Awake!

OCTOBER 8, 1978

A BOOK THAT CAN PUT BREAD ON YOUR TABLE

Awake!®

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FEATURE ARTICLES

A BOOK THAT CAN PUT BREAD ON YOUR TABLE

How practical really is the Bible? In clear language it points out what to avoid, and what to do, to improve one's lot in life. From around the earth, real-life examples testify that it enables one to cope successfully with the economic problems of our day. The following series of articles shows how:

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WHY THIS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED

"Awake!" is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. It also shows how to cope with today's problems. Most importantly, "Awake!" builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new order within our generation.

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

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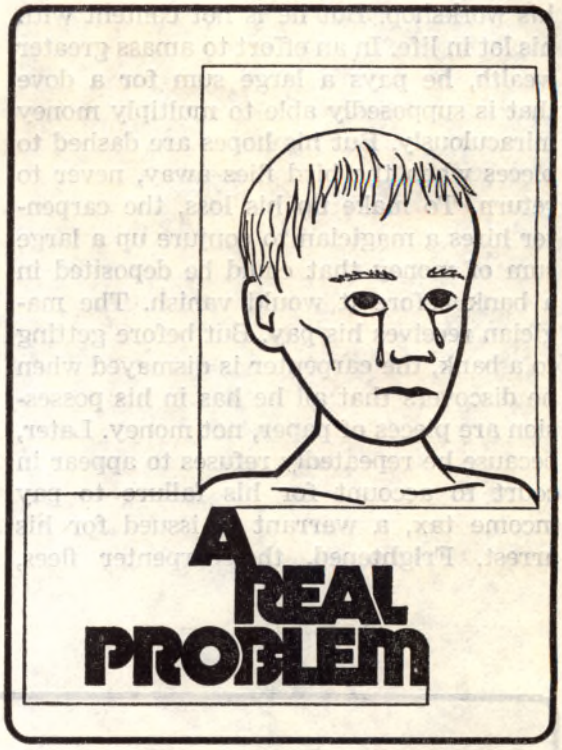


JOSEPH lives in Southeast Asia. His only shelter from the heavy rains is a bridge. Here he sleeps on a dirty straw mat. A rusty can serves as a drinking cup. Since the age of 10, when he ran away from his guardian, Joseph has been stealing to keep himself alive. His returns from theft for one year amounted to $60 (U.S.). That is more than the annual per capita income of most persons living in his country of nearly 140,000,000.

Such poverty is not limited to just a few of earth's inhabitants but is the daily lot of half the world's population. The annual per capita income in more than 30 countries, with sizable populations, is less than $200. It is believed that "800 million people survive on so little that their biological functions are handicapped." —*To the Point International.*

Even in lands where yearly incomes are much higher, millions find themselves among the hungry poor. This includes persons who are in serious financial straits because of gambling, alcohol abuse and the like. Furthermore, by resorting to such things, the poor worsen their already hard lot. Consider these examples:

A middle-aged man from a rural area in Rhodesia goes to Salisbury to sell his chickens. After receiving a good price for them, he decides to increase his funds by gambling. He wins twice, more than doubling his money. Although he thinks of going home, the gambling urge just will not let him do so. This time he loses. But he does not quit gambling until he has no more money. Then he puts his jacket into the game and loses it also. After unsuccessful efforts to obtain help from the police, he returns home empty-handed.

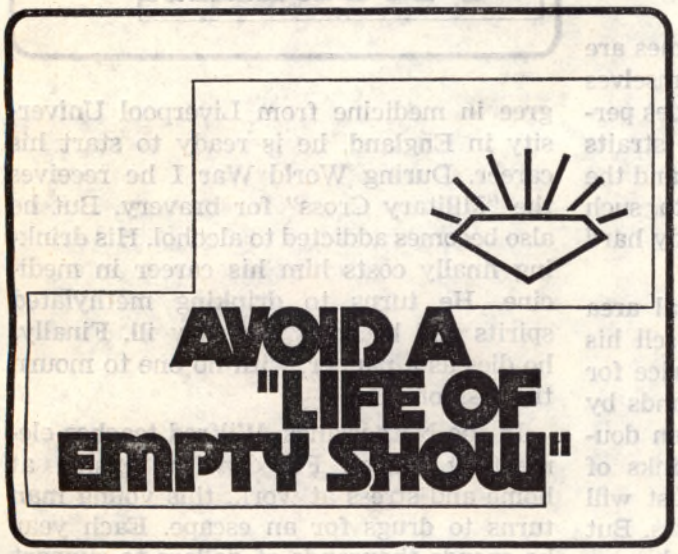
Then there is the case of an intelligent, handsome young man with a promising future. After receiving his doctor's degree in medicine from Liverpool University in England, he is ready to start his career. During World War I he receives the "Military Cross" for bravery. But he also becomes addicted to alcohol. His drinking finally costs him his career in medicine. He turns to drinking methylated spirits and becomes seriously ill. Finally, he dies as a pauper, with no one to mourn the loss of him.

In the Netherlands, Wilfred teaches elementary school. Faced with tension at home and stress at work, this young man turns to drugs for an escape. Each year he spends thousands of dollars to support his habit. Because of his addiction, he lives like a beggar, sometimes sleeping on the streets. He is also terrified that his addiction will be discovered and reported to the authorities. Finally he does lose his job.

A middle-aged carpenter in Ghana owns his own house and employs many men in

his workshop. But he is not content with his lot in life. In an effort to amass greater wealth, he pays a large sum for a dove that is supposedly able to multiply money miraculously. But his hopes are dashed to pieces when the bird flies away, never to return. To make up his loss, the carpenter hires a magician to conjure up a large sum of money that could be deposited in a bank before it would vanish. The magician receives his pay. But before getting to a bank, the carpenter is dismayed when he discovers that all he has in his possession are pieces of paper, not money. Later, because he repeatedly refuses to appear in court to account for his failure to pay income tax, a warrant is issued for his arrest. Frightened, the carpenter flees, leaving behind his house, family and workshop.

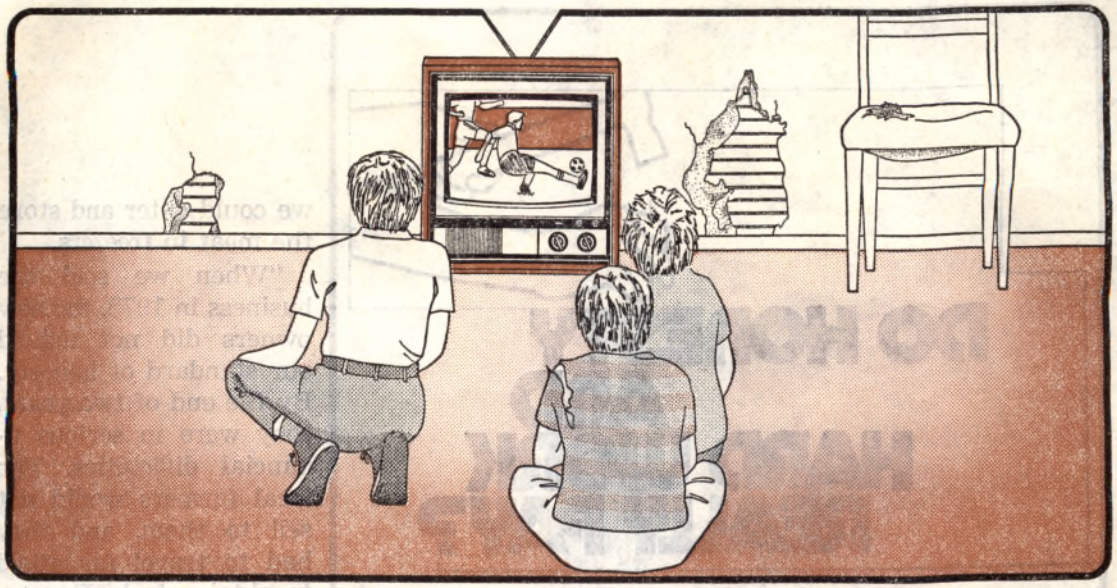
These are not mere stories. They are tragic realities. Is there really a source that provides sound guidelines and needed motivation to prevent such sad consequences? Yes, it consists of a collection of writings that have been translated, at least in part, into more than 1,600 languages. The most recent portion of this collection was completed nearly 1,900 years ago. In the 20th century, hundreds of millions of copies of the complete work have been printed and distributed earth wide. This remarkable book is the Bible. We invite you to examine with us how your following the lofty principles contained in the Bible can indeed help to put bread on your table.



A VERY sound guideline that the Bible provides is: Shun a "life of empty show." (1 John 2:16, *The New American Bible*) How often this counsel is ignored!

In many parts of the world, people buy color television sets or other expensive luxuries, to the neglect of more important things. The family may be poorly clothed. They may be without a decent hygienic bathroom and toilet. Essential home repairs, including the replacing of broken windows, are put off for lack of funds. Especially may persons who buy luxuries on credit have little money left for the actual necessities of life.

It is common for people to live beyond their means. They may try to keep up a second home on the beach or in the country merely as a status symbol. Believing that they will get a raise in salary or an additional in-



come from another source, many go into debt despite their having no assurance that what they anticipate will materialize.

However, when financial reverses come, as often happens, family problems mount. The wife and the children may now accuse the breadwinner of being a failure because he can no longer satisfy their desires for luxuries. They may make unfavorable comparisons with relatives or acquaintances who are doing better financially. When this happens many men become desperate. For example, a Jewish man living in a large, fine home in an excellent residential area of São Paulo, Brazil, tearfully told a complete stranger: 'I'm about to commit suicide or go crazy.' Why? His wife was no longer satisfied with his income, for other relatives made twice as much money as he did.

A "life of empty show" has spelled complete family ruin for some persons. This was the experience of a short, elderly African farmer in Rhodesia. Though advanced in years, he wanted others to think of him as being young. Very much wanting an automobile of his own, he sold a number of his cattle and purchased a secondhand car. Not being a licensed driver, the farmer had to depend on someone else to get the automobile to his home. Soon he discovered that he had taken on a tremendous expense. To keep the vehicle operating, he paid out more money for repairs than the entire initial cost of the automobile. Therefore, he left his farm to work in the city, leaving his wife and family behind. On weekends he would return home, but eventually this stopped and he became involved in an immoral way of life. What a high price he paid for a secondhand automobile!

If you want to enjoy your daily bread, seek to follow the Bible's guidelines. Keep in mind that material things are not lasting. One's attaching undue importance to them may lead to ruin. The Bible expresses this well when it says: "Carnal allurements, enticements for the eye, the life of empty show—all these are from the world. And the world with its *seductions* is passing away."—1 John 2:16, 17, *NAB*.

DO HONESTY AND HARD WORK REALLY PAY?

IN THIS world, dishonesty has gone to seed. But the Bible allows for no exceptions when it comes to honesty. It says: "The LORD hates people who use dishonest weights and measures." (Prov. 20:10, *Today's English Version*) While acknowledging that dishonest people may prosper materially, the Bible warns against being deceived by this into thinking that lawlessness pays. (Ps. 73:3-28) According to the Scriptures, honesty and industriousness are essential for a happy, contented life. And actual experience has repeatedly demonstrated that honest, hard work does put bread on one's table.

Honesty in Weighing

A family man from Western Australia comments: "My wife and I owned an abattoir and butchering business. We had no problems in obtaining supplies of stock for slaughter. People were pleased to deal with us, for they knew that we were honest in weighing their livestock. Even when other abattoirs were finding it difficult to buy stock and had to transport animals some 300 miles (480 kilometers), we were still able to buy locally. During this time we were supplying meat to many local butchers in the nearby town of Geraldton. As we were making these deliveries after trading hours, we were given keys to all the shops so that we could enter and store the meat in freezers.

"When we sold the business in 1975, the new owners did not uphold our standard of honesty. By the end of two years, they were in serious financial difficulties. The local farmers would not sell to them, and they had to travel far afield to obtain stock. Eventually they had to dispose of their business. The local farmers have since remarked that it was a sad day for them when we sold our business, because they appreciated having honest people to whom they could sell their livestock."

Similarly, a market scene in Accra, Ghana, reveals that honesty is rewarding. Unknown to the market women, a farmer from Agona Swedru weighed his vegetables before bringing them to market. Then, as usual, he allowed the market women to do the weighing before they bought his products. But he noted that just one of them was honest. At another time he permitted only the honest woman to weigh the vegetables

for herself. From then on she was given this priority.

This infuriated the other women, for they had to wait until the farmer was ready to weigh the vegetables himself instead of letting them do it. They accused him of showing favoritism. His answer was, in effect: 'She is honest, but you are dishonest. So there should be a difference in my way of dealing with you.'

Other Important Bible Principles

The application of still other Bible principles may mean the difference between eating or not eating. Among these principles are the following: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work." (Eph. 4:28) "The one working with a slack hand will be of little means." (Prov. 10:4) "The soul of the sluggard craves in vain, but the diligent soul is amply satisfied."—Prov. 13:4, *NAB*.

Thieves Do Suffer

Arthur of Saskatchewan, Canada, is one man who learned the value of such Scriptural principles the hard way. Cradling a cup of coffee in his hands, he says:

"I cannot help but be grateful for the tremendous change in my life that started just four years ago. Out of the first 36 years of my life, I spent a total of 15 behind bars. And at the end of that period, what did I have economically, materially and spiritually? Nothing!

"Now, after the past four years of working diligently in harmony with Bible principles, what can I say? Well, Jehovah has really blessed me. I have a home, a regular job, a fine wife and a little son whom I love with a father's pride. Yet it isn't always easy. The past dies slowly. Ever before me is such Bible advice as 'Let none of you suffer as . . . a thief' and 'Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work.' Yes, one *can suffer* as a thief. I did, although I did not fully appreciate it at the time."—1 Pet. 4:15; Eph. 4:28.

"Once a friend and I," Arthur continues, "broke into a clothing store and took about $10,000 worth of clothing to sell. We got only $1,500 for these stolen goods. Before the day was over, I had wasted it all in drinking and other activities and didn't even have enough taxi fare to get home." What did he do? Arthur adds: "I gave the taxi driver my watch—the one my own mother had given me—as security until I paid the $3 I owed. I never did claim that watch. Just how low in self-esteem or in feeling for others can one get? Very low, as you can see. Why, once when I needed money, I even stole my mother's television set!"

What about thieves who escape being apprehended by the authorities? Are they really getting by with their lawlessness? Take the case of fair-haired Alfie of the British Isles. For five years he lived by stealing. But what were the results? "The more I stole," he comments, "the more I lost all sense of values. I received no pleasure from the possessions that I had because they were so easily obtained. Once, in an argument with my mother over a £5 [$9, U.S.] note, I tore it into little pieces. It seemed silly to me that we should be arguing over something so trivial. If anyone gave me a present, perhaps worth just a pound or a few pounds, it meant nothing to me. A life of crime means having tons of money one day, but then no food the next! This is because, if I came down to my last £20 [$37, U.S.], I would just go out and spend it on something I didn't need, feeling that I would soon go out and steal some more. Then I would be broke for a while and depend on my family to provide for me."

Honesty and Industriousness Bring Success

How different it is with those who are honest and industrious workers! That this course does put bread on the table is clearly manifest in the operation of a merchandising service that began in Toronto, Canada. About 15 years ago, this business had a very modest beginning. The first employee was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Soon a second Witness was added. The influence of these two Witnesses brought to the company the practice that the Scriptures recommend: "We wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Heb. 13:18) As the reputation of this business establishment became more widely known, the number of customers increased. The business expanded rapidly and spread to all 10 Canadian provinces. The industriousness and honesty of the workers kept expenses down and increased profits. A few years ago the company was purchased by a large international corporation, and that corporation's desire was to retain the same employees. The business employs some 80 people and operates out of several warehouses and offices in all Canada.

Honesty and industriousness have also helped Diamond, of Nigeria, to put bread on his table. His job was to load goods into lorries, to be transported to the company's stores or to distribution centers. Noticing Diamond's conscientiousness, his supervisor assigned him to a more responsible job as "motor boy." This involved traveling on the lorry to deliver consignments to customers. Unlike the former motor boy, Diamond refused to cooperate with the driver in stealing some of the goods. Because of his honesty, Diamond was eventually transferred to the store, where he was put in charge of clearing merchandise, and pilfering came to a stop. His employers put so much trust in him that, whenever there were transactions involving large sums of money, this responsibility would be given to Diamond instead of to his immediate senior. A remarkable fact about this honest man is that he had never received formal education. But his faithful adherence to Bible principles is of greater value in the eyes of his employers. In fact, Diamond occupies a position of trust and responsibility above that of his more educated colleagues. He alone signs the documents authorizing the removal of goods from the store.

Honesty Opens Opportunities for Work

Often a reputation for honesty and industriousness opens work opportunities that would otherwise be closed. In Australia, Thursday Island has one of the highest unemployment figures in the country. People available for employment abound. Yet the manager of a bank there sought out a particular family to do the cleaning work. Why? They were known by all to be honest people. In Sweden, firms that have few openings are pleased to hire Jehovah's Witnesses because of their good reputation as workers. The employment manager of a company with 1,400 employees even asked whether it would be possible to advertise for employees in the principal journal used by Jehovah's Witnesses, *The Watchtower*. Even in northern Sweden, where jobs are scarce, unemployment is virtually unknown among Jehovah's Witnesses.

Throughout the world, the honest, conscientious worker is definitely preferred. Many people are willing to pay for quality work. In some areas, dependable painters, electricians, mechanics and other tradesmen are at times so busy that they cannot accept certain jobs for lack of time.

Refusing to Work —Unsatisfying and Harmful

While some persons choose to live at the expense of the government, their life of seeming ease is not really rewarding. Fre-

quently they are bored and spend money unwisely on gambling, alcoholic beverages and the like. Persons who refuse to take available jobs and continue to draw compensation from the State often become nervous and pessimistic. They tend to develop greater laziness and sloppy habits. Some begin to feel that other things should also be given to them. Many people who do not have to work for their money lose self-respect and show very little appreciation for their own possessions and the property of others.

The tragic circumstances that may befall a person who refuses to do hard work are illustrated in the case of a young man who was employed in cocoa production. For some years he worked energetically. But, then, this man and his workmates began to feel that it was beneath their dignity to carry buckets to water nursed cocoa seedlings. The young man eventually resigned from his job and began to gamble. His friends recommended that he go back to his former employment, but he refused to do so. One day, when he was gambling, a quarrel erupted. While struggling, the young man stabbed one of his friends and is now serving a prison sentence. How much better it would have been for him to continue working!

We should never underestimate the value of building up a fine reputation as an honest, reliable and industrious worker. Even in lands where good jobs are scarce and the annual per capita income is very low, the honest, industrious worker fares much better than others. He may not have much, but he usually has the basic necessities and the satisfaction of eating food that he himself has earned. Yes, conformity to the Bible's guidelines about honesty and industriousness can put bread on our table and safeguard us from losing our self-respect.

A LITTLE girl spots an attractive display of oranges in a North American supermarket. 'Mommy, please buy some,' she says. Her poorly dressed mother responds with some tender feeling for her daughter and asks the clerk: 'How much are the oranges?' When the clerk replies, the mother turns to her daughter and says: 'We can't afford that.' The girl's head drops in disappointment. Then, after but a moment's hesitation the mother tells the clerk: 'A package of cigarettes, please.'

Many times similar scenes are repeated daily. Men and women may buy cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, lottery tickets and the like, but fail to provide adequate meals for their children. They may spend large sums of money for festivities that are, in actuality, unrestrained revelries. Others live in a state of misery because of drug addiction.

These are serious problems that could be avoided by applying Bible principles. The Scriptures state: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Cor. 7:1) "Do not be getting drunk with wine, in which there is debauchery." (Eph. 5:18) "Do not come to be among heavy drinkers of wine . . . For a drunkard . . . will come to poverty." (Prov. 23:20) "You men are those leaving Jehovah, . . . those setting in order a table for the god of Good Luck." (Isa. 65:11) "Do hard work, doing with [your] hands what is good work." (Eph. 4:28) "By working with quietness they should eat food they themselves earn." (2 Thess. 3:12) "Walk decently, not in revelries and drunken bouts."—Rom. 13:13.

Note the clear Biblical statements against heavy drinking and revelries. True, the Scriptures do not specifically mention smoking or drug abuse. However, based on what you have seen, would you not say that smoking is a defiling habit? Is not drug abuse also defiling and injurious, producing effects comparable to drunkenness? Similarly, gambling is not mentioned in the Bible. But is it not a practice associated with luck? Does it not engender greed and run counter to the Bible's admonition to work for one's food?

Smoking

You may wonder, though, to what extent a person's living in harmony with the Bible in these respects would help him to put bread on his table. Take, for instance, the smoking habit. In Sweden, a man who smokes from 20 to 25 cigarettes a day must spend about $600 (U.S.) annually. As about 50 percent of his income goes for taxes, this means that he must earn about $1,200 (U.S.) just to support his tobacco habit. This is more money than the monthly wages for the average worker. When the wife and teen-age children also smoke, more than 20 percent of the breadwinner's income may be spent on tobacco. Often this means that the family cut down on the nourishing quality of their food in order for them to be able to continue smoking.

In lands where per capita incomes are much lower than in Sweden, many people spend just as high a percentage, or even more, of their limited wages on tobacco. That was true of K. P., a family man in India. He says: "I supported my family by operating a small pan* shop, earning 35 rupees [about $4, U.S.] weekly. Ten percent of this was consumed on my smoking habit."

However, when K. P. began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses in 1972, he came to appreciate that smoking conflicted with the Scriptural admonition about being 'clean from every defilement of flesh and spirit.' Furthermore, if he was going to aid others to break free from such defilement, K. P. realized that it would be inconsistent for him to continue selling pan. What did he do? He answers: "I abandoned my pan shop in order to conform my life to the Bible. I put my complete reliance in Jehovah God."

But how would he live? Did his conforming to Bible principles help him to put bread on the table? Yes, he actually improved his situation. He was able to get a job as a salesman in a vegetable store. His wages were 50 rupees (about $5.50, U.S.) per week, 15 rupees (about $1.50, U.S.) more than he had earned in his pan shop. Moreover, since he had stopped smoking, his available funds were increased by an additional 10 percent. But this was not all.

K. P. continues: "My employer tested out my trustworthiness in various ways until I gained his complete confidence. Now he entrusts his money and the entire store to my care. This he had never done with previous employees. Because of my trustworthiness, he granted me free vegetables for my family's use and a personal expense account. Since becoming one of Jehovah's Witnesses I have been able to construct my own home and improve my living conditions. Now we enjoy a happy family life and find true contentment."

Drug Addiction

Similarly those who break free from drug addiction improve their situation by no longer having to support a prohibitively expensive habit. This was the experience of Eoin and Angelika.

In 1966, Eoin started taking drugs. Two years later he stopped working and spent around £25 or £30 ($50 or $60, U.S.) weekly to pay for the hashish and LSD that he used. This would be nearly £70 ($130, U.S.) in today's inflated currency. It also represented 75 percent of his "earnings" from dealing in drugs and from stealing. He also smoked about 40 to 50 cigarettes a day.

Eoin had little cash in those days to provide for himself. Often he slept in the subways. At other times he stayed at the homes of others in "the drug scene." "You live," he says, "a sort of 'con' life, joining one group of addicts until they get *fed up*

* Pan is an admixture of betel leaf, areca nut, lime and sometimes tobacco leaf.

with you, and then moving on to another group." It was into this "scene" in London that 17-year-old Angelika came from a similar "scene" in Germany. Being on drugs and an exceedingly heavy smoker, she soon had financial problems comparable to Eoin's. But somehow she managed to survive by using her flat in London as a meeting place for buyers and sellers in the drug world.

Eventually Eoin had nothing besides the clothes on his back. Angelika had only one coat, a dressing gown. All her other possessions were kept in one small suitcase.

However, within two weeks after starting to learn Bible principles, both of these young people stopped smoking and taking drugs. Within three weeks, Eoin began working at a building site. In time, Eoin and Angelika saved up enough money to put a deposit on a flat and got married. Since bringing their life into harmony with Bible principles in 1973, they have been able to make a good home for themselves. Eoin and Angelika have a nice flat and everything in it is their own. God's Word has certainly helped them to put bread on their table.

Heavy Drinking

Heavy drinking is yet another habit that is making it difficult for many to put bread on their table. In 1974, people in the Federal Republic of Germany and in West Berlin spent 30.7 billion marks (about $15 billion, U.S.) for alcoholic beverages. It is reported that more than two million men and women in Japan border on being alcoholics. The number of alcoholics in the United States is about 10 million, and in Italy about four million. For over one million Australians, the amount spent on alcoholic beverages weekly is $30 (U.S.). This amounts to about 20 percent of an average worker's weekly take-home pay. More money is actually being spent on alcoholic beverages than the average family spends on meats, fruits and vegetables. Many problem drinkers in Australia spend more than half the average weekly wage on alcohol. In Sweden, the average drinker spends about 10 percent of his income on alcoholic beverages. Truly, the Bible's counsel about moderation could help millions to have more and better food on their table.

It is especially pathetic when a man spends most of his earnings on drink while the family suffers want. After receiving their wages, millions throughout the earth head for a bar. On leaving, they may be completely drunk and penniless. The wife may then be forced to borrow some money in order to pay bills and to get the family something to eat. In lands where such heavy drinking is customary, great poverty exists among persons with low incomes.

This was the situation with a family in Mexico. They were extremely poor and lived in squalor and filth. The family did not even own a table on which to eat. However, when they began to learn the principles of the Bible, things began to change. Because the husband stopped drinking, they were able to obtain a table and some chairs. Later, they bought a gas stove to replace their little kerosine stove. The whole appearance of the house improved, as better efforts were put forth to keep it clean.

When excessive drinking is combined with heavy smoking, the financial problems are compounded. "In fact," as Jim, a dark-haired young man living in Canada, explains, "easily a quarter to one third of my wages was consumed to keep us on alcohol and tobacco. Why, we could have eaten better and dressed quite well if we had just saved that wasted money!" His wife, Carol, interrupts, saying: "Sometimes we would be relaxing at the end of

the day, and I would suddenly discover, with annoyance, that our cigarettes were finished. Then I would start to pressure Jim to go out to buy more. He'd complain that he had no money. 'Probably spent it on beer!' I would think. Anyway, I'd get more upset until I would persuade him to collect all the milk bottles around the house to take to the store and trade them for some cigarettes. This was always embarrassing for Jim. But, more than that, it often meant our young ones would have to do without much-needed milk until we could get more money."

Gambling

Gambling is yet another vice that has deprived many of their daily bread. This is a widespread problem. It is estimated that Australians spend more than 10 percent of their net earnings on gambling. In the Federal Republic of Germany, each year billions of marks are spent on this vice. People risk their weekly or monthly wages and, at times, even more. An estimated $20 billion are spent on gambling in the United States. Spain's Christmas lottery alone brought in 32,500,000,000 pesetas ($396,341,463, U.S.). Of this amount, 70 percent was distributed in prizes, and the remainder went to the State. A complete ticket cost 20,000 pesetas ($244, U.S.), a whole month's wages for lower paid workers. But tickets were also sold in fractions.

Gambling losses stagger the imagination. An Iranian heiress lost nearly six million dollars (U.S.) in the casinos of London and continental Europe. In three days of poker playing, a Yugoslavian who had settled in Australia lost all the money that he had saved in six years. This put him in a state of such extreme shock that he died four days later. Pedro, a young Spaniard, spent so much money on gambling each month that he could have paid rent and food bills for a second family of four members. Yet he ended up borrowing money at the end of some months in order to be able to buy food.

The professional gamblers who live on the losses of others remain completely unaffected by what they see—people losing their fortunes, persons committing suicide because of gambling losses, women prostituting themselves to pay off gambling debts. Ronald, who once worked in the gambling establishments of Amsterdam, remarked: "I saw no harm whatever in sitting at the gambling table with my own mother and bleeding her white."

That the Bible can help a person to break free from this vice is forcefully demonstrated in the case of Friedel, an Indonesian-born Dutchman. By the time he was 38, he became the owner-director of an import firm with a net annual profit of $550,660 (U.S.). He drew a salary of 6,000 rupiahs ($840, U.S.) monthly, which was a fortune in those days right after World War II. However, Friedel became addicted to gambling. To finance his vice, Friedel would sell his goods at 300 percent profit. Also, at the risk of his life, he would sell his merchandise in territories controlled by the Pemoeda terrorists.

There seemed to be no hope of his ever getting out of the mire. But the Bible did help Friedel to break free from his addiction to gambling. From his consideration of the Scriptures, he came to appreciate the following: Gambling makes a person dishonest, shows no regard for others and interferes with happy living as a family.

If more persons would come to recognize the wisdom of shunning gambling, they could provide far better for their families. For example, it is not uncommon for a Brazilian to pay out as much money annually for lottery tickets as it would cost him to buy 100 quarts of milk.

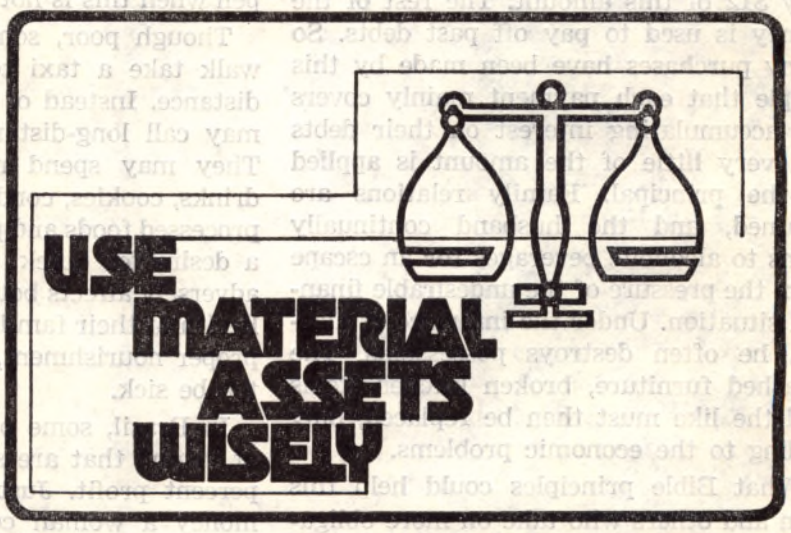
Festivals, Revelries

In Latin-American countries, tremendous sums of money are spent on festivals. Because they have church approval, many people believe that these occasions are Christian. In reality, however, the various feasts, or festivals, have non-Christian origins and are characterized by excesses in eating and drinking. This puts them in the category of revelries, which are in conflict with Bible principles. The truth of God's Word sets persons free from spending excessive amounts of money on such celebrations and thus worsening their economic situation.

Just how much money can be wasted on festivities can be seen from the case of Eladio, a wealthy Mexican. The combined cost for two festivals was 180,000 pesos ($14,400, U.S.). In addition to these two festivals, Eladio financed drinking parties that lasted three or four days. At times, he would spend between 5,000 and 7,000 pesos ($400 to $560, U.S.) for alcoholic beverages. Upon learning what God's Word teaches, Eladio stopped this waste of resources and began using his funds wisely in helping others to reap spiritual benefits.

Real Benefits

Certainly no one can deny that millions would improve their lot in life if they stopped using tobacco, limited their buying of alcoholic beverages, broke free from drug addiction, quit gambling and shunned all revelries and festivities that conflict with Scriptural teaching. A person's shunning undesirable habits and practices is definitely a big factor in his being able to put bread on the table.



NOT money in itself but the love of money can be harmful. The Bible is very realistic in this matter. Although warning against the love of money, it also says: "The table has its pleasures, and wine makes a cheerful life; and money is behind it all." (Eccl. 10:19, *The New English Bible*) Yes, a good meal may be enjoyable. But neither food nor drink can be obtained without money. In this world, money is a necessity. It is a valuable asset that must be managed wisely.

In connection with material possessions, the Bible emphasizes the importance of wisdom. We read: "Wisdom along with an inheritance is good . . . For wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowl-

edge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners." (Eccl. 7:11, 12) An inheritance is definitely of value. But if the individual does not know how to manage money wisely, he may soon be penniless. Money does provide a measure of protection from poverty and its accompanying troubles. However, wisdom provides even greater protection. It enables a person to make good use of his resources and to avoid things that could jeopardize his welfare and that of his family.

Besides stressing the importance of wisdom, the Bible provides the guidelines that, when followed, result in a person's acting wisely. Those who do not know or appreciate these guidelines face many serious problems.

Take the case of a married couple in Australia. They make many credit purchases. To meet expenses, both husband and wife work. Though the man's gross weekly wage is about $180, he receives only $12 of this amount. The rest of the money is used to pay off past debts. So many purchases have been made by this couple that each payment mainly covers the accumulating interest on their debts and very little of the amount is applied to the principal. Family relations are strained, and the husband continually turns to alcoholic beverages for an escape from the pressure of the undesirable financial situation. Under the influence of alcohol, he often destroys possessions. The smashed furniture, broken kitchen items and the like must then be replaced, only adding to the economic problems.

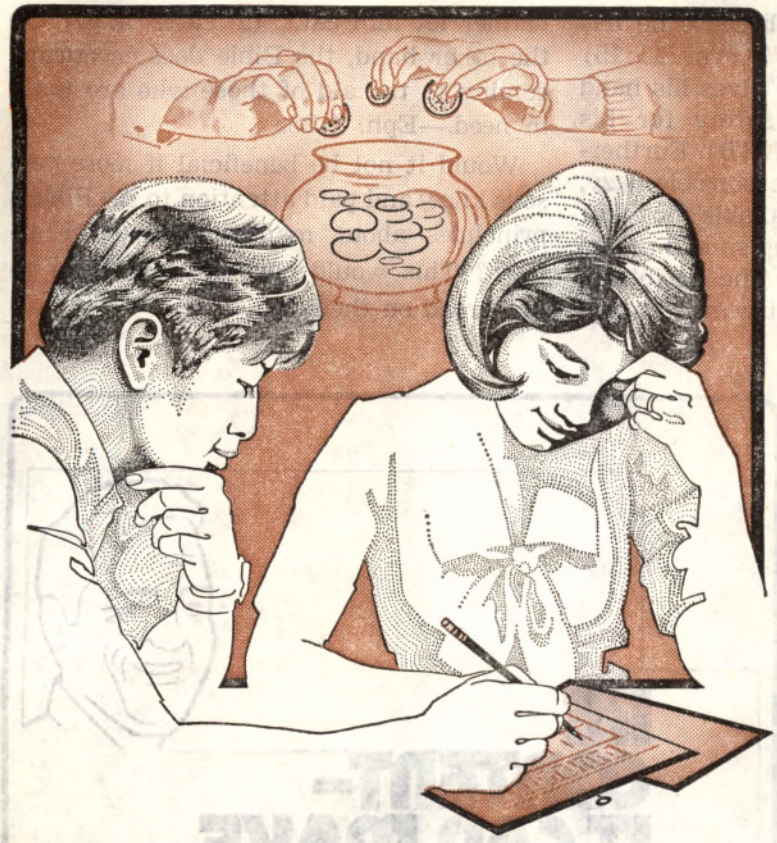
What Bible principles could help this man and others who take on more obligations than they can handle? The Scriptures tell us: "The borrower becomes the lender's slave." (Prov. 22:7, *NEB*) "Do not you people be owing anybody a single thing, except to love one another." (Rom. 13:8) "Who of you that wants to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense, to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, he might lay its foundation but not be able to finish it, and all the onlookers might start to ridicule him, saying, 'This man started to build but was not able to finish.' "—Luke 14:28-30.

It is indeed the wise course for a person to analyze beforehand whether he can take on a particular financial responsibility. Otherwise, as the Bible says, the individual may find himself in slavery to the lender. He could become hopelessly indebted. How much better it would be not to "be owing anybody a single thing"!

Especially must persons with limited assets be careful about not drawing too heavily on their income for nonessentials. Since they cannot afford to mismanage their finances, they do well to follow the Bible's encouragement to be industrious, to avoid wastefulness and to shop wisely. (Compare Proverbs 31:14, 15.) Note what can happen when this is not done.

Though poor, some persons who could walk take a taxi to travel just a short distance. Instead of writing a letter, they may call long-distance on the telephone. They may spend much money on soft drinks, cookies, condiments, sauces, candy, processed foods and packaged meals. Sadly, a desire for quick, easy-to-prepare meals adversely affects both their budget and the health of their families. Because of lacking proper nourishment, the children may often be sick.

In Brazil, some poor families buy cups of yogurt that are sold at more than 200 percent profit. Just think of how much money a woman could save by making yogurt and other items at home! Other families have small plots of ground but do not plant anything. They may let bananas, coconuts and oranges rot on their property and buy these items from vendors. Others spend money on worm remedies, while pa-



paya fruits become rotten in their garden. Yet, in the tropics, papaya is the best worm remedy.

By way of contrast, consider the case of one father of two children who applies Bible principles. This Brazilian has learned how to support his family of four on a limited income. By purchasing meat a day after the butchering, he pays a lower price. Shortly before closing time, he goes to the street market to buy fruits and vegetables. Since those operating the stands want to sell out, he is able to buy food at a greatly reduced price. While not as attractive as at the start of the day, the fruits and vegetables are still wholesome and sound. Through such wise shopping, *this man* spends just a third of what other people do for the same kind of food.

Also, consider the example of Bruce, a tall, slight-built family man. During the time of the Great Depression in Canada, he worked 10 hours a day, six days a week. His salary was $12 (U.S.) per week. Yet, in a modest way, he provided well for his family. The family always had adequate food, clothing and shelter. How did he manage on an income that was small even in the 1930's?

He lived by a principle that Jesus Christ exemplified. When providing food for *more than* 5,000 people, Jesus instructed his disciples: "Gather together the fragments that remain over, so that nothing is wasted." (John 6:12) Bruce applied this principle himself and inculcated the same in the minds and hearts of his happy family. He fortified his teaching about good management by calling attention to Jesus' illustration about the steward who lost his job due to his wastefulness. (Luke 16:1, 2) As a result, the family wasted nothing—food, clothing, furnishings, heat or power. They took good care of their possessions.

The Bible's comments about giving monetary help to others could also aid many people to avoid financial problems. Some persons who are emotionally inclined make loans without security or they even go surety for others. Often they lose money in this way and experience serious economic hardships. Hence, they would benefit greatly from living in harmony with the *following* Biblical warnings: "One

will positively fare badly because he has gone surety for a stranger." (Prov. 11:15) "Senseless is the man who gives his hand in pledge, who becomes surety for his neighbor." (Prov. 17:18, *NAB*) Furthermore, persons who are irresponsible, lazy, and unwilling to accept available jobs that they are capable of handling should not be given financial assistance. The Scriptural rule is: "If anyone does not want to work, neither let him eat." (2 Thess. 3:10) On the other hand, the Bible does encourage coming to the aid of those who are truly in need.—Eph. 4:28.

Would it not be beneficial if more persons knew and paid attention to the Bible's principles about managing financial affairs? This would certainly aid them to put bread on their table.

"WE HAVE brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things. However, those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some . . . have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." —1 Tim. 6:7-10.

Thus the Bible sounds a clear warning against becoming a lover of money and also minimizes the importance of material possessions. To live, we do not need an abundance of luxuries. True, our food should be wholesome, but it does not have to be the most expensive kind available. While clothing and shelter are basic necessities, a large wardrobe and a luxurious home filled with fine furniture will not add years to our life.

Many people know these things, but they still make the acquiring of money their main goal in life. Often this plunges them into ruin, even bringing them to the point where they have no bread on their table.

A Safeguard Against Unwise Moves

Of course, a man should rightly be concerned about providing well for his family. The Scriptures state: "If anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has dis-

owned the faith and is worse than a person without faith." (1 Tim. 5:8) Hence, when an opportunity for better employment opens up, perhaps even in another location, a family head may wish to take advantage of this and move with his wife and children. Particularly would this be the case if his doing so would benefit the whole family. However, careful consideration must be given to such matters. A Bible proverb says: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps." (Prov. 14:15) A failure to analyze just where a certain course may be leading could result in serious problems.

This happened to a village carpenter in Ghana. His brother-in-law persuaded him that he could earn much more money in Accra, the capital. But the brother-in-law could not give him any assurance that a well-paying job was even available. Nevertheless, the carpenter turned a deaf ear to an acquaintance who encouraged him to follow the Bible's advice about being content with the returns from his hard work. Before leaving the village, the carpenter told this acquaintance: 'Progressive people would never spend all their life in a village.'

But look at the man a few months later. With a walking stick in his hand and luggage balanced on his head, the carpenter, lean and haggard, trudges along. His two sons are following him. The high cost of living in the city and his failure to find suitable employment have forced the man to return to the village. But where is his wife? She found the family's bad plight in Accra so unbearable that she deserted her husband.

Time and again, in many other lands, untold thousands worsen their situation because of being discontented with basic necessities. They may sell their small plots of land in the rurals and move to the city. However, their hopes of finding good employment often do not materialize. Soon their limited resources are spent. Even if they wanted to return to the rurals, they cannot do so for lack of funds. Hence, they must continue to live in unsightly city slums or shantytowns.

It is noteworthy that the Bible warns against making moves for the sake of profit without considering seriously the uncertainties of life. We read: "A word with you, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go off to such and such a town and spend a year there trading and making money.' Yet you have no idea what tomorrow will bring. Your life, what is it? You are no more than a mist, seen for a little while and then dispersing." (Jas. 4:13, 14, *The New English Bible*) If they had but known and appreciated the wisdom of being content and of taking into consideration the uncertainties of life when making plans, many persons who now are suffering from poverty would have had enough bread on their table.

Though perhaps knowing about the serious problems that others have faced because of unwise moves, some people still feel that they are the exception. Often they lose sight of the fact that even seemingly successful men may be sacrificing genuine happiness and contentment.

Success at a High Price

Note what gray-haired Geoffrey of the British Isles relates about a fellow worker at an insurance brokerage:

"He was a Scot, lean and well over six feet tall. When I arrived, he was in charge of a small section. Peering through his small gold-rimmed spectacles, he would often confide in me that he intended to become a director someday. He worked very hard, staying late every night, taking work home and even forgoing holidays. Eventually he became departmental manager. This prompted him to move his wife and two young children to a more fashionable part of Essex. He also felt the

need of sending his children to private schools.

"Because he began living beyond his means, he found it too expensive to use his automobile. While the vehicle remained parked at home, he would walk or cycle. Once he showed me his shoes that were packed with cardboard to cover the holes. The man did not feel that he could afford to have his shoes repaired. To meet expenses, he would often borrow money before the end of the month.

"In time the Scot did become a director and entered a higher income bracket. Inevitably, this meant moving to a larger house, buying a new automobile and arranging to provide better schooling for his children. Having cultivated expensive tastes, his wife simply would not settle for second best. The man spent even more time at work and became a director of several subsidiary companies. Finally, however, his marriage ended in divorce, and he found himself keeping up two expensive homes. When I terminated my employment with the firm, he wistfully commented: 'For all my money and position, what good has it been?' "

The tragic consequences of an ambitious drive for more and more money are also well illustrated in the case of 10 other men. In the 1920's they were among the world's most successful financiers. But, as the years passed, things changed. Three of these men committed suicide, two were imprisoned, one went insane, and three died in poverty. Only one of the 10 was not totally thrown off balance by his ability to make money.

Protection Against Fraudulent Schemes

Persons who are not unduly concerned about making money are also less likely to be ensnared by fraudulent moneymaking schemes. In the United States, Japan and other lands, many people have been deceived by the exaggerated claims of "pyramid" sales companies. These firms require individuals to pay an initial fee to work as sales agents and as recruiters. After investing large sums of money, however, many find that they have been trapped. The products do not sell well, and the recruiting of new investors is hard. Not infrequently, unscrupulous men in the topmost positions abscond with huge sums of money.

In Japan, when one "pyramid" sales company went bankrupt, the government took over the merchandise for back taxes. But this posed a problem, since the cost of storing the merchandise in rented property exceeded $1,250 a day. As for the investors, they lost everything.

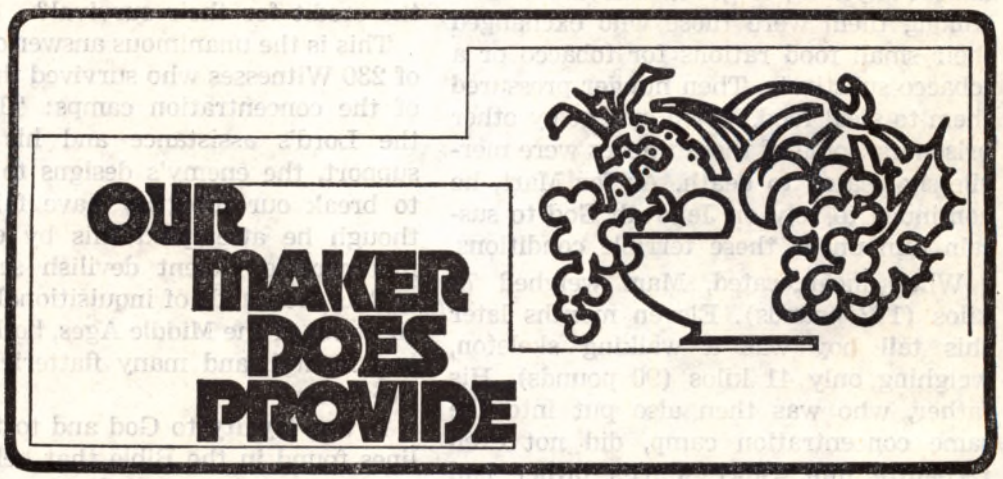
The Snare of Occult Practices

Contentment may even serve as a safeguard against hurtful involvement with the occult. Because of a desire to increase their funds without working, some people have hired magicians to double their money. This is what one man in western Africa did. The magicians then instructed him to limit communication with his wife and to keep everything totally secret. He was told to visit the cemetery on special days, to do so in prescribed dress and to offer prayers there. Later, the magicians gave him a parcel, to be untied at midnight on a certain Sunday. The man was assured that, on opening the package, he would find that the invested money had indeed multiplied. The exact time arrived. Greedily he unpacked the parcel. *What did he* see? Money—lots of it? No, just a bundle of newspapers. What a shock! The man was ready to commit suicide. In fact, even afterward his wife had a hard time trying to prevent him from taking his life.

If this man had believed the Bible and followed it, he would have been spared financial loss and bitter disappointment. The Scriptures not only urge a person to

be content but also warn against involvement with the occult. For instance, the Israelites were instructed: "You must not look for omens, and you must not practice magic." (Lev. 19:26) "There should not be found in you . . . a practicer of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium."—Deut. 18:10-14.

Truly, there is wisdom in heeding the Bible's recommendation about being content with sustenance and covering. That advice, if followed, may help you to keep bread on your table and to continue enjoying it.



ALL around us there is abundant evidence that our Maker is concerned about the human family, in fact, about all living things. This earth is marvelously designed for sustaining plant, animal and human life. If it were not for man's mismanagement of resources and the unequal distribution of food, humans everywhere could really enjoy life. It has been estimated that, if earth's agricultural potential were maximized, there would be enough food to sustain about 10 times more people than the present world population. How generous the provisions for life are! Then, too, the earth is filled with variety and beauty, with things that delight our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

In view of such evidence of our Maker's loving care, we can rest assured that he will never forsake his servants. The Bible states: "Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are?" (Matt. 6:26) Just think about the many birds that fill the air. Yet very few ever die of hunger. Since these creatures continue to benefit from God's bountiful provisions for sustaining life, our Maker would certainly never permit his servants to starve to death en

masse. He will answer the prayer: "Give us today our bread for this day."—Matt. 6:11.

Ample proof to this effect is available from living examples. Even under the worst conditions imaginable, God's servants have been able to continue living.

Take the case of 17-year-old Mart, one of Jehovah's Witnesses. While in a concentration camp in Nazi Germany, he saw that many prisoners were willing to do almost anything to get a little extra food. Among them were those who exchanged their small food rations for tobacco or a tobacco substitute. Then hunger pressured them to steal food. When caught by other prisoners, some of these thieves were mercilessly beaten to death. As for Mart, he continued to rely on Jehovah God to sustain him under these terrible conditions.

When incarcerated, Mart weighed 78 kilos (172 pounds). Eleven months later this tall boy was a walking skeleton, weighing only 41 kilos (90 pounds). His father, who was then also put into the same concentration camp, did not even recognize him. Since Mart's father had had enough to eat while still free, he now shared his rations with his son. Within 10 weeks Mart gained about 5 kilos (11 pounds). There were also times when he received food under unusual circumstances. Mart relates:

"Once the entire group in the barracks where I was staying had to exercise in the pouring rain from six o'clock in the evening until midnight, and our food was given to the pigs. Finally we went back to the barracks, and I felt a piece of bread being put into my hand by a Witness from another section of the camp. I was the only one with a little food."

Many other Witnesses had similar experiences during Hitler's rule over Germany. In that land, 1,687 Witnesses lost their jobs, 284 their businesses, 735 their homes, and 457 were *not* permitted to carry on their trade. In 129 cases, their property was confiscated, 826 had their pensions terminated, and an additional 329 suffered other personal loss. Of the 2,000 Witnesses who suffered inhuman treatment and deprivation in the concentration camps, the majority came out alive. Yes, despite planned efforts to destroy their means of living, Jehovah's Witnesses as a body survived inside and outside the concentration camps. To whom do they give the credit for their survival?

This is the unanimous answer of a group of 230 Witnesses who survived the horrors of the concentration camps: "Thanks to the Lord's assistance and his gracious support, the enemy's designs to cause us to break our integrity have failed, even though he attempted this by employing innumerable violent devilish schemes as well as thousands of inquisitional practices right out of the Middle Ages, both physical and mental, and many flatteries and enticements."

It was loyalty to God and to the guidelines found in the Bible that helped these Witnesses to survive. Surely, then, that same faithful adherence to Bible principles will enable others to put bread on their table under more favorable conditions. Do you share this conviction?

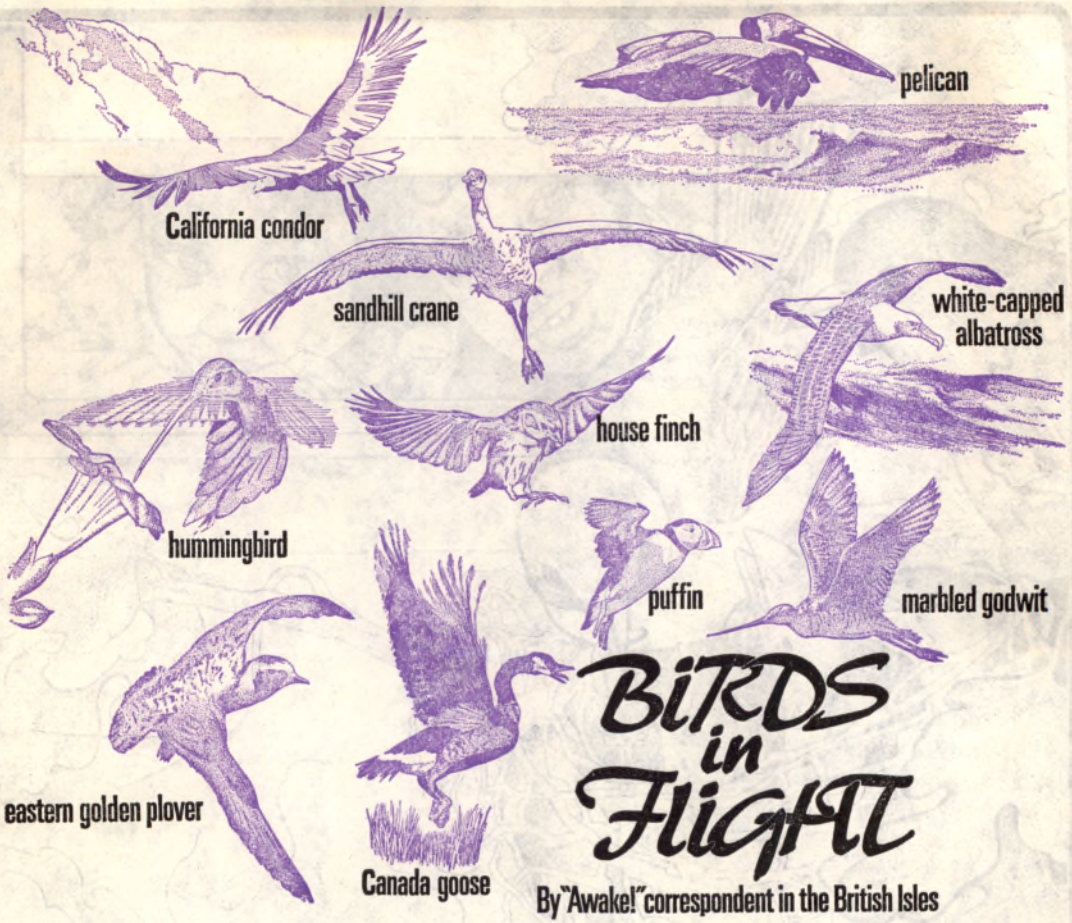
The Needed Incentive

Firm faith that God is real and that he deeply cares about mankind has helped tens of thousands to change their way of life for the better. From a careful examination of the Bible and from seeing the benefits of its guidelines in the lives of others, they have been able to make this faith their own. That conviction has helped many to break free from alcohol abuse, drug addiction, gambling, a life of crime, and other vices. Others have learned to be content and to make wise use of their assets. Convinced by personal experience

that the Bible's principles are sound, they have made efforts to follow these ever more closely.

They have also come to appreciate that living by Bible principles results in more than present benefits. Because God deeply cares about mankind, he has a grand future in store for them. The Bible tells us: "He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4) Truly, we gain much by living in harmony with the Bible—the best way of life possible under present conditions and, in the future, a life without pain, sickness and death when God makes all things new.—Rev. 21:5.

If you are not now discussing the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses on a regular basis, please accept their invitation to do so without any cost to you. See for yourself how practical the Bible is and how the application of what it says can help you to put bread on your table. Also learn more about the marvelous future that God has in mind for all lovers of righteousness and how you may share in it.



BIRDS in Flight

By "Awake!" correspondent in the British Isles

WHEN about to complete their conquest of Mount Everest in the summer of 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were astonished to see a large bird flying at 27,000 feet (8,200 meters). Their report of this created considerable interest among ornithologists and bird lovers. It raised such questions as: What variety of bird was involved? If survival required it, could this bird or others fly still higher?

Ornithologists know that birds may fly higher than normal when some instinctive reason demands it. These creatures may do so to clear an obstacle, such as a mountain range, in their path. Or, they may be searching for tastier insects. Birds that have their normal habitat in the lowlands fly at a higher level during migration than at any other time. For instance, migrating pelicans, ducks and cranes have been observed flying at 3,000 to 8,000 feet (900 to 2,400 meters). Lapwings and larks have been sighted at over 6,000 feet (1,800 meters), while plovers and sandpipers have been seen flying at 10,000 to 12,000 feet (3,000 to 3,700 meters). In each case, these heights were sufficient for the birds to clear obstacles in their path. Could they have flown higher?

From observational reports, the answer is, Yes. In the Himalayas some years ago,

two types of lowland birds—curlews and godwits—were noted flying at 20,000 feet (6,000 meters).

It has also been observed that high-flying migrating birds may drop down to lower altitudes during bad weather. This suggests that they are not bound into some inflexible flight pattern, but, rather, will instinctively choose to fly under instead of over a storm in order to pass it.

Modes of Flight

All modes of flying may be classified as wing flapping, soaring or gliding. Of these, soaring and gliding are found only in relatively large birds. Low speeds are inherently possible with a soaring or gliding flight, but extra lift is necessary. The bird's large wings and its weight (giving added momentum) supply this needed lift. *The Birds* (a volume of the *Life* Nature Library) gives more details, saying: "Soaring birds, with a large sail surface in proportion to their weight, fall into two very different types: (1) those with broad wings and fanlike tails as exemplified by many of the hawks, eagles and vultures, and (2) those with extremely long but relatively narrow wings, ocean wanderers such as gulls, frigate birds and albatrosses."

The shape and the size of a bird's wings in relation to its body weight are also factors that determine its mode of flight. For example, a greater number of wingbeats are needed to keep aloft those birds with wingspreads that are relatively small in proportion to their bodies. Hummingbirds have to use a rapid whirring flight just to keep aloft. Larger birds having a very fast wingbeat, such as partridges and puffins, can also glide, but for only short distances. On the other hand, such large birds as herons and pelicans, with a wingspread that is greater in relation to their body weight, have a slow wingbeat.

Hopping Birds

Even the hopping birds that we enjoy watching in our gardens often are very seasoned travelers. Blackbirds, thrushes, finches, tits and those tiny bundles of energy, the wrens, travel widely and regularly.

In the autumn vast numbers leave their nesting sites in Scandinavia and eastern Europe and fly south and west toward Britain, to enjoy the milder winters. Then they make their way back in the spring. Radar observations on the east coast of Britain have revealed that these small birds arrive generally at speeds under 30 miles (48 kilometers) per hour and at heights of less than 3,000 feet (900 meters).

If a bird is capable of continuing in the air for a long period, the speed of flight can be a factor influencing its ability to fly high. Sustained flight, in turn, depends on the pattern of flight characteristic of each particular bird variety. This pattern —whether wing flapping or soaring or a variation of both—is determined chiefly by the structure and size of the bird's wing bones and feathers, as well as by its body weight and the development of its breast muscles.

Fitness Vital for Migration

If a migrating bird must fly at mountain-high altitudes to reach its final destination, it must possess extraordinary stamina. This calls for an incredibly high standard of fitness, a fitness that in most long-distance migrants is dependent on ability to store a great fuel supply in the form of fat. In some bird varieties the doubling of their usual body weight is necessary before such flight is possible.

Effect of Thermal Currents and Different Wind Speeds

Birds may also make use of thermal currents. Such a current begins as a ris-

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- *The Root Cause of Marriage Failures*
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ing column of warm air and is undercut by colder air. Rising quickly, the thermal current is like a large warm-air bubble. As thermal currents rise, birds such as gulls and hawks rise with them. The most spectacular of all European migrants, the white stork, makes use of these thermals at the start of its long journey southward. Setting off from Spain, Holland or the Rhine River region, the bird rides these thermals to a great height before gliding in a southwesterly path to the Strait of Gibraltar and across Africa.

Like other birds, storks soar upward before they start to glide. Ornithologists describe gliding as the simplest form of flight. It is less complicated than flapping or hovering, and saves energy. Doubtless you have observed swallows gliding to and fro, needing only a few strong wing strokes for a long, graceful flight. Many birds use a gliding approach prior to landing, notable among these being wild geese and pelicans flying in formation.

Most efficient of all gliding birds, though, are the albatrosses. The wandering albatrosses, for example, spend nine months of the year on the wing in the southern hemisphere. In their gliding, these birds utilize the difference in speed between the winds at the surface of the ocean and those 50 feet (15 meters) above the surface. Not affected by frictional drag of the ocean waves, the higher air currents are stronger and faster, enabling the albatross to gain speed. Then, when coming to the slower-moving air currents, the bird, traveling at a high speed, is pushed upward.

High-flying Hummingbirds

Since ability to fly high is noted among many large birds, it may seem odd that some varieties of hummingbirds have been observed on the wing at a height of 16,000 feet (4,900 meters). This tiny creature is one of the few birds able to fly backward momentarily. Astonishing, too, is the speed of its wingbeat. It does not seem possible that the ruby-throated hummingbird, found in the United States and Canada, may flap its wings from 50 to 70 times per second. Yes, per second! Contrast this with the wingbeat of the pelican, which needs to flap its wings only 1.3 times a second to keep flying.

Obviously, one would question how the tiny hummingbird could possibly have enough energy to reach 16,000 feet (4,900 meters). But the answer is simple enough. Those hummingbirds seen at this height were in the vicinity of perpetual snow in the Ecuadorian Andes, mountains that range from 8,000 feet (2,400 meters) to peaks over 20,000 feet (6,000 meters). Since these particular birds are known to live high in the Andes, they have a good start in achieving a great height when flying.

'Dwellers on the Heights'

Hence, it is understandable that other 'dwellers on the heights' are observed flying high. Among these is the Andean condor, a giant bird that ranks in size with the California condor and is at home in the highest elevations of the Andes. So, it is not surprising that one of these birds was seen flying with apparent ease in the

thin air some 6,700 feet (2,040 meters) *above* an Andean peak of 12,958 feet (3,950 meters).

Possibly the greatest known recorded height attained by birds in flight was that achieved some years ago by a flock of geese in migration across the lofty Himalayas. At that time scientists were photographing the sun over India when they saw the geese flying in V-formation at the height of Mount Everest, around 29,000 feet (8,800 meters).

What about the high-flying bird seen by Sir Edmund Hillary and his guide? Neither man was able to identify it. It may have been that huge vulturelike bird, the lammergeier. On occasion lammergeiers have been spotted flying at 24,000 to 25,000 feet (7,300 to 7,600 meters) in the Mount Everest area.

Could such birds, the high-flying geese, the condors and perhaps the lammergeier, fly higher if it were necessary? Quite possibly!

"CRACK!!!" The sound came from the next room. Startled, I looked around nervously. But nobody else seemed to have noticed it.

"What—er—what was that?" I asked my companion.

Hardly looking up from the table, he answered, "harmattan," as he continued stirring his coffee.

At the time, I was a recent arrival in Ivory Coast as a missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses. Curiosity aroused, I peered out the window. The sky, covered with haze through which the sun shone blood red, looked threatening.

"It's getting dark a little early, isn't it?" I asked uneasily. "Are we in for a typhoon or something?"

"That? Oh, that's just harmattan," replied my host nonchalantly. Then he ran a finger along the balcony rail, showed me the red dust on his fingertip, sneezed violently and said: "And that, too, is harmattan."

You may well ask, as I did: "What is harmattan?" Residents here will answer that it is a hot, dry wind heavily laden with dust. It originates in the burning sands of the Sahara and blows in a southwesterly direction across West Africa. It usually develops in December, January or February and lasts for a few days or for several weeks.

What Causes It?

In the Sahara, temperatures are known to reach 130 degrees Fahrenheit (54 degrees Celsius) in the shade. For a depth of several inches, the sand may exceed 200 degrees Fahrenheit (93 degrees Celsius). Hot air generated by this baking sand rises swiftly. When it meets cooler air above, great turbulence results.

This causes dust to whirl high above mountain ranges. From December to February this dust-laden air begins flowing in a southwestward direction, toward the northern coast of the Gulf of Guinea.

Cool and Dry

Temperatures drop considerably during the harmattan season. From Sierra Leone, between Guinea and Liberia, a missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses relates: "Usually the high temperatures and humidity in this area make it necessary for us to change our clothing several times a day. Well do we remember the surprise of our first harmattan season. In just a few hours the temperature dropped nearly 30 degrees. The brisk cool breeze that swept into our bedroom chilled us. We were in need of blankets to keep warm."

When this wind blows, humidity also drops drastically. The extreme dryness brings about desertlike conditions even in forested areas. Regarding effects of the sudden drop in humidity is this report from Sierra Leone:

> "One morning during harmattan I entered my office and picked up a piece of ordinary typewriting paper. It felt like parchment. As I took a piece of carbon paper out of its box, it began to curl up right around my finger. When I started to insert the paper and carbon into a new typewriter, I noticed that the chrome had started to peel from the handle that manipulates the carriage.
>
> "Perhaps the biggest surprise came after that harmattan had really gotten under way. Right in the middle of a deep sleep one night there was a loud bang. It sounded much like a gunshot. My wife and I jumped out of bed and searched the house for evidence of thieves. But there was none. The next morning, however, we quickly discovered the cause. Gazing at the desk in our room, we saw a wide split right down the middle of its top. We learned that harmattan's severe drying-out process often causes boards glued together to burst apart. Likewise drawers that fit tightly in furniture during most of the year become loose when harmattan is in full swing."

In Abidjan, Ivory Coast, the climate becomes so dry that wood carvings will warp and crack. The loud crack mentioned at the outset resulted from the splitting of the wood of our library bookcase. Fortunately, however, it seems that in this locality the cracks gradually close up as the climate returns to its usual high degree of humidity.

The dust that accompanies the dry wind causes poor visibility and creates problems for aircraft pilots and navigators. This affects fishing, too, since fishermen are trained to observe visible signs, such as birds hovering over a school of fish. Some fishermen on the coast of West Africa have gotten lost during harmattan because certain landmarks were no longer visible.

Curse or Blessing?

Harmattan gives rise to mixed feelings. Regarding health, for example, this wind produces drying out of mucous membranes, bringing on hoarseness, coughing and sneezing. Lips will split and the skin becomes dry and cracked. Sometimes fingernails split and hair becomes brittle. One can easily see why the local people wear long, flowing desert robes as well as head and face coverings.

Harmattan can adversely affect crops, too, unless they are given extra attention by irrigation. And the dust is especially annoying. Housewives lament that no sooner have they finished wiping furniture clean than the wind playfully puts down another dust layer of equal thickness. The fine, red dust works its way into everything. It infiltrates the folds of clothing, where it leaves a red stain; it gets into eyes, ears and even food.

Rather than fearing it, though, on the whole West Africans welcome harmattan and the benefits it brings. For example, it dries up stagnant ponds and rainwater in the ditches —thus destroying the breeding grounds of the mosquito, reducing the spread of malaria and other diseases.

Housewives also note a favorable side to this wind. They are happy to see salt running free from the saltshaker, bread and other foodstuffs not becoming moldy so rapidly and clothes drying quickly on washday. Also, the dampness and the mustiness disappear from one's wardrobe. Especially pleasant is the opportunity to work in a cooler, less humid, atmosphere.

All things considered, West Africans appreciate a period of respite from the limp stickiness that often prevails. The majority consider harmattan more of a blessing than a curse.

City Living Costs

◈ According to Business International (based in Geneva, Switzerland), of 59 cities surveyed recently, the cost of living is the highest in Tokyo. Following it in the top-ten bracket are Osaka/Kobe, Zurich, Geneva, Stockholm, Vienna, Oslo, Lagos, Copenhagen and Frankfurt. New York city is in 18th place in the expense rating. Among the least expensive cities are Mexico City, Bogotá, Rio de Janeiro, Lisbon, São Paulo, Manila, Johannesburg, Bangkok and Montevideo, with Buenos Aires being rated the cheapest in living costs.

Blood "Substitutes" Excel

◈ Under the direction of the University of Munich's Institute for Surgical Research, 31 clinics in southern Bavaria have made a three-year study comparing patients given blood transfusions with those receiving blood "substitutes." The findings indicate that such "substitutes" result in far fewer complications than do transfusions. In the use of 200,000 units of blood "substitutes," complications arose only in 0.033 percent of the cases. However, several dangers of blood transfusions were cited in the report. It was said that in some large cities every 10th transfusion patient was infected with hepatitis.

Dramatic Solar Eruption

◈ In certain ways, an eruption on the sun's surface on July 11 was the strongest ever noted. Besides temporarily disrupting certain types of communication, it overpowered X-ray detectors on two earth-orbiting satellites. The flare also sent magnetic fields into space and, for a time, blocked cosmic rays that usually strike the earth from outside the solar system.

Bible Encyclopedia in Hungary

◈ During Hungary's recent yearly book week, the state-operated publishing house released *The Small Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Before the week had ended, the 78,000 copies off the press had been sold, making the book a best seller. Its compilers said that their aim was to explain the Bible as "a human and literary creation." According to *Time* magazine, the Communist Party newspaper *Népszabadság* stated that the encyclopedia had been published for three reasons. One purpose was to provide understanding of Scriptural expressions. Another object was to enrich "the dialogue with believers." As a third point, the paper held that knowledge of the Scriptures "can in fact strengthen official ideology." *Time* reports: "Like every other Communist regime, . . . Hungary's propagates atheism; and while in practice it tolerates religious observance by its 5.8 million Catholics and 2.6 million Protestants, the *Bible* itself is available in only a single church bookstore in the country. It is frequently out of stock."

Catholic Numbers

◈ There were over 724 million Roman Catholics world wide in 1976, according to the current statistical yearbook of the church. The number had risen from 705 million during 1974. But the yearbook reveals that whereas there were 409,000 Catholic priests throughout the world in that year, the 1976 tally was just 401,000. A Reuters dispatch from Rome says that the decrease is "attributed by many to the ban on married priests."

Pollution Toll

◈ A recent issue of the magazine *L'Europeo* reported that 200,000,000,000 liras are spent in Italy each year "to repair some of the damage caused by pollution." The journal also said that environmental pollution in that country results in the death of 30 persons an hour.

Preferred by Foreign Businessmen

◈ According to a recent survey by Touche Ross & Co., New York heads the foreign executives' list when it comes to assignments in a foreign city. One reason is New York's status as a principal business center of the world. San Francisco and Los Angeles are other United States cities favored by foreign businessmen.

Women in Crime

◈ During a study funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Prof. Rita J. Simon of the University of Illinois found that in the United States during 1975 women were arrested for committing 16 percent of the crimes. The figure was up

from 10.8 percent in 1953. According to the Associated Press, Prof. Simon contends: "As you have more and more women working outside the home, they are getting jobs that place them in a position to embezzle or steal. With this larger female working force, it is simply a question of the law of averages."

Deadly Amoeba

◈ An amoeba known as *Naegleria fowleri* is baffling scientists. Although this microorganism generally is harmless, the New York *Times* reports that it can kill swimmers "by feasting on their brain cells." This apparently drug-resistant amoeba lives in freshwater—at times in polluted places, but also in clean waters. Whereas people by the millions swim in waters where this organism is found, just 123 cases of infection have been reported world wide. However, all but three resulted in death. Since this amoeba can enter a person's nose and travel up the olfactory nerve to his brain, one researcher recommends that swimmers either use nose clips or blow their noses after they have been swimming.

Are Smokers Nearby?

◈ Even if you do not smoke, just occupying a room with smokers can be detrimental to your health. This is the conclusion of cardiologist Wilbert Aronow after studies involving 10 men with angina pectoris, a condition resulting in chest pain when insufficient oxygen reaches the heart. In tests at the Long Beach Veterans Administration Hospital (in California, U.S.A.), Aronow had each of the subjects sit in a room with three individuals who smoked a total of 15 cigarettes in two hours. Normally, the subjects "could pedal exercise about four minutes before experiencing chest pains," reports *Time* magazine, adding: "After sitting in a smoke-filled room, they were forced to stop after only 2½ to 3 min., and their heart rates and blood pressures rose as they inhaled the nicotine-laden air."

TV Tally

◈ In the United States, 97 percent of the households have at least one television set. According to *TV Guide*, 31.9 million of the 71.2 million households had more than one TV set in 1976 and 54.9 million owned color sets.

Real Estate in Greece

◈ A British Broadcasting Company study recently revealed that real-estate costs in Greece were the highest in Europe. For instance, a house priced at 35,000 pounds in England sells for 130,000 pounds in Switzerland, but costs 200,000 pounds in Greece. Concluding a report on the study, the *Athens News* states: "A building at Constitution Square in Athens costs more money than a similar one in Piccadilly Circus!"

Watch That Back

◈ Leonard Ring, a specialist in New Zealand, says that a person should lift things by using thigh-muscle strength, not that of the back. To be more specific, the feet should be placed apart at about the width of the shoulders. One foot ought to be a little ahead of the other one. When taking hold of the object, one's back should be kept as straight as one can keep it, and the knees should be bent. The person should straighten the legs, lifting the article gradually, not quickly. The journal *Industry Week* cites this advice after mentioning "an estimated 6.5 million Americans suffering daily from back injuries."

Hints for Air Travelers

◈ Among business travel hints, *Exec*time* newsletter recommends avoiding the bustling "hub" airports and holiday periods. It also suggests that the air traveler avoid busy times of the day and week (4 to 7 p.m., as well as Monday morning and Friday afternoon). Besides carrying heavy work, a person might take along light material to read, for instance, while in waiting rooms and during the homeward flight.

Indian Tribe Found

◈ A Brazilian explorer has discovered a hitherto unknown tribe of Indians living in an area along the Simões River near the Brazil-Colombia border. He believes that they are descendants of the Central American Mayas. The tribesmen use blowguns that are over nine feet (3 meters) in length.

China's Populace

◈ The People's Republic of China has some 900 million inhabitants. Of these, about 80 percent are less than 35 years of age. So reports *Parade* magazine, citing information provided by a Chinese liaison-office spokesman in Washington, D.C.

Airline Records

◈ During 1977 an all-time yearly record of 240 million passengers were carried on United States airlines. Profits ran to $754 million (U.S.), notably higher than the $564 million of 1976.

Pet Owners

◈ In the United States, half the cat owners also have a dog. So reports the Pet Food Institute. It is estimated that there are 23 million cats in the homes of Americans.

Smoke-Detector Hazard?

◈ According to some, up to 70 percent of the smoke detectors now on the market in the United States contain the radioactive isotope americium-241. It is said that this type of detector could cause physical harm, including cancer. Leakage is possible if detectors containing this poisonous isotope are damaged. *Parade* reports that representative Ted

Weiss introduced a bill in Congress that would prohibit the sale of such radioactive detectors. Weiss suggests, says the magazine, "that consumers buy photoelectric smoke detectors, which are effective in fire-warning without constituting a health hazard."

Thin or Fat?

◈ Citing the *Executive Fitness Newsletter* as a source, the journal *Industry Week* reports that, according to one study, "as family income increases, men get fatter and women get thinner." Also, for some reason, women with better schooling have 20 percent less fat than their less-educated counterparts. Among men, those who have not finished high school have a fat layer 10 percent thinner than that of those having completed a 12-year education.

How Much Do You Sleep?

◈ On an average, United States residents are sleeping 1½ hours less each day than they did six decades ago. This is the conclusion drawn from 20 years of research by Wilse Webb, a psychologist associated with the University of Florida. Whereas the average American adult sleeps 7½ hours daily, 15 percent are said to sleep for over 8½ hours and another 15 percent reportedly get along on under 6½ hours of slumber a day. Webb contends: "We've ripped away the cocoon of darkness with electric light."

Money-making "Teddy Bear"

◈ The "Teddy Bear," so popular with children, earns some $60 million annually for the company making it. This well-known stuffed "animal" got its start 75 years ago in Giengen, about midway between Stuttgart and Munich, Federal Republic of Germany. According to the journal *To the Point International*, the "bear" made its first appearance at the Leipzig Fair of 1903 and "would have disappeared if an American buyer had not, 'on the spur of the moment', ordered 3,000, a few ending up on US president 'Teddy' Roosevelt's banquet table as decorations." Soon thereafter, the "Teddy Bear" became world famous.

Do You Own a Skateboard?

◈ In 1973, skateboard injuries cared for in emergency rooms numbered only 3,682 in the United States. However, during 1977 the toll reached 140,070. So reports the National Injury Information Clearinghouse of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.