were dropped due to lack of evidence. The fears are not altogether unjustified. In Cincinnati, 35 percent of the victims of crime who were preparing to testify reported that they had been threatened with reprisals. The *Rocky Mountain News* of Denver comments: "*Fear* of crime is growing as rapidly as crime itself. It is bad enough that thousands of people in our cities fear crime so much that they live behind barred windows and double-locked doors. It's even worse that thousands more live behind the invisible bars of fear that keep them from cooperating with the law."

Lesbian Episcopal Deacon

◈ New York's Episcopal bishop Paul Moore said that the ordination of avowed lesbian Ellen Barrett as a deacon "is a healthy development in our culture and our church." He noted: "Historically many of the finest clergy in our church have had this personality structure, but only recently has the social climate made it possible to be open about it." Moore asserted that homosexuality "is not a question of morality." But God differs with the bishop, viewing as "disgraceful" the sexual conduct of women who change "the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature." —Rom. 1:26, 27.

Unique Subway

◈ Sweden recently completed a six-mile-long subway line running from Stockholm to suburban Hjulsta. Its decorated stations feature such artworks as sculptures, golden mosaics, murals and even drawings by children. Therefore, some term this underground rail line "the world's longest art gallery," according to *Parade* magazine.