

Awake!

JUNE 22, 1979



OLD AGE: The GOLDEN YEARS?

Can it be reversed?

FEATURE ARTICLES

Old age has been called by some the "golden years." Yet for many older people they are hardly that, as mounting problems may interfere with their enjoyment. How can the later years be made more worthwhile? And will it ever be possible for the aging process to be reversed?

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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.

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The Problem of Old Age



NO ONE really wants to get old. True, we may want the experience and wisdom that can come from living many years; but we do not want the severe limitations that old age may bring to the body and mind. Nor do we want what follows—death. If we had our choice, likely we would combine the wisdom of age with the vitality of youth. That is what Ponce de León had in mind when seeking the “Fountain of Youth” in Florida centuries ago.

Can aging be halted, reversed? Can the wisdom of age someday be combined with the vitality of youth and last indefinitely? Confidently we answer, YES! When? Much sooner than you may imagine, as we will explain later in this magazine.

But before old age is reversed, its problems remain with us. And these must be confronted.

“Golden Years” or Not?

Some have called the period of old age the “golden years.” When one is not plagued by many illnesses, regrets or fears, the advancing years may indeed be a period of gracious tranquillity similar to what the patriarch Abraham evidently experienced, for the Bible says that he “died in a good old age, old and *satisfied*.”—Gen. 25:8.

However, others would call old age not “golden,” but “disaster.” One prominent person, on reaching the age of 70, was

asked how he viewed old age. He answered: “Like shipwreck.” He compared his growing old to a ship washed ashore and being beaten to pieces by the winds and waves. Or as Boston psychologist Dr. Rebecca Black stated:

“People are led to believe that when they retire they will live happily ever after, but there is very little done to prepare people for the reality of retirement—and often it’s a disaster.”

Thus the thought of old age brings with it a conflict of images. There is the one image of lost youth, declining strength, and finally the possibility of a lonely death. The other image is that of having achieved something in life and getting respect and honor.

This conflict was noted in an editorial by Daniel Calahan of the Institute of Society, Ethnics and the Life Sciences when he passed the age of 46. He stated:

“To one who recently reached the advanced age of forty-six, the rapidly approaching prospect of old age is both entrancing and terrorizing.

“My children will be grown, my life will

once again be my own. That is entrancing.

"But I am not altogether reassured by some of the elderly people I see around me, who spend a good deal of their extra leisure visiting hospitals, going to the funerals of old friends, and restlessly looking for something to do with idle time. . . .

"Many of the elderly are in nursing homes, those cunning institutions created to make certain that the elderly are not under foot around the house. The prospect that I might end my days in one of those places—staring at walls or ever-blaring television sets—terrifies me, but only slightly more than the prospect of aging itself."

More Elderly

In some ways modern science has complicated the problem of those who are old and in poor circumstances. How so? In that medical science has prolonged life, but has not done much about the *kind* of life elderly people live. For instance, in America the child born today has an average life expectancy of 24 years more than

not have at least one of its members over the age of 65 is an exception. The census bureau reports that, of these Americans who are over 65 years of age, well over five million women live alone. About one and a half million men also do.

Because in many lands older persons are living longer, and there are more of them, the problem of what they should do with their lives is a real one. Many older folks will spend as much time living after age 65 as they did before becoming an adult. What are they to do with all that time?

Adding to the problem is the fact that the mind does not diminish its powers as fast as the body does. One group of psychologists states that the mind achieves its fullest powers at about 60 years of age, and after that it declines only very slowly. Hence, the problem of how to occupy the mind grows at the very time that the body no longer responds as it used to.

In Future Issues

■ Eliminating Crime Through Law —Is It Possible?

■ Death—A Doorway to What?

■ Gems for the Joy of Mankind

that of the child born in 1900. But if the elderly have to spend many of those extra years in misery, what has been gained?

Because more people are living to grow older, the problems associated with aging increase. In the United States alone, there are now more than 24 million people aged 65 or over. Practically every family is affected by old age, since a family that does

Problems for Others

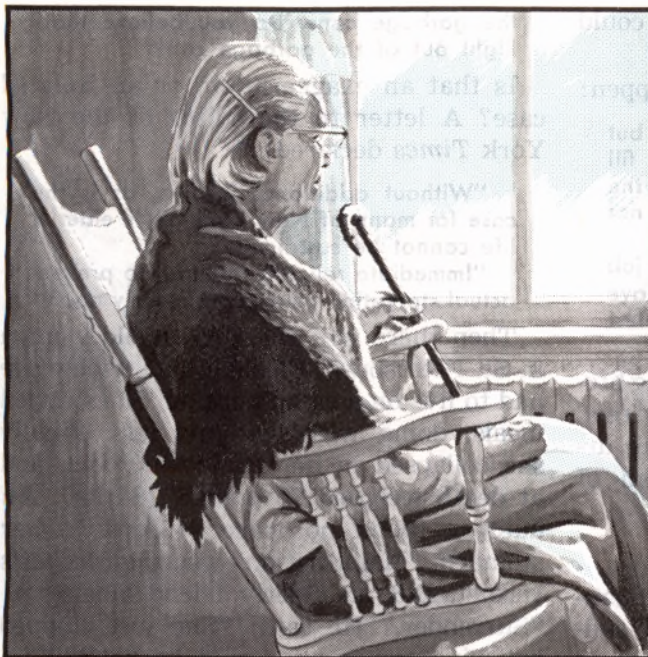
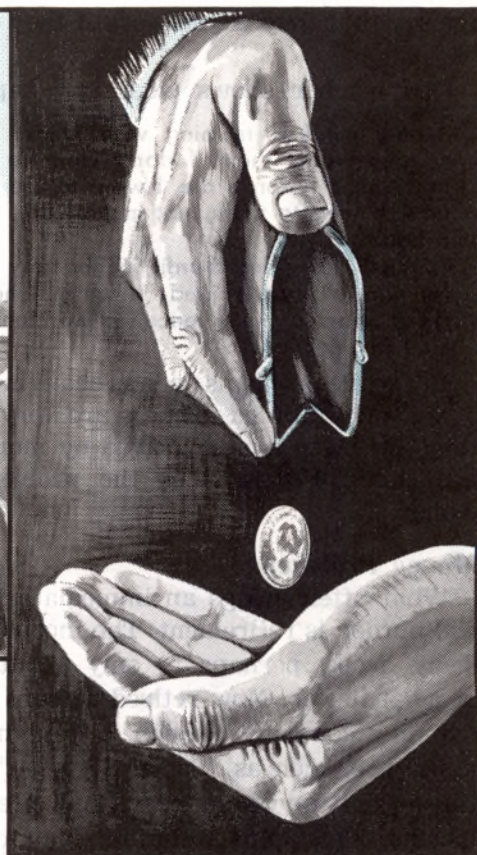
The problems of the aged, of course, are faced not only by the aged themselves; younger family members are faced with their problems too. For instance, *Business Week* magazine says:

"Next to bringing up teenagers and financing their college education, the hardest family problem faced by executives over age 35 is caring for elderly parents.

"Says a New York insurance executive: 'Taking care of my 91-year-old mother has turned us upside down—emotionally and financially.' His reaction is all too typical."

Old age, then, certainly is a problem. And more and more people are having to face it. How can they do so and be "satisfied," as was Abraham? What can they do? What can young adults do about their aging parents?

And the most vital question of all: Can old age ever be reversed?



What Bothers Old People?

WHAT do elderly people themselves regard as their most serious problems? Most often mentioned are: not enough money; poor health care; fear of crime; loneliness; being considered useless; the huge change in their life-style.

Many elderly persons are troubled by the drastic change in the rhythm of their life, especially after retirement. Their lack of a daily routine causes problems. It becomes a chore to fill free time, particularly if interests have not been suf-

ficiently varied during earlier life.

Also, when a married man retires, it can have a profound effect on his wife. With the husband around the house every day, offering comments, making criticisms, wanting attention, a strain can develop between them. It has been found that about one third of all marriages deteriorate after retirement.

In many lands a mandatory retirement age bothers large numbers of the elderly. They are able to work and want to work. But they cannot get jobs. In the year 1900, fully 70 percent of American men over the age of 65 were working. Now only 20 percent are. Yet a third of those over retirement

age say that they would work if they could find a job.

One teacher shows what can happen:

"My mind is teeming with ideas, but no one wants them. I don't want to fill in the time before I die. I want to use the time. I need to work, not make-work, not a hobby . . .

"To be considered unfit for the very job for which I was trained, in which I have many years of experience, is the cruelest kind of rejection."

But while problems such as changing lifestyles and enforced idleness are very real, they are often overshadowed by more urgent ones. Foremost is the problem of money.

Money Problems

What often brings an immediate financial burden is retirement. The income suddenly drops, perhaps to only about half of what it was. Now retired persons must live on a company pension or government assistance, such as "Social Security." But this is not anywhere near their previous income. This, plus inflation, may create money problems.

For example, in the United States, the magazine *U.S. News & World Report* reveals that in the city of New Orleans, 69 percent of those over the age of 65 have incomes below the poverty line. In many other cities, too, a quarter to a half of the elderly live that way.

A typical case is in the 'gray ghetto' of San Francisco, where a 72-year-old man thought he had an ample pension when he first retired. But inflation shrank its buying power. So now he says: "When the end of the month comes, I am usually down to my last few dollars. When that happens, I sometimes skip supper." In the same city, an elderly woman said:

"There are people out there starving in the street. There are people eating out of

the garbage cans. Do you believe that? Right out of the garbage can!"

Is that an exaggeration, or an isolated case? A letter to the editor of the *New York Times* declared:

"Without additional income, as is the case for many of New York City's elderly, life cannot be sustained. . . .

"Immediate relief is required to prevent actual starvation among the elderly poor."

Then there was the 80-year-old woman in St. Petersburg, Florida; as a widow she had to live on a small pension. She skipped meals, doing with less and less. Finally she collapsed in her run-down room, and at death weighed 76 pounds (34 kg). An autopsy found no trace of food in her stomach. "Malnutrition" was the coroner's verdict. But an elderly friend labeled it: "Surrender." He said: "She just stopped believing tomorrow would be better."

Health Affected

While heredity plays a part in health during old age, an important factor is how a person lived during his younger years. If he smoked, then the price in later life might be lung cancer, bladder cancer, chronic heart disease or emphysema. Overdrinking brings on the premature death of brain cells, as well as liver disease. Overeating can contribute to heart trouble, diabetes and other diseases.

Poor nutrition is an important cause of poor health in the elderly. Particularly is this so because many cannot afford to eat properly. Yet, even when they can afford it, some elderly people still neglect their diet, especially when they live alone. This makes them far more vulnerable to disease.

As for senility, a Duke University study indicates that only about 15 percent of the elderly ever become senile. And some conclude that it is not the direct result of old age, but of disease.

Tragically, the onset of poor health, boredom, fear and depression lead to a

mounting problem among the aged: alcoholism. Nearly one out of 10 elderly people in America is now an alcoholic.

Fear of Crime

In many places, such as in the large cities, more elderly ones than any other age group are the victims of crime. They are less able to protect themselves.

An anticrime official in New York said of the city's 1.3 million elderly: "Most are afraid and view crime as one of the most serious problems facing them." Common crimes against elderly people include purse snatching, mugging, fraud, forcible entry for robbery or even rape. Thus, a San Francisco resident said: "You can't protect yourself. Most older people stay off the streets after three o'clock."

Loneliness

One of the most grievous problems of the aged is loneliness. All too many feel unloved, unwanted. This can become acute when one marriage mate dies, especially where the couple had a good relationship.

In the "old days," elderly parents usu-

ally lived with their grown children, providing companionship. In various lands, such as in Africa, Asia and Latin America, this is still true. But even there, change is evident. For instance, in Japan the number of older persons living alone has increased to more than a million, 20 percent more than the year before. Of them, Tokyo's *Daily Yomiuri* said:

"Japan is clearly turning steadily into a society full of old people, but both public and private housing is largely closed to them so that many are having difficulty finding a place to live. . . .

"Although Japan is supposed to be trying to become a welfare country, hardly anything is being done to provide old people with what they need most; namely, housing."

In Western societies, more older people than ever before live alone, or are put into homes for the elderly. And a parallel trend is that more grown children are unable to care for their aging parents, or do not want to do so.

How do you feel about such trends in today's world? Indeed, what is your view of the elderly? And what is God's view?

How Do You View the Elderly?

OUR modern age has seen many rapid changes. Among these is how people view the elderly. At one time respect for the elderly was almost universal. But that is not the case today. Quite a contrary attitude is developing in many lands. In this regard, an older college professor observed:

"Old age is a disease in America. The aged person becomes a leper, to be put away in an institution, or, if lucky, and affluent, in an expensive colony, separated from the rest of mankind."

A study of schoolchildren by the University of Maryland's Center on Aging found that youngsters usually viewed elderly people as "sick, sad, tired, dirty and ugly." It is a tragedy of the times that elderly people are less and less respected by younger ones. Even more tragic is the fact that more children do not consider it an obligation to care for their aging parents.

However, this attitude is not unexpected, at least not by those who keep abreast of



the events of our day in the light of Bible prophecy. It foretold that in our day, these "last days" of this present wicked system of things, many would be "lovers of themselves, . . . disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection."—2 Tim. 3:2-5.

God's View of the Aged

It is of great interest and importance to see how God views the elderly.

When the people of ancient Israel were in covenant relationship with God, they were commanded: "Before gray hair you should rise up, and you must show consideration for the person of an old man, and you must be in fear of your God." (Lev. 19:32) Thus, respect for the aged was a sacred duty, linked to being in subjection to God. Similarly, the apostle Paul said: "Do not severely criticize an older man [even when wrong]. To the contrary, entreat

him as a father, . . . older women as mothers."—1 Tim. 5:1, 2.

Proper regard for one's parents was included as one of the Ten Commandments, the fifth, which stated: "Honor your father and your mother in order that your days may prove long upon the ground that Jehovah your God is giving you." (Ex. 20:12) Note, too, the following Bible verses reflecting God's thinking regarding the children's relationship to their parents:

"Listen to your father who caused your birth, and do not despise your mother just because she has grown old."—Prov. 23:22.

"He that is maltreating a father and that chases a mother away is a son acting shamefully and disgracefully."—Prov. 19:26.

"The eye that holds a father in derision and that despises obedience to a mother—the ravens of the torrent valley will pick it out and the sons of the eagle will eat it up."—Prov. 30:17.

"And one who strikes his father and his mother is to be put to death without fail. And one who calls down evil upon his father and his mother is to be put to death without fail."—Ex. 21:15, 17.

Today we are not under the Mosaic law with those sanctions. (Rom. 6:14; Col. 2:13, 14) However, they surely do teach us how important God considers this matter to be.

Respect in Other Cultures

Even among many ancient nations not governed by God's laws, the aged were given proper respect. Ancient Egypt's young men were taught to rise before their elders as a mark of honor, yielding first place to them. The young of ancient Greece were taught to be silently respectful before older persons.

In some parts of the world today older persons are still given much esteem. In a section of the Soviet Union where many live to be over 100, it is said that a contributing factor to their longevity is the respect that they are given. They are made to feel useful and are wanted, holding a dignified place in society.

Earlier in United States history, older folks were usually respected and obeyed. Parents took care of their children, and, when the children were grown, it was understood that they would take care of their parents.

Concerning today's attitudes toward the elderly in one city, the *New York Daily News* had this observation:

"Curiously, it is an advantage at this stage in life [being elderly] to be black or Hispanic in New York. Blacks and Hispanics take care of their elderly.

"The white generally do not, and their numbers account for many of the estimated 300,000 people over 65 who live alone in rent-controlled apartments, or run-down hotels and rooming houses."

Certainly the elderly need to feel wanted, loved. If they are not, they may just give up on life. Dr. Amos Johnson, of the American Academy of Family Physicians, said:

"I have seen old people in a reasonably healthy condition who, when put away in the isolation of custodial care facilities, totally lose interest in life.

"They refuse to communicate, refuse to



eat, become totally bedridden, waste away and die. This is a disease process called 'isolation' and should be so designated on the death certificate."

Hidden Treasure

Younger persons who take an interest in older ones often find the experience enriching. One middle-aged man observed that some of the most interesting, profitable, "golden" hours of his life were those spent in the company of older folks.

Why can this be so? Older persons have lived longer, have usually experienced many more things in life. Their views and recollections can be very valuable. And this is of particular benefit when an older person has lived his life in harmony with God's laws and principles. Of such ones, the Bible says: "Gray-headedness is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness." —Prov. 16:31.

They can be like a hidden treasure. But a treasure, to be useful, has to be discovered and used. The rich mine of informa-

tion, wisdom and views of older persons needs to be tapped. So children, teen-agers, young adults and middle-aged adults would do well to exchange views with their elders. And if the older ones may be reluctant to offer their comments, tactfully ask them for their opinions. You may be surprised at how rewarding this can be. In turn, it will provide them with encouragement and uplift.

It is not only good counsel and information that older ones can give; many upset young people have found great peace of mind in the company of older ones, who often have a warmth, affection and understanding that is very appealing. A kind word from such a one can help to ease the problems of the day. That is why grandparents usually make such excellent babysitters.

This does not mean that every elderly person constantly speaks words of wisdom and uplift. (Eccl. 4:13) Nobody does that. They may often have erroneous views; but so do others. They may also have peculiarities, as do others. Yet, notwithstanding their imperfections, many of which are magnified by old age, God's view is that they merit our consideration and respect.

How You Can Help

Two elderly ladies, friends, lived in separate homes in the same town. One day there was a heavy snowfall. The next morning, when one of the ladies looked outside, she was amazed to find that her sidewalk had been shoveled clean of snow.

The woman wondered who could have done this kind deed without even letting her know or asking payment. She called her friend to tell her about it. But her friend said, in equal amazement, that her sidewalk, too, had been shoveled clean.

Weeks later, there was another heavy snow. The next morning, both found that their sidewalks had again been shoveled. Later, another heavy snow was forecast,

and it came. That evening one of the ladies went to bed early and was up the next morning by 6. When she looked out the window, there was a 12-year-old boy shoveling the snow.

How happy it made her and her friend to think that someone cared enough to perform such a service. And why so early in the morning? So that the elderly ladies would not see him and feel obligated to pay for his work! That boy performed a service that was of great practical help. It is a sample of the many things that can be done by others to ease the burdens that come with advanced age.

Tactful Help

At the same time, however, balance and tact are needed. One must not become overbearing or bossy in offering help, or short-tempered. It is important, wherever possible, that the older person still feel in control of his or her life.

As an example, one day a man saw an older woman carrying a heavy package. He politely asked: "Could I help you carry that, ma'am?" She smiled, expressed gratitude for the offer, but declined, saying: "No, I can still do this for myself."

On the other hand, a man was about to cross a busy intersection of a city in mid-winter. He saw an elderly lady just standing at the curb with an apprehensive look on her face. Then he noticed the mound of snow and ice that she had to cross. Turning to her, he asked: "May I help you?" She quickly responded: "Oh, yes, would you please?"

Visits Mean Much

Visits with elderly folks mean much to them. As one older person said of those who visit: "They cannot know what joy they bring to one whose children and grandchildren are far away." You may have an interesting experience to tell them, or some items from the news that may be

of value to them. However, many times your just being a good listener is the most important service you can give.

Another thing that many elderly folks would appreciate when their eyesight is not what it used to be is your reading aloud to them. You may have an upbuilding item from a letter you received. Or they may have some material they would like you to read to them. You might read and discuss together a portion of the Bible. Many find the variety of information that is published in *Awake!* magazine and also the Bible magazine *The Watchtower* interesting and edifying to read aloud.

At times, a small token of your interest can also be brought in the form of a gift. It can be food, a plant, or perhaps something you have made. Yes, you may even bring a money gift if you see a need. Then, too, you could offer to cook them a meal, or perhaps offer to take them out to one if they are able to go. Or they might appreciate being invited to other homes or gatherings. Offer to accompany them there. And when this is done, check to see if they are being cared for at the gathering.

Sometimes the aging process results in illnesses or infirmities that prevent one from going out to care for necessary matters, such as shopping. It would be a real kindness to offer to do this, or to see that it gets done.

Yes, there are many ways that others can help to make life more enjoyable for older ones. Doing so shows the godly spirit of giving. It helps the giver too, bringing more satisfaction to his or her life because of knowing that the right thing has been done. And they usually get greater love shown to them by the recipient. Jesus said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

That is the spirit behind the good deed that the 12-year-old boy performed for the

two elderly ladies when he shoveled the snow off their sidewalks. He had learned such a godly attitude from the training he had received in Bible principles as the son of one of Jehovah's Witnesses. His father had taught him that being a servant of God includes good works as well as belief in God.—Jas. 2:26.

Financial Help

In many lands, there are various agencies of government that are able to offer financial assistance, and it would be proper to use these.

At times, though, forms of financial help from the outside are not enough, or do not exist. Then what financial obligation, in particular, do one's own grown children have toward aging parents, and even grandparents? On this important matter God's Word says:

"If any widow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household and to keep paying a due compensation to their parents and grandparents, for this is acceptable in God's sight.

"Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household [such as elderly parents or grandparents], he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith."
—1 Tim. 5:4, 8.

To say that one should not have to accept the burden of elderly parents really does not make sense. The children were cared for by their parents in many ways. For 18 to 20 years or more they depended on the parents for food, housing, clothing, education, money and other things. This included being cared for when they were helpless babies, as well as when they got sick. Why, then, should it seem wrong for children, when grown, to take up the responsibility of caring for their aging parents?

Of course, the time may come when it

is no longer possible personally to provide the care that one of advanced age needs if that one becomes incapacitated. It may be that better care could be taken of them in a nursing home that specializes in this. If this becomes necessary, they should be

visited often. Spending one's last years in a nursing home is not pleasant.

Will the lot of mankind always include getting old, perhaps ultimately bedridden and unable to engage in activities once enjoyed, with death always the final result?

How Old Age will be Reversed

THE fact that we do not really want to grow old and die is revealing. As long as possible, we want to hold on to the vitality that comes with youth.

This fundamental longing harmonizes with another basic fact: We were not made to grow old and die. Old age and death are not only undesirable, but unnatural as well.

But is this not how God created us, that is, to live for a short while, then to grow old and die? Did he not arrange for the aging process, and the death that follows, as the normal state of affairs for humans?

The answer that comes from God's own inspired Word is, NO! Humans were not created to die. They were not created even to grow old in the sense that we now experience. Old age and death were completely alien to the human family at its beginning.

Please read the account of God's creating man and woman, found in the first three chapters of the Bible in Genesis. Nowhere does it say that humans were created to age and die as a natural sequence of life.

Instead, the Bible clearly reveals that old age and death were the consequences of breaking God's law, of rebelling against God. (Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-5, 17-19) Had our first parents continued obedient to God's

laws, had they remained in subjection to Him, they would still be alive today. They would be perfect humans who would not grow old and die, although having lived thousands of years.

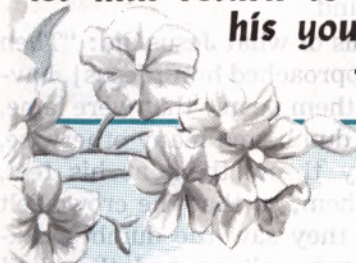
Breakthrough Near

God's purpose in creating humans on earth was to have a perfect race of people inhabit it, living amid paradise conditions, and doing so forever. That is still his purpose, which is why Jesus promised a dying man who expressed faith: "You will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43) Jesus had in mind the time that was coming when old age and death would once again be foreign to mankind. He knew that ultimately every person living on earth would have perfect, vibrant health and never again be tormented with the problems of old age and death.

Happily, we are fast nearing the time when a dramatic breakthrough will take place that will mark the beginning of the end for old age and death. That breakthrough will pave the way for these plagues to be nullified once and for all time. Then, even without Ponce de León's "Fountain of Youth," all who will live will be able to enjoy the good health and vitality that will come with a perfect body, combining it with the experience and wisdom that



**"Let his flesh become fresher
than in youth;
let him return to the days of
his youthful vigor."
—Job 33:25.**



will come with living many, yes, an endless number of years.

Too, all of this will be enjoyed in a world where the disagreeable conditions of today no longer prevail. They will have been taken out of the way. Instead, there will be such peace and security that "there will be no one making them tremble." (Mic. 4:4) "They will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." (Ps. 37:11) For how long? "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." —Ps. 37:29.

Are we discussing some fantastic scientific breakthrough that is about to take place? No, it is something far more pro-

found and enduring. Scientific breakthroughs may help in some ways, but they cause many problems in other ways. And no scientist will ever find the formula for ending old age and death. Nor can any scientist unite peoples of all nationalities in a worldwide bond of peace, happiness and genuine love.

At Whose Hands?

The coming change from mankind's present pitiful condition will not be at the hands of mere mortals. (Dan. 2:44) Hu-

mans have had long enough to show what they can do on their own. When we review the past record of man's hatreds, wars, selfishness, crime, hypocrisy and prejudices, we must acknowledge that the record is hardly one that inspires confidence. In truth, the record is downright miserable. No, we cannot look to humans for a meaningful breakthrough where old age and death are concerned.

There is only One who is capable of bringing about such a breakthrough. This is the One who knows the human mechanism, the body and mind, more intimately than anyone else. This is mankind's Creator, the Almighty One, Jehovah. It is he who is in position to make the needed changes. He has the wisdom, power, love and will to halt aging and death.

Has God's time neared for this to take place? Yes! Those keeping abreast with Bible prophecy and its fulfillment in modern times know that we live in the final generation of human history where old age and death would prevail. Soon, God's toleration and time limit for this present unsatisfactory world will run out and he will crush it out of existence. That it would take place in "this generation," our lifetime, Jesus noted in his prophecy about "the conclusion of the system of things." Thus, when the present worldly system of things ends, aging and death will begin to come to an end too.—Matt. 24:3, 34.

The end of this system will pave the way for "a new earth." This was foretold in the inspired writings of the apostle Peter. (2 Pet. 3:13) The "new earth" will mean a new human society under God's rulership. The benefits that will then flow to those living on earth will be like those given to the first man and woman in the paradise of Eden.—Gen. 2:8.

Earthly Blessings

Many Bible prophecies, directly or indirectly, reveal the thrilling uplift that is

in store for mankind in God's "new earth." Note a few of them:

"At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."
—Isa. 35:5, 6.

"And no resident will say: 'I am sick.' The people that are dwelling in the land will be those pardoned for their error."
—Isa. 33:24.

"Let his flesh become fresher than in youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor."—Job 33:25.

Is the prospect of return to youth and enjoyment of good health too good to be true? Not at all. Do not forget what took place in the first century of our Common Era. That was when Jesus, by means of God's power, demonstrated that such healing and restoration are part of God's purpose for mankind.

The Bible tells of what Jesus did: "Then great crowds approached him [Jesus], having along with them people that were lame, maimed, blind, dumb, and many otherwise, and they fairly threw them at his feet, and he cured them; so that the crowd felt amazement as they saw the dumb speaking and the lame walking and the blind seeing."—Matt. 15:30, 31.

Jesus did even more. He not only performed marvelous cures for the sick and infirm but also showed that in God's "new earth" there would be consideration for the dead. The Bible relates several instances of Jesus' raising the dead back to life on earth. Lazarus was one of these. He had been dead for four days, but Jesus resurrected him.—John 11:38-44.

On another occasion, Jesus said: "All those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28, 29) Later, the

apostle Paul similarly declared: "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous."—Acts 24:15.

The restoring of dead ones to life presents no problem at all to the Creator, since he created man and woman in the first place. Re-creating people from his divine memory will be for God a simple task. Surely, since mere humans can even now re-create to a degree a person's looks, actions, voice and personality by means of motion pictures and voice recordings, cannot man's Creator, with infinitely more power and wisdom, do better?

Beautifully, God's Word describes the conquering of death and old age. Notice some of the scriptures that bear on this:

"He will actually swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will certainly wipe the tears from all faces."—Isa. 25:8.

"And he [God] 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.

"As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing."—1 Cor. 15:26.

"'Death is swallowed up forever.' 'Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?' "—1 Cor. 15:54, 55.

What a marvelous day it will be when dead loved ones are welcomed back to life so they, too, can benefit from God's great healing and restoration program!

This grand hope of release from the grip of old age and death gives great encouragement to older persons in these trying times. For example, a woman in Florida who began examining the Bible's promises after her husband's death said that the hope of her husband's resurrection was what really interested her in God's new order. That comforting hope helped to sustain her in her grief, and gave her the best reason for living.

Think of it! The day is dawning when older folks will see the aging process re-

versed, with fewer and fewer wrinkles as time passes. Eyesight will be restored so they can throw away their eyeglasses. Hearing will improve too, so they can get rid of hearing aids. Infirmities will be eliminated, so they can walk without a cane. And on top of all of that, they will be able to welcome back to life dead loved ones.

So thrilling and satisfying will that time be that God's Word says: "The former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart." (Isa. 65:17) In God's new order, there will be such a flood of good things happening that the saddening, painful, frustrating life led now will be but a dim memory, in no way interfering with the delights of each new day of life then.

Trusting God

Can such promises be trusted? Well, whom would you rather trust—humans who have already demonstrated their unreliability or God, who, as the Bible says, "cannot lie"?—Titus 1:2.

The answer given by the Israelite leader Joshua, who saw some of God's marvelous works, was: "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed."—Josh. 23:14.

If you knew a doctor that could cure heart disease, cancer, and every other illness, would you go to him for treatment? If he could also reverse the aging process and eliminate death, would you turn to him? And if at the same time he had the power to create a delightful paradise for you to live in, how much would you give for his services? Would you say: "I don't have time, I'm too busy"? Or would you object: "I'm not interested"?

Jehovah God has far greater powers for cure and restoration than any doctor. And he can be trusted to do the job right. What does he ask in return? That we turn to him in faith, and work on behalf of his interests, for "he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

A Better Life Now

This solid hope has proved to be a 'rock of Gibraltar' in the lives of many elderly people today. It provides motivation, uplift and purpose for the present, as well as hope for the future, and, in addition, it brings them into comforting association with many others with similar hopes.

The hope of God's new order "does not lead to disappointment." (Rom. 5:5) It does much to dispel depression and insecurity. And coming into association with others who have the same hope forges a bond of love that dispels loneliness and a feeling of unworthiness. Too, it gives a person the opportunity to perform very worthwhile activity, since the hope of a new order is one that can be shared with others.

An elderly lady in a Caribbean land retired from teaching school mainly because of age, but also because she had trouble with her voice. On learning the Bible's truths about the new order, and God's great restoration program, she began to teach others. For many years thereafter she was 'unretired,' daily spending as much, and often more time in her teaching God's truths to others than she formerly did in her school teaching.

In Spain, a 74-year-old man wanted to spend his full time telling others about God's new order. When he first started, he said he wished to serve in that upbuilding work as long as his physical faculties would allow it. Seven years later, at 81, he was still going strong. He found that there could be no more upbuilding and satisfying work than to share the good

news of God's incoming "new earth" with others. No, there was no boring inactivity, loneliness, or feeling of worthlessness mar-
ring his old age.

A 96-year-old woman in South Africa, when asked if she intended to retire as a teacher of the Bible, replied that she could never do that. She stated: "As long as I have power of speech and a steady hand, I shall continue to preach the 'good news.' With Jehovah's help I will continue to tell people about the wonderful blessings to be experienced under his kingdom." Although she suffered constant pain from arthritis, and was not able to go out very often, she wrote many letters to console others, discussing an upbuilding Bible subject and enclosing further information in printed form. She spent much time profitably in preparing interesting topics to discuss in her letters, which helped to fortify her mind against depression. Too, she regularly attended meetings with those who had the same hope. There she was greatly encouraged by hearing the expressions of faith of others, and by associating with so many "brothers" and "sisters" of like faith. In turn, her very presence at those meetings was an encouraging example to all.

Also encouraging to older ones is the cooperation they get from younger ones who have been trained in God's laws and principles. After a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Fresno, California, an elderly woman wrote:

"I think it is the younger people and the cooperation of the organization all working together that helps me to keep on serving and enduring.

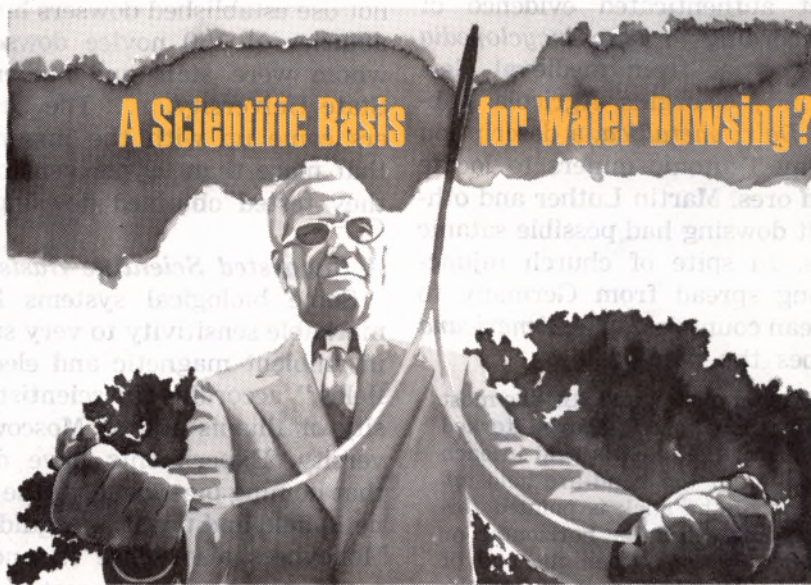
"I had an experience with a couple of younger Witnesses at this assembly. It is hard for me to get up and down the steps, and I was trying to get down the steps when two little boys on two different occasions came up to me. I didn't know who they were, but they said: 'Sister, can we help you down the steps?' It is wonderful that the younger ones are looking after our older ones."

The living hope of God's new order, the association of others who have the same hope, the love and unity shared with several million "brothers" and "sisters" throughout the world are testimony to the fact that life can be, indeed is, worth while for aging ones.

Yes, knowing about God's purposes can

make the older years really "golden." And even if death should temporarily seem to be the victor, life in God's new order is still assured by means of the resurrection. There, in that new system, everyone will be completely and permanently freed from today's calamities, including old age and death.

A Scientific Basis for Water Dowsing?



THERE seems to be no scientific basis for some of the responses claimed by some water dowsers. In some cases the forked stick jerks about wildly, in others the pull is so strong that the stick breaks. Other dowsers claim that they can locate water just by working over a map of the area. Such reports rouse suspicions that some demonic forces are involved. The *Watchtower* magazine of November 15, 1962, had an interesting article on the subject of wicked spirits and their activities. It took the position that demonic forces might very well be involved in these experiences.

However, the article also said: "While scientific research to date does not agree that seeking water with the use of a forked twig is based on the operation of natural laws, this does not mean that such researchers are absolutely correct. It may be that there are certain basic laws of nature that are involved in it."

Along this line, 17 years later an interesting article appeared in the reputable *New Scientist* magazine. (February 8, 1979) Under the title "Dowsing Achieves New Credence," the subtitle read: "Reports from the Soviet Union of successful scientific experiments in the ancient arts

of water and mineral divining have forced a fresh look at possible practical application of the technique." The Soviet geologists involved "emphasized the merits of one particular method recently developed in the Soviet Union and known as 'BPM.'" The *New Scientist* article added: "As it turns out, BPM (bio-physical method) is simply a respectable new name for water and mineral divining or dowsing!"

Attacked by the Church

"The first authenticated evidence of dowsing," according to *The Encyclopedia Americana*, "comes from medieval Germany: in 1556, Georgius Agricola published in his *De re metallica*, a description of dowsing by Teutonic miners to locate minerals and ores. Martin Luther and other clerics felt dowsing had possible satanic relationships. In spite of church injunctions, dowsing spread from Germany to other European countries." The *Americana* then describes the method:

"The traditional device, and still the most popular instrument, is a Y-shaped forked stick. One fork of the stick is held in each hand. The palms of the hand are held upward. The end of the stick is pointed forward and maintained in a horizontal or slightly raised position. When the end of the stick bends down, the presence of the desired object is indicated. In the past, rods of hazelwood were preferred. Now a variety of woods are employed, as are rods made of whalebone, nylon, and metal."

After stating that dowsing was "controversial from the start and frequently attacked by the Church as the work of the Devil," *New Scientist* disputed the claims that only certain persons had this power. Based on a study with ordinary people, "it seems that the ability to obtain such reactions is far more widespread than had previously been thought. . . . Using these devices which, like the traditional hazel twig simply act as high-gain mechanical amplifiers of small hand movements, hun-

dreds of people found that they could experience dowsing reactions." So it is not the rod that is attracted to the water or ore. It merely amplifies and makes visible small, imperceptible hand movements. Confirming this, the *Americana* said: "Some dowsers claim to be able to detect objects with their hands alone."

The *New Scientist* article reported on a study conducted by two originally skeptical scientists at the Water Research Laboratory of Utah State University. They did not use established dowsers but "tested the abilities of 150 novice dowsers, most of whom were staff and students at Utah State University. . . . The Utah researchers came up with the important finding that more than 99 per cent of the people they tested obtained dowsing reactions."

A Suggested Scientific Basis

Some biological systems have "a remarkable sensitivity to very small changes in ambient magnetic and electromagnetic fields," according to scientists at University of Illinois and at Moscow State University. Experiments have demonstrated that homing pigeons sense the earth's magnetic field and use it as a guidance system. Honeybees also sense it, and recent experiments seem to suggest that even some snails are sensitive to it. Can the human hand respond to variations in the magnetic field? If so, how would that be relevant to the presence of water? The *New Scientist* article explains:

"How could such a theory account for the phenomenon of water and mineral divining, or BPM as applied by Soviet geologists? Mineral veins and flowing ground water are both associated with geological discontinuities such as faults, fracture and shear zones, prominent joint planes, old stream channels, solution cavities in limestones, lava tubes in volcanic rocks and so on. These discontinuities cause small geophysical perturbations, in magnetic field strength, for instance, that

could be responsible for the dowsing reaction. This is the belief of the Soviet geologists who have been using BPM for over a decade and whose work deserves to be better known in the West."

According to this theory, it is thought that the variations in the magnetic field strength, caused by the particular geological formations, are what cause the dowsing reaction, and not the presence or absence of water or metals. These formations, however, favor the depositing of metallic veins or accumulations of water. Many examples of the successful application of dowsing in the Soviet Union have been given, for locating both ore bodies and flowing water.

In the Utah State University tests previously mentioned, the 150 novice dowsers were each given 30 wooden blocks and walked along prescribed test courses. They were to drop a block wherever they had a dowsing reaction. Each walked the courses alone, and before the next one came along the blocks were removed after their positions were recorded. In a significant number of cases, the blocks were dropped in the same locations. After reporting this the *New Scientist* article continues:

"These results suggested that it would be worth examining the possibility that the dowsing reactions were related to small magnetic field variations along the test paths, as measured by caesium vapour magnetometers. Some correlation was found: dowsers obtained more frequent reactions along path segments in which larger magnetic field gradient changes occurred.

Chadwick and Jensen concluded that the possible link between dowsing reactions and magnetic field changes related to flowing ground water could form the basis of future research."

Conclusion

The *New Scientist* concludes: "If the dowsing reaction is as general as this, and if the Soviet claims as to the effectiveness of BPM as a prospecting technique are to be taken at face value, there would seem to be every reason for making water and mineral divining the subject of a concerned research effort. . . . if the solution of an age-old mystery, frequently linked with clairvoyance and the occult, were shown after all to be merely a question of thorough analysis it would be a timely demonstration of the value of the scientific method."

Even if it is proved that there are responses to changes in the electromagnetic field, which some attribute to the presence of water, it still does not explain the extreme reactions of some who claim that the stick or rod jerks about wildly and is sometimes broken by the violence of the reaction. Nor is there any explanation for the claim that some can pass the rod over a map of an area and locate water. In such cases demonic forces may still be at work. Wicked spirits sometimes seize upon normal reactions and distort them out of all proportions, or take a truth and push it to such an extreme that it becomes a gross deception.



What a Bird Brain!

Science has always been mystified by the ability of birds to migrate long distances. Now the mystery has deepened—pigeons can sense the position of the moon even when they can't see it. Before this it has been demonstrated that homing pigeons sense changes in the earth's magnetic field, can see light waves we can't, can detect low-frequency sounds miles away, can sense air-pressure changes and identify familiar odors. And now pigeons know where the moon is, even in daylight. How they do it is still a mystery to scientists.

the OSTRICH

Largest bird on earth



"LISTEN!" The booming sound reverberated again through the bushveld. "Is that a lion?"

"No, that's a male ostrich showing off to his mate."

The bushveld farmer and his friend left their Land Rover and crept carefully forward. Soon they could see the courting pair in a clearing. What huge birds! The ostrich is easily the largest bird on earth. But how gracefully it can dance!

Courting Dance

The courting dance of the male bird is fascinating to watch. This remarkable display puts the ostrich among the foremost performers of the bird and animal kingdom. During the mating season, the plumage of the cock usually attains its

brightest colors—black on the body and wings, with white wing quills, brownish-white tail feathers and a white collar around the skin of the neck. Female plumage is of a light-gray color and the skin dark gray. The skin of the mature cock is dark-lead blue and, at mating time, bright scarlet over the beak, forehead and eyes, as well as the front of the legs and toes.

By
"Awake!" correspondent
in South Africa

The cock begins his dance with spectacular "waltzing" movements in dainty circles, as if on tiptoe, with raised wings, displaying his beautiful plumage. He approaches his mate gently, going down before her on his knees, or haunches. Patiently, he courts her with a rolling body movement and with wings slightly raised, moving them to and fro. He butts his head alternately against the right or the left arch of his back, thus making a thudding sound.

An appreciative hen will then raise her wings in a horizontal position, fluttering the tips gently. She does this almost bashfully, with her head held low, while opening and shutting her beak as if chewing air. After a while, she crouches for the male to perform the mating act.

A Fascinating Bird

Not only the dancing of the ostrich, but its very appearance, is fascinating. The largest of all birds, standing about eight feet (2.5 m) high, has a small head with big eyes and long lashes. Its eyeball is very large, about two inches (5 cm) in diameter. The eyelashes serve to protect those delicate eyes from the dust of the arid regions and the sandstorms of the desert.

An ostrich has a narrow, bare neck about three feet (1 m) long. Since its wings are small and its body so heavy, averaging about 240 pounds (109 kg), the ostrich cannot fly. However, respect for the bird grows as one observes its muscular thighs and strong legs. These enable it to run at speeds of about 45 miles (72 km) per hour, faster than a horse. Not without good reason, then, the Bible says that the ostrich "laughs at the horse and at its rider."—Job 39:18.

Ostrich plumage is the main attraction. Those gorgeous feathers on the wings and tail are up to 30 inches long and 15 inches wide (76 by 38 cm). They were honored by the ancient Egyptians, were worn by medieval knights and European royalty, and were used for centuries to bedeck African chiefs and warriors. Even today, women from Hong Kong to Rio de Janeiro, as well as dancers on stage, highly prize these elegant plumages.

When instinct prompts pairing, the cock immediately gives attention to the building of the "nest," if it can be called that. It is a crude affair. The cock chooses a spot with a clear view all around and frantically loosens the ground with his powerful feet. Then, with his breast, he scoops out a shallow depression, and that is the nest!

What About Its Manners?

Ostriches have truculent manners, especially in their natural habitat. The males

fight with one another at the least provocation, especially during the breeding season. Their kicking power is tremendous. If irritated by a man and afforded the opportunity, an ostrich's toe can rip open the individual's chest and stomach with one blow.

When in a belligerent mood, cocks can be quite reckless. Consider this story of a cock that saw a train coming down a slope at full speed. He got onto the track and advanced to fight the foe. As the engine approached, he kicked. But, alas! It was his last kick.

Although these birds are so pugnacious, there is one thing that will make a charging ostrich stop and think—a thorn branch. Fear that his large, delicate eyes will be scratched on the long, sharp thorns will make him hold back and keep his distance. Ostrich farmers often use thorn branches to control their birds.

When egg-laying begins, the cock and his hen (or hens, for he often is polygamous, especially in the wild) take turns at sitting on the eggs. The hens, with their duller plumage that blends well with the surrounding terrain, take the "day shift." On the other hand, the cocks, with their black plumage work the "night shift." What excellent camouflage the Creator provided for these birds!

If enemies appear, the adult birds have the built-in ability to feign either death or injury to lure the foe away from the nest. An ostrich may pretend to have an injured leg and may stumble along pathetically, or it may lie so quietly in a death-like state that the enemy is deceived. If a predator comes near when the bird is on the nest, it will lay its head on the ground so that its rounded body looks just like an anthill. Wrote one ostrich farmer: "It is thought that the fallacy that an ostrich buries his head in the sand derives from this habit."

Ostrich Farming

In South Africa, ostrich farming is carried on mainly in the Little Karroo, with its center in the town of Oudtshoorn. The industry flourished well from about 1880 to 1914, ostrich feathers then being the height of fashion among women. Fortunes were made, and large mansions still seen in Oudtshoorn bear witness to that era. But with the coming of World War I there was a terrible slump, which lasted until after World War II. Today, however, the industry again is on sound footing.

The relatively low mentality of ostriches often presents problems when farming with them. For example: A male may take four or five females with him, sectioning off a portion of the veld. However, with so many females, about 35 to 40 eggs will lie scattered about the nest, some inside, others outside. During the day, each female chooses a few and "covers" them. By nightfall, the male probably will select just the center position on the nest and cover those eggs. Hence, many eggs never hatch.

To add to this problem, the male and the female will desert the nest three or four days after the first chicks have been hatched, regardless of how many eggs remain unhatched. No wonder the Bible indicates that "God has made [the ostrich] forget wisdom, and he has not given her a share in understanding." (Job 39:17) For these and other reasons, to ensure a reasonable degree of success, incubators are used for hatching the eggs, rather than relying on such irresponsible parents.

Even then care must be exercised. Once in the morning and once at night, the eggs must be turned manually to simulate what the ostrich does to give movement to the germinating yolk and to prevent it from settling and sticking to the shell membrane. In the nest the parent birds turn the eggs regularly.

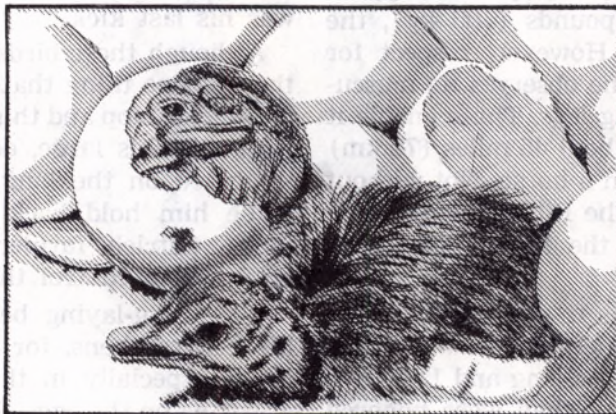
Egg Collection

For incubating purposes, the eggs need to be collected from the field, and for the inexperienced this can be dangerous. The eggs must be taken from the nests, which are nearly always attended by the birds. Farmhands go in among the birds with horses and put the eggs in bags packed with straw. The eggs are heavy, each weighing about

three and a half pounds (1.6 kg), and they are about six inches (15 cm) long, with a white, porous shell. They are easily cracked or broken if knocked together. Remarkably, though, without breaking, they can take the weight of a man standing on them.

A Look at the Hatching Process

If you want to boil an egg hard—and ostrich eggs provide fine nourishment—it will take about 42 minutes. But if you want to witness one of the most marvelously intricate pieces of natural machinery going into action for 42 days, follow the farmer as he prepares his incubator. He packs the ostrich eggs on trays and sets the ventilated heat at approximately 98 degrees Fahrenheit (37° C). This simple application of heat to the germ life of the



egg triggers a process that should humble the wisest of men.

At the end of the gestation period, we find that the unborn chick has filled the shell completely and is ready to emerge. But how will the thick shell be broken? The chick itself does this. With its beak? No, with the claw on the larger of its two toes. The packaging of this marvel of creation has to be seen to be believed. Why, the large toe is next to the head and beak of the chick! The toe breaks the shell and the chick begins breathing through its nostrils. The longer it breathes, the more vigorous its kick becomes, until the shell breaks and the chick is free. Lining the inside of the shell is a many-layered plastic-like membrane (or, inner shell) housing all the intricate connections through the navel tube. As the membrane dries while the chick is emerging, so does the tube. Truly a most exciting and delicate function.

The farmer is very careful not overly to hasten these critical movements and break an excessive amount of the shell in an effort to help the emerging chick. Doing so would expose too much of the membrane, cause it to dry out too fast, and so, by its contracting, it would suffocate the chick.

Several days will pass before the new chick takes in food and water. During that period, it will be sustained by the yolk, which, shortly before hatching, has slipped through the chick's navel. The little creature's first meal is a very strange one—its mother's droppings! Evidently, this gives some kind of stability to the stomach, which is most delicate at this stage and is the cause of great concern to the farmer. Many fatalities among chicks can occur because of incorrect early feeding. But in later life the ostrich will greedily satisfy its almost insatiable appetite, swallowing nearly everything it can get. Being an indiscriminate feeder, the ostrich was

included among the unclean birds listed in the Mosaic law. (Lev. 11:13, 16) Since the ostrich lacks teeth, it swallows small pebbles that combine with the muscular movement of the upper stomach to mash its food.

It is standard practice to introduce to a breeding pair the three- or four-day-old chicks that have been hatched in an incubator. The foster parents accept the chicks happily and bring them up as their own. After the chicks have been left in the enclosure and the hen catches sight of them, she goes to them and immediately excretes the vital droppings. The chicks feed just once on them. Many new chicks can be introduced to the same foster parents, and ultimately the pair may be caring for up to 100 chicks.

Skins and Meat

Ostrich skin makes a tough, soft leather much in demand by manufacturers of shoes, handbags, gloves and other items. It is light brown in color and is easily recognizable by its evenly spaced nodules.

The dried, raw meat, or biltong, obtained from ostriches is of good quality and is considered a delicacy by many South Africans. Slaughtering used to be done by breaking the neck, but the resulting biltong was of poor quality. Recently, the slaughterhouses have been bleeding the birds, resulting in a marked improvement in the quality and durability of the biltong. Local farmers were both delighted and surprised. But especially is this procedure desirable because of God's requirement that Christians "keep abstaining . . . from blood."—Acts 15:28, 29; Deut. 12:23-25.

Fierce. Foolish. Flightless. Fascinating. All these words apply to this unusual "mammoth" of the bird world. Quaint in appearance and strange in some of its ways, the ostrich certainly magnifies the wisdom and variety evident in its Maker's handiwork.

ALFALFA



The Amazing Forage

THE aroma of freshly mown alfalfa wafts over the fields, sweet and warm. A warm aroma? Well, yes, when you walk in bright sunlight across hay stubble, the black velvety Minnesota loam is warm to your feet, and the breeze is warm, and you associate warmth even with the scent of hay.

Hay is a subject that I had not always relished. I associated it with "sweat bees," hard work and vociferous cows flailing their tails in hunger. My memories of hay go back to boyhood times in east Tennessee where clover was mowed with a clickety-clack machine drawn by mules. The hay wagon would come and, with grunting and heaving, we would hoist pitchfork bunches up onto the hay frame.

There was always bickering over who rode the wagon because up there it was easier to shape the hay into a mound than it was to heft it aloft. The only time our vengeance was satisfied was when, un-

knowingly, we included a big snake in a forkful, and it would slither out over the driver's legs. I still see mental pictures of him bounding with a hoarse yelp clear off the wagon, no matter if it was a 10-foot (3-m) jump.

But that was long ago and far away. Here in Minnesota my brother-in-law, Quen, has been buying and selling and growing hay for 30 years. But there are no mules or wagons or pitchforks in sight. Here the fluffy green alfalfa undulates like the sea over the horizon in 100-acre (41-ha) stretches. Up ahead, receding away from us, a giant red mowing machine is gushing out a windrow of rich green hay.

The All-Around Feed

"Alfalfa produces more protein to the acre than any other of the 25 crops commonly grown in the United States for forage and grains," my brother-in-law informs me. Due to our living so far apart,

in all these years this is the first time I have visited him while he is haying. We are walking between a windrow and the uncut edge of alfalfa. It stands knee-high, dense, yet sensitive to the breeze, with here and there a starlike purple flower showing.

"We'd rather cut it before there's any bloom at all," he explains. He pulls up a double handful. "Right now the stems are small and the leaves are tender. At this stage it is about 40 percent more nutritious, a third more digestible, with hardly half the crude fiber it will have a few days later when it is in full bloom and the stems are tough."

He moves ahead: "The more tender and green the hay, the more of it cows will eat and the more milk they will give. Or"—he thrusts his toe under the windrow and tosses a bunch of alfalfa into the air—"when a farmer feeds beef cattle a 40-percent ration of alfalfa along with corn silage the cattle grow better and faster; and eight pounds of alfalfa becomes one pound of beef."

It is a revelation to hear him expound authoritatively on the merits and glories of alfalfa. "In some areas it is called *lucerne*. The Arabic *al-fac*, *facah* means 'the best fodder.'"

Alfalfa, I learn, is the all-around feed for just about any animal on the farm. A cow, when fed no grain, can eat up to 3 percent of her body weight of quality alfalfa (and give 50 pounds of milk). That is half again as much as she can gain from corn silage. When hogs are fed wholly or partially on some form of alfalfa (pellets, meal, etc.) more pigs are farrowed, more are saved, and costs of brood sows and finished market hogs are lowered. Alfalfa lowers the costs by replacing some grains in feeding lambs and ensures an improved "creep" ration. Horses thrive on alfalfa more than on any other forage. Alfalfa meal for poultry provides an eco-

nomical source of protein, vitamins, minerals and some growth factors not yet understood. In egg production, it furnishes 10 times as much pigmenting color as yellow corn.

South Dakota State University has found that there is as much feed value in five tons of alfalfa as in 104 bushels (3,665 L) of wheat, 113 bushels (3,982 L) of corn or 233 bushels (8,210 L) of oats. Professors Rohweder and Smith of the Department of Agronomy, University of Wisconsin, have determined that a good acre of alfalfa furnishes more than twice the protein as does one of soybeans and three times as much as one of corn.

Such facts magnify in meaning when you consider the University of Minnesota Department of Animal Husbandry's estimate that a year's forage costs for one cow have risen from \$64 in 1955 to \$94 in 1965 to \$301 in 1977.

The tractor-drawn mower has come into sight again, delineating the landscape with one more meandering windrow of delicately scented hay. The driver, sweating and grinning, pulls up and stops. Quen points down into the yellow insides of the mower at something as long and thick and dark as a railroad crosstie, only it is furrowed like a giant screw with crushed alfalfa mangled in the grooves. "That rubber roller crushes the crude fiber and flattens the leaves to fix and condition them. It is sort of like pressing a rose in a book to preserve it. That keeps the leaves from being shattered and lost. It saves about 20 percent of the feed energy."

Growing and Harvesting Fine Quality

Growing and harvesting a fine grade of alfalfa has become a science as well as a business. Where does it begin? With superior seedlings. There are infinite varieties. One may yield 40 percent more tonnage than another. If you choose the right one, fertilize it properly and cut it at its

prebloom peak, it can increase the protein yield per acre by 80 percent over an inferior strain.

So you plant it at just the right time, in fertile, well-drained soil. You safeguard it with pesticides from the more than 60 known diseases to which alfalfa is vulnerable. And there must be less than 25 percent grass and virtually no weeds mixed in it.

Besides its matchless nutritional values alfalfa has proved its superiority as a soil builder. Its deep roots deposit up to 155 pounds (70 kg) of nitrogen per acre to the soil. And farmers have found no better way to fight erosion than with alfalfa and other hay crops. Erosion has become a matter of grave concern.

Erosion Fighter

It is estimated that in the United States only a fifth of the needed forage like alfalfa is being grown. This leaves the country more than ever vulnerable to the ravages of drought. Agronomists (specialists in the art and science of crop production) blame the mass-production practices of the great Corn Belt area for depleting much of the soil-moisture reserves. In a study covering 8.9 million acres (3.6 million ha) of land converted from hay to

other crops in 1973-1974, more than half the acreage suffered from poor management of conservation and water reserves.

In most cases little or no attention was given to erosion control. Soil was being lost at the rate of 12 tons an acre. Experts feel that a soil loss of more than five tons per acre is serious. According to the Soil Conservation Service in the Corn Belt proper, soil is blowing and washing away at the disastrous rate of 15 to 100 tons per acre (0.4 ha).

As we walk away from the hayfields, Quen casts a searching look at the sky. He hopes the sun will have time to dry the hay to a moisture content of about 20 percent before they package it by machine into strong, neat bales. If rain comes first it could destroy up to a fifth of the protein value.

Once stored, the alfalfa will need good ventilation to prevent heating and molding—that could destroy another one fifth of the protein.

"You are an agronomist," I conclude, "because it takes an expert in the art and science of crop production to grow this stuff in peak condition."

"It's worth it, no matter what I am," he replies. "In hay circles alfalfa is known as green gold."—*Contributed.*

"Awake!" Saved Her Life

"I'd like to share an experience of someone who is very much touched with appreciation of your efforts," writes a Kingdom publisher from Louisiana. "This someone is an elderly amputee lady who accepted the February 8 'Awake!' concerning the heart. She lived in a trailer in the back of her son's property in a rural area, and although she was amazingly self-sufficient, she hadn't been checked on in nearly a week by her family. As we talked, I noticed she was very short of breath and pale, but she insisted she was just excited about being able to talk to someone.

"As the week progressed, I couldn't get her off my mind, and was drawn to check back on her. However, when I arrived, her trailer was locked up and dark. I got to a

phone, and calling both hospitals I found her in an intensive-care unit. She was thrilled to see me, and explained that when I'd left she started reading the 'Awake!' and realized that she was suffering from the symptoms of a heart attack described therein. She said her son then appeared and she asked to be taken to the hospital where she had her heart attack under the care of experts.

"When she was allowed to have a lengthy visit, I brought her a 'Truth' book, and, as we read from it, she accepted what she learned enthusiastically.

"I know the information saved her physical life; more importantly, perhaps it will have saved her spiritual life."

The Bible's View



GENUINE Christians have a responsibility before God and men to prove themselves to be 'without blemish amid a crooked and twisted generation of people.' In a world alienated from God, loyal disciples of Jesus Christ are to shine as illuminators. (Phil. 2:15) By their exemplary daily conduct and their eagerness to make known God's truth, they serve as lights in a world that is in great spiritual darkness.

Rightly, then, the Christian should be concerned about the example that he is setting in his daily life. As far as it depends on him, he should not be giving anyone a valid basis for viewing him as a person who violates moral laws or who acts contrary to the natural sense of propriety. The apostle Peter admonished fellow believers: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other people's matters." (1 Pet. 4:15) As should be true of men appointed as elders, all Christians should strive to have "a fine testimony from people on the outside."—1 Tim. 3:7.

It is also vital that the servant of God take into consideration the conscientious feelings or scruples of the people among whom he is living. In some areas, for example,

Should You Be Concerned About How Others View You?

a person who drinks alcoholic beverages, even in moderation, or who eats certain kinds of food may be viewed as a sinner. When that is the case, the Christian would not insist on his right to drink a little wine or to eat pork or other meats that his neighbors might regard as defiling. Rather, he would make it his determination to forgo his rights so as not to put an unnecessary stumbling block before persons who might be responsive to the "good news."

A person would want to act in harmony with the fine example of the apostle Paul, who could say with reference to himself: "Though I am free from all persons, I have made myself the slave to all, that I may gain the most persons. And so to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to those under law I became as under law, though I myself am not under law, that I might gain those under law. To those without law I became as without law, although I am not without law toward God but under law toward Christ, that I might gain those without law." (1 Cor. 9:19-21) "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) Like Paul, true Christians today have good reason to be concerned that their speech and actions appeal to the good conscience of observers.

However, there is no reason for a loyal disciple of Jesus Christ to be concerned when worldlings look down on him for being a Christian. He may be ridiculed and subjected to physical mistreatment on account of his faith. When that is the case, he wisely follows the inspired counsel: "If he suffers as a Christian, let him not feel shame,

but let him keep on glorifying God in this name." (1 Pet. 4:16) It is really an honor to suffer in behalf of Christ. His authority is far greater than that of any man or any group of men. Jehovah God gave to his Son 'all authority in heaven and on the earth.' (Matt. 28:18) Moreover, Jesus Christ, in proof of his great love, gave up his life in sacrifice, making it possible for his disciples to gain a clean standing before the Creator and thus to be put on the way that leads to everlasting life. (John 3:16; 15:13) Considering Christ's great authority and the depth of his love for us, we certainly have no reason to be ashamed about suffering for his name.

Moreover, the genuine Christian does not have to be concerned as to how unspiritual persons inside and outside the Christian congregation may assess him. The apostle Peter stressed this in the following words: "For this purpose the good news was declared also to the [spiritually] dead, that they might be judged as to the flesh from the standpoint of men but might live as to the spirit from the standpoint of God." (1 Pet. 4:6) While those who accept the "good news" come to life from a spiritual standpoint, unspiritual persons may continue to make their evaluations of such ones on the basis of fleshly considerations, judging those who lack worldly influence, power, position and possessions as mere nobodies. This should not trouble us. The more important thing is God's judgment of us. We want him to regard us as living truly spiritual lives.

There simply is no way to please faultfinders. That is why the conscientious Christian does not need to trouble himself about his being compared unfavorably with others. The Christian apostle Paul was subjected to such unfavorable comparisons by certain members of the congregation at Corinth. His response to such a wrongful assessment of him can be en-

couraging to us. He wrote: "To me it is a very trivial matter that I should be examined by you or by a human tribunal. Even I do not examine myself. For I am not conscious of anything against myself. Yet by this I am not proved righteous, but he that examines me is Jehovah. Hence do not judge anything before the due time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring the secret things of darkness to light and make the counsels of the hearts manifest, and then each one will have his praise come to him from God."—1 Cor. 4:3-5.

Certainly the apostle Paul knew his reasons and motivations for speaking and acting, better than did those who presumed to examine him or to assess his worth. He conscientiously acted in accord with Christ's example and teaching. That is why he regarded such an examination as a "very trivial matter," something that deserved no serious consideration. The apostle Paul realized that the assessment that would be made by the Lord Jesus Christ as God's appointed judge did matter. Similarly, Christians today need to keep in mind the seriousness of being examined by Jehovah God through the Son. This can help them to avoid becoming disturbed about the assessments of unspiritual persons and to shun making such unspiritual judgments themselves.

Thus the Scriptures make it clear that there are times for being concerned about how others may view us and also times when we should not become concerned over what others may think or say. Our chief concern at all times should be in proving ourselves unblemished before our God by preserving a clean conscience before him and fellow humans. However, we should treat groundless faultfinding, ridicule or unspiritual judgments as amounting to nothing, as we continue to conduct all our affairs in a manner that will bring glory to God and to our Lord Jesus Christ.



False Charge Retracted

◆ Last November, *U.S. News & World Report* magazine cited Robert Kerwick, tax assessor for Hardenburg, New York, as alleging that "an 8,000-acre farm owned by the Jehovah's Witnesses is able to sell food it raises to state institutions at lower prices than ordinary farmers charge because of the [nonprofit organization] tax break."

However, the magazine's issue of April 23, 1979, under the heading "Correction," acknowledges the untruthfulness of the published statement, noting that the "governing agency for Jehovah's Witnesses in the U.S., says that, contrary to a statement in 'For Many, There Are Big Profits in 'Nonprofits'' [Nov. 6, 1978], no food whatsoever is sold to anyone from a farm owned by the society in Ulster County, N.Y., and that the farm does not compete with ordinary farmers. Instead, the society says, the entire production of the 1,031-acre farm is used to feed the 1,800 voluntary workers who make up its headquarters staff."—Page 6.

Sweden Defies Ancient

Standards

◆ Instead of mothers' tender care, new baby Swedes may now receive well-meant but perhaps rougher handling by their fathers for the first eight months. Sweden's gov-

ernment has offered fathers the option of staying home to care for their infants at 90 percent salary while mother goes to work. Thousands of fathers have responded to the invitation.

Also, the Swedish Parliament recently voted overwhelmingly to prohibit parents from spanking their children or subjecting them to any other so-called "humiliating treatment." The Ministry of Justice is said to be planning an information campaign that will include distributing videotapes that inform children about their rights. Then how are parents to discipline? Though warning against physical punishment, a government pamphlet for parents says: "Of course, you have the right as a parent to get angry and show it."

The Hand in Spain's Purse

◆ "Under an agreement between Spain and the Vatican signed in January," reports *Christianity Today*, "state aid to the Roman Catholic church will be maintained at an annual level of \$977 million through 1982." The agreement also states that the Church intends to acquire "by its own efforts sufficient funds to meet its own requirements" after that year. Apparently, though, if these efforts fail to maintain the grandeur to which the church is accustomed, then,

says the agreement, the government "may assign the Catholic church a portion of the revenue raised by income taxes."

Disco Comment

◆ In an article on "The Seventies," *Maclean's* magazine of Canada observes: "If the Seventies had an anthem, it was the nihilistic 2/4 beat of the disco. The free-floating gyrators of the Sixties have been replaced by cool automatons who flaunt their desire under the strobes in a sexually charged choreography that reduces sensuality to its crudest, most mechanical form."

The *Toronto Star* quotes Frank Zappa, described as "one of the wildest of rock's wild men," as saying the purpose of disco is "to provide a rhythmic accompaniment for the activities of people who wish to gain access to each other for potential future reproduction."

Superstition in Naples

◆ In Naples, Italy, more than 70 infants recently died in an epidemic that newspapers called the "dark disease." Some authorities thought it was caused by an unidentified virus, while others considered it the result of poverty and poor hygiene. But Naples' Roman Catholic archbishop, Corrado Cardinal Ursi, believed the cure may lie with the local idol, the patron "saint" Januarius, known for its semi-annual "miracle" of liquefying a phial of blood. "For hours the Cardinal and his priests prayed for a sign of divine grace," reports the *New York Times*. "But the substance in the phial on the main altar remained dry and solid." Thus an educated cardinal and priests took the lead in superstitious idolatry, much as years ago less educated church members used images in an effort to stop lava flowing from an erupting volcano—with similar results.

"Good Advice" for Youth

◆ In a letter to the *New Castle News* in Pennsylvania, the pastor of a Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (a branch of Mormonism) wrote: "It's obvious to most of us that youth have many temptations and difficult decisions to face. Often parents are also very confused as to their role and lack a source of information to guide them. I've just read a book, [Your] Youth, Getting the Best out of It, put out by the Jehovah[']s Witnesses, that has much good advice for people of all religions. . . . I'm not 'plugging' that religion in its entirety, but when they have something good to offer, I believe it wisdom to take advantage of it."

Sunspots Make Bad Tan

◆ Earth's atmospheric ozone layer protects us from ultraviolet radiation, which is thought to trigger malignant melanoma, a deadly skin cancer. Dr. Michael Viola of the University of Connecticut warns that 1979 may be a dangerous year for sun lovers because the current cycle of increased sunspot activity reduces the ozone layer. "The kind of sun exposure you get matters," he also says. "Working outdoors all year doesn't seem to be as dangerous as staying indoors most of the time and frying yourself now and then." His research indicates that skin cancer most often appears on the legs of women and torsos of men whose occupations enable them to afford extended periods at the beach.

Space Facts

◆ By early April, the Soviet Union had sent 48 cosmonauts, including a woman, into space, whereas 43 Americans had made the trip, some more than once.

The countries that have orbited unmanned space satellites are Britain, China, Italy,

the Soviet Union and the United States. Canada, France, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the European Space Agency have also built satellites and paid the United States to launch them.

"Boning Up"

◆ Hundreds of pounds of bones have been spread daily in the hills about 100 miles from Johannesburg in South Africa. Wildlife officers haul the bones in an attempt to save the Cape vulture, one of the world's rarest species. The homely birds are said to be dying out because hunters have put predatory animals to rout, leaving fewer carcasses for scavenger birds to feed on. Older vultures manage to survive by eating rock rabbits, but the little animals' bones apparently do not contain enough calcium for growing baby birds. "Many young birds have died after breaking wings made brittle by the absence of calcium in their diet," says the report in London's *Sunday Express*, "and parent vultures began trying to feed their offspring with bits of broken glass and china," often with fatal results.

Good Medical Advice

◆ The medical journal *Family Practice News* recently offered advice to surgeons caring for Jehovah's Witnesses, based on comments by a professor of clinical surgery at the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center: "Although Jehovah's Witnesses will not accept blood or blood components, they can be offered considerable emergency and surgical care without violating their religious principles, Dr. Horace Herbsman said at a trauma seminar sponsored by the American College of Surgeons."

"There is no point in trying to convince a Jehovah's Witness that blood is needed to save his life because his spiri-

tual salvation is more important to him, and the sect's literal reading of the Bible simply forbids 'ingestion' of blood in any form, Dr. Herbsman said. Courts have upheld the right of adults to refuse treatment, and the American Medical Association has supported a patient's right to not accept blood. To administer blood to a Jehovah's Witness without telling him is unethical as well as illegal."

Harboring Heretics

◆ For only the third time this century, Germany's United Evangelical Lutheran Church unfrocked a minister for heresy. Since 1971, Paul Schulz has taught members of the St. Jacobi Church in Hamburg that a personal God is "a comforting invention of human beings." His book *Is God a Mathematical Formula?* calls prayer "self-reflection." Even so, "the church hardly rushed to judgment," observes *Time* magazine. After years of discussion, formal proceedings did not begin until 1976, during which Schulz accused the church of upholding "old notions of God so you can uphold your own institutional power." He was finally forbidden to preach or administer sacraments, but "is expected to receive a \$12,000-a-year stipend if he shuns anti-church activities," says *Time*.

Ghana's New Money

◆ In a move to fight inflation, the government of Ghana recently issued new currency. Old cedis, the national currency, were exchanged for new bills at the rate of 10 old to 7 new cedis during a two-week changeover period. This caused some problems at first because few merchants wanted to honor old bills during the transition. Hence, many reportedly had to go without food for a few days until they could get new cedis. But church collection plates prospered with the old notes, causing a newspaper to re-

mark: "To think that pious believers would actually unload their disgraced cedis on the Lord."

Soviet Prices

◆ How do living costs in Moscow and New York compare? *U.S. News & World Report* offered these recent prices (those for Moscow are listed first): kilo (2.2 pounds) of butter—\$5.76, \$3.73; liter of milk—46c, 58c; dozen eggs, large—\$2.37, 99c; kilo of potatoes—15c, 64c; kilo of coffee—\$30.35, \$5.05; large toothpaste—53c, \$1.68; "apartment"-size refrigerator—\$446, \$285; semiautomatic washer—\$250, \$290 (automatic); B&W TV—\$449, \$159; subway fare—8c,

50c; nylon stockings—\$2.58, \$1.75. Some basic items, such as medical care and higher education, are free in the Soviet Union. Housing, vacations and some other costs are very low.

Keeping Cool in Japan

◆ To help conserve oil, Japan's Natural Resources and Energy Agency proposed that the public not wear neckties and coats this summer. They believe that this will make the recommended increase in minimum air-conditioned room temperature to 28° C (82° F) as painless as possible. Though most office workers are happy with the idea, "the necktie industry has issued a strong pro-

test against the government proposal," says the *Mainichi Daily News*.

Transplanted Rabies

◆ A 37-year-old Boise, Idaho, woman was hospitalized with headaches and facial numbness about five weeks after having a forester's cornea transplanted into her right eye. She suffered gradual paralysis and died within a short time despite the efforts of her bewildered doctors. In time scientists traced the malady to the donor of her transplanted cornea. He had died of a neurological disease unknown at the time. But new tests of his frozen eyes revealed rabies virus.

