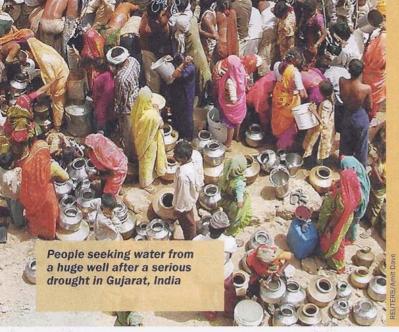
Avake

Are We Running Out of



WATER?

ALSO: ARE YOUR PROBLEMS A PUNISHMENT FROM GOD? PAGE 28



- 17 Was It Designed? The Toucan's Beak
- 18 Young People Ask Should We Break Up?
- 21 Salt Seekers of the Sahara
- 24 Forgotten Slaves of the South Seas
- 26 A Penchant for Pizza
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 'The Best Book on the World's Religions'

### Are We Running Out of WATER? 3-9

Annually, millions die as a result of poor sanitation and contaminated water. What is the solution?



#### Helping Children With Learning Disabilities

What can you do if your child has dyslexia or another learning disability?



# Are Your Problems a Punishment From God?

Are your problems an indication of God's disapproval?

# Are We Running Out of WATER?

According to an Uzbek saying, "if you run out of water, you run out of life." Some experts would say that those words seem more prophetic than proverbial. Each year about two million people die as a result of poor sanitation and contaminated water, and 90 percent of the victims are children.

OW do you get water? Do you just turn on a faucet and out it pours? Or, as is common in some lands, do you have to walk a long distance, wait in line, and then carry a heavy bucket of the precious liquid back to your home? Does it take you several hours each day just to get enough water for washing and cooking? In many lands, water is that scarce and that difficult to obtain! In her book Water Wars—Drought, Flood, Folly, and the Politics of Thirst, Diane Raines Ward notes that 40 percent of the world's population "carry their water from wells, rivers, ponds, or puddles outside of their homes." In some countries, women may spend up to six hours fetching water for their families, lugging it home in containers that, when full, weigh more than 40 pounds.

The fact is that over a third of the world's population is seriously affected by a water and sanitation crisis. The problem is particularly severe in Africa, where 6 out of 10 people do not even have a proper toilet—a factor that, according to a World Health Organization report, contributes to "the transfer of bacteria, viruses and parasites found in human excreta which . . . contaminate water resources, soil and food." Such contamination, the report notes, "is a major



#### WATER UNDER THREAT

- "The Aral Sea in Central Asia was the fourth-largest lake on the planet in 1960. By 2007 it had shrunk to 10 percent of its original size."—Scientific American.
- The five Great Lakes of the United States and Canada—Lakes Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, and Superior—are shrinking "at an alarming pace."

  —The Globe and Mail.
- At one time, Australia's Deniliquin mill processed enough grain to meet the needs of 20 million people. Now, however, the rice crop has been reduced by 98 percent, and the mill closed in December 2007. The cause? "Six long years of drought."—The New York Times.

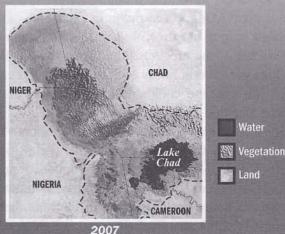
cause of diarrhoea, the second biggest killer of children in developing countries, and leads to other major diseases such as cholera, schistosomiasis, and trachoma."

Water has been called liquid gold, the oil of the 21st century. Yet, nations are squandering the precious commodity to such a degree that their principal rivers have hardly anything left to pour into the sea. As irrigation and evaporation take their toll, prominent rivers are drying up, including the Colorado River in the western United States, the Yangtze in China, the Indus in Pakistan, the Ganges in India, and the Nile in Egypt. What has been done to alleviate the crisis? What is the ultimate solution?

#### "DRAINING DRY THE RIVERS AND STREAMS"

"Africa's Lake Chad, once a landmark for astronauts circling the earth, is now difficult for them to locate. Surrounded by [Cameroon,] Chad, Niger, and Nigeria . . . , the lake has shrunk by 95 percent since the 1960s. The soaring demand for irrigation water in that area is draining dry the rivers and streams the lake depends on for its existence. As a result, Lake Chad may soon disappear entirely, its whereabouts a mystery to future generations."—Plan B 2.0—Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble, by Lester R. Brown.





#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

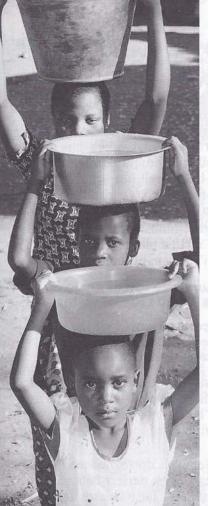
This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional malling offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. ◎ 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Vol. 90, No. 1

Monthly

**ENGLISH** 



#### "Where there is no water, there is no life. ... We live by the grace of water." —Michael Parfit, writer for National Geographic

# WATER CRISIS What Is Being Done?

The water crisis is global. It poses health risks to billions of earth's inhabitants. What steps have been taken to bring water supply and water use back into balance?

**SOUTH AFRICA:** "Durban's Poor Get Water Services Long Denied," announces a headline in *Science* magazine. The article reports that poor people living there have not had an adequate supply of water for decades as a result of the now-defunct apartheid policy of previous governments. In 1994, the article says, "a quarter of a million households in the Durban area had no access to clean water or sanitation."

To remedy the situation, in 1996 an engineer instituted a program that would supply some 50 gallons of water daily to each household. The result? "All but 120,000 of Durban's 3.5 million residents have access to clean water," *Science* reports. Now, at the very least, water is just a short walk away—a vast improvement over bygone days when many had to carry water for over half a mile.

Science magazine explains that to address the sanitation issue, "old 'pit toilet' outhouses" are being replaced with "urine-diversion (UD) double-pit toilets, which separate urine from feces to allow the latter to dry and decompose faster." By early 2008 some 60,000 UD toilets had been installed, although it was projected at that time that it would be another two years before all homes would be equipped with a proper toilet.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chineses (Simplified), Chichonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, <sup>eo</sup> Danish, <sup>o</sup> Dutch, <sup>eo</sup> English, <sup>eo</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, <sup>eo</sup> French, <sup>eo</sup> Georgian, German, <sup>eo</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, <sup>eo</sup> French, <sup>eo</sup> Georgian, German, <sup>eo</sup> Greek, Gujarati, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, <sup>eo</sup> Japanese, <sup>eo</sup> Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, <sup>eo</sup> Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, <sup>eo</sup> Polish, <sup>eo</sup> Portuguese, <sup>eo</sup> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, <sup>eo</sup> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, <sup>eo</sup> Swahili, Swedish, <sup>eo</sup> Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

\*\* Audiocassettes also available.

+ CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, DN L76 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

**Brazil:** In the city of Salvador, hundreds of children were suffering diarrheal diseases because of the lack of a sewage system and toilets.\* To correct the situation, the city laid 1,200 miles of sewer pipes for more than 300,000 homes. The result? The diarrhea rate fell by 22 percent citywide and by 43 percent in areas that previously had a higher prevalence.

India: In some parts of the world, there is a seasonal excess of good water; but it is not always captured so that it can be put to good use. However, in 1985 a group of Indian women in the district of Dholera, in the northwest state of Gujarat, came up with an ingenious method for saving water. They organized a group to build a retaining pond, which, when completed, was the size of a football field. They then lined the pond with heavy plastic to avoid leakage. Their initiative was successful. In fact, months after the next monsoon season ended, they still had water—despite the fact that they had "welcomed their neighbors to drink."

**Chile:** This South American country stretches for 2,650 miles, hugging the Pacific Coast to the west and the Andes Mountains to the east. The State controls all water rights and authorizes the building of dams and canals. The result? Now 99 percent of city dwellers and 94 percent of those who live in the country receive adequate water.

#### The Ultimate Solution

Each country seems to have its own method of dealing with the water crisis. In some lands where favorable winds regularly blow, windmills raise water to the surface and also serve to generate electricity. In wealthier nations, desalinization of seawater is also viewed as a viable solution. In many places huge dams retain river water and rainwater—a measure that has proved somewhat effective, even though reservoirs in arid areas may lose

about 10 percent of their water through evaporation.

Jehovah's Witnesses, the publishers of this magazine, believe that the ultimate solution to the water crisis rests in God's hands, not man's. The Bible states: "To Jehovah [God] belong the earth and that which fills it, the productive land and those dwelling in it. For upon the seas he himself has solidly fixed it, and upon the rivers he keeps it firmly established."—Psalm 24:1, 2.

True, God gave humans the responsibility of taking care of this planet. (Genesis 1:28) However, man's mismanagement of earth's

### To produce one ton of grain requires 1,000 tons of water

### "70 percent of world water use is devoted to irrigation."

-Plan B 2.0, by Lester R. Brown

resources—along with the devastating consequences that have ensued—provides further evidence that "it does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."—Jeremiah 10:23.

What will Jehovah do to restore the elements of our earth to a perfect balance? The Bible assures us that he purposes to 'make all things new.' (Revelation 21:5) Imagine a world with no poverty, no droughts, and no water shortages. Imagine a world without monsoon flooding, which today sweeps away thousands of lives each year. Under the rule of his Kingdom, God will fulfill his many promises! Jehovah himself has stated: "So my word that goes forth from my mouth will prove to be. It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it."-Isaiah 55:11.

Would you like to learn more about God's purpose to restore our earth, as outlined in his Word, the Bible? The following article will explain how you can do so.

<sup>\*</sup> Each year across the globe, some 1.6 million children die from diarrheal diseases. That is more than the number of fatalities from AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined.



A Installing pipes for access to clean water, Durban, South Africa



Local people working on a new water system for their village near Copán, Honduras



### How much freshwater is available?



#### **Freshwater**

Freshwater

99%
Locked up in
glaciers and icebergs
or underground

Available to nearly seven billion humans and countless billions of other life forms





# **WATER**That Leads to Life

Jesus had been traveling through Samaria, north of Jerusalem. He was tired and thirsty. As he sat by a well, he asked a Samaritan woman to draw up water for him. She was shocked that a Jew would ask her for water, since in the first century, there was little love between Jews and Samaritans.

The perplexed woman asked Jesus: "How is it that you, despite being a Jew, ask me for a drink, when I am a Samaritan woman?"

Jesus answered: "If you had known the free gift of God and who it is that says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

Jesus further explained to her: "Everyone drinking from this water will get thirsty again. Whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty at all, but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water bubbling up to impart everlasting life."—John 4:1-15.

To what water did Jesus refer?

THE Bible calls the Creator, Jehovah God, "the source of living water." (Jeremiah 2: 13) Life is a gift from God, and our existence depends upon availing ourselves of the water he provides, both in a physical sense and a spiritual sense.

There has never been more of a need for spiritual guidance than there is today. Indeed, it could be said that a spiritual drought

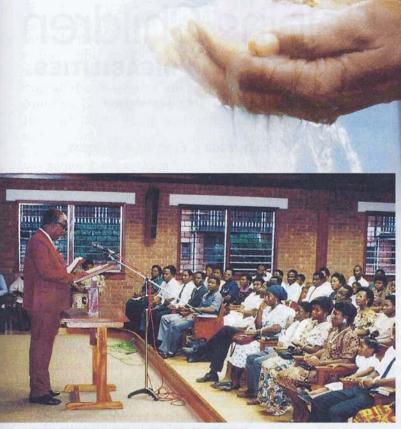
plagues our planet. People thirst for answers to such questions as: Where are the dead? Is there hope of ever being reunited with them? Why does God permit suffering? Will the future bring relief from war, crime, famine, and sickness? Jehovah's Witnesses believe that satisfying answers to these questions can be found in the refreshing "waters" of God's Word, the Bible.

#### HAS RELIGION QUENCHED MAN'S THIRST?

Simply going to church or claiming to be religious does not bring a person into contact with refreshing waters of truth. The fact is, many of today's mainstream religions have added to man's problems rather than solved

them. Consider one example: In times of war, Catholics have killed Catholics, Protestants have killed Protestants—with both sides imploring God for victory!

Added to that are numerous reports of church scandals involving clergymen who have embezzled funds or sexually abused minors. Truly, the waters dispensed by most religions are polluted. (Revelation 17:4-6; 18:1-5) The situation is as described in the Bible at Titus 1:16: "They pub-



You can find the 'waters of truth' at your local Kingdom Hall

When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well, as described earlier, he alluded to the life-giving waters of truth that we can find flowing from God's Word. Jehovah's Witnesses invite you to taste the pure waters of truth. This invitation is expressed in the last book of the Bible: "Let anyone thirsting

come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free."—Revelation 22:17.

To learn more about how God's Kingdom will benefit mankind, contact Jehovah's Witnesses at the nearest Kingdom Hall or write to the appropriate address listed on page 5 of this magazine. You may also consult the Web site www.watchtower.org.

licly declare they know God, but they disown him by their works." For the most part, religion has done little to quench man's thirst in these times of spiritual drought. In 19 chapters, the 224-page publication
What Does the Bible Really Teach? explains the
Bible's answers to such basic questions as:

- "What is God's purpose for the earth?"
- "Where are the dead?"
- "Are we living in 'the last days'?"
- "Why does God allow suffering?"





# Helping Children

#### WITH LEARNING DISABILIT

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

Steven has difficulty reading. Every time he knows that he will be asked to read aloud in class, he develops a stomachache.

Despite her teacher's urgings, Maria has problems writing legibly. It takes her hours to complete her homework.

Noah reads the same school assignments repeatedly. Still, he forgets the material and struggles with his grades.

TEVEN, Maria, and Noah suffer from learning disabilities, the most common of which involve reading disabilities. Dyslexics, for example, often confuse letters that have a similar appearance. Other learning disabilities are dysgraphia (a disorder that affects handwriting) and dyscalculia (difficulty with math skills). Yet, most of those with learning disabilities have average or aboveaverage intelligence.

Symptoms of learning disabilities include delayed language skills, trouble rhyming words, habitual mispronunciation, persistent baby talk, difficulty in learning letters and numbers, inability to sound out letters in simple words, confusion involving words that sound alike, and difficulty following instructions.\*

#### **Helping Your Child to Cope**

What can you do if your child seems to have a learning disability? First, have his hearing and vision tested to rule out those caus-

\* Learning disabilities are often accompanied by Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which is characterized by hyperactivity, impulsive behavior, and an inability to concentrate. See Awake! of February 22, 1997, pages 5-10.

es.\* Then obtain a medical evaluation. If your child is learning-disabled, he will need your emotional support. Remember, a learn-

Children can be very adept at taking "picture notes" while listening attentively



The masculine gender is used in this article because boys are three times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with dyslexia and hyperactivity.

ing disability is not related to a child's intelligence.

Take advantage of any special program your child's school might have, such as tutoring. Enlist his teacher's cooperation. Perhaps your child could be allowed to sit at the front of the classroom and have more time to complete his assignments. His teacher could give him both written and oral instructions and let him take exams orally. As learning-disabled children are often forgetful and disorganized, a second set of textbooks could be provided for use at home. A computer with a spell-checker could be made available for use in class or for homework.

Have short daily reading sessions. It is best for a dyslexic child to read aloud so that you, the parent, have an opportunity to offer feedback and correction. First read aloud yourself, having your child follow along. Next, read the same text aloud together. Then have your child read it by himself. Have him use a ruler under each line as he reads, and a highlighter on difficult words. This exercise may take only 15 minutes a day.

Math skills can be taught in practical ways, such as when measuring quantities in recipes, using a ruler in carpentry, or going shopping. Graph paper and diagrams may be of help in doing math problems. For handwriting difficulties, try wide-ruled paper and thick pencils. Magnetic letters arranged on a metallic surface may help your child to spell.

There are also useful strategies for dealing with ADHD. Before speaking to a child with an attention disorder, make eye contact. Provide a quiet area for homework, and allow your child to take frequent breaks. Channel his hyperactivity by assigning chores that involve being active, such as walking the dog.

#### Success Is Possible

Build on your child's strengths, encouraging any ability or talent that he may have. Praise and reward any accomplishment, however small. Break projects down into smaller, more manageable tasks so that he can experience the pride of succeeding. Use pictures or diagrams of the steps he must take in order to complete a project.

In the end, mastering basic reading, writing, and math skills is important for a youth. Be assured that given the proper motivation and assistance, your child *can* learn—he may just do it differently from others and take a little longer.

#### A LEARNING DISABILITY BECOMES AN ASSET

"When I looked at words on a page, they were merely a jumbled mess of squiggly lines. They may just as well have been in a foreign language. Words did not mean anything to me until someone else read them aloud. Teachers thought I was lazy or disrespectful or that I was not trying or not listening to lessons. Nothing could have been further from the truth. I was listening and trying very hard, but I was just not able to

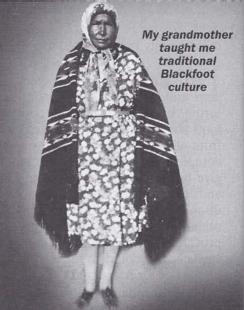
grasp the concept of reading and writing. Other subjects, such as math, were not difficult for me. As a child, I quickly learned to focus on things like sports, trade skills, art, and anything that involved using my hands, as long as it was not related to reading and writing.

"Later on, I chose to work with my hands, so I became a tradesman. This has led to the privilege of working on five international construction projects of Jehovah's Witnesses. Because more effort is needed for me to read, I tend to be able to remember much of what I have read. As a student of the Bible, I have found this to be very helpful, particularly in my Christian ministry. So, instead of viewing this disability as a weakness, I view it as an asset."—Peter, a dyslexic who is a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses.

## We Found What We Were Looking For

AS TOLD BY BERT TALLMAN

I fondly remember my life as a young boy on the Blood Reserve, a Native community that is part of the Blackfoot Nation in Alberta, Canada. We lived not far from the Canadian Rockies and beautiful Lake Louise.



COME from a family of seven boys and two girls. My brothers and sisters and I were often at my grandmother's home. She worked hard and taught us the traditional way of life practiced by many generations of Blackfoot people before us. We learned how to gather wild berries, prepare traditional foods, and plant a garden. My grandfather and my father used to take me hunting and fishing. We hunted elk, deer, and moose for food and for their skins. Our parents were hard workers and did their best to provide a good home for us. My life on the reserve was enjoyable.

Everything changed, however, when my grandmother died in 1963. As a five-year-old boy, I was confused by this event. Nothing I heard brought me any real comfort. Even at that young age, I asked myself, 'If there is a Creator, where is he? Why do people die?' Sometimes I would begin to whimper in frustration. When my parents asked me what was wrong, I simply told them I had an ache of some sort.

#### **Contact With White People**

Before my grandmother died, we had little contact with white people. Whenever we did see them. I would hear comments such as: "He is just another evil, greedy white man, devoid of emotion. They are not real people." I was warned that very few white people are genuine and that they could not be trusted. Although I was curious about meeting them. I remained cautious because white people in our area often made fun of us and made disparaging remarks.

Soon after my grandmother passed away, my parents began to abuse alcohol, making those years some of the saddest of my life. When I was eight years old, two Mormons began to visit our home. They seemed to be good people. My parents agreed with their proposal that I participate in a placement program. The program, as I understood it, was to change Native children by having them live with white people. Evidently, because of their circumstances, my parents thought it was best for me to stay with another family. I was shocked and disappointed, for I had heard my parents say that white people could not be trusted. I didn't want to go, and I tried to get out of it. Finally, I agreed when my parents assured me that my older brother would come along.

However, when we arrived in Vancouver, British Columbia, my brother and I were separated, and I was taken some 60 miles away! I was devastated. Although the family that hosted me were good people, it was a traumatic experience, and I was terrified. I returned home about ten months later.

#### **Back Home With My Parents**

Even though the situation at home had not changed much, I was glad to be back. When I was about 12 years old, my parents quit using alcohol. That was a relief, but I already had a negative lifestyle of my own, since I had begun experimenting with drugs and alcohol. My parents encouraged me to take up alternative activities, including rodeo, something I really enjoyed. Rodeo riding was not for the fainthearted. I learned to ride wild bucking bulls for a minimum of eight seconds without being thrown off, while holding on with just one hand to a rope looped around the bull's belly.

When I was a teenager, tribal elders introduced me to Native religion. I took a real interest in it, since I had little respect for the so-called white man's religions. I reasoned that Blackfoot customs seemed to promote the kindness and justice that were missing from many "Christian" religions. I was comfortable among Native people, enjoying the humor and closeness that existed among families and friends.

About this time, I also learned about the injustices that Native people had experienced for centuries. I was told that the white man had spread disease among us and eradicated our primary means of life, the buffalo. In fact, Colonel R. I. Dodge, of the U.S. Army, is reported to have said: "Kill every buffalo you can. Every buffalo dead is an Indian gone." This attitude, I learned, demoralized the Blackfoot people and led to a feeling of helplessness.

Furthermore, some government leaders, along with their religious allies, had made de-

termined efforts to assimilate and transform the Native people, whom they viewed as savages. They believed that everything about the Native people needed to change—including their culture, beliefs, behavior, and language—in order for them to adapt to the white man's ways. In Canada, some Native children were abused at religious residential schools. Others turned to substance abuse, violence, and suicide—problems that persist on reserves even to this day.

To escape these problems, some Natives decided to abandon Blackfoot culture. They chose to speak English to their children rather than the Blackfoot language, and they tried to adopt some of the white man's ways. Instead of being accepted, however, many were

### 'If there is a Creator, where is he? Why do people die?'

ridiculed, not only by some in the white population but also by other Native people, who called them "apple Indians"—red on the outside but white on the inside.

It was sad to see Native people suffer in so many ways. I longed to see better conditions for the people on our reserve and others across Canada and the United States.

#### I Longed for Answers

As a teenager, I thought that I could never be accepted. My feelings of inferiority often turned into resentment. I even developed a hatred for white people. However, my parents and aunt cautioned me about harboring negative feelings of hate and revenge; instead, they encouraged me to show forgiveness and love and to overlook those who were prejudiced. I later learned that this advice was consistent with Bible principles. In addition, I still longed to find the answers to the questions that had plagued me as a child. I also began to wonder why we are on the earth and why

injustice continues. Living for only a short time and then dying did not make sense to me. I was confused.

Whenever Jehovah's Witnesses came to our home, I was sent to the door. I always respected them because they did not seem to be prejudiced. Although I found it difficult to formulate my questions in the right way, we always had interesting conversations. I recall one visit from John Brewster and Harry Callihoo, a Blackfoot Witness. We had a long discussion as we walked through the prairie grass. I obtained a book and read about half of it before it somehow got lost.

#### I Became a Rodeo Rider

I asked older ones on my reserve for advice. While I appreciated their well-thought-out counsel, I never received satisfactory answers to the questions I had about life. When I was about 16 years old, I left home and became absorbed in rodeo riding competitions. The parties I attended after rodeos usually featured overdrinking and drug abuse. My conscience plagued me because I knew such conduct was wrong and sensed that God did not approve of my lifestyle. I often prayed to the Creator for help to do what is right and to find answers to the questions that still bothered me.

In 1978, while I was in Calgary, I met a young Native woman named Rose. She was part Blackfoot and part Cree. We shared similar interests, and I could communicate openly and freely with her. We fell in love and were married in 1979. Our family grew to include our daughter Carma and our son, Jared. Rose has proved to be a loyal, supportive wife and a good mother. One day when my family and I were visiting my older brother, I found a book entitled *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth.*\* What I read intrigued me and seemed very reasonable. But just as I felt that I was beginning to understand the Bible's message, I came to a part of the book where pages had

been torn out. Rose and I made a determined effort to locate the missing pages, but without success. Even so, I continued to pray for help.

#### A Visit to the Priest

In the spring of 1984, Rose gave birth to our third child, our beautiful daughter Kayla. Only two months later, however, Kayla died from a congenital heart disease. We were devastated, and I did not know how to comfort Rose. She convinced me to go with her to the Catholic priest on our reserve to find comfort and answers to our questions.

We asked him why our little girl had to die and where she had gone. He told us that God took Kayla because he needed another angel. I thought, 'Why would God need to take our daughter to be an angel if he is the Almighty Creator? What good would a helpless baby be?' The priest never opened the Bible. We left feeling empty.

#### **Prayer Was Our Mainstay**

One Monday morning in late November 1984, I lingered in prayer, desperately begging God to help me to be a better person, to make sense of what was going on, and to understand the purpose of life. That very morning, Diana Bellemy and Karen Scott, two of Jehovah's Witnesses, knocked at the door. They were very sincere and kind and were eager to present their message. I listened, accepted a Bible and the book entitled *Survival Into a New Earth*,\* and agreed to have Diana return with her husband, Darryl, later that week.

Only after they left did it occur to me that this must have been the answer to my prayer. I was so excited that I eagerly paced back and forth in the house, waiting for Rose to return from work so I could tell her what had happened. To my surprise, Rose revealed that she too had been praying the night before, and she had asked God to help her to find the right religion. That Friday, we had our first

<sup>\*</sup> Published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Now out of print.

<sup>\*</sup> Published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Now out of print.



Bible study. We later learned that the day Karen and Diana visited us, they had been unable to find the houses where they intended to preach. Nevertheless, when they saw our house, they felt motivated to call on us.

#### Answers to My Questions—At Last!

Our family and friends were puzzled and initially gave us the cold shoulder when we started to study the Bible. Then they pressured us by saying that we were throwing our lives away and not using our talents and abilities to the full. However, we resolved not to turn our backs on our newfound Friend, our Creator, Jehovah. After all, we had found

#### 'Many Native people are known for the qualities of kindness and humility'

something precious—the awesome truths and sacred secrets in God's Word, the Bible. (Matthew 13:52) Both Rose and I were baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses in December 1985. Our relatives now have great respect for Jehovah's Witnesses, as they have seen positive changes in our lives since our baptism.

Yes, I found what I was looking for! The Bible answers important questions simply and logically. I was satisfied when I learned the purpose of life, why we die, and God's promise that we can be reunited with our daughter Kayla to see her grow up in perfect surroundings. (John 5:28, 29; Revelation 21:4) In time, I also learned that we should not abuse our bodies, show disrespect for life, or stir up competition. (Galatians 5:26) It was a difficult decision, but I chose to leave bull riding and the rodeo in order to please God.

Accurate knowledge from the Bible has freed us from superstitions that plague many Native people, such as belief that a visiting owl or a howling dog can lead to the death of a family member. We no longer fear that invisi-

ble spirits in animate creatures or inanimate objects will harm us. (Psalm 56:4; John 8: 32) We now appreciate Jehovah's marvelous creations. I have friends of many nationalities whom I call my brothers and sisters, and they accept us as equals and fellow servants of God. (Acts 10:34, 35) Many of them are putting forth effort to learn about our Native culture and beliefs and to speak the Blackfoot language so that they can effectively share the Bible's message in an appealing way.

Our family lives on the Blood Reserve, in southern Alberta, where we have a small ranch. We still enjoy Native culture-including our traditional foods, music, and dance. We do not actively participate in traditional social dances, sometimes called powwows, but we enjoy watching them when appropriate. I have also tried to teach our children about their heritage and some of the Blackfoot language. Many Native people are known for the wonderful qualities of kindness, humility, and loving concern for family and friends. They are also known for showing hospitality and having respect for other people, including those from different backgrounds. I still appreciate and admire these things.

Our greatest happiness comes from using our time and resources to help others learn about and love Jehovah. Our son, Jared, serves as a volunteer at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses near Toronto. I have the privilege of serving as an elder in our local Macleod Congregation, and Rose, Carma, and I are all regular pioneers, or full-time evangelizers. It is a joy to preach in our native Blackfoot language. It is heartwarming to see others respond to the truth about the Creator and his purposes.

The Bible says about Jehovah: "If you search for him, he will let himself be found by you." (1 Chronicles 28:9) I am grateful that he has fulfilled his promise by helping me, as well as my family, to find what we were looking for.



#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK



Should we break up?

"Three months into the relationship, both of us were saying that it felt so right. We talked about spending the rest of our lives together as if it were just a given."—Jessica.\*

"I had a huge crush on him, and then a couple of years later, he actually started noticing me! I liked having an older boyfriend who would watch out for me."—Carol.

In time, both Jessica and Carol broke up with their boyfriends. Why? Were they foolish for giving up such great guys?

YOU'VE been dating for nearly a year. At first, you were sure that he was "the one." At times, you can even rekindle the romantic feelings that characterized the onset of your relationship. But now you're having second thoughts. Should you ignore those thoughts? How can you know if you should break up?

First, you need to face a cold truth: Disregarding danger signs in a relationship is like ignoring the warning signals on your car's dashboard. The problem will not go away; likely it will only get worse. What are some of the danger signs in a relationship that you would do well to heed?

**Things are moving too fast.** Problems can arise when a romance moves too quickly. "We were e-mailing, chatting online, talking on the phone," Carol recalls. "Those meth-

ods of communication can be more powerful than face-to-face because you can get way more personal, way too fast!" Don't rob yourselves of the chance to get to know each other. A relationship should not be like a weed that sprouts up fast and then withers. Rather, it should be like a precious plant that takes time to grow.

He's critical and demeaning. "My boy-friend was always putting me down," says a girl named Ana, "but I wanted to be with him so badly." She adds, "I tolerated situations that I never dreamed I would have allowed!" The Bible condemns "abusive speech." (Ephesians 4:31) Demeaning words—even if they are delivered calmly and quietly—have no place in a loving relationship.—Proverbs 12:18.

**He's got a volatile temper.** "A man of discernment is cool of spirit," says Proverbs 17:27. Erin found that her boyfriend had

<sup>\*</sup> Names in this article have been changed.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Although this article presents matters from a girl's perspective, the principles herein apply to both genders.

problems in this regard. "When we had disagreements, he would shove me," she says, "and at times I ended up with bruises." The Bible tells Christians: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath... be taken away from you." (Ephesians 4:31) A person with little self-control is hardly ready for dating.—2 Timothy 3:1, 3, 5.

He's secretive about our relationship. "My boyfriend didn't want others to know that we were dating," recalls Angela. "He was even upset when my *dad* found out!" Of course, there may be valid reasons for a couple to maintain a measure of privacy. But secrecy—a deliberate attempt to keep the relationship hidden from those who have a right to know about it—spells trouble.

He has no intention of marriage. Among Christians, dating has an honorable purpose—to help a young man and woman determine if they want to get married to each other. Of course, this doesn't mean that you need to make wedding plans the moment you start dating. In fact, many people do *not* end up marrying the first person they date. At the same time, a person shouldn't date if he or she isn't ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage.

Our relationship is on-again, off-again. Proverbs 17:17 states: "A true companion is loving all the time." Not that the two of you will always agree. But a relationship that constantly seesaws between breaking up and making up could indicate that something deeper needs to be addressed, as Ana came to realize. "The many times I broke up with my boyfriend brought me so much

back to fix a relationship that I would have done better without."

He pressures me for sex. "If you love me, you'll do it." "We need to take our relationship to the next level." "It's not really sex if there's no intercourse." These are all manipulative lines that boys have used to pressure girls into sex. Says James 3:17: "The wisdom from above is first of all chaste." You deserve a boyfriend who is morally clean and who respects your chaste sexual boundaries. Don't settle for anything less!

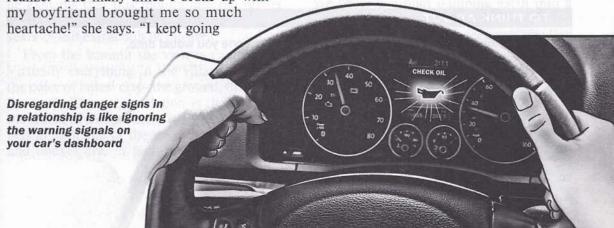
Others have warned me about him. The Bible says: "Get all the advice you can, and you will succeed; without it you will fail." (Proverbs 15:22, Today's English Version) "You can't ignore what your family and long-time friends think, any more than you can ignore those little alarm bells that ring in your head," says Jessica. "The more you ignore what others are saying, the harder you're making it on yourself."

Above are just a few danger signs that could mean trouble in a relationship.\* If you are dating, how does your boyfriend measure up in the areas discussed? Write below any personal concerns you may have.

#### How to Break Up

Suppose you determine that it's best to end a relationship. How will you do so? There are

<sup>\*</sup> For more information see Awake! of May 2007, pages 18-20.



a number of ways, but keep the following in mind.

Be courageous. "I had become so reliant on my boyfriend that I was afraid to leave him," says a girl named Trina. It takes courage to speak up when a relationship needs to end. But standing up for yourself is healthy. (Proverbs 22:3) It enables you to establish firm boundaries as to what you will and what you will not tolerate in a dating relationship—and, later, in a marriage.

**Be fair.** If *you* were on the other end of the breakup, how would you want to be treated? (Matthew 7:12) Surely, your boyfriend deserves more than a brief e-mail, text message, or voice mail saying "We're through!"

Choose the right setting. Should you talk face-to-face or over the phone? Should you write a letter or have a discussion? Much depends upon the circumstances. You should not meet in any setting where your safety would be put in jeopardy, nor would it be wise to be in an isolated area where wrong desires could be stirred.—1 Thessalonians 4:3.

**Speak truthfully.** Talk honestly about why you feel the relationship cannot continue. If you feel that your boyfriend has not treated you properly, say so. Stick to viewpoint statements. For example, instead of saying, "You're always putting me down," say, "I feel put down when you . . ."

**Be willing to listen too.** Is there something you've misunderstood about the situation? Do not allow yourself to be manipulated by clever words, but at the same time, be rea-

#### THE PERSON YOU CHOOSE TO DATE SHOULD . . .

- □ share your spiritual convictions.
   −1 Corinthians 7:39.
- ☐ respect your moral boundaries.

  —1 Corinthians 6:18.
- □ be considerate of you and of others.
   −Philippians 2:4.
- □ have a good reputation.−Philippians 2:20.

#### **BEWARE IF YOUR BOYFRIEND ...**

- always insists on getting his way.
- constantly makes you feel guilty, stupid, or worthless.
- tries to keep you away from your friends and family.
- constantly checks up on your whereabouts.
- ☐ accuses you of flirting with others when there is no basis for his doing so.
- ☐ makes threats or gives ultimatums.

sonable and consider all the facts. The Bible wisely admonishes Christians to "be swift about hearing, slow about speaking."—James 1:19.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

#### TO THINK ABOUT

- List below the traits you view as essential in someone you would date.
- Which traits would you consider to be unacceptable?

# Salt Selters Seekers Of the sahara

STAKES flash past the window of our four-wheel-drive vehicle. These posts mark the way when sandstorms obscure the road. Indeed, such storms are likely here in the Sahara Desert.

The road we are speeding along follows an ancient camel route that links the city of Agadez, in northern Niger, to the Algerian border and beyond. Our destination is the tiny village of Teguidda-n-Tessoumt—an outpost of humanity 120 miles northwest of Agadez. There, 50 families follow time-honored methods of extracting precious salt from the clay of the Sahara.

#### Man-Made Hills and Pastel Ponds

Ahead of us small hills appear on the desert plain, marking our destination. Our guide parks our vehicle near a 30-foot hill and invites us to get out and climb to the top for a view of the village. As we trudge up the slope, he explains that this mound and the others like it are man-made from the residue of many years of salt extraction in the area.

From the summit the view is captivating. Virtually everything in the village below is the color of baked clay—the ground, the walls, the roofs. The only variation is the green of the leaves of the two trees that stand as sentinels at each end of the township. The fences and houses are, in fact, made of clay. The

monochrome buildings contrast with the pastel hues in the hundreds of nearby salt ponds. The area is a hive of activity—men, women, and children all hard at work.

#### **An Unusual Extraction Process**

NIGER

As we descend from our vantage point, our guide explains the ancient salt-extracting process used by the villagers. "There are actually only two types of ponds," he says. "The larger ponds, some six feet in diameter, are used to decant the salt-laden water. The smaller ones are evaporation ponds. The water from the 20 springs in the area is itself quite briny. However, the principal source of the salt is, not the water, but the earth, and that is what makes these salt works unusual." How, exactly, is the salt extracted from the earth?

We observe a man dumping earth into a large pond full of water from the spring. He stomps the mixture with his feet, as if treading

The account does not mention a bride.
 Pive virgins entered the feast.
 Five virgins had lamps and receptacles, while the other five had only lamps.
 There would have been a door for the bridegroom to shut.
 Unijah.—Jeremiah 26:20.
 G. Urijah.—Jeremiah 26:20.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

### "The principal source of the salt is, not the water, but the earth, and that is what makes these salt works unusual"

a winepress. When satisfied with his work, he leaves the briny mix to settle for several hours. Large ponds brimming with the same muddy concoction surround him. The contents of each one displays a different shade of brown because the ponds change color as the mud settles.

Nearby, another man draws the salty water from a pond using a calabash—a utensil made from the shell of a gourd—and ladles the solution into the smaller ponds. Men usually handle this part of the process. The men are also responsible for the maintenance of the ponds. Some of them are natural depressions in the earth, while others have been dug into the rock. Where digging is not possible, the men mound clay into a ring on top of the rock. They form the clay wall by hand and then beat the barrier with a stick until it is solid. These ponds must be repaired or reconstructed every year.

What part do the women play? They do the heavy lifting, ensuring that a good supply of the salty earth is always ready for processing. They also remove the salt crystals from the evaporating ponds. They then thoroughly clean the ponds in readiness for the next batch.

Meanwhile, children scamper about among the smaller ponds. Their job is to monitor the drying process. As the water evaporates from the ponds, crystals form on the surface. If left unchecked, this salty crust would block further evaporation. So the children sprinkle the surface with drops of water

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- **■** Earth—Designed for Life
- When Birds Crash Into Buildings
- How Can I Get Over a Breakup?

to break the crust and cause the crystals to sink to the bottom of the pond. Evaporation continues until finally only the precious salt remains.

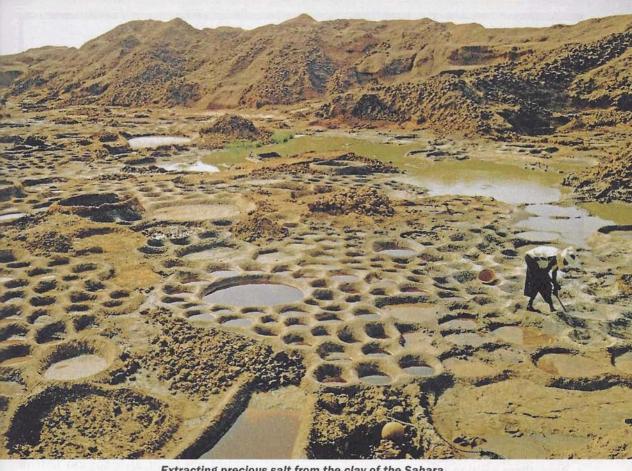
Why are the ponds such a variety of beautiful colors? Our guide explains: "There are basically three kinds of clay, or mud, found in this area, and each adds its own color to the water. In addition, the color varies depending on the salinity of the solution. Also, algae grows in some of the ponds and colors the water." We notice, too, that the ponds change hue and tone as the sun's burning rays shift their angle of reflection.

#### Salt as Money

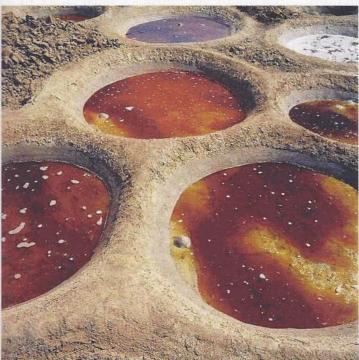
Back in the village, the women form the moist raw salt into loaves or cakes, which they dry in the searing sun. They do not refine the salt, so the cakes stay a brownish color. We observe that the women form the cakes in three shapes—oval, round, and triangular. One of the women explains that the oval and round cakes are sold, while the triangular ones are reserved as gifts.

Who buys the salt? Nomads and salt merchants. They trek through Teguidda-n-Tessoumt, trading food and other goods in exchange for the salt. Most of the salt will be sold in the markets of the larger towns on the fringe of the desert. The raw salt from this village will likely not be used by humans. Rather, it will supplement the diet of domestic animals.

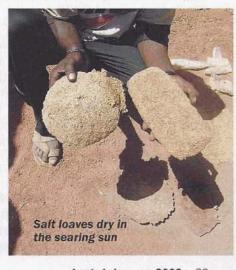
Heading back to our vehicle, we see a man digging the residual clay from an empty decanting pond. He hauls the load toward the dumping grounds and adds his small contribution to the man-made mounds. As we drive away, we reflect on how these hills bear testimony to the generations of salt seekers who have lived, worked, and died in Teguidda-n-Tessoumt.—Contributed.



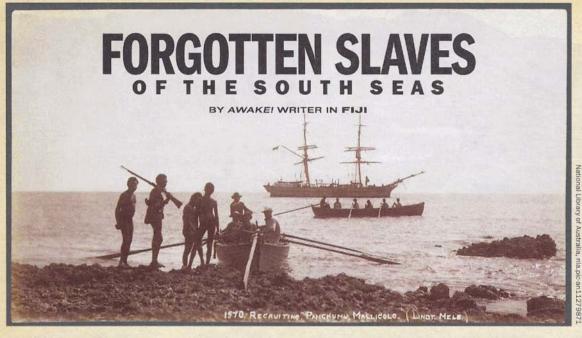
Extracting precious salt from the clay of the Sahara



Evaporation ponds come in many colors



Awake! January 2009



A RIPPLE of excitement seizes the crowd as two ships slip into the lagoon of the remote Pacific atoll. Years earlier, a castaway had given each family there a few pages torn from his Bible. These humble people eagerly read those pages and since then had anxiously awaited the arrival of a Christian teacher.

Now these visiting seamen are promising to take them to a place where they can learn more about God. Some 250 trusting men and women board the ships, many of them clutching their treasured Bible pages.

They were, however, victims of a clever deception. Once on board, they were bound, thrown below deck, and sent on a long journey to the port of Callao in South America. Unsanitary conditions led to many deaths in transit. Sexual exploitation was rife. Those who survived the voyage were sold as slaves to work on plantations and in mines or as domestic servants, never to return to their island home.

#### **Development of "Blackbirding"**

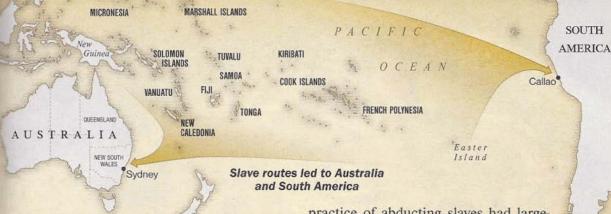
The abduction of South Pacific islanders during the 19th and early 20th centuries came to be called blackbirding. During the early

1860's, the practice brought thousands of the islanders to South America. During the decade that followed, the focus moved to the west as islanders were taken to Australia. In 1867, Ross Lewin, formerly of the Royal Navy, offered sugar growers and cotton planters the "best and most serviceable natives to be had in the islands at 7 [pounds] a head."

Efforts of the British Colonial Office to combat blackbirding were unsuccessful. For one thing, it was difficult to apply British law to subjects of foreign powers. For another, English law did not have a comprehensive definition of slavery. Thus, in court, blackbirders successfully argued that these islanders—although deceived and taken forcibly—were not really slaves but were indentured laborers who would be paid and, in time, sent home. Some went so far as to assert that they were doing these former heathens a favor by bringing them under British law and teaching them to work! Blackbirding thus proliferated, at least for a time.

#### The Tide Turns

As fair-minded citizens spoke out against blackbirding, the tide began to turn. While



some islanders were recruited willingly, forcible capture could no longer be tolerated. Neither could abuses, such as whipping and branding, or the shocking conditions under which some laborers lived and worked.

The situation further intensified when the Anglican bishop J. C. Patteson-an outspoken opponent of blackbirding-was murdered by the very islanders he sought to protect. Employing an often-used form of deception. blackbirders had arrived at an island ahead of Patteson in a ship deliberately made to resemble his. In this case, the local people were invited on board to meet the bishop. They were never seen again. When the real Patteson arrived, he was met by an understandably hostile crowd, and he was killed in a mistaken act of retaliation. In response to this incident-and to the growing public outcry-British and French navy ships were stationed in the Pacific with orders to stop the abuses.

The New South Wales and Queensland governments in Australia joined forces with the Colonial Office by passing various acts to halt abuses and to regulate the indentured-labor trade. Inspectors were appointed, and government representatives were placed aboard recruiting ships. These zealous efforts paid off, as convictions were obtained on the grounds of kidnapping and murder, rather than on the ineffectual antislavery provisions. The last decade of the 19th century saw a changing situation in the South Seas. The

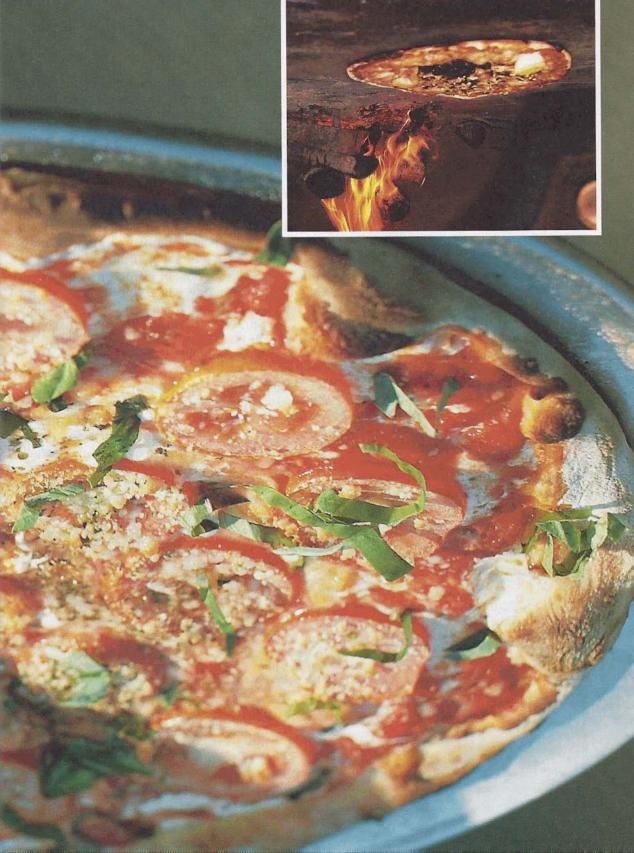
practice of abducting slaves had largely halted, and the flow of new "recruits" ebbed to a trickle by the beginning of the 20th century.

In 1901, a new national parliament, the Commonwealth of Australia, gained control over immigration for the entire country. Its policies reflected public opinion, which by then had started to resent outside labor, as many feared it would undermine local workers. Indentured laborers or not, South Sea islanders were no longer welcome. Thousands were forcibly repatriated, leading to more tragedy, as some who were now taken from where they had settled were separated from loved ones.

#### **Forgotten Slaves Remembered**

In September 2000, the government of the state of Queensland issued a statement that is on permanent display. It acknowledges the role that the islanders of the South Seas played in the economic, cultural, and regional development of Queensland. At the same time, it expresses regret over the harsh treatment to which they were subjected.

Throughout history, many individuals have seized opportunities to enrich themselves at the expense of the life and liberty of others. The Bible promises that under the rule of God's Kingdom, no such injustices will take place. Indeed, those living as earthly subjects under that heavenly government "will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble."—Micah 4:4.



# A PENCHANT PIZZA

KING Ferdinand I (1751-1825) is said to have disguised himself as a commoner and, in clandestine fashion, visited a poor neighborhood in Naples. Why the secrecy? One story has it that he wanted to sink his teeth into a food that the queen had banned from the royal court—pizza.

If Ferdinand were alive today, he would have no trouble indulging his appetite. Currently, there are some 30,000 pizzerias in Italy, and each year they produce enough pizzas to serve 45 to each inhabitant!

#### **Humble Origins**

Pizza may have originated in Naples about 1720. Back then, pizza was primarily for the poor, a "fast food" that was sold and consumed outdoors. Vendors would traverse the streets loudly calling out to advertise their tasty delicacies. The pizzas were kept warm in a *scudo*, a copper receptacle that was carried on the vendor's head.

King Ferdinand I eventually made his penchant for pizza known to the royal court. Before long, this street delicacy won such favor that even members of the wealthy elite and the royal class began flocking to pizzerias. Ferdinand's grandson, King Ferdinand II, went so far as to have a wood-burning oven built in the gardens of Capodimonte Palace in 1832. Thus, he was able to keep his aristocratic guests happy.

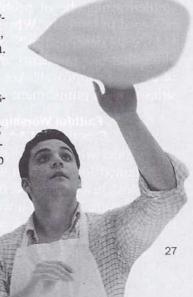
#### Pizza-Nutritious?

Today, pizza is a favorite food of young people, but a word of caution is in order. To be considered nutritious, pizza should be made from healthful ingredients that are balanced in carbohydrates, proteins, and fats and that are rich in vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. Olive oil is a recommended ingredient in pizza. It promotes the formation of HDL, described as "the good type of cholesterol that helps clean the arteries."

Furthermore, when pizza is cooked well, it rarely causes digestive problems. In part, this is because the carbohydrates in the flour receive an ample amount of hydration during the kneading and leavening process. Meanwhile, the presence of complex carbohydrates contributes to a full feeling, which usually helps keep even the most enthusiastic pizza lover from overindulging.

The next time you indulge *your* penchant for pizza, recall its humble origins. And be glad that King Ferdinand I did not keep his love for pizza a secret.

- Pizza is best cooked in a wood-burning oven. The smoke that is released during cooking gives the pizza a delicate aroma, while the thin layer of ash on the bottom of the pizza gives it a delicious taste.
- The world's largest circular pizza was made in 1990. Its diameter measured more than 122 feet, and it weighed more than 12 tons!
- The age-old custom of throwing pizza dough into the air and rotating it is not just for show. The centrifugal force that is created flattens the dough into a disk with a slightly raised border—a perfect base for a pizza!



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# Are Your Problems a Punishment From God?

"I feel like I'm being punished," says a woman in her mid-50's after learning that she has cancer. Reflecting on a wrong she committed years earlier, she concludes, "This must be God's way of telling me I sinned."

WHEN faced with adversity, many people feel that God is punishing them for some past wrong. Overwhelmed by a sudden avalanche of problems, they may be heard to lament: "Why me? What have I done to deserve this?" Should we conclude that our problems are an indication of divine disapproval? Are personal adversities really a punishment from God?

#### Faithful Worshippers Experienced Adversity

Consider what the Bible reports about a man named Job. Without warning, he suddenly lost his wealth. Next, all ten of his children were killed in a windstorm. Soon thereafter, he was struck with a debilitating, loathsome disease. (Job 1:13-19; 2:7, 8) Such adversities led Job to cry out: "The hand of God has struck me down." (Job 19: 21, *Today's English Version*) Evidently, like many today, Job felt that God was punishing him.

However, the Bible reveals that before Job's trials began, God himself had described Job as "a man *blameless* and *upright*, fearing God and turning aside from bad." (Job 1:8) In view of this expression of divine approval, it is clear that Job's adversities were not a punishment from God.

The fact is, the Bible is filled with accounts of upright individuals who faced personal adversities. Although he was a

#### "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all."-Ecclesiastes 9:11

loyal servant of God, Joseph endured years of unjust imprisonment. (Genesis 39:10-20; 40: 15) The faithful Christian Timothy suffered from "frequent cases of sickness." (1 Timothy 5:23) Even Jesus Christ, who never did wrong, was cruelly mistreated before suffering an agonizing death. (1 Peter 2:21-24) Hence, it is a mistake to conclude that adversity must be an expression of God's displeasure. But if God is not responsible for adversity, who, if anyone, is?

#### The Causes of Our Problems

The Bible shows that Satan the Devil was the cause of Job's tragedies. (Job 1:7-12; 2: 3-8) Furthermore, it identifies Satan as the chief source of our problems today when it states: "Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time." (Revelation 12:12) As "the ruler of this world," Satan has influenced many to engage in evil acts that have resulted in untold misery and heartache.—John 12:31; Psalm 37: 12, 14.\*

We should not, however, be quick to blame the Devil for every adversity we experience. As a result of inherited sin and imperfection, we are prone to make unwise decisions that can cause us problems. (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12) For example, imagine a man who by choice neither eats properly nor gets sufficient rest. If this eventually leads to serious

health problems, should he blame the Devil? No, the man has merely reaped the bitter consequences of his own poor judgment. (Galatians 6:7) In such an instance, it is just as a Bible proverb puts it: "A man's own folly wrecks his life."—Proverbs 19:3, *The New English Bible*.

Finally, it must be realized that many unpleasant experiences are simply the result of "time and unforeseen occurrence." (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Consider the person who is unexpectedly caught in a rainstorm. Whether he will get a little wet or completely drenched may just depend on where he happens to be standing when the rain begins to fall. Similarly, in these "critical times hard to deal with." negative conditions can quickly turn into a downpour of adversity. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) To what extent we are personally affected is often a matter of timing and circumstances, over which we may have little or no control. Does this mean, then, that we will always be plagued with adversity?

#### All Adversity Soon to End

Happily, Jehovah God will bring an end to all adversity very soon. (Isaiah 25:8; Revelation 1:3; 21:3, 4) In the meantime, he shows that he really cares for us by providing "instruction" and "comfort from the Scriptures" so that we can cope with trials now as we look forward to that wonderful future just ahead. (Romans 15:4; 1 Peter 5:7) At that time, those who are upright in God's eyes will enjoy unending life in a new world, free from every form of adversity.—Psalm 37:29, 37.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Is it only wrongdoers who experience adversity?-Job 1:8.
- Is the Devil to blame for all our problems?—Galatians 6:7.
- Will adversity always exist?—Revelation 21:3, 4.

<sup>\*</sup> See the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Who Is Satan? Is He Real?" in the February 2007 issue of Awake!

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### A Time of Peace?

"Christmas is one of our greatest festivals," but it is also "a time of conflicts," states Vi Föräldrar, a Swedish magazine for parents. In fact, at Christmastime, families "quarrel and wrangle more than at any other time of the year." The magazine asked over 1,100 parents of small children about their experiences during the holiday season. Some 88 percent answered that the family quarrels over "how and where to celebrate Christmas." Many are irritated because grandparents spoil their grandchildren with candy and unneeded gifts.

#### **More Happiness in Giving**

"Money makes you happy—if you give it away," reads a headline in *The Globe and Mail* of Canada. Although most people surveyed predicted that spending on themselves would make them happier, those who used their money to help others—regardless of the amount spent—actually reported greater happiness. "Wealth is not a predictor of happiness, study after study has shown," says the newspaper. "Once people have enough money to meet their basic needs, getting more of it doesn't give them much of a boost."

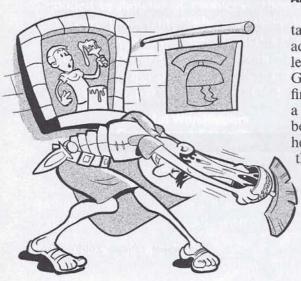
- "100 million deaths were caused by tobacco in the 20th century."—WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. SWITZERLAND.
- "For almost 9000 patients who had heart surgery in the [United Kingdom] between 1996 and 2003, receiving a red cell transfusion was associated with three times the risk of dying in the following year and an almost sixfold risk of dying within 30 days of surgery compared with not receiving one."—NEW SCIENTIST, BRITAIN.

#### You Can Get It on the Web!

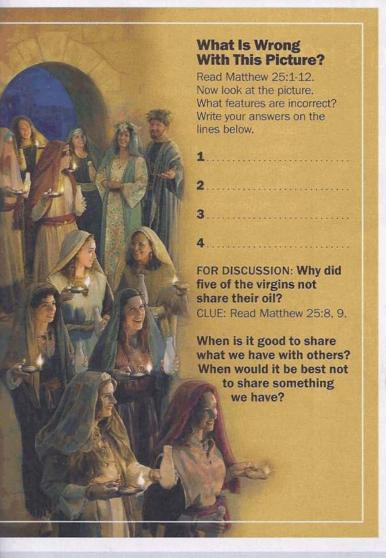
U.S. government officials decided to check whether it would be possible for their potential enemies to "obtain sensitive items of military equipment" through the Internet, says New Scientist magazine. "They were astonished to discover how easy it was." Using well-known online trading sites, they had no difficulty purchasing "pieces of US military body armour," a "used nuclear-biological-chemical protective suit," parts for jet fighter planes, and "several other sensitive items." It is unknown how the sellers obtained such equipment, but several "now face criminal investigations," says the magazine.

#### **Ancient Superglue**

In antiquity, decorative silver laurel leaves were attached to a Roman official's parade helmet with an adhesive that has superglue properties. Frank Willer, chief restorer at the Rhineland Museum in Bonn, Germany, made the discovery accidentally. Using a fine saw, he was removing a small metal sample from a first-century-B.C.E. iron helmet that had lain on the bed of the Rhine River for at least 1,500 years. "The heat from the tool caused the silver laurel leaves on the helmet to peel off, leaving thread-like traces of the glue behind," he explains. Analysis revealed that the tenacious adhesive was made of bitumen, bark pitch, and beef fat.



#### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**



#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 6 Who owns the earth and that which fills it?
Psalm 24:

PAGE 9 What can anyone thirsting receive?
Revelation 22:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 18 A man of discernment is what? Proverbs 17:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 29 A man's own folly can do what? Proverbs 19:\_\_\_\_



#### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

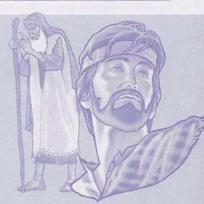
#### What Do You Know About the Prophets?

Who was the prophet that ran away from King Jehoiakim?
CLUE: Read Jeremiah 26:17-23.

When Hezekiah was king, who prophesied that Jerusalem would become "heaps of ruins"?

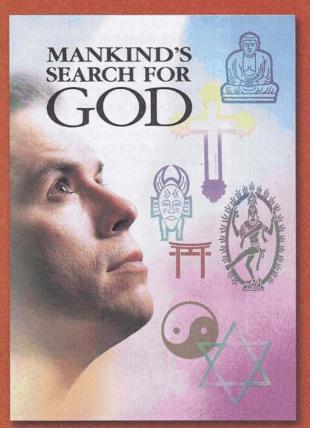
CLUE: Read Jeremiah 26:18.

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, after reading about these two prophets, should you not be afraid to talk about God? CLUE: Read Proverbs 29:25.



# 'The Best Book on the World's Religions'

■ A high-school teacher in Canada faced the challenge of instructing students in the beliefs of several different religions practiced in her area. After reading the



book Mankind's Search for God, she exclaimed: "This is the best book describing the world's religions that I have ever read!" She was so impressed that she sought and received permission from the school board to use the book in class.

The teacher offered to travel over 300 miles to pick up 40 copies of the book from the Canada branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses. The Witnesses in her area, however, were happy to deliver the books to her. A number of students in her class enjoyed the book so much that they asked to have their own copies.

You too may find that this book will help you to understand the beliefs of people in your community. It explains the origins, history, and teachings of the major religions of the world—including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.



# Earth designed for life

ALSO: IS YOUR FUTURE PREDESTINED? PAGE 12



# Earth designed for life 3-9

Everything about planet Earth indicates that it was made to support life. Is this situation just an incredible fluke, or does it reflect purposeful design? What do science and the Bible tell us?



### How Can I Get Over a Breakup?

When one member of a courting couple ends the relationship, the other may feel devastated. See how to deal with this difficult situation.





#### Dyslexia Has Not Held Me Back

Read the inspiring story of a Danish man who refused to let dyslexia stop him from achieving his goals in life.





- 3 The Living Planet
- 4 Earth's Perfect "Address"
- 6 Earth's Dynamic Shields
- 6 The Liquid of Life
- 8 Cycles for Life
- 8 A Special Provision for Humankind
- 10 When Birds Crash Into Buildings
- 12 The Bible's Viewpoint Is Your Future Predestined?
- 14 Mars Up Close
- 17 A Bicycle That Sharpens Knives
- 24 Was It Designed?
  The Wing of Nature's Fliers
- 25 Whistled Speech
  —An Ingenious Way to "Talk"
- 26 You Can Improve Your Memory!
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 Is There a Creator? If So, Does He Care About You?

COVER: Earth: NASA/The Visible Earth (http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/); Sun: SOHO (ESA & NASA)

# The Living Planet

PLANET Earth hosts a prodigious amount and variety of living organisms—perhaps many millions of species. Much of this life, which thrives in the soil, the air, and the water, is too small for the naked eye to see. For example, just one gram (0.04 ounces) of soil has been found to host 10,000 species of bacteria, not to mention the total number of microbes! Some species have been found up to two miles underground!

The atmosphere too is packed with life—and this does not mean just birds, bats, and insects. Depending on the time of year, it is also filled with pollen and other spores, as well as seeds and—in certain areas—thousands of different kinds of microbes. "This puts the diversity of microbes in the air on par with the diversity of microbes in the soil," says *Scientific American* magazine.

Meanwhile, the oceans remain largely a mystery because in order to study the watery deep, scientists often have to use costly technology. Even coral reefs, which are relatively accessible and are well-surveyed, may host millions of yet unknown species.

What we do know, though, is that planet Earth hosts so much life that as a result, life actually changes chemical properties of the planet, particularly its biosphere—the part of the earth where life exists. In the oceans, for example, the calcium carbonate in shells and coral helps to stabilize the chemistry of the water "much the same as an antacid works in the stomach," says a report by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Plants and phytoplankton—single-celled algae found near the surface of lakes and oceans—help to regulate carbon dioxide and oxygen levels in water and air. And in the soil, bacteria and fungi work as decomposers, providing inorganic nutrients for plants. Yes, earth has rightly been called the living planet.

Yet, terrestrial life could not exist were it not for some extremely fine tuning in a number of areas, some of which were not fully grasped until the 20th century. That finetuning includes the following:

- **1.** Earth's location in the Milky Way galaxy and the solar system, as well as the planet's orbit, tilt, rotational speed, and moon
- 2. A magnetic field and atmosphere that serve as a dual shield
  - 3. An abundance of water
- **4.** Natural cycles that replenish and cleanse the biosphere

As you consider these topics in the articles that follow, ask yourself: 'Are earth's features a product of blind chance or of intelligent design? If the latter, what was the Creator's purpose in forming the earth?' The final article of this series will discuss that question.

#### "WE CANNOT ALLOW A DIVINE FOOT IN THE DOOR"

Despite the evidence that the natural world seems too well designed to be a mindless accident, many scientists refuse to believe in a Creator. It is not that science somehow compels atheists to "accept a material explanation" of the world, says evolutionist Richard C. Lewontin. Rather, he says, it is their "prior commitment... to materialism," their determination to create "a set of concepts that produce material explanations." "That materialism," he adds, speaking for scientists in general, "is absolute, for we can-

not allow a Divine Foot in the door."

Is such dogmatism wise, especially if the evidence overwhelmingly points to a Creator? What do you think?
—Romans 1:20.

### Earth's Perfect "Address

OUR address often includes our country, city, and street. By way of comparison, let's call the Milky Way galaxy earth's "country," the solar system-that is, the sun and its planets-earth's "city," and earth's orbit within the solar system earth's "street." Thanks to advances in astronomy and physics, scientists have gained deep insights into the merits of our tiny spot in the universe.



To begin with, our "city," our solar system, is in a part of the Milky Way that many scientists call the galactic habitable zone. This zone is about 28,000 light years from the center of the galaxy and contains just the right concentrations of the chemical elements needed to support life. Farther out, those elements are too scarce; farther in, the neighborhood is too dangerous because of the greater abundance of potentially lethal radiation and other factors. "We live in prime real estate," says Scientific American magazine.

#### The Ideal "Street"

No less "prime" is earth's "street," or orbit within our solar system "city." About 93 million miles from the sun, this orbit is in what scientists call the circumstellar habitable zone. where life neither freezes nor fries. Moreover. earth's path is almost circular, keeping us roughly the same distance from the sun yearround.

The sun, meanwhile, is the perfect "powerhouse." It is stable, it is the ideal size, and it emits just the right amount of energy. For good reason, it has been called "a very special star."

#### The Perfect Neighbor

If you had to choose a "next-door neighbor" for the earth, you could not improve on the moon. Its diameter measures just over a quarter of the earth's. Thus, when compared with other moons in our solar system, our moon is unusually large in relation to its host planet. This, however, is no coincidence.

For one thing, the moon is the principal cause of ocean tides, which play a vital role in the planet's ecology. The moon also contributes to earth's stable spin axis. Without its tailor-made moon, our planet would wobble like a spinning top, perhaps even tipping right over and turning on its side, as it were!

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures -With References.

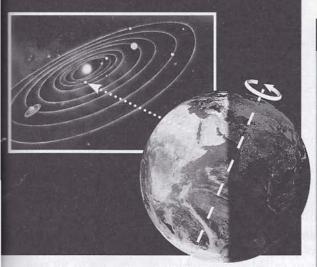
Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Awake! February 2009

Vol. 90, No. 2

Monthly

**ENGLISH** 



The resulting climatic, tidal, and other changes would be catastrophic.

### Earth's Perfect Tilt and Spin

Earth's tilt of 23.5 degrees causes the annual cycle of seasons, moderates temperatures, and enables a wide range of climate zones. "Our planet's tilt axis seems to be 'just right,'" says the book *Rare Earth—Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe*.

Also just right is the length of day and night, a result of earth's spin. If the rotation period were substantially longer, the side of the earth facing the sun would bake while the other froze. Conversely, if days were shorter, perhaps just a few hours long, earth's rapid spin would cause relentless gale-force winds and other harmful effects.

Yes, everything about our planet—from its "address" to its rate of spin to its lunar neighbor—gives evidence of thoughtful design by a

#### ARE YOU GOING FASTER THAN A BULLET?

By the time you finish reading this box, you will have traveled thousands of miles—and without any bumps! Consider the following.

The earth is 25,000 miles in circumference and rotates once every 24 hours. Thus, points at or near the equator move at about 1,000 miles an hour. (The poles, of course, just spin on the spot.)

The earth itself orbits the sun at 18.5 miles a second, while the solar system as a whole travels around the hub of the Milky Way at an astonishing 155 miles a second. Bullets, by comparison, travel at less than a mile a second.

wise Creator.\* Says physicist and evolutionist Paul Davies: "Even atheistic scientists will wax lyrical about the scale, the majesty, the harmony, the elegance, the sheer ingenuity of the universe."

Could such ingenuity be a product of chance, or does it reflect purposeful design? Think about that question as you read the next short article, which discusses two amazing shields that protect life on earth from threats originating in space.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Chionga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech. Po Danish, Dutch, English, Poo Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, Porench. Poorence, Georgian, German. Poorence, Gujarati, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian. Poorence, Portuguese, Malayalam, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian. Politish, Portuguese. Portuguese. Portuguese Poorence, Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Stovenian, Spanish. Poorence, Swahili, Swedish. Portuguese. Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba. Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehama IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Ransey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>\*</sup> Essential to the existence of the universe as a whole are the four fundamental forces that govern matter: gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear forces. All are marvelously fine-tuned.—See chapter 2 of the book *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

<sup>&</sup>quot; Audiocassettes also available.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

<sup>9</sup> MP3 CD-ROM also available.

<sup>·</sup> Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

## Earth's Dynamic Shields

SPACE is a dangerous place filled with lethal radiation and meteoroids. Yet, our blue planet seems to fly through this galactic "shooting gallery" with relative impunity. Why? Because earth is protected by amazing armor—a powerful magnetic field and a custom-made atmosphere.

**Earth's magnetic field** originates deep inside the planet and stretches far into space, where it forms an invisible shield called the *magnetosphere* (shown at right). This shield protects us from the full force of cosmic radiation and from dangers emanating from the sun. The latter include the solar wind, which is a steady stream of energetic particles; solar flares, which release in minutes as much energy as billions of hydrogen bombs; and coronal mass ejections (CMEs), which blast billions of tons of matter from the sun's corona into space. Both solar flares and CMEs trigger intense auroras (shown lower right), colorful displays of light visible in the upper atmosphere near earth's magnetic poles.

Earth's atmosphere provides additional protection. An outer layer of the atmosphere, the *stratosphere*, contains a form of oxygen called ozone, which absorbs up to 99 percent of incoming ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Thus, the ozone layer helps to protect many forms of life, including humans and plankton, from dangerous radiation. Interestingly, the amount of stratospheric ozone is not fixed but is directly proportional to the intensity of UV radiation, making the ozone layer a dynamic, efficient shield. ▶

# The Liquid of Life

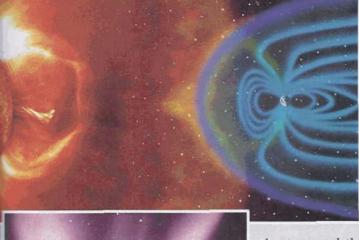
WATER is an enigma. It is both simple and complex. Each molecule comprises just three atoms—two of hydrogen and one of oxygen. Yet, scientists still do not fully understand how water molecules work. What we all know, though, is that water is essential to life, making up about 80 percent by weight of all living things. Consider just five attributes of this amazing substance.

- **1.** Water can store a lot of heat without a substantial rise in temperature, thus helping to moderate climate.
- 2. Water expands when it freezes, causing ice to float and form an insulating layer. If, like other substances, water became more dense as it froze, the lakes, the rivers, and the seas would solidify from the bottom up, entombing everything in ice!

- **3.** Water is highly transparent, enabling light-dependent organisms to survive at considerable depths.
- **4.** Water molecules produce surface tension, creating an elastic "skin." This tension enables insects to scamper about on a pond, causes water to form into droplets, and contributes to the capillary effect, which helps water to hydrate the tallest plants.
- **5.** Water is the most efficient solvent known. It is able to carry in solution oxygen, carbon dioxide, salts, minerals, and many other vital substances.

### Essential to Earth's "Air Conditioner"

Oceans cover about 70 percent of the earth, giving them a major role in climate control. Indeed, oceans and atmosphere are practically one, constantly exchanging heat, water, gases, and momentum in the form of wind and waves. They also work together carrying solar heat away from the Tropics toward the poles, thus moderating global tempera-



The atmosphere also protects us from a daily barrage of millions of meteoroids, ranging in size from tiny particles to boulders. Fortunately, by far the majority of these burn up in the atmosphere, becoming bright flashes of light called meteors.

Earth's shields do not block radiation that is essential to life, such as heat and visible light. The atmosphere even helps to distribute the

heat around the globe, and at night the atmosphere acts as a blanket, slowing the escape of heat.

Earth's atmosphere and magnetic field truly are marvels of design that are still not fully understood. The same could be said of another terrestrial phenomenon—earth's abundance of water in its liquid form.

tures. In fact, for most organisms to survive, temperatures must stay within the range that allows water to remain a liquid. "It appears that Earth got it just right," says the book *Rare Earth—Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe*.

Of course, the earth is an effect, not a cause. But was the cause chance, or was the cause a wise and loving Creator? The Bible says the latter. (Acts 14:15-17) In the following article, we shall see how the Bible's view is supported by additional evidence—amazing cycles that keep our planet clean and healthy.



### THE BIBLE IS SCIENTIFICALLY ACCURATE

The earth is suspended in space. "He is stretching out the north over the empty place, hanging the earth upon nothing."—Job 26:7, stated about 1613 B.C.E.

The earth is round. "There is One who is dwelling above the circle of the earth."—Isaiah 40:22, written about 732 B.C.E.

Water moves in a cycle. "All the winter torrents are going forth to the sea . . . To the place where the winter torrents are going forth, there they are returning so as to go forth."—Ecclesiastes 1:7, written before 1.000 B.C.E.

The universe is governed by laws. "I [Jehovah] had appointed . . . the statutes [or, laws] of heaven and earth."—Jeremiah 33:25, written before 580 B.C.E.

aurora: Collection of Dr. Herbert Kröehl, NGDC: reef: Stockbyte/Getty Images

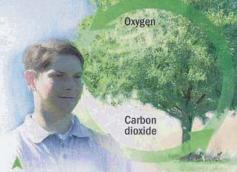
## Cycles for Life

FA city's supply of fresh air and water were cut and its sewers blocked, disease and death would soon follow. Yet, our planet is a closed system—clean air and water are not shipped in from outer space, nor is waste matter rocketed out! So how does earth's biosphere remain healthy and habitable? The answer: natural cycles, such as the water, carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen cycles, here explained and shown simplified.

**The water (hydrologic) cycle** involves three stages. **1.** Solar power lifts water into the atmosphere by evaporation. **2.** Condensation of this purified water produces



clouds. 3. Clouds, in turn, form rain, hail, sleet, or snow, which fall to the ground, closing the loop. How much water is thus recycled annually? According to estimates, enough to cover the entire surface of the planet to a depth of more than three feet.



The carbon and oxygen cycles involve two key processes—photosynthesis and respiration.\* Photosynthesis uses sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water to produce carbohydrates and oxygen. Respiration, which occurs in animals and humans, combines carbohydrates and oxygen to produce energy, carbon dioxide, and water. Thus, the output of one cycle is the input of the other, and it all happens cleanly, efficiently, and quietly. ▶

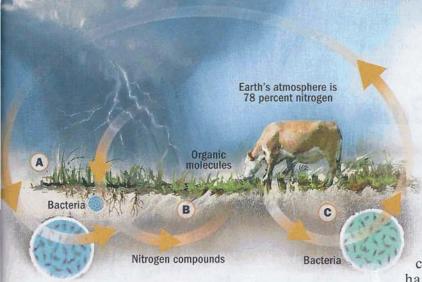
### A Special Provision for Humankind

UMANS need more than air, food, and water. To be truly happy, we have to satisfy our spiritual need. We need to know the purpose of life, why we are here. Hence, Jesus Christ said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need."—Matthew 5:3.

God has enabled us to satisfy that need by means of the most widely distributed sacred book in the world, the Holy Bible, now available in whole or in part in some 2,400 languages. (2 Timothy 3:16) The Bible tells us that God created the universe and all life on earth. (Genesis, chapters 1 and 2) It even tells us that he divided his creative activity into six figurative "days," or periods of time, the order of which harmonizes with the principal divisions of geologic time established by scientists.

The Bible also reveals God's purpose for mankind. That purpose is stated at Psalm 37: 29: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." Note that the righteous—the morally and spiritually upright—will live forever, not in heaven, but on the earth. Of course, the earth will not be the polluted

<sup>\*</sup> The cycles of various chemical elements may combine or overlap. Oxygen, for example, is present in carbon dioxide, carbohydrates, and water. Hence, it shares in both the carbon and the water cycles.

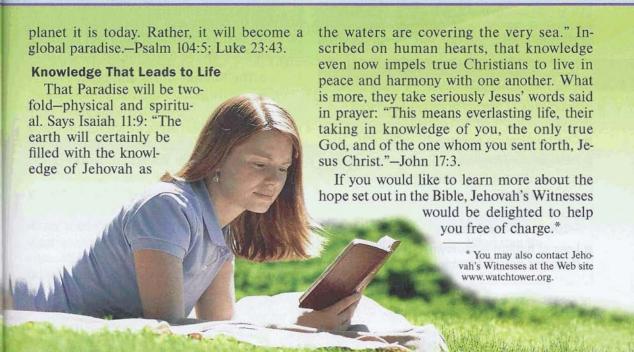


The nitrogen cycle is essential to the production of amino acids, proteins, and other organic molecules. A. The cycle begins when lightning and bacteria convert atmospheric nitrogen into compounds that can be absorbed by plants. B. Plants, in turn, incorporate these compounds into organic molecules. Animals that eat plants thus also acquire nitrogen. C. When plants and animals die, another family of bacteria break down the nitrogen compounds, releasing nitrogen back into the soil and the atmosphere.

### Perfect Recycling!

Consider: Humans, with all their technology, create countless tons of unrecyclable toxic waste annually. Yet, the earth recycles all its wastes perfectly, using ingenious chemical engineering. "Chance processes alone almost certainly could never have duplicated" such environmental harmony, says religion and science writer M. A. Corey.

Giving credit where it is due, the Bible says: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made." (Psalm 104:24) That wisdom has been manifest in a special way toward human-kind.

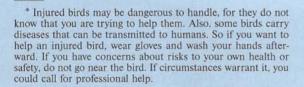


# When Birds Crash Into Buildings

ALTHOUGH it was daytime, the woodpecker flew straight into a skyscraper and plummeted to the ground. The bird did not see the glass. A kind pedestrian found the dazed bird and watched over it, hoping that it would revive. His hopes were soon realized when the

bird chirped, stood up, ruffled its feathers, and flew away.\*

Sadly, not all birds survive such collisions unharmed. In fact, of those that fly into hous-



#### WHERE HAVE ALL THE BIRDS GONE?

Estimates of annual human-associated bird deaths in the United States

- Communication towers—40 million
- Pesticides—74 million
- House cats and feral cats —365 million
- Glass windows —100 million to 1 billion
- Loss of habitat—unknown, but possibly the most harmful factor



Each year in the United States, at least 100 million birds die after crashing into windows

es, about half die. Studies indicate that in the United States alone, more than 100 million birds die annually after crashing into buildings of various kinds, says the Audubon Society. And some researchers believe that the figure may be closer to a billion! Why, though, do birds fly into buildings? And can anything be done to make their life on the wing safer?

### The Killers-Glass and Light

Glass spells *danger* for birds. When windows are clean and clear, birds often see only what is on the other side, which may include greenery and sky. As a result, unsuspecting birds sometimes fly straight into the glass at full speed. Also, they may see decorative plants inside glass lobbies or homes and try to land on them.

Coated reflective glass can also be a problem. Under certain conditions, birds may see, not the glass, but a reflection of the surrounding area or sky and, here again, come to grief. Birds have even been killed by glass at visitors' centers and on observation towers at bird sanctuaries and wildlife refuges! Ornithologist and biology professor Dr. Daniel Klem. Jr., believes that more birds are killed by flying into windows than by any other cause related to human activity, except perhaps habitat destruction.

Some birds are especially vulnerable to crashes. Most migratory songbirds, for example, fly toward their destination at night and navigate, at least in part, by the stars. As a result, they may become confused by bright lights on tall buildings. Indeed, some birds have become so disoriented that they have flown around aimlessly until they dropped from exhaustion. Another danger occurs during nights of rain or high cloud cover. On such occasions, birds tend to fly at lower altitudes, which increases their risk of crashing into tall buildings.

### The Impact on Bird Populations

Just one tall building in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., caused an average of about 1,480 known deaths during migration season, according to one report. Thus, over a period of 14 consecutive years, that one building caused the death of some 20,700 birds. Of course, the total number of bird strikes was no doubt much higher. Moreover, these birds "are not the pigeons, gulls, or geese," says Michael Mesure, director of the Fatal Light Awareness Program of Toronto, Canada, but "birds with endangered populations."

For example, in Australia in one recent year, glass killed about 30 swift parrots, of which only 2,000 remain. In the United States, many museum specimens of Bachman's warbler, now possibly extinct, were gathered from collisions with one particular lighthouse in Florida.

Of the birds that survive building strikes, many are injured or weakened. This can be especially hazardous for migratory birds. If they are hurt and come down within a concentration of buildings, they may die of hunger or predation by other animals, some of which have learned to exploit this occasional food source.

### Can Buildings Be Made Bird Friendly?

For birds to avoid flying into glass, they need to see it and recognize it as a solid object. To that end, some homeowners have sacrificed their view somewhat by attaching decals, stickers, or other readily visible matter to the outside of windows subject to bird strikes. According to Klem, the important thing is, not the drawings or the stickers themselves, but the spacing. His research suggests that visual cues should be no more than two inches apart horizontally and four inches vertically.

What can be done to help night-flying migratory birds? "Nocturnal collision with buildings . . . is largely preventable with the flick of a switch," says ecological research consultant Lesley J. Evans Ogden. In some cities, decorative lights on skyscrapers are now being dimmed or turned off at a set hour of the night, especially during bird-migration season. In other instances, netting has been placed on windows of tall buildings so that birds do not mistake reflections for sky.

Such measures may reduce the death toll by as much as 80 percent, saving millions of birds annually. But the basic problem likely will not go away, for people love lights and glass. Hence, organizations devoted to the welfare of birds, such as the Audubon Society, are attempting to persuade architects and developers to be more sensitive to the needs of the natural world.

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Is Money Your Master or Your Servant?
- Should You Object to Cremation?
- Childhood Obesity—What Can Be Done?

THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# Is Your Future **Predestined?**

Many people believe that their life and future are predestined by a higher power. They feel that from conception to death, we all follow a script already written in the mind of God. 'After all.' they say, 'God is all-powerful and all-knowing, or omniscient, so surely he must know every detail about the past, the present, and the future.'

HAT do you think? Does God foreordain our life course and ultimate destiny? In other words, is free will genuine or just an illusion? What does the Bible say?

Total or Selective Foreknowledge?

The Bible leaves us in no doubt as to God's having foreknowledge. He knows "from the beginning the finale," says Isaiah 46:10. He even used human secretaries to record many prophecies. (2 Peter 1:21) What is more, those prophecies always come true because God has both the wisdom and the power to fulfill them in every detail. Hence, God can not only foreknow but also foreordain events whenever he chooses to do so. However, does God foreordain the destiny of every human or even the total number who will gain salvation? Not according to the Bible.

The Bible teaches that God is selective when it comes to foreordaining the future. For example, God foretold that "a great crowd" of righteous humans would survive

the destruction of the wicked at the end of the present system of things. (Revelation 7: 9, 14) Note, though, that God did not give a specific number for that great crowd. The reason? He does not predestinate individuals. God is like the loving father of a large family. He knows that at least some of His children will reciprocate His love,

Compare God's use of foreordination with the way he uses his power. As the Almighty, God has absolute power. (Psalm 91:1; Isaiah 40:26, 28) But does he use his power in an uncontrolled manner? No. For instance, he held back from acting against Babylon, an enemy of ancient Israel, until the time was right. "I kept exercising self-control," God said. (Isaiah 42:14) The same principle applies to his use of foreknowledge and foreordination. Jehovah exercises self-control in order to respect the free will that he gave us.

but He does not predetermine the number.

God's control of his powers does not limit

him or render him imperfect. In fact, it magnifies his greatness, and it endears him to us, for it shows that his sovereignty truly is exercised not only with omniscience and power but also with love and respect for the free will of his intelligent creation.

On the other hand, if God predetermines everything, including every nasty accident and vile deed that has ever happened, could we not rightly blame him for all the misery and suffering in the world? Thus, upon closer inspection, the teaching of predestination does not honor God, but casts a pall over him. It paints him as cruel, unjust, and unloving—the very opposite of what the Bible says about him.—Deuteronomy 32:4.

### The Choice Is Yours

By means of his servant Moses, God said to the nation of Israel: "I have put life and death before you, . . . and you must choose life . . . by loving Jehovah your God, by listening to his voice and by sticking to him; for he is your life and the length of your days." (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) Had God predestinated each Israelite either to love him and gain life or to disregard him and merit death, His words would have been both meaningless and insincere. Do you believe that God, "a lover of justice" and the very personification of love, would act in such an arbitrary way? —Psalm 37:28; 1 John 4:8.

God's appeal to his servants to choose life applies even more so to us today, for the fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that we are rapidly approaching the end of the present system of things. (Matthew 24: 3-9; 2 Timothy 3:1-5) How do we choose life? We do so in essentially the same way as the ancient Israelites did.

### How Can You "Choose Life"?

We choose life by "loving Jehovah," by "listening to his voice," and by "sticking to him." Of course, we can only do these things when we know God as a person and understand his requirements for us. In prayer to God, Jesus Christ said: "This is eternal life, to know you, the only true God, and him whom you have sent—Jesus Christ."—Italics ours; John 17:3, *Phillips*.

That precious knowledge can be found in the pages of the Holy Bible, rightly called

# The Bible teaches that God is selective when it comes to foreordaining the future

the Word of God. (John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3: 16) Indeed, this spiritual gift is a tangible evidence that God has not predestined our future but wants us to make informed choices based on information he has provided.—Isaiah 48:17, 18.

By means of the Bible, God is, in effect, saying to us: 'This is my purpose for mankind and the earth, and this is what you should do to gain everlasting life. It is now up to you to decide whether to listen to me or disregard me.' Yes, how perfectly God balances his powers of foreordination with his respect for our free will! Will you choose life "by listening to [God's] voice and by sticking to him"?

### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- To what extent does God exercise foreknowledge?
  —Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; Isaiah 46:10.
- Why would God not predetermine everything, including the bad things that happen to people?—Deuteronomy 32:4.
- What will ultimately determine our future?-John 17:3.

# Marsupclose

N August 2003, Mars came within 35 million miles of our home planet, its closest approach in nearly 60,000 years. On the astronomical scale, that put the red planet practically in our backyard, much to the delight of sky watchers.

By early 2004, a number of spacecraft had converged on Mars. Some studied the planet from its surface, and others from orbit. What have these missions taught us about our planetary neighbor?

### Surveying the Red Planet

The orbiter Mars Global Surveyor arrived at Mars in 1997. It discovered that Mars once had a strong magnetic field. The orbiter also accurately mapped the topography of Mars. revealing, among other things, that the distance from the lowest spot on the surface of the planet to the highest exceeds 18 miles, compared with just over 12 miles for the earth.\*

The lowest spot on Mars is in the vast Hellas basin, which was evidently formed by the impact of a gigantic asteroid. The highest point is the summit of the immense, 13-milehigh volcano Olympus Mons. A camera onboard Surveyor also recorded boulders that appeared to be more than 60 feet across, as well as large shifting fields of sand dunes and freshly carved gullies. Another instrument determined that most surface rocks are of volcanic origin.

Although in November 2006 communication with Mars Global Surveyor was lost, three orbiters-the 2001 Mars Odyssey, the Mars Express, and the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter-continued their surveillance of the red planet.\* Using more-sensitive cameras and detectors, they examined the Martian atmosphere and space environment and even discovered and mapped abundant ice at the planet's north pole.

This ice is a focus of the Phoenix Mars Lander, which dropped down flawlessly on the red planet on May 25, 2008. The Lander is equipped with highly advanced instruments to analyze both the atmosphere and the permafrost at the polar region. Scientists hope to learn whether the icy soil has ever supported microbial life. However, the search for life-or at least conditions favorable to it-had begun earlier.

### The Rovers Spirit and Opportunity

Two Mars Exploration Rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, arrived on Mars in January 2004, their landing sites chosen on the basis of data acquired from earlier missions. The rovers-each about the size of a gocart-slowed their descent through the Martian atmosphere by using heat shields, parachutes, and rockets. When landing, they bounced on the surface, encased in a cocoon of air bags in much the same way as their smaller predecessor, Mars Pathfinder, had in 1997.#

The surface of Mars has about the same area as the dry land on earth, so it provides a broad scope for robotic exploration. The site chosen for the rover Opportunity was Meridiani Planum, a plateau of ancient layered rocks containing the iron-rich mineral hematite. Spirit landed on the other side of Mars to explore the depths of the giant Gusev cra-

"See the article "A Robot Explores Mars," in the June 22, 1998, issue of Awake!

<sup>\*</sup> Twelve miles represents the distance from the bottom of the Mariana Trench in the Pacific Ocean to the top of Mount Everest.

The 2001 Mars Odyssey and the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter were launched by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and the Mars Express was launched by the European Space Agency.



The extinct volcano Olympus

Mons, 13 miles high



A The robotic arm—with scoop, probe, and camera—of the Phoenix Mars Lander

Color-enhanced photo of the "blueberries"



The rover Spirit drilled and also scrubbed the surface of this rock

ter, which some researchers believe may have contained an ancient lake. The objective of the dual mission, says a NASA fact sheet, was "to assess the history of environmental conditions at sites that may once have been wet and favorable to life."

### "Geologists" on Mars

When Spirit arrived at its destination on January 4, 2004, it was within a barren, rubbly landscape marked by shallow circular depressions. The rover studied the landscape much the same as a human geologist would,



### IS THERE LIFE ON MARS?

Sir William Herschel and Percival Lowell, 18th- and 19th-century astronomers, suggested that the red planet teemed with intelligent life, and Darwin's theory of evolution seemed to bolster that notion. But all those views have been shattered. Satellite observations have revealed a barren landscape and a thin atmosphere made up mostly of carbon dioxide. In 1976, experiments carried out by the Viking 1 lander discovered no life on the Martian surface.\*

Yet, scientists continue to look for signs of life, the Phoenix Mars Lander being their latest endeavor. Because some microbes are able to

survive in extreme environments on earth, scientists feel that similar organisms may exist in certain places on Mars. The Beagle 2 craft, attached to Mars Express, was equipped to test for organic substances in Martian soil, but the landing failed in late 2003. The following year scientists detected traces of methane in the Martian atmosphere, fueling speculation as to whether the gas was of biologic or volcanic origin.

Can life arise spontaneously anywhere in the universe? The Bible answers, saying: "With [God] is the source of life." (Psalm 36:9) Yes, life can come only from life, the original Life-Giver being the Creator, Jehovah God.—Acts 17:25.

by inspecting various soils, rocks, and landforms. Scientists guiding Spirit determined that its landing area was strewn with volcanic rocks and pocked with hollows caused by meteorites. Spirit then drove 1.6 miles to investigate a group of small hills. There, it discovered unusual rock forms and ledges of soft layered rocks that might have a volcanic origin.

Meanwhile, on January 25, 2004, Opportunity, after traveling 283 million miles, landed a mere 16 miles from the center of the target area. The air-bag-encased rover bounced on the flat Meridiani surface and rolled straight into a small crater. A scientist likened the landing to an "interplanetary hole in one" golf shot!

Opportunity explored a number of craters that contain layered rocks encapsulating small, hematite-rich spherules nicknamed blueberries. Although not truly blue, their gray color is a contrast to the background of reddish soil and rock. Certain rock layers form ripples and patterns typical of sand deposits in flowing water. Some scientists feel that these patterns, along with the chlorine and bromine

found in the rocks, suggest that salt water was present at one time.

The 2008 Phoenix Mars Lander mission has provided more data on the Martian surface, especially its icy region. An arm has scooped down below the surface to the ice, feeding soil and ice samples to Phoenix's two onboard "laboratories" for analysis. The mission, however, was designed to be relatively short-lived because just months after the completion of the lander's work, explained *Science* magazine, the Martian winter would "wrap Phoenix in a thick blanket of carbon dioxide frost."

That scientists can actually explore other planets hundreds of millions of miles away shows what can be done when people work together toward a single goal. Such achievements are also a credit to human ingenuity. Of course, space exploration—indeed, science as a whole—is only possible because of the consistent and totally reliable physical laws that govern the universe. These laws did not create themselves but were established by the Grand Architect of the universe, Jehovah God.

<sup>\*</sup> See the article "The Red Planet Revisited" in the November 22, 1999, issue of Awake!

# **A Bicycle That Sharpens Knives**

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN TANZANIA

■ What would you think if you saw a man seated backward on a bicycle, pedaling vigorously but standing still? In parts of the world, such as here in East Africa, you would likely be watching a knife sharpener—a man who makes his living by filling a community need.

His bicycle is ordinary but has a few important modifications. It has a circular grindstone mounted on a reinforced luggage carrier. For the drive belt, a nylon string is wrapped around the rim of an extra bicycle wheel that has been split in half and welded to the back wheel of the bike.

It is not certain how this ingenious implement came to Africa. "I have been told that such bikes were used in Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania, before the idea came to the city of Moshi, where I live," says Andrea, a man who has sharpened knives this way since 1985. "It came into use here in 1982," he adds.

How does one obtain a knife-sharpening bike? Andrea explains, "We go to a fundi, Swahili for 'craftsman,' and ask him to modify a normal bike according to our specifications." The finished product is usually ready in a day or two.

### **Sparks and Sweat!**

Andrea's day begins at about seven in the morning, when he mounts his bicycle and heads for a well-populated area. On arriving, he calls out: "Knife sharpening! Knife sharpening!" He also rings the bells fitted to his bike. Soon the face of a housewife appears at a window. She hails Andrea and gives him a couple of blunt knives. A neighbor brings over a machete; and a barber, his scissors. Andrea also sharpens hoes, drills, and almost anything that has a cutting edge.

When setting up, Andrea looks for a level patch of ground and lowers his bike stand, which elevates the back wheel. He then attaches the nylon drive belt, seats himself on a second saddle, which faces to the rear, and pedals. Sparks fly and sweat appears as he hones an assortment of blades to a razor edge. At about six in the evening, Andrea calls it a day.

The biking knife sharpener is but one example of how "diligent ones" can use resource-fulness and initiative to make an honest living, even under difficult economic circumstances.

—Proverbs 13:4.



### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK



# How can I get over a breakup?

"We'd been dating for six months and had been friends for five years. When he wanted to end the relationship, he couldn't even face me. He just stopped talking to me. I felt helpless. The disappointment was overwhelming. I kept asking myself, 'What did I do wrong?'"—Rachel.\*



BREAKUP can crush your joyful disposition and replace it with tearful despair. Consider Jeff and Susan, who dated for two years. Over that period their emotional bond grew. Throughout the day, Jeff sent Susan text messages with expressions of endearment. From time to time, he gave her gifts to show that he was thinking of her. "Jeff put forth an effort to listen to me and understand me," Susan says. "He made me feel special."

Before long, Jeff and Susan were talking about marriage and where they would live as husband and wife. Jeff even inquired about Susan's ring size. Then, quite suddenly, he called off the relationship! Susan was devastated. She went through the motions of daily life, but she felt numb with shock. "I became mentally and physically exhausted," she says."

### Why It Hurts

If you've been in a situation similar to that of Susan, you might well wonder, 'Will I ever be able to move on?' (Psalm 38:6) Your dis-

<sup>\*</sup> Names in this article have been changed.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Although the individuals quoted in this article are female, the principles discussed apply to males as well.

tress is understandable. Breaking up may be one of the most traumatic experiences you've ever had to endure. In fact, some have said that a breakup is like a minideath. You may even find yourself going through these and perhaps other typical stages of grief:

Denial. 'It can't be over. He'll change his mind in a day or two."

Anger. How could he do this to me? I can't stand him!'

Depression. I'm unlovable. No one will ever love me.

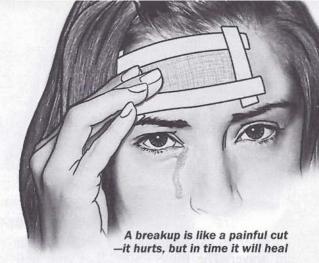
Acceptance. I'm going to be all right. The breakup hurt, but I'm getting better.'

The good news is, you can reach the acceptance stage. How much time it will take to get there depends on a number of factors, including how long your relationship lasted and how far it progressed. In the meantime, how can you cope with your heartbreak?

### **Moving Forward**

You may have heard the saying, Time heals all wounds. When you first break up, those words might ring hollow. That's because time is only part of the solution. To illustrate: A cut on your skin will heal in time, but it hurts now. You need to stop the bleeding and soothe the pain. You also need to keep it from becoming infected. The same is true with an emotional wound. Right now, it hurts. But there are steps you can take to lessen the pain and keep from becoming infected with bitterness. Time will do its part, but how can you do yours? Try the following.

■ Allow yourself to grieve. There's nothing wrong with having a good cry. After all, the Bible says that there is "a time to weep" and even "a time to wail." (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4) Shedding tears doesn't mean you're weak. In the midst of emotional anguish, even David-a courageous warrior-once admitted: "Every night my bed is damp from my weeping; my pillow is soaked with tears."-Psalm 6:6. Today's English Version.



■ Take care of your physical health. Physical exercise and proper nutrition will help replenish the energy lost from the emotional toll of a breakup. "Bodily training is beneficial," the Bible says.-1 Timothy 4:8.

What areas pertaining to your health might you need to give attention to?

■ Keep busy. Don't stop doing the things that interest you. And now, more than ever, don't isolate yourself. (Proverbs 18:1) Associating with those who care about you will give you something positive on which to focus.

What goals can you set with regard to keeping busy?

■ Pray to God about your feelings. This might be a challenge. After a breakup, some even feel betrayed by God. They reason, 'I prayed and prayed that I would find someone, and now look at what happened!' (Psalm 10:1) Would it be right, though, to view God as merely a celestial matchmaker? Surely not; nor is he responsible when one party does not wish the relationship to continue. We do know this about Jehovah: "He cares for vou."

### SUGGESTION

Susan, mentioned earlier, made a list of scriptures and kept it handy so that she could read those texts when she felt she was losing control. Perhaps you can do the same with some of the scriptures cited in this article.

(1 Peter 5:7) So pour out your feelings to him in prayer. The Bible states: "Let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:6, 7.

What specific things could you pray to Jehovah about while you are striving to cope with the anguish of a breakup?

### Looking Ahead

After you've had time to heal, you might do well to take a close look at just what happened in your past relationship. When you're ready to do that, you may find that writing out your responses to the following questions will help.

■ Were you given a reason for the breakup? If so, write the reason below, regardless of whether you feel it was valid.

	at other rea		ou think, migh	
have do		uld have cha	ning you could anged the out-	
■ Has	s this eyner	ience revea	led any ways i	in

which you would like to grow spiritually or emotionally?

■ What, if anything, would you do differently in your next relationship?

Granted, the relationship you were involved in didn't become what you had hoped. But remember this: In the middle of a storm. it's easy to focus on the dark sky and the pouring rain. Eventually, though, the rain stops and the sky clears. The youths quoted earlier in this article found that they were, in time, able to move on. Be assured that the same can be true of you!

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

### TO THINK ABOUT

- What have you learned about yourself from your past relationship?
- What have you learned about the opposite sex?
- In whom could you confide if feelings of distress about the breakup seem overwhelming?

# Dyslexia Has Not Held Me Back

I have a learning disability-dyslexia. This condition, which affects my father, my mother, and my three younger brothers, has made it difficult for me to read my native Danish, and school proved to be a real struggle. Nevertheless, I have received much help and encouragement, especially from my family.

Y FAMILY have been Jehovah's Wit-Kingdom with English-speaking foreigners in nesses for four generations, and readmy hometown of Copenhagen. To be sure, I

ing, especially of the Bible and Bible study aids, has always been an important part of our life. My younger brother Flemming and I also regularly accompanied Father in the Christian ministry, which impressed upon us the importance of reading and writing well.

As a child, I read every issue of The Watchtower and Awake! taking up to 15 hours to read one magazine! Additionally, I set out to read the entire Bible. I also joined the Theocratic Ministry School, which is held in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the world. This school trains students to read and speak well and to give talks before an audience. All these provisions have helped me immeasurably in my struggle with dyslexia. Little did I know, however, that I would face many more challenges. Let me explain.

### **Learning English**

In 1988, when I was 24 years old, I began serving as a pioneer, a full-time minister of the good news. Since Denmark hosts many immigrants, I wanted to share Bible truths with them. To do so effectively, however, I had to learn English-a project I found very difficult. Still, through perseverance and private lessons, I slowly improved, and in time I was able to share the good news of God's

made many linguistic errors, but I did not let that stop me.

A grasp of English also enabled me to serve as a volunteer worker on construction projects of Jehovah's Witnesses in various lands. First I was sent to Greece, and later I assisted in the construction of the branch in Madrid, Spain.

Because I wanted to expand my share in the preaching work, I applied for enrollment in the Ministerial Training School, sponsored by Jehovah's Witnesses. This school provides eight weeks of specialized training to single Christian men who are willing to accept assignments in places that have a greater need for ministers of the good news. (Mark 13:10) I was invited to attend an English-language class to be held in Sweden.

The class began on September 1, 1994. I wanted to be well prepared, so I studied English four hours a day for about eight months, and I joined an English-speaking congregation. Then, when the school began, I refused to allow my disability to impede my progress. For example, when the instructors posed questions, I often raised my hand to answer, even though I was not always sure of the correct words to use. After graduating, I was

What is dyslexia? The word "dyslexia" comes from Greek and means "poor speech." A life-long condition, dyslexia is a language-related disability that especially involves reading. People who have dyslexia tend to have difficulty making the connection between letters and the sounds those letters represent. Specific symptoms, however, may differ from person to person.

What causes dyslexia? The exact causes remain unclear, although heredity is a factor. While studies indicate abnormal brain development and function, dyslexia is not linked to general intelligence or lack of the desire to learn. In fact, sufferers are often gifted in areas not requiring strong language skills.

How is dyslexia treated? Early identification of the condition is important. Effective training in language skills involves using several senses, especially hearing, seeing, and touching. So that they can progress at their own pace, many students need one-on-one assistance. They may also need help with emotional issues resulting from difficulties in school. With good tutoring and hard work, students with dyslexia can learn to read and write well.\*

assigned to serve as a pioneer in Copenhagen. Learning English was a major challenge, but an even greater one awaited me.

### Tackling Tamil

In December 1995, I was assigned to a Tamil-speaking congregation in the Danish town of Herning. Tamil, I thought, must be one of the most difficult languages in the world. It has 31 letters, as well as combinations of consonants and vowels to form composite letters, making a total of nearly 250 characters!

At first, my talks to the congregation were in Danish and translated into Tamil. When finally I launched into Tamil, I doubt

that anyone understood me. Still, the audience listened respectfully, even though many seemed somewhat amused. So that I could learn faster, I decided to go to a country where Tamil is spoken by millions—Sri Lanka.

When I arrived in Sri Lanka in October 1996, the country was in the throes of a civil war. For a time, I lived in the town of Vavuniya on the border between the two fighting parties. The local Witnesses had little materially, but their love and hospitality were overwhelming, and they tried hard to teach me Tamil. Non-Witnesses were impressed that I, the only Westerner in the area, tried to converse in their language. Their appreciative, humble attitude made it easier for me to talk to them about the Bible.

In January 1997, I had to return to Denmark, and the following year, I married Camilla, a pioneer. Sri Lanka beckoned me back, so in December 1999, I returned, this time, of course, with my wife. Before long, we were conducting Bible studies with a number of families and individuals,

and we accompanied local Witnesses on their Bible studies. We were fully immersed in both the ministry and the language.

In March 2000, we had to return to Denmark. Parting from our fellow Witnesses and Bible students was very difficult, for we had truly grown to love them. But more work lay ahead of us, including the challenge of learning yet another language!

### From Tamil to Latvian

In May 2002, Camilla and I, now married for four years, received an invitation to serve as missionaries in Latvia, a European country that lies to the east of Denmark. Camilla learned Latvian quickly and could communi-

<sup>\*</sup> The above is based on information supplied by the International Dyslexia Association. See also the article "Helping Children With Learning Disabilities," in the January 2009 issue of this magazine.



With a fellow Witness in Sri Lanka

Over the years, my wife and I have been able to help a number of people come to an accurate knowledge of Bible truth. However, we cannot take the credit. Rather, we thank Jehovah for the good results that we have seen. After all, we just plant and water the seeds of Bible truth; God makes them grow. —1 Corinthians 3:6.

### When a Hindrance Can Be a Help

Although dyslexia has been a hindrance to me, it has also been

an advantage. How so? When I give talks in the congregation, I tend to rely less on written notes and therefore have better eye contact with my audience. Also, I make full use of illustrations, which are relatively easy to remember. Thus, in certain respects my condition has helped me to develop my teaching skills.

The Christian apostle Paul wrote: "God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put the strong things to shame." (1 Corinthians 1:27) My disability has certainly made me a 'weak thing' in some respects. Yet, as I and many others have learned, Jehovah can more than make up for our lack. We just need to set reasonable goals, have modest expectations, pray for God's holy spirit, and go out there and try.

cate after just six weeks! But I did not do as well. In fact, to this day I still feel that I have made little progress, despite all the help I have received. Nevertheless, I am determined to keep at it.\*

Camilla continues to be a great support, and both of us are enjoying our missionary service. Indeed, we have studied the Bible with many appreciative people. When I forget words or use bad grammar, the local Witnesses and Bible students patiently try to understand and help me. This increases my confidence when I engage in the public ministry and also when I give talks at Christian meetings.

Why have I accepted the challenge of learning other languages when it is such a struggle for me? In a word, love—not so much for languages but for people. It is a wonderful privilege to help someone come to know the true God, Jehovah, and to draw close to him. And as many missionaries have seen over and over again, that task is accomplished far more effectively when one speaks to others in their native language, the language of their heart.

With Camilla in Latvia

av iespējams!" Tomer ir pamats tam tie rais Dievs Jehova ir apsolījis drīz radīt š



tākļus. Bībelē ir rakstīts, ko Dievs paveiks cilvē- ju vairs nebūs, jo, kas bija, ir pag

<sup>\*</sup> After serving in Latvia for six years, the Henborgs were recently reassigned to Ghana.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Wing of Nature's Fliers

A broad-billed

hummingbird

Laurie Excell/Fogstock/ age fotostock Which would you think are more efficient in the air? Planes or such creatures as bats, insects, and birds? Believe it or not, the plane is no match for these small wonders of nature, who "have outstanding capabilities to remain airborne through wind gusts, rain, and snow," says Wei Shyy, professor of aerospace engineering at the University of Michigan.\* Their secret? Wings that flap—the envy of aviators since man's attempts at flying first got off the ground.

Consider: While some birds and insects.

**Consider:** While some birds and insects are in flight, their wings are constantly changing shape to adapt to the environment. This enables them to hover and to perform sharp maneuvers. The magazine Science News reports what has been ob-

served in bats: "When flying at slow speeds, about 1.5 meters per second, the bats turned their wing-

tips upside down and quickly flicked them backward during an upstroke. Scientists [have] surmised that this trick . . . provides lift and thrust."

To be sure, there is still much to learn about natural fliers. "Physically, what are they doing to the air to produce such efficient lift?" asks Peter Ifju, professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the University of Florida. He adds: "There are all kinds of flow physics we just don't understand. We can see what [birds and insects are] doing, but we don't understand how that interacts with the air."

What do you think? Did the versatile wing of natural fliers come about by chance? Or was it designed?

\* Although many winged creatures can fly in the rain, most seek a place of safety.



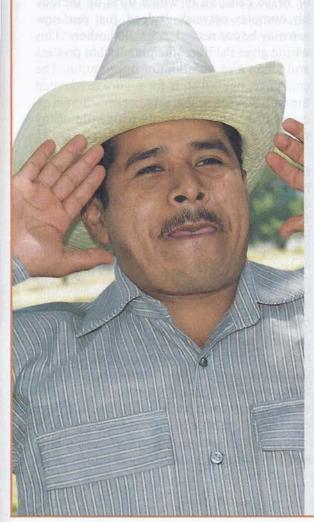
A mouse-eared bat

Delpho, M/age fotostock

# Whistled Speech

AN INGENIOUS WAY TO "TALK"

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO



In the sierra of Oaxaca, Mexico, the local Mazatec people have no telephones, cellular or otherwise. Yet, they manage to communicate over a distance of a mile or more—for example, while working on hillside coffee plantations. Their secret? Long ago, the Mazatecs developed a whistled form of their language. Says Pedro, a young Mazatec: "Mazateco is a tonal language. So when we whistle, we copy the tone and rhythm of the spoken tongue. And we whistle purely with the lips, not with the aid of our fingers."\*

Pedro's friend Fidencio explains the advantage of articulated whistling: "We use this form of communication over long distances and generally for short conversations. For example, a father may have sent his son to the store to buy tortillas but forgot to ask him to get tomatoes. If the boy is too far to hear the spoken word, his father can whistle the instructions."

Jehovah's Witnesses too sometimes whistle when communicating with one another. Pedro explains: "When I visit isolated territories and want to invite a spiritual brother to accompany me, I don't have to go all the way to his house. I just whistle."

"So that we know who is 'talking,'" says Pedro, "we each have a personalized whistle. Usually, only Mazatec men use whistled speech. A woman may understand the language and even use it in the family, but she would not use it to communicate with just any man. That would be considered improper."

Whistled speech is by no means unique to Mazatecs; other whistlers have been found in the Canary Islands, China, and Papua New Guinea. Typically, they are people who live in mountains and dense forests. In fact, more than 70 whistled languages may exist, and at least 12 have been studied.

We cannot help but marvel at human creativity. Indeed, when you combine that talent with a burning desire to communicate, the only limits are those set by our imagination—and that seems to be almost without limit!

<sup>\*</sup> A reference work explains: "By variations in speed, timbre, and intensity of the whistle, the Mazatecs are able to exchange a great number of concepts."

# You Can Improve Your Memory!

"Memory enlarges our world. Without it, we would lack a sense of continuity and each morning encounter a stranger staring back from the mirror. Each day and event would exist in isolation; we could neither learn from the past nor anticipate the future."

- "MYSTERIES OF THE MIND."



WHY is it that some birds can remember months later the places where they stored seeds for the winter and squirrels can remember the locations where they buried nuts, but we may forget where we left our keys an hour ago? Yes, many of us complain of a faulty memory. Yet, the human brain, though imperfect, has an amazing capacity to learn and remember. The secret is to make the most of what we have.

### **Enormous Potential**

The human brain weighs about three pounds and is roughly the size of a grape-

fruit, yet it contains some 100 billion neurons, or nerve cells, all of which form an incredibly complex network. Indeed, just one neuron may be connected to 100,000 others. This wiring gives the brain the potential to process and retain a vast amount of information. The challenge, of course, is for a person to recall the information when it is needed. Some excel at this, including many with little if any secular schooling.

For example, in West Africa, nonliterate tribal chroniclers called griots can recite the names of many generations of people in their villages. Griots enabled American author Alex Haley, whose book *Roots* won a Pulitzer prize, to investigate his family tree in Gambia back through six generations. Haley said: "I acknowledge immense debt to the griots of Africa—where today it is rightly said that when a griot dies, it is as if a library has burned to the ground."

Consider, too, the famous Italian conductor Arturo Toscanini, who was "discovered" at the age of 19 when called upon to substitute for another conductor. In spite of his poor eyesight, he was able to conduct the entire opera *Aida*—from memory!

Such feats may amaze us. Yet, most people have the potential to remember much more

than they think they can. Would you like to enhance your memory?

### **Improving Your Memory**

Memory involves three stages: encoding, storage, and retrieval. Your brain encodes information when it perceives it and registers it. This information can then be stored for future retrieval. Memory failure occurs when any one of these three stages breaks down.

Memory itself has been divided into various kinds, including sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Sensory memory receives information from stimuli through the senses, such as smell, sight, and touch. Short-term memory, also called working memory, holds small amounts of information for brief periods. Thus, we can add up numbers in our head, remember a telephone number long enough to dial it, and remember the first half of a sentence while reading or listening to the second half. But as we all know, short-term memory has its limits.

If you want to store information indefinitely, it must go into your long-term memory. How can you put it there? The following principles will help.

- Interest Cultivate an interest in the subject, and remind yourself of the reasons for learning it. As your own experience in life may tell you, when your emotions are involved, you enhance your memory. This fact can be a great help to Bible students. When they read the Bible with the twofold goal of drawing closer to God and teaching others about him, their memory can be considerably enhanced.—Proverbs 7:3; 2 Timothy 3:16.
- ally represent failures in attention," says the book *Mysteries of the Mind*. What can help you to pay attention? Be interested and, where possible, take notes. Note-taking not only focuses the mind but also enables a listener to review the material later.
- Understanding "With all that you acquire, acquire understanding," says Prov-

#### **ADDITIONAL TIPS**

- Stimulate your memory by learning new skills, a new language, or a musical instrument.
- Focus your attention on the most important things.
- Learn mnemonic techniques.
- Drink sufficient water. Dehydration can cause mental confusion.
- Get enough sleep. During sleep the brain stores memories.
- Relax while you are studying. Stress triggers the release of cortisol, which can disrupt nerve interactions.
- Avoid alcohol abuse and smoking. Alcohol interferes with short-term memory, and alcoholism can lead to a deficiency of thiamine, a B-vitamin that is essential to the proper working of the memory. Smoking reduces oxygen to the brain.\*

erbs 4:7. When you do not understand a teaching or concept, likely you will not remember it well, if at all. Understanding illuminates the relationship between the parts, knitting them together to form a logical whole. For example, when a student of mechanics understands how an engine works, he will better remember details about the engine.

■ Organization Categorize similar concepts or related ideas. For instance, a grocery list is easier to remember when we categorize items—meats, vegetables, fruits, and so on. Also, divide the information into manageable chunks of not more than five to seven items. Telephone numbers are usually divided

**1.** The bull to be offered in sacrifice. **2.** The trench full of water. **3.** The many hundreds of people that were present, including 450 prophets of Baal. **4.** Zechariah the son of Jehoisda. **5.** No.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

<sup>\*</sup> Based on information published in the electronic magazine Brain & Mind.

into two parts so that they can be remembered more easily. Finally, it may help to put your list into a certain order, perhaps alphabetical.

- Recitation, or verbalization Repeating aloud what you want to remember (a foreignlanguage word or phrase, for example) will strengthen the neural connections. How so? First, saying the word forces you to pay close attention. Second, you may get immediate feedback from your teacher. And third, listening-even to yourself-calls into play other parts of your brain.
- Visualization Make a mental picture of what you wish to remember. You might also find it helpful to draw it or map it out. Like verbalization, visualization makes use of different parts of your brain. The more senses you use, the deeper the information is embedded.
- Association When learning something new, associate it with something you already know. Linking thoughts to memories already stored makes encoding and retrieving easier, the association serving as a cue. For example, to remember a person's name, link it to some unusual feature of his appearance or to something else that will call the name to mind. The more humorous or absurd the association, the better the recall. In short, we

need to think about the people and things we want to remember.

The book Searching for Memory states: "If we operate on automatic pilot much of the time and do not reflect on our environment and our experiences, we may pay a price by retaining only sketchy memories of where we have been and what we have done."

■ Consolidation Allow time for the information to be processed, to soak in, as it were. One of the best ways to do this is to review what you have learned, perhaps by repeating it to someone else. If you had an interesting experience or read something upbuilding in the Bible or in a Bible study aid, share it with someone. In that way both of you will benefit -your memory will be reinforced and your friend, encouraged. For good reason, repetition has been called the mother of retention.

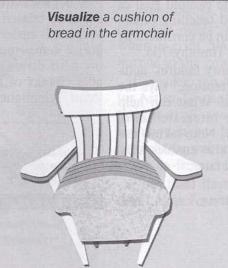
### Mnemonics-A Useful Tool

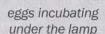
In ancient Greece and Rome, orators were able to deliver long speeches without referring to a single note. How did they do it? They used mnemonics. A mnemonic is a strategy or device that helps us store information in the long-term memory and recall it when needed.

A mnemonic device used by ancient Greek orators was the method of loci, or the loca-

### TAKE AN IMAGINARY WALK

How would you remember a grocery list with several items, such as bread, eggs, milk, and butter. Using the loci method, you could "see" them as you go for an imaginary walk through your living room.







tion method, first described by Greek poet Simonides of Ceos in 477 B.C.E. This technique combines the principles of organization, visualization, and association with something familiar, such as a landmark on a road or an object in one's room or house. People who use the loci technique go for a mental walk, associating each piece of information that they want to remember with certain landmarks or objects. When they want to recall the information, they simply take that same mental walk again.—See the box "Take an Imaginary Walk."

Research done on people who ranked high in the annual World Memory Championships found that their superior memories were not due to exceptional intellect. Moreover, most participants were between 40 and 50 years of age. What was their secret? Many attributed their skill to their effective use of mnemonics.

Do you need to remember lists of words? An effective mnemonic for this is the *acronym*—combining the initial letter or letters of a group of words to form a new word. Many North Americans remember the names of the five Great Lakes—Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior—by the acronym "HOMES." A similar memory aid is the *acrostic*, which was used extensively by the ancient

### BE GLAD THAT YOU CAN FORGET!

Imagine what your life would be like if you remembered everything, whether important or trivial. Your mind would become filled with clutter, would it not? In fact, one woman who could recall practically everything that occurred in her life, "described her constant recall as 'non-stop, uncontrollable and totally exhausting' and as a 'burden,' " says New Scientist magazine. Thankfully, most of us do not have that problem because our mind, researchers believe, has the ability to weed out irrelevant or out-ofdate information. "Efficient forgetting," says New Scientist, "is a crucial part of having a fully functioning memory. When we forget something useful, . . . it just shows that this pruning system is working a little too well."

Hebrews. In many of the psalms, for example, the first word of each verse or group of verses begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (See Psalms 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, and 119.) This useful memory aid enabled singers to recall all 176 verses of Psalm 119!

Yes, you *can* train and improve your memory. As studies have shown, our memory is much like a muscle. The more we use it, the stronger it gets, even into old age.

your goldfish swimming in a tank of milk



butter smeared all over the television screen



The more humorous or unusual, the better!
When you get to the store, retrace your mental walk.



### WATCHING THE WORLD

### Colleges and "Hookup" Sex

"Except for some evangelical colleges . . . , there is little difference between public, private and Catholic colleges and universities in the 'hookup culture' that prevails on campus—one in which students seek sexual experiences with a variety of partners." So said Catholic theologian and assistant university professor Donna Freitas after doing research on sexual behavior and religion in American colleges. According to the *National Catholic Reporter*, Freitas said that religion's lack of influence on sexual mores reveals not only "the power of the college hookup culture" but also "the weakness of religious traditions in the face of it."

### **Parents Paid to Raise Girls**

The Indian government is offering poor parents the equivalent of nearly \$3,000 (U.S.) to raise daughters, says a BBC News report. Families will receive a cash award upon the birth of a daughter and at various stages of her life up to the age of 18. Although gender selection and selective abortion were outlawed in 1994, they remain widespread. In fact, it is estimated that over the past 20 years, abortion claimed the lives of approximately 10 million female fetuses, seriously affecting the gender balance in some areas. According

- "A team of astronomers using the Subaru and Keck telescopes on Mauna Kea [Hawaii] has discovered giant, three-dimensional filaments of galaxies extending across 200 million light-years of space." These filaments make up the largest-known structure ever discovered.—SUBARU TELESCOPE WEB SITE, IAPAN
- The United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics reports that "the number of weddings [in England and Wales] in 2006 was the lowest for 110 years. More and more couples prefer to cohabit."

  —THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY, BRITAIN.
- According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "44% of adults have either switched religious affiliation, moved from being unaffiliated with any religion to being affiliated with a particular faith, or dropped any connection to a specific religious tradition altogether."

to a 2001 census, nationwide there were 927 girls for every 1,000 boys under the age of six and the gap was widening. In one state the birth ratio was 793 girls born for every 1,000 boys.

### **Birds' Reaction to Noise**

Some birds go to great lengths to make themselves heard over city clamor. While urban noise may be a nuisance for humans, it can be a question of "life and death" for birds, says New Scientist magazine, since males sing to "attract mates and demarcate their territory." Because city noise is louder at low frequencies, certain birds make their songs more audible by singing at night or by raising their volume or pitch. What is more, this adaptability is not limited to urban birds, says the magazine. Those living near "waterfalls and river torrents also sing at higher frequencies."

### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**



### What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read 1 Kings 18:19-24, 30-40. Now look at the picture. What features are missing? Write your answers on the lines below.

1		٠	٠	*		*	+					*		*		4	*	
2					*	*	*	+						+	*			

3.....

FOR DISCUSSION: Why did Jehovah accept Elijah's sacrifice? What kind of sacrifices does Jehovah accept from his servants today?

### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 7 Jehovah is hanging the earth upon what? Job 26:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 9 Whose works are all done in wisdom? Psalm 104:

PAGE 13 We choose life by doing what? Deuteronomy 30:\_

PAGE 20 When we pour out our feelings to Jehovah, what does he give us? Philippians 4:\_\_\_\_



### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

### What Do You Know About the Prophets?

4 What prophet reproved King Jehoash of Judah for his badness?

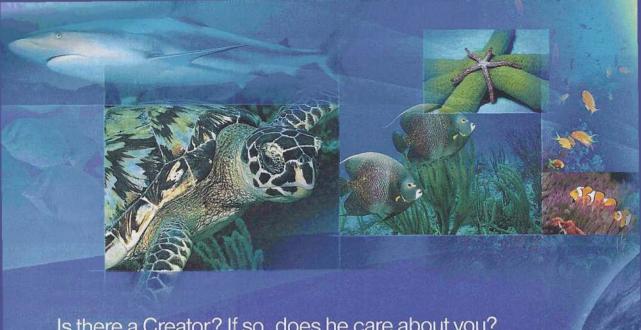
CLUE: Read 2 Chronicles 24:20-22.

5..... King Jehoash had that prophet put to death for his words. Does this mean that Jehovah disapproved of what the prophet said?

CLUE: Read Luke 11:50, 51.

FOR DISCUSSION: Why should you not worry if people persecute you for obeying Jehovah? CLUE: Read Matthew 5:11, 12 and 1 Peter 4:14.





### Is there a Creator? If so, does he care about you?

We are far from alone when asking, What caused the universe, our planet, and our life on it? And how does this relate to our finding a satisfying meaning in life?

Many people believe in creation, that there is a Creator who cares about us. Does research suggest this to be reasonable in our scientific age? Why are many educated people looking into the Bible, and should what it says about a Creator matter to us and our loved ones?



Who Cares About You?

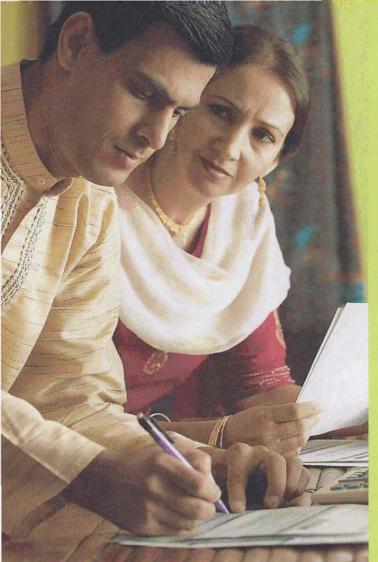
Eagle Nebula: J. Hester and P. Scowen (AZ State Univ.), NASA

Awake!



Is Money Your Master or Your Servant?

ALSO: SHOULD YOU OBJECT | TO CREMATION? PAGE 10





- 3 Is Money Your Master or Your Servant?
- 5 Manage Your Money Wisely
- 6 Blessings Greater Than Riches
- 9 Was It Designed? The Squid's Beak
- 12 Blessed by Putting God First
- 16 A Last Frontier for Endangered Species
- 18 Young People Ask Do I Need Better Friends?
- 21 A Teacher Changes Her View
- 22 My Little Pink Book
- 24 A Great Scientific Mystery Unraveled
- 29 Watching the World
- 30 From Our Readers
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 A Night to Remember

### Is Money Your Master or Your Servant? 3-8

Money can bring great benefits. Why then are so many people afflicted by money problems? Learn how to use and view money wisely.

# 10 Should You Object to Cremation?

Is there something morally wrong with the disposing of human remains by cremation?



## Childhood Obesity -What Can Be Done?

What is behind the global epidemic of childhood obesity? How can you help your children?

# Is Money Your Master or Your Servant?

DO YOU suffer from money sickness syndrome? Reportedly, this condition afflicts a large percentage of the world's population. What is it?

Dr. Roger Henderson, a mental-health researcher in the United Kingdom, recently coined the term "money sickness syndrome" to designate the physical and psychological symptoms experienced by people who are stressed with money worries. The symptoms include shortness of breath, headaches, nausea, skin rashes, lack of appetite, unjustified anger, nervousness, and negative thinking. "Money worries are a significant cause of stress," reports Henderson.

It should come as no surprise that during recent months more and more people have fallen victim to the ill effects of money-related anxieties. The current financial crises in many lands have resulted in the loss of jobs, homes, and personal savings on a global scale. Large financial institutions have collapsed, and even the wealthiest nations have adopted emergency measures to prevent total financial ruin. In the developing world, the rising cost of food and other basic commodities has also caused much anxiety.

Money woes are also common in times of abundance. During recent years of financial prosperity, many people have been plagued by money worries. For instance, *The Witness*, a South African newspaper, reported that "a creeping social disease of over-consumption, commercialism and rampant materialism" was spreading in Africa. The newspaper listed some of the symptoms of this "disease," including "stress, debt, waste, overwork, feel-



ings of deprivation, envy and depression." Money was blamed for the ongoing deterioration of the quality of human life in Africa.

Prior to the recent financial crunch, India underwent a period of outstanding economic growth. *India Today International* reported that 2007 was a year when the country "fast forwarded to a new level of conspicuous consumption." Yet, at the time, officials there were afraid that India's prosperity would result in increased unrest and even violence.

During that same period too, a new generation of young adults in the United States were displaying a propensity for splurging on luxury items. However, their spending power was not bringing them happiness. Researchers stated that affluence was one of the principal causes of alcoholism, depression, and suicide there. One study revealed that despite the abundance and wealth, "fewer than one in three Americans" claimed to be "very happy."

### The Other Side of the Coin

On the other hand, in good times and bad times, many people—both rich and poor—are relatively free of anxieties about money and material possessions. Why the difference?

In a report entitled *The Meaning of Money*, the researchers observed that some people are "highly motivated by money and controlled by money. This may lead to stress and neuroticism." In contrast, they added: "Those who budget their money carefully tend to have internal locus of control and positive feelings toward themselves. They are the

masters of money and not slaves of money... We assert that those who budget their money carefully may also have lower stress, and, thereby, lower strain."

What is your attitude toward money? How does the volatile nature of the world's economy affect you? Is money your master or your servant? Perhaps you do not experience the symptoms of the so-called money sickness syndrome. Still, whether wealthy or poor, we are all vulnerable to the ill effects of money worries. Consider how adjustments in the way you handle your finances may bring you more peace of mind and a happier life.

### Money may be your master if ...

- You avoid discussing finances because of the anxiety it causes
- ☐ Money is often the subject of family squabbles
- ☐ You spend compulsively
- ☐ You worry constantly about bills
- ☐ You are not sure how much you earn
- ☐ You are not sure how much you spend
- $\hfill\square$  You are not sure how much you owe
- ☐ Your bills are often bigger than what you expect
- □ You often pay your bills late
- You are able to make only the minimum payment on credit card bills
- ☐ You pay your bills with money earmarked for other things
- $\hfill\square$  You take on extra work just to pay bills
- $\hfill\square$  You have taken out new loans to pay off old ones
- ☐ You use savings to pay routine bills
- ☐ You find it nearly impossible to get to the end of the month without running out of money
- $\hfill \square$  You feel pressure to accumulate large sums of money
- □ You suffer physical and/or psychological symptoms resulting from money-related stress

Source: Money Sickness Syndrome, by Dr. Roger Henderson



THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brookiyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. ◎ 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Awake! March 2009

Vol. 90, No. 3

Monthly

**ENGLISH** 

# Manage Your Money Wisely

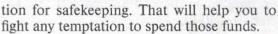
THE adage "Money is the root of all evil" has often been ascribed to the Bible. What the Bible really says is: "The love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:10, King James Version) Some people have indeed developed a fondness for money and have devoted themselves to the accumulation of riches. Some have become slaves of money and have reaped tragic consequences. When managed properly, however, money can be a useful tool. The Bible acknowledges that "money solves a lot of problems."—Ecclesiastes 10:19, Holy Bible—Easy-to-Read Version.

# Know what your income is, and spend less than you earn

Although the Bible does not claim to be a financial handbook, it does contain practical advice that can help you to manage money wisely. The following five steps are commonly recommended by financial advisers, and they are consistent with principles recorded in the Bible long ago.

**Save.** The Bible record shows that the ancient Israelites were taught the value of saving. They were told to set aside a tithe (or 10 percent) each year to be used exclusively for attending national festivals. (Deuteronomy 14:22-27) The apostle Paul likewise en-

couraged early Christians to set aside savings each week so that they could later contribute something to help their needy fellow believers. (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2) Most financial planners encourage saving. Make saving a priority. As soon as you get paid, deposit the amount you wish to save in a bank or other loca-



Budget. This is the only practical way to monitor, control, or reduce your spending. A good budget can give you a sense of where your money goes, and it can help you to reach your financial goals. Know what your income is, and spend less than you earn. Learn the difference between needs and wants. Along these lines, Jesus wisely urged his listeners

## Learn the difference between needs and wants

to "calculate the expense" before undertaking any project. (Luke 14:28) The Bible advises us to avoid unnecessary debt.—Proverbs 22:7.

**Plan.** Carefully consider your future needs. For instance, if you plan to purchase a house

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplifiled), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, "°° Danish, "Dutch, "° English, "De' Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, "o French, "†° Georgian, German, "†° Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, "†° Japanese, †° Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, "° Japanese, the Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, "° Japanese, "o Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, "†° Japanese, "o Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, "†° Japanese, "o Portuguese, "†° Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, "o Polish, "o Portuguese, "†° Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, "†° Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, "†° Swahili, Swedish, †° Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

" Audiocassettes also available.

+ CD also available.

O MP3 CD-ROM also available.

o Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L76 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 9313. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

or an apartment, obtaining a mortgage at a reasonable rate may be a good decision. Similarly, a family man may feel the need to purchase life, health, disability, or other forms of insurance to protect his loved ones. Considering your needs for the future may also involve planning for retirement. Proverbs 21:5 reminds us that "the plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage."

**Learn.** Invest in yourself by acquiring skills and taking care of your physical and emotional health. These are investments that will pay you back. Make learning a lifelong habit. The Bible puts a high value on "practical wisdom and thinking ability," and it urges us to keep on developing them.—Proverbs 3:21, 22; Ecclesiastes 10:10.

Balance. Keep money in its place. Survey after survey shows that those who care more about people than they do about money are happier. Some allow greed to throw them off balance. How so? After adequately satisfying their basic needs, they embark on the pursuit of riches. Yet, beyond food, clothing, and

shelter, how much does a person really need? No wonder the Bible writer quoted at the beginning of this article also wrote: "Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Timothy 6:8) Cultivating contentment prevents us from developing

### Beyond food, clothing, and shelter, how much does a person really need?

the love of money and all the problems that come along with it.

The love of money is indeed the root of many evil things. Money will become your master if you let it. When managed properly, however, money can provide you with the freedom to pursue the more important things in life, such as a close bond with family, friends, and God. Still, in this world it seems impossible to be totally free of money worries. Will money always be such a source of anxiety? What hope is there for an end to poverty? The concluding article in this series will answer those questions.

# Blessings Greater Than Riches

JON had a very successful career as a consultant in the United States. Even as a young man, he traveled the world and made a lot of money. He and his wife had a beautiful home and a comfortable lifestyle. In the eyes of many, they were blessed.

Consider another case. Out of over 5,000 applicants, Kostas\* was one of only 80 selected to become an apprentice with a prominent European bank. Within just a few years, he was repeatedly promoted, eventually being made the head of a major department at another bank. By the time he left that job to

start his own company, he was making more money in one year than most people make in a lifetime. He felt blessed.

Yet, both these men are convinced that there are blessings greater than material riches. For instance, today Jon volunteers as a Bible teacher helping others get closer to God. "I have personally seen and experienced that material wealth does not lead to happiness," says Jon. "The struggle to get it and keep it allows time for little else. On the other hand, living by Bible principles opens up so many blessings, such as a much happier marriage, peace of mind, and a good conscience."

<sup>\*</sup> Name has been changed.

### TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO MANAGE MONEY

With so many adults in financial trouble today, experts are urging parents to teach their children about money—and to start early. Ask most children where money comes from, and they might say, "Daddy" or "the bank." If you can teach your children the value of money—how to separate needs from wants, how to save, and how to invest—you may help them avoid the heartache of crushing debt and economic slavery. Here are a few suggestions.

- 1. Be a good example. Your children will generally imitate what you do more than what you say.
- 2. Set spending limits. Discuss how much you and they can spend. Learn to say no, and mean it.
- Allow them to manage money. If they receive an allowance or earn money from a job, give them some guidelines. Then allow them to make some decisions.
- 4. Teach them to share. Encourage your children to share what they have with others as well as regularly to set something aside to honor God.



Kostas similarly observes: "God does not want us to live a life of opulence. I strongly feel that whatever he gives us that is beyond our daily needs puts us under obligation to use it according to his will." Recently, Kostas and his family started to learn another language in order to teach more people Bible principles. He says, "We have learned that giving makes us happier than does receiving." —Acts 20:35.

Indeed, Jon and Kostas have both learned that spiritual blessings are much more valuable than material riches. Daniel Gilbert, a professor at Harvard, notes that mentalhealth experts "have spent decades studying the relation between wealth and happiness, and they have generally concluded that wealth increases human happiness when it lifts people out of abject poverty and into the

middle class." But then he adds, "It does little to increase happiness thereafter."

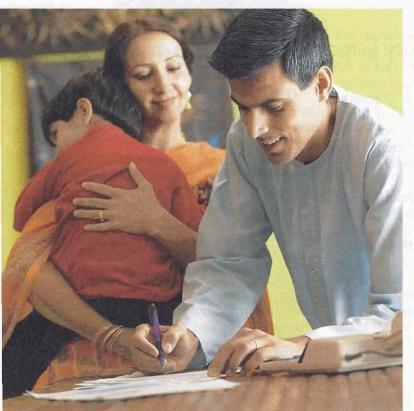
### A Lesson Often Painfully Learned

"Once above the poverty line," noted a thoughtful observer, "increases in income have surprisingly little relation to personal happiness." Early in the last century, a reporter had that lesson impressed upon him when interviewing Andrew Carnegie, a pioneer of the steel industry, who was then one of the richest men in the world. "I am not to be envied," Carnegie told him. "How can my wealth help me? I am sixty years old, and I cannot digest my food. I would give all my millions if I could have youth and health."

The reporter then added: "Mr. Carnegie suddenly turned, and in hushed voice and with bitterness and depth of feeling quite indescribable, said, 'If I could make Faust's bargain I would. I would gladly sell anything to have my life over again.'" Another multimillionaire, oil magnate J. Paul Getty, later said in agreement: "Money doesn't necessarily have any connection with happiness. Maybe with unhappiness."

You may well agree with the Bible writer who requested: "Give me neither poverty nor riches. Let me devour the food prescribed for me, that I may not become satisfied and I actually deny you and say: 'Who is Jehovah?' and that I may not come to poverty and I actually steal and assail the name of my God." —Proverbs 30:8, 9.

King Solomon of ancient Israel explained: "I became greater and increased more than anyone that happened to be before me in Jerusalem." Yet, he added: "Everything was vanity and a striving after wind." Solomon also stated: "The blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich, and he adds no pain with it."—Ecclesiastes 2:9-11; 5:12, 13; Proverbs 10:22.



### The Way to Everlasting Blessings

Clearly, we can only find true and lasting happiness after we properly satisfy our spiritual needs. If we put God first, we will find that every aspect of our lives becomes richer and more rewarding.

Thankfully, we can say that money will not always be a cause for concern. The Bible assures us of a future when greedy and exploitative commerce will be permanently removed. (1 John 2:15-17) God's new system

## If we put God first, our lives can become more rewarding

of things that follows will be governed by his righteous principles. The earth will be transformed into a paradise as God originally purposed it to be when he put the first couple upon it. What a blessing it will be to see the entire earth filled with happiness, peace, and love!—Isaiah 2:2-4; 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 4:8-11.

Life at that time will not be austere or dull. Material blessings will accompany the spiri-

tual as God fulfills his original purpose for humans to live forever in a paradise earth. We are assured that there will be more than enough food, shelter, and meaningful work for all. Poverty will be completely eradicated.—Psalm 72:16; Isaiah 65:21-23; Micah 4:4.

Everyone who sincerely exercises faith in Jehovah, the God of the Bible, will not be disappointed. (Romans 10:11-13) How wise, therefore, to pursue now the blessings that are greater than riches!—1 Timothy 6: 6-10.

Wise money management can make life more enjoyable WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Squid's Beak

The beak of the squid baffles scientists.

They wonder: 'How can something that is so hard be attached to a body that has no bones?

Should not the combination of materials cause abrasion and hurt the squid?'

**Consider:** The tip of the squid's beak is hard, whereas the base of the beak is soft. The composition of the beak—which is made up of chitin, water, and protein—changes in density so gradually from soft to hard that the squid can use its beak without causing any harmful abrasion.

Professor Frank Zok, at the University of California, says that studying the squid's beak could "revolutionize the way engineers think about attaching materials together in all sorts of applications." One potential application is

in the making of prosthetic limbs. Ali
Miserez, a researcher at the same university, imagines "creating a full prosthesis that mimics the chemistry
of the beak, so that it matches the
elasticity of cartilage on one side and,
on the other side," is made of "a material which is very stiff and abrasion
resistant."

What do you think? Did the squid's beak with its changing density from tip to base come about by chance? Or was it designed?



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# Should You Object to Cremation?



Some people feel that cremation—that is, the reduction of a corpse to ashes by burning—dishonors the body and the memory of the dead person. 'It is of profane origin,' they reason, 'and thus should be shunned by those who profess to worship God.' Others believe that cremation is a perfectly acceptable and dignified way of disposing of human remains. How do you feel about this matter?

N Bible times it was customary for the dead to be buried. For example, Abraham buried his wife, Sarah, in a cave. Jesus' body was laid in a tomb that had been carved out of rock. (Genesis 23:9; Matthew 27:60) Does the Bible stipulate that burial is the only acceptable way to dispose of human remains? Does it indicate that God's ancient servants objected to cremation?

#### Indication of Divine Disapproval?

On the surface, a number of Bible passages may seem to indicate that cremation was the lot of some who died in God's disfavor. For instance, the Mosaic Law stated that if the daughter of one of Jehovah's priests should become a prostitute, she was to be "burned in the fire" after being executed. (Leviticus 20:10; 21:9) Likewise, when the disobedience of Achan and his family resulted in Israel's defeat at Ai, their fellow countrymen pelted them with stones and then "burned them with fire." (Joshua 7:25) Some scholars have suggested that this was the treatment accorded those who died in disgrace and that cremation deprived evildoers of what was considered a decent burial.

Further, when King Josiah attempted to cleanse Judah of idolatry, he broke open the burial places of the priests who had sacrificed to Baal and burned their bones upon their altars. (2 Chronicles 34:4, 5) Do such examples indicate that God's disapproval rests upon those whose remains are cremated? No, as shown by another Bible account.

When the Philistines defeated King Saul of Israel in battle, they irreverently fastened his dead body, as well as the bodies of his three sons, to the city wall at Beth-shan. However, the Israelite inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead, on hearing of this disrespectful treatment of the bodies, removed them and burned them, after which they buried the bones. (1 Samuel 31:2, 8-13) At first sight this account may seem to confirm the negative connotation of cremation. After all, Saul too was wicked; he fought against David, Jehovah's anointed, and died in divine disfavor.

Yet, notice who died alongside Saul. One of his sons, whose body received identical treatment, was Jonathan. He was not a bad person. On the contrary, Jonathan was David's close friend and ally. Of Jonathan, the Israelites recognized: "It was with God that he worked." (1 Samuel 14:45) When David learned of the actions of the men of Jabeshgilead, he praised and thanked them for what they had done: "Blessed may you be of Jehovah, because you exercised this loving-kindness toward your lord, toward Saul." Evidently, the burning of Saul's and Jonathan's corpses did not disturb David.—2 Samuel 2: 4-6.

#### No Obstacle to Resurrection

The Bible clearly teaches that Jehovah God will bring back to life many who now sleep in death. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; John 5:28, 29) Prophetically describing the time when the dead will return to life, the Bible book of Revelation, or Apocalypse, says: "The sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them." (Revelation 20:13) To accomplish this, it makes no difference

# The Bible gives no specific direction concerning what ought to be done with the bodies of the dead

to Almighty God whether a person's body is buried, burned, lost at sea, eaten by wild animals, or even vaporized by an atomic explosion.

The Bible gives no specific direction concerning what ought to be done with the bodies of the dead. Cremation is not condemned by Jehovah. Clearly, though, funeral arrangements should be dignified and respectful.

Something that might influence a person's decisions in making these arrangements, however, is the way that the local community views funeral customs. Those who abide by Bible principles would certainly not want to do anything that would cause unnecessary offense to their neighbors. It would also be inappropriate to engage in a practice that might seem to indicate belief in false religious teachings, such as the immortality of the soul. These concerns aside, whatever decision a person might make as to how his own body, or that of another, is to be disposed of is really a personal or family matter.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Which faithful worshipper mentioned in the Bible was cremated?—1 Samuel 31:2, 12.
- How did David treat the men who disposed of Saul's body?-2 Samuel 2:4-6.
- What shows that being cremated would not in itself disqualify one from being resurrected?—Revelation 20:13.

## Blessed by **Putting God First** AS TOLD BY PIERRE WOROU "Bonjour!" I have used this French greeting all my life. But in November 1975. I was arrested for doing so. Let me tell you what led up to that event and what has happened since.

WAS born on January 1, 1944, in Malété, a suburb of Savé, in central Benin.\* My parents gave me a traditional Yoruba name. Abiola. While still young, I changed it to Pierre, which I thought was more modern and popular.

The townsfolk had nicknames for all the youngsters. They called me Pastor because at birth I resembled the local clergyman. I was more interested, however, in playing soccer than in attending catechism classes.

In 1959, I moved to Sakété, a city in the south of the country, to continue my schooling. I lived with my cousin Simon, a schoolteacher, who had recently begun to study the Bible with two of Jehovah's Witnesses. At first, I was not interested in sitting in with them. Later I asked another cousin. Michel, if he would join with me in the study. He agreed, and it was then that I first heard God's name, Jehovah.

One Sunday, Simon, Michel, and I decided not to go to church but to attend the Witnesses' meeting. What a disappointment to see that there were only five present—the two Witnesses and we three cousins. Yet, we rec-

there on September 15, 1961.

Simon moved north to the city of Kokoro. and I went along. An assembly of the Wit-

ognized the ring of Bible truth and continued

to study. Michel was the first to be baptized

in symbol of his dedication to God. Today he

serves as a pioneer, as Jehovah's Witnesses

call full-time ministers.

nesses was planned at Ouansougon, Simon took a public taxi, but I rode my bicycle 135 miles to attend. We were both baptized

#### Challenges in the Full-Time Ministry

I supported myself by painting and selling pictures as well as by cultivating a field that produced well. When a traveling overseer, Philippe Zannou, visited our congregation, he asked if I had ever considered the full-time pioneer ministry. After discussing the matter together, my friend Emmanuel Fatunbi and I said we could both begin the work in February 1966. In time, I began serving as a traveling overseer, visiting congregations where the Fon, Gun, Yoruba, and French languages were spoken.

Eventually I met Julienne, a charming young Christian sister who loved a simple life, as I did. She became my wife on August 12, 1971, and joined me in visiting congre-

<sup>\*</sup> At that time Benin was known as Dahomey and was part of French West Africa.

gations. Our son Bola was born on August 18, 1972. When traveling between congregations, I pedaled the bicycle and Julienne sat behind me with Bola on her back. A local Witness usually transported our baggage on his bicycle. We visited congregations this way for four years.

One day Julienne fell sick and went through a terrible night of suffering. The next morning, I headed down the road looking for help. Suddenly, a public taxi appeared, something rare in that area. Moreover, it was empty—even more unusual! I explained the situation to the driver and asked if he would take us to Porto Novo, the capital, about 15 miles away. He agreed. Upon arrival, he smiled and said: "This is on me. It won't cost you a thing."

Julienne had to remain in bed at the home of a Witness for two weeks. The doctor kindly came by every day. He also brought along the needed medication. When he examined Julienne the last time, I apprehensively asked for the bill. I was astonished when he replied, "There is no bill."

#### **Dramatic Changes**

In 1975, Dahomey adopted a Marxist form of government. The country's name was changed to the People's Republic of Benin. Daily life also changed. A new greeting was enforced: "Pour la révolution?" (Are you ready for the revolution?) People were expected to answer: "Prêt!" (I'm ready!) Our Bible-trained consciences did not allow us to repeat such political slogans. This resulted in much hostility.

One Sunday toward the end of 1975, I was sharing in the house-to-house ministry near St. Michel, when I was arrested. As mentioned earlier, I had responded "Bonjour!" to a man who greeted me with "Pour la révolution?" I was taken to the police station, where I was beaten. But later that day three local Witnesses were able to procure my release.

I was the first Witness of Jehovah to be arrested. Soon many others throughout the

country were arrested too. The government seized Kingdom Halls, and missionaries were deported. The branch office was even closed, and many Witnesses had to flee the country, heading west to Togo or east to Nigeria.

#### **Our Family Increases in Nigeria**

Our second son, Kola, was born on April 25, 1976. Two days later, a government decree, No. 111, banned the work of Jehovah's Witnesses. We left for Nigeria, where we went to a Kingdom Hall jammed with refugees. The next day arrangements were made to assign us to neighboring congregations. As soon as the hall was emptied of one group of

#### He smiled and said: "This is on me. It won't cost you a thing"

refugees, another group arrived. Trucks were used to take the new arrivals to outlying congregations.

The Nigeria branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses asked me to visit all of the Witnesses from Benin. Then I was appointed as a traveling overseer for a group of Yorubaspeaking congregations in Nigeria, and later for Gun-speaking congregations. We traveled by motorbike. Bola sat in front of me and Kola was sandwiched between Julienne and me.

In 1979 we realized that our daughter, Jemima, was on the way, making it necessary for us to leave the traveling work. Julienne's younger sister, whom we called Pépé, came from Benin to live with us. Our family continued to grow. Two boys were born: Caleb in 1983 and Silas in 1987. So we had become a family of eight. Julienne and I wanted to be good parents, but we wanted to remain in the full-time ministry if at all possible. How could we do it? We leased a field and raised manioc, maize, and cocoyam. Then we built a modest house in the village of Ilogbo-Eremi.

After sending the children off to school, Julienne and I did our preaching in the morning. We were always home in time for the family to eat together. Then, after siesta, we worked in the field. Julienne and Pépé also sold produce at the market. We all worked very hard. Thankfully, we were seldom sick during those years.

#### **Blessings Without Higher Education**

We never encouraged the children to pursue higher secular education. We knew that putting Kingdom interests first, developing Christian qualities, and working hard were the keys to a successful life. We tried to inculcate these ideals in the hearts of our children. I studied with them, and what a joy it was to

## We never encouraged the children to pursue higher secular education

see them come to love Jehovah, dedicate their lives to serve him, and get baptized in symbol of their dedication!

Pépé was older than our children and the first to leave our home. Earlier, when she came to live with us, I taught her to read. Although she had little formal education, she focused on Bible study and other spiritual matters. After serving as a pioneer for some time, she married Monday Akinra, a traveling overseer, and accompanied him in his work. They now have a son, Timothy. Pépé and Monday have continued in the full-time ministry, and Monday enjoys many responsibilities at assemblies.

Bola became an apprentice to a cook in a large company. Soon one of the directors noted his good work habits, reliability, and other fine Christian qualities. In time, he was promoted to a position of responsibility in the company. More important, he is a good husband for his lovely wife, Jane, and a fine father for his three children, as well as a responsible elder in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lagos, Nigeria.

Kola became an apprentice to a tailor and also took up the pioneer ministry. Since he

had learned English while in Nigeria, in 1995 he was invited to serve in the Translation Department at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Benin. He has served there for the past 13 years.

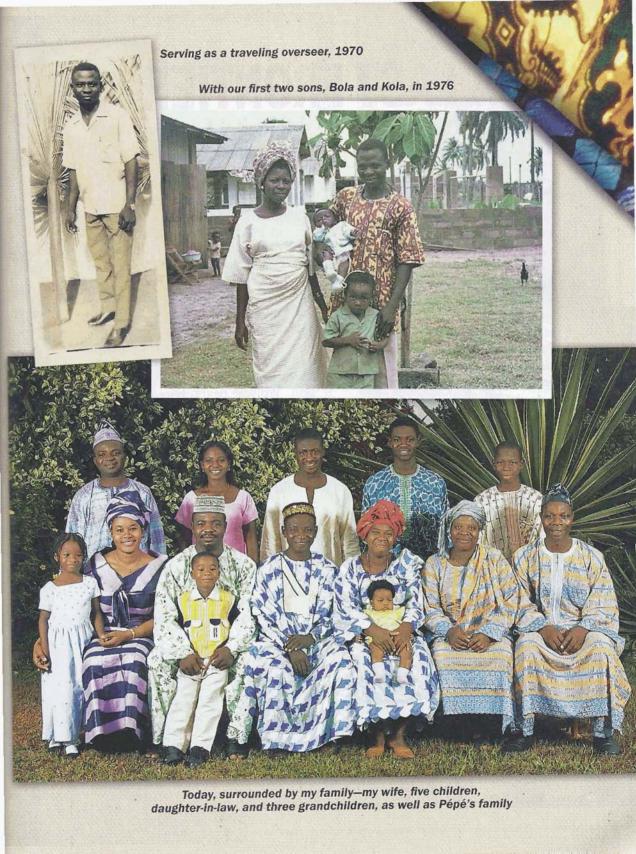
#### **Our Ministry Back in Benin**

We were excited to hear that a Benin government decree of January 23, 1990, proclaimed that the earlier decree banning our work was null and void. Many refugees returned. Also, new missionaries arrived in Benin, and the branch office was reopened. In 1994 our family moved back to Benin, but Pépé, Bola, and their families stayed in Nigeria.

I was able to find part-time work. With the modest rent from our house in Nigeria and Bola's generous assistance, we were able to construct a house for the five of us not far from the branch office. Jemima served as a pioneer for over six years, supporting herself by working as a seamstress. Then she married Kokou Ahoumenou, and they now work at the nearby branch. Caleb and Silas are finishing their schooling. With God's help and the cooperation of our family, Julienne and I have remained in the full-time service for over 40 years.

God has richly blessed the preaching work in Benin. When I was baptized in 1961, there were 871 of Jehovah's Witnesses preaching the Kingdom message in the country. The year I was arrested, the number had climbed to 2,381. By the time we returned to Benin in 1994, the number had risen to 3,858, despite the 14-year ban. Today there are more than twice that many—over 9,000—and attendance at the Memorial of Christ's death in 2008 was 35,752.

Sometimes I go to the spot where I was arrested over 30 years ago and reflect on all that has happened. I especially thank God that he has blessed my family. We have lacked nothing. And I still greet everyone with "Bonjour!"



# A LAST FRONTIER

FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SPAIN

PLANTS and animals face growing threats all over the world. Some scientists calculate that thousands of species become extinct every year. Fortunately, mountain ranges provide a vital refuge for plants and animals that used to flourish over wider areas. Even in these bastions, though, pollution and human encroachment pose a threat. Perhaps nowhere else is this more evident than in Europe, one of the most densely populated parts of the planet.

In the Pyrenees, a mountain range dividing France from Spain, several national parks serve to provide refuge for the local flora and fauna. In these protected areas, visitors get a chance to see what has become a last frontier for many endangered species. Let us look briefly at what these parks offer.

#### **Species Fighting for Survival**

Flowers. Some of the most beautiful wildflowers grow at altitudes above 5,000 feet. Snow gentians and trumpet gentians (1), with their vivid-blue petals, carpet slopes well above the tree line. Farther down the slopes, nestled among beech trees, a grove of endangered lady's-slipper orchids (2) still flourishes. Hundreds of nature lovers visit this grove every year, so local forestry wardens mount guard 14 hours a day to ensure that these precious flowers are not damaged or uprooted.

Butterflies. Unspoiled alpine meadows with abundant wildflowers provide a refuge for colorful butterflies. The large Apollo butterfly (3), with its vivid-red wing spots, flutters among the thistles. Smaller flowers receive constant visits from blue butterflies and copper butterflies (4) of the Lycaenidae family. Painted-lady and tortoiseshell butterflies briskly patrol the higher slopes.

Animals. Many of the larger mammals of Europe once roamed over vast tracts of the continent. But some have been hunted almost to extinction. Wolves, bears, lynx (5), bison, chamois, and mountain goats (6) now survive in just a few mountain ranges or in the far north. The majestic animals in these Pyrenean reserves offer a vivid reminder of the wildlife that once abounded in these mountains. Some thoughtful visitors wonder what the future holds for the few that remain.

We have reason to be confident that the Creator, Jehovah, the One "to whom the peaks of the mountains belong," cares about the wildlife of the mountains. (Psalm 95:4) In one of the psalms, God says: "To me belongs every wild animal of the forest, the beasts upon a thousand mountains. I well know every winged creature of the mountains." (Psalm 50:10, 11) Jehovah's concern for the earth and its creatures gives us every reason to believe that he will never allow the beasts of the mountains to disappear.



#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

## Do I need better friends?



"If I'm angry, I need someone to vent to. If I'm sad, I want someone to tell me it's going to get better. If I'm happy, I want to share that with someone. To me, friends are a necessity."—Brittany.

T'S been said that little children need playmates, whereas adolescents need friends. What's the difference?

A playmate is someone who keeps you company.

A friend is someone who also shares your values.

Furthermore, the Bible states that "a true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress." (Proverbs 17:17) That's probably describing a deeper kind of friendship than you found at the playground!

**Fact:** As you progress toward adulthood, you need friends who

- (1) Have admirable qualities.
- (2) Live by praiseworthy standards.
- (3) Have a positive influence on you.

**Question:** How can you tell if your friends fit that profile? Let's examine one factor at a time.

When you conform to others' standards just to fit in, you can become like a pawn on a chessboard, to be moved around at their whim

### Friendship Factor #1 Admirable Qualities

What you should know. Not everyone who claims to be a friend has what it takes to live up to the title. The Bible even says that "there exist companions disposed to break one another to pieces." (Proverbs 18:24) That might sound extreme. But consider: Have you ever had a "friend" who took advantage of you? What about one who talked behind your back or spread false rumors about you? Such an experience can shatter your trust.\* Always re-



<sup>\*</sup> Of course, everyone makes mistakes. (Romans 3:23) So when a friend hurts you but then expresses genuine remorse, remember that "love covers a multitude of sins."—I Peter 4:8.

member that when it comes to friends, quality is more important than quantity!

What you can do. Choose as friends those who have qualities that are worthy of imitation.

"Everyone has such a positive view of my friend Fiona. I want to be spoken of in a good way too. I want the same reputation she has. To me. that's admirable."-Yvette, 17.

#### Try this exercise.

- 1. Read Galatians 5:22, 23.
- 2. Ask yourself, 'Do my friends reflect qualities that make up "the fruitage of the spirit"?'
- 3. List below the names of your closest friends. Next to each name, write the trait that best describes the person.

Name	Trait
<b></b>	W
	and unified an weak-
2(4)(10)(4) - (4)(5)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)(4)	

Hint: If only negative traits come to mind, it might be time to look for better friends!

#### Friendship Factor #2 **Praiseworthy Standards**

What you should know. The more desperate you are for friends, the more likely you are to settle for the wrong kind. The Bible says: "He that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Proverbs 13:20) The term "stupid ones" does not refer to people who lack intelligence. Rather, it describes those who turn their back on sound reasoning and instead follow a morally insensible course-the kind of friends you can do without!

What you can do. Instead of befriending just anyone who'll accept you, be discriminating. (Psalm 26:4) No, that's not to say you should be prejudiced. In this context, being discriminating means that you're perceptive enough to "see the distinction between a righteous one and a wicked one, between one serving God and one who has not served him."-Malachi 3:18.

#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

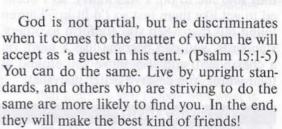
"When my parents steered me away from a certain group of friends. I told myself that these were the only ones I wanted to associate with. My parents' advice was good, though, and once I took off my blinders. I realized that there were plenty of better friends available." -Cole.

"Engaging in the Christian ministry is the best way for me to get to know people in the congregation. That's where I get to mix with a variety of people, both young and old. And I'm spending time with people who love

"I prayed for friends, but then I realized that I wasn't doing anything to find them. So I began to take the initiative and talk to others at Christian meetings. Soon I had many new friends. I almost never feel lonely anymore."-Sam.

Jehovah."-Yvette.





"I'm thankful that my parents helped me to find friends-people my age who are doing well spiritually."-Christopher, 13.

#### TRY THESE SUGGESTIONS

Talk to your parents about friendships. Ask them about the kind of friends they had when they were your age. Do they have regrets about their choice of companions? If so, why? Ask them how you can avoid some of the problems they encountered.

Introduce your friends to your parents. If you're hesitant to do so, ask yourself, 'Why is this the case?' Is there something about your friends that you know your parents won't approve of? If so, you may need to be more selective when it comes to choosing your friends.

#### TO KEEP GOOD FRIENDS THREE WAYS

- Be a good listener. Show interest in your friends' welfare and concerns. -Philippians 2:4.
  - Be forgiving. Don't expect perfection. "We all stumble many times." -James 3:2.
  - Give them space. There's no need to be clingy. Genuine friends will be there when you need them. -Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10.

#### Try this exercise.

Answer the following questions:

- When with my friends, am I often nervous that they might try to pressure me into doing something I know is wrong? \(\sigma\) Yes \(\sigma\) No
- Am I reluctant to introduce my friends to my parents, fearing that my parents might not approve of them? \(\sigma\) Yes \(\sigma\) No

Hint: If you answered yes to the above questions, look for friends who have higher standards. Why not start with those who are a little older than you and who set a good example in Christian living?

#### Friendship Factor #3 Positive Influence

What you should know. The Bible states: "Bad companions ruin good character." (1 Corinthians 15:33, Today's English Version) A youth named Lauren says: "My schoolmates accepted me as long as I did just what they told me to do. I was lonely, so I decided to act like them just so I'd fit in." Lauren found out that when you conform to others' standards, you can become like a pawn on a chessboard, and they move you around at their whim. You deserve better than that!

What you can do. Cut off ties with those who insist that you change to conform to their lifestyle. If you take this step, you'll feel better about yourself and you'll open the door to better friendships—the kind that will influence you in a positive way.-Romans 12:2.

"My close friend Clint is levelheaded and empathetic, and as a result, he's been the greatest encouragement to me."-Jason, 21.

#### Try this exercise.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I change the way I dress, speak, or act to please my friends? Yes No
- Do I find myself going to morally questionable places that I would not frequent if it were not for my friends? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Hint: If you answered yes to the above questions, go to your parents or to another mature adult for advice. If you're one of Jehovah's Witnesses, you could also approach a Christian elder and let him know that you'd like assistance in choosing friends who will have a better influence on you.

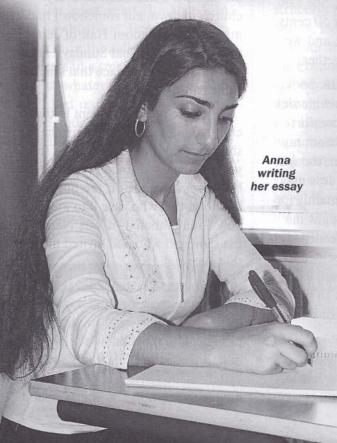
More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/vpe

#### TO THINK ABOUT

- What qualities would you most value in a friend, and why?
- What qualities do you need to work on to be a better friend?

# A Teacher Changes Her View

■ A few years ago, a teacher in Batumi, in the country of Georgia, asked her students to list the Ten Commandments. To the amazement of the teacher, one of her students, Anna, recited them correctly. She also answered other Bible questions in an impressive way. The teacher, intrigued, asked her how she



knew so much. When Anna replied that she studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, the teacher cut her off, saying that she considered them fanatics.

On one occasion, the teacher asked the students to write an essay on life in Georgia and the various problems the country faced. At the end of her essay, Anna wrote: "Any effort by people to correct society radically will be unsuccessful because, as Jeremiah 10:23 says: 'To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.' All the problems will only be solved by God's Kingdom."

The next day the teacher commended Anna's essay to the class and said: "I enjoyed Anna's unique work, which she wrote in her own words. In it she explained how it is possible for world conditions to be changed." The teacher was also impressed with Anna's behavior, praising her in front of the whole class for her good manners and modest dress.

When Jehovah's Witnesses contacted the teacher at home, she told them that earlier she had regarded them as fanatics but that she had changed her view because of her student Anna. In 2007, the teacher attended the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death together with Jehovah's Witnesses and listened attentively to the program.

After the Memorial, Anna's teacher admitted that she was deeply impressed with how well Jehovah's Witnesses know the Bible. Now Witnesses are regularly studying the Bible with her. No doubt, like this teacher, you have an open mind that prompts you to look into what is behind others' beliefs and behavior. Why not ask one of Jehovah's Witnesses for a free home Bible study?

# My little pink book

HEN I was seven years old, a girl on my school bus in Shreveport, Louisiana, U.S.A., offered me a little pink book called *Listening to the Great Teacher*. She said she would let me have it for 50 cents. So she came to my house, and we counted out 50 pennies together.

I just loved that little pink book. Soon after receiving it, I became sick and was hospitalized. To comfort me, my family read to me from my beloved book. As I got older, though, I read the little pink book less and less, since it was designed mainly for children. The book had taught me important lessons, but I needed deeper understanding. I decided to attend a different church each week in search of Bible answers to my questions. However, I did not find satisfying explanations.

By the time I attended high school, religion had become less important to me, although I still craved Bible knowledge and read my Bible regularly. One day I noticed that a classmate didn't take part in the pledge of allegiance. I asked her about it, and she said, "I have already given my allegiance to Jehovah, so how can I give it to both God and the flag at the same time?" How logical! 'But who is Jehovah?' I wondered.

For every question I asked, my classmate provided a Biblical answer. I wondered: 'How did she learn all this? We are the same age; yet, she knows all about the Bible!' She explained, "I learn about the Bible at the Kingdom Hall." I eagerly accepted her invitation to attend a meeting on Sunday. I had been to every church in town, but somehow I had missed the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. That Sunday I knew that I had found a place that teaches Bible truth.

After the meeting, I went to the literature counter, and there on the top shelf was my little pink book! Ten years had passed since I received the book from the girl on the bus, so I had forgotten who gave it to me. But now I remembered—it was Nancy, the same girl who had invited me to this meeting!

Thereafter, I began a weekly Bible study and progressed quickly. I had learned so much from my little pink book that the knowledge I acquired from the Bible study immediately made sense. I soon dedicated my life to Jehovah and was baptized



in 1985 at the age of 18. Meanwhile, Nancy had moved to Florida, and we lost contact.

After a few years, I married. In 1991 my husband, Drew, and I began to serve in the full-time ministry as pioneers in a small town in east Texas. But whatever happened to Nancy? I had no idea. Then one night while reading the December 1, 1992, Watchtower, I cried out: "I found Nancy! I found Nancy! There she was in the photo of the latest Gilead graduation. She and her husband, Nick Simonelli, had been assigned to Ecuador, South America.

Insets: When we knew each other as children Background: Years later, at the Ecuador branch

In 2006 my husband and I applied as volunteers for international construction projects of Jehovah's Witnesses. How thrilled we were to learn that our first assignment would be the Ecuador branch expansion project! My first day at the Ecuador branch, Nancy came walking in! She just happened to be visiting the branch that day. We saw each other and embraced—together again, 32 years after I received my little pink book! How grateful I am to Jehovah for that book and for the little girl who offered it to me!



#### THEY HAVE AFFECTED THE LIVES OF MILLIONS

In 2003, after Listening to the Great Teacher had been in print for 32 years, a revised edition was published. It is entitled Learn From the Great Teacher. To this date, a combined total of over 65 million copies of these books about Jesus' teachings have been printed in more than 100 languages. You may obtain a copy of Learn From the Great Teacher from one of Jehovah's Witnesses in your area.





WHEN divers explored a shipwreck off the Greek island of Antikýthēra in 1901, they found treasure. The wreck proved to be an ancient Roman merchant vessel carrying, among other things, marble and bronze statues and silver coins from Pergamum. The coins enabled researchers to estimate that the ship, probably heading for Rome, went down between 85 and 60 B.C.E.

Since the discovery, the artifacts have been preserved in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece. Neither the statues nor the coins, however, were what drew researchers to the museum in 2005. Their interest was focused on a bronze device that had originally been housed in a wooden case about the size of a shoe box. This artifact, known as the Antikythera Mechanism, challenges assumptions about the scientific achievements of early civilizations. The device has been called "the most sophisticated mechanism known from the ancient world."

Just what is it? And why is it so important?

#### A Mystery Object

When the case was pulled from the seabed, it was badly corroded and encrusted. After nearly 2,000 years, it resembled greenish rock. Since all the excitement of the find concentrated on the statues, this mystery object initially received scant attention.

When a Greek archaeologist examined the artifact in 1902, the mechanism was in several pieces. There were gearwheels of different sizes, with accurately cut triangular teeth. The device looked like a clock, but because clockwork was not believed to have been widely used until about 700 years ago, this did not seem likely.

An article on the Antikythera Mechanism explains that "historians do not generally credit [Greeks of some 2,000 years ago] with possessing scientifically precise gears—gears cut from metal and arranged into complex 'gear trains' capable of carrying motion from one driveshaft to another." Nevertheless, the device was thought to be some kind of astrolabe, an instrument once commonly used to determine latitude by the positions of celestial bodies.

Still, many argued that the gears were simply too complex for the object to be 2,000 years old. So they concluded that it must not have been part of the ancient wreck. On the other hand, one scholar suggested that the object might be the legendary Sphere of Archimedes. This device was described by Cicero in the first century B.C.E. as a kind of planetarium—a mechanical model capable of

#### Reconstruction of the inner workings of the **Antikythera Mechanism**

- 1. The front dial indicated lunar phases and positions of the sun and the moon. It also showed the day and month according to the solar calendar and movement of the sun (and the visible planets) in relation to the constellations of the zodiac
- 2. The upper back dial indicated the relation between lunar months. solar years, and the times of the Panhellenic Games
- 3. The lower back dial predicted solar and lunar eclipses





Back view

Front view

replicating in miniature the movements of the sun, the moon, and the five planets visible to the naked eye. In the absence of any clear evidence to the contrary, however, the astrolabe theory prevailed.

#### **Examined More Closely**

In 1958 the mechanism was studied by Derek de Solla Price, who trained as a physicist but then switched fields and became a professor of history. He came to believe that the device was capable of calculating past or future astronomical events, such as the next full moon. He realized that the inscriptions on the dial referred to calendar divisions-days, months, and signs of the zodiac. It must once have had rotating pointers, he assumed, that indicated the positions of heavenly bodies at different times.

was tied to the movement of the sun and that in the introduction examined the mechanism one rotation corresponded to a solar year. If using a state-of-the-art CAT-scan machine

another gear, connected to the first, represented the movement of the moon, then the ratio of the number of teeth on the two wheels ought to reflect ancient Greek ideas about the moon's orbits.

In 1971, Price X-rayed the mechanism. The results confirmed his theories. The device was a complex astronomical calculator. Price produced a drawing of the mechanism's hypothetical workings and published his findings in 1974. He wrote: "Nothing like this instrument is preserved elsewhere. . . . From all that we know of science and technology in the Hellenistic Age we should have felt that such a device could not exist." At the time, Price's work did not receive the acclaim it merited. Others, however, continued his research.

#### Fresh Insight

Price deduced that the largest gearwheel In 2005, the team of researchers mentioned

to produce high-resolution, three-dimensional X-ray images. These studies offered fresh insight into how the mechanism worked. As the user turned a knob, at least 30 interlocking gearwheels activated three dials on the front and the back of the box. This allowed the user to predict astronomical cycles, including eclipses, in relation to the four-year cy-

cle of the Olympic and other Panhellenic games. These games were commonly used as a basis for chronology.

Why was such information so important? There are several reasons. Astronomy was important to ancient peoples because the sun and the moon were the basis for calendars that would tell farmers when to sow seed. Sailors used the stars to navigate. Greek social institutions were tied to astronomical phenomena. And there is yet another reason such information was valued.



How the back outer plate might have looked

"For the ancient Babylonians, predicting eclipses was very important, as they were thought to be bad omens," writes Martin Allen, of the Antikythera Mechanism Research Project. "Indeed the mechanism could be thought of as being a political tool, allowing the ruling authorities to have dominion over their subjects. It has even been proposed that one reason we know so little of these

mechanisms, is that they were bound by mili-

tary or political secrecy."

Whatever else it tells us, the mechanism is evidence that ancient Greek astronomy and mathematics, much of which was based on the long tradition of the Babylonians, were much more advanced than we might imagine. *Nature* magazine puts it this way: "The ancient Antikythera Mechanism doesn't just challenge our assumptions about technology transfer over the ages—it gives us fresh insights into history itself."

#### WHO MADE IT?

The Antikythera Mechanism could not have been the only device of its kind. "There is no evidence of any mistakes." writes Martin Allen, "All the mechanical features have a purpose. There are no extra holes, or bits of metalwork to suggest that the manufacturer modified his design as he built the mechanism. This leads to the conclusion that he must have built a number of predecessors." So who made it? And what became of his other productions?

The most recent research on the mechanism has revealed the names of the months on the dial that predicted eclipses. The names are of Corinthian origin. This leads investigators to deduce that the device was made and used in a specific cultural context. The scientific magazine Nature states: "The Corinthian colonies of northwestern Greece or Syracuse in Sicily are leading contenders-the latter suggesting a heritage going back to Archimedes."

Why have no similar devices survived? "Bronze is a valuable and highly recyclable commodity," writes Allen. "Consequently, bronze finds from antiquity are remarkably rare. In fact many of the significant historical bronze finds have been made underwater, where they were inaccessible to those who might have reworked them." "We only have this [example]," says one researcher, "because it was out of reach of the scrap-metal man."

## **Childhood Obesity**

**WHAT CAN BE DONE?** 

OBESITY among children has reached epidemic proportions in many countries. The World Health Organization says that worldwide an estimated 22 million children under the age of five are overweight.

A national survey in Spain revealed that 1 out of every 3 children is either overweight or obese. In just ten years (1985-1995), childhood obesity tripled in Australia. In the last three decades, obesity in children aged 6 to 11 has more than tripled in the United States.

Childhood obesity is also extending to developing countries. According to the International Obesity Task Force, in some parts of Africa, more children are affected by obesity than by malnutrition. In 2007, Mexico occupied second place in the world, behind the United States, for childhood obesity. It is said that in Mexico City alone, 70 percent of the children and adolescents are either overweight or obese. Pediatric surgeon Dr. Francisco González warns that this may be "the first generation to die before their parents from the complications of obesity."

What are the complications? Three are diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. These are health problems formerly considered characteristic mostly of adults. According to the U.S. Institute of Medicine, 30 percent of the boys and 40 percent of the girls born in the United States in the year 2000 have a lifetime risk of being diagnosed with obesity-related type 2 diabetes.

Surveys show an alarming trend among children. Climbing rates of obesity are leading to climbing rates of high blood pressure. "Unless this upward trend in high blood pressure is reversed, we could be facing an explosion of new cardiovascular disease cases in young adults and adults," warns Dr. Rebec-



ca Din-Dzietham of the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia.

#### **Contributing Factors**

What is behind this global epidemic of childhood obesity? While genetics can be a predisposing factor, the alarming increase in obesity in recent decades appears to indicate that genes are not the only cause. Stephen O'Rahilly, professor of clinical biochemistry and medicine at Cambridge University in England, declares: "Nothing genetic explains the rise in obesity. We can't change our genes over 30 years."

Commenting on the causes, the Mayo Clinic, in the United States, says: "Although there are some genetic and hormonal causes of childhood obesity, most excess weight is caused by kids eating too much and exercising too little." Two examples illustrate the changing trend in eating habits today.

First, as working parents have less time and energy to prepare meals, fast food has increasingly become the norm. Fast-food

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Under Pressure In School and Out
- How Can I Make Bible Reading Enjoyable?
- Marital Fidelity—What Does It Really Mean?



#### WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Buy and serve more fruits and vegetables than convenience foods.
- 2 Limit soft drinks, sweetened beverages, and high-fat sugary snack foods. Instead, offer water or low-fat milk and healthful snacks.
- 3 Use cooking methods that are lower in fat, such as baking, broiling, and steaming, instead of frying.
- 4 Serve smaller portions.
- 5 Avoid using food as a reward or as a bribe.
- 6 Do not allow children to skip breakfast. Skipping it may lead to overeating later.
- 7 Sit at the table to eat. Eating in front of a TV or a computer screen promotes consumption and lessens awareness of feeling full.
- 8 Encourage physical activity, such as bike riding, playing ball, and jumping rope.
- 9 Limit time spent on watching television, using the computer, and playing video games.
- 10 Plan active family outings, such as visiting the zoo, going swimming, or playing in the park.
- 11 Assign active chores to your children.
- 12 Set the example in healthful eating and exercise.

Sources: The National Institutes of Health and the Mayo Clinic

restaurants have sprung up all over the world. One study reported that nearly a third of all children in the United States aged 4 to 19 eat fast food every day. Such foods are typically high in sugar and fats and are offered in temptingly large sizes.

Second, soft drinks have replaced milk and water as the beverage of choice. For example, Mexicans spend more each year on soft drinks, particularly colas, than on the ten most basic foods put together. According to the book *Overcoming Childhood Obesity*, just one 20-ounce soft drink a day can result in a gain of 25 pounds in a year!

As to the lack of physical activity, a study carried out by the University of Glasgow in Scotland found that the average three-year-old engages in "moderate to vigorous activity" for only 20 minutes a day. Commenting on that study, Dr. James Hill, professor of pediatrics and medicine at the University of Colorado, said: "The increasingly sedentary nature of U.K. [United Kingdom] children is not unique and is being seen in most countries around the world."

#### What Is the Solution?

Nutritionists do not recommend putting children on a restrictive diet, as this may compromise their growth and health. Rather, the Mayo Clinic states: "One of the best strategies to combat excess weight in your children is to improve the diet and exercise levels of your entire family."—See the accompanying box.

Make healthful habits a family commitment. If you do, they will become a way of life for your children, carrying over into adulthood.

1. In Lystra of Asia Minor. ■ His father was Greek. His mother was Jewish. ■ Eunice. ■ "The holy writings," meaning the Hebrew Scriptures of the Bible, because she wanted him to be a worshipper of the true God, Jehovah. 2. Nineveh.—Jonah 1:1, 2. 3. God's judgment against the city. The people, including the king, repented.—Jonah 1:2; 3:2-9.

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### **Conflict Between Lions and Humans**

As the human population in Africa increases, wildlife habitat decreases, resulting in "frequent and often violent contact," says the Cape Town journal *Africa Geographic*. Lions, in particular, "appear to have identified humans as prey." In Tanzania, for example, lions have killed at least 70 people each year since 1990. In some cases, reports the journal, lion prides are even "specialising in humans, seizing people from the front porches of huts and tearing through thatched roofs and loose mud walls."

#### **Ancient Egyptian Granaries Unearthed**

University of Chicago archaeologists working in southern Egypt have unearthed seven ancient grain bins, the largest known in that land. Artifacts found nearby enabled archaeologists to date the silos to between 1630 and 1520 B.C.E. If the dating is accurate, the bins existed in the days of Moses. The circular, mud-brick bins, 18 to 21 feet in diameter and probably at least 25 feet tall, were part of a local administrative center. The university's report on the find says that such centers "functioned as places where the agricultural wealth of the Nile valley was mobilized for the state. Grain as currency provided the sinews of power for the phar[ao]hs." The re-

- A comprehensive study of the health of reef-forming coral species indicates that 32.8 percent of those classified are at "elevated risk of extinction" as a result of climate change or local human interference.—SCIENCE, U.S.A.
- Of the more than 2,000 children with breathing problems examined at a hospital pediatric unit in Athens, Greece, some "65 percent were found to have been exposed to [tobacco] smoke by one or both of their parents."—KATHIMERINI—ENGLISH EDITION. GREECE.
- "The soaring price of oil, the increasing cost of living, . . . the shadow of economic recession . . . , and the recurrent natural disasters that highlight our vulnerability: we obviously have no appropriate short- or long-term responses to any of these serious issues."—LLUÍS MARIA DE PUIG, PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE.
- In Poland, 17 percent of the boys and 18 percent of the girls have tried drugs by age 15.—ŻYCIE WARSZAWY, POLAND.

port added that "because grain was a form of currency, the silos functioned as a bank and a food source."

#### Paper as Strong as Iron

Researchers at the Swedish Royal Institute of Technology have developed a method of producing paper from wood cellulose that preserves the natural strength of its fibers. The normal mechanical processing of wood pulp in papermaking damages its tiny cellulose fibers and greatly reduces their strength.

But the Swedish team succeeded in breaking down the pulp with enzymes and then gently separating its cellulose fibers in water, using a mechanical beater.

When the undamaged fibers are drained, they bond into networks, producing sheets of paper with a yield strength greater than cast iron and almost as great as structural steel.

#### FROM OUR READERS



Ancient Manuscripts—How Are They Dated? (February 2008) This article upset me. It is my understanding that C.E. stands for "Common Era" and B.C.E. stands for "Before the Common Era." In all of my 70 years, I have seen the terms B.C. and A.D. used as a time reference, referring to before and after the birth of Jesus. It seems to me that using B.C.E. or C.E. somehow denies the birth of Jesus.

R. W., United States

"Awake!" responds: Although A.D. (Anno Domini, meaning "in the year of our Lord") and B.C. (before Christ) are used in lands where professed Christianity predominates, we have chosen to use the terms C.E. (Common Era) and B.C.E. (Before the Common

Era). Why? First, there is considerable evidence pointing to the year 2 B.C.E. as the date of Jesus' birth. Second, the literature printed by Jehovah's Witnesses is widely distributed in languages read by many non-Christians. Third, the title "Christ" means "Anointed One." Jesus became the Messiah, or Christ, when he was anointed with God's spirit at the time he was baptized in 29 C.E. (Matthew 3:13-17) Thus, Jesus was not born Christ; he became Christ the year of his baptism. Significantly, the descriptions C.E. and B.C.E. are growing in usage, and they appear in almost all modern dictionaries and in many scholarly works. Please be assured that Jehovah's Witnesses consider Jesus and his sacrifice indispensable to the outworking of God's purposes and our personal salvation.

Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope if I'm Not Well? (February 2008) I cannot tell you how much I appreciate receiving this article at just the right time! I fell sick and had to be hospitalized for three weeks. I had just come out of the hospital when I received the magazine. I could relate in many ways to the young ones mentioned in the article. Thank you for the examples provided and for the counsel given.

#### K. P., Canada

My heart was touched by the fact that Jehovah God gives comfort, even to those who are disabled like me. When I was very little, I was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Although I can't walk, I am auxiliary pioneering. I look forward to the time when, in the coming Paradise earth, all those living

with disabilities "will climb up just as a stag does."—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

#### J. J., Republic of Korea

I read this article again and again. I couldn't help but cry, feeling Jehovah's warm thoughts. It was as if he wrapped us up in a warm blanket so that we wouldn't be harmed in any way. Thank you very much.

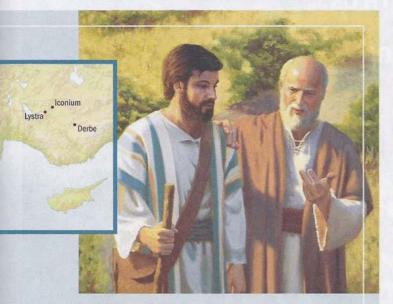
M. T., Japan

#### Death—Is It Really the End?

(December 2007) I had lost my mother in death a few months before, and the explanation in this series, especially the promises about the resurrection, really touched my heart. Thank you very much. It gave me real comfort and encouragement.

M. R., Madagascar

#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?



#### Where Did It Happen?

- 1. In which town did Paul meet Timothy?
  CLUE: Read Acts 16:1-3. Circle your answer on the map.
- What was Timothy's father's nationality? His mother's?
- What was Timothy's mother's name? CLUE: Read 2 Timothy 1:5.
- What did Timothy's mother teach him, and why? CLUE: Read 2 Timothy 3:15.

FOR DISCUSSION: How can you be like Timothy?

#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 5 It is good to do what with some of your money?
1 Corinthians 16:

PAGE 5 If you borrow money, what do you become?
Proverbs 22:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 11 How did King Josiah stop false worship in Judah? 2 Chronicles 34:

PAGE 19 Why should you not befriend everyone?
Psalm 26:



#### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### **What Do You Know About the Prophets?**

Read the book of Jonah. Then answer the following questions.

2.....

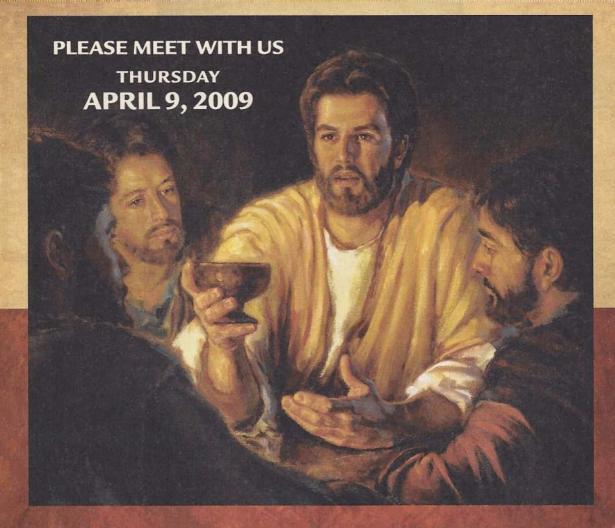
3...

God sent Jonah to what city?

What message did Jonah deliver to the people of that city? How did they respond?

FOR DISCUSSION: Why did Jonah become angry? Should he have felt angry? Why or why not?





## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

On the night before he died, Jesus Christ instituted the Memorial of his death, using wine and unleavened bread as symbols. Jesus commanded: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19.

Jehovah's Witnesses warmly invite you to assemble with them in obeying Jesus by observing this annual event. Please check with them locally for the exact time and place.

# Awake!



**Under Pressure In School and Out** 



- 3 Stressed-Out Students
- 4 'I Have Too Much to Do!'
- 9 How Can Parents Help?
- 10 Bucharest—A City With Two Faces
- 16 What It Takes to Drive an Elephant
- 19 The Man Who Mapped the World
- 23 Young People Ask How Can I Make Bible Reading Enjoyable?
- 27 Was It Designed? The Water-Repellent Lotus Leaf
- 30 Watching the World

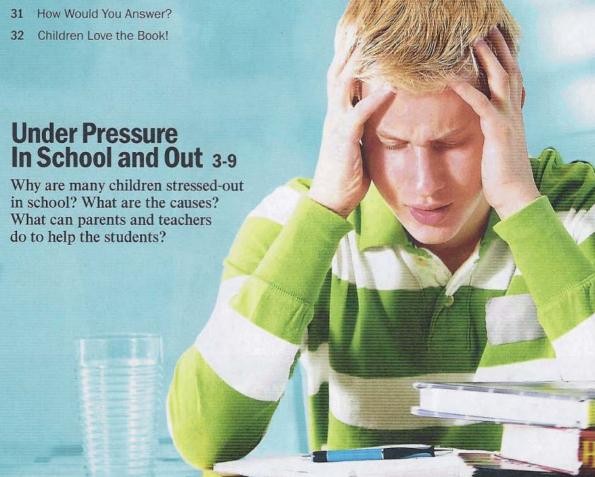
# The following the state of the

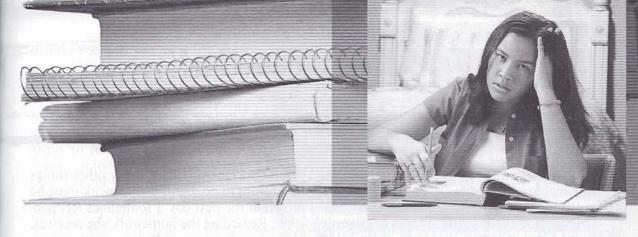
## Who Answers Your Call for Help?

What kind of training do paramedics receive? What is their role in an emergency? A Canadian paramedic answers.

## Marital Fidelity -What Does It Really Mean?

Are sexual fantasies harmless? How can you avoid infidelity?





## **Stressed-Out Students**

SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Jennifer maintained a grade average among the highest in her class. She took part in many extracurricular activities and had the respect of her teachers and counselors. But in the year before her graduation, she started having severe headaches and frequent bouts of nausea. She feels that the long hours of intense concentration she spent on her schoolwork along with lack of sleep made her physically ill.

Jennifer is not alone. The number of students facing high levels of stress in school seems to be increasing, with some seeking psychiatric help. As a result, a group of American educators has instituted a program to loosen up the high-pressure atmosphere in schools. The program is called Challenge Success.

If you are a student, perhaps like Jennifer you are dealing with stress. Or if you are a parent, you may see the unrelenting pressure your son or daughter faces to succeed in school. Is there an effective source of guidance that students and their parents can turn to for help?

## 'I Have Too Much to Do!'

THE THE PROPERTY OF THE

OLYMPIC weight lifters do not try to set records every day. They regularly work out with smaller weights and in this way gain strength for the big lifts. If they constantly pushed themselves to the limit, they would put dangerous stress on their muscles and joints and risk their career.

In like fashion, as a student, you probably work hard in school. And when you receive difficult assignments or prepare for exams, you are willing and able to make an even greater effort.\* But what if all your days were packed only with schoolwork and other assignments? You might find it hard to eat properly or get a good night's rest. The constant high level of stress could eventually make you sick. Perhaps that is how you feel now.#

#### **Homework That Does Not Stop**

"As I go on to higher grades, my homework increases and gets more difficult. Finishing it takes a long time," says Hiroko, △ a 15-year-old

student in Japan. "I have many other things that I want to do, but the homework must be turned in the next day. I sometimes feel panicky." Regarding the homework she receives, 14-year-old Svetlana in Russia writes: "Completing my homework has become more difficult. Every year I have more subjects to study and the teachers assign much more material. Also, each teacher considers his subject to be more important than the rest. It is hard to find a balance and get it all done."

Why is so much emphasis put on homework? Eighteen-year-old Gilberto in Brazil writes: "Teachers say that they want to prepare us for the highly competitive job market." Even if that is the case, you might feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of homework you receive. Perhaps you can reduce stress both by changing the way you view it and by taking practical steps to get organized.

Consider increased homework as training that you need so you can be successful as an adult. Although the time you spend doing homework may seem endless, your school years will end sooner than you think. When you start working to support yourself, you will be glad you finished those difficult assign-

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY, 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

<sup>\*</sup> For students who are underachievers or who make little effort, see "Young People Ask . . . Could I Be Doing Better in School?" in Awake! of March 22, 1998, pages 20-22.

<sup>&</sup>quot;For additional information on this subject, see "Young People Ask . . . What Can I Do About So Much Homework?" in Awake! of April 8, 1993, pages 13-15.

Some names have been changed.

ments. You will 'see good because of the hard work' you put into your schooling.—Ecclesiastes 2:24.

You can alleviate much stress by being self-disciplined and organized. (See the box "Practical Ways to Reduce Stress.") When you establish a pattern of doing your schoolwork punctually and carefully, your teachers may come to trust you and want to help you. Imagine that you have that kind of relationship with one of your teachers. If something unexpected were to come up and you told him or her in advance that you could not complete an assignment on time, don't you think that your teacher would be more inclined to give you a break? One of God's servants named Daniel "was trustworthy and no negligence or corrupt thing at all was found in him." Daniel's diligence in carrying out his work won him the praise and trust of the king. (Daniel 6:4) If you imitate Daniel in the way you handle your school assignments, you may receive extra consideration when you need it.

Will paying attention in class, doing homework, and completing projects on time relieve you of all school-related stress? No, but some of the remaining stress may just come from your own desire to do well. Instead of look-

#### PRACTICAL WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

□ Do you spend a lot of time sorting through papers and notebooks, trying to find what you want? Some people need help to get better organized. Don't be ashamed to ask others for suggestions.

☐ Do you procrastinate? As a test, make an effort to complete an assignment ahead of time. The relief and satisfaction you feel will surprise you and may motivate you to stop putting off your schoolwork.

☐ Do you often find yourself daydreaming during class? Try this for a month: Listen closely to the classroom discussions, and take good notes for later reference. You may be pleasantly surprised at how much easier your homework becomes. That good result will reduce your stress in school.

☐ Have you selected classes that increase the pace of your schooling but that require much more time and effort? Is it vital that you take those classes? Speak with your parents. Get the opinion of someone with a reasonable view of education. You may find that those optional courses add little to your progress toward graduation.

ing for an easy way out of schoolwork, you may end up really wanting to learn and benefit from your classes.

Stress of that kind is positive and desirable. You may, however, face stress that is harmful and needless.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese® (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, "® Danish, ® Dutch, \*® English, \*® Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, ® French, \*\*® Georgian, German, \*\*\*\*® Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, \*\*\*\*> Japanese, \*\* Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, \*\*® Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, \*\*> Polish, \*\*® Portuguese, \*\*\*\*> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, \*\*\*\*> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, \*\*\*> Swahili, Swedish, \*\*> Tagalog, Tamili, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehama IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>&</sup>quot; Audiocassettes also available.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

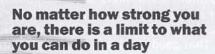
MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

#### Extracurricular Activities Keep Them Running

Imagine someone who always drives his car hard. He approaches stop signs at high speed and screeches to a stop. Then he steps on the accelerator and speeds off with his wheels spinning. What will that wild driver end up doing to his car? He will likely damage the engine and other parts. But before that, he may destroy it in a serious accident.

In a similar way, many students drive their bodies and minds relentlessly, before and after school. In her book *Doing School*, Denise



Clark Pope wrote the following about several students she had met: "Their school days started early, a full hour or two before most adults began their work days, and often ended late at night, after soccer practice, dance rehearsals, student council meetings, paid job responsibilities, and homework time."

When students keep such a fast pace day after day, they set themselves up for prob-

lems. Because of intense stress, they may suffer from stomach ailments and headaches. As constant fatigue weakens their immune system, they may fall sick. Then the fast pace comes to a crawl and they may have quite a struggle to regain their strength. Has something like that been happening to you?

It is fine to work hard toward worthwhile goals, but no matter how strong you are, there is a limit to what you can do in a day. The Bible offers this sound counsel: "Let your reasonableness become known to all men." (Philippians 4:5) Two definitions of the word "reasonable" are "not extreme or excessive" and "possessing sound judgment." A reasonable person makes decisions that are not harmful to himself or others. He manifests maturity, which is invaluable in today's unstable world. So to conserve your health, be reasonable—eliminate some of the less-essential activities to which you have committed yourself.

#### **Pursuing Wealth**

To some young people, however, reasonableness seems a hindrance rather than a help in reaching their goals. Such students believe that the key to success is a high-paying job and the riches that such a job

#### AN IMAGINARY WALL OF PROTECTION

"The valuable things of the rich [man] are his strong town, and they are like a protective wall in his imagination." (Proverbs 18:11) In ancient times, people depended on high walls for protection against attack. But think of living in a city surrounded by a wall that only existed in your mind. As hard as you tried to convince yourself otherwise, that wall would provide no defense against your enemies.

Like people living in such an exposed place, young ones who pursue riches are headed for disappointment. Are you a parent? You would do well to help your child avoid the trap of materialism and not take up life in a city with an imaginary wall.

The following Bible-based truths can help you reason with your son or daughter:

■ Great wealth often brings far more problems than it solves. "The plenty belonging to the rich one is not permitting him to sleep."—Ecclesiastes 5:12; 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

- With good planning, a person does not need wealth to be happy. "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage."—Proverbs 21:5; Luke 14:28.
- A moderate income that covers one's needs leads to contentment. "Give me neither poverty nor riches."

  —Proverbs 30:8.\*

<sup>\*</sup> More information regarding the snare of materialism can be found in *Awake!* of April 8, 2003, pages 20-21.



produces. Pope encountered that kind of thinking among some of the young people she met. She observed: "These students wished they could get more hours of sleep and improve their health, but their busy schedules, including school, family, and work obligations, did not allow this change. Similarly, they wished they could spend more time with friends, pursue other activities, or take a few days off, but most believed they could not do these things and still maintain their high

#### Gaining knowledge of your Creator is the best education you can acquire

grades. They recognized that they needed to make a choice, and for them, future success was more important than present happiness."

Such hard-driving students do well to consider what a wise man once said: "Will a person gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life? Of course not! There is nothing he can give to regain his life." (Matthew 16:26, *Today's English Version*) With those words Jesus Christ warned that the goals we may strive to reach in this world are not worth the physical, emotional, and spiritual price required to attain them.

In her book *The Price of Privilege*, psychologist Madeline Levine wrote of "the fact that money, education, power, prestige, and material goods offer no protection against unhappiness or emotional illness." Pope, cited earlier, made this observation: "I see so many kids and parents striving for perfection—according to a flawed definition of success." And she added: "We should be striving to be healthy—mentally and physically and spiritually."

Some things are far more important than money. These include emotional and physical well-being, a good conscience, and friendship with our Creator. These are priceless gifts from God. If you lose them in the pursuit of fame or riches, you may never regain them. With that in mind, notice what Jesus taught: "How happy are those who know their need for God, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs!" —Matthew 5:3, *The New Testament in Modern English.* 

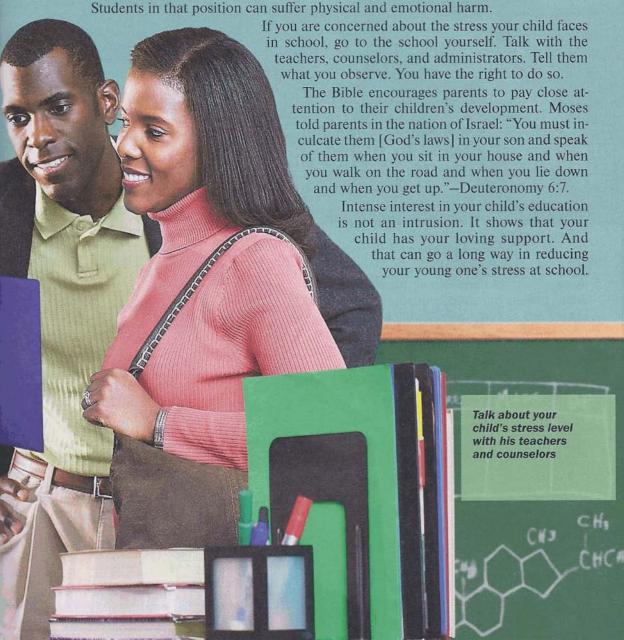
Many young people have come to accept that truth. While they do their best in school, they know that academic excellence and material riches do not produce lasting happiness. They recognize that the pursuit of such goals brings them unnecessary stress. Those students have learned that satisfying "their need

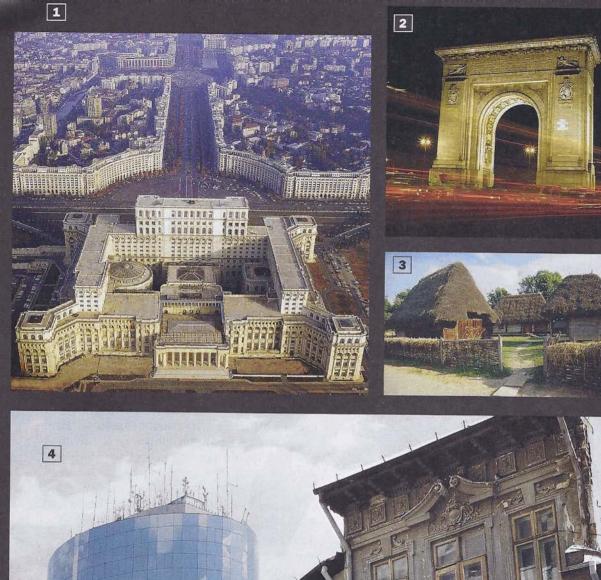




## **How Can Parents Help?**

ONE educational organization in the United States challenges high school students: "Show your willingness to push yourself to the limit." Driven to reach their goals, some young people go beyond the limit of their stamina. Madeline Levine, mentioned in the preceding article, wrote: "Between accelerated academic courses, multiple extracurricular activities, premature preparation for high school or college, special coaches and tutors engaged to wring the last bit of performance out of them, many kids find themselves scheduled to within an inch of their lives." Students in that position can suffer physical and emotional harm.







## **Bucharest** A City With Two Faces

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ROMANIA

AT FIRST SIGHT, the skyline of Bucharest seems dominated by a single structure -the Palace of Parliament (1), known during the Communist era as the House of the People. This austere building, among the largest in the world, is one of the city's main tourist attractions.

In some ways the palace represents the modern face of Bucharest. But local feelings about the massive building are ambivalent. Residents hope that visitors will also appreciate their city's other face-the attractive architecture of its past.

#### The Capital of Yesteryear

In 1862, Bucharest was proclaimed capital of the state of Romania. During the second half of the 19th century, the city developed rapidly. One after another, impressive yet graceful public edifices designed by French architects appeared along the leafy avenues. Because of Bucharest's many parks, gardens, and squares, it came to be called a garden city. Bucharest was also among the first cities in the world to be illuminated with oil-burning street lamps. In 1935 the Arch of Triumph (2), inspired by the Arc de Triomphe on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, was erected on beautiful Kiseleff Avenue. The city's picturesque appearance might have made a Frenchman feel at home. In fact, Bucharest was even nicknamed Little Paris of the East.

After World War II. Bucharest, under Communist rule, experienced dramatic change. About a third of the downtown area, which encompassed many historic architectural monuments, was razed to make room for apartment blocks. During 1960 and 1961 alone, some 23,000 apartments were built. In 1980, planning began for the House of the People. It was eventually equipped with hundreds of chandeliers and a bomb shelter

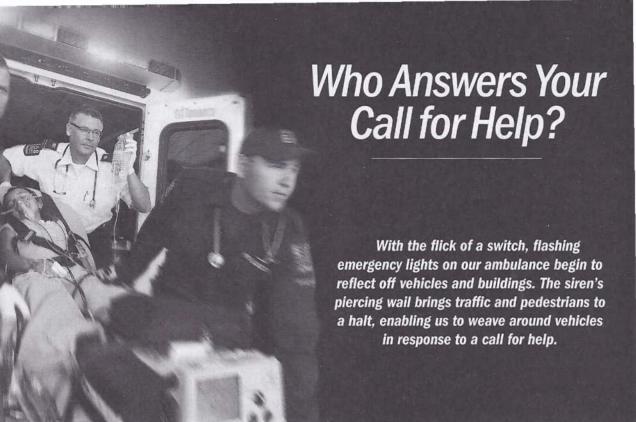
300 feet below ground. With its more than 3,875,000 square feet of floor space, 12 stories, and 1,100 rooms, it is three times the size of France's Palace of Versailles. Vast areas in the old part of town were cleared to construct the palace and the grand boulevard—wider than the Champs-Elysées—that sweeps up to the facade of the building. To those who knew Bucharest as it was before. the city became virtually unrecognizable.

For many local residents, the palace's imposing presence is a grim reminder of its builder-the late dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. Driven by the desire to erect a monument to himself, he marshaled almost 700 architects and tens of thousands of workers, who toiled on the project in three shifts around the clock. When his regime collapsed in 1989, the building was still unfinished, although by then it had already cost more than a billion dollars.

#### **Another Face**

In the portion of the old town that remains, a very different face of the city can be seen. There you can still admire the elegant architecture of old Bucharest. And at the Village Museum (3)—one of its many museums—you can get a sense of the culturally varied atmosphere of rural Romania. In a tranquil park overlooking a lake, more than 50 peasant homes and other structures from all over Romania were reassembled piece by piece, creating a fascinating collection. Each house is a museum in itself, displaying the tools, trades, and home environment of a Romania very different from today's Bucharest.

There is little demarcation between historic and modern quarters of this city. It is not unusual to see neighboring structures from widely different epochs (4). Thus, the two faces of Bucharest stand side by side in a city that embraces both past and present.



POR more than 20 years, I have been a paramedic, providing prehospital emergency medical care to the sick and injured.\* Each workday is like navigating uncharted waters. I have encountered situations varying from the mundane to the extraordinary, and I have seen results ranging from happy endings to unspeakable tragedies.

#### Impact on the Community

Paramedics are an essential part of the health-care system in Canada. The competent medical care they administer before a person arrives at a hospital can save a life or at least limit the severity of some accidents and illnesses.#

\* For information on possible conflicts of conscience for a Christian working as a paramedic, see *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1999, page 29, and April 1, 1975, pages 215-216.

"In some countries paramedics do not staff ambulances. There, it is the ambulance driver's responsibility to get the patient to the hospital as soon as possible.

In many areas paramedics are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They may be employed by a municipal, commercial, or hospital-based emergency medical service agency. Some work with either an ambulance service or a fire department.

These specially trained men and women spring into action seconds after receiving an emergency call for help. It could come at any moment, without prior warning. Consider what a paramedic is certified to do.

#### **Trained to Save Lives**

Although paramedic training and the terms used to describe it differ among jurisdictions in Canada, it is generally classified into four levels—emergency medical responder, primary care paramedic, advanced care provider, and critical care provider. Certification to practice as a paramedic is required by

various levels of government as well as medical authorities.

In my case here in Canada, basic training included many hours in a classroom, in a hospital, and in an ambulance. We learned how to measure vital signs, use oxygen-delivery and ventilation equipment, and perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), as well as how to apply bandages, splints, and spinal-immobilization devices.

Then 300 hours of valuable clinical training took place in the emergency, intensive care, and labor-and-delivery units of several hospitals. The first childbirth in which I assisted was a most memorable experience—it was like being part of a miracle! This event and other incidents helped prepare me for the next step of my training, which involved more than 300 hours of real-life experience in an ambulance with the guidance and support of two experienced paramedics. After passing written and practical examinations, I was certified as an emergency medical care assistant, now referred to as a primary care paramedic.

For several years I worked both in rural and urban areas. I quickly learned the value of my new lifesaving skills when a construction worker with chest pain walked into the hospital emergency department. Shortly after arriving, the man went into cardiac arrest. I worked with doctors and nurses who performed CPR and defibrillation and administered drugs. Within minutes, the patient's heartbeat was restored and he began to breathe on his own. He was then transferred to the critical care unit (CCU). The next day, I was sent to the CCU, where a physician introduced me to a man sitting in bed talking with his wife. I did not recognize him until he said: "Remember me? You saved my life yesterday!" That was an incredible feeling.

The last part of my training included working with a physician who accompanied me for a 12-hour shift to monitor my patient care. Finally, I passed both the written and practi-

cal examinations and was certified as an advanced care paramedic.

Paramedics practice under the authority of a medical director, who usually works with a medical advisory committee to develop written treatment protocols, or plans. The emergency medical care that paramedics administer is based on these, or they work

#### I did not recognize him until he said: "Remember me? You saved my life yesterday!" That was an incredible feeling

through direct radio or telephone communication with a select group of physicians. For this reason, paramedics have been described as the eyes, ears, and hands of a physician. Treatment given in a private home, in public buildings, or at a vehicle-accident scene could range from administering oxygen, medications, and defibrillation to intubation and surgical procedures.—See the box "Paramedic Treatment Skills," on page 15.

#### **Risks and Challenges**

Risks and challenges are an inherent part of a paramedic's daily routine. Work is done in all types of weather and, at times, in unsafe locations or circumstances. Even driving to an emergency call can be dangerous.

Exposure to blood, body fluids, and infectious diseases is a constant risk. To protect ourselves, we wear such personal protective

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Prescription Drug Abuse—How Can You Protect Your Family?
- Does God Want You to Be Rich?
- I Fled the Killing Fields and Found Life

equipment as gloves, masks, goggles or face shields, and special suits or gowns as needed.

Caring for patients includes dealing with their family members, their friends, or even strangers, whose emotional reactions can be extreme or unpredictable. It is tragic when a husband and wife who have spent decades of life together are separated by death. It is not easy to inform the surviving mate. On one occasion I had to inform a woman that her husband had died. She reacted by punching

#### During my career, I have been bitten, spat on, and assaulted in other ways by patients who were unable to control themselves

me and running out of her house and into the street screaming and crying. I was able to catch up with her, and she turned around, grabbed me, hugged me, and then began to cry inconsolably on my shoulder.

Interacting with individuals who are emotionally disturbed or under the influence of alcohol or drugs requires empathy, tact, and compassion. People in such a state can be unpredictable. During my career, I have been bitten, spat on, and assaulted in other ways by patients who were unable to control themselves.

The job is also physically strenuous, routinely requiring heavy lifting, sometimes in a very awkward position. Much time is spent kneeling and bending to care for patients.

detention.

1. The walls of Jericho fell down flat before the Israelites charged. 2. The cord that Rahab lowered was scarlet, not blue. 3. Achan stole a garment, a gold bar, and silver shekels, not an idol. 4. The attack did not take place at night. 5. Micaiah. 6. He announced Jehovah's place at night. 5. Micaiah. 6. He announced Jehovah's place at night. 5. Micaiah thrown into the house of battle. Ahab had Micaiah thrown into the house of

#### ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

Work-related injuries are a reality for us. Injuries to our back, shoulders, and knees are most common. Some injuries are serious enough to end a career. Shift work is also expected and can be physically exhausting.

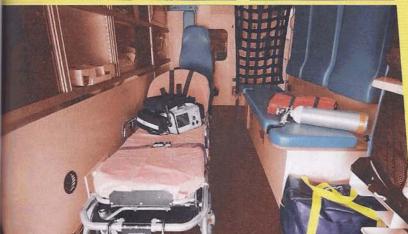
Caring for people who suffer a life-threatening illness or injury is mentally and emotionally stressful. A paramedic must stay calm, use sound judgment, and make rational decisions in times of crises. Paramedics are eyewitnesses of human suffering and tragedy. They see and care for people who suffer horrific physical injuries. I vividly remember one young man who was crushed in an industrial accident. Virtually unrecognizable below his lower chest, he begged my partner and me not to let him die. Sadly, despite our best efforts and those of a team of physicians and nurses, he died less than an hour later.

Some scenes are truly heartbreaking. We received a call to an early-morning house fire. A husband had just arrived home from work as his wife and three-year-old daughter escaped from their burning home. Three more children, aged four months to five years, and their grandfather were trapped inside until firefighters were able to take them out of the house. I was on one of several teams of paramedics that worked in vain to save their lives.

Perhaps at this point you are wondering why anyone would want to be a paramedic. At times. I have asked myself that same question. I am reminded of Jesus' parable about the neighborly Samaritan who willingly gave of himself to help an injured man. (Luke 10: 30-37) Being a paramedic involves giving of oneself physically and emotionally to answer someone's call for help. For me personally, being a paramedic has been a rewarding profession, but I look forward to the time when I will be unemployed. Why unemployed? Because, as God promises, in the near future no one will say: "I am sick." Furthermore, 'death and pain will be no more.' (Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:4)—As told by a paramedic in Canada.







#### PARAMEDIC TREATMENT SKILLS

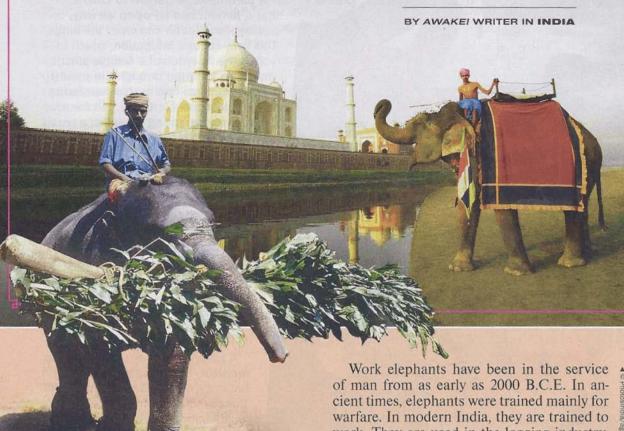
A paramedic is trained to ensure that a patient has an open airway, or passage, so that air can enter the lungs. This may require intubation, which involves the insertion of a flexible plastic endotracheal tube through the mouth and vocal cords into the trachea, using a laryngoscope. Or it may call for a cricothyrotomy, using a needle, a small catheter, a guide wire, and a scalpel to insert a larger catheter through a patient's neck directly into the trachea. The insertion of a needle and catheter through the chest wall is used to treat the life-threatening complication of a collapsed lung.

Another skill is **intravenous therapy.** A needle is used to insert a catheter into a vein. Thus, solutions such as normal saline can be infused. Alternatively, an intraosseous device can be used to infuse fluid directly into bone marrow.

A paramedic may use a **cardiac monitor**/**defibrillator** to monitor a patient's electrocardiogram. Additionally, the unit may be used for defibrillation (delivering an electric shock to restore normal heart rhythm and function in cardiac arrest) or for cardioversion (delivering a synchronized electric shock to slow a dangerously fast heartbeat). The monitor/defibrillator can also be used as a temporary external pacemaker to speed up a heart that is beating too slowly.

All photos: Taken by courtesy of City of Toronto EMS

## What It Takes to Drive an Elephant



As A mahout, or elephant driver, cooked his meal by the side of the Narmada River, he left his child between the trunk and forefeet of his resting elephant. The child repeatedly tried to move away, but "the recumbent elephant gently curled its trunk around the child and drew him back to where his father had left him," recounts the book *Project Elephant*. "The father continued his cooking and appeared to have absolute confidence that the child was in safe custody."

of man from as early as 2000 B.C.E. In ancient times, elephants were trained mainly for warfare. In modern India, they are trained to work. They are used in the logging industry, at religious festivals and weddings, in advertising, in circuses, and even for begging. How are these elephants domesticated? And how are they trained?

#### A Course in Elephant Training

A number of centers in India are equipped to care for elephant calves that have been captured, abandoned, or injured in the wild. One such training center is in Koni, in the state of Kerala. Here the calves are trained to become work elephants. A mahout must first win the trust of a calf. Feeding is an important way to build this trust. A calf recognizes its mahout's voice, and when called for feeding, it will hurry over to receive its milk and millet paste.

Training for work does not usually take place until young elephants reach their early teens. Then they are put to work when they reach the age of 25. In Kerala, government norms require that working elephants be retired at the age of 65.

To drive an elephant safely, the mahout must have good training. According to the Elephant Welfare Association of Trichur, Kerala, a new mahout needs intensive training for at least three months. Such training is not limited to learning to give commands. It also covers elephant science as a whole.

An adult elephant takes longer to train. From outside the enclosure where the elephant is kept, the trainer first teaches his animal to understand verbal commands. In Kerala, a mahout uses some 20 commands and signals to get his elephant to do the needed work. The mahout gives clear and loud commands and, at the same time, prods his elephant with a stick and shows it what to do. When a command is obeyed, the elephant is rewarded with a small treat. When the trainer is sure that his elephant is friendly, he enters the enclosure and caresses it. This interaction reinforces mutual trust. In time, the elephant can be taken outside-with caution, of course, as it still retains some of its wild characteristics. Until it becomes clear that the elephant is fully tamed, it is chained between two trainer elephants when taken out for bathing and for other excursions.

After an elephant grasps verbal commands, the mahout sits on its back and teaches it how to respond to physical commands by prodding it with his toes or heels. To make the elephant move forward, the mahout presses both of his big toes behind the elephant's ears. To make it back up, he presses both of his heels into the animal's shoulders. To avoid any confusion, verbal commands are given by just one mahout. An elephant will understand all the commands within three or four years. Thereafter, it never forgets them. Even though an elephant has a brain that is small

in proportion to its body, it is a very intelligent animal.

#### **Elephant Maintenance**

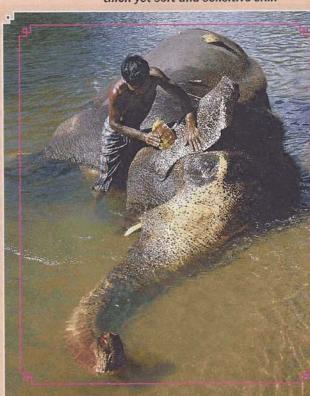
An elephant needs to be kept healthy and in good spirits. A daily bath is important. At bath time, the mahout uses stones and neatly cut coconut husks to scrub his charge's thick yet soft and sensitive skin.

Then comes breakfast. The mahout prepares a thick paste of wheat, millet, and horse gram, a type of fodder. The main course includes bamboo, palm leaves, and grass. The elephant is delighted if raw carrots and sugar cane are added as well. Elephants spend most of their time eating. They need about 300 pounds of food and some 40 gallons of water every day! To stay good friends with his pachyderm, the mahout has to satisfy these needs.

#### The Results of Abuse

The gentle Indian elephant cannot be driven or made to work beyond a certain point.

The mahout scrubs his elephant's thick yet soft and sensitive skin

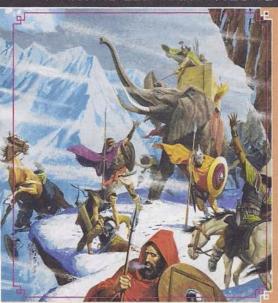


Elephants may turn on mahouts who inflict punishment, verbal or otherwise. India's Sunday Herald newspaper spoke of one tusker-that is, a male elephant with tusks-that "went be[r]serk . . . following ill-treatment by the mahouts. The elephant which was reacting to the beating meted out to it by the mahout went on a rampage . . . and had to be tranquilized." In April 2007, India Today International reported: "In the past two months alone, more than 10 tuskers have run amok at festivals; since January last year, 48 mahouts have been killed by the raging beasts." Such displays often occur during the period known as musth. This is an annual physiological phenomenon connected with the mating season, during which the testosterone level of healthy adult male elephants rises. The result is aggressive and erratic behavior toward other bull elephants and humans. Musth can last from 15 days to three months.

Another situation in which an elephant can get agitated is when it is sold and a new mahout takes over. Its attachment to the old mahout is evident. To effect a smooth transition, the previous mahout usually travels with it to its new home. There, both handlers work together until the new one gets used to the moods of the elephant. When a mahout dies and a new one takes over, problems can be even greater. However, the elephant eventually comes to recognize and accept the new situation.

Even though some people might fear this mighty land animal, a well-trained elephant will obey a kind master. When kindness reigns, the elephant need not even be chained when his mahout is temporarily absent. All the mahout needs to do is place one end of his stick on the elephant's foot and the other end on the ground and ask the animal not to move. The elephant obediently stands still with the stick in place. As illustrated in the introduction, the cooperation between an elephant and its mahout can be both surprising and touching. Yes, a good driver can trust his elephant.

#### MAN AND ELEPHANT—A LONG HISTORY



Man's domestication of elephants has a long history. Perhaps the most famous example in antiquity is that of Hannibal, a Carthaginian general. In the third century B.C.E., the North African city of Carthage was fighting Rome in a century-long series of battles known as the Punic Wars, Hannibal assembled an army in the city of Cartagena, Spain, with the plan of marching on Rome. He first crossed the Pyrenees to enter what is now France. Then, in what Archaeology magazine terms "one of the boldest military maneuvers in history," his army of 25,000 men-accompanied by 37 African elephants and scores of pack animals loaded with supplies-crossed the Alps into Italy. They had to contend with cold, snowstorms, rockslides, and hostile mountain tribes. That journey was extremely strenuous for the elephants. Not one of them survived Hannibal's first year in Italy.

# THE MAN WHO MAPPED THE WORLD

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BELGIUM

In the early part of 1544, Gerardus Mercator found himself in a cold, dark prison cell. He felt he was facing certain death. Why did this happen to the greatest cartographer of the 16th century? To find out, let us first take a closer look at his life and times.

ERCATOR was born in 1512 in Rupelmonde, a small port near Antwerp, Belgium. He received his education at the university of Louvain. After graduating, he studied the teachings of Aristotle, and before long, he was troubled by his inability to reconcile the views of Aristotle with the teachings of the Bible. Mercator wrote: "When I saw that Moses' version of the Genesis of the world did not fit sufficiently in many ways with Aristotle and the rest of the philosophers, I began to have doubts about the truth of all philosophers and started to investigate the secrets of nature."

Since he did not want to become a philosopher, Mercator gave up further university studies. However, his quest to find evidence to uphold the Biblical creation account occupied his mind for the rest of his life.

#### Turning to Geography

In 1534, Mercator began to study mathematics, astronomy, and geography under the mathematician Gemma Frisius. Furthermore, Mercator may have learned the art of engraving from Gaspar Van der Heyden, an engraver and globemaker. At the beginning

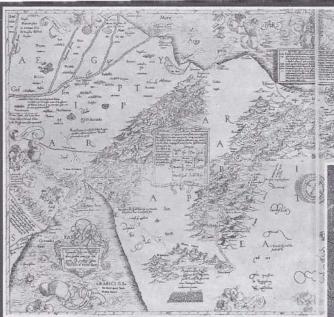


of the l6th century, cartographers used heavy Gothic, or black-letter, type, which limited the space available for written information on maps. However, Mercator adopted a new style of cursive writing from Italy called italic, which proved to be beneficial in globemaking.

In 1536, Mercator worked as an engraver with Frisius and Van der Heyden in the production of a terrestrial globe. Mercator's beautiful cursive handwriting contributed to the success of the project. Nicholas Crane, a modern biographer of Mercator, writes that while another cartographer "had managed to fit fifty American locations onto a wall-map as wide as a man was tall, Mercator reduced sixty onto a sphere whose diameter was two handspans"!

#### A Cartographer Is Born

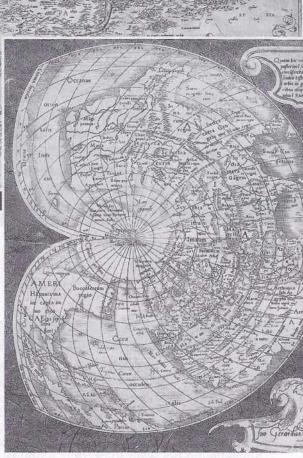
By 1537, Mercator made his first "solo production"—a map of the Holy Land, which he made to contribute to a "better



understanding of both testaments." In the l6th century, maps of the Holy Land were hopelessly inaccurate, some with fewer than 30 place-names—and many of them in the wrong location. Mercator's map, however, identified more than 400 places! Further, it showed the route followed by the Israelites on their journey through the desert after the Exodus. Because of its accuracy, the map was much admired by many of Mercator's contemporaries.

Encouraged by his success, Mercator published a world map in 1538. Before that time, mapmakers knew little about North America, calling it the Unknown Distant Land. Although the geographical name "America" already existed, Mercator was the first to apply that name to both North and South America.

Mercator lived at a time when the world's oceans were being explored and many new lands were being discovered. Sailors passed on contradictory information, making the task of mapmaking almost impossible, as cartographers had to fill in the gaps. Nevertheless, in 1541, Mercator achieved his goal of

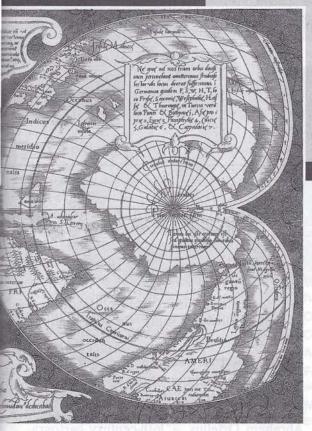


making "a more complete globe than [had] been done so far."

#### **Accused of Heresy**

In Louvain, where Mercator lived, there were many Lutherans. By 1536, Mercator sympathized with Lutheranism, and it appears that his wife later became a Lutheran. In February 1544, Mercator was arrested together with 42 other citizens of Louvain on the accusation of writing "suspicious letters." However, it may also have been because

- Mercator's map of the Holy Land, 1537, identified more than 400 places
- ¥ Mercator's world map, 1538 Note "AMERI CAE" on both American continents



the publication of his map on the Holy Land had aroused the suspicion of Tapper and Latomus, two theologians from the university in Louvain. Both men had presided at the trial of Bible translator William Tyndale, who had been executed in Belgium in 1536. Perhaps Tapper and Latomus were concerned that Mercator's map of the Holy Land, like Tyndale's translation of the Bible, encouraged Bible reading. In any case, Mercator was imprisoned in the castle of Rupelmonde, his hometown.

#### MERCATOR-A DILIGENT BIBLE STUDENT

Mercator believed that the earth would become a place of righteousness, peace, and prosperity. He wrote an unpublished commentary on Romans chapters 1-11, in which he refuted the Calvinistic idea of predestination. Interestingly, he also disagreed with Martin Luther and stated that in addition to faith, works are necessary for salvation. Mercator wrote

> in a letter that sin "comes not from the planets [astrology] nor from any inclination of nature created by God, but only from the free will of man." In his correspondence he rejected the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantiation, stating that Jesus' words "this is my body" should not be interpreted literally but, rather, spiritually.

Antoinette Van Roesmaels, one of the other people on trial, testified that Mercator had never attended private Protestant Bible readings. However, because she herself had attended such readings. Antoinette was buried alive, to die slowly of suffocation. Mercator was released after seven months of imprisonment, but all his belongings were confiscated. In 1552, Mercator moved to Duisburg, Germany, where he found a more tolerant religious climate.

#### The First Atlas

Mercator continued to defend the Biblical account of creation. He devoted most of his life to making a synthesis, or overview, of the entire creation "of heaven and earth, from the beginning of times to the present," as he put it. This work contained both chronological and geographical information.

In 1569, Mercator published a list of the most important historical events from the creation onward-the first part of his synthesis, entitled Chronologia. His aim was to help his readers understand their place in time and history. However, because Mercator had included in his book Luther's protest against

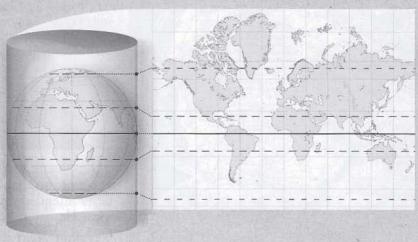
#### THE MERCATOR PROJECTION

Have you ever tried to flatten the skin of an orange?

Of course, it is impossible to do so without distorting it. That example illustrates the problem faced by mapmakers—how to project a globe (the earth) on a flat map. Mercator solved the problem by introducing a system that is now known as the Mercator projection. In this method the lines that form the degrees of latitude from the equator to the poles are spaced proportionally. Although this approach distorts distances and sizes

(especially to the north and south), it was a major breakthrough in cartography. Mercator's wall map of the world of 1569 was a masterpiece that greatly contributed to his fame as a cartographer. Actually, his projection is still used in ocean maps and by the modern Global Positioning System.

The Mercator projection can be compared to a cut-open cylinder on which the world is flattened out



indulgences in 1517, *Chronologia* was put on the Catholic Church's index of prohibited books.

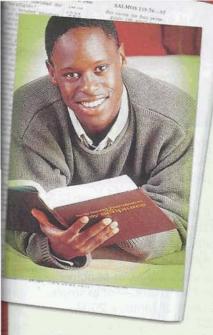
In the years that followed, Mercator devoted much time to drawing and engraving the plates for the maps of his new geography. In 1590, Mercator suffered a stroke that left him unable to speak and paralyzed his left side, making it extremely difficult for him to continue his work. He was, however, determined not to leave his life's work unfinished, and he continued with it until he died in 1594 at the age of 82. Mercator's son Rumold completed five unfinished maps. The complete collection of Mercator's maps was published in 1595. It was the very first collection of maps to bear the name atlas.

Mercator's Atlas contained a study of the first chapter of Genesis, in which the authenticity of God's Word was defended in the face of opposition from philosophers. Mercator called this study "the goal of all my labour."

#### "The Greatest Geographer of Our Day"

An enlarged edition of the *Atlas*, published by Jodocus Hondius in 1606, was printed in many languages and became a best seller. Abraham Ortelius, a 16th-century cartographer, praised Mercator as "the greatest geographer of our day." More recently, writer Nicholas Crane described Mercator as "the man who mapped the planet."

Mercator's legacy is still part of our daily lives. For example, whenever we consult an atlas or switch on a Global Positioning System, we are benefiting from the labors of Mercator, a remarkable man who all his life sought to know his time and place in God's creation.



## How can I make Bible reading enjoyable?

How often do you read the Bible?	Daily Weekly	
	□ Other	
Complete the following sentence.	□ Bored	
When I don't enjoy Bible reading,	☐ Confused	
it's usually because I am	☐ Distracted	
(Check all that apply)	□ Other	

ARE you less than thrilled about reading the Bible? If so, you might agree with 18-year-old Will, who says, "The Bible can seem boring." However, he adds, "That's only if you don't know how to read it."

Why learn *how* to read the Bible? Well, would you like to know more about how to

- make good decisions?
- have real friends?
- cope with stress?

The Bible contains gems of wisdom on those subjects and more. Granted, finding these gems may take effort. But expending that effort is a lot like going on a treasure hunt: The more challenging the search, the more exciting the discovery!—Proverbs 2:1-6.

How can you discover treasures in the Bible? The cutout to the right will give you an idea of how to read the Bible and—on the reverse side—in what order to read it. Also, try the suggestions on the following pages that appeal to *you*.

#### HOW TO READ THE BIBLE



#### Before you read . . .

- Make sure your surroundings are quiet so that you can concentrate.
- Pray for understanding.

#### While you read . . .

- Use maps and depictions of Bible accounts to help you visualize Bible scenes.
- Consider the setting, and analyze details.
- Consult footnotes and cross-references.
- Ask yourself such questions as:

**FACTS:** When did this occur? Who spoke these words? To whom were the words addressed?

**MEANING:** How would I explain this to someone else?

**VALUE:** Why did Jehovah God include this account in his Word? What does it reveal about his personality or way of doing things? What lessons can I apply to my life?

#### After you read . . .

- Do further research. Use tools produced by Jehovah's Witnesses, such as Insight on the Scriptures and "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," if available in your language.
- Pray again. Tell Jehovah what you learned and how you plan to use it. Thank him for his Word, the Bible.

#### MAKE THE SCRIPTURES LIVE!



- Get involved in what you read. For example:
- ☐ Convert lists of names into family trees.
- Create diagrams. For instance, as you read about a faithful character, connect that person's qualities and
- acts with the blessings he or she received.—Proverbs 28:20.
- Draw pictures to illustrate the account.
- Draw a storyboard, a series of simple pictures to illustrate a sequence of events. Describe what's happening in each scene.
- Build a scale model of structures, such as Noah's ark.—For example, see Awake! of January 2007, page 22.
- Read aloud with friends or family members. Suggestion: Assign one person to read the narration. Others can take on character parts.
- □ Select an account, and turn it into a news story. Report the event from several perspectives by including "interviews" with the main characters and eyewitnesses.
- ☐ Take an account in which a character made an unwise decision and imagine a different ending! For example, consider Peter's denial of Jesus. (Mark 14:66-72) How could Peter have better responded to the pressure?
- □ Watch or listen to recordings of Bible dramas.
- □ Write your own drama. Include lessons that can be learned from the account.—Romans 15:4.
  IDEA: Perform this drama with a small group of your friends.

#### IN WHAT ORDER WILL YOU READ THE BIBLE?



#### Options ...

- ☐ Read from cover to cover.
- Read chronologically, either in the order in which the books were written or the order in which events occurred.
- □ Each day, read from a different section of the Scriptures.

Monday: Action-packed history (Genesis to Esther)

Tuesday: Jesus' life and teaching (Matthew to John)

Wednesday: Early Christianity (Acts)

Thursday: Prophecy and moral guidance

(Isaiah to Malachi, Revelation)

Friday: Moving poetry and song (Job, Psalms, Song of Solomon)

Saturday: Wisdom for living (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)

Sunday: Letters to the congregations

(Romans to Jude)

Whatever order you choose, be sure to keep track of what you read! Put a read! Put a read! Put a read! Put a read! of the chapter after you finish it, or in some other way make a record of the chapters that you've read.

#### TO GET MOTIVATED

- Set a goal! Write below a date by which you would like to start your Bible-reading program.
- Choose a portion of the Bible that interests you. (See the box "In What Order Will You Read the Bible?") Then write below which part of the Bible you will read first
- Begin with a small amount of time. Even 15 minutes of Bible reading is better than no time at all. Write below how much time you can set aside for this activity.

Suggestion: Keep a study Bible. Write notes in it. Mark verses that are especially meaningful to you.

#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

"I try to read a little of the Bible each night before I go to bed. This gives me something good to think about as I fall asleep."-Megan.

"I focus on one verse for 15 minutes. I'll read every footnote, look up every crossreference, and do additional research. Sometimes I don't finish a verse in one sitting, but I get so much out of my reading with this method!"-Corev.

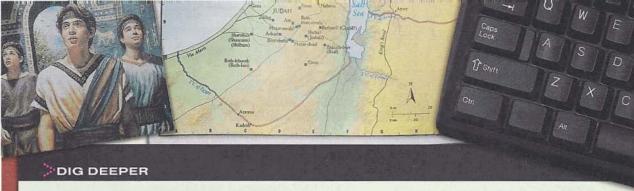
"Once, I read the Bible in 10 months. With that pace I saw connections between different parts of the Bible that I'd never noticed before."-John.





#### YOU GET TO CHOOSE!

- ☐ Pick an event. The Bible is packed with reallife drama. Pick an account that interests you, and read it from beginning to end.
  - Suggestion: For ideas on how to get even more out of the account, see page 292 of the book Questions Young People Ask-Answers That Work, Volume 2, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.
- ☐ Pick a Gospel. Read Matthew (the first Gospel written), Mark (noted for being fastmoving and action-packed), Luke (which gives special attention to prayer and to women), or John (which covers very little of what is stated in the other Gospels).
- Suggestion: Before reading, briefly look up information about the Bible book and its writer so that you can better understand what makes that Gospel unique.
- ☐ Pick a psalm. For example:
  - If you feel alone and friendless, read Psalm 142.
  - If you're discouraged over your weaknesses, read Psalm 51.
  - If you question the value of God's standards, read Psalm 73.
  - Suggestion: Keep a list of psalms you've read that are particularly encouraging to you.



Consider the setting. Examine the timing, location, and circumstances surrounding a passage.

Example: Read Ezekiel 14:14. About what age may Daniel have been when Jehovah mentioned him as a good example alongside Noah and Job?

Clue: Ezekiel chapter 14 was recorded just five years after Daniel was exiled to Babylon —likely as a teenager.

The hidden gem: Was Daniel too young for Jehovah to notice his faithfulness? What good decisions led to blessings for him? (Daniel 1:8-17) How can Daniel's example help you to make good decisions?

Analyze details. Sometimes just a word or two is significant.

Example: Compare Matthew 28:7 with Mark 16:7. Why did Mark include the detail that Jesus would soon appear to the disciples "and Peter"?

Clue: Mark was not an eyewitness of these events; evidently, he got his information from Peter.

The hidden gem: Why must Peter have felt reassured to hear that Jesus wanted to see

him again? (Mark 14:66-72) How did Jesus prove himself a real friend to Peter? How can you imitate Jesus and be a real friend to others?

■ Do further research. Consult Bible literature for explanations.

**Example:** Read Matthew 2:7-15. When did the astrologers visit Jesus?

Clue: See The Watchtower of January 1, 2008, page 31, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

The hidden gem: How, evidently, did Jehovah provide materially for Jesus' family while they were in Egypt? How can trust in God help you to cope with stressful circumstances?

—Matthew 6:33, 34.

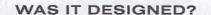
More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

If you have access to the Internet, you can read the Bible online at www.watchtower.org/e/bible

#### TO THINK ABOUT

It's been said that what you get out of an endeavor depends largely upon what you put into it.

- How is that true when it comes to reading the Bible?
- When can you make time for personal Bible reading?



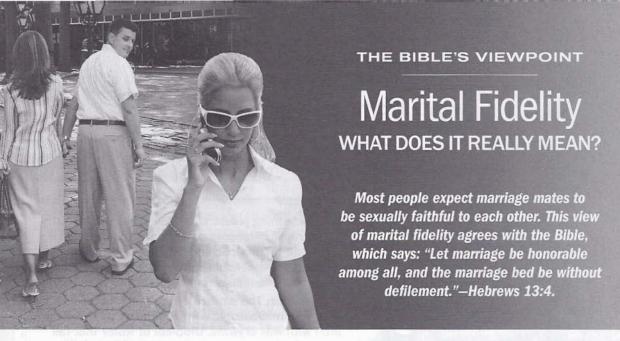
## The Water-Repellent Lotus Leaf

■ Self-cleaning plastic cups? Windows that stay dry in the rain? Microscopic machines that operate with little friction? Scientists say these are just a few benefits that could come our way if we succeed in tapping into the secrets of the lotus leaf.

Consider: The surface of the lotus leaf is covered with microscopic bumps that are, in turn, covered with wax crystals. Droplets of water that fall on the leaf are suspended on these structures, which act as a water repellent. The slope of the leaf causes the water to roll off before it even has a chance to reach the leaf's surface. The result? Not only is the lotus leaf kept dry but it is also kept clean, as dirt and dust particles are carried off in the droplets.

Scientists want to develop materials that mimic the lotus leaf's water-repellent properties. Even microscopic machines, which are subject to damage from water, would benefit from a design similar to that of the lotus leaf. "The potential uses are endless," reports Science Daily.

What do you think? Did the lotus leaf come about by chance? Or was it designed?



S REFRAINING from sex with other partners the full extent of what it means to be faithful in marriage? What about sexual fantasies involving someone other than your marriage mate? Could a close friendship with someone of the opposite sex become a form of "infidelity"?

#### **Are Sexual Fantasies Harmless?**

The Bible presents sex as a natural and wholesome part of married life, a source of mutual joy and satisfaction. (Proverbs 5:18, 19) But many modern experts believe that it is normal—even healthy—for a married person to fantasize about other sexual partners. Are such fantasies harmless as long as they are not acted upon?

Sexual fantasies typically focus on personal gratification. Such self-centered behavior is contrary to the Bible's advice for married people. Regarding sexual relations God's Word says: "The wife does not exercise authority over her own body, but her husband does; likewise, also, the husband does not exercise authority over his own body, but his wife does." (1 Corinthians 7:4) Following the Bible's counsel prevents sex from becoming a

fantasy-fueled act of lust and selfishness. As a result, both marriage mates enjoy greater happiness.—Acts 20:35; Philippians 2:4.

Fantasies of sex outside of marriage involve mentally rehearsing actions that if carried out would cause great emotional pain to one's mate. Will engaging in sexual fantasies increase the likelihood of committing adultery? The simple answer is yes. The Bible illustrates the link between thoughts and actions: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin."—James 1:14, 15.

Jesus said: "Everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28) By refusing to dwell on adulterous fantasies, you "safeguard your heart" and protect your marriage.—Proverbs 4:23.

#### Why Remain Emotionally Faithful?

A successful marriage requires giving "exclusive devotion" to your mate. (Song of Solomon 8:6; Proverbs 5:15-18) What does this mean? While it is normal to have friends of

both sexes outside of marriage, your marriage mate has first claim on your time, attention, and emotional energy. Any relationship that takes what rightly belongs to your mate and gives it to someone else is a form of "infidelity," even if no sexual activity is involved.\*

How could such a relationship develop? Someone of the opposite sex may seem more attractive or empathetic than your spouse. Spending time with that one in the workplace or in a social setting can lead to discussing personal matters, including problems or disappointments in your marriage. An emotional dependency can grow. Communication in person, by telephone, or through online chat could become a betrayal of trust. Marriage mates properly expect that certain topics will be discussed only with each other and that their "confidential talk" will be kept private. —Proverbs 25:9.

Beware of rationalizing that no romantic feelings exist when in fact they may! 'The heart is treacherous,' says Jeremiah 17:9. If you have a close friendship with someone of the opposite sex, ask yourself: 'Am I defensive or secretive about the relationship? Would I be comfortable if my mate overheard our conversations? How would I feel if my mate cultivated a similar friendship?'—Matthew 7:12.

An improper relationship can lead to marital disaster, since emotional closeness paves the way for eventual sexual intimacy. As Jesus warned, "out of the heart come . . . adulteries." (Matthew 15:19) However, even if adultery does not result, the damage caused

by loss of trust can be extremely difficult to repair. A wife named Karen\* said: "When I discovered that Mark was secretly talking on the phone several times a day with another woman, my heart was broken. It is very hard to

"Everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."—Matthew 5:28

believe that they were not involved sexually. I am not sure that I will ever trust him."

Keep friendships with members of the opposite sex within appropriate boundaries. Do not ignore the presence of improper feelings or rationalize impure motives. If you sense that a relationship threatens your marriage, act quickly to limit or end it. The Bible says: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself."—Proverbs 22:3.

#### **Protect Your One-Flesh Bond**

Our Creator intended that marriage should be the closest relationship between two humans. He said that husband and wife "must become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) The one-flesh bond involves more than sexual intimacy. It includes a close emotional bond, which is strengthened by unselfishness, trust, and mutual respect. (Proverbs 31:11; Malachi 2:14, 15; Ephesians 5:28, 33) Applying these principles will help to protect your marriage from damage caused by mental and emotional unfaithfulness.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Can sexual fantasies lead to actions?-James 1:14, 15.
- Could a close friendship with someone of the opposite sex threaten your marriage?—Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19.
- How can you strengthen your marriage bond?—1 Corinthians 7:4; 13:8; Ephesians 5:28, 33.

<sup>\*</sup> It is important to note, however, that only sexual relations outside the marriage constitute grounds for Scriptural divorce.

—Matthew 19:9.

<sup>\*</sup> Names have been changed.

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### **Christmas "Cheer"?**

About 20 percent of divorce proceedings in Australia are begun right after the Christmas and New Year period, says Sydney's Sunday Telegraph. "We see a lot of people having fights or breakdowns and coming to our doors as soon as our offices re-open," says divorce lawyer Barry Frakes. "People have expectations that Christmas will be perfect like it is on TV shows and in advertising." When their lives do not fit this "stereotype," he adds, they seek a divorce. Yet, according to Angela Conway, spokeswoman for the Australian Family Association, "divorce rarely solves long-term problems or brings the peace and happiness that people think it will." She recommends: "It's worth sticking to your marriage and trying to make it work."

#### "Birthing Houses" Save Lives

Peru has put great effort into reducing its maternal mortality rate. In order to encourage Andean women to receive professional medical care at a clinic rather than give birth at home, 390 "birthing houses" have been opened in Peru over the last decade.

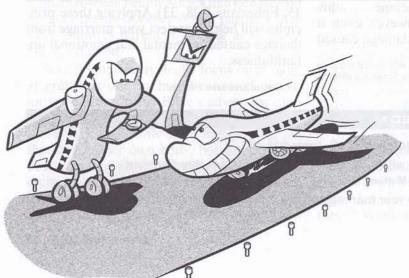
- In efforts to cope with 2.2 million percent inflation, Zimbabwe knocked ten zeros off its bank notes in August 2008.

  A \$10-billion note was thus revalued at one "zimdollar."—AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE, ZIMBABWE.
- "More than 12,000 homicides by gun were reported in the United States in 2005. But the number of people who are wounded and survive gunshot assaults is much greater—nearly 53,000 were treated in emergency rooms in 2006."

  —THE SEATTLE TIMES, U.S.A.

A pregnant woman and her family can stay at one of these houses—each one conveniently located next to a clinic—until it is time for the birth. One attraction of these clinics, says a Reuters news report from Cuzco, is that they blend "modern medicine with indigenous practices," such as "giving birth standing up," which "tends to reduce labor and delivery time . . . and allows the mother to watch the birth better than if she were lying down."

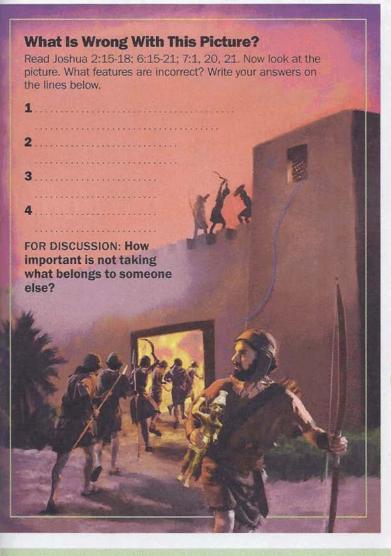
In the 35-year period between 1970 and 2005, one quarter of vertebrate species—fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals—became extinct.—SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG. GERMANY



#### **Always Late**

According to a 2008 U.S. Department of Transportation report, some 30 percent of all scheduled airline flights in the United States arrive more than 15 minutes late. Among the worst offenders was a flight from Texas to California, which arrived late 100 percent of the time.

#### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**



#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 5 What was Daniel known for? Daniel 6:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 6 What should you make known to all men?
Philippians 4:

PAGE 28 What should marriage be before all? Hebrews 13:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 28 Desire, when it becomes fertile, gives birth to what? James 1:\_\_\_\_



#### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### **What Do You Know About the Prophets?**

Read 2 Chronicles 18:1–19:3. Then answer the following questions.

What was the name of the prophet that King Ahab hated?

Why did Ahab hate that prophet?

What did the prophet tell Ahab, and how did Ahab respond?

FOR DISCUSSION: When might you need to imitate the courage of this prophet?





# MAY 2009

# Prescription Drug Abuse How can you protect your family?



### Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000 PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

## Prescription Drug Abuse HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOUR FAMILY? 3-10

Read how you can protect yourself and your family from the abuse of prescription drugs, which threatens health and life.

- 3 Raiding the Medicine Cabinet
- 4 Prescription Drugs-Use and Abuse
- 6 Parents-Protect Your Children!
- 8 Something Better Than Drugs
- 11 A Receipt That Corroborates the Bible Record
- 14 Stressed-Out Children
- 15 When Giants Roamed Europe
- 18 Young People Ask Why Don't Girls Like Me?
- 24 Was It Designed? The Cyphochilus Beetle's Shell
- 25 The Harpy Eagle—Raptor of the Rain Forest
- 26 How Is Your Thyroid?
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 "How Can You Survive the End of the World?"









#### Does God Want You to Be Rich?

Some popular preachers say that God wants us to be materially prosperous *now*. But is this the time for us to pursue wealth? Or should we have other priorities?



### I Fled the Killing Fields and Found Life

Read the inspiring story of a teenager who fled from an Asian land during a brutal, turbulent era.

## **RAIDING THE Medicine Cabinet**

when I was 14 years old," said a woman named Lena.\* "I felt that I had to be thin and attractive, so our family doctor prescribed diet pills for me. The only time I

felt good was when it seemed that boys admired me. Eventually, I moved on to hard drugs and the immoral lifestyle that went with them. I was always trying to reach the ultimate high."

A woman named Myra suffered from migraine headaches, so her doctor prescribed a pain reliever. In time, she began taking more and more pills—not just for headaches but also to satisfy her growing addiction. Moreover, she began taking pills prescribed for other members of her family.

Yes, reports indicate that a growing number of youths and a surprising number of older people are misusing

\* Names in this series have been

changed.

"Drug addiction is characterized by compulsive use, use for non-medical purposes, and continued use despite harm or risk of harm," says the *Physicians' Desk Reference*.

Addiction is character-

ized by a lack of control

and an obsession with

the drug.

Physical dependence is evident when patients develop withdrawal symptoms when they stop taking a certain prescribed drug, such as an opioid. This is a normal reaction and is not the same as addiction.

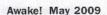
Tolerance refers to the need for an increased dosage in order to obtain the same degree of pain relief.

prescription drugs in an effort to calm down, cope with anxiety, stay alert, lose weight, or experience a high. Some of the most frequently abused drugs are those found in many homes: pain relievers, sedatives, stimulants,

and tranquilizers.\* Abused products also include such over-the-counter drugs as sleeping aids, decongestants, and allergy pills.

The problem is both widespread and growing. In parts of Africa, Europe, and South Asia, for example, the abuse of prescription drugs is overtaking that of street drugs. In the United States. prescription-drug abuse exceeds that of virtually all illicit products except cannabis. According to a recent newspaper report, more 12- to 17-year-olds "abuse prescription drugs than cocaine, heroin and methamphetamines combined." Indeed, the demand is so high that it has given rise to a counterfeitprescription-drug industry.

How can you protect yourself and your children from the abuse of drugs—prescription or illicit? The following articles examine these questions.



<sup>\*</sup> Many of the principles discussed in these articles also apply to the use of illicit drugs and to the abuse of alcohol.

# Use and Abuse

AGIRL named Angie overheard her parents saying that her brother's medicine curbed his appetite. Because Angie was concerned about her weight, she started sneaking her brother's pills, taking one every few days. To reduce the risk of her parents' finding out, she asked a friend who was using the same medication to give her some of his pills.\*

Why the fascination with prescription drugs? One reason is availability—they may be right there in the home. Second, many young people wrongly assume that they are not doing anything illegal when they take medici-

nal drugs without a prescription. And third, prescription drugs seem less toxic than their illicit counterparts. 'After all,' some youths reason, 'if a child can take certain prescribed products, the products must be safe.'

Granted, when properly used, prescribed medication may improve health and the quality of life and even save lives. But misused, it can be as unsafe as street drugs. For example, when a person abuses certain prescription stimulants, he may bring on heart failure or seizures. Other products can lower a person's breathing rate and ultimately cause death. A drug may also have a harmful effect if it is taken with certain other drugs or with alcohol. Early in 2008, a popular actor died "from a deadly mix of six tranquilizers, sleeping pills and painkillers," said the *Arizona Republic* newspaper.

Another potential danger is addiction. When taken in excessive amounts or for

#### ANYTHING FOR A HIGH

Some people will try almost anything to get a high. Particularly harmful practices include the sniffing of cleaning fluids, fingernail polish, furniture polish, gasoline, glue, lighter fluid, spray paint, and other volatile substances. Sniffed fumes are rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream, giving an almost instant reaction.

Another harmful practice is the abuse of over-the-counter medications that contain alcohol or induce sleepiness. When taken in high doses, these products interfere with the senses, especially hearing and vision, and may cause confusion, hallucinations, numbness, and stomach pain.

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated. Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000. Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

<sup>\*</sup> From TeensHealth Web site.

#### "DRUG-SEEKING TACTICS"

"'Drug-seeking' behavior is very common in addicts and drug abusers," says the *Physicians' Desk Reference*. "Drug-seeking tactics include emergency calls or visits near the end of office hours, refusal to undergo appropriate examination, testing or referral, repeated 'loss' of prescriptions, tampering with prescriptions and reluctance to provide prior medical records or contact information for other treating physician(s). 'Doctor shopping' to obtain additional prescriptions is common among drug abusers and people suffering from untreated addiction."

The drugs most often abused are the following three kinds:

- Opioids—prescribed for pain relief
- CNS (central nervous system) Depressants—barbiturates and benzodiazepines prescribed for anxiety or sleep problems (often referred to as sedatives or tranquilizers)
- Stimulants—prescribed for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), the sleep disorder narcolepsy, or obesity\*

the wrong reason, some substances act like street drugs—they stimulate pleasure centers in the brain, which can lead to a craving for the substance. But instead of providing ongoing excitement or helping people cope with life, drug abuse only makes matters worse. It may heighten stress, deepen depression, ruin health and the ability to function normally, lead to addiction, or do all of these things. Inevitably, victims have problems at home, at school, or at work. Where, then, is the line be-

tween the proper use of prescribed products and their wrongful use?

#### Use or Abuse?

Simply put, you use a prescription drug properly when vou take it according to the directions of a physician who is fully aware of your medical history. That would include taking the correct dosage at the right times, in the proper manner, and for the right medical reason. Even so, undesirable or unexpected symptoms may appear. If that happens, tell your doctor immediately. He or she may change your prescription or cancel it altogether. The same principles apply to over-the-counter products: Use them only when you

have a legitimate need, and carefully follow the instructions on the label.

People step into dangerous territory when they take medication for the wrong reason, take liberties with the dosage, use products meant for someone else, or take the drug in the wrong way. For example, some pills have to be swallowed whole so that the active ingredient is released into the system slowly. Abusers often disrupt the process by crushing or chewing pills, by crushing and sniffing them,

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chicheva, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only, Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, \*\*\*\*

Dutch\*\*\* English\*\*\*

Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, \*\*\*

Perpain, German\*\*\*

Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, \*\*\*

Kirghiz Korean\*\*

Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian,\*

Polish,\*\*

Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian,\*\*

Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spansh,\*\*

Samoan, Tarkish, \*\*

Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L76 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehame IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>\*</sup> Information supplied by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

<sup>#</sup> Audiocassettes also available.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

<sup>·</sup> Audio recordings also available at www.iw.org.

#### GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE USE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

- 1. Follow directions carefully.
- Don't change doses without consulting your doctor.
- Don't stop taking prescribed medication on your own.
- Don't crush or break pills unless specifically instructed to do so.
- Be aware of the effect the drug may have on your driving and other activities.
- Find out how the drug may interact with alcohol and with other medications—prescribed or over the counter.
- 7. If you have a history of substance abuse, tell your doctor.
- 8. Do not use drugs prescribed for someone else, and do not share yours.\*

or by dissolving them in water and injecting them. The result may be a high, but it could also be a first step toward addiction. Worse still, it could be lethal. On the other hand, if someone is taking a prescribed drug in the proper manner but suspects that he may be developing an addiction, he should inform his doctor without delay. The doctor should know the safest way to address the matter without neglecting the original health problem.

The pandemic of drug abuse—in all its forms—is a reflection of our times. The family, which should be a haven of love and a refuge from daily stresses, is in trouble. Wholesome moral and spiritual values are on the wane, as is respect for life. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Another factor is a lack of hope for a better future. Many people see nothing but gloom and doom on the horizon. Hence, they live for the moment and pursue whatever pleasures they can, sometimes recklessly. The Bible says: "Where there is no vision the people go unrestrained."—Proverbs 29:18.

If you are a parent, no doubt you want to protect your family from the moral and spiritual ills that plague the world. But how can you do that? And where can you turn for sound guidance and a reliable hope for a better tomorrow? The following articles address these questions.

## Parents Protect Your CHILDREN!

CONCERNED parents rightly ask, "Why are more and more teens sneaking into the medicine cabinet?" The answers are varied. Some young ones seek excitement. Others want to study more effectively or numb anxiety. Still others may be suffering physically or emotionally and simply want to feel better. Indeed, children as young as 12 years of age have become full-fledged abusers of prescription drugs, perhaps ordering them from one or more of literally hundreds of thousands of Web sites that readily provide such drugs—no questions asked. Others have pur-

chased pills from so-called friends. If you are a parent, what can you do to protect your children?

For one thing, talk openly to them about the dangers of taking drugs—prescribed or illicit. Also, keep prescriptions in a safe place—perhaps even locking the medicine cabinet. Know what you have on hand, and monitor usage. If a drug is no longer needed, safely discard it. If a teen is over his cough but is still taking medicine, ask him about it. And keep an eye on your child's Internet and credit-card activity and mail deliveries. Finally, be alert

<sup>\*</sup> Based on recommendations provided by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

to any changes in his or her associations, appearance, or behavior or to any sudden drop in school grades.

#### If a Child Has a Drug Problem

If your child has a drug problem or you seriously suspect one, what can you do? You need to discuss your concerns with your child, doing so in a loving and kind manner. "The intention in the human heart is like water far below the surface," the Bible says, "but the man [or woman] of intelligence draws it forth." (Proverbs 20:5, *The New American Bible*) Drawing the truth from a child with a suspected drug problem may be like lifting a bucket of water with a frail rope. If you pull too hard by being accusatory or bitterly an-

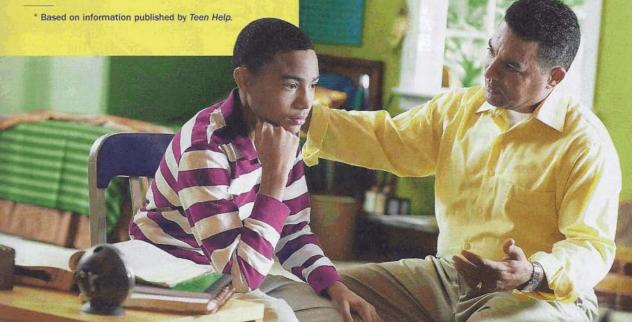
#### WARNING SIGNS OF TEENS AT RISK

- A family history of substance or alcohol abuse
- Depression or low self-esteem
- Feel that they do not fit in with others and that they are not popular
- Frequently feel sluggish; have difficulty sleeping
- Aggressive, rebellious attitude toward authority figures\*

gry, you might break the rope of communication. Remember, your goal is two-fold. First, you want to find out whether there is a problem. And second, if there is a problem, what the underlying reasons are for it. Often those reasons involve one or more of the following.

- pressure. "Make no mistake," says 1 Corinthians 15:33, "bad company is the ruin of a good character." (The New English Bible) Wise parents, therefore, will help their children see the danger of bad associates, who may have considerable influence. On the positive side, such parents will help their children choose wholesome companions. (Proverbs 13:20) Perhaps Dad and Mom could help by inviting such to their home or on family outings.
- Stress. The pressure to succeed in today's world is intense, and parents sometimes make matters worse by driving their children

"The intention in the human heart is like water far below the surface, but the man of intelligence draws it forth."—Proverbs 20:5. New American Bible



too hard.\* Are you aware of the strengths and weaknesses of your children? Do you set reasonable goals for them and help them to reach those goals? Do you strictly avoid making disparaging comparisons that can crush a child and sow the seeds of depression? To be sure, if children's emotional needs are not met at home, they will go elsewhere for the affection and recognition they crave. Wise parents also strive to foster a spiritual environment in the home, perhaps by reading the Bible with their children. "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need," said Jesus Christ.—Matthew 5:3.

■ A lack of behavioral boundaries. Some young people take drugs because their parents simply let them run wild. "A boy [or girl] let on the loose will be causing his mother shame," says Proverbs 29:15. The fact is, children appreciate clear behavioral boundaries, which make them feel more secure and

loved—despite outward protestations. Hence, the Bible encourages parents to set wholesome guidelines for their children, as well as a good example. (Ephesians 6:4) The Bible also encourages consistency and firmness when needed. "Let your *Yes* mean Yes, and your *No*, No."—James 5:12.

Of course, if you learn that your child has a drug problem, you would be wise to discuss the matter with a health professional. Breaking an addiction can be difficult and may require expert guidance. Also, if your family is part of the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, you should seek the support of the local elders. (James 5:13-16) These spiritually mature men may be able to assist you to apply Bible principles that will help speed recovery.

The following article will consider some additional principles and will also discuss the wonderful hope we can have for a much better future.

SOMETHING BETTER
THAN Drugs

WHEN Lena, mentioned in the first article, was 32 years of age, she was "consumed with guilt, doom, and death," largely because of her drug problem. "As a wife and mother, I wanted to be good," she wrote, "but everything in my life and in the world was so sad and pathetic that there seemed to be no reason to be good. And the few times I tried, I failed."

Then Lena began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Before long, Bible truth gave her inner peace and relief, which she described as "the most tremendous feeling I have ever had." Insight into Bible principles and a wonderful hope for the future motivated her to clean up her life and conquer her addiction.



<sup>\*</sup> See the article "Stressed-Out Children," on page 14.

#### **Principles for Life**

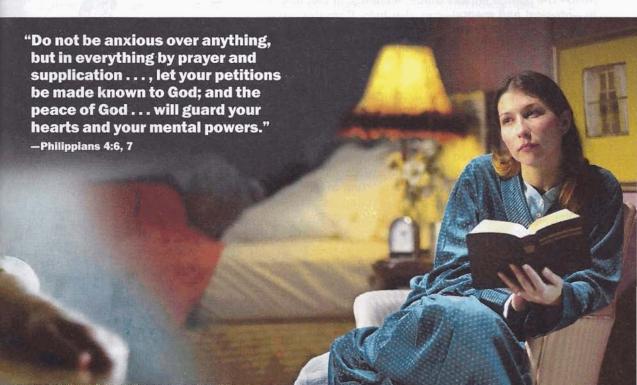
The laws and principles found in the Bible were tailor-made for us by our Creator, Jehovah God. Says Psalm 19:7, 8: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back [reviving] the soul. . . . The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice; the commandment of Jehovah is clean, making the eyes shine."

For instance, 2 Corinthians 7:1 exhorts us to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." Lena took that Bible verse to heart, and this helped her to break her defiling habit. The same was true of Myra, also mentioned in the first article in this series. You may recall that she became addicted to the drugs prescribed for her headaches. How did Myra address her problem? She discussed it frankly with her doctor, who then helped her to pursue other medical treatment.\* Additionally, she took advantage of the spiritu-

al encouragement provided by the Christian congregation.

Both Lena and Myra also sought help through prayer. Says Philippians 4:6, 7: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers." A servant of God in ancient times who experienced that inner peace wrote that when his "disquieting thoughts became many," God's reassuring words gave him calmness, consolation, and inner joy. (Psalm 94:19) Comforting words like those can be found in the pages of the Bible and in the personal encouragement and support of wholesome Christian associates, including Christian elders.

Sometimes, though, because of a drug problem, a person may feel totally unworthy. Janice, a Christian who had been addicted to prescription drugs for many years, wrote: "Addicts may be so spiritually bankrupt and so full of self-hatred that on their own they



<sup>\*</sup> Not all situations are the same as Myra's. For example, some people may be enduring a painful disease for which relief can be found only through strong, potentially addictive drugs administered under medical supervision. Such a patient is not seeking a euphoric high, nor is he indulging an addiction.—See Proverbs 31:6.

find it difficult, if not impossible, to turn to Jehovah for help." Under such circumstances, it is especially important for them to seek the aid of mature Christians. Their loving, patient encouragement and their prayers of faith can "make the indisposed one well." (James 5:15) Of course, if the addict is a child, the parents should take an active interest—spiritually and medically—in his recovery, lest he relapse.

Janice entered a treatment center, overcame her habit, and has remained drug free ever since. "I rely on Jehovah to get me through the rough times," she wrote. "I now have serenity, and my old fun-loving personality is coming back."

#### When Our Problems Will Be Gone

The day is coming when drugs of any kind will be a thing of the past. How so? Revelation 21:3, 4 answers: "The tent of God is with mankind... And he will wipe out every tear

from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things [which include today's problems] have passed away."

The Bible likens the Christian hope to "an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm." (Hebrews 6:18, 19) When beset by a storm, sailors in ancient times would lower the ship's anchor. If the anchor took hold of the seabed, it would help the ship ride out the storm, away from dangerous reefs or shorelines. Similarly, the "sure and firm" hope set out in the Bible can help us to keep our emotional, mental, and spiritual equilibrium when stormy trials arise—as they undoubtedly will!

Why not examine the Bible and see how relevant and encouraging its advice and teachings are? Jehovah's Witnesses would be delighted to help you, and you will not be disappointed.

#### PRACTICAL WAYS TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING

Exercise can "temporarily lift your mood and provide a brief respite from depression," says the book *Managing Your Mind—The Mental Fitness Guide*. A change in diet and habits—physical and mental—can also help. Consider the example of Valerie, who was abused as a child. She became addicted to at least 12 different prescription drugs. Nevertheless, she was able to overcome her habit and lead a relatively normal life. Her secret?

Instead of watching TV and reading questionable novels, Valerie established a good routine of Bible study and made time to read Bible study aids published by Jehovah's Witnesses, including this magazine. Also, she prayed incessantly to God for strength, availed herself of the support of the Christian congregation, and filled her days with such wholesome activities as sharing the Bible's comforting message with others. Besides that, she made major changes in her physical diet, which had included a lot of junk food. The result was a recovery that amazed even her doctors. She has now been drug free for many years.\*

<sup>\*</sup> If you take prescribed medication for clinical depression, bipolar disorder, or some other mental condition, your situation is likely not the same as Valerie's. So do not make any changes without consulting your doctor.



#### A RECEIPT THAT CORROBORATES THE BIBLE RECORD



Copyright The Trustees of the British Museum

A two-inch-wide clay tablet was unearthed in the 1870's near modern-day Baghdad, Irag. In 2007, Michael Jursa, a professor at the University of Vienna, in Austria, came across the tablet while doing research at the British Museum. Jursa recognized the name Nebo-sarsechim (Nabu-sharrussu-ukin, in its Babylonian form), a Babylonian official mentioned in the Bible at Jeremiah 39:3.\*

Nebo-sarsechim was one of King Nebuchadnezzar's commanders at the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E., and according to the tablet, he is called "the chief eunuch." Moreover, the title chief eunuch was held by only one man at any given time, providing strong evidence that the Sarsechim in question is the same man mentioned in the Bible.

The tablet records a gold delivery that Nebo-sarsechim made to the temple of Marduk, or Merodach, the chief god of Babylon, whose name is also mentioned in the Bible. (Jeremiah 50:2) The receipt is dated the 10th year, 11th month, and 18th day of

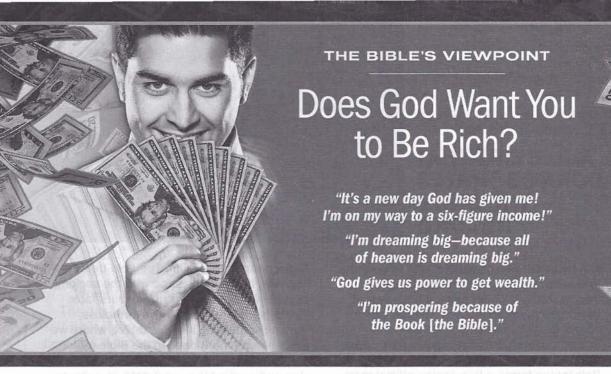
\* At Jeremiah 39:3, the New World Translation reads: "Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris," following the punctuation in the Hebrew Masoretic text. But the Hebrew consonantal text could be rendered: "Samgar, Nebo-sarsechim the Rabsaris [or, the Chief Court Official]," which agrees with the cuneiform

king. 3. Humility and courage. enter the Promised Land. 2. Conspiracy against the did not sanctify Jehovah, so they were not allowed to T. Kadesh. • Moses spoke rashly, and he and Aaron

Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The gold delivery, however, had nothing to do with the sacking of Jerusalem, which occurred years later. (2 Kings 25:8-10, 13-15) Nevertheless, "finding something like this tablet, where we see a person mentioned in the Bible making an everyday payment to the temple in Babvlon and quoting the exact date, is quite extraordinary," said Professor Jursa. Acclaimed as one of the most significant discoveries in modern Biblical archaeology, the tablet "supports the view that the historical books of the Old Testament are based on fact," says Britain's Telegraph newspaper.

The Bible's veracity, however, does not depend on archaeology. Far more powerful evidence can be found within the Bible itself, especially in its prophecies. (2 Peter 1: 21) For example, more than 100 years in advance, Jehovah God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, foretold that all the treasures in Jerusalem would "be carried to Babylon." (Isaiah 39:6, 7) Likewise, through the prophet Jeremiah, God foretold: "I will give all the stored-up things of this city [Jerusalem] . . . into the hand of their enemies. And they will certainly plunder them and take them . . . to Babylon."-Jeremiah 20:4, 5.

Nebo-sarsechim was one of those enemies, and as such, he was also an eyewitness of the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. In fact, whether he knew it or not, he actually shared in that fulfillment.



THESE statements reflect the view of a number of religious groups that attribute material wealth to the blessing of God. If you do the right thing by God, they preach, he will empower you to gain the good things of *this* life and reward you afterward as well. The theology has wide appeal, and books promoting it are best sellers. But does this "prosperity theology" harmonize with the Bible?

To be sure, our Creator, whom the Bible calls "the happy God," wants us to lead happy, successful lives. (1 Timothy 1:11; Psalm 1: 1-3) Moreover, he blesses those who please him. (Proverbs 10:22) But for us today, is that blessing merely a form of material prosperity? The answer becomes clear when we understand where we are in the stream of time according to God's purpose.

#### A Time to Get Rich?

In the past, Jehovah God blessed some of his servants with material wealth, the patriarch Job and King Solomon being good examples of that. (1 Kings 10:23; Job 42:12) Yet, many other God-fearing men had little, including John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. (Mark 1:6; Luke 9:58) The point? According to the Bible, God deals with his servants in harmony with his purpose for them at the time. (Ecclesiastes 3:1) How does that principle apply to us today?

Bible prophecy reveals that we are living in "the conclusion of the system of things," or "the last days" of the present world. This era would be marked by warfare, disease, famines, earthquakes, and a breakdown in society—conditions that have plagued mankind on an unprecedented scale since the year 1914. (Matthew 24:3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Luke 21:10, 11; Revelation 6:3-8) In short, this world, like a foundering ship, is about to sink! In view of those facts, would it make sense for God to bless each of his servants with material riches, or would God have other priorities for us?

Jesus Christ compared our time with the days of Noah. Jesus said: "As they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into

the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matthew 24:37-39) Jesus also compared our days with the days of Lot. Lot's neighbors in Sodom and Gomorrah were 'eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building.' "But on the day that Lot came out of Sodom it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all," Jesus said, adding: "The same way it will be on that day when the Son of man is to be revealed."—Luke 17:28-30.

To be sure, there is nothing wrong with eating, drinking, marrying, buying, and selling. The danger lies in being so absorbed in those things that we take no note of the urgency of the times. So ask yourself, 'Would God be doing us a favor if he were to bless us with the very things that would fill our lives with distractions?'\* On the contrary, he would be doing us a great disservice. That is not the way of the God of love!—1 Timothy 6:17; 1 John 4:8.

#### A Time to Save Lives!

At this critical time in human history, God's people have an urgent work to do. Jesus said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) Jehovah's Witnesses take those words very seriously. Hence, they encourage their neighbors

to learn about that Kingdom and God's requirements for everlasting life.—John 17:3.

However, God does not expect his faithful servants to be ascetics. Rather, he wants them to be content with life's necessities so that they can focus on serving him. (Matthew 6: 33) He, in turn, will see that their material needs are filled. Says Hebrews 13:5: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For [God] has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.'"

God will prove true to those words in an outstanding way when he preserves "a great crowd" of true worshippers through the end of the present system of things and into a

### So-called prosperity theology is, in reality, distraction theology

new world of peace and true prosperity. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Jesus said: "I have come that they [his faithful followers] might have life and might have it in abundance." (John 10: 10) That 'abundant life' refers, not to a life of material plenty now, but to endless life in Paradise under God's Kingdom rule.—Luke 23:43.

Do not settle for less by being deceived by so-called prosperity theology, which, in reality, is distraction theology. Instead, heed Jesus' loving but urgent words: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare." —Luke 21:34, 35.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- For what is it now the appointed time?-Matthew 24:14.
- Jesus compared our time with the times of what Bible characters?

  -Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:28-30.
- What must we avoid if we want to gain everlasting life?—Luke 21:34.

<sup>\*</sup> As in the first century, some faithful Christians today are wealthy. However, God warns them not to trust in their riches nor be distracted by them. (Proverbs 11:28; Mark 10:25; Revelation 3:17) Rich or poor, all should focus on doing God's will.—Luke 12:31.

## Stressed-Out Children

■ "I didn't have enough time. I'm tired," said Pablo, an eight-year-old boy, when his teacher asked him about his homework. Like this bleary-eyed boy in Spain, many children face long, tiring days that may include 12 hours or more of lessons and homework. Why such long days?

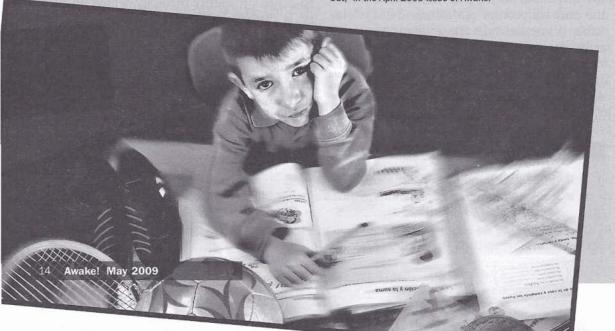
Some parents enroll their children in afterschool activities to keep them busy until Mom or Dad comes home. Others impose a demanding schedule on their young ones because they want them to excel at school and pursue a successful career. To that end, many South Korean parents send their teens to "cram schools," where they endure exhausting schedules, sometimes from 7:30 a.m. until midnight or later for up to seven days a week. "Their obsession to get their children into topnotch universities is nothing short of 'a war,'" says a New York Times report.

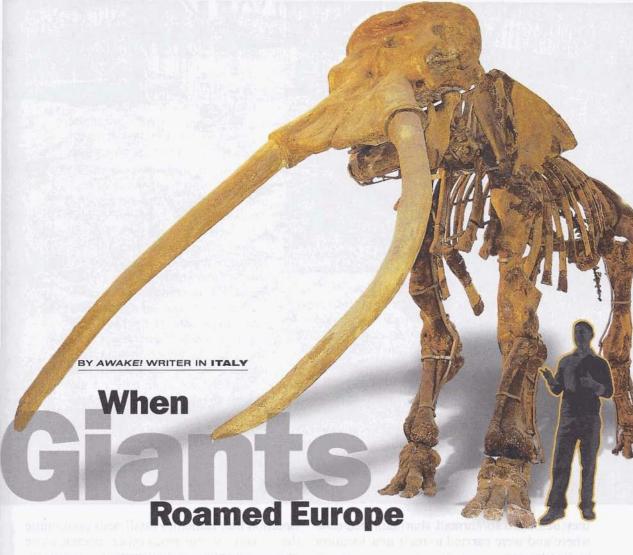
The Spanish weekly Mujer hoy states: "'Pushy parents' want the best for their children, but they require very high performance from them." To meet their parents' expectations, children may demand too much of

themselves, which can be very stressful. "According to our observation, young ones are overloaded," says Antonio Cano, president of the Spanish Society for the Study of Anxiety and Stress. According to another authority, 40 percent of children in Spain under 15 years of age suffer from too much stress. Such pressure can exact a toll, perhaps even leading to suicide. In South Korea, for example, "among young people 10 to 19, suicide is the second most common cause of death, after traffic accidents," says *The New York Times*.

Of course, young ones should work hard at school, and parents should give them all the help they possibly can, for those years will never be repeated. But "children are not adults. They cannot cope with such long, tiring days," says Irene Arrimadas, a teacher. Aware of this, loving parents make sure that their children have adequate time for rest and wholesome family activities. Pointing to the need for balance, wise King Solomon wrote: "Better is a handful of rest than a double handful of hard work and striving after the wind."—Ecclesiastes 4:6.\*

<sup>\*</sup> For a detailed discussion of the pressures that many children face, see the series of articles "Under Pressure in School and Out," in the April 2009 issue of Awake!



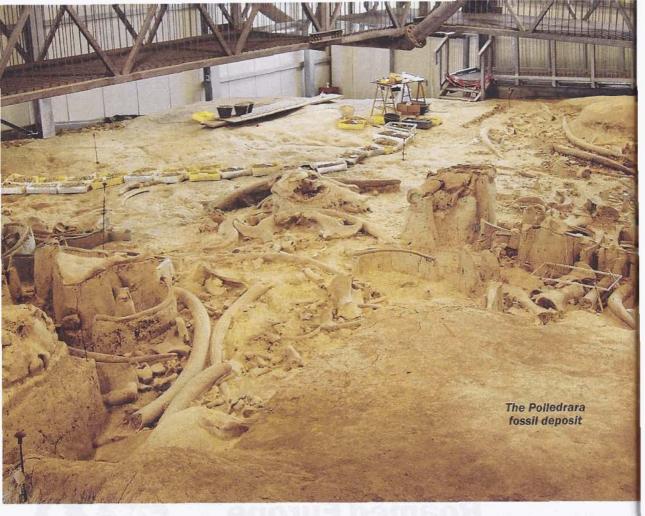


IN 1932 a road-construction crew was digging near the Colosseum in Rome when one of the men struck a hard object. It turned out to be the tusk and cranium of an elephant. This discovery is not an isolated case. Over

the years, about 140 fossilized remains of elephants have been found in and around Rome, the first confirmed case being in the 17th century.

People thought that the bones belonged either to elephants imported into ancient Rome or to the ones that Carthaginian General Hannibal brought into Italy. G. B. Pianciani, a 19th-century priest and professor of Natural Sciences in Viterbo, challenged those assumptions. Because the bones were mostly found in alluvial deposits, he concluded that





they belonged to animals that had died elsewhere and were carried to their new location by floodwaters.

Many elephant fossils found in Italy are not those of the elephants we know today. Rather, they belong to an extinct species called *Elephas antiquus*, or ancient elephant. (See page 15.) This creature had almost straight tusks and grew to about 15 feet at the shoulders, making it about six feet taller than its modern-day counterparts.

How common were those giants? The fossil record indicates that they once roamed throughout Europe and England, as did their close relatives the mammoths. What is more, the elephant fossils are not always found in isolation but, rather, in fossil beds containing the remains of numerous other species, some of which were natural enemies.

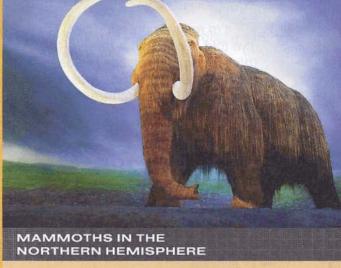
#### From Hyenas to Hippos

Fossils found in Lazio, a region of central Italy that includes Rome, suggest that the area at one time had a climate more like that of Africa, for hippopotamuses, gazelles, and even big cats once roamed in this region. In fact, fossils of one cat, dubbed the leopard of Monte Sacro, were found right in the heart of Rome. At the Polledrara deposit outside the city, more than 9,000 fossil remains have been unearthed, representing a diversity of animals: ancient elephants, buffalo, deer, Barbary apes, rhinoceroses, and aurochs—large

### WHAT IS A FOSSIL?

At first glance a fossil might look like a normal bone. In fact, it is the result of a chemical transformation—fossilization—that takes place before the remains of dead animals can decompose.

One common form of fossilization is mineralization. In this process the original organic material is replaced, either totally or partially, by minerals present in wet sedimentary deposits. Thus, for fossilization to occur, specific environmental conditions are necessary. They include an abundant deposit of sediment and rapid burial of the remains, as well as their resistance to disintegration. Under normal circumstances, animal remains that are left uneaten are finished off by bacteria as well as mechanical and chemical agents, such as wind and water. Fossilization, therefore, is very rare.



The fossil record indicates that the woolly mammoth roamed over a vast area, which included Asia, Europe, and North America. In Europe, Italy appears to have been at the southernmost extremity of the animal's range.

About the same size as present-day Asian elephants, the woolly mammoth had hair that grew up to 20 inches in length, and the males had long curved tusks that grew to about 15 feet. A particularly large amount of mammoth ivory has been found in Siberia—so much, in fact, that from medieval times it was exported to China and Europe.

oxen that were driven to extinction about four centuries ago. A museum at the site provides an elevated walkway for visitors to view the fossils in their original locations.—See page 16.

A cave near Palermo, Sicily, was filled with many tons of remains, including the fossilized bones of deer, oxen, elephants, and hippopotamuses of various ages—even a fetus. In fact, 20 tons of fossils found their way onto the market in the first six months after the site was discovered!

In Southern England, paleontologist J. Manson Valentine discovered fossil beds containing massive deposits of splintered bones of many of the same animals as well as

of hyenas and polar bears. What is the reason for these large beds of fossils in such diverse places?

Some scientists believe that the circumstances in which the animals died are consistent with a natural catastrophe. Whatever the cause or causes of such mass extinctions, their effects were felt over a large area that included mainland Europe, the British Isles, Siberia, and Alaska.

Thanks to the fossil record, we are able to imagine a world that was quite different from the one we know today. Indeed, in Italy alone, if you went back far enough in time, you could be excused for thinking that you were in the wilds of Africa.

I'm really impressing her.
I've told her all about myself—the
things I own, the places I've been,
the people I know. She must be
dying to date me!

I wish the ground would open and swallow me up! Can't he take a hint? How can I end this conversation without being rude?

### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

### Why don't girls like me?

OU'RE old enough to date. You'd like to find someone who is attractive and who shares your religious beliefs. (1 Corinthians 7:39) In the past, though, each time you tried to start a relationship, you felt as though you crashed and burned.

If you'd like to get to know a girl better, what factors do you need to consider? And what Bible principles would you do well to remember?

### What to Do First

Before you decide to pursue a particular girl, there are some basic skills you need to master, and these will help you to be friends with *anyone*. Consider the following.

**Cultivate good manners.** The Bible says that "love is not ill-mannered." (1 Corinthians 13:5, *Today's English Version*) Good manners show that you respect others and that you're developing a mature, Christlike personality. However, good manners aren't like a suit you wear to impress others but take off when you get home. Ask yourself, 'Do I display good manners when dealing with my family members?' If not, then it will seem forced when you do so while interacting with others outside your home. Remember, to find out the type of person you really are, a discerning girl will look at the way you treat members of your family.—Ephesians 6:1, 2.

What girls say: "I definitely find it attractive if a boy displays good manners both in small things, like opening the door for me, and larger things, like being kind and considerate not only to me but also to my family."—Tina, 20.\*

"I am put off when I've just met someone but he asks questions that are too personal, such as 'Are you dating?' and 'What are your goals?' It's rude and makes me squirm!"—Kathy, 19.

maintain your personal hygiene. Good hygiene shows respect not only for others but also for yourself. (Matthew 7:12) If you respect yourself, others are more likely to respect you. On the other hand, if you let your hygiene slide, you'll sabotage your efforts to impress a girl.

What girls say: "One boy who was interested in me had really bad breath. I just couldn't get past that."—Kelly, 24.

■ Cultivate conversation skills. The basis of a lasting relationship is good communication. This involves discussing not only *your* interests but also the interests of *your friend.*—Philippians 2:3, 4.

What girls say: "I'm impressed when a boy can converse with me naturally, when he can remember things I told him and can ask questions that keep the conversation moving." —Christine, 20.

"I think that boys are attracted to what they see, but girls are more attracted to what they hear."—Laura, 22.

"Gifts are great. But if a boy can hold a good conversation, if he can comfort and encourage you with his words . . . Wow! That's attractive."—Amy, 21.

"I would definitely want to get to know someone better if he had a sense of humor but could also talk about more serious things without sounding fake."—Kelly, 24.

Applying the above suggestions will help you to enjoy good friendships. However, once you feel that you are ready to start a serious relationship with a particular girl, what should you do?

### The Next Step

■ Take the initiative. If you think a friend whom you admire might make a good marriage mate, let her know you are interested in her. Be clear and forthright in declaring your feelings. Yes, it can be nerve-racking. You fear rejection. But your being willing to take the initiative is a sign that you have grown up.

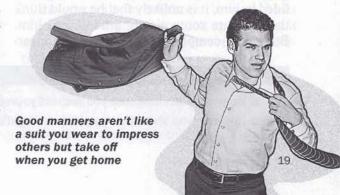
What girls say: "I can't read minds. So if someone wanted to get to know me better, he would have to be honest and straightforward and just tell me."—Nina, 23.

"It could be an awkward transition if you've been friends for a while. But I'd respect someone if he simply said that he would like to get to know me as more than just a friend."—Helen, 25.

Respect the girl's decision. What if your friend says that she doesn't want a more serious relationship with you? Dignify her by believing that she knows her own heart and that her no means no. It betrays a lack of maturity if you make a pest of yourself. Really, if you ignore a girl's explicit rejection of your attention—even becoming provoked by her rebuff—are you really thinking of her interests or your own?—1 Corinthians 13:11.

What girls say: "It irritates me when I say a definite no to a boy but he keeps on trying." —Colleen, 20.

"I explained to one boy that I wasn't interested in him, but he kept pressuring me for my phone number. I wanted to be nice. After all, it probably wasn't easy for him to work up



<sup>\*</sup> Names have been changed.

the nerve to express his feelings. But eventually I had to be very firm with him."—Sarah, 23.

### What Not to Do

Some young men feel that they have little trouble getting girls to like them. They may even compete with their peers to show who can grab the attention of the most girls. However, such competition is cruel and will earn you a bad reputation. (Proverbs 20:11) You can avoid that outcome if you do the following.

■ Don't flirt. A flirt uses flattering speech and provocative body language. He has no intention of pursuing an honorable romantic relationship. Such actions and attitudes ignore the Bible's counsel to treat "younger women as sisters with all chasteness." (1 Timothy 5:2) Flirts make poor friends and worse marriage mates. Discerning girls know that.

What girls say: "I think it's very unattractive when someone flatters you but you know that he has said the same things to your friend just last month."—Helen, 25.

"This cute boy once started flirting with me, talking mainly about himself. When another girl joined our group, he did the same with her. Then a third girl joined our group, and he used the same lines on her. It was ugly!"—Tina, 20.

■ Don't toy with a girl's feelings. Don't expect that friendship with a member of the opposite sex will operate according to the same rules as friendship with a member of the same sex. Why? Consider: If you remarked that a male friend looked good in his new suit or you regularly talked to that friend and confided in him, it is unlikely that he would think that you are romantically attracted to him. But if you compliment a girl on her appear-

ance or you regularly talk to her and confide in her, she may well think that you have a romantic interest in her.

What girls say: "I just don't think boys understand that they can't treat girls the same way that they treat their male friends." —Sheryl, 26.

"A boy will get my phone number, and then I get a text message from him. So, . . . what does that mean? Sometimes you can have a text-messaging relationship and get emotionally attached, but how much can you say in a text message?"—Mallory, 19.

"I don't think a boy realizes how quickly a girl can become emotionally involved, especially if he is caring and easy to talk to. It's not that she's desperate. I just think that most girls want to fall in love and that they always have an eye out for 'Mr. Right.'"—Alison, 25.

### **Be Realistic**

It's unrealistic, even egotistical, to think that *all* girls will like you. But some will if you remember this: How you look on the outside is less important than what you are on the inside. It's hardly surprising that the Bible emphasizes the need to cultivate "the new personality."—Ephesians 4:24.

Kate, 21, sums up the matter this way: "Boys think that to attract girls they have to dress a certain way or have a certain look. While this is true to some degree, I think that many girls are more attracted to positive personality traits."\*

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

### TO THINK ABOUT

- How can you show that you respect yourself?
- How can you show that you respect a girl's thoughts and feelings?

<sup>\*</sup> See chapter 3 of the book Questions Young People Ask-Answers That Work, Volume 2, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

# I Fled the Killing Fields and Found Life

AS TOLD BY SAM TAN

Fleeing our homeland along with about 2,000 other Cambodians, my family and I finally reached the river that borders Thailand. We managed to squeeze onto one of the small boats carrying people to safety. Just as the last boat pulled away. Khmer Rouge soldiers appeared and shot at us.

WUCH to our relief, we all made it safely across to Thailand. Everyone was happy except us, for we were without my father and my uncle, who had been taken away from us some months earlier. Mother just sat down and wept. But before I continue the story, let me give you some background.

### My Early Life as a Buddhist

One of three siblings, I was born in Cambodia in 1960. When I was nine years old, my parents and I decided that I should enter Buddhist temple service, which was not uncommon for boys. A monk begins his day at approximately six in the morning, when he leaves the temple to go from house to house collecting food. I found it difficult to ask some householders for food, for they were obviously very poor. Thereafter, we young monks prepared the meals and served the older monks. We ate afterward.

At six in the evening, the older monks gathered for prayer, using a tongue that few, if any, understood. After two years, I became what we called a small monk and enjoyed some of the privileges of the older monks. I was also allowed to say prayers with them. All the while, I thought that Buddhism was the only religion in the world.

### **Escape From Cambodia**

I was unsatisfied with temple life and returned home at the age of 14. Shortly thereafter, a political leader named Pol Pot came into power. His Khmer Rouge movement, which ruled from 1975 to 1979, forced everyone out of the cities and into the country as part of an effort to make Cambodia a Communist state. Our family too was relocated. Later, Pol Pot's men took my father and my uncle away. We never saw them again. In fact, under the Khmer Rouge, nearly 1.7 million Cambodians were executed on the so-called killing fields or died as a result of overwork, disease, or starvation.

These conditions prompted the 2,000 of us mentioned at the outset to embark on a dangerous three-day journey over mountainous terrain to the Thai border. We all arrived safely, including a baby boy born en route. Most of us carried money but ended up throwing it away because Cambodian currency was virtually worthless in Thailand at the time.

### Life in Thailand

My family moved in with relatives in Thailand, and I found work as a commercial fisherman. Our boat often ventured into Cambodian waters, where there were more fish—as well as Khmer Rouge patrol boats. If caught, we would have lost our boat and our lives. In fact, we had two narrow escapes. Others, though, did not fare as well, including my neighbor, who was caught and decapitated. Although his death distressed me, I continued to fish off the coast of Cambodia—it was that or my family would have starved.

Out of concern for my family and myself, I decided to go into a refugee camp in Thailand, apply to immigrate to another country, and from there send money to my family. When I told my relatives about this, they strongly objected. But I had made up my mind.

English-speaking visitors I met in the refugee camp said they were Christians. That shattered my belief that Buddhism was the only religion. My newly adopted friend, Teng Hann, and I began to associate with the "Christians," who showed us the Bible and gave us food. I lived in the camp for a year and applied to immigrate to New Zealand.

### A New Life in New Zealand

My application was accepted in May 1979, and shortly thereafter I found myself in a refugee camp in Auckland. A kind sponsor arranged for me to go to the city of Wellington to work in a factory. Once there, I worked hard and sent money home as promised.

In my efforts to learn about Christianity, I began to attend two Protestant churches. Little, though, was said about the Bible. Because I wanted to pray properly, a friend taught me what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer, or the Our Father. (Matthew 6:9-13) But nobody explained what the prayer actually meant. So just as I had done with Buddhist prayers, I uttered the words over and over without understanding what I was saying.

### **A Troubled Marriage**

I married in 1981. About a year later, my wife and I were both baptized, the minister

sprinkling water on our heads. By then, I had two jobs, a fine home, and a comfortable life-style—things I never had in Cambodia. Yet, I was unhappy. Our marriage developed problems, and our attendance at church did not seem to help. Nor did my conduct, for I was gambling, smoking, drinking to excess, and seeing other women. My conscience bothered me, however, and I seriously doubted that I would qualify for heaven, where I was told all good people go when they die.

In 1987, I sponsored my mother and my sister so they could come to New Zealand, and they lived with us for a while. When they left, I did too, the three of us moving to Auckland.

### At Last, I Learn the Bible

When leaving a friend's place, I met two men who were going from house to house. One of them, Bill, asked me, "Where do you hope to go when you die?" "To heaven," I replied. He then showed me from the Bible that only 144,000 go to heaven, where they will rule as kings over the earth. He also told me that the earth will be inhabited by millions of God-fearing humans and transformed into a paradise. (Revelation 5:9, 10; 14:1, 4; 21:3, 4) Initially, this teaching angered me, for it contradicted what I had been taught earlier. Deep down, though, I was impressed at seeing how well the men knew the Bible and how calm they remained. In fact, I regretted not having asked them for the name of their religion.

A few weeks later, I visited a friend whose children were having a Bible study with a couple named Dick and Stephanie. Their study aid was a brochure entitled *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!* I began to read it and found that it made a lot of sense. I also learned that the couple were Jehovah's Witnesses. Then it dawned on me that the two men I had recently met must have been Witnesses too, for what they said harmonized with the brochure.

Keen to learn more. I invited Dick and Stephanie to my home, where I inundated them with Bible questions. Later, Stephanie asked me if I knew God's name. She showed me Psalm 83:18, which reads: "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." That scripture touched my heart, and I began to have a regular Bible study. La, the Laotian girl with whom I was then living, joined in the study.

In the meantime, I also sponsored my brother and his wife. After arriving in New Zealand, they too began to study the Bible with the Witnesses.

Not long thereafter, La and I had to stop our study because we moved to Australia for work. Although we were focused on making money, we began to miss our Bible studies. So one night we earnestly petitioned Jehovah to lead us to his people.

### **Our Prayer Is Answered**

A few days later, I arrived home from shopping to find two Witnesses at my door. I silently thanked Jehovah, and La and I recommenced our study. We also began to attend Christian meetings at the local Kingdom Hall. However, I soon realized that to please God I had to make a number of changes in my life. As a result, I gave up my bad habits and cut my long hair. My old acquaintances teased me, but I managed to control my temper. I also had to address my marital situation, for La and I were not married, and my wife and I were not legally divorced. So in 1990, La and I returned to New Zealand.

Immediately, we telephoned Dick and Stephanie. "Sam, I thought we had lost you!" exclaimed Stephanie. We resumed our



Bible study with them, and as soon as my divorce came through. La and I were married with a clean conscience before God. We remained in New Zealand, where we were baptized in symbol of our dedication to God. Eager to share what I had learned. I had the privilege of studying the Bible with a number of Cambodian and Thai people living in Auckland and nearby.

### **Back to Australia**

In May 1996, La and I returned to Australia and settled in Cairns, north Queensland. Here, I have the privilege of coordinating the preaching work among Cambodian, Laotian, and Thai people in the area.

I could never thank Jehovah enough for his blessings, which include my wonderful wife and our three boys—Daniel, Michael, and Benjamin. I am also deeply thankful that my mother, my sister, my brother, my mother-in-law, and Teng Hann, my friend in the Thai camp, also accepted Bible truth. My family and I still mourn the loss of my father and my uncle, but we are not overly sad. We know that in the resurrection God will so thoroughly undo past injustices that such things "will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart."—Isaiah 65:17; Acts 24:15.

A few years ago at an assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses, I saw a familiar face. It was Bill, who had called on me many years earlier. "Do you remember me?" I asked.

"Yes!" he replied. "I met you in New Zealand years ago and told you that only 144,-000 go to heaven." After all those years, Bill remembered me. We hugged and reminisced, now as brothers.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

## The Cyphochilus Beetle's Shell

The shell of the Cyphochilus beetle has overlapping scales that are ten times thinner than a human hair. "When I put them under the electron microscope, it was like another world had opened up," says Dr. Pete Vukusic of Exeter University in Britain. "It was totally remarkable."

Consider: What Vukusic found was the explanation for the beetle's bright-white color, which has nothing to do with pigment. The secret is in the size of the filaments of which the scales are made and the spacing between the filaments. This structure scatters light in an unusually efficient manner. "Industrial mineral coatings, such as those used on high quality paper, plastics and in some paints, would need to be twice as thick to be as white," reports Science Daily.

Scientists believe that the shell of the *Cyphochilus* helps it blend in with a white fungus where it is often found. But experts are more interested in how the secret of this tiny beetle's color can benefit humans—for example, in the development of ultrawhite synthetic materials. Vukusic says that such things as the paper we write on, the color of our teeth, and even the brightness of lights "will be significantly improved if technology can take and apply the design ideas we learn from this beetle."

What do you think? Did the white shell of the Cyphochilus beetle come about by chance? Or was it designed?

The "Cyphochilus" beetle is no bigger than your fingertip (photo enlarged)

Department of Entomology, Kasetsart University, Bangkok



BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ECUADOR

■ Early explorers in South America must have been stunned at the sight of this huge bird. They were so impressed that they named it after a frightful half-avian, half-woman monster of Greek mythology-the harpy.

Today the striking appearance of the harpy eagle still inspires wonder. Standing three feet tall and having a wingspan of up to seven feet, this bird of the Central and South American rain forests is one of the biggest and most powerful eagles in the world. Females are the larger sex and can weigh in at 20 pounds. Commensurate with their size, harpy eagles are armed with powerful talons that grow to about five inches in length, twice that of bald-eagle talons. Moreover, according to National Geographic Today, harpy-eagle talons are so strong that they can crush "the bones of the sloths, monkeys, and other prey the eagle snatches from the rain forest canopy, often

killing its victims instantly." Despite the harpy eagle's great size and formidable weaponry, however, it flies so quietly that it may not even be noticed as it passes overhead.

Preparing to tag an eagle

Pete Oxford/Minden Pictures

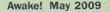
### A Bird in Trouble

Although humans have little to fear from the harpy eagle, the bird has cause to fear man. Poaching and the destruction of its forest habitat have put the

bird on the endangered species list, and sightings in the wild are now rare. In an effort to save the harpy eagle. Panama declared it the national bird, and convicted poachers there face stiff sentences.

Harpy-eagle conservation is under way in Ecuador too. In an interview with Awake!, veterinarian Dr. Yara Pesantes of the Guayaguil Historic Park explained that harpy eagles do not become sexually mature until they reach four or five years of age. Even then, they breed in two-year cycles, females laying just one or two eggs at a time. Slow reproduction makes conservation a challenge. But the park's captive-

> breeding program has already produced a healthy chick, said Dr. Pesantes. Soon, however, conservation will no longer be an issue. How so? The Creator, Jehovah God, will take full control of earth's affairs and prove beyond all doubt that he did not create our planet and its amazing creatures in vain. -Psalm 104:5: Isaiah 45:18.





her baby during her first trimester. About a year later, she lost another baby. Several medical tests failed to reveal the cause. As the years went by, Sara started to gain weight, even though she monitored her food intake and exercised regularly. She also developed cramps in her legs and an increased sensitivity to cold. Finally, blood tests and an ultrasound of her thyroid gland revealed that Sara had a disease called Hashimoto's thyroiditis, a possible cause of her miscarriages.\*

Like most people, Sara had rarely given thought to her thyroid. But her deteriorating health revealed just how important that gland is.

\* While an underactive thyroid may complicate a pregnancy, most women with thyroid disease give birth to a healthy baby. However, it is extremely important that the mother receive hormone replacement therapy, for initially she is the only source of thyroid hormone for her unborn child.



### The Thyroid Gland

The thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland situated in the front of the neck just below the Adam's apple. The thyroid has two lobes that wrap around the trachea, or windpipe, and the whole gland weighs a little under an ounce. It is part of the body's endocrine system, a group of organs and tissues that produce, store, and secrete hormones—chemical messengers—directly into the bloodstream.

The thyroid consists of numerous tiny follicles, or sacs, filled with a viscous fluid that holds the thyroid hormones. These hormones contain a high concentration of iodine. In fact, nearly 80 percent of the iodine in the body is in the thyroid. A dietary deficiency of this element may lead to an enlarged thyroid, or goiter. In young children, a lack of iodine can inhibit hormone production and thereby retard physical, mental, and sexual development—a condition called cretinism.

### **Thyroid Hormones at Work**

The thyroid hormones are designated T3, RT3 (Reverse T3), and T4.\* Both T3 and RT3 are derived from T4, the conversion largely occurring outside the thyroid in body tissues. Hence, when the body requires more thyroid hormones, the gland secretes T4 into the bloodstream, and from there the T4 and its derivatives can affect all body cells.

Just as the accelerator controls the speed of a car's engine, thyroid hormones regulate the rate of the body's metabolism—chemical activity in cells that produces energy and new tissue. Thus, thyroid hormones promote normal tissue growth and repair, affect cardiac rate, and maintain the production of energy for muscles and body heat.

Thyroid hormones also have other important functions. For example, they help the liver remove excess triglycerides and low-density lipoproteins, called bad cholesterol, from the bloodstream. The cholesterol is transferred to the bile and from there to the feces. On the other hand, too little thyroid hormone can cause an increase in bad cholesterol and a decrease in high-density lipoproteins, or good cholesterol.

Just as the accelerator controls the speed of a car's engine, thyroid hormones regulate the rate of the body's metabolism

In the gastrointestinal tract, thyroid hormones speed up the secretion of digestive juices and also increase the rhythmic waves of muscular contractions (peristalsis). Thus, too much thyroid hormone can cause frequent bowel movements, and too little, constipation.

### What Controls the Thyroid?

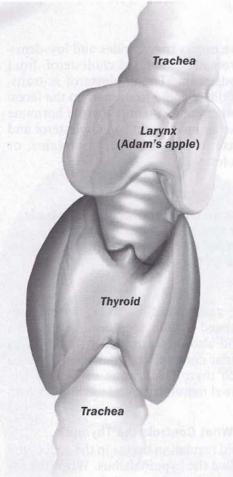
Thyroid regulation begins in the area of the brain called the hypothalamus. When the hypothalamus detects a need for thyroid hormones, it signals the nearby pituitary gland, situated at the base of the brain above the roof of the mouth. The pituitary, in turn, releases thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) into the bloodstream to signal the thyroid to get busy.

Hence, by measuring blood levels of both TSH and thyroid hormones, doctors can diagnose thyroid function and health. This is important, for things can go awry.

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Abortion—Why Is It Such an Issue?
- Should You Be Afraid of the Dead?
- Catholic Youth Urged to Bear Witness

<sup>\*</sup> T3 is *triiodothyronine* and T4, *thyroxine*. The digits 3 and 4 refer to the number of iodine atoms attached to the hormone. The thyroid also produces *calcitonin*, a hormone that helps to regulate calcium levels in the blood.



### When the Thyroid Is Not Well

Thyroid impairment may be the result of a diet poor in iodine, physical or mental stress, genetic defects, infections, disease (usually autoimmune disease), or side effects of medications prescribed for various illnesses.\* An enlarged thyroid, or goiter, may be an indication of disease. The enlargement may be diffuse or in the form of nodules. Although generally benign, goiters should always receive medical attention, for they might indicate a more serious condition, such as cancer.#

Usually, ailing thyroids produce either too much or too little hormone. Overproduction is called *hyperthyroidism;* underproduction, *hypothyroidism.* Thyroid disease can develop gradually and imperceptibly, so one may have it for years and not know it. As with most illnesses, the outcome may be better if the diagnosis is made early.

The more common thyroid ailments are Hashimoto's thyroiditis and Graves' disease.

### **COMMON SYMPTOMS**

Hyperthyroidism: Excessive agitation, unexplained weight loss, rapid heartbeat, increase in bowel movements, irregular menstrual periods, irritability, anxiety, mood swings, protruding eyeballs, muscular weakness, insomnia, and thin, brittle hair.\*

**Hypothyroidism:** Physical and mental sluggishness, unexplained weight gain, hair loss, constipation, exaggerated sensitivity to cold, irregular menstrual periods, depression, voice change (hoarseness or low voice), memory loss, and tiredness.

### AN IMPORTANT TEST FOR NEWBORNS

A few drops of blood taken from a newborn can show whether the baby has a thyroid abnormality. If blood tests reveal a problem, physicians can take corrective measures. Lacking sufficient thyroid hormones, a child may become physically and mentally retarded, a condition called *cretinism*. Hence, babies are usually tested just days after birth.



<sup>\*</sup> Awake! does not endorse any particular therapy. If you suspect that you have thyroid problems, consult a physician who has experience in the prevention and management of thyroid disease.

<sup>&</sup>quot;The risk of cancer is greater for those who have had head and neck radiotherapy or who have a personal history of cancer or relatives with thyroid cancer.

<sup>\*</sup> Some symptoms may be caused by other underlying conditions, so be sure to consult your doctor if you feel unwell.

Both are autoimmune disorders—so named because the immune system attacks normal body cells, viewing them as foreign tissue. Hashimoto's thyroiditis is six times more

### Thyroid disease can develop gradually and imperceptibly, so one may have it for years and not know it

common in women than in men, and it usually results in hypothyroidism. Graves' disease is eight times more common in women and generally causes hyperthyroidism.

Opinions vary as to how often people should be tested for thyroid disease, although screening for newborns is generally felt to be important. (See the box "An Important Test for Newborns.") If a medical examination suggests an underactive thyroid, tests for antibodies that attack the gland are usually ordered. On the other hand, if the test indicates an overactive thyroid, a thyroid scan is usually obtained, provided that the patient is not pregnant or breast-feeding. The presence of thyroid nodules may call for a biopsy to rule out malignancy.

### When Treatment Is Necessary

Medication can ease the symptoms of hyperthyroidism, such as accelerated heartbeat, muscle tremors, and anxiety. Other treatment involves the destruction of thyroid cells so that the gland produces less hormones. And sometimes the thyroid may have to be surgically removed.

For patients with hypothyroidism or who have had their thyroid removed, doctors usually prescribe daily doses of the hormone T4. To get the dosage right, physicians monitor patients undergoing therapy. Thyroid cancer can be treated in a number of ways, including drugs, surgery, chemotherapy, and radioactive iodine.

Sara is successfully undergoing hormone replacement therapy with T4, and a nutritionist has helped her to plan a balanced diet. The results have been positive. As people like Sara have learned, the thyroid may be small in size, but it is big in importance. So take good care of yours—eat wholesome food that includes sufficient iodine, try to avoid chronic stress, and do your best to maintain overall good health.

#### ARE YOUR DIETARY NEEDS BEING MET?

Proper nutrition can help to prevent thyroid problems. For example, does your food include sufficient iodine, which is essential for the production of thyroid hormones? Saltwater fish and other seafood are excellent sources of this vital element. The amount of iodine in

vegetables and meats varies according to the chemical composition of the local soil. To compensate for a lack of the element in food, some governments require that iodine be added to table salt.

Also important to the thyroid is selenium. This trace element is part of the

enzyme that transforms the hormone T4 into T3. Again, the concentration of selenium in vegetables, meats, and milk depends on the soil. Seafood and Brazil nuts are rich sources of selenium. Of course, if you suspect that you have a thyroid problem, consult your doctor; do not try to treat it yourself.

### WATCHING THE WORLD

### Baggage That Goes Astray

Loss of baggage during air travel is anything but infrequent. The *International Herald Tribune* reports that in 2007, "42 million bags went missing, 25 percent more than in 2006." Most of those bags were delivered to their owners within 48 hours, but 3 percent of them, "one bag for every 2,000 travelers, were never found." Lost baggage cost airlines \$3.8 billion in 2007. Among the causes are "congestion due to growing passenger numbers, tight aircraft turnaround times," baggage mishandling, and tagging errors.

### **Cohabiting Catholics**

A French study points to "the decline of religion" as a reason for the change in people's lives and values, whichever faith is considered, says the magazine *Population & Sociétés*. For example, some 88 percent of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 in France claim to be Catholic, but 80 percent of these never go to church other than for weddings, baptisms, or funerals. The weakening of traditional values is reflected in family life. Forty years ago, 1 couple in 10 lived together before marriage. Today, the figure is 9 out of 10. "Among the most regular Catholic churchgoers, 75 percent lived together before their marriage," the study revealed.

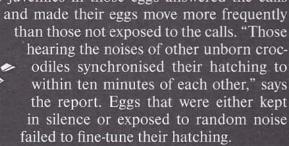
- "Some 160,000 exhibits are missing from museums throughout Russia."
  —RIA NOVOSTI, RUSSIA.
- "NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander has detected snow falling from Martian clouds."—"NASA MISSION NEWS," U.S.A.
- "65 percent of the drivers and passengers who lose their lives on Greek roads do not use their seat belts or crash helmets."—EIKONES, GREECE.

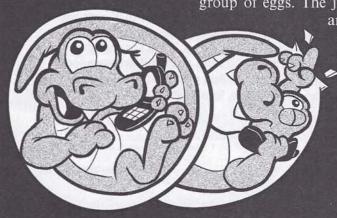
### **Epidemic of Suicides Among Indian Farmers**

In India, since 2002, more than 17,000 farmers each year have taken their own life, often by ingesting pesticides, reports the newspaper *The Hindu*. Among the difficulties farmers face are drought, plummeting crop prices, rising costs of farm cultivation, and problems in obtaining bank credit. As a result, many turn to moneylenders, who charge exorbitant interest rates, leaving borrowers heavily in debt. To cover debts, some farmers even revert to selling their body organs. However, when that fails or nothing else seems to work, thousands turn to the only other escape they know—suicide.

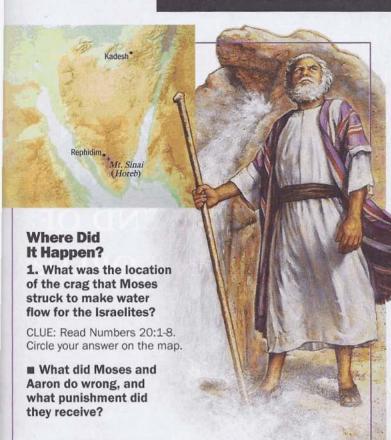
### **Nile Crocodiles Communicate Before Hatching**

"Baby crocodiles talk to each other while still in the egg," synchronizing hatching, reports *The Times* of London. Pre-hatch calls of Nile crocodiles in their eggs were recorded. The calls were then played to one group of eggs. The juveniles in those eggs answered the calls





### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**



From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 7 What will bad company do? 1 Corinthians 15:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 8 Happy are those who are conscious of what?

Matthew 5:

PAGE 13 Our manner of life should be free of what?

Hebrews 13:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 18 What is love not?

1 Corinthians 13:\_\_\_\_



### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

### What Do You Know About the Prophets?

CLUE: Read Numbers 20:9-13: Psalm 106:32, 33,

become angry with the Israelites? Why is it

important that you control your anger?

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, do you think, did Moses

Read Amos 7:10-17, and then answer the following questions.

2..

Of what crime does Amaziah the priest accuse Amos?

3.

What are two qualities that Amos displays when answering the mockery of Amaziah?

FOR DISCUSSION: Should you stop speaking about Jehovah because some people make fun of you? Why, or why not?

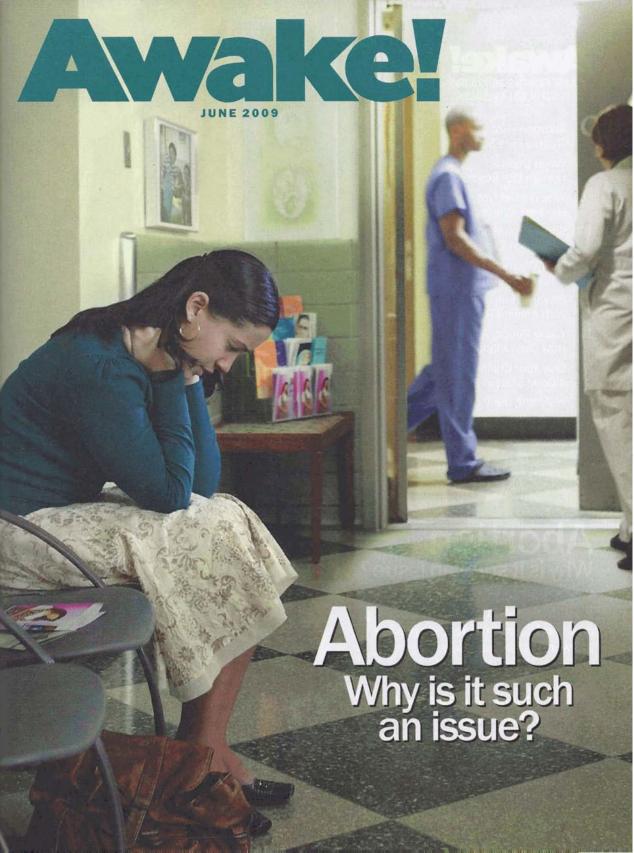
■ Answers on page 11



■ What does the Bible mean when it speaks about the end of the world, or the present system of things? A global nuclear exchange that could wipe out all human life? Or is it referring to some natural phenomenon, such as an asteroid impact? Interestingly, the Bible says that "a great crowd" of humans will survive the world's end. (Revelation 7:9, 10, 14) Who will they be? Can you be among them?

Those important questions will be answered in the public talk "How Can You Survive the End of the World?" It will be delivered at the "KEEP ON THE WATCH!" conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses, beginning in May in the United States and continuing around the world. You are cordially invited to attend the convention nearest you. Contact Jehovah's Witnesses in your area, or write to the publishers of this magazine. The March 1, 2009, issue of our companion magazine, The Watchtower, lists convention locations in the United States.

# "HOW CAN YOU SURVIVE THE END OF THE WORLD?"



### Awake!

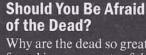
AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000 PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

- 3 Abortion—Not a Trouble-Free Solution
- 5 When Does a Human Life Begin?
- 6 Why We Did Not Have an Abortion
- 10 Should You Worry About Sun Exposure?
- 12 Thirty Years of Underground Translation
- 16 Plovdiv—A Modern City With Ancient Roots
- 19 Young People Ask How Can I Manage My Time?
- 28 Give Your Children a Good Start in Life
- 29 Watching the World
- 30 A Patient's Right to Choose
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 "Keep on the Watch!" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses

### **Abortion**

Why is it such an issue? 3-9

When does human life actually begin? Read how both the latest technology and the Bible provide a surprising answer to that question.



Why are the dead so greatly feared in many parts of the world? What can help people everywhere overcome fear of the dead?



### Catholic Youth Urged to Bear Witness

World Youth Day 2008—the largest gathering ever held in Australia—was viewed worldwide on TV by some 500 million people. What light did it shed on the faith of young people?

## Abortion

### Not a trouble-free solution

BILL had grown up to believe that abortion was a serious sin, tantamount to murder. But his firm, decades-long stand softened in 1975 when this issue became personal. His girlfriend, Victoria, became pregnant, and Bill could not face the commitment of marriage and parenthood. "I quickly opted for the convenient solution," admitted Bill, "and told Victoria that she had to have an abortion."

What Bill called a convenient solution to an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy is not uncommon. A 2007 global study reported that in 2003 there were an estimated 42 million induced abortions worldwide. Women who have abortions come from every race and nationality, from a variety of religious backgrounds, and from every level of income, education, and age between puberty and menopause. If you were facing an unwanted pregnancy, how would you react? Why do so many choose abortion?

### 'All I Could See Was One Option'

"I had just gone through a scary pregnancy and a hard birth, and there was a mountain of monetary and family stress," explained a 35-year-old woman. "Then six weeks after the birth, I was pregnant again. We decided for abortion. In my heart I felt it was wrong, but all I could see was this one option."

Women seek abortions for a variety of reasons, ranging from financial problems to a failed, perhaps abusive, relationship that results in their not wanting any further ties with the man. Or the pregnancy may simply

not fit into the plans of the woman or the couple.

At times, abortion is chosen to protect a reputation. Such was true of the case reported on by Dr. Susan Wicklund in her book *This Common Secret—My Journey as an Abortion Doctor*. A patient of hers who was seeking an abortion confessed: "My parents are very religious. . . . If I have a baby out of wedlock, it would be a mark on them. It would say to all their friends that their daughter has sinned."

Dr. Wicklund then asked: "Okay, so you've sinned in their eyes, but how do they feel about abortion?" The girl confided: "Oh, abortion. That's totally unforgivable. But it's the lesser evil because it would be a secret. If I have an abortion, [my parents'] friends in church will never know."

Regardless of the situation, usually the decision to terminate a pregnancy deliberately is not an easy one. It is often intensely painful. But is abortion a trouble-free solution?

### **Consider the Consequences**

A 2004 research study of 331 Russian and 217 American women who had an induced abortion revealed that about half of both groups felt bad after the abortion. Nearly 50 percent of the Russians and almost 80 percent of the Americans felt "guilt" over the procedure. More than 60 percent of the American women were 'unable to forgive themselves.' Since guilt is such a pervasive problem—even among those who do not consider themselves religious—why do so many young women still have abortions?



#### GIVING BIRTH VERSUS HAVING AN ABORTION

A 2006 study reviewed the life history of scores of women who became pregnant as teenagers. Half of them gave birth, and the other half had abortions. The study concluded that "childbirth was associated with a lower likelihood of receiving psychological counseling services, less frequent sleep problems, and a lower probability of smoking marijuana when compared to abortion."—Journal of Youth and Adolescence.

Another report provided "the results of the four largest record based studies in the world." What did these studies reveal? "Women with a known history of abortion experience higher rates of mental health problems of various forms when compared to women without a known abortion history."—Report of the South Dakota Task Force to Study Abortion—2005.

They often come under intense pressure to have an abortion. Parents, a mate, or well-meaning friends may encourage abortion as a lesser of two evils. This can lead to a hasty, ill-informed decision. "However, after the stressfulness of the decision and the procedure have ended," explained Dr. Priscilla Coleman, an expert on the mental-health risks of abortion, "women's cognitive abilities return to normal, often ushering in feelings of pronounced guilt, sadness, and regret."

This regret often centers on the question: Did the abortion terminate a life that already existed? A report by the South Dakota Task Force to Study Abortion concluded that many pregnant women considering an abortion "were misled into thinking that nothing but 'tissue' was being removed, and relate that they would not have had an abortion if they were told the truth."

After an evaluation of the "stunning and heart-wrenching testimony" of 1,940 women who had abortions, the study concluded: "Many of these women are angered by grief at the loss of a child they were told never existed." It also stated that "the psychological harm of knowing she killed her child is often devastating."

But what is the truth? Does an abortion merely remove some tissue from a pregnant woman's body? Is an unborn child actually a living person while in the womb?

### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Awake! June 2009

Vol. 90, No. 6 Monthly

**ENGLISH** 

# When does a human life begin?

Y BIOLOGICAL mother was 17 years old and 7 1/2 months pregnant when she made the decision to have a saline abortion," explained Gianna.\* She added: "I am the person she aborted. I lived instead of died."

This testimony was given by 19-year-old Gianna in 1996 before a U.S. government committee hearing on the subject of abortion. By the time Gianna had been inside her mother's womb for seven and a half months, her body parts were clearly developed. You probably agree that she was actually a *person*, since she continued her life as a person outside the womb.

Well, then, what about Gianna when she was a *five-week-old* embryo, measuring a third of an inch in length? True, her body parts were not yet fully formed, but the foundation for her nervous system, including her brain, had been established. She had a heart beating 80 times a minute that forced blood through vessels. So if Gianna was a person after seven

and a half months in the womb, might one not logically conclude that she was a person at five weeks—although not as developed?

### The Miracle of Conception

The development of all the parts of an embryo begins at conception, when the ovum, or egg cell, of the woman is fertilized by a sperm cell of the man. New advances in technology have enabled scientists to observe the amazing changes that take place in the nucleus of this one-celled fertilized egg. The molecules making up the DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) of the father and mother combine to create a human life that never existed before.

That original single cell begins the truly miraculous process of constructing a fully formed human. The nature of this "construction" project is determined by our genes, which are segments of DNA. These control virtually everything about us. They determine our height, facial features, eye and hair color, and thousands of other traits.

Afterward, as that original cell divides, the complete genetic "blueprint" is duplicated into *every new cell*. Amazingly, each of these is programmed to develop into whatever kind of cell is needed. This includes heart tissue.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese® (audio Mandarin only, Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, ""> Danish, Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, ""> Danish, Dutch, "Penglish, "Pestonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, "Perench, "" Georgian, German, "" Geek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, "" Japanese, " Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, "" Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, " Polish, "" Portuguese, "" Polish, "" Polish, "" Siovenian, Spanish, "" Siovenian, Spanish, "" Sowahili, Swedish, " " Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: P0 Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: P0 Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: P0 Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: 65617 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehame In V Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: P0 Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: P0 Box 3980, Guzynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>\*</sup> A saline abortion involves the injection of a toxic salt solution into the mother's womb, which the baby swallows, usually causing death within two hours. The mother goes into labor about 24 hours later and delivers a dead or—in a few cases—dying baby.

<sup>\*</sup> Audiocassettes also available.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

brain cells, bone, skin, and even transparent tissue for our eyes. The initial programming within the original cell for the development of a unique new person has understandably often been referred to as "a miracle."

"The human being is fully programmed for human growth and development for his or her entire life at the one cell age," reported Dr. David Fu-Chi Mark, a celebrated molecular biologist. He concluded: "There can no longer be any doubt that each human being is totally unique from the very beginning of his or her life at fertilization."

### A Person Inside the Womb?

From the time of conception in the womb, the child is, not just another part of the mother's tissue, but a separate person. Her body views it as a foreign object. It would be quickly rejected were it not for the "protected world" created in the mother's womb. This new human life—separated from the mother by protective housing—is a person with a unique DNA fingerprint.

Some argue that a woman's body spontaneously aborts many fertilized eggs because of abnormalities, so why shouldn't a doctor be able to abort a pregnancy? Yet, there is a big difference between spontaneous death and deliberate homicide. In one South American country, 71 out of 1,000 children die within

their first year. But just because so many die prematurely, would it be acceptable to kill a child under the age of one? Of course not!

Significantly, the Bible describes a human life as existing in the womb. The psalmist David wrote concerning God: "Your eyes saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writ-

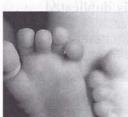
A five-week-old human embryo is not a mere piece of tissue—it has within it the foundation for all the organs of a grown person



(actual size)

ing." (Psalm 139:16) David does not simply say "an embryo" but "the embryo of ME," thus accurately revealing that David's life began when he was conceived, long before his birth. Under inspiration by God, David also revealed that at conception the development of his body parts was according to a plan, or detailed 'written' instructions, which made him the person he was.

Please note also that the Bible does not say that a woman conceives a piece of tissue. Instead, it states: "An *able-bodied man* has been conceived!" (Job 3:3) This too indicates that according to the Bible, a child exists as a person from the time of his conception. Yes, that is when human life begins.



# Why we did not have an abortion

VICTORIA, mentioned in the first article, told her boyfriend, Bill, that she would not have an abortion. "I felt there was a life inside of me," Victoria said. "Realizing that if I stayed with Bill, he would not support me during my pregnancy, I left."

Later, however, Bill altered his thinking and asked Victoria to marry him. But caring for their newborn son seemed overwhelming. "We had no car, no money, few clothes, and very little of anything," explained Victoria. "Bill had a low-paying job, and we were stuck



in low-rent housing, but we persisted."

Others have also faced difficult circumstances because of an unintended pregnancy. Yet, they too have refused to get an abortion. What enabled them to remain resolute and deal with the stress of rearing an unplanned or even unwanted child? The key

was following pearls of wisdom from the Bible.

### Avoid Haste-Make Practical Plans

The Bible wisely observes: "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage, but everyone that is hasty surely heads for want." -Proverbs 21:5.

For Connie, a mother of three boys, including one who was disabled, the thought of another child seemed overwhelming. "We didn't need another mouth to feed," she said. "So we considered an abortion." But before making a hasty decision, she confided in Kay, a workmate. Kay helped her to see that she was carrying an unborn person, a realization that changed her thinking.

Connie, however, needed practical help to form a plan. Since Connie had an aunt in the area, Kay suggested that Connie contact her. When the aunt was reached, she was glad to help. In addition, Connie's husband took on some extra work, and they moved to a less expensive apartment. They thereby managed to care for this new arrival.

Kay also helped Connie to locate some agencies that provide assistance to those who experience an unplanned pregnancy. In many countries, there are such agencies that provide help for new mothers in need. The Internet or local phone directories, which are usually available in most public libraries, can be

used to locate these. Seeking help may take real effort, but it is "the plans of the diligent one" that bring success.

### Face the Reality of a Human Life

"As regards anyone wise," says the Bible, "his eves are in his head; but the stupid one is walking on in sheer darkness."-Ecclesiastes 2:14.

A truly wise woman does not shut her eyes to reality and 'walk in the dark,' so to speak. She uses the 'eyes in her head,' which in effect serve her intellectual powers. This enables her accurately to evaluate the consequences of her actions. Thus, in contrast with one who closes her eyes to the reality of what is taking place in her womb, the wise woman acts with heartfelt compassion to protect her living embryo.

Stephanie, a pregnant girl who was considering an abortion, was shown a sonogram of the two-month-old child within her. "I burst into tears," said Stephanie. "I thought: Why would I want to kill something that's living?"

Another pregnant but unwed young woman, named Denise, also faced the reality that she carried within her a living person. When her boyfriend gave her monev and told her to "take care of it," Denise re-

child within her helped Stephanie decide (Outline added) sponded: "An abortion? I could never do

### What Fear of People Can Do

that!" So she refused to kill her baby.

If pressured by others to have an abortion, those who may initially consider terminating their pregnancy are wise to reflect on the Bible proverb: "Being afraid of people can get you into trouble, but if you trust the LORD, you will





Victoria and Lance

Victoria and Bill today, with Lance and his family

be safe."-Proverbs 29:25, New Century Version.

Seventeen-year-old Monica became pregnant by her boyfriend just as she was about to start business school. Her mother, a widow with five children, was devastated. She had wanted her daughter to learn a trade so she could rise out of their poverty. In desperation, the mother insisted that Monica have an abortion. "When the doctor asked if I wanted to go through with the abortion," explained Monica, "I told him 'No!"

Bewildered at seeing Monica's promising future disappear and contemplating the stress of another child, her mother forced her to leave home. Monica was able to stay with an aunt. After a few weeks, her mother relented and allowed her to return home to have her child. Monica's mother helped her to care for Leon, the new arrival, and grew to love the little boy deeply.

The pressure on a married woman named Robin came from a different source. "When I became pregnant, my doctor treated me for a kidney infection before checking for pregnancy," said Robin. "I was told there was a good chance that the baby would be born severely retarded." The doctor then urged her to have an abortion. "I explained to him the Bible's view of life," Robin related. "I told him that I could not possibly have an abortion."

While the doctor's concern was understandable, there was no immediate threat to Robin's life.\* "When my daughter was born and tests were taken," added Robin, "they showed that she was only slightly retarded with mild cerebral palsy. She functions quite well. Now at age 15, she is reading better and better. She means so much to me, and I thank Jehovah many times a day for her."

### Friendship With God Has Power

The Bible states: "The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him."—Psalm 25:14, American Standard Version.

What influences the decision of many who refuse to have an abortion is their consideration of how their Creator feels about the matter. Enjoying friendship with God, and doing what pleases him, is their paramount concern. This concern is what strongly influenced Victoria, mentioned earlier. "I firmly believed that God gives life," she said, "and I didn't have the right to take the life he had given."

When Victoria began to study the Bible in earnest, her friendship with God grew. She noted: "Making the decision to keep my child

<sup>\*</sup> If at the time of childbirth a choice must be made between the life of the mother and that of the child, it is up to the individuals directly involved to make that choice. However, advances in medical procedures in many lands have made this situation very rare.

made me feel much closer to God and made me want to please him in all aspects of my life. When I prayed for his direction, everything else just fell into place."

Friendship with God, the Source of life, deepens our respect for the life in the womb. (Psalm 36:9) Moreover, God can provide "power beyond what is normal" to help a woman and her family cope with any unplanned pregnancy. (2 Corinthians 4:7) Looking back, how do those who showed respect for God's view of life feel about their decision?

### No Regrets

These parents are not plagued by feelings of guilt or an unresolved sense of sadness and loss. In time, they truly viewed "the fruitage of the belly" as a reward, not a curse! (Psalm 127:3) Connie, mentioned earlier, acknowledged this just two hours after giving birth! Excitedly, she called her workmate Kay and told her how thrilled she was with the prospect of rearing her little girl. Bursting with joy, Connie added: "It is so true that God blesses those who do what pleases him."

Why is acting in harmony with God's view of life so beneficial? Because as the *Source of life*, God sets out his laws and standards in the Bible "for [our] good," or "for [our] own well-being."—Deuteronomy 10:13; *New Revised Standard Version*.

According to Victoria and Bill, whose experience introduces both this article and the opening one, the decision *not* to have an abortion was the turning point of their lives. They explain it this way: "We were heavy into drug abuse and probably would have died had we continued. But respecting the life of our unborn child made us stop and think about our own lives. With the help of Jehovah's Witnesses, we changed."

Lance, their son, is now nearly 34 years old and has been married for over 12 years. Lance explains: "From childhood, my parents taught me to make decisions based on

the Bible. This has benefited me, my wife, and my child to the point of feeling that we couldn't be happier." His father, who initially wanted Victoria to have an abortion, said, "We shudder when we realize how close we came to not having our precious son."

Consider again Monica, who refused an abortion in spite of her mother's pressure. "Two weeks after my son's birth," she reports, "I was contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses and learned how to bring my life into full harmony with God's laws. I soon began to teach my son Leon the value of obeying God, and over time he developed a strong love for God. Leon is now a traveling minister of Jehovah's Witnesses."

Reflecting on what his mother did, Leon said: "Knowing that she had so much love for me that she allowed me to live despite the pressure she was under made me want to use my life in the best way I could to show my appreciation to God for this wonderful gift."

Many who have come to understand God's view of life have no regrets for their decision to preserve the life of the child they now treasure. They can say from hearts brimming with gratitude, "We did *not* have an abortion!"

Monica and her son Leon are deeply thankful that she resisted the pressure to abort him 36 years ago





# Sun Exposure?

"As ozone depletion becomes more marked and as people around the world engage more in sun-seeking behaviour, the risk of developing health complications from over-exposure to UV [ultraviolet] radiation is becoming a substantial public health concern."—DR. LEE JONG-WOOK, FORMER DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

ARTIN, a fair-skinned man from Northern Europe, fell asleep in the shade of a beach umbrella on the Italian coast. When he awoke, he found that the shade had moved and that his legs were no longer white but an angry red. "I had to go to the hospital emergency room," Martin explains. "My legs were as stiff and swollen as two sausages. In the two or three days that followed, I was in terrible pain. I could neither stand nor bend my legs. The skin was so tight that I was afraid it would burst."

Many believe that only light-skinned people like Martin need to fear exposure to sunlight. However, while darker-skinned people have greater protection against sunburn, they can still develop skin cancer. And their cancer often goes undetected until it reaches a dangerous stage. Other dangers connected with overexposure to the sun include damage to the eyes and to the immune system, problems that may not appear until years after the damage is done.

Of course, the level of UV radiation is generally higher the closer one gets to the equator. So those living in the Tropics or the subtropics and those traveling to such areas

should take extra precautions. One reason for doing so is that the atmosphere's protective ozone layer has reportedly become thinner in recent years. Let's examine some of the potential dangers posed by overexposure to the sun.

### Eye Damage

As many as 15 million people earth wide are blind because of cataracts, the world's leading cause of blindness. Cataracts form when proteins in an eye's lens unravel, tangle, and accumulate pigments that cloud the lens. Cataracts are one of the long-term effects of exposure to UV radiation. In fact, it is estimated that up to 20 percent of cataracts are caused or worsened by chronic sun exposure.

Sadly, the so-called cataract belt near the equator includes developing countries where the majority of people are poor. Thus, millions of poor people in Africa, Asia, Central America, and South America are blind because they cannot afford to have an operation to remove their cataracts.

### Damage to the Skin

One third of all cancers diagnosed worldwide are skin cancers. Some 130,000 new

### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Limit your exposure during the midday hours between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., when UV radiation is particularly intense.
- Try to stay in the shade.
- Cover your arms and legs with tightly woven, loosefitting clothes.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your eyes, ears, face, and the back of your neck.
- Good-quality wraparound sunglasses, or sunglasses with side panels, that provide 99 to 100 percent UVA and UVB (categories of ultraviolet light) protection will greatly reduce the risk of eye damage.
- Use—and liberally reapply every two hours—a broadspectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least 15.
- Since sunlamps, sun beds, and tanning parlors use UV radiation, which may damage the skin, WHO recommends avoiding them.
- Be careful to protect babies and young children, whose skin is particularly delicate.
- Never fall asleep in the sun.
- If you develop a mole, a freckle, or a spot that you are concerned about, see your doctor.

cases of melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, are reported each year. And between two and three million new cases of other skin cancers, such as basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas, occur. It is estimated that some 66,000 people die each year from skin cancer.\*

How does sunlight damage your skin? The most common and best-known acute effect of overexposure to the sun is sunburn, or erythema. Its immediate effects can last for days and may include blistering and peeling.

When sunburn occurs, UV radiation kills most of the cells in the outer layer of the skin and damages deeper layers. Any change in the color of a person's skin as a result of sun exposure is a sign of damage. Cancer can result when damage occurs to the DNA of genes that control the growth and division of skin cells. Sunlight also alters the texture of the skin and weakens its elasticity. This leads to premature wrinkling and sagging, as well as easy bruising.

### **Immune-System Damage**

Studies have shown that when the skin absorbs too much UV radiation, the activities of certain parts of a person's immune system are adversely affected. This may reduce the body's ability to defend itself against some diseases. Even moderate sun exposure has been known to increase the risk of bacterial, fungal, parasitic, or viral infections. Many people notice that being in the sun causes them recurrent eruptions of cold sores, or herpes simplex. A World Health Organization (WHO) report explains that one category of ultraviolet light, known as UVB, "appears to reduce the effectiveness of the immune system-in the case of cold sores it can no longer keep the virus Herpes simplex under control which results in re-activation of the infection."

Hence, when it comes to cancers, sunlight can deliver a devastating one-two punch. First, by directly provoking DNA damage and then by reducing the immune system's natural ability to deal with such damage.

Wisely, we need to take precautions so that we do not overexpose ourselves to the sun. Our health, and indeed our very lives, may be at stake.

<sup>\*</sup> For a discussion of skin cancer, see Awake! of June 8, 2005, pages 3-10.

### Thirty Years of Underground Translation

AS TOLD BY ONA MOCKUTÉ

In April 1962, I was on trial in a packed courtroom in Klaipeda, Lithuania, accused of crimes against society. The previous October, I had been arrested and charged with religious activity that was considered a crime against the Soviet State. Let me explain what led up to my arrest and subsequent imprisonment for doing underground translation of publications of Jehovah's Witnesses.



WAS born in 1930 in western Lithuania, not far from the Baltic Sea. Mother had prayed before giving birth to me that her child would become a nun. Yet, she once told me: "In no way can I pray in front of St. Peter or other lifeless idols." Remembering this, I avoided kneeling in church, although I would do so before a crucifix when I was on the road going home from school.

Later, during World War II—from 1939 to 1945—I saw indescribable brutality, and it weighed heavily on my heart. One day during the German occupation, I was berry picking in the forest with my aunt. We happened upon two large pits where we saw recently spattered blood. Knowing that a group of Jews, including my school friends Tese and Sara, had recently been murdered, we concluded that we had stumbled upon their mass grave. Stunned, I cried out: "God, you are so good! But why do you allow such horrible atrocities?"

In 1949, I graduated from high school in Klaipeda near our home, and after that I con-

tinued my study of music. In 1950, I joined a student underground political movement but was soon betrayed and arrested along with 12 others. I was imprisoned in Klaipeda, and while there, I first met one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

### **Learning Bible Truths**

A middle-aged woman was shoved into our prison cell. She smiled kindly at us seven young women. I asked her: "My dear lady, prisoners are usually sad when they are put into prison, but you are smiling! May I ask why you are here?"

"Because of the truth," she answered.

"But what is truth?" I asked.

The woman's name was Lydia Peldszus. She was a German who had been arrested because of her faith as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. We had many spiritual discussions. The heartwarming Bible truths Lydia taught us not only changed the course of my life but also the lives of three others who shared the cell with us.

### How My Bible Knowledge Grew

For my underground political activities against the Soviet occupation, I was sentenced to 25 years in prison, as well as another 5 in exile. Through the Witnesses I met during my years in prisons, as well as in work camps in the Siberian expanse, my knowledge about God and his purposes grew. These Witnesses, like Lydia, had been punished for their beliefs.

Besides growing in Bible knowledge during those years, I also shared my faith with others. Although I did not have opportunity to get baptized in symbol of my dedication to God, other inmates and prison officials considered me to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. In 1958, after serving eight years of my sentence, I was released. I returned to Lithuania in poor health, yet strong in my faith in Jehovah.

### **Underground Translation Begins**

There were then only a few Witnesses left in Lithuania. The others were in prison or in exile in Siberia. In 1959, two Witnesses returned from Siberia and suggested that I translate our Bible publications into Lithuanian. I gladly accepted the challenge, viewing it as a privilege.

In March 1960, I began translating, and in July, I was secretly baptized in the Dubysa River. Because of opposition from the KGB (Soviet State Security Committee), I couldn't find work to support myself, so I lived with my parents, who were favorable toward my beliefs. I cared for cows that belonged to my father and to other neighbors. While looking after the animals, I also did translating. I had a beautiful office as I sat on a stump of a tree surrounded by a carpet of green grass. The ceiling over my head was the blue sky, and my lap served as my desk.

However, I came to see that translating in the open pasture wasn't safe, since I might easily be noticed by KGB agents or their informants. So when hideouts became available in which I could do translating, I moved out of my father's house. Sometimes I worked inside barns where farm animals were on one side of an enclosure and I was on the other side hammering away on my typewriter.

There was no electricity, hence I worked while there was daylight. To camouflage the plunking of the manual typewriter, a specially built windmill whirred away outside the barn. When it got dark, I would go inside the house to eat supper. Then I returned to the barn and slept on a bed of hay.

In October 1961, along with two other Witnesses, I was arrested when my work promoting religious activity was discovered. This led

The heartwarming Bible truths Lydia taught four of us while we were in prison changed our lives

to the trial in 1962 that I mentioned at the beginning of this account. The authorities granted us a public hearing, and we rejoiced to be able to give a witness to many observers. (Mark 13:9) I received a three-year sentence and was sent to a prison in Tallinn, Estonia. To my knowledge, I was at that time the only person incarcerated there for my faith. City administrators visited me, and I shared my beliefs with them.

### **Resuming Translation Work**

Upon release from prison in Estonia in 1964, I returned to Lithuania. There I continued translating our publications, generally from Russian into Lithuanian. The workload

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Depression—Help for Sufferers
- The Lazy Life of a Sloth
- Is It Wrong to Change Your Religion?

Some of the Bible literature I translated at the risk of my freedom

much literature have you printed throughout the years?"

11566 Branasyatemia 19 mimai arba pranašystės išsipildy ins Dievo garbintojus, Jėzus leid

PADRASTNIMAS

ave, Tève, dangaus ir šemės Viešps atingujų ir atvėrei tai sažutėli Kodėl, ryšium su Jehovos ketinima žinoti, ką reiškia laikas?

PADRĄSTNIMAS

vyzdatu parodančiu kaip padrądia
"o taip pat koks tai stramos te
dos sanaikinimas septyniaudešini
so judėjai buvo paimti netalgyča
valditos Inspiruojant pievo Syves
imsakė ta septyniaudešinties me
ie kaip ir spie kitas jas supamt
v vias šta žem bun dykyne ir
flono karalini septyniaudešinties
hova ausakė ne tit ta sunaikinia
jų attetigimą to laiko periodo g
ja. P./ kada jums sukaks Bablione
is aplankysiu ir patvirtinaiu Se
jus vėl jūtų viet parvendiai
tokie verti dėmenio ženklai buvo
lerusaise sunaikiniam?
eniajavė prasidėjo pagal Jebovos
ir tubčia, siinko metai. Praėjus
s, sastvienijusi metai praėjus
s, vastvienijusi metai praėjus
s, sastvienijusi metai praėjus
s, sastvienijus metai praėjus metai praėjus
s, sastvi

I replied that I couldn't answer that question. He then asked, "Well, to what kind of question can you give an answer?"

"To a question that is not related to this work," I replied.

### Winds of Change

Toward the end of the 1980's, the situation in Lithuania began to change. It was no longer necessary to hide from government agents. So, in 1990, others began to do the translating work. Then, on September 1, 1992, a small translation office was established in Klaipeda, the city I ultimately settled in.

Altogether, I worked as a translator for 30 years in 16 locations. I didn't have a home of my own. But how delighted I am to see the fruitage of our work! Today there are about 3.000 of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lithuania. And the work of translating that I once did while hiding in barns and lofts is now carried on in the comfortable Lithuania branch office near the city of Kaunas.

I still remember the remarkable encounter in that cold prison cell almost 60 years ago in Klaipeda. It changed my life! I will always be thankful to our great Creator, Jehovah, that I found the truth about him and his purposes and that I dedicated my life to him to do his

was considerable. Although others helped, I served as the sole full-time translator for the Lithuanian language. I often worked seven days a week from sunrise to sunset. Without Jehovah's help, I would never have had the strength to do that.

Realizing how vital the work was, I always tried to be cautious. Christian brothers and sisters often risked their own safety, as well as that of their family, to hide me, provide me with physical sustenance, and protect me. Such cooperation drew us very close together. While I was working, the family with whom I was staying would be on the lookout for those who might report me. As a warning signal, someone would hit the heating pipes twice with an iron object. Upon hearing that warning, I quickly hid anything that might give away the work I was doing.

If we found that the house where I was working was being watched, I quickly moved to another location. Having a typewriter without official approval was then a serious crime, so someone else would take my typewriter to the new workplace. Then, usually during the night, I would leave for that new location.

Jehovah truly protected me. Officials, although unable to come up with any evidence, knew what I was doing. For example, in 1973, when eight of Jehovah's Witnesses were on trial, the prosecutor called me in for questioning. He asked me straight out, "Mockutė, how



### Plovdiv A MODERN CITY WITH ANCIENT ROOTS

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BULGARIA



PLOVDIV is older than Rome, Carthage, or Constantinople. Some 350,000 people live in this city, which sprawls over seven hills in south-central Bulgaria.

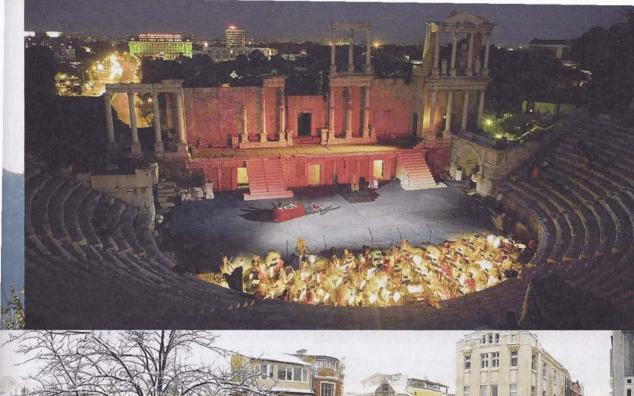
Walk down the city's ancient streets, and you will see abundant evidence of its glorious, tumultuous past. Edifices built by the Thracians, a feared race that lived hundreds of years before the Common Era, can be seen, as well as Greek pillars, Roman theaters, and Turkish minarets.

### The "Loveliest of All Cities"

Archaeological discoveries in and around the city reveal that it was inhabited well before the first millennium B.C.E. Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus wrote that before the fourth century B.C.E., a Thracian fortified settlement named Eumolpias existed at the site of present-day Plovdiv. In 342 B.C.E., Eumolpias was conquered by Philip II of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great. Philip changed the city's name to Philippopolis.

When the Romans gained control of the city in 46 C.E., they called the city Trimontium and made it the capital of Thrace. The Romans were eager to hold this city because it straddled the Via Diagonalis, an important crossroad of the Balkan region. The Romans







added a stadium, an amphitheater (seen above), numerous baths, and many other typically Roman buildings.

Lucian of Samosata described the natural beauty of this city, which was set among three hills at the base of the Rhodope Mountains. (See the box "The City of Seven Hills," on page 18.) It lay near the Maritsa River, with the fertile Thracian plain spreading out before it. Lucian wrote that Trimontium was "the greatest and loveliest of all cities!"

After the decline of Rome in what came to be called the Dark Ages, Slavic peoples settled the area. Over the next few centuries, crusaders looted the town on four separate

occasions. Then, in the 14th century, a political change took place when the city fell to the Turks. They renamed the city Philibé and remained the city's masters until 1878. The Jumaia Mosque with its minaret and sundial still stands as a reminder of that time.

When Russia defeated Turkey in 1878, the city's name was changed from Philibé to Plovdiv. The city was given an economic boost in 1892 when it hosted a trade fair. From then on, Plovdiv became the main trading center of Bulgaria. During the second world war, the Nazis briefly controlled the city but were ousted by the Soviets in 1944. Then, in 1989, Plovdiv slipped from the grip



of yet another mighty empire when the Soviet Union collapsed. Some of Plovdiv's past masters may have been sincere; still, they were hampered by the imperfections that characterize human rule.

#### The Good News Comes to Ploydiv

As early as 1938, a local corporation with the name Nabludatelna Kula (Watch Tower) was formed and registered. It printed and distributed Bibles and Bible literature in Bulgaria. Despite efforts by the Communist government to oppress them, Jehovah's Witnesses kept on sharing the good news of a coming perfect heavenly government with the residents of Plovdiv. (Matthew 24:14) A few began to respond to the message. Now, there are over 200 in Plovdiv who have taken an active stand for Jehovah, and they are organized into two congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The majority of these Witnesses are Bulgarians. But, true to the multinational history of this city, among them are also people from many other nations. There are Americans, British, Canadians, Italians, Moldovans, and Poles. Together, these tell their neighbors about the prospect of being ruled by a perfect administration. At that time, not only the inhabitants of Plovdiv but people of the whole world will enjoy security, "each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble."

—Micah 4:4.

#### "THE CITY OF SEVEN HILLS"

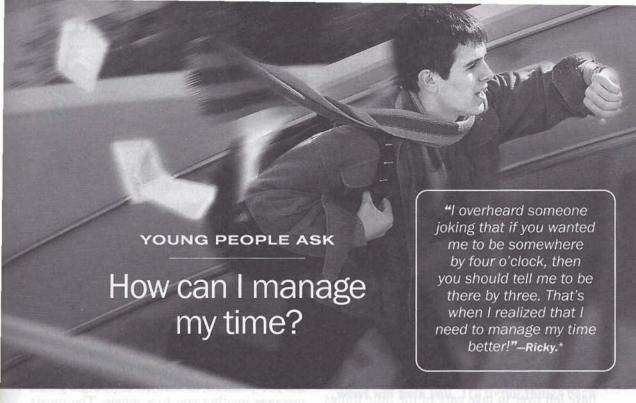
A modern visitor to Plovdiv may find it hard to locate the city's famed seven hills, or tepes, as they are called. A hundred years ago, one of the hills, Markovo Tepe, was demolished as the city expanded. Six hills remain as silent witnesses of Plovdiv's ancient past.

Three are obvious to the

visitor: Bunardjik Tepe, Djendem Tepe, and Sahat Tepe, called such by the Turks because of the clock tower built on this hill. Trimontium, as the Romans called Plovdiv, comprises the three remaining hills: Djambaz Tepe, the largest and highest hill; Taksim Tepe; and Nebet Tepe, which in Turkish means "Guard Hill."

A stroll through the area of Trimontium takes one into the heart of Plovdiv's past, from the ancient ruins and walls of Philippopolis to the still-functioning Roman theater. Of interest too are the well-preserved houses of the Bulgarian National Revivalist era that line the narrow cobbled streets.





OW many more hours could you use in a day? What would you use the extra time

☐ To hang out with friends ☐ To sleep

☐ To study ☐ To exercise □ Other.....

Although it would be great to get a few more hours in the day, that's not going to happen! So, what can you do? Many young people have learned that managing their time has helped them to find those few extra hours they so desperately need. They've also noticed that being in control of their time has reduced their stress, improved their grades, and gained them more trust from their parents. Let's see how time management can work for you.

### Challenge #1 Making a Schedule

What might stop you. Just the thought of scheduling makes you feel trapped! You like

\* Names in this article have been changed.

to be spontaneous, and you don't want every minute of your life controlled by a planner.

Why do it anyway. King Solomon wrote: "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage." (Proverbs 21:5) Solomon was no doubt a busy man. He was a husband, a father, and a king-likely all before he was 20 vears old! And his life got busier after that. Similarly, your life is busy now. But probably it will become even more hectic as you get older. Better that you get organized sooner rather than later!

What your peers say. "About six months ago, I started planning my schedule regularly. I was trying to make things easier, and having a schedule seemed to do the trick!"-Joey.

"Lists help keep me on track. When I have an extra-heavy load, my mom and I write it all down to figure out how we can help each other reach our goals."-Mallory.

What will help you. Look at it this way: Suppose you're going on a road trip. Each family member randomly throws his or her bags into the trunk of the car. It looks as though there won't be enough room for everything. What could you do? You might take everything out and start again, putting the biggest bags in first. Progressively, space is found for the smaller bags.

The same is true with your life. If you start filling up your time with smaller things, you risk not being able to fit in the important things. Make space for the big things first, and you'll be amazed at how much more time you'll have for the rest!—Philippians 1:10.

What are the most important things you need to do?

Now go back and prioritize—number the things you need to do in order of importance. If you get the big things done first, you may be surprised at how much time you will have left over to take care of the little things. But, remember, it doesn't work the other way around!

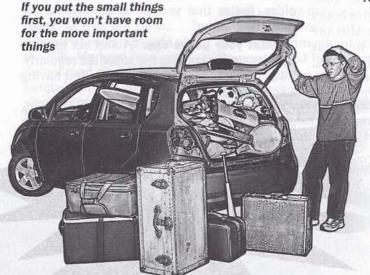
What you can do. Get a pocket planner, and prioritize what you need to do. On the other hand, perhaps one of the following alternatives below would work for you.

□ Cell-phone calendar□ Computer calendar

**O** .....

☐ Small notepad

er calendar 🔲 Desk calendar



In a week's time, youths between the ages of 8 and 18 spent their hours this way:

17 with their parents

20 at school

44

watching TV, playing video games, instant messaging, and listening to music

### Challenge #2 Sticking to a Schedule

What might stop you. After school you just want to relax and watch TV for a few minutes. Or you planned to study, but you get a text message inviting you to a movie. The movie won't wait, but you can put off studying until tonight. 'Besides,' you tell yourself, 'I seem to do better under pressure.'

Why do it anyway. You may obtain a better grade if you study when your mind is more alert. Plus, don't you already have enough pressure to deal with? Why add to it by cramming for a test late at night? What will the next morning be like? You may oversleep,

feel more stress, have to rush out the door, and possibly be late for school.—Proverbs 6:10, 11.

What your peers say. "I love watching TV, playing the guitar, and being with friends. These things aren't wrong; but sometimes they push the more important things back, and I end up rushing."—Julian.

What will help you. Don't just schedule things you have to do—schedule things you *enjoy*. "It's easier to do what I have to,

### WHERE DOES MY TIME GO?

Add up the hours you spend each week

watching TV:
playing video games:
using the computer:
listening to music:

Total:

Hours I can easily use for more important things:

knowing I have enjoyable things planned later," says Julian.

Another idea: Have something to aim for, and then set little goals along the way to make sure you're still on track. Sixteen-year-old Joey, mentioned earlier, says: "I would like to be a full-time Bible teacher. That goal helps me stick to my schedule now in preparation for an even busier life later."

What you can do. What are one or two realistic goals that you could achieve within the next six months?

Sumilierative day new pluestice Albirtel

What is a realistic goal you could achieve within the next two years, and what do you need to start doing now to reach that goal?

## Challenge #3 Being Neat and Organized

What might stop you. You're not sure how being neat and organized has anything to do with managing your time better. Besides, being messy seems so much easier. Cleaning your room can be done tomorrow—or not at all! You don't mind the mess, so it's really not a big deal. Or is it?

Why do it anyway. Having everything neat and orderly will save you time when you are looking for your things. This will also give you much-needed peace of mind.—1 Corinthians 14:40.

What your peers say. "Sometimes when I don't have time to put my clothes away, things I need find a way of getting lost under all the mess!"—Mandy.

"I couldn't find my wallet for a week. I got pretty stressed over that. I finally found it when I cleaned my room."—Frank.

What will help you. Try to put things back in their place as soon as you can. Doing things regularly rather than waiting until clutter gets out of control will make cleaning quicker and finding things easier.

**What you can do.** Try making neatness a habit. Keep everything neater, and see if it makes life easier.

Start small—start *today!* Which suggestions from this article were most helpful to you?

I'll try these tips for ..... week(s) and see if they help.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

### TO THINK ABOUT

- How many hours of sleep do you need to have to perform best?
- Who might you ask to help you with your schedule?
- If you already use a schedule, what adjustments might you need to make?

## Should You Be Afraid of the Dead?

Members of the Annang tribe in Nigeria believe that if the dead are not buried with appropriate praise and recognition, their souls will bring trouble—including death—to family members. Some Chinese also believe that if burial traditions are not followed, the soul of dead ones will attack and even kill others.

THE BELIEF that at death something leaves the body—the soul, the spirit, the ghost—is commonplace in many cultures throughout the world. Many also believe that this soul or spirit can interfere in the affairs of family members or friends.

Yet, is there really some conscious entity that lives on after a person dies? And can that "something" harm the living? What is the Bible's viewpoint?

### Are the Dead Conscious?

The Bible declares that the dead are "conscious of nothing at all." It also says that the dead are "impotent in death." (Ecclesiastes 9:5; Isaiah 26:14) Regarding the first man, Adam, God's Word explains: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul."—Genesis 2:7.

Note that Adam was created a soul, that is, a living person. According to the Bible, Adam was not *given* a soul that could live apart from his body. So when Adam sinned, he died. He became a "dead soul." (Numbers 6:6) "The soul that is sinning—it itself will die," the Bible also says. (Ezekiel 18:4) All of us inherited sin, or imperfection, from the first man, Adam. So when we die, the soul dies.—Romans 5:12.

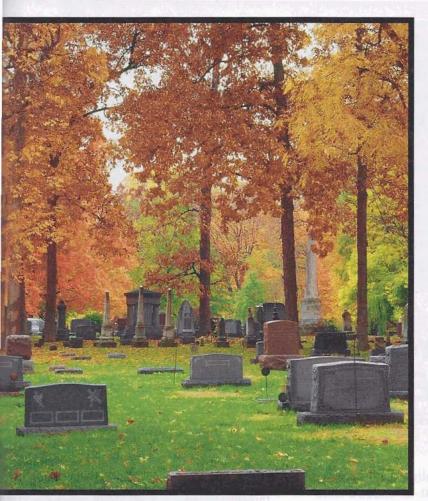
When the Bible describes the condition of the dead, it does not use mysterious terms, but it uses expressions we can understand, such as "fall asleep in death." (Psalm 13:3) Once Jesus said concerning a 12-year-old girl: "She did not die but is sleeping." People "began to laugh at him scornfully because they knew she had died." Yet, the Bible explains that Jesus woke her from the sleep of death. —Luke 8:51-54.

It was similar when Lazarus died. Jesus told his disciples that he was going to visit Lazarus "to awaken him from sleep." The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant, so "Jesus said to them outspokenly: 'Lazarus has died.'" The apostle Paul too spoke of ones 'who had fallen asleep in death' and said that in God's due time, they would be brought back to life.—John 11:11-14; 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-15.

Significantly, nowhere does the Bible teach that a soul lives on after an individual dies. So there is no basis for fear of the dead. What, then, is responsible for the common belief that some part of a human lives on after death? And what is behind the fear that the dead can harm the living?

### The Lie—The Deception

False religions have promoted the idea that at death humans do not really die. Early in human history, the teaching of the immortality of the soul gained worldwide acceptance. As a result, at the death of some rulers—such as the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt—their slaves were killed so that the ruler would have their services in a future life.



Evil spirit creatures, not dead people, delight in harassing humans

in harassing and frightening people.—Luke 9:37-43; Ephesians 6:11, 12.

The Scriptures speak of Satan as "the father of the lie," who "keeps transforming himself into an angel of light." He and his demons are "misleading the entire inhabited earth." (John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:9) Satan, in fact, is behind the lie that the soul is immortal and can harm the living.

Believers of the Bible, however, are protected from being deceived by such lies. They have come to know the truth about Sa-

tan's attempts to deceive people into believing that the dead can communicate with the living. The fact is, as the Bible says: "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) Truly, God's Word contains liberating truths about the condition of the dead!—John 8:32.

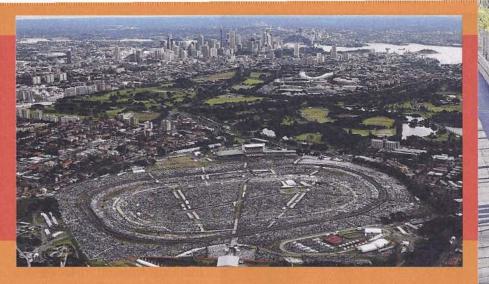
Many people have been harassed by what they have been led to believe are the souls, or spirits, of the dead. They are convinced that such harassment has come from the unappeased souls of dead relatives and others. Yet, as the Scriptures clearly show, this is not true. Invisible spirit forces called demons are behind such attacks, and they delight

### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Are the dead conscious of anything?—Ecclesiastes 9:5; Isaiah 26:14.
- What is responsible for the common belief that some part of a human lives on after death?—John 8:44.
- Where can we go to find the truth about the condition of the dead?

  —John 8:32; 17:17.





# Catholic Youth Urged to *Bear Witness*

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRALIA

AST July Roman Catholics from around the world converged on Sydney, Australia, to celebrate World Youth Day 2008, a religious event sponsored by the Catholic Church.

Flag-waving visitors, or pilgrims, from 170 nations thronged the streets, cheering, singing, and spreading a carnival atmosphere across the city. Thousands of spectators lined Sydney Harbor to glimpse Pope Benedict XVI, who arrived by boat accompanied by 12 other colorful vessels. Some 500 million people worldwide watched the spectacle live on TV.

The final Mass, held at a city racecourse, drew up to 400,000 people, including 4,000 church officials and 2,000 media personnel. It was the largest single gathering ever witnessed in Australia, eclipsing attendance

Colorfully dressed pilgrims paraded through the streets

records set at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

What is World Youth Day? Why is it held? What activities does it include? And what light did it shed on the faith of the young people there in Sydney?

### "An Erosion of Faith"

World Youth Day is an annual event celebrating the faith of Catholic youth. Church members usually mark the day in their local diocese. However, every two or three years, a large city hosts the event and Catholic youth around the world are invited to attend. Ten cities on five continents have staged such gatherings, and millions have attended these.







CHURCH VOCATIONS EXPO

World Youth Day 2008 featured the largest religious vocations expo ever held in Australia. Over 100 Catholic orders and agencies urged more than 50,000 pilgrims to consider careers in the Catholic Church as priests, nuns, or religious workers.

But, as church officials admit, World Youth Day is also about stemming the decline in the Catholic Church. "We face a serious erosion of practice and to some extent an erosion of faith," said George Cardinal Pell, Australia's senior Catholic cleric. "World Youth Day is an attempt to do something about it."

The number of priests is falling worldwide, according to Vatican figures. Tens of thousands have left the priesthood in recent decades to marry. The number of those who are training for the priesthood in Australia has plunged more than 70 percent over the past 30 years. The average age of priests in Australia's largest diocese is now in the 60's, some 20 years older than the average age in 1977.

Church attendance in many countries has also waned. About 25 percent of all Australians call themselves Catholic, but only 14 percent of these regularly attend church. Fewer than 10 percent of Catholic youths are thought to attend. Meanwhile, many Catholics disobey church teachings on sexual morality, contraception, and divorce. Others are disillusioned by church scandals, such as those involving pedophile priests.

World Youth Day "is really a last-ditch attempt to stop the rot," says *The Sydney Morning Herald*. "The church leadership in Australia and Rome is looking for restoration and renewal through the young." How are church leaders reaching out to them?

### Pageantry and Parties

World Youth Day 2008 included church pageantry, group workshops, religious







Jehovah's Witnesses reached out to pilgrims who toured the city of Sydney

pilgrimages, and huge gatherings for the celebration of Mass. Although these activities deeply moved many of these pilgrims, some noted another spirit animating the proceedings. A young Catholic named Alexandra from the United States said about World Youth Day, "It's just one big party."

The six-day Sydney gathering featured 450 festive events, including concerts, films, plays, exhibitions, and street performances. The music ranged from opera and Gregorian chant to heavy metal and rap. Rock concerts drew thousands of young revelers.

These events concerned some Catholics. The occasion has "become just a happy party—a week of partying and concerts and world activities with very little that is truly holy and sacred," said priest Peter Scott to Australia's ABC News. In fact, in the year 2000, Pope Benedict XVI, then Cardinal Ratzinger, wrote: "'Rock' [music] is the expression of

elemental passions, and at rock festivals it assumes a cultic character, a form of worship, in fact, in opposition to Christian worship." —The Spirit of the Liturgy.

The question might be raised, "Will World Youth Day prove to be a life-changing event?" "Perhaps for a tiny minority," noted former priest Paul Collins. "But most will revert to their previous patterns of existence," he said. "Fundamental change doesn't occur through spectacular events, but through reflection, careful planning and a willingness to tackle deep-seated problems."

### "Be My Witnesses"

Church leaders are clearly conscious of those facts. Hence, World Youth Day 2008 featured the theme: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses."\*

<sup>\*</sup> This theme is a partial quote of Acts 1:8 from *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Bishops urged pilgrims to "discover a new apostolic zeal to witness more fully the Gospel in the modern world." Pope Benedict XVI exhorted pilgrims to become "a new generation of apostles," and on another occasion he urged them to spread "the Good News among their friends, their families, and all whom they meet."

These appeals struck a chord with some sincere pilgrims. Ramido, a 20-year-old from the United States, told one reporter: "I take being a witness seriously." But Beatrice, an 18-year-old from Italy, observed: "Young people today don't speak about God. To be a witness these days is a very difficult thing." Many pilgrims echoed the comment of two teenage girls from Texas, U.S.A., "The only ones who witness where we come from are Jehovah's Witnesses!"

### **Youths Who Bear Witness**

Indeed, Jehovah's Witnesses, young and old, are well-known for their zealous witnessing. Why do they do it? "Love for God, love for people, and love for the Bible," says Sotir, a 22-year-old Witness from Sydney.

During World Youth Day 2008, nearly 400 young Witnesses from Sydney, though not attending the event, joined in a special campaign to share Bible truths with visiting Catholic pilgrims. "I was delighted to meet these spiritually-minded young Catholics," said Travas, aged 25. "Many of them had good Bible questions, and I enjoyed showing them satisfying answers."

"My approach was relaxed and informal," said Tarsha, aged 23. "I wanted to welcome them to Sydney and hear what they believed." "Where appropriate, I gave the visitors a gift—the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?*"\* said Frazer, aged 20. "Everyone I met was happy to receive it."

Many visitors clearly enjoyed their discussions with Witness youths. Suzanne, from Fiji, asked Belinda, a 19-year-old Witness,

why God has permitted suffering. Belinda suggested that they discuss the answer presented in the *Bible Teach* book. When they finished, Suzanne said: "Usually people just tell me that God works in mysterious ways. This time I really got an answer!" When Belinda gave her the book, Suzanne exclaimed: "I was trying to memorize everything you said. I didn't think you would let me keep the book!"

One Filipino visitor asked Marina, a 27-year-old Witness, to take her photograph

"We face a serious erosion of practice and to some extent an erosion of faith."

-Roman Catholic George Cardinal Pell

in front of a Sydney landmark. A friendly discussion followed, and Marina gave the woman a *Bible Teach* book. "I actually prayed last night to understand the Bible better," the woman remarked. "This book could be the answer to my prayer!"

Levi, a 27-year-old Witness, struck up a conversation with two visitors from Panama, a mother and daughter. The exchange soon turned to spiritual matters, and a fine discussion of Bible teachings followed. The two accepted a *Bible Teach* book. Later, Levi asked, "What has been the highlight of your trip?" Grasping the *Bible Teach* book, the daughter replied, "Meeting you."

Yes, many young Catholics were eager to know more about the Bible. What about you? Would you like to understand the Bible better? Then why not ask Jehovah's Witnesses for a free home Bible study? They would be delighted to help you too!

was destroyed.

 The she-ass. 2. Balaam's staft. 3. Jehovah's angel. 4. Ebed-melech. He knew that Jeremiah was Jehovah's prophet and did not deserve death. 5. That Jehovah would protect Ebed-melech when Jerusalem

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

<sup>\*</sup> Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.



■ "Television can be a wonderful learning tool," says a report in *The New York Times*. However, "sitting passively in front of the tube for hours is taking its toll on the bodies and minds of children," robbing them of opportunities that can foster creativity, learning, and social interaction.

After studying the viewing habits of 2,500 children, researchers at Children's Hospital in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A., "found that the more TV watched by toddlers aged one to three, the greater their risk of attention problems at age seven," says the newspaper. Such children were increasingly aggressive and impatient and had a decreased attention span. According to educational psychologist Dr. Jane M. Healy, "many parents of children diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder found the difficulty markedly improved after they took away television viewing privileges."

What can parents do to reduce the time their children spend watching television? The report offered the following suggestions: Set limits on when and how long your child can watch television each day. Avoid using the television as a babysitter. Instead, involve your

child in doing household chores as much as possible. Select the shows your child can watch, and turn off the television when the chosen shows are over. Whenever possible, watch the selected programs with your child and talk about what you see. Finally, limit your own television viewing.

Nurturing creativity and social skills in children takes time, determination, and self-discipline. The positive results are worth the effort. This is attested to in an ancient proverb that says: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." (Proverbs 22:6) An integral part of such training involves instructing children in proper moral values.

Jehovah's Witnesses successfully use their book *Learn From the Great Teacher* to instill lessons of acceptable behavior in their children. Indeed, good communication and loving attention by parents during a child's early years are sure to reap lasting rewards. What can be more satisfying than for parents to see their offspring grow into respected and responsible adults?

### WATCHING THE WORLD

### **Biblical Name Unearthed**

Archaeologists digging in Jerusalem's ancient City of David have discovered a 2,600-year-old clay seal impression, or bulla, bearing the name of "Gedaliah the son of Pashhur." Gedaliah is spoken of in the Bible at Jeremiah 38:1, as is Yehukhal—called "Jucal [shortened form of Jehucal (Yehukhal)] the son of Shelemiah"—whose name was found on a bulla in the same area in 2005. The two men were officials in the court of King Zedekiah. *The Jerusalem Post* reports: "This is the first time in the annals of Israeli archeology that two clay bullae with two Biblical names that appear in the same verse in the Bible have been unearthed in the same location."

### **Technology Used Against Crime**

The New York Police Department receives most emergency calls from citizens by phone. Advances in technology recently made it possible to contact the police by text message. "Citizens are now being encouraged to capture crimes in progress on their cellphones and send the videos to the police," reports The New York Times. Steps are also being tak-

- "Consultations for emergency contraceptives—the famous morning-after pill—tripled in the last six months, [and] sales have increased more than 200% since 2004. . . . Calls intensify on Mondays. Most are made by adolescents." —CLARÍN, ARGENTINA.
- American cell-phone users between the ages of 13 and 17 each "sent or received an average of 1,742 text messages a month in the second quarter [of 2008]."—THE NEW YORK TIMES, U.S.A.
- "Mental disorders affect nearly 12% of the world's population."—WORLD FEDERA-TION FOR MENTAL HEALTH, U.S.A.
- "An estimated one in five European adults have tried [cannabis, the source of marijuana] at some time in their lives."
  —EUROPEAN MONITORING CENTRE FOR DRUGS AND DRUG ADDICTION, PORTUGAL.

en, says the paper, "to enable the Real Time Crime Center to send photos out to all patrol cars in the area of a crime."

"We are facing very serious peril [the political crisis in Georgia] ... God is with us and [the] Virgin Mary is protecting [us], but one thing concerns us very deeply—that Orthodox Russians are bombing Orthodox Georgians."—GEORGIAN CATHOLICOS PATRIARCH ILLIA II.

### Magpies Recognize Themselves

"It had been thought only chimpanzees, dolphins and elephants shared the human ability to recognize their own bodies in a mirror," says a Reuters report. Now, Eurasian magpies have been recognized as members of this "club," which had commonly been believed to be exclusive. Researchers marked magpies' bodies with a colored dot that they could see only in a mirror. "The birds regularly scratched the mark on their body, proving they recognized the image in the mirror as themselves and not another animal," claims the report.

# A Patient's Right to Choose

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ITALY

Jehovah's Witnesses refuse to accept blood transfusions. This refusal is based on Bible commands, the earliest of which says: "Only flesh with its soul-its blood-you must not eat."

First-century Christians were told simply: "Keep abstaining . . . from blood,"-Genesis 9:4; Acts 15:29; Leviticus 17:14.

At Monterenzio, Italy, secondary-school students were asked to write an essay on the importance of donating blood. Among those students was Benedetta, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, who wrote the following:

"It is well-known that Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusion be-

cause of their adhering to Bible principles, but this does not mean that they do not accept other treatments. In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses value their health. They strive to find the best medical care available for themselves and their children. They are more than willing to cooperate with doctors, on the condition that their beliefs are respected."

Benedetta then added: "Every pa-

ment that he believes is in his best interests, the right to be respected, and the right to know the risks and benefits of the treatment he will undergo."

The Monterenzio branch of AVIS (Association of Italian Blood Donors) awarded prizes to the students who best expressed their personal feelings on the subject. A report in Monterenzio Vivace magazine stated: "A special mention was given to Benedetta Barbi for her essay that went against the mainstream-the contents being far from the position that AVIS takes-but through which the student was able to express her beliefs with moderation and politeness."

Even though Jehovah's Witnesses' stand on blood goes "against the mainstream," many doctors now see merit in their position. The Witnesses' stand has been a major factor behind a number of innovative medical procedures that reduce blood loss during surgery. This has resulted in benefits to Witness and non-Witness patients alike. However, the main reason Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood is firmly founded on the Bible, as noted in the introduction.

The next time Jehovah's Witnesses call at your home, why not ask them about the Creator's view of blood? They will be eager to discuss it with you, doing so with "deep respect." -1 Peter 3:15.

tient has the right to choose the treat-



With the help of many recognized experts, the DVD Transfusion Alternatives explores the medical, legal, and ethical principles surrounding transfusion alternatives. It is available from Jehovah's Witnesses.



Modi man

facile to

principio

+AStusi o

alcumi cas

Deuza

200053

Riquardo

Sangue



### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?



### What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read Numbers 22:21-27. Now look at the picture. Write your answers on the lines below, and complete the picture by coloring it and drawing in the missing elements.

1.									-								
2.						*										*	

FOR DISCUSSION: Why did Balaam become angry? How do you feel about the way Balaam treated the she-ass, and why do you feel that way?

### **From This Issue**

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGES 7-8 Being afraid of people can do what? Proverbs 29:

PAGE 7 What does the stupid one walk in?

Ecclesiastes 2:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 7 The plans of the diligent one make for what?

Proverbs 21:\_\_\_\_\_

PAGE 22 What are the dead conscious of?

Ecclesiastes 9:\_\_

Answers on page 27



### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

### **What Do You Know About the Prophets?**

Read Jeremiah 38:1-13; 39:15-18. Then answer the following questions.

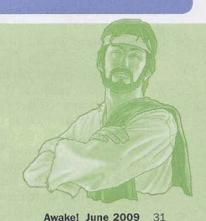
Who rescued Jeremiah, and

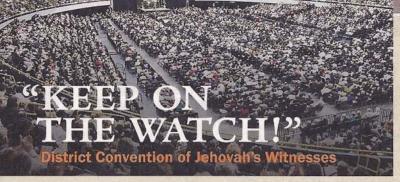
Who rescued Jeremiah, and why did he carry out that risky action?

5 . . .

What did Jeremiah later tell that man?

FOR DISCUSSION: Why did Jeremiah deliver Jehovah's message even though it was dangerous to do so? If you serve Jehovah as Jeremiah did, what can you trust Jehovah to do for you?





Thousands of these three-day conventions. which are scheduled to begin in the United States on the weekend of May 22-24, will be held throughout the world for months to come. In the United States, sessions will begin each day at 9:20 a.m. with a musical program. Friday's theme, based on Matthew 24: 44, is "Prove Yourselves Ready." The chairman's address will be followed by the talks "Conventions Help Us to Remain Watchful" and "Jehovah-God of 'Times and Seasons.' " Then the symposium "Imitate Faithful Ones Who Remained Watchful" will consider how Noah. Moses, and Jeremiah did so. The morning program will end with the keynote address, "How Jehovah Helps Us to 'Keep on the Watch.' "

The first part on Friday afternoon is "Answers to Questions About 'the Last Days,' " followed by the talks " 'You Know Neither the Day Nor the Hour'—Why?" and "Know That the End Is Near." Next will be the six-part symposium, " 'Stay Awake' as Christian Families!" The first three parts address husbands, wives, and young ones directly. The last three parts are entitled "Keep Your Eye Simple," "Keep Pursuing Spiritual Goals," and "Maintain a Family Worship Evening." The afternoon session will end with the feature "Verses That Move Us to 'Keep Strict Watch.'"

Saturday's theme is "Keep Your Senses, Be Watchful," based on 1 Peter 5:8. The five-part symposium "Help People to 'Awake From Sleep,'" will include the parts "Our Ministry—Why So Vital?," "Be Observant in the Ministry," "Focus on Improving Your Skills," "Don't Forget Your Relatives!," and "Maintain Your Sense of Urgency!" After the talks "Imitate Jesus' Example of Watchfulness" and "Be Vigilant With a View to Prayers," the session will

conclude with a talk on baptism, after which those who qualify will have the opportunity to be baptized.

Saturday afternoon's program will feature the five-part symposium "Watch Out for Satan's Traps!"—"The Fire," "The Pit," "The Snare," "The Trap That Chokes," and "The Trap That Crushes." The

special presentation, "Until I Expire I Shall Not Take Away My Integrity!," will follow. The day's sessions will end with the talks "Do Not Look 'at the Things Behind'" and "Learn Watchfulness From Jesus' Apostles."

Sunday's theme, based on Habakkuk 2:3, is "Keep in Expectation . . . It Will Not Be Late." After a talk on the day's theme, the symposium "Keep Your Eyes on the Things Unseen" will consider the following subjects: "The Ten Horns . . . Will Hate the Harlot," "The Nations Will Have to Acknowledge Jehovah." "'All These Kingdoms' Will Be Crushed," "The Devil Will Be Bound for a Thousand Years," "They Will Build Houses and Plant Vineyards," "The Wolf and the Lamb . . . Will Feed as One," "God . . . Will Wipe Out Every Tear." "All Those in the Memorial Tombs Will . . . Come Out." and "God Will Be 'All Things to Everyone.' " The public talk, "How Can You Survive the End of the World?," will complete the morning session.

A special feature Sunday afternoon is the touching modern-day drama "Your Brother Was Dead and Came to Life," based on Jesus' parable of the prodigal son. Following the summary of the weekly Watchtower Study, the convention will conclude with the talk "Keep in Expectation, Watching for Jehovah's Day!"

Make plans now to attend. To find the location nearest you, contact the local Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses or write the publishers of this magazine. In some places four-day international conventions will be held. The March 1 issue of *The Watchtower*, our companion magazine, has a list of all convention locations in the United States, including those that are international.

# AWake

JULY 2009

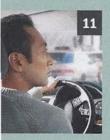


# Depression Help for Sufferers

## Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000 PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

- 3 Depression-How Does It Feel?
- 4 Depression-How to Treat It
- 6 Help From 'the God of Comfort'
- 10 Was It Designed? The Energy-Efficient Boxfish
- 14 The Lazy Life of a Sloth
- 17 Albarracín—An "Eagle's Nest" With a Difference
- 20 Tabàky—A Beauty Treatment From Wood
- 21 Rickshaw Anyone?
- 24 Young People Ask Why Am I Afraid to Share My Faith?
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 'It Answers Our Questions'



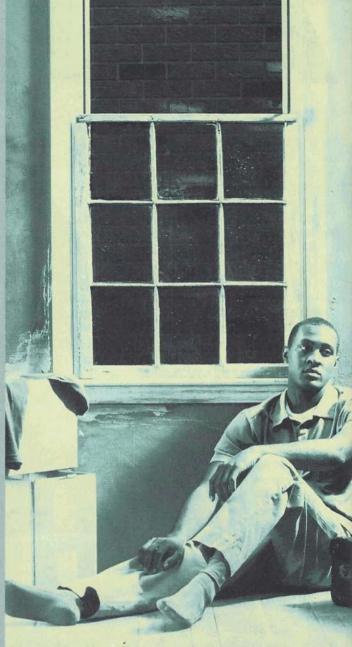
### Driving—How You Can Keep It Safe

Here are some commonsense suggestions for avoiding trouble when driving.



Is It Wrong to Change Your Religion?

Is the religion you received at birth the right one? What if your answer is no?



# Depression Help for Sufferers 3-9

Millions are affected by depression. Are there effective remedies?

### How Does It Feel?

**66** WOKE up one morning when I was 12 years old," remembers James,\* "sat on the edge of my bed, and wondered, 'Is today the day I die?" James was in the grip of major depression. "Every day of my life," says James 30 years later, "I have fought this emotional and mental illness." James felt so worthless when he was young that he tore up his childhood photographs. "I didn't even think that I was worth remembering," he recalls.

Because we all contend with feelings of sadness occasionally, we could conclude that we understand what depression is all about. But how does it feel to have clinical depression?

### A Cruel Intruder

More than just a spell of melancholy blues. clinical depression is a grave disturbance that often hinders a person from carrying out daily activities.

For example, for more than 40 years, Alvaro has been afflicted with "fear, mental confusion, anguish, and deep sorrow." He explains: "My depression made it difficult for me to deal with the opinions of others. I always felt responsible for everything that went wrong." He describes depression as "having a terrible pain without knowing where the pain is located, fear without knowing why and, worst of all, absolutely no desire to talk about it." Now, though, he has found some relief. He knows the cause of his symptoms. He says, "Knowing that others have the same problem that I have has made me feel better."

In Brazil, 49-year-old Maria was afflicted with depression that caused insomnia, pain, irritability, and "a seemingly unending feeling of sadness." When her condition was first diagnosed, Maria was relieved to put a name to the cause of her suffering. "But then I became more anxious," she explains, "because so few people understand depression and it carries a stigma."

### Nothing to Be Sad About?

Although depression sometimes has an obvious trigger, it often intrudes on a person's

"Your life is suddenly darkened by a cloud of sadness for no abbarent reason"

life without warning. "Your life is suddenly darkened by a cloud of sadness for no apparent reason," explains Richard from South Africa. "Nobody you know has died, and nothing distressing has occurred. Yet, you feel dejected and listless. And nothing will make the cloud go away. You are overwhelmed by feelings of despair, and you don't know why."

Depression is nothing to be ashamed of. Yet, Ana in Brazil felt ashamed to be diagnosed with depression. "In fact, eight years later I still feel ashamed of myself," she admits. In particular, she finds it difficult to deal with her emotional anguish. "The suffering is sometimes so intense," she explains, "that I feel physical pain. All the muscles in my body hurt." At such times it is almost impossible to get out of bed. And then there are the times when Ana cannot stop crying. "I sob

<sup>\*</sup> Names in this series of articles have been changed.

with such intensity and become so exhausted," she says, "that it feels as though my blood has stopped circulating."

The Bible acknowledges that people can become dangerously low in spirit. For instance, the apostle Paul's concern about one man was that he might be "swallowed up by his being overly sad ["swallowed up in overwhelming depression," Jewish New Testament]." (2 Corinthians 2:7) Some depressed people become so distraught that they wish they could just fall asleep in death. Many feel as did Jonah the prophet: "My dying is better than my being alive."—Jonah 4:3.

What can depressed ones do to treat and cope with this distressing malady?

# Depression How to Treat It

HUSBAND and I have sought out medical treatment, made lifestyle changes, and worked hard to develop a routine that I can cope with," says Ruth, who has suffered with depression for many years. "We seem to have found an effective medication, and I am doing better. But during the time when nothing else seemed to work, the constant love of my husband and friends helped me not to give up."

As Ruth's experience indicates, patients who suffer from clinical depression need all the support they can get, including whatever medical approach might be advisable. It can be risky to ignore depression because in some cases when left untreated it can be lifethreatening. About two thousand years ago,

Jesus Christ acknowledged that those with medical experience could provide needed help, when he said that 'those who are ill need a physician.' (Mark 2:17) The fact is that physicians can do much to alleviate the suffering of many depressed patients.\*

### Some Helpful Options

There are a number of treatments for depression, varying according to the symptoms and the severity of the illness. (See the box on page 5, "What Kind of Depression?") Many people may be helped by their family physician, but some need more specialized treatment. The doctor might prescribe antidepres-

### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a world-wide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. ◎ 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Vol. 90, No. 7

Monthly

ENGLISH

<sup>\*</sup> Awake! does not endorse any particular treatment. Each individual should carefully evaluate his options before making a personal decision.

sant medication or recommend some other form of assistance. Some people have experienced good results with herbal medications, dietary adjustments, or a controlled exercise program.

### Common Issues

1. Well-meaning friends with little or no medical training might try to tell you which method of treatment to accept and which to reject. They might also have strong opinions about whether you should take herbal medicine, prescribed medication, or nothing at all.

**Consider:** Make sure that any advice you accept comes from a reliable source. In the end, you are the one who must make an informed choice.

**2. Discouragement** may make patients discontinue their choice of treatment because they do not seem to be getting better or because of unpleasant side effects.

Consider: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment." (Proverbs 15:22) A program of medical therapy is more likely to succeed if there is good communication between doctor and patient. Frankly explain your concerns or describe your symptoms to your doctor, and ask whether you need to adjust the treatment or simply to persevere before you will begin to experience benefits.

**3. Overconfidence** can make patients stop their medical remedy abruptly after a few weeks because they feel better. They may

### WHAT KIND OF DEPRESSION?

The effectiveness of any particular medical approach depends on what type of depression a patient has.

- Major depression has symptoms that are severe enough to last six months or longer if untreated and that impact on most aspects of a sufferer's life.
- Bipolar disorder is also known as manic depression. Sufferers may experience emotional extremes that careen between prolonged episodes of intense hyperactivity (manias) and devastating lows (depressions).

  —See the article "Living With a Mood Disorder," in the January 8, 2004, issue of this magazine.
- Dysthymia, although not as disabling as major depression, has depressive symptoms that make it difficult for the patient to function normally. Some may also experience intermittent periods of major depression.
- Postpartum depression is a debilitating emotional condition that affects many mothers after they give birth.—See the article "Understanding Postpartum Depression," in the June 8, 2003, issue of this magazine.
- Seasonal affective disorder likely occurs as a result of a lack of sunlight during autumn and winter. It usually clears up during spring and summer.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese<sup>o</sup> (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, <sup>o</sup>o Danish, <sup>o</sup>Dutch, <sup>+o</sup> English, <sup>+o</sup>o Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, <sup>o</sup>o French, <sup>+o</sup>o Georgian, German, <sup>+o</sup>o Geek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, <sup>+o</sup>o Japanese, <sup>+o</sup>o Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, <sup>+o</sup>o Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, <sup>+o</sup>o Polish, <sup>+o</sup>o Portuguese, <sup>+o</sup>o Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, <sup>+o</sup>o Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, <sup>+o</sup>o Swahili, Swedish, <sup>+o</sup>o Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamase, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Idd Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guyanaho, PR C0970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.iw.org.

forget how debilitating their symptoms were before they started their medication.

**Consider:** Suddenly terminating medical treatment without consulting a doctor can have serious and even life-threatening consequences.

Though the Bible is not a medical textbook, its Author, Jehovah God, is our Creator. The next article will examine the comfort and guidance God's Word provides both for those who suffer from depression and for their caregivers.

# Help From 'the God of Comfort'

KING DAVID was a man who experienced much anguish and many "disquieting thoughts." Yet, he never doubted that the Creator understands us in every way. "O Jehovah, you have searched through me, and you know me," he wrote. "You yourself have come to know my sitting down and my rising up. You have considered my thought from far off. For there is not a word on my tongue, but, look! O Jehovah, you already know it all."—Psalm 139:1, 2, 4, 23.

We too can be certain that our Creator understands us and the debilitating effect that depression can have on our imperfect minds and bodies. He knows what causes depression and how we can best cope under present circumstances. Furthermore, he has revealed how he will cure depression forever. We could wish for no one better to help us than our compassionate "God, Who comforts and encourages and refreshes and cheers the depressed."—2 Corinthians 7:6, *The Amplified Bible*.

But depressed ones may wonder how God can help them when they experience distressing emotions.

### ■ Is God accessible to the depressed?

God is so close to his depressed servants that it is as if he *resided with* the "crushed and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly ones and to revive the heart of the ones being crushed." (Isaiah 57:15) How comforting to know that "Jehovah is *near* to those that are

broken at heart; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves"!—Psalm 34:18.

### ■ How can the depressed get comfort from God?

At any time of the day, God's worshippers have approach to the "Hearer of prayer," who can help us to cope with distressing feelings and circumstances. (Psalm 65:2) The Bible urges us to pour out our hearts to him: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:6, 7.

# ■ What if feelings of unworthiness make us think that our prayers are not being heard?

Depression may cause us to conclude that our attempts to please God are not adequate. However, our heavenly Father is sensitive to our fragile emotions, "remembering that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14) Even if "our hearts may condemn us," we can "persuade our hearts" that "God is greater than our hearts and knows all things." (1 John 3:19, 20, footnote) Therefore, you can use expressions in your prayers that you glean from such Bible passages as Psalm 9:9, 10; 10:12, 14, 17; and 25:17.

### ■ What if we are too distraught to put our feelings into words?



### "SPEAK CONSOLINGLY TO THE DEPRESSED"

When Barbara's depression and feelings of worthlessness are more than she can bear. she and her husband phone Gerard, a family friend who is a Christian overseer. He always listens patiently as Barbara sobs uncontrollably and repeats the same anguished thoughts she has expressed before.

Gerard has learned to listen without being judgmental, argumentative, or condemning. (James 1:19) As the Bible advises, he has learned to "speak consolingly to the depressed." (1 Thessa-Ionians 5:14) Patiently he reassures Barbara that she is very precious to Jehovah God, to her family, and to her friends. He usually reads one or two comforting passages from the Bible, even though he has read some of them to her before. Then, without fail, he offers to say a prayer with her and her husband over the phone, something they

always find very consoling. -James 5:14, 15.

Gerard is very aware that he is not a trained physician, and he never tries to take over the role of Barbara's doctors. He does, however, complement her medical treatment with something few doctors give-consoling scriptures and comforting prayers.

To "speak consolingly to the depressed"

You might say: "I just wanted to let you know that I've been thinking of you. I know you don't always feel very well. How have you been lately?"

Remember: Speak sincerely and listen with empathy, even if the depressed

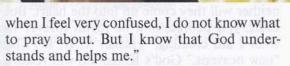
person says the same things he or she has said before.

You might say: "I am amazed at what you are able to do (or "I am impressed by the Christian qualities you display") despite your health limitations. Even if you wish you could do more, Jehovah loves and appreciates you, and so do we."

Remember: Be compassionate and kind.

You might say: "I came across this encouraging scripture." Or "I thought of you when I reread this favorite Bible verse of mine." Then read or quote the verse.

Remember: Avoid a preachy tone.



### ■ How does God answer our prayers?

The Bible does not suggest that God removes all our difficulties now. However, God does impart the strength to cope with "all

give up! Keep approaching "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort." knowing that he understands your feelings and needs. (2 Corinthians 1:3) Maria, mentioned earlier in this series, says: "At times,

ing that rational speech is difficult, do not

When painful emotions are so overwhelm-

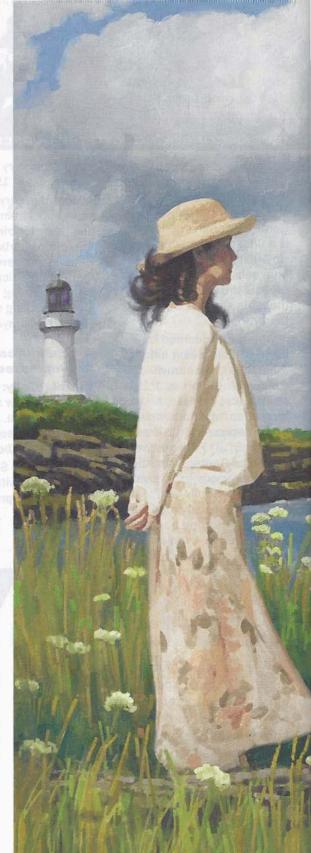
things"—including depression. (Philippians 4:13) "When I first suffered from depression," admits Martina, "I prayed for Jehovah to heal me immediately because I thought I would not be able to bear it any longer. Now I am content to pray for strength each day."

The Scriptures are a vital source of spiritual strength to help afflicted individuals to cope with depression. Sarah, who has battled depression for 35 years, personally experienced the practical value of daily Bible reading. She relates: "I truly appreciate what the medical profession has done for me. Above all, though, I realize the spiritual and practical value of reading God's Word. I have made a habit of reading it."

### No More Depression-Ever!

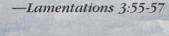
When Jesus Christ was on earth, he demonstrated his God-given power to cure painful maladies. Jesus was eager to bring relief to people who suffered from grievous sicknesses. Moreover, he himself knows the agony of distraught emotions. On the night before he was to die a painful death, "Christ offered up supplications and also petitions to the One who was able to save him out of death, with strong outcries and tears." (Hebrews 5:7) As distressing as that was to Jesus at the time, we benefit now because "he is able to come to the aid of those who are being put to the test."—Hebrews 2:18: 1 John 2:1, 2.

The Bible reveals that God purposes to remove all the distressing conditions that contribute to depression. He promises: "I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating." (Isaiah 65:17, 18) The "new heavens," God's Kingdom, will restore the "new earth," a society of righteous people on earth, to perfect physical, emotional, and spiritual health. All sicknesses will be wiped out permanently.



"I have called out your name, O Jehovah, from a pit of the lowest sort. My voice you must hear. Do not hide your ear to my relief, to my cry for help. You have drawn near in the day that I kept calling you. You said:

'Do not be afraid.'"



### Consolation From the Scriptures

Lorraine is strengthened by Jehovah's promise found at Isaiah 41:10: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not gaze about, for I am your God. I will fortify you. I will really help you. I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness."

**Álvaro** says that the words of Psalm 34: 4, 6 often console him: "I inquired of Jehovah, and he answered me, and out of all my frights he delivered me. This afflicted one called, and Jehovah himself heard. And out of all his distresses He saved him."

Naoya says that reading Psalm 40:1, 2 always comforts him: "I earnestly hoped in Jehovah, and so he inclined his ear to me and heard my cry for help. . . . He firmly established my steps."

Psalm 147:3 reassures **Naoko** that Jehovah "is healing the brokenhearted ones, and is binding up their painful spots."

Jesus' words recorded at Luke 12:6, 7 help Eliz trust in Jehovah's care: "Five sparrows sell for two coins of small value, do they not? Yet not one of them goes forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your heads are all numbered. Have no fear; you are worth more than many sparrows."

### Other Bible verses:

Psalm 39:12: "Do hear my prayer, O Jehovah, and to my cry for help do give ear.

At my tears do not keep silent."

2 Corinthians 7:6: God "comforts the depressed."—"New American Standard Bible."

1 Peter 5:7: "Throw all your anxiety upon [God], because he cares for you."

WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Energy-Efficient Boxfish

To produce a car that is sturdier, more energy-efficient, and environmentally friendly, designers looked to an unlikely place for inspiration—under the sea! The boxfish, found near coral reefs in tropical waters, provides an excellent model for a vehicle with lightweight construction and astounding aerodynamics.

Consider: The boxfish can swim fast —covering a distance of up to six times its body length each second. But this speed is more than a feat of strength. Contrary to expectations, the cubelike shape of the

fish actually enhances its aerodynamic qualities. In fact, engineers who constructed a model of the boxfish and tested it in a wind tunnel found this design to slip through the air far more efficiently than compact cars do.

The boxfish has a bony outer skin that gives it maximum strength with minimal weight.

Tiny vortices form in the water surrounding the fish, stabilizing the creature when it encounters

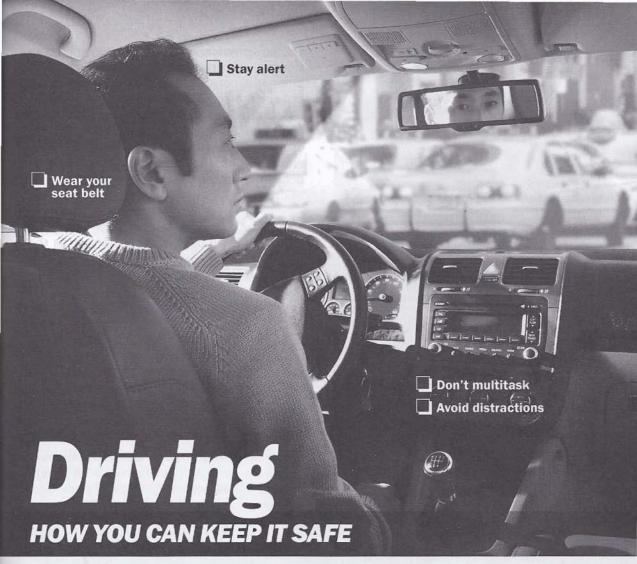
turbulence. Thus, the boxfish has outstanding maneuverability and protection from injury.

Engineers believe that the boxfish provides the secret to producing a safer, more fuel-efficient, yet lightweight, vehicle. "Quite frankly," says research and development chief Dr. Thomas Weber, "we were surprised when this clumsylooking fish, of all things, became our model for designing an aerodynamic and fuel-efficient car."

What do you think? Did the energyefficient boxfish come about by chance? Or was it designed?



Boxfish: © Hal Beral/V&W/SeaPics.com; car: Mercedes-Benz USA



THOUGH driving a motor vehicle is viewed as a necessity by millions of people today, driving comes at a price. It has been estimated that over 1,200,000 people lose their lives in traffic accidents worldwide each year! Thus, would it not be worth our while to learn how to drive safely? Let us look at some practical steps that we can take.

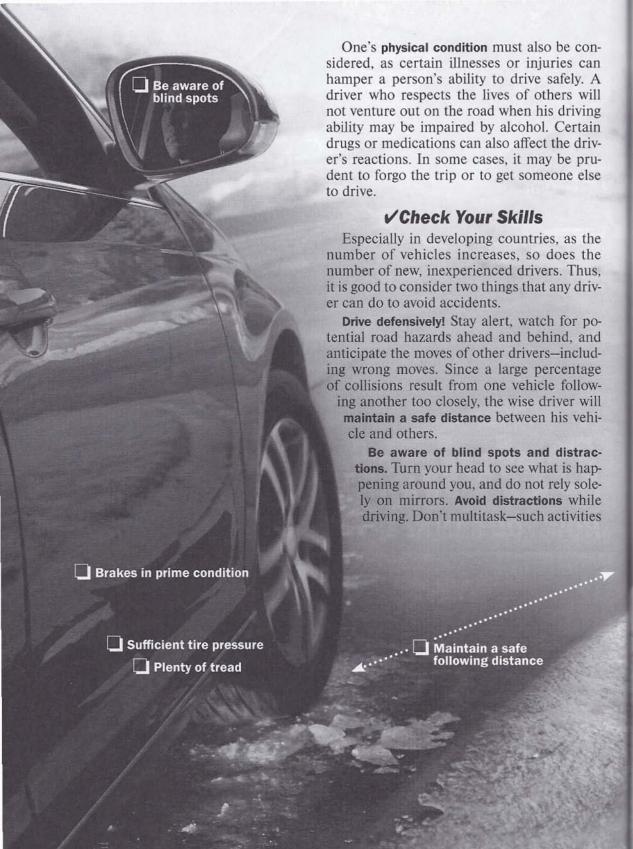
### 4. False.

15:17, 20, 3. Cushan-rishathaim.-Judges 3:8. thought they were drunk.-Acts 2:13. 2. Judah.-Joshua T. Jerusalem.—Acts 2:5. ■ Galilee.—Acts 2:7. ■ They

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

### **V** Check Yourself

A report in the Australian Journal of Social Issues noted that one of the most significant steps a driver can take to reduce the risk of fatalities is to improve his behavior at the wheel. Therefore, before setting out, a driver might want to ask himself, 'Am I in the proper condition and mood to drive?' Fatigue can dull one's mind and slow responses. The Land Transportation Office of the Philippines lists anger, anxiety, and excitement as emotions that affect driving habits and that can lead to unwise decisions and even violent road rage.



as talking on the phone or operating gadgets are distracting.

If you drive a motorcycle: Some authorities say that per mile, a motorcyclist is 37 times more likely to die in a crash than the occupant of a car. What protective steps can you take? Both of the preceding steps also apply to the motorcyclist. In addition, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation in the United States says: "Be visible." Make sure others can see you. Keep your headlights on. Stay out of blind spots of other vehicles. "Dress for safety." Wear a helmet and bright, thick, protective clothing. "Ride extra defensively." Assume that others cannot see you, and drive accordingly.

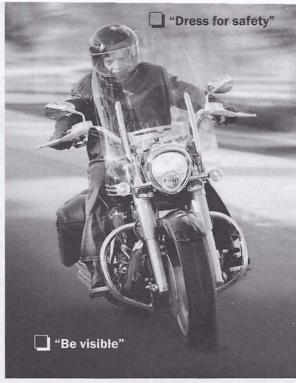
### **✓ Check Your Vehicle**

The driver should be safety conscious, and his vehicle should be in good condition. Brakes should be in prime condition, as should all working parts. Tires should have plenty of tread to reduce the possibility of sliding or hydroplaning. Sufficient tire pressure will improve handling and braking. Most vehicles today have seat belts. These do little good if they are not worn.

Drive your vehicle according to conditions. Wet roads, and especially those with ice or snow, affect **stopping distances** and steering ability. For night driving, **headlights** should be kept in good condition and speeds should usually be lowered. Since life is a gift from God, it is only proper that we do what we can to protect our lives, including learning to drive safely.

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Prejudice and Discrimination —Why? How Can You Cope?
- A Universe Full of Surprises
- Should There Be a Clergy-Laity Distinction?





### **ECONOMICAL DRIVING**

- **Drive smoothly:** Frequent acceleration and braking wastes fuel.
- Avoid idling: Cars today do not generally need to be warmed up before being driven. If the car will be standing for more than half a minute, switch off the engine.
- Maintain tire pressure: Properly inflated tires roll more easily, thus reducing fuel use significantly.
- Keep your speed down: Driving at a high speed can be unsafe and can require extra fuel.

# The Lazy Life of a SLOTH

URRY and get your camera!" I called to my sister as I spotted a green sloth on the jungle path in front of me. We laughed when we realized that there was no reason to hurry—the sloth is one of the world's slowest animals.

To learn more about this mammal, I visited Zoo Ave in La Garita de Alajuela, Costa Rica. More than just a zoo, it is a center for the rescue, rehabilitation, and return to the wild of native animals. There I met biologist Shirley Ramírez, who was Zoo Ave's enthusiastic research director. She took me to meet the zoo's resident sloth, Pelota, which in Spanish means "ball." Sloths, in fact, may curl up into a tight ball to sleep. Pelota is a two-toed sloth the size of a small dog, with a fluffy coat of fur, a snub nose, and big, watery brown eyes.

My research told me that sloths are solitary animals and that they give birth to a single offspring about once a year. The baby sloth clings to its mother for the first four to six weeks until weaned but may ride on her belly for five to eight months afterward. During that time the mother feeds her baby tender, easily digestible leaves from her lips. Later, the baby reaches out to grab its own leaves without ever releasing its grip on its mother. During their time together, the mother sloth also familiarizes her little one with the small home range in which it will live.

### Two-Toed, Three-Toed, Green, and Cold

I learned that the sloth I had seen in the jungle was a three-toed sloth. It had a black

mask around its eyes, a stubby tail, a coat of wiry hair, forelimbs that are much longer than its hind limbs, and a yellow-gold patch between its shoulders. This kind of sloth has nine vertebras in its neck, allowing it to rotate its head 270 degrees in search of its favorite leaves. But why did it appear to be green? Shirley answers, "That greenish tinge is algae that grows on the sloth's coat."

In contrast with their longer-armed, threetoed cousins, the two-toed species have forelimbs that are about the same length as their hind limbs. Their hair is long, brownish-gold, and soft to the touch.

The sloth spends its days sunning itself high up in the forest canopy. Its body temperature can fluctuate from an ambient 75 degrees Fahrenheit at night to 91 degrees Fahrenheit during the day—a temperature range greater than that of any other mammal. The sloth has so little muscle mass that it cannot shiver to stay warm. That is why it often sleeps curled up in a ball, to conserve heat. Its undercoat of short, fine hairs helps to insulate it. And yes, the sloth can sleep for 20 hours a day!

### **Lingering Over Lunch**

Since digestion requires body heat for bacterial activity and fermentation, the sloth's low body temperature gives it an incredibly low metabolic rate. Leaves may take up to a month to go through the stages of digestion in a sloth's multichambered stomach before passing into the small intestine. During a rainy season with many successive cool days,



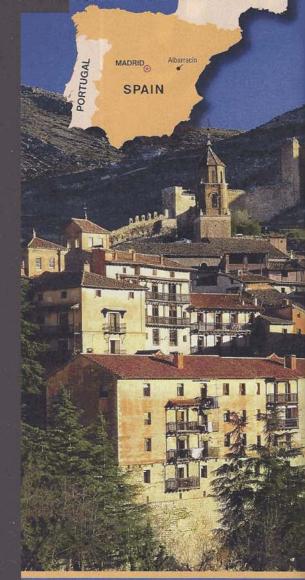
sloths can die of starvation with a stomach full of food. "For sloths," explains Shirley, "the sun's warmth is indispensable to digestion."

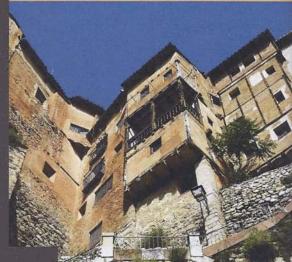
Shirley adds: "As a zookeeper who handles the animals and cleans their cages, I have to say that my favorite thing about sloths is that they only defecate and urinate once a week! When they do, they go down to the ground, dig a hole, and bury their excrement. It is the only thing they do on the ground."

### **Designed for Life Upside Down**

Almost everything else sloths do-eat, sleep, mate, and give birth-they do suspended in trees. The little mammals were ingeniously designed by their Creator for life in an upside-down world. The animal hangs by its fingers and toes, which are equipped with three-inch-long claws that hook and lock over branches and vines. To prevent the sloth's skin from getting soaked by tropical downpours, even its hair grows upside down! Its hair parts on the belly and grows down around the back-just the opposite of the hair of other land-based animals-so the rain runs right off. Though on the ground the sloth is awkward and clumsy, when in the branches above, it is the epitome of leisurely grace. Surprisingly, the sloth is also an excellent swimmer!

What else did I learn about this quiet denizen of the treetops? Two things stand out. First, the sloth has an amazing ability to survive injuries and even doses of poison that would be lethal to other mammals. Severe wounds heal quickly, and they rarely become infected. Hence, a better understanding of the sloth's immune defenses would be helpful to medical research. And second, people who are constantly rushing and under stress might find it beneficial to imitate, at least to some extent, the sloth's relaxed pace and easygoing nature.—Contributed.







AN "EAGLE'S NEST" WITH A DIFFERENCE

"Visit one of the most beautiful towns in Spain, visit Albarracín."—José Martínez Ruiz, Spanish writer also known as Azorín, 1873-1967.

LBARRACÍN is a unique town. What makes it so? First of all, its geography, then its history, and finally its delightful surroundings. For these reasons, in 1961 the Spanish government declared this small town in the province of Teruel a national monument. And in 2005, a group of tourist representatives selected Albarracín as "the most beautiful town in Spain."

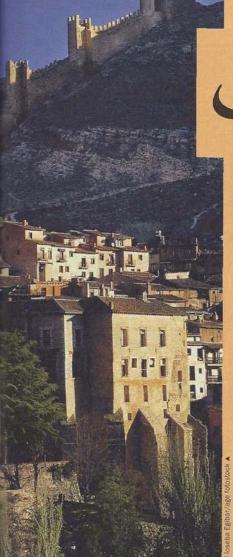
Nestled in the mountains of central Spain, Albarracín is an ancient town of some 1,000 inhabitants. Surrounding it are green meadows watered by several rivers and a mountain range that shares its name—Sierra de Albarracín.

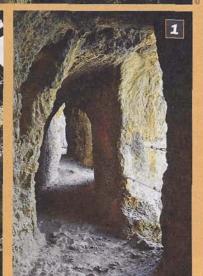
### A Source of Food and Water

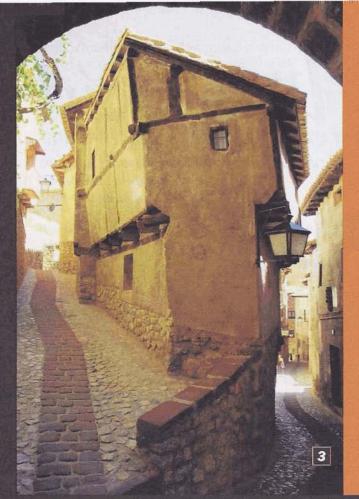
In ancient times, the abundance of game in the Albarracín area attracted settlers, whose cave paintings show that they were fine artists and keen observers of nature. They drew many huge bulls and other animals, which they colored using a white pigment that has been seen only in this area. Scholars think that these caves, where scenes of daily life were portrayed, were used as meeting places for religious or social activities.

Even today, deer, wild boar, and small game abound in the nearby reserve of Montes Universales. And the Guadalaviar (Arabic for "White River") is one of the best trout rivers in Spain.

In 133 B.C.E., the Romans subjugated the local Celtiberian tribes and founded several villages in the Albarracin region. In the first century C.E., Roman engineers built a 12-mile-long **aqueduct (1)**. It is considered to be one of the most complex of the Roman public works projects in Spain. Roman religion too left its mark. A carving on a Roman gravestone found in the town of Albarracin indicates that emperor worship was practiced here.







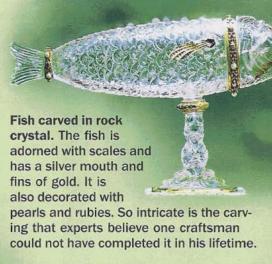




### ARTISTIC TREASURES DISCOVERED AT ALBARRACÍN

Silver ointment jar. Moorish
King Abdelmelic had this jar made
for his wife Zahr, meaning "Flower"
in Arabic. A gold engraving on it says
in part: "Perennial blessing...,
divine help, and

divine help, and guidance toward goodness and justice." It is considered one of the best silver treasures of Hispano-Arabic art.



Jar: Museo de Teruel. Foto Jorge Escudero; crystal: Sta. M\* de Albarracin Foundation

### **Prosperity Under Muslim Rule**

The Moors had overrun this region by the ninth century, and it is believed that the name Albarracín is derived from the name of the Muslim settlers who came here, the Berber clan Banu Razin. In the Middle Ages, Moors, Jews, and nominal Christians lived together with mutual respect and tolerance. As a result, this was the most prosperous period of Albarracín's history.

Artisans of Albarracín produced beautiful objects, and evidently the practice of medicine also flourished here. A set of surgical tools that was unearthed indicates that local surgeons even operated on cataracts. Albarracín continued under Muslim rule until the end of the 12th century, when it passed to Roman Catholic hands. It is noteworthy that this seems to be the only occasion in Spanish history when such a political change occurred peacefully.

How does Albarracín look today? A visitor can still meander through the medieval town, since no modern sections have been added.

### An Astonishing Silhouette

Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955) described Albarracín as "the city that thrusts its astonishing silhouette into the heights." This description is apt, since the town is perched on an outcrop of rock that stands some 4,000 feet above sea level and is surrounded by a deep gorge, which serves as a defensive moat. This natural fortress has protected the town throughout the centuries and has earned Albarracín the nickname Eagle's Nest.

While strolling through the narrow, cobbled streets of the town, the visitor will spot fascinating architecture of a bygone age. Some of the best examples are the Corner Balcony, the Blue House (2), and the Julianeta House (3). The latter almost appears to perform a balancing act at the junction of two streets.

Houses from the period are constructed of wood and plaster, materials that weigh much less than stone—an important factor if you are building on top of a hill. Their small windows with lace curtains and **iron grilles (4)** also attract a visitor's attention. The overlapping eaves, carved wooden balconies, and unusual door knockers, often shaped in the form of animals, add a further touch of distinction.

Any who suffer from vertigo should be careful not to look down when entering one of the hanging houses. Because the town was built on an outcrop of rock and building space was limited, inhabitants built some of their houses right on the edge of the cliff.

A Moorish castle crowns the hill above the town, where the original nucleus of Albarracín once lay. The Torre del Andador is part of the original wall built by the Arabs in the tenth century. Later constructions were the Gothic cathedral, dating from the 16th century, and the horseshoe-shaped town hall, with its rounded-arch porticoes.

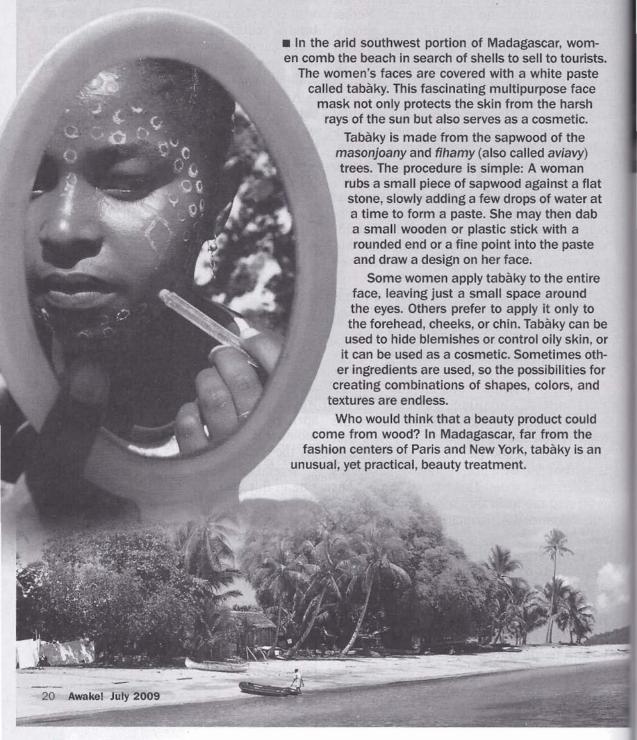
### **Natural Treasures in the Vicinity**

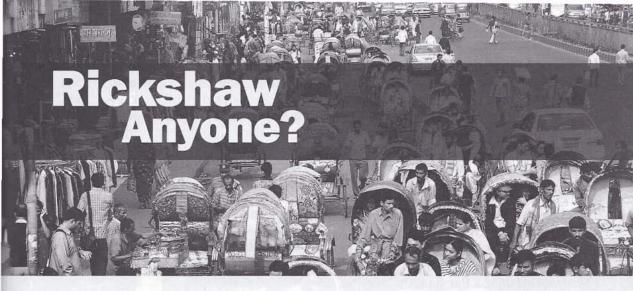
For nature lovers Albarracín has even more to offer. The surrounding mountain range has a great diversity of ecosystems, with abundant flora and fauna. Fountains, springs, and waterfalls grace the wooded mountains. And those who camp here can enjoy the spectacular starry nights.

Several families of Jehovah's Witnesses reside in this area. The beautiful surroundings they live in remind them of the Bible promise that under God's Kingdom obedient mankind will live in a worldwide paradise. This is the good news that they endeavor to share with their neighbors.—Psalm 98:7-9; Matthew 24:14.

Each year more than a hundred thousand tourists walk through the narrow streets of Albarracín. If you come to Spain, why not visit this unique "eagle's nest" hidden in the mountains?

# TABÀKY A Beauty Treatment From Wood





PON arriving in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, a visitor immediately notices something different. Amid the sea of people is an army of cycle rickshaws! Endless streams of these conveyances flood the streets and alleys, carrying people and goods.

In Dhaka, the rickshaw remains a popular means of transportation. While the number of registered rickshaws is about 80,000, most feel that there are many more than that number on the roads every day. In fact, Dhaka has been dubbed the rickshaw capital of the world!

### Early Rickshaws

While earlier versions of a mobile chair were in use during the reign of Louis XIV of France (1638-1715), the invention of the original human-drawn rickshaw is sometimes credited to Jonathan Gable, an American missionary in Japan in the 1870's. It is said that he designed an innovative vehicle for his frail wife and that it was the first one called in Japanese jinrikisha, meaning a vehicle pulled by human power. The word eventually developed into "rickshaw" in English. Over time, various styles of rickshaws became prevalent throughout Asia as an inexpensive means of transport. When Charles Taze Russell (right), who took a zealous lead in the work of the Bible Students (as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called), visited Japan in 1912, his delegation used rickshaws in their travel within the country.

In Dhaka, three-wheeled rickshaws made their debut in the late 1930's. Unlike the rickshaw drawn by a man using two poles attached to the body of the vehicle, these looked similar to a big tricycle. The rickshaw wallah, or driver, pedaled the cycle at the front of the rickshaw. This allowed him to take his passengers or cargo farther, steering more easily through bustling traffic and congested roads.



### **Rickshaw Art**

The rickshaws in Dhaka appear to have every square inch covered with decorations. Where did the tradition of decorating rickshaws come from? When rickshaws first appeared in Dhaka, they had to compete with tomtoms, horse-drawn wagons that carted passengers and goods. Perhaps to lure customers to the new means of transport, rickshaw owners began decorating their vehicles. The paintings and advertisements were eventually turned into distinctive art.

The overall effect of rickshaw art is spectacular. This is art on wheels. In fact, Syed Manzoorul Islam, a Bangladeshi art critic, describes rickshaws in Dhaka as "moving picture galleries." Every possible surface of the vehicle is decorated with colorful designs, pictures, and patterns. Twirling tassels, tinsel, and shiny beads hang from its sides or on its folding canopy.

Individual artists have their own styles and favorite subjects. Some artwork looks more or less like a billboard, with scenes from the Indian and Bangladeshi cinema, past and present. The art reflects nostalgia for village life and rural landscapes and, at times, social and political issues. Animals, birds, hunting, and lush country scenes are common themes.

In the 1950's, only a handful of rickshaw painters existed. Today, between 200 and 300 artisans produce these unique pieces of art. The rickshaws are assembled piece by piece in specialized workshops, with parts often made from recycled materials. For example, taking a piece of tin cut from a drum of cooking oil or some other discarded item, the artist uses enamel paint to create a spectacular scene in full color. Rickshaw art is the folk art of Bangladesh. It has assumed an identity and a charm all its own.

### The Rickshaw Driver

As you can well understand, the rickshaw driver leads a strenuous life. Imagine spend-

ing your whole day cycling with heavy loads of people or goods. The customers may include housewives, schoolchildren, businessmen, or shoppers with packages. Often, two, three, or more individuals are crowded onto a rickshaw. The rickshaw may also be used to carry sacks of rice, potatoes, onions, or spices for a merchant to sell at the market. Sometimes a passenger will be perched high up on top of his mound of possessions. To a bystander, it may appear impossible for a driver to pull such heavy loads. Yet, in the heat of the sun or in the rains of the monsoon, the humble rickshaw driver is hard at work without complaint.

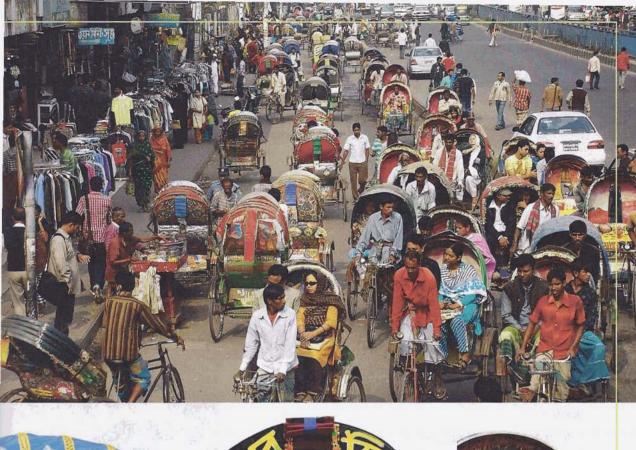
The majority of drivers have come to the city from poor rural areas where they are unable to eke out a living as farmers. Not able to find higher-paying jobs, many leave their family behind to become rickshaw wallahs. Using their physical strength and energy, they may earn the equivalent of a few dollars (U.S.) each day.

### **A Unique Means of Transportation**

Rickshaws continue to flourish in Dhaka because of the flat terrain and countless alleys and lanes that defy other forms of public transportation. Many people consider this nonpolluting mode of travel to be both beneficial and enjoyable.

In most Asian cities, rickshaws have become an "endangered species." There, the desire for mass transportation and a modern lifestyle has made the rickshaw almost obsolete. However, while many people may view them as out-of-date, there is an effort to preserve the rickshaw through improved designs.

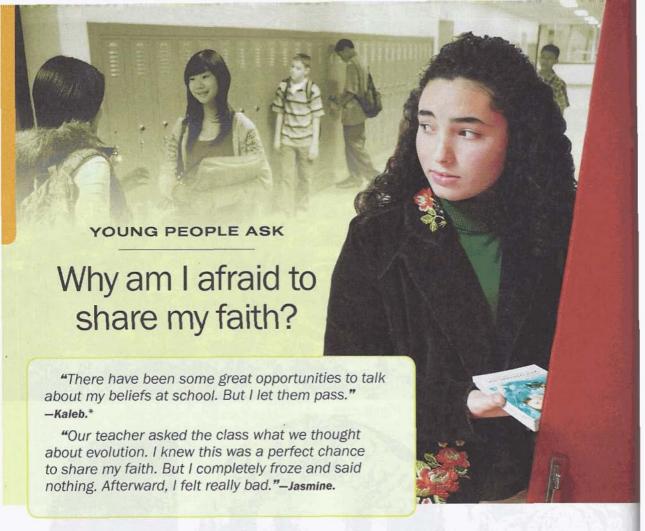
When traveling in Dhaka, you may choose from many forms of public transportation—bus, taxi, motorbike, auto rickshaw, or the colorful cycle rickshaw. But you will never forget it if you experience a leisurely ride through the crowded streets of Dhaka on a cycle rickshaw!











F YOU are a Christian youth, perhaps you can relate to the experiences of Kaleb and Jasmine. Like them, you may love the Biblebased truths you have learned and want to share them with others. Still, you might dread the thought of speaking up. But you can develop more courage. How? Take the following steps as you prepare for each school year:

1. Define your fears. When you think about sharing your faith, it's easy to imagine the worst-case scenario! Sometimes, though, you can reduce your fears simply by putting them into words.

Complete the following sentence.

If I talk about my beliefs at school, this is what might happen:

If it's any comfort, your fears may be a lot like those of other Christian youths. For instance, 14-year-old Christopher admits, "I'm afraid kids will make fun of me and tell everyone I'm weird." And Kaleb, quoted at the outset, says, "I was worried someone would ask a question and I wouldn't know the answer."

2. Accept the challenge. Are your fears completely unfounded? Not necessarily. "Some kids pretended they were interested

<sup>\*</sup> Some names in this article have been changed.

What's your foot thate homosexuals, stand on form thate homosexuals, stand on forms stand on form thate homosexuals, stand on forms stand on form thate homosexuals, stand on forms stand on forms that stand on forms that stand on forms that stand on forms the foot form that stand on forms the foot form that stand on forms the foot form that stand on forms that should believe in cerept blood transfer that should believe in to make our own choices.  Why don't your foot forms that should believe in cerept blood to be the experts!  Why won't your foot forms that should believe in cerept blood to be the experts!  Why won't your foot forms that should believe in cerept blood to be the experts!  Why won't your foot forms that the fine forms that should believe in cerept blood to be the experts!  Why don't your foot forms that the fine forms that fine foot for for foot for foot for foot for foot for foot foot		question	answer	next question	research	answer
Why don't your arelationship until I've decided not to get into you date?  Why don't you are agree on the worship it.  So-and-so is a member of your religion?  So-and-so is a member of your wouldn't standard?  Why don't you?  Why should! believe in evelution? Scientists don't even agree on it, and they're evolution?	morals	What's your stand on homosexuality?	I don't hate homosexuals, but I can't approve of their conduct.	Isn't that viewpoint prejudiced?	1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work, Volume 2, chapter 28.*	No, because I'm against all forms of immorality—homosexual or otherwise.
Why don't you salute the flag?  Why don't you salute the flag?  Why won't you accept safe transfusions transfusions?  Why won't you risk of AlDS. But the Blue seging to accept blood, so transfusions?  So-and-so is a member of your religion, and he brainwashed! We all have did such-and-such.  Why don't won't you?  Why don't won't you?  Why don't won't you accept safe transfusions as a member of your religion, and he brainwashed! We all have did such-and-such.  Why don't won't you?  Why don't won't you?  Why should I believe in even agree on it, and they're sevelution?  So-and-so is a member of your requirements, but we're not standard?  Why don't won't you?  Why should I believe in even agree on it, and they're even agree on it, and they're sevelution?	gniteb	Why don't you date?	I've decided not to get into a relationship until I'm older.	Is it because of your religion?	Song of Solomon 8:4; Young People Ask, Volume 2, chapter 1.	Yes. We date only with a view to marriage, and I know I'm not ready for that yet!
Why won't you accept safe transfusions  Why won't you accept safe transfusions  Why won't you accept blood transfusions?  I accept safe transfusions accept blood accept blood transfusions?  I accept safe transfusions accept blood accept blood transfusions?  I accept safe transfusions accept blood transfusion accept blood accept blood accept blood, so a die? Wouldn't blood accept blood, so and accept blood, so accept blood, so alies and accept blood, so accept blood accept blood, so accept blood, so accept blood accept	neutrality	Why don't you salute the flag?	I respect the land I live in, but I don't worship it.	So you wouldn't fight for your country?	Isaiah 2:4; John 13:35; What Does the Bible Really Teach? pages 148- 151.*	No, and millions of Jehovah's Witnesses in other lands wouldn't fight against this country either.
So-and-so is a member of your requirements, but we're not religion, and he brainwashed! We all have did such-and-such.  Why can't you?  Why don't would! believe in evolution? Scientists don't even agree on it, and they're supposed to be the experts!	poold	Why won't you accept blood transfusions?	I accept safe transfusions—the kind that don't carry the risk of AIDS. But the Bible says to abstain from blood, so that's where I draw the line.	But what if you were going to die? Wouldn't God forgive you?		
Why should I believe in evolution? Scientists don't you believe in even agree on it, and they're evolution? supposed to be the experts!	choices	So-and-so is a member of your religion, and <b>he</b> did such-and-such. Why can't you?	We're taught God's requirements, but we're not brainwashed! We all have to make our own choices.	Isn't that a double standard?		
	creation	Why don't you believe in evolution?	Why should I believe in evolution? Scientists don't even agree on it, and they're supposed to be the experts!			

#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY



"I've had some kids laugh at me for expressing my faith. But usually they leave me alone once they realize that their teasing doesn't bother me."—Francesca, Luxembourg.

"If you don't tell people that you're a Christian, you can lose touch with who you are and start acting like everyone else. You can't let yourself be a follower; you have to remain your own person."

—Samantha, United States.



"When I was younger,
I didn't want to be different
from other kids. But then
I began to appreciate how my
faith contributes to a better
quality of life. That realization
boosted my confidence—it
made me feel proud of what
I believe."—Jason, New Zealand.



#### CONVERSATION STARTERS

- "What are your plans for the summer?" [After response, mention your spiritual plans, such as attending a convention or expanding your ministry.]
- Mention a news item, and then ask: "Did you hear about that? What do you think of it?"
- "Do you think that the world's financial situation [or another problem] is likely to improve? [Allow for response.] Why do you feel that way?"
  - "Do you belong to a religion?"
  - "Where do you see yourself five years from now?" [After response, share your spiritual goals.]

#### TO THINK ABOUT

■ Could these be the thoughts of someone at your school?

'I know you're one of Jehovah's Witnesses. You might think I'm going to ridicule you, but really I respect you. How do you remain so calm amid all the problems in the world? I'm scared. Will there be another war soon? Will my parents divorce? Will I make it through school today without getting shot or stabbed? I've got so many questions, but you seem to have life all figured out. Is that because of your religion? I'd like to discuss it, but I'm afraid to bring up the subject. Will you please start the conversation?'



in my beliefs," says Ashley. "But later they turned my words against me and teased me in front of others." Nicole, 17, had this experience: "A boy compared a verse in his Bible with the same verse in mine, and the wording was different. He said that my Bible had been changed. I was stunned! I didn't know what to say."\*

Situations like these can seem pretty scary! But instead of running away, accept such challenges as a normal part of your life as a Christian. (2 Timothy 3:12) "Jesus said his followers would be persecuted," says 13-year-old Matthew, "so we can't expect everyone to like us or our beliefs."—John 15:20.

**3. Think of the benefits.** Can any good come out of a seemingly bad experience? Amber, 21, thinks so. "It's hard to explain your faith to people who don't respect the Bible," she says, "but it helps you to understand your own position better."—Romans 12:2.

Look again at the scenario you described at Step 1. Think of at least two good things that could come out of that situation, and write them below.

1																										
2					ì			Ì	J			ĺ	1		١			į	į							

Hint: How might making known your faith lead to less peer pressure? How will your doing so affect your self-confidence? Your feelings for Jehovah God? His feelings for you?—Proverbs 23:15.

- **4. Be prepared.** "The heart of the righteous one meditates so as to answer," says Proverbs 15:28. Besides meditating on what you'll say, try to anticipate questions others may ask. Research those topics, and plan out answers you feel comfortable giving.—See the chart "Plan Your Response," on page 25.
- **5. Get started.** Once you're ready to talk about your beliefs, how should you start? You have options. In a sense, sharing your faith is like swimming: Some people ease their way

into the water; others jump right in. Likewise, you could start the conversation on a non-religious subject and gradually test the waters, so to speak. But if you find yourself worrying too much about what might go wrong, your best option may be to 'jump right in.' (Luke 12:11, 12) "Thinking about sharing my faith was always harder than actually doing it," says 17-year-old Andrew. "Once a conversation was started, it was much easier than I thought it would be!"\*

**6. Be sensible.** Just as you wouldn't dive into shallow waters, be careful not to jump into pointless arguments. Remember, there's a time to speak and a time to keep quiet. (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7) At times, even Jesus refused to answer questions. (Matthew 26:62, 63) And remember this principle: "Sensible people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later."—Proverbs 22:3, *Today's English Version*.

So if you sense an argument coming on, don't "walk right into it." Instead, give a brief and discreet reply. For example, if a classmate taunts, 'Why don't you smoke cigarettes?' you could simply say, 'Because I'm not into body pollution!' Depending on the response, you can decide whether or not to explain your beliefs further.

The above steps can help you to be "always ready to make a defense" of your faith. (1 Peter 3:15) Of course, being ready doesn't mean that you'll never feel nervous. But Alana, 18, observes: "When you explain your beliefs despite being scared, it makes you feel as if you've accomplished something—you've overcome your fear and taken the risk that it might not go well. And if it does go well, you'll feel even better! You'll be glad you had the courage to speak up."

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

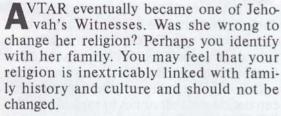
<sup>\*</sup> Bible translations use different wording. However, some are more faithful to the original languages in which the Bible was written.

<sup>\*</sup> See the box "Conversation Starters," on page 26.

THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# Is It Wrong to Change Your Religion?

When Avtar began studying the Bible, her Sikh family was upset. "In my homeland," she says, "changing your religion cuts you off from the community. Even our names have religious meaning. To change your religion is viewed as rejecting your identity and disrespecting your family."



Honoring one's family is important. The Bible says: "Listen to your father who caused your birth." (Proverbs 23:22) But it is more important to seek to know the truth about our Creator and his purposes. (Isaiah 55:6) Is such a search possible? If so, how important is this search to you?

#### Searching for Religious Truth

The world's religions teach conflicting ideas. Logically, those teachings cannot all be true. As a result, there must be many people who, as the Bible says, "have a zeal for God; but not according to accurate knowledge." (Romans 10:2) Yet, as recorded at 1 Timothy 2:4, the apostle Paul says that it is God's will that "all sorts of men... come to an accurate

knowledge of truth." How can such accurate knowledge be found?

Consider reasons for examining the Bible. Paul, who was an inspired Bible writer, stated: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching." (2 Timothy 3:16) As part of your search for truth, examine the evidence that the Bible's claim is true. Investigate for yourself its unparalleled wisdom, historical accuracy, and fulfilled prophecy.

Instead of presenting all religions as equal approaches to God, the Bible tells its readers not to believe everything they hear but to "test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God." (1 John 4:1) For example, any teaching that truly originates with God must be in harmony with his personality, including his dominant quality of love. —1 John 4:8.

The Bible assures us that God wants us to "really find him." (Acts 17:26, 27) Since our Creator wants us to search for truth, it cannot be wrong to act on the evidence that we find —even if this means changing our religion.

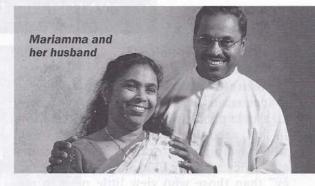
But what about the problems that this may bring?

#### **Balancing Family Loyalty**

When people change their beliefs, they may decide that they will no longer share in certain religious rituals or holidays. Understandably, this can result in strong feelings within the family. Jesus acknowledged this. He told his followers: "I came to cause division, with a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a young wife against her mother-in-law." (Matthew 10: 35) Did Jesus mean that Bible teachings were designed to be an unavoidable cause of contention? No. He simply foresaw what could happen when family members react negatively to one who takes a firm stand for beliefs different from theirs.

Should family conflict be avoided at all costs? The Bible teaches that children should be obedient to parents and that wives should be in subjection to their husbands. (Ephesians 5:22; 6:1) However, it instructs those who love God to "obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Thus, at times, loyalty to God may result in your making a decision that is unpopular with some family members.

Although the Bible makes a clear distinction between true and false teachings, God allows each person the freedom to choose how he or she will respond. (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) No one should be forced to worship in a way that he finds unacceptable or be made to choose between his beliefs and his family. Does study of the Bible lead to family breakup? No. In fact, the Bible encourages a husband and wife who practice different religions



to remain together as a family.—1 Corinthians 7:12, 13.

#### **Overcoming Fears**

You may fear how the community will react if you study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Mariamma says: "My family was worried that I would not be able to find a suitable husband who could provide for me. So they opposed my Bible study." Mariamma put her trust in Jehovah God and continued studying. (Psalm 37:3, 4) You can do

## The Bible's message changes lives and personalities for the better

the same. Rather than fear the results, consider the benefits. The Bible's message changes lives and personalities for the better. People learn to show unselfish love for their family. Bad habits, such as verbal and physical violence and abuse of alcohol and drugs, can be overcome. (2 Corinthians 7:1) The Bible promotes such wholesome traits as loyalty, honesty, and industriousness. (Proverbs 31:10-31; Ephesians 4:24, 28) Why not study the Bible and see the benefits of applying its teachings in your life?

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Why examine your religious beliefs?—Proverbs 23:23; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4.
- How can you identify true teachings?-2 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 4:1.
- Should family opposition prevent you from studying the Bible?-Acts 5:29.

#### **TV Affects Sexual Behavior**

"There is increasing evidence that youth exposure to sexual content on television shapes sexual attitudes and behavior," says an article published in the journal Pediatrics. In fact, according to one study, adolescents who have high exposure to such programs are "twice as likely to experience a pregnancy" than those who view little of such material. One possible explanation is that TV creates the perception that sexual behavior is relatively risk-free, in that unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases are not portrayed realistically enough. Of course, TV is just one medium that shapes adolescents' sexual behavior. Researchers also suggest that critical attention should be given to magazines, the Internet, and music.

#### **New Cases of Leprosy**

Three thousand people in the United States are receiving treatment for leprosy, also called Hansen's disease. Approximately 150 new cases are diagnosed annually. Many sufferers are from other countries. However, the National Hansen's Disease Program, based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, "sees approximately 30 cases each year among residents in southern Louisiana and the Gulf Coast of Texas who were born in the U.S. and who have never visited an endemic country," says the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. Researchers

- A clam dredged from the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean has been dubbed "the longest-lived animal ever known." Scientists counted the growth layers of its shell and determined that the clam was 405 years old.—SUNDAY TIMES, BRITAIN.
- "In an economic downturn, even those whose net worth is in the billions feel the squeeze. Just ask their psychologists."—THE NEW YORK TIMES, U.S.A.

still do not fully understand how the disease spreads. If diagnosed early, leprosy is fully treatable. However, once the disease has taken hold, nerve damage cannot be reversed.

#### **Thefts of Radioactive Material**

"The possibility of terrorists obtaining nuclear or other radioactive material remains a grave threat," says Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency. "The number of incidents reported to the Agency involving the theft or loss of nuclear or radioactive material is disturbingly high—nearly 250 in the first half of 2008 alone. Equally troubling is the fact that much of this material is not subsequently recovered." It is not clear whether this phenomenon is a result of an increasing demand for radioactive materials or of member states' more accurate reporting of losses.

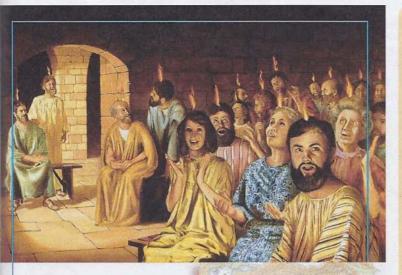


#### Ancient Writing Found in Israel

Israeli archaeologists have found an ancient text that appears to predate the Dead Sea Scrolls by 1,000 years. The document, five lines of text written in ink on a pottery fragment, was uncovered in excavations of a 10th-century-B.C.E. Judean fortress at Khirbet Qeiyafa, Israel. The document has not yet been fully deciphered, but it seems to be a legal text that was written by a trained scribe and contains "roots of the words 'judge,' 'slave' and 'king,'" says a press release from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Gabi Laron/Institute of Archaeology/Hebrew University © Yosef Garfinkel

#### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**



### Where Did It Happen?

1. In which city did this event take place?

CLUE: Read Acts 2:1-13. Circle your answer on the map.

- Where did most of the disciples come from?
- Why did some people mock the disciples?

FOR DISCUSSION: What are the similarities and the differences between this incident and the one recorded at Genesis 11:1-9?

#### **From This Issue**

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 4 What can swallow up a person?

2 Corinthians 2:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 6 What will the peace of God do?

Philippians 4:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 28 Some have a zeal for God but lack what?

Romans 10:

PAGE 29 Whom should we obey? Acts 5:\_\_\_\_



Babylon

Jerusalem





#### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### **What Do You Know About Judge Othniel?**

Read Judges 3:7-11. Now answer the following questions.

He was from which tribe? CLUE: Read Joshua 15:17, 20.

He delivered Israel from which ruler?

True or false? He lived before Moses.

FOR DISCUSSION: What good example did Othniel's uncle Caleb set? CLUE: Read Numbers 14:6-9. Name a relative of yours that you admire, and explain why you are impressed by that person.



■ 'It answers our questions.' That is what young people are saying about the new book Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work, Volume 2. "I was feeling confused and unsure of myself," wrote Jessicah, in Texas, U.S.A. "This book really encouraged me. It was beneficial for me to know that there are many teens like me who encounter obstacles along their journey of trying to serve God. The book answered just about every question that I had about being a youth."

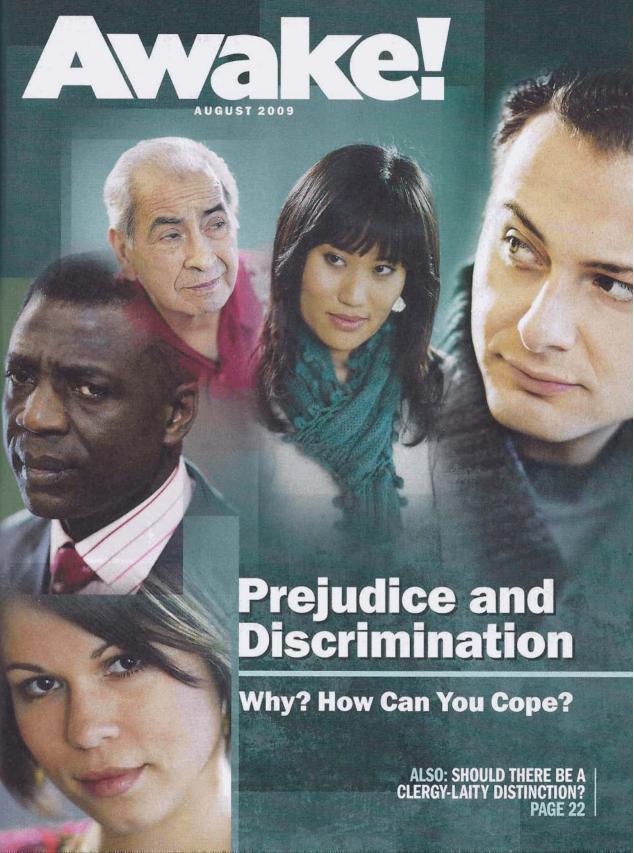
Breann, in Colorado, said: "Your book is having its intended effect of encouraging dialogue between parents and children. When I want to talk to my mom, I bring out the book and read right from it. A friend of mine is also preparing to talk with her parents simply because of reading this book."

The first chapters of the book address questions about an issue particularly on young people's minds—relationships with the opposite sex. Katrina, in New Jersey, wrote: "The book made my convictions so strong that no matter what anyone else says, I'm not ready to date. Besides, being single gives one the opportunity to do so many great things! I don't want to give them up right now. And when I'm ready to date, I will have a better idea of what to look for in a mate and how to proceed."



## 'It answers our questions'





## Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000 PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

- 3 Treated Like a Nobody
- 4 Prejudice and Discrimination
  —Getting to the Roots
- 7 Love Conquers Prejudice
- 14 The Art of Making Espresso
- 19 Blunders That Led to World War
- 22 The Bible's Viewpoint Should There Be a Clergy-Laity Distinction?
- 24 Faithful, Cooperative Parents
- 25 Was It Designed? The Mollusk Shell
- 26 The Battle for Secrecy
  —You Are Involved!
- 29 From Our Readers
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 'A Drawer That Only Jehovah Can Open'



#### How Can I Cope With the Death of a Parent?

Few things in life hurt more than the death of a parent. See how to cope with the flood of emotions that may follow such a bereavement.



## A Universe Full of Surprises

The more scientists learn about the universe, the more it seems they don't know. Read about some recent, baffling discoveries.

Based on NASA photo



## Prejudice and Discrimination Why? How Can You Cope? 3-9

Millions of people constantly have to endure unfair discrimination. What factors underlie this serious social injustice? Is there a remedy?

## **Treated Like a Nobody**



"During my first year at primary school in Spain, the other children in my class kept calling me names, since I was much shorter than they were. I would go home crying nearly every day."

—Jennifer, a daughter of Filipino immigrants.

"When I moved to a new school, white fellow students called me insulting names. I knew they wanted to provoke me into a fight. Somehow, though, I kept my cool—but inside I felt hurt and rejected."—Timothy, an African-American.





"When I was seven years old, the Igbo and Hausa people in Nigeria clashed with each other. The hatred affected me, and I began to make fun of a boy in my class who was Hausa, even though he had been my friend."—John, a member of the Igbo ethnic group.

"My missionary partner and I were sharing the Bible's message with our neighbors when children, egged on by the local clergy, began to follow us and throw stones at us. The clergy wanted us to leave town."—Olga.



AVE you experienced the indignity of unfair discrimination, which tends to be based on prejudice? Perhaps it was because of your skin color, your religion, your economic status, your gender, or even your age. Those who are regularly treated prejudicially often live in fear of further ill-treatment. When they walk by a group of people, go into a store, move to a new school, or attend a social gathering, they may become sick with anxiety.

In addition, victims of prejudice and discrimination may have trouble getting a job, or they may receive second-rate medical care, an inferior education, and fewer social privileges and legal rights. When officially sanctioned, discrimination can lead to such evils as ethnic cleansing and genocide. An ancient example of an attempted genocide is found in the Bible book of Esther. Note the role of hatred and prejudice.—Esther 3:5, 6.

Bigotry and intolerance may persist even where there are laws against discrimination. Says a former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: "Six decades after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights . . . , the principles of equality and non-discrimination are still far from a universal reality." That is disturbing because immigration and the influx of refugees have significantly altered the demographics of many lands.

So, is an equitable society just a dream? Or can prejudice and discrimination be overcome? The following articles address these questions.



## Prejudice and Discrimination

**GETTING TO THE ROOTS** 

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."—Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

DESPITE that lofty ideal, prejudice and discrimination continue to plague mankind. This sad fact reflects not only our times but also the imperfection of humans. (Psalm 51:5) Nevertheless, the situation is far from hopeless. Granted, we may be unable to eliminate the discrimination we see around us, but we can work to root out prejudices that may lodge within ourselves.

A good start is to acknowledge that none of us are above developing prejudices. The book *Understanding Prejudice and Discrimination* says: "Perhaps the most important conclusions to emerge from prejudice research are these: (1) no one capable of human thought and speech is immune from harboring prejudice, (2) it often takes deliberate effort and awareness to reduce prejudice, and (3) with sufficient motivation, it can be done."

Education has been described as "the most powerful tool" in the fight against prejudice. The right education can, for example, expose the root causes of prejudice, enable us to examine our own attitudes more objectively, and help us deal wisely with prejudice when we are victims.

#### **Getting to the Roots**

Prejudice causes people to distort, misinterpret, or even ignore facts that conflict with their predetermined opinions. Prejudice may have its beginnings in seemingly innocent, but misguided, family values, or it may be sown by those who deliberately promote warped views of other races or cultures. Prejudice can also be fostered by nationalism and false religious teachings. And it can be a product of inordinate pride. As you reflect on the following points and on pertinent principles taken from the Bible, why not examine your own attitudes and see if changes are in order?

**Associates.** Humans are gregarious by nature, and this is a good thing. Indeed, the Bible says that "one isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing" and will even disre-

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Monthly

gard practical wisdom. (Proverbs 18:1) However, we should choose our associates wisely, for they can exert a powerful influence on us. Wise parents, therefore, take a deep interest in their children's associates. Studies have shown that children as young as three years of age can develop racial biases, which they pick up from the attitudes, words, and gestures of others. Of course, parents themselves should do all in their power to be a good influence on their little ones, knowing that parental influence is usually the most powerful factor in shaping a child's values.

what does the Bible say? "Start a boy [or girl] on the right road, and even in old age he will not leave it." (Proverbs 22:6, The New English Bible) "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Proverbs 13:20) If you are a parent, you might ask yourself: 'Am I directing my children along a path that is true and just in the eyes of God? Do I associate with people who have a wholesome effect on me? Am I a good influence on others?"—Proverbs 2:1-9.

Nationalism. One dictionary defines nationalism as "a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations." Ivo Duchacek, a professor of political science, observed in his book *Conflict and Cooperation Among Nations:* "Nationalism divides humanity into mutually intolerant units. As a result people think as Americans,

Russians, Chinese, Egyptians, or Peruvians first, and as human beings second—if at all." A former UN secretary-general wrote: "So many of the problems that we face today are due to, or the result of, false attitudes—some of them have been adopted almost unconsciously. Among these is the concept of narrow nationalism—'my country, right or wrong.'"

what does the Bible say? "God loved the world [all mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) Ask yourself, 'If God's love is impartial—embracing people of all nations, including me—should I not strive to imitate him, especially if I profess to reverence him?'

Racism. Racists believe "that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others," says one dictionary. Yet, as is noted in *The World Book Encyclopedia*, researchers "have not discovered any scientific basis for such claims of [racial] superiority." The gross injustices that racism fosters, such as people's systematic denial of rights to fellow humans, are painful evidence that racism rests on falsehoods and fallacies.

■ What does the Bible say? "The truth will set you free." (John 8:32) "[God] made out of one man every nation of men." (Acts 17:26)

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech,®o Danish,® Dutch,†® English,†®o Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,®o French,†®o Georgian, German,†®o Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hilligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,†®o Japanese,†® Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean,†®o Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian,†®o Portuguese,†®o Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian,†®o Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,†®o Swahili, Swedish,†® Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.



When we get to know people on a personal level, we more readily see through misleading stereotypes

"Not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (1 Samuel 16:7) Ask yourself: 'Do I try to see all humans as God does? Do I try to find out what others—perhaps those of a different race or culture—are really like by getting to know some of them personally?' When we get to know people on a personal level, we more readily see through misleading stereotypes.

Religion. The book *The Nature of Prejudice* says: "Abominations inevitably result when men use their religion to justify [selfish pursuits] and ethnic self-interest. It is then that religion and prejudice merge." What is especially striking, the same book observes, is how readily many religious people "seem to slip from piety into prejudice." Evidence in support of those words is seen in racially exclusive churches, sectarian hatred and violence, and acts of terror inspired by religion.

■ What does the Bible say? "The wisdom from above [from God] is . . . peaceable, reasonable, . . . not making partial distinctions." (James 3:17) "The true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and [religious] truth." (John 4:23) "Love your enemies and . . . pray for those persecuting you." (Matthew 5:44) Ask yourself: 'Does my religion promote genuine love toward all, even toward those who may want to hurt me? Are the doors of my church open to people of all kinds, regardless of nationality, skin color, gender, income, or social status?'

**Pride.** In the form of inordinate self-esteem or haughtiness, pride can make a person

more susceptible to prejudice. For example, pride can cause a person to be prone to feelings of superiority or disdain toward the less educated or the materially poor. It may also make him inclined to believe propaganda that elevates his national or ethnic group. Clever propagandists, such as Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler, have deliberately nurtured national and racial pride to rally the support of the masses and to malign those considered to be different or undesirable.

■ What does the Bible say? "Everyone that is proud in heart is something detestable to Jehovah." (Proverbs 16:5) "[Do] nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind [consider] that the others are superior to you." (Philippians 2:3) Ask yourself: 'Do I take secret delight in flattering comments about my own race or ethnic group or in disparaging remarks about others? Am I inclined to be jealous of those who have talents that I lack, or do I take genuine delight in their abilities?'

Yes, for good reason the Bible cautions: "More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life." (Proverbs 4:23) So view your heart as truly precious, and let nothing corrupt it! Instead, fill it with godly wisdom. Then, and only then, will 'thinking ability and discernment safeguard you, to deliver you from the bad way, from the person speaking perverse things.'—Proverbs 2:10-12.

What, though, can you do if you are a victim of prejudice or discrimination? The next article looks into this matter.



## **Love Conquers Prejudice**

"A new form of religious community appeared for the first time in history: not a nation celebrating its patriotic cult, but a voluntary group, in which social, racial and national distinctions were transcended: men and women coming together just as individuals, before their god."—A History of Christianity, by Paul Johnson.

AS TRUE Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, people saw something amazing—an international spiritual family that had learned to live together in true peace and unity. The secret of the peace of this "family" was genuine love, which was based, not on mere sentiment, but on the very principles taught by God.

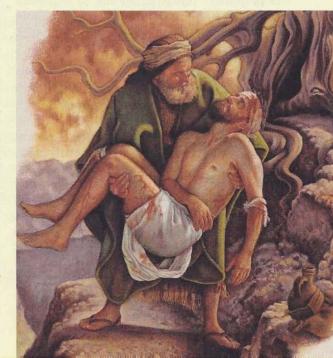
Those principles were embodied in Jesus Christ, who himself was an object of hatred and vicious prejudice. (1 Peter 2:21-23) For one thing, he was from Galilee, and Galileans—who were mostly farmers and fishermen—were looked down upon by the Jewish religious elite in Jerusalem. (John 7:45-52) Also, Jesus was an outstanding teacher who was loved and respected by the common people. Because of this, the religious leaders became so envious of him that they spread lies about him and even plotted to kill him!—Mark 15:9, 10; John 9:16, 22; 11:45-53.

Yet, Jesus did not "return evil for evil." (Romans 12:17) For example, when individual Pharisees—members of a Jewish sect that opposed Jesus—sincerely approached him with questions, he kindly answered them. (John 3: 1-21) He even dined with Pharisees, including one who had exhibited a measure of prejudice toward Jesus. How so? In those days it was customary to wash a guest's feet; yet,

the Pharisee failed to extend that courtesy to Jesus. Did Jesus take offense? No. In fact, he used the evening to teach a beautiful lesson in compassion and forgiveness.—Luke 7: 36-50: 11:37.

#### Jesus Loved the Despised

One of Jesus' best-known parables is that of the good Samaritan, in which a Samaritan man, at his own expense, attended to the needs of a Jew who had been beaten and robbed. (Luke 10:30-37) Why was the Samaritan's deed so noble? In real life, Jews and Samaritans despised one another. In fact, "Samaritan" was often used by Jews as a term of contempt—one that was even leveled at Jesus himself. (John 8:48) Against that background,



A neighborly Samaritan comes to the aid of a Jew who has been robbed



Jesus could hardly have used a more powerful illustration of impartial neighbor love.

Jesus backed up his words by example, healing a Samaritan leper. (Luke 17:11-19) In addition, he taught other appreciative Samaritans, even having an extended conversation with a Samaritan woman—an especially noteworthy event. (John 4:7-30, 39-42) Why? Strict Jewish rabbis would not speak to *any* woman in public—even a close relative—not to mention a Samaritan woman!

How, though, does God view a person who has prejudices but is struggling to eliminate them from his heart? Once again, the Bible gives us comforting insight into the matter.

#### **God Is Patient With Us**

In the first century, many Jewish Christians were initially influenced by long-standing prejudices against non-Jews, a large number of whom were becoming believers. How did Jehovah God deal with this potentially divisive problem? He patiently educated the Christian congregation. (Acts 15: 1-5) That patience bore good fruitage, for as mentioned at the beginning of this article, "social, racial and national distinctions were transcended." As a result, "the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."—Acts 16:5.

The lesson? Don't give up, but continue to look to God, who generously gives wisdom and moral strength to those who "keep on asking in faith." (James 1:5, 6) Do you recall Jennifer, Timothy, John, and Olga mentioned in the first article of this series? By the time Jennifer attended secondary school, she had grown spiritually and had learned to ignore racial slurs and comments about her stature. Soon thereafter, when another girl became the target of insults by classmates, Jennifer spoke up for her and comforted her.

What helped Timothy keep his cool when fellow students taunted him with racial slurs?

### Soon prejudice and discrimination will cease to blight mankind

He says: "I was concerned about the reproach I would bring on Jehovah God's name. Also, I kept remembering that we must 'keep conquering the evil with the good' and not allow evil to conquer us."—Romans 12:21.

John overcame his prejudice toward his Hausa classmate. "As a teenager," he recalls, "I met some Hausa students who became my friends. I worked with one such student on a joint project, and we got on very well. Now I try to look at people as individuals, not as belonging to a certain race or tribe."

Olga and her missionary companion did not cower when persecuted by hateful opposers, but they remained steadfast, confident that some people would appreciate the Bible's message. Many did. "Some fifty years later," says Olga, "a man approached me and handed me a beautiful satchel. Inside were small stones on which Christian qualities, such as goodness, kindness, love, and peace, were engraved. He then told me that he was one of those boys who had thrown stones at me and that now he was my Christian brother. He and his wife then gave me two dozen white roses in addition to the satchel of stones."

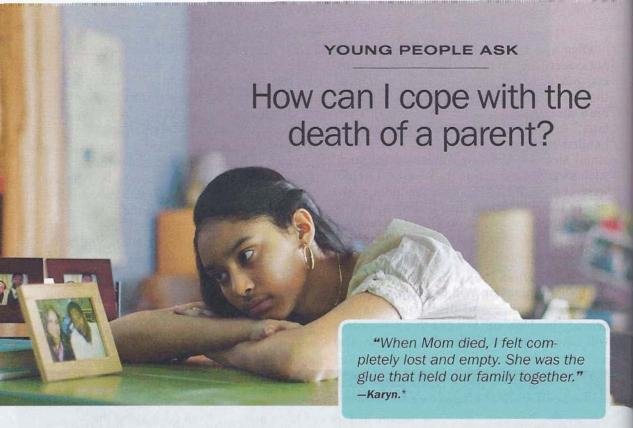
#### When Prejudice and Discrimination Will Be No More!

Soon prejudice and discrimination will cease to be. How so? For one thing, the earth will have as its sole Ruler the very one who demonstrated that he "will not judge by any mere appearance to his eyes"—Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 11:1-5) Further, Jesus' earthly subjects will then perfectly mirror his attitude, for all will have been educated by him and his Father, Jehovah God.—Isaiah 11:9.

That spiritual education is now well under way, preparing God's people for life in a completely new system of things. So why not take advantage of that free educational program by having your own Bible study?\* Yes, God is not partial; it is his will that all sorts of people "should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth."—1 Timothy 2: 3, 4.

#### **GODLY PRINCIPLES TO LIVE BY** ■ "Return evil for evil to no one. . . . Keep conquering the evil with the good." (Romans 12:17-21) The point? Let the bad in others bring out the good in you. "They hated me without cause," said Jesus Christ. Yet, he did not respond in the same manner.-John 15:25. "Let us not become egotistical, . . . envying one another." (Galatians 5:26) Envy and improper pride are spiritually harmful, often leading to hatred and prejudice.-Mark 7:20-23. "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matthew 7:12) Ask yourself, 'How do I like to be treated?' Treat other people in the same way, regardless of their age, skin color, language, or culture. "Open your hearts to one another as Christ has opened his heart to you." (Romans 15:7, Phillips) Do you try to get to know people from different backgrounds and cultures, especially if they are fellow servants of God?-2 Corinthians 6:11. "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up." (Psalm 27:10) No matter how others may treat you, God will never abandon you if you remain loval to him.

<sup>\*</sup> If you would like to have a free Bible study at a time and place of your convenience, call the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses or one of the branch offices listed on page 5. Or contact Jehovah's Witnesses at the Web site www.watchtower.org.



EW things in life will ever affect you more deeply than the death of a parent. Not only do you have to endure the intense pain of loss but you are also left to face a future that will likely be quite different from what you had expected.

Perhaps you had hoped that your beloved mom or dad would be there when you finally got a driver's license or graduated from school or that he or she would share in the joy of your wedding day. Now these hopes have been shattered, leaving you saddened, frustrated, or even angry. How can you cope with the flood of emotions that comes from losing a parent in death?

#### 'Am I Normal?'

When first hit with the reality of your mom or dad's death, you may be forced to contend with a range of emotions that you have never experienced before. Brian, who was only 13 when his father died from a heart attack, says. "The night we found out, all we could do was cry and embrace each other." Natalie, who was ten when her dad died of cancer, recalls: "I didn't know what to feel. So I felt nothing. I was void of emotion."

Death affects each person differently. Indeed, the Bible says that "each one" has "his own plague and his own pain." (2 Chronicles 6:29) With that in mind, take a moment to think about how your parent's death has affected vou. Below, describe (1) how you felt when you first found out about your parent's death and (2) how you feel now.#

(1)		 	 	 							*				*		
(2)	200	 	 	 			•										

Names in this article have been changed.

<sup>&</sup>quot;If answering these questions is too difficult at present, you might try to do so at a later time.

Perhaps your answers reveal that your emotions are, at least to a degree, leveling off. *This is normal.* It does not mean that you have forgotten your parent. On the other hand, you may find that your emotions are still the same or are even more intense. Maybe your grief comes in waves that seem to ebb and flow and then "crash ashore" at unexpected moments. *This too is normal*—even if it occurs years after your parent's death. The question is, How can you cope with your grief—whatever form it takes?

#### Ways to Cope

**Don't hold back the tears!** Crying helps ease the pain of grief. However, you may feel the way Alicia did, who was 19 when her mother passed away. She relates, "I felt that if I showed too much emotion, it would seem to others that I lacked faith." But think: Jesus Christ was a perfect man who had strong faith in God. Yet, he "gave way to tears" over the death of his dear friend Lazarus. (John 11: 35) So don't be afraid to let your tears flow. It does *not* mean that you lack faith! Alicia says: "Eventually, I cried. A lot. Every day."\*

Address feelings of guilt. "I always went upstairs and kissed my mom good night," says Karyn, who was 13 when her mom died. "There was one time that I didn't do that. The next morning, Mom passed away. As unrealistic as it sounds, I feel guilty for not having seen her that last night—and for the chain of events that occurred the next morning. My dad left on a business trip and wanted me and my sister to look in on Mom. But we slept late. When I went into the bedroom, Mom wasn't breathing. I felt terrible, because she was OK when Dad left!"

Like Karyn, perhaps you feel a measure of guilt for things you neglected to do. You might even torture yourself with

#### IT'S OK TO CRY . . . THEY DID!

Abraham-Genesis 23:2.

Joseph-Genesis 50:1.

David-2 Samuel 1:11, 12; 18:33.

Mary, the sister of Lazarus

-John 11:32, 33.

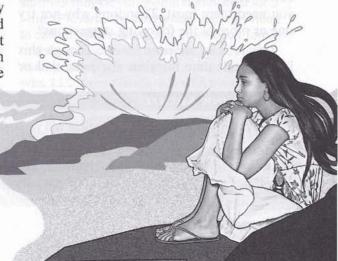
Jesus-John 11:35.

Mary Magdalene-John 20:11.

"if onlys." 'If only I had urged Dad to see a doctor.' 'If only I had checked on Mom earlier.' If such thoughts plague you, remember this: It's normal to feel regret over things you wish you had done differently. The fact is, you would have done things differently had you known what would happen. But you did not know. Therefore, guilt is inappropriate. You are not responsible for your parent's death!\*

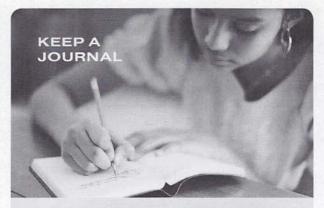
Communicate your feelings. Proverbs 12: 25 states: "Kind words will cheer you up." (Today's English Version) Keeping your feelings bottled up inside may make it difficult for you to deal with your grief. On the other hand, discussing your feelings with someone

Grief can be like waves that crash ashore at unexpected moments



<sup>\*</sup> Don't feel that you *must* cry to manifest your grief. People grieve in different ways. The important thing is this: If you feel tears welling up, realize that it may be "a time to weep."—Ecclesiastes 3:4.

<sup>\*</sup> If such thoughts continue to plague you, share your feelings with your surviving parent or another adult. In time, you will acquire a more balanced outlook.



Writing down your thoughts about the parent you lost can be a tremendous aid in coping with grief. There are many things you could write about. Below are a few suggestions.

- List some pleasant memories you have of your parent.
- Write down what you wish you could have said to your parent while he or she was still alive.
- Imagine that you have a younger sibling who struggles with feelings of guilt over the death of your parent. Write what you would say to comfort your sibling. This can help you to put your own feelings of guilt into perspective.

you trust will open the way for you to receive "kind words" of encouragement when you need them most. Therefore, why not try one or more of the following suggestions?

Talk to your surviving parent. Though this is a difficult time for your surviving dad or

mom, he or she undoubtedly still wants to provide the assistance you need. So let your surviving parent know how you feel. Such discussions will no doubt relieve you of some of your grief and draw the two of you closer together.

To help start a conversation, try this exercise: List two or three things that you wish you could have known about your deceased dad or mom, and then ask to discuss one of these with your surviving parent.\*

Talk to close friends. The Bible says that true companions are "born for when there is distress." (Proverbs 17:17) "The person you least expect may be the one who helps you," says Alicia. "So don't be afraid to talk about it." Admittedly, such conversations might be a bit awkward, as you and your friend struggle to find the right words to say. In the long run, though, it will do you good to talk to others about your grief. David, who was only nine years old when his father suffered a fatal heart attack, recalls: "I kept all my feelings locked up inside me. It would have been healthier for me if I had talked more about it. I could have coped better."

Talk to God. Likely, you will feel much better after you "pour out your heart" to Jehovah

#### TO THINK ABOUT

- Which suggestions in this article will you use?
- Below, list a few scriptures that will comfort you when grief seems overwhelming.

<sup>\*</sup> If you were raised by a single parent or if because of circumstances your surviving parent is not a part of your life, you might confide in a mature adult.

God in prayer. (Psalm 62:8) This is not simply a 'feel-good therapy.' In prayer, you are appealing to "the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation."—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

One way that God provides comfort is through his holy spirit. It can infuse you with "power beyond what is normal," so that you can endure the pain of grief. (2 Corinthians 4:7) God also provides "comfort from the Scriptures." (Romans 15:4) So ask God for his spirit, and take time to read the encouragement found in his Word, the Bible. (2 Thessalonians 2:16, 17) Why not keep handy a list of scriptures that are particularly comforting to you?\*

#### Will the Pain Ever End?

Grieving is not an overnight process. "It's not as though you just 'get over it," says Brianne, whose mom died when Brianne was 16. "I have my days when I just cry myself to sleep. Other times, I try to focus, not on my loss, but on the promises Jehovah has in store for me to enjoy with my mom in Paradise."

The Bible assures us that in the Paradise to which Brianne refers, "death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." (Revelation 21:3, 4) You too may find that meditating on such promises will help you to cope with the loss of your parent.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

#### A NOTE TO THE SURVIVING PARENT

Grieving the loss of a mate is a painful experience. Yet, it has come at a time when your adolescent child needs your help. How can you help him to cope with his grief, while not ignoring your own?\*

Resist the urge to hide your feelings. Your child has learned many of his most valuable lessons in life by watching you. Learning how to cope with grief will be no exception. Thus, do not feel that you must be strong for the child by hiding all your grief from him. This may only teach your adolescent to do the same. In contrast, when you express your emotional pain, he learns that feelings are often better expressed than suppressed and that it is normal for him to feel saddened, frustrated, or even angry.

Encourage your adolescent child to talk. Without making him feel pressured, encourage your adolescent child to discuss what is in his heart. If he seems reluctant, why not discuss this article together? Also,

talk about the many fond memories you have of your deceased mate. Acknowledge how difficult it will be for you to carry on. Hearing you express your feelings will help your adolescent learn how to do the same.

Recognize your limitations. Understandably, you want to be an unfailing support for your adolescent child during this difficult time. But remember, you have been severely affected by the loss of your beloved mate. So your emotional, mental, and physical stamina may be somewhat diminished for a time. (Proverbs 24:10) Hence, you may need to call on the assistance of other adult family members and mature friends for support. Asking for help is a sign of maturity. Proverbs 11:2 says: "Wisdom is with the modest ones."

The best support you can have comes from Jehovah God himself, who promises his worshippers: "I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, 'Do not be afraid. I myself will help you.'"—Isaiah 41:13.

<sup>\*</sup> Some have been comforted by the following scriptures: Psalm 34:18: 102:17; 147:3; Isaiah 25:8; John 5:28, 29.

<sup>\*</sup> For simplicity, we refer to the child as a male. However, the principles discussed apply to both genders.

TO SOME aficionados, perfectly brewed espresso is "the ultimate in coffee," says the journal *Scientific American*, "because its special preparation amplifies and exhibits the inherent characteristics of the beans." That preparation involves forcing steam or hot water under pressure through finely ground coffee.

"People enjoy espresso-style drinks at cafés and want to reproduce that quality at home," one industry expert told *Awake!* Some domestic espresso machines now make this possi-

ble. As a result, the consumption of homemade espresso is rapidly increasing in some lands.

Are you a coffee drinker? Would you like to master the challenging art of brewing espresso? What does it take to produce the perfect cup? *Awake!* put that question to master coffee roasters John and his father, Gerardo, who live in Sydney, Australia.

#### **Getting the Blend Just Right**

Inside John and Gerardo's coffee-roasting factory, sacks of raw beans from around the world line the walls. "I mix a selection of raw beans according to a carefully blended recipe," says John. "Each bean variety has its own character and contributes to the final flavor of the blend. To get the flavor you want takes time. In fact, I experimented for six months to get our leading espresso blend just right." Little wonder that coffee roasters jealously guard their recipes!

Gerardo presides over the roasting process, a craft that requires considerable training, for roasting dramatically alters the chemical characteristics of coffee beans and creates about 500 volatile substances. As the beans tumble in a coffee roaster—a gas-fired drum—they heat up until they emit a crackling sound when water and carbon dioxide boil out and the beans expand. This expan-



With hundreds of billions of cups consumed every year, coffee has become one of the most popular beverages in the world.

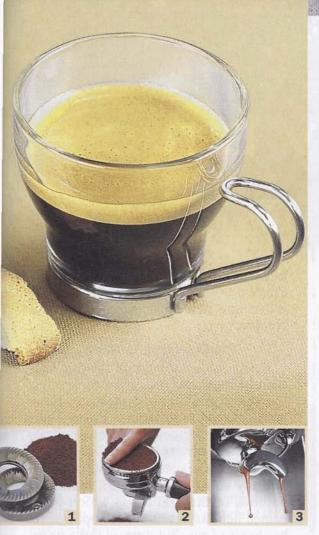
sion ruptures the walls of cells within the beans, liberating aromatic oils. These oils, in turn, define both the aroma and the flavor of espresso. The art lies in mastering the roasting process—the *rate* at which heat is applied and the *degree* of roasting.

At just the right moment, Gerardo empties the hot, dark-brown beans into a steel basket and blows cool air through them to prevent overroasting. "Coffee flavor peaks between one and two days after roasting," says John. The flavor-producing oils are then stable and ready to be extracted.

#### The Art of Brewing

"Espresso extraction is the most efficient—and difficult—of all coffee-brewing methods," explains John. Making perfect espresso requires a skillful balance of three key processes: grinding the beans (1), compacting the grinds into the filter basket on the coffee machine (2), and pouring the espresso shot (3). "Grinding the beans correctly is crucial," says John. "If the grind is too coarse, the espresso will be thin and watery. If it's too fine, the coffee will taste bitter and burned. In both cases, when the espresso comes out of the spout, the crema—the golden froth on the surface of the fresh espresso—will indicate how well the oils have been extracted."

After grinding some beans, John uses a packing tool called a tamper to compress



them firmly into a filter basket, creating a smooth, seemingly polished surface. Next, he locks the filter basket into place and turns on the pump. A stream of hot, brown liquid gushes from the spout. Almost straightaway John's trained eye tells him that the grind is too coarse. "Getting the perfect pour is often a case of trial and error," he says. "Let's try again with a grit just short of powder. Also, we'll compact the coffee a little more to force a slower extraction."

John makes the needed adjustments and turns the machine on again. The *crema*-rich espresso now oozes from the filter spout with the consistency of warm honey. As the mouth-watering aroma once again fills the air, John's smile bespeaks his approval. "It is very important that we stop the pour when the color begins to clear," he says. This takes less than 30 seconds. "Further extraction," he adds, "only produces bitter flavors and extra caffeine."

"I think we've just made the perfect espresso," says John, observing the thick, velvety, and long-lasting *crema*. "Anyone for coffee?"

Purists usually enjoy espresso in its classic form, commonly called short black. In other words, they add nothing to the liquid except perhaps a little sugar. Others, however, add hot milk to create cappuccino, latte, or a host of other espresso styles. "Today, milk-based espresso drinks account for more than 90 percent of all espresso beverage sales," states Fresh Cup Magazine.\*

To be sure, relaxed conversation over a good brew—coffee or tea, depending on your taste—is one of life's simple pleasures. "Tasty beverages bring people together," says John. "Perhaps that's the best thing about them!"

#### BUYING AND STORING COFFEE

"Roasted coffees begin to lose flavor after a week, ground coffee an hour after grinding, and brewed coffee in minutes," says a coffee-buying guide. Hence, if you buy your own beans, it is best to buy them in small amounts and store them in a cool, dark place. But do not refrigerate them, for they may absorb moisture and lose their flavor. And always brew your coffee just after you grind it.



<sup>\*</sup> If you are concerned about whether a Christian should avoid coffee and tea because they contain the potentially addictive drug caffeine, you might like to read the article "Questions From Readers" in the April 15, 2007, issue of our companion magazine, *The Watchtower*.

## UNIVERS

**FULL OF SURPRISES** 

UST a century ago, scientists believed that the entire universe was contained within our galaxy, the Milky Way, During the 20th century, however, major advances in astronomy, physics, and technology revealed the breathtaking scale of the cosmos. Some of the discoveries have also been humbling. For example, in recent decades astronomers have come to the realization that they do not know what makes up over 90 percent of the universe. What is more, the discoveries that led to that conclusion have caused scientists to question their understanding of the fundamentals of physics itself. Of course, such questions are nothing new.

For instance, toward the end of the 19th century, physicists observed something odd about the speed of light. They found that relative to an observer, light always traveled at the same speed no matter how fast the observer was moving. But that seemed to defy common sense! The problem was addressed in 1905 in Albert Einstein's special theory of relativity, which showed that distance (length), time, and mass are not absolutes. Then, in 1907, after a flash of intuition that he termed "the happiest thought of my life," Einstein began to develop his general theory of relativity, which he published in 1916. In this revolutionary work. Einstein wove gravity, space, and time together and refined the physics of Isaac Newton

#### The Expanding Universe

Based on the evidence of the day, Einstein believed that the universe is static -neither expanding nor contracting. However, American astronomer Edwin Hubble, in 1929, presented evidence indicating that the universe is expanding.

Hubble also cleared up a long-standing mystery about certain fuzzy, luminous patches in the night sky, which were named nebulae because they appeared to be clouds of gas. But were all these nebulae within our galaxy, or were they outside it, as British astronomer Sir William Herschel (1738-1822) suggested over a centurv earlier?

When Hubble first estimated the distance to one of these entities, the Great Nebula in the constellation Andromeda. he concluded that the nebula was actually a galaxy a million light years away. That put it well beyond the Milky Way, which has a diameter of a "mere" 100,000 light years. As Hubble charted the distances to other nebulae, he began to unveil the enormous scale of the cosmos and



triggered a revolution in astronomy and cosmology.\*\*

It was soon thereafter that Hubble observed that the universe is expanding, for he saw that distant galaxies were receding from us. He also noticed that the farther away the galaxy, the faster the recession. Those observations imply that the universe of yesterday was smaller than that of today. When Hubble published his groundbreaking work in 1929, he paved the way for the development of the big bang theory of the origin of the universe, which indicates that the universe originated in a cosmic explosion approximately 13 billion years ago. But the picture is still incomplete.

#### **How Fast Is the Expansion?**

Since the time of Hubble, astronomers have been trying to measure as accurately as possible the rate of expansion, referred to as the "Hubble constant." Why is this measurement so important? If astronomers could calculate how fast the universe is expanding, they could use that calculation to estimate its age. Moreover,

the rate of expansion might have serious implications for the future. How so? It is reasoned that if, for instance, the universe is expanding too slowly, gravity might ultimately win out and cause everything to collapse in a final "big crunch"! But if the expansion is too rapid, the universe might expand forever and dissipate entirely.

While more precise measurements have provided answers to some questions, other questions have been raised—questions that cast doubt on our present understanding of matter and the fundamental forces of nature.

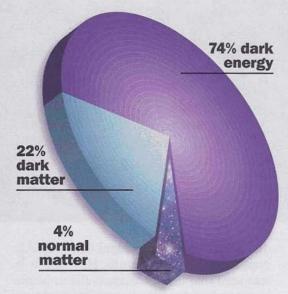
#### **Dark Energy and Dark Matter**

In 1998, researchers analyzing light from a special kind of supernova, or

#### LOOK UP AND BE HUMBLE

When an ancient servant of God looked up at the clear, unpolluted night sky, he felt reverential awe, which he put to verse. Psalm 8:3, 4, reads: "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have prepared, what is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and the son of earthling man that you take care of him?" Yet, the psalmist had no telescopes or special cameras. How much more, then, should we feel in awe!

<sup>\*</sup> Astronomy is the study of extraterrestrial objects and matter. Cosmology, a branch of astronomy, "is the study of the structure and development of the universe and the forces that work on it," says *The World Book Encyclopedia*. "Cosmologists try to explain how the universe formed, what has happened to it since, and what might happen to it in the future."



exploding star, found evidence that the expansion of the universe is actually accelerating!\* At first, the scientists were skeptical, but evidence soon mounted. Naturally, they wanted to know what form of energy was causing the accelerating expansion. For one thing, it seemed to be working in opposition to gravity; and for another, it was not predicted by present theories. Appropriately, this mysterious form of energy has been named dark energy, and it may make up nearly 75 percent of the universe!

Dark energy, however, is not the only "dark" oddity discovered in recent times. Another was confirmed in the 1980's when astronomers examined various galaxies. These galaxies, as well as our own, appeared to be spinning too fast to hold together. Evidently, then, some form of matter must be giving them the necessary gravitational cohesion. But what kind of matter? Because scientists have no idea, they have called the stuff dark matter, since it does not absorb, emit, or reflect detectable amounts of radiation.\* How much dark matter is out there? Calculations indicate that it could make up 22 percent or more of the mass of the universe.

Consider this: According to current estimates, normal matter accounts for about 4 percent of the mass of the universe. The two big unknowns-dark matter and dark energy-appear to make up the balance. Thus, about 95 percent of the universe remains a complete mystery!#

#### A Never-Ending Quest

Science is in search of answers, but all too often one set of answers leads to another layer of puzzles. This fact calls to mind a profound statement recorded in the Bible at Ecclesiastes 3:11. It reads: "Everything [God] has made pretty in its time. Even time indefinite he has put in their heart, that mankind may never find out the work that the true God has made from the start to the finish."

Of course, at present we can absorb only limited amounts of knowledge because of our short life span, and much of that knowledge is speculative, subject to change. But that situation is temporary, for God has purposed to grant faithful humans endless life in Paradise on earth. where they can examine his handiwork for an eternity and thus gain true knowledge. -Psalm 37:11, 29; Luke 23:43.

Therefore, we need not fear doomsday speculations about the universe. After all, science has only scratched the surface of reality, whereas the Creator knows all. -Revelation 4:11

<sup>\*</sup> The exploding stars are called type 1a supernovas, and they may shine as brightly as a billion suns for a short time. Astronomers use these supernovas as a standard for measurement.

<sup>\*</sup> Dark matter was postulated in the 1930's and confirmed in the 1980's. Today astronomers measure how much dark matter a cluster of galaxies may have by observing how the cluster bends light from more distant objects.

The year 2009 has been designated the "International Year of Astronomy," and it marks the 400th anniversary of the first use of an astronomical telescope by Galileo Galilei.



grossly miscalculate risks and cause the loss of millions of lives?

IE DO not know. But we do know that this very thing has occurred. A century ago. European leaders launched their nations into the Great War, later called World War I, unaware of the magnitude of the horrors to come. "We muddled into war," confessed David Lloyd George, British prime minister from 1916-1922. Consider some of the key events that led to that horrific slaughter.

"None of the statesmen wanted war on a grand scale," wrote historian A.J.P. Taylor, "but they wanted to threaten and they wanted to win." The czar of Russia felt that everything possible must be done for the sake of peace. He did not want to be responsible for a monstrous slaughter. Somehow, though, beginning with two fateful shots fired at about 11:15 a.m., on June 28, 1914, events slipped out of control.

#### **Two Shots That** Changed the World

By 1914, long-standing rivalries among European powers had stretched nerves taut and produced two opposing alliances: the Triple Alliance of Austria-

> Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand

> > Mary Evans Picture Library



Hungary, Italy, and Germany and the Triple Entente of Britain, France, and Russia. Moreover, those nations had political and economic ties with a number of other countries, including those in the Balkans.

At the time, the area called the Balkans was a politically volatile region chafing under the sovereignty of the bigger powers, and it was rife with secret societies scheming for independence. There, a small group of young people plotted to assassinate Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand during his visit to Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia, on June 28.\* A small police presence made their task easier. The would-be assassins, however, had minimal training. One youth threw a small bomb but missed his target, and others failed to act when the time came. Gavrilo Princip was the one conspirator who succeeded-and only by sheer accident. How so?

> When Princip saw the archduke drive by still unharmed by the bomb, he tried to get to the car but in vain. Dispirited, he walked across the road to a café. Meanwhile, the archduke, angry about the attempted

<sup>\*</sup> Bosnia is now part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



The Bible foretold that wars would be part of the sign marking the last days of the present wicked world. (Matthew 24:3, 7; Revelation 6:4) The fulfillment of that sign today indicates that we are rapidly approaching the time when God's Kingdom government will take full control over the earth.—Daniel 2:44; Matthew 6:9, 10.

Moreover, God's Kingdom will remove an unseen force in world affairs—wicked spirits led by Satan the Devil. "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," says 1 John 5:19. Satan's sinister influence has contributed to many of mankind's woes, no doubt including the disastrous events that led to World War I.—Revelation 12:9-12.\*

bombing, decided to change his route. However, his driver, unaware of the change in plans, set off in the wrong direction and had to turn the car around. At that very moment, Princip came out of the café and was literally presented with a sitting target—the archduke in his open car less than ten feet away. Princip approached the car and fired two shots, killing the archduke and his wife.\* A naive Serb nationalist, Princip likely had no idea of the avalanche he had just triggered. Yet, he could not take sole blame for the horrors to come.

#### Ripe for War

Before 1914, most European minds had a romantic notion of war. They saw it as beneficial, noble, and glorious—this despite their profession of Christianity. Some statesmen even believed that war would forge national unity and invigorate the people! Moreover, certain generals assured their leaders that a war could be won quickly, decisively. "In two weeks we shall defeat France," boasted a German general. Nobody foresaw that millions

Furthermore, in the prewar years, "a great tidal wave of hypernationalism swept over Europe," says the book *Cooperation Under Anarchy.* "The schools, the universities, the press, and the politicians all joined in this orgy of mythmaking and self-glorification."

Religious leaders did little to counter that ugly spirit. Says historian Paul Johnson: "On one side were ranged Protestant Germany, Catholic Austria, Orthodox Bulgaria and Moslem Turkey. On the other were Protestant Britain, Catholic France and Italy, and Orthodox Russia." Most clerics, he adds, "equated Christianity with patriotism. Christian soldiers of all denominations were exhorted to kill each other in the name of their Saviour." Even priests and nuns were mobilized, and thousands of the former were later killed in action.

The European alliances, which were meant to provide security against a major war, may have contributed toward it. In what way? "The security of the European powers was tightly meshed," says *Cooperation Under Anarchy*. "Each power felt that its own security

<sup>\*</sup> Further information on the last days and these wicked spirits can be found in the Bible study aid What Does the Bible Really Teach? published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

of men would be mired in trench warfare for years.

<sup>\*</sup> Princip killed the archduke's wife by mistake. He had intended to shoot the governor of Bosnia, General Potiorek, who was with the royal couple in the car, but something interfered with his aim.

rested precariously on that of its allies, and therefore felt compelled to rush to defend its allies—even when these allies had provoked their attackers."

Another dangerous element was Germany's Schlieffen Plan, named after a former chief of the German general staff, General Alfred von Schlieffen. The plan, which involved a rapid first strike, was drafted on the assumption that Germany would have to fight both France and Russia. The goal, therefore, was a quick victory over France while Russia slowly mobilized and then an assault on Russia. "Once the [Schlieffen] plan was set in motion, the system of military alliances almost assured a general European war," says World Book Encyclopedia.

#### The Avalanche Begins

Even though an official investigation found no evidence to incriminate the Serbian government in the assassination of the archduke, Austria was determined to end Slavic agitation in the empire once and for all. Austria was keen "to teach Serbia her lesson," says historian J. M. Roberts.

In an attempt to defuse tensions, Nicholas Hartwig—the Russian ambassador in the Serbian capital—worked on a possible compromise. But he had a heart attack and died while meeting with the Austrian legation. Finally, on July 23, Austria sent Serbia a list of demands that amounted to an ultimatum. Because Serbia could not accept all the demands, Austria immediately terminated diplomatic relations. At that crucial moment, diplomacy broke down.

Still, a few attempts were made to prevent war. For example, the United Kingdom recommended an international conference, and Germany's kaiser urged Russia's czar not to mobilize. But events ran out of control. "Statesmen, generals, and whole nations were overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of the events that were about to unfold," states the book *The Enterprise of War*.

The Austrian emperor, backed by assurances of German support, declared war on Serbia on July 28. Russia backed Serbia and thus tried to restrain Austria's hand by announcing the mobilization of about a million Russian troops along the Austrian border. Because that would leave Russia's border with Germany undefended, the Russian czar reluctantly ordered a total mobilization.

The czar tried to assure the kaiser that he had no designs on Germany. Nevertheless, the Russian mobilization threw German war plans into high gear, and on July 31, Germany commenced executing the Schlieffen battle plan, declaring war on Russia on August 1 and on France two days later. Because German war plans involved marching through Belgium, Britain warned Germany that it would declare war on that country if it violated Belgian neutrality. German troops crossed into Belgium on August 4. The die was cast.

#### "The Biggest Diplomatic Disaster of Modern Times"

"Britain's declaration of war put the final seal on the biggest diplomatic disaster of modern times," wrote historian Norman Davies. Fellow historian Edmond Taylor wrote that after Austria declared war on July 28, "sheer muddle played an increasingly significant role in generating [war]. Too much was happening too fast in too many places. . . . The keenest and most orderly minds could no longer digest and assimilate the raw data that were being fed into them."

More than 13 million soldiers and civilians paid the ultimate price for that disastrous "muddle." Optimism about the future and human nature also suffered a mortal blow as so-called civilized peoples armed with powerful, mass-produced, newly invented weapons slaughtered one another on an unprecedented scale. The world would never be the same again.—See the box "World War—A Sign of the Times?"

## Should There Be a Clergy-Laity Distinction?

Most Reverend, Right Reverend, Father, Most Holy Father, Rabbi, His Eminence, His Excellency, His Holiness, His All-Holiness—these are some of the titles that distinguish the clergy of various religions from the laity. The separation of the clergy from the laity is common to many religions, but is the arrangement from God, or is it a human tradition? More important, does it have God's approval?

early apostolic times there is no mention of clergy or laity," wrote professor of theology Cletus Wessels. The *Encyclopedia of Christianity* states: "There gradually arose a differentiation into *clergy* as the officeholders and the *laity* as the rest... 'Ordinary' church members now came to be seen as an unqualified mass." That differentiation became prominent during the third century C.E.—more than two hundred years after Jesus Christ!

If, then, the clergy-laity distinction is not based on the model set by Jesus' apostles and other early Christians, does that make it wrong? According to the Bible, yes. Consider why.

#### "All You Are Brothers"

God's Word tells us that all Christians serve as God's ministers and that none is above or beneath the other. (2 Corinthians 3:5, 6) "There was a very positive insistence on the absence of class" among early Christians, says religion writer Alexandre Faivre. That "absence of class" harmonizes with Jesus' words to his followers: "All you are brothers."—Matthew 23:8.

Spiritually older men did, of course, serve as overseers, which included being shepherds and teachers. (Acts 20:28) However, these men were not paid clerics. For the most part,

they were ordinary working men—husbands and fathers. Moreover, they qualified to serve as overseers, not by attending religious seminaries, but by being diligent students of God's Word and by cultivating the spiritual qualities required by God. These qualities include being "moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, . . . reasonable, not belligerent, not a lover of money, a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner."—1 Timothy 3:1-7.

#### Why It Is Wise to Stick to the Bible

"Do not go beyond the things that are written," the Bible states. (1 Corinthians 4:6) Sadly, when people disregard that divinely inspired directive, spiritual harm usually results, and that is true of the clergy-laity arrangement. How so? Please consider the following six points.

- 1. The separation of a clergy class implies that one must have a special calling to be a minister of God. Yet, the Bible says that all true Christians should serve God and praise his name. (Romans 10:9, 10) As for ministering within the congregation, Christian men in general are encouraged to reach out for that privilege, which is the custom among Jehovah's Witnesses.—1 Timothy 3:1.
- 2. The clergy-laity distinction exalts the clergy class, an evidence being adulatory reli-



Unlike the clergy, Jesus conducted himself as "a lesser one"



gious titles. Yet, Jesus said: "He that conducts himself as *a lesser one* among all of you is the one that is great." (Luke 9:48) In harmony with that spirit of humility, he told his followers not to adopt religious titles.—Matthew 23: 8-12.

**3.** A paid clergy class can impose a heavy financial burden on the laity, especially when the former have lavish lifestyles. Christian

overseers, on the other hand, care for their financial needs by doing normal secular work, thus setting a good example for others.\*—Acts 18:1-3; 20:33, 34; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-10.

- 4. Because a clergyman may depend on others for financial support, he might be tempted to dilute the Bible's message in order to please parishioners. Indeed, the Scriptures foretold that this very thing would occur. "There will be a period of time when they will not put up with the healthful teaching, but, in accord with their own desires, they will accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled."—2 Timothy 4:3.
- **5.** The clergy-laity distinction tends to cause lay people to relegate religion to the clergy, while the laity just turn up for weekly services. Yet, all Christians must be conscious of their spiritual need and be good students of the Bible.—Matthew 4:4; 5:3.
- **6.** When the laity are Biblically uninformed, they can easily be misled by clerics, even exploited by them. Indeed, history contains many examples of such abuses. —Acts 20:29, 30.

In order to adhere closely to the pattern set down in the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses have, not a clergy class, but unpaid spiritual shepherds and teachers who willingly minister to God's flock. Why not see for yourself by visiting a Kingdom Hall in your locality?

#### **HAVE YOU WONDERED?**

- How should all of God's people view one another?-Matthew 23:8.
- How do Christian men qualify to serve as overseers in the congregation?—1 Timothy 3:1-7.
- Why does the clergy-laity arrangement not have God's blessing?—1 Corinthians 4:6.

<sup>\*</sup>In the first century, some itinerant overseers did at times "live by means of the good news" by accepting hospitality and contributions that were willingly extended.—1 Corinthians 9:14.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Examples include the sale of indulgences, the Catholic Inquisition, and even the burning of Bibles by clerics who wanted to keep God's Word out of the hands of their flocks.—See the November 15, 2002, issue of our companion magazine, *The Watchtower*, page 27.

## Faithful, Cooperative Parents



■ The temperature on the South African highveld, or interior plateau, is close to freezing. From my warm thirdfloor office, I anxiously watch a leafless tree sway to and fro before a howling winter wind. Down in a fork of the tree, a laughing dove is keeping a couple of three-day-old chicks warm.

Before the first eggs were laid, the dove and its mate cooperated in building the nest—the male bringing twigs and the female setting them in place. They did a superb job because fierce winter winds have been unable to dislodge the nest, which has now been home to two broods. The female incubated these eggs at night; the male, during the day. After about two weeks, the eggs hatched. Before two more weeks are up, the nestlings will be big and also strong enough to fly.

Listen! Can you hear that pleasant cooing that sounds like gentle laughter? The female laughing dove, with her crop full of food for her hungry

chicks, has announced her arrival on a nearby branch and is ready to relieve her mate. Even after the chicks have left the nest, both parents will continue feeding them until they can fend for themselves.

I often marvel at the cooperation and tender care shown by those birds, whose instincts are unfailingly passed on from one generation to the next. These facts call to mind the words of Psalm 86:8: "There is none like you . . . , O Jehovah, neither are there any works like yours."

In his written Word, the Holy Bible, Jehovah God has provided guidance for human parents that is as reliable as the instincts he gave to the doves. For example, the Bible urges mothers "to love their children." (Titus 2:4) To fathers, it says: "Do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 5:8) To be sure, parents who do these things are truly precious in God's eyes.



Seashells look fragile, but they are usually difficult to break. "I'd have to hit some of them with a hammer to get a piece off," says engineer Kenneth Vecchio, reflecting on his childhood days. The toughness of the seashell is especially evident in the shell of mollusks.\*

Consider: The inner layer of the shell of mollusks (called nacre, or mother-of-pearl) has microscopic scales that are just nanometers, or billionths of a meter, apart. "The complexity we have observed in nacre at the nanoscale is quite amazing and seems likely to be a critical determinant of the toughness of the material," says Christine Ortiz, associate professor of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, U.S.A.

Science writer Charles Petit describes a magnified view of nacre as "astonishingly orderly." He explains: "A microscopic cross section looks like brickwork, with flat, hexagonal tablets of a crystalline, calcium carbonate mineral stacked in neat layers. Mortaring them is a flexible protein-rich gum originally secreted by the shellfish."

Scientists believe that the secrets of the mollusk's shell have broad applications—tougher armor systems, auto panels, and airplane wings, to name a few. "Nature uses nanoscale structural design principles to produce materials with superior mechanical properties," says Ortiz. "In many aspects, human engineers have yet to achieve the same skill."

What do you think? Did the shell of the mollusk with its amazing strength come

about by chance? Or was it designed?

Enlarged cross-section of the inner layer of a mollusk shell

Inset: © Eye of Science/Photo Researchers, Inc.

<sup>\*</sup> Mollusks are soft-bodied, boneless animals. Sea mollusks include clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, octopuses and squid.



Persian King Xerxes of the element of surprise, and his forces were defeated.

Modern forms of steganography include using the microdot and watermarking paper and images for copyright protection. During World War II, the microdot employed was actually a photograph reduced to the size of a period. The intended receiver would simply enlarge the dot. Today, people who peddle illegal pornography employ a similar concept. Aided by computer software, they hide pictures in otherwise innocuous digital images. text, or sound files.

Because the existence of the message itself is kept secret, steganography does not draw attention to either the carrier or the recipient. On the other hand, if the message is discovered, it can be read-unless it has also been encrypted.

#### Hiding the Meaning

Cryptology, or "hidden word," is the science of keeping communications confidential by concealing, not the fact of the message, but its meaning. The process involves scrambling and unscrambling data according to a predetermined system of rules, thus only those parties who have the key are enabled to decrypt the message.

The ancient Spartans encrypted messages by means of a simple mechanical device called a scytale. The code writer would wrap a strip of leather or parchment in a tight, spiral fashion around a staff and then write a message on the material along the staff. When unwrapped, the strip of leather appeared to contain just meaningless letters. But when the intended receiver wound the material around another staff of exactly the same diameter as the original, he could read the text. Adding a touch of steganography, the messenger would sometimes disguise the strip as a belt, wearing it with the letters on the inside.

Julius Caesar is said to have disguised his battlefield messages by means of a simple substitution cipher—swapping each letter with one that is, for example, three places along in the alphabet. Thus, a would be written as d, b as e, and so on.

The European Renaissance provided the means for more sophisticated advances in cryptography. One of several individuals to advance the field was Blaise de Vigenère, a French diplomat born in 1523. Vigenère proposed a cipher, invented earlier, that involved switching between multiple alphabets during encipherment. His technique, thought unbreakable, was dubbed "the indecipherable cipher" (le chiffre indéchiffrable). Nevertheless, progress in code making also saw advances in code breaking.\*

For example, when Islamic scholars analyzed the Koran, written in Arabic, they observed that certain letters occurred more frequently than others, a trait common to other languages as well. This insight led to the development of an important cryptographic tool called frequency analysis, which can reveal the hidden identity of certain letters and groups of letters in a ciphertext by counting the number of times individual letters appear.

By the 15th century, cryptography was becoming a routine tool of European diplomats. But it did not always guarantee security. For instance, Frenchman François Viète managed to crack the codes of the Spanish

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- You Can Meet the **Challenges of Youth**
- Will Bad People Burn in Hell?
- Herod the Great—A Master Builder

<sup>\*</sup> In technical terms, a cipher differs from a code. Whereas a cipher replaces individual letters with other letters or numbers, a code involves substituting words or phrases for other words, phrases, or numbers. Nevertheless, the two may over-

royal court. What is more, he was so successful that a disheartened King Philip II claimed that Viète was in league with the Devil and argued that he be tried before a Catholic court!

#### **Technology Enters the Fray**

The 20th century, especially the two world wars, took cryptography to new levels of sophistication involving complex machines, such as the German Enigma, a machine much like a typewriter. When an operator entered plaintext, a succession of electrically wired rotors encrypted the message. The ciphertext was then sent via Morse code and decrypted by another Enigma. Nevertheless, errors and a lax approach by overworked operators gave code breakers vital clues that enabled them to decrypt messages.

In today's digital world, banking, money transfers, and payments-as well as medical, corporate, and government records-are secured by means of complex encryptions. The ciphertext, in turn, is read by those who have the necessary decryption key to restore the data to its original form.

Whereas a metal key usually has a set of grooves, a digital key is a string of zeros and ones in various combinations. Longer keys have more combinations and are thus harder to crack. An eight-bit key, for example, has 256 possible combinations, or permutations, whereas a 56-bit key has more than 72 quadrillion permutations. The present standard for encrypted Web browsing is 128-bit keys, which have 4.7 sextillion times more permutations than 56-bit keys!\*

Still, security breaches do occur. In 2008, for instance, federal prosecutors in the United States charged 11 men with what is thought to be the largest-ever case of identity theft. The group allegedly used laptop computers, wireless technology, and special software to capture numbers from credit cards and debit cards used for payment at cash registers.

#### Is Your Confidential Data Safe?

To be sure, the encryptions protecting your bank accounts and online transactions are extremely hard to crack. Yet, much also depends on you. The Bible says: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself, but the inexperienced have passed along and must suffer the penalty." (Proverbs 22:3) So be shrewd and "conceal" yourself, as it were, from fraud and theft by doing at least the following:

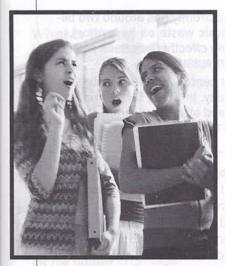
- Use antivirus software on your computer.
- Employ a spyware-detection program.
- Install a firewall.
- Keep all of the above continually updated, and install security updates for your applications and operating system.
- Beware of links or attachments in e-mail or instant messages, especially if the mail is unsolicited and asks for personal information or for verification of a password.
- When transmitting sensitive data, such as credit card details, use encrypted connections, and log off the Web site when you have finished.\*
- Choose passwords that are hard to guess. and protect them.
- Do not copy or run software from unknown sources.
- Regularly back up your files, and safely store the copies.

If you follow those basic precautions and apply any others that may be advisable now and in the future, you at least improve your chances of winning your own battle for confidentiality and security.

<sup>\*</sup> A quadrillion is 1 followed by 15 zeros. A sextillion is 1 followed by 21 zeros.

<sup>\*</sup> Encrypted Web pages on Web browsers have securetransaction symbols, such as a lock symbol or "https://" in the address bar. The s means secure.

#### FROM OUR READERS



Young People Ask . . . What's So Bad About Swearing? (March 2008) I was raised in a Christian home, but I got into the habit of swearing. I tried and tried to stop but without success. However, this article has helped me to control myself. As mentioned in the article, I do not want to abuse the gift of speech. So now I think twice before speaking. Thank you very much.

C. P., Brazil

I am 12 years old. I'm surrounded by swearing in school, and I'm afraid that one day a swearword might slip out. I was just about to write and ask that a "Young People Ask" article be written on this subject when the exact article I wanted appeared in Awake! The article reminded me why

swearing is bad, and it renewed my strength. Keep writing articles like that!

A. P., United States

My husband and I clean houses for a living, and one of our clients told us about her "new year's resolution" to stop swearing. She said that she prays every day, asking God to help her quit her bad habit. She also asked me to give her any literature I had on the subject. I prayed about that and then, as usual, I downloaded the recent magazines from the Web site www.iw.org to my MP3 player. You can imagine my delight upon hearing the table of contents the next day. I was so excited! Even though the article was written for youths, I knew that our client would still get some practical advice from it. I couldn't wait to share it with her.

S. C., United States

Air Traffic Control-How Does It Keep You Safe? (April 2008) "Secure and ready for takeoff!" were the words I exclaimed after reading the article. I was encouraged and felt safer because Awake! showed me that air traffic controllers are really interested in our safety. Thank you. T. S., Brazil

How Would You Answer? I am 12 years old and live in southern Ireland. I would like to thank you for the special quizzes for children at the back of Awake! They are a good idea. They get children involved with the magazine. Please keep putting them in. Thanks again. A. C., Ireland

1. Both Peter and John were present. 2. The man was ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

gate not in the country. 4. Benjamin.-Judges 3:15.

lame, not blind. 3. The lame man was near a temple

2. Eglon.-Judges 3:14. 6. Irue.

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### **Alcohol During Pregnancy**

Each year in Germany about 10,000 babies are born with alcohol-related birth defects, reports the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Some 4,000 of these children are severely and permanently disabled. "There is no certain limit for safe alcohol consumption during pregnancy," warns Drug Commissioner Sabine Bätzing. "We need to enhance the awareness of physicians, midwives, and pregnant women that even one drink now and then [by a pregnant woman] could harm a child mentally and physically or lead to behavioral problems."

#### **Gardening—Good for Your Health**

"Researchers are discovering that growing your own food—however much or little you can do—is better for your health than anyone ever suspected," says *Psychology Today*. Research showed that when "certain strains of soil-borne mycobacteria" were ingested or inhaled, they "sharply stimulated the human immune system." Thus, says the magazine, "it looks increasingly like ingesting components of the soil itself might be as critical to human health as the very finest fruits and veggies grown in it."

- "Russia currently has around two billion tons of toxic waste on its territory, and there is no effective way to dispose of it."—RIA NOVOSTI. RUSSIA.
- The 21st century has seen a surge in maritime piracy. In 2007, for example, "263 actual and attempted pirate attacks took place."—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, U.S.A.

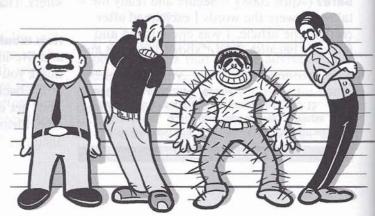
#### **Record Nonstop Flight**

Scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) have reported "the longest non-stop flight recorded for a land bird." A number of bar-tailed godwits were tracked by satellite as they made their annual migration over the Pacific Ocean. One female made an eightday, 7,242-mile nonstop flight from Alaska to New Zealand. By the time it arrived, it had "burned off half of its 1.5-pound weight," says the magazine The Week. On their return journey, the godwits fly from New Zealand to China and then back to Alaska-a round trip of 18,000 miles. "If 18,000 miles is an average annual flight distance," says the USGS, "then an adult godwit would fly some 288,000 miles in a lifetime."

#### **Catching Cactus Thieves**

The Saguaro National Park, Arizona, U.S.A., is losing some of its signature cactuses to thieves. "Everybody wants a saguaro in their front yard," says Jim McGinnis, of the Arizona Department of Agriculture's office of special investigations. So it is not uncommon to see a vehicle in the desert

carrying a cactus. Thieves typically target four- to seven-foot specimens, which can fetch a thousand dollars or more. To combat theft, officials are planning to insert microchips into cactuses. Handheld scanners should later reveal whether specimens for sale in nurseries or landscape businesses were stolen from the national park.



#### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

### What Is Wrong With This Picture?

Read Acts 3:1-10. Now look at the picture. What features are incorrect? Write your answers on the lines below.

1.....

3

FOR DISCUSSION: Why could the apostles perform miracles? What hope does this give us for the future? CLUE: Read Revelation 21:3, 4; 22:2.





#### **Children's Picture Search**

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 5 What will happen if a boy or a girl starts out on the right path? Proverbs 22:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 5 What did God make out of one man? Acts 17:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 11 What will kind words do? Proverbs 12:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 23 Who is the one that is great among Christians?

#### What Do You Know About Judge Ehud?

Read Judges 3:12-30. Now answer the following questions.

He was from which tribe?

He delivered Israel from which ruler?

FOR DISCUSSION: Read Judges 3:15, 28. Why did Jehovah raise up Ehud? Whom did Ehud credit for his victories? If you face challenges, what should you do, and why?

True or false? He lived before King David.

6



## 'A Drawer That Only Jehovah Can Open'

■ In 2007, six-year-old Erika and four-year-old Mattia lost their father in death. The children's pain has been eased, however, by the resurrection hope.—Acts 24:15.

Erika likes to share her Bible-based hope with others, especially at her school in Sicily. For example, when her friend Beatrice said that Erika's father was now in heaven, Erika kindly replied that the Bible indicates otherwise. "So where is he then?" asked Beatrice.

"In the tomb," replied Erika. At that point, Beatrice wanted to know what a tomb is.

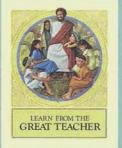
"It's like a drawer that opens and closes," explained Erika. "But once this drawer is closed, you can't open it. Only Jehovah can open it when the new world comes."

Erika then explained to her friend that Jehovah is God's name, that he will bring about a paradise on earth, that there will be no more sickness, and that dead ones will return to life. Then Erika asked Beatrice to check with her mother to see if it would be all right for her to receive as a gift a book that discusses these things.

When she had been assured that Beatrice's mother had given permission, Erika gave her friend a copy of the book *Learn From the Great Teacher*. Erika continues to talk to others about the things she is learning from the Bible and has even given a copy of the above-mentioned book to her teacher.

Of course, Erika and her little brother still have sad moments because of the loss of their dad. But the resurrection hope makes them feel better. These children, like many others around the world, render thanks to Jehovah, the God of true comfort.—Matthew 21:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.





# SEPTEMBER 2009

YOU CAN MEET THE Challenges of Youth

## Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000
PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

- 3 What Are the Challenges?
- 7 How Youths Can Find Help
- 12 Faithful to God for Over 70 Years
- 16 The Sea Buckthorn

  —A Tree of Many Uses
- 17 Young People Ask How Can I Control My Temper?
- 20 Keeping Fast Hold of God's Right Hand
- 21 How Modern Farming Has Changed the World
- 28 A Pillar on the Sea
- 29 From Our Readers
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 Evolution or Creation

  —Which?



#### Will Bad People Burn in Hell?

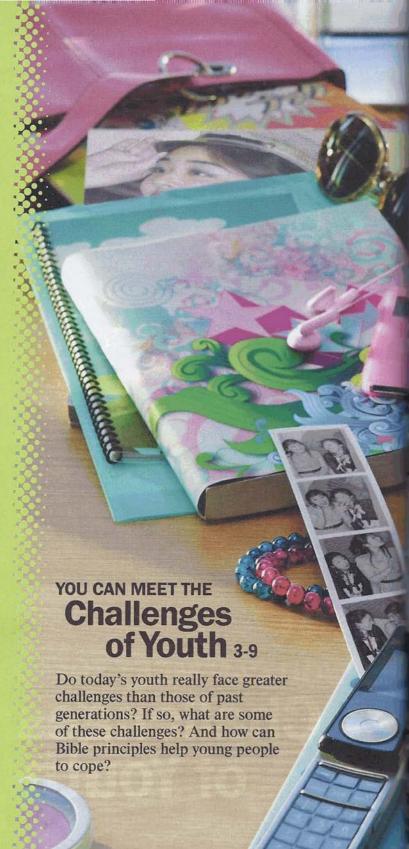
What does the Bible teach about this? Learn why it is important that we know.

Photo: www.comstock.com



## Herod the Great -A Master Builder

What did Herod build, and why were Jesus' disciples impressed? What conclusion was recently reached about Herod's burial place?



# **What Are the Challenges?**

What do you think? Are the challenges facing youths of the current generation more difficult than those of the past? If your answer is no, you may feel that today's teens are the most blessed of any group of young people in history.

In many countries, medicine controls diseases that formerly robbed the young of health and life. Technology produces electronic tools and toys that previous generations only dreamed about. And economic development has lifted millions of families out of poverty. Indeed, countless parents work hard to provide their children with living conditions and educational opportunities that they themselves lacked.

Without a doubt, youths today have many advantages. But they also face unprecedented challenges. One reason is that mankind is now living during a period of time that the Bible calls "the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 24:3) Jesus Christ accurately foretold that this era would be marked by massive social upheaval. (Matthew 24:7, 8) The Bible calls this same era "the last days" and describes the prevalent social conditions as "hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) Consider just some of the hard-to-deal-with challenges facing teens today.

#### Challenge 1

#### **Increased Isolation**

Movies, TV shows, and magazines have portrayed youths as constantly surrounded by a group of friends who grow with them through school and maintain that bond as adults. The reality for most teens is quite different.

Researchers Barbara Schneider and David Stevenson, who analyzed interviews conducted with thousands of youths in the United States, found that "relatively few students consistently had the same best friend or a small group of friends over time." Many youths "lack

> Many youths lack close friends in whom they can confide



a sense of connection and have few close friends with whom they feel comfortable discussing problems or sharing ideas," say Schneider and Stevenson.

Teens who do make friends seem to have little time to spend with them. One extensive study in the United States found that most teenagers spend about 10 percent of their time in face-to-face contact with friends but up to 20 percent of their waking hours alone—more time than they spend with either family or friends. They eat alone, travel alone, entertain themselves alone.

Encouraging this trend toward isolation is the proliferation of electronic devices. For example, in 2006, *Time* magazine reported that youths in America between the ages of 8 and 18 spent, on average, six and a half hours a day with their eyes glued to the TV, their ears plugged with earphones, or their hands hovering over video-game controls or computer keyboards.\*

Of course, this generation is not the first to spend hours enjoying music or playing games. (Matthew 11:16, 17) But the sheer quantity of time now spent in electronic isolation instead of interaction with family can be detrimental. Say researchers Schneider and Stevenson: "Young people report having lower self-esteem, being less happy, enjoying what they are doing less, and feeling less active when they are alone."



#### Challenge 2

#### **Pressured for Sex**

Teens and even preteens are under tremendous pressure to experiment with sex. Nathan, a youth who lives in Australia, says: "Most kids I knew at school began having sex between the ages of 12 and 15." A young woman named Vinbay, who lives in Mexico, says that casual sex was very common among youths at her school. "Those who did not have sex were considered strange," she says. "Casual sex is so common among my peers that only saying no once is not enough," says Ana, a 15-year-old who lives in Brazil. "You repeatedly have to reject the invitations."

Researchers in the United Kingdom surveyed a thousand youths whose ages ranged between 12 and 19 and who were from a vari-

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Vol. 90, No. 9

Monthly

**ENGLISH** 

<sup>\*</sup> Youths who isolate themselves in their room have become so commonplace in Japan that they have been given a name, the *hikikomori*. Some people estimate that there are between 500,000 and 1,000,000 *hikikomori* in Japan.

# According to one study, girls who experiment with sex are three times more likely to be depressed than girls who do not

ety of backgrounds. They found that almost 50 percent of the youths regularly engaged in some form of sexual activity. Over 20 percent of these sexually active youths were only 12! Dr. Dylan Griffiths, who oversaw the research, says: "The controls that the family, the Church and other institutions traditionally exerted have vanished, leaving the young as casualties."

Are youths who experiment with sex really "casualties"? In a report published in 2003, researchers Rector, Noyes, and Johnson drew a direct link between teenage sexual activity, depression, and an increased risk of attempted suicide. They analyzed interviews with 6,500 teenagers and found that "sexually active girls are more than three times more likely to be depressed than are girls who are not sexually active." And among boys those "who are sexually active are more than twice as likely to be depressed as are those who are not sexually active."



#### Challenge 3

#### Fractured Families

Youths in the United States have experienced rapid changes in family structure and a shifting set of values. "In the past few decades there have been several major demographic changes that directly affect the lives of teenagers," says the book *The Ambitious Generation—America's Teenagers, Motivated but Directionless.* "The size of the average American family has been decreasing, so adolescents are likely to have fewer siblings. As divorce rates continue to rise, more children are spending part of their childhood with a single parent. And more mothers of children under eighteen are working, so it is less likely that there is an adult at home."

af values emple

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Arnharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bistama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech,°° Danish,° Dutch, \*° English, \*°° Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,°° French, \*°° Georgian, German, \*°° Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, \*°° Japanese, \*° Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, \*°° Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macadonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, \*° Polish, \*°° Porluguese, \*°° Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, \*°° Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, \*°° Swahili, Swedish, \*°° Tagalog, Tamili, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

+ CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brocklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

Whether children are living with one or with two parents, many feel alienated from their parents at the very times they need them most. A study that followed 7,000 teens over a period of years found that most of the adolescents considered their parents to be loving and accepting. Even so, "only a third said that they receive special attention and help when they have a problem." It also found that "for most adolescents, problem situations are seen as the times when parents are least likely to intervene and offer assistance."

In Japan the once strong family bond is being corroded by the desire for material success. Yuko Kawanishi, a professor of sociology, says: "Most parents of today's teenagers belong to the postwar baby-boomer generation, and grew up being exposed to a new set of values emphasizing economic success and material gains." What values do such parents pass on to their children? "Many parents today primarily care about their children's academic success," says Kawanishi. "As long as their children study," she continues, "other things have become secondary, or do not even matter, at home."

How can such an unbalanced emphasis on material success and academic achievement affect youths? In Japan the media often talk about *kireru*—a term describing the way young people suddenly snap under the pressure to perform. "When children appear to act crazy," says Kawanishi, "it may be because they do not perceive their family to have a controlling impact on their behavior."

#### A Reason for Optimism

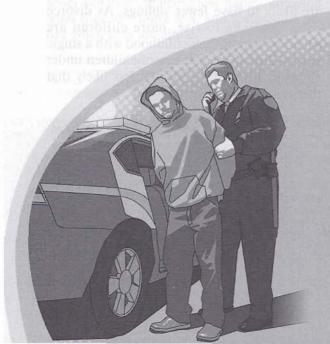
Certainly, we are living in "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) However, the Bible does much more than just foretell that people living in this period would face increased trouble.

The Bible offers constructive counsel on how youths can improve their lives. Jehovah God, the Author of the Bible, keenly desires to teach young ones how to cope with challenges. (Proverbs 2:1-6) He wants them to have a good life. His Word can give "to the inexperienced ones shrewdness, to a young man knowledge and thinking ability." (Proverbs 1:4) Consider how Bible principles can help.

#### Self-Destructive Behavior

A government report in 2006 revealed that in Britain cocaine use among 11- to 15-year-olds doubled within a year. Some 65,000 youths said that they had experimented with the drug. In Holland more than 20 percent of youths between 16 and 24 years of age are said to be alcohol dependent to some degree or have an alcohol-related illness.

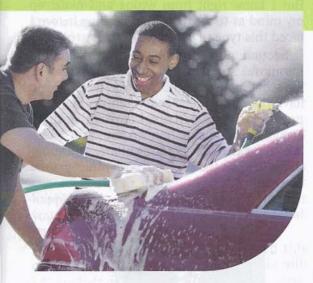
Many youths express their inner anguish in a more direct way. They cut, bite, or burn their own bodies. "It is estimated that three million Americans suffer from self-injury, and one in every 200 teenagers suffer from chronic selfinjury," say researchers Len Austin and Julie Kortum.



## **How Youths Can Find Help**

In an ideal world, all parents would provide consistent and loving guidance and training for their children. They would talk to them, read to them, eat with them, understand them. However, parents are not perfect. The Bible rightly states: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."-Romans 3:23.

If you are a youth, you may feel that your homelife is less than ideal-and you may be right. Nevertheless, there is much you can do to reduce your anxiety and increase your happiness. Note just some of the ways in which applying Bible principles can help you.



Suggestion 1

#### Choose Association Over Isolation

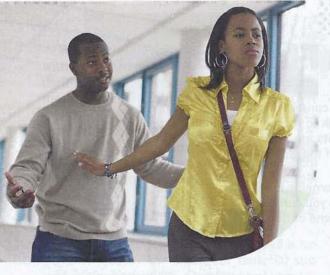
"One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing; against all practical wisdom he will break forth." (Proverbs 18:1) Some youths feel awkward around people and find it easier to watch TV or play a video game. Others are painfully shy, so they isolate themselves. Elizabeth is a youth who describes herself as being in "a permanent state of shyness." She says: "My shyness is like a fear. I find it very hard to approach people and talk to them."

How has Elizabeth dealt with the challenge of shyness? She is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and as part of her worship, she regularly attends Christian meetings. Elizabeth says: "In spite of my shyness, I make it a goal to speak with one person at each meeting. If I fail, I try not to feel down. Instead, I focus on my achievements. I find that I have really benefited from getting to know others."

Flac From Sexual Immorality

Why not write down the names of two or three people you would like to get to know better? Make it a goal in the following week or so to learn something new about one of them. Then write down one nice thing you could do for each of these people over the coming month, and then do it.-Acts 20:35.

If you lock yourself away from problems and people, you will inevitably become more concerned about yourself than is healthy. On the other hand, the Bible advises us to be "keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just [our] own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Philippians 2:4) If you apply that principle when dealing with those in your family and with others around you, you will see your own problems in perspective and be better able to handle them.



Suggestion 2

#### Flee From Sexual Immorality

"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18, New International Version) How can you avoid being pressured into engaging in immoral sex, when it is so prevalent among other youths?

What Teens Need From Parents

Shared Time: Jehovah God told parents in Israel that they should speak with their children often —"when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road." (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7) This requires that parents spend time with their children. Jesus evidently felt that children were deserving of his time. For example, when "people began bringing him young children for him to touch these," what was Jesus' reaction? "He took the children into his arms and began blessing them." (Mark 10: 13, 16) What a fine example for parents!



First, you need to think this subject through before you face pressure or temptation. "The shrewd one considers his steps." states a wise proverb. (Proverbs 14:15) Mbali, a young woman who lives in South Africa, says: "In high school, I was persistently asked out by a young man in my class. The girls in class pressured me to date him because he was so good-looking-he was a model and played on the school soccer team. I thought he was attractive, but I had already decided not to compromise my moral standards. My peers felt that casual sex was no big deal. But I knew right from wrong and made up my mind as to what I would do long before I faced this type of situation."

Second, pray for God's help in sticking to his moral standards. Maggie, a youth who lives in England, says: "Prayer helps me to have the strength I need when dealing with pressure to engage in sex. I never think that I can handle the situation on my own. I also talk to my parents about the matter and sometimes discuss the problem with other mature friends."



Honest, Open Communication: The Bible says: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk." (Proverbs 15: 22) Confidential talk with your children was necessary when they were younger. It is especially vital during the teen years, when youths likely spend less time at home and more time with school friends or other companions. If there is no confidential talk—no honest and open communication between children and parents—teenagers can become strangers in the house.



Suggestion 3

## Develop Fellow Feeling for Your Parents

"All of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate." (1 Peter 3:8) You can't control whether your parents separate or not, nor can you control whether both must work full-time. But to some extent you can control whether you allow such challenges to destroy your relationship with them. One way you can reduce your anxiety and increase your happiness is by developing compassion for your parents by trying to understand the challenges they face.

A youth named Amber has applied this counsel. She admits that her relationship with her mother is sometimes filled with stress, misunderstandings, and frustration. Nevertheless, she says: "My mom has been through so much in her life. She has raised us four

children on her own. She has always given us a roof over our heads, food on the table, and clothes to wear. I really admire her strength, and I hope to show the same determination when I'm faced with hardship."

If you endeavor to put yourself in your parents' shoes and to feel the emotions they feel, it can help you to keep your problems in perspective. Doing so may also help you to recognize and imitate your parents' good qualities.

#### A Source of Reliable Advice

The suggestions above are just a sample of the practical wisdom found in God's Word, the Bible. As you learn more about this book, you will appreciate what reliable advice it provides.\*

One way you can learn more about the Bible is by associating with Jehovah's Witnesses and studying it with them. Among these people you will find true friends who will support you through difficult times and help you to apply the Bible's wise counsel in your life. Living by Bible standards is certainly not easy.

But if you choose this course of life, you will lastingly benefit yourself.—Isaiah 48:17, 18.

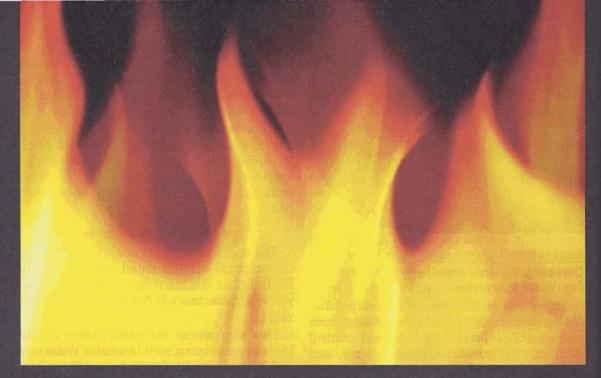
<sup>\*</sup> The book Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work, Volume 2, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, is an excellent source of Bible-based advice on how youths can deal with the pressures they face. Similar information is also published on the Internet at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype.





Appropriate Discipline: Discipline carries the thought of correction and training—although punishment may come into the picture. "Anyone foolish disrespects the discipline of his father, but anyone regarding reproof is shrewd," states Proverbs 15:5. A teenager cannot 'regard reproof' if it is not given. Of course, when disciplining teenagers, parents need to be balanced. They should avoid being so strict that they frustrate their offspring, perhaps even damaging their children's self-confidence. (Colossians 3:21) Yet, parents do not want to be permissive and fail to provide their youngsters with vital training. Permissiveness can be disastrous.\*

<sup>\*</sup> For more information see chapters 5 and 6 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# Will Bad People Burn in Hell?

GERTRUDE, a Pentecostal preacher, held firmly to her belief in a fiery hell. The very suggestion that there might not be any such place offended her sense of justice. She reasoned that without the fires of hell, all sorts of horrible crimes would go unpunished. Gertrude remained adamant in her position. As she put it, "I don't think that I'd want to worship God if there were no hellfire for the wicked."

Will bad people burn in hell, as many religions teach? If not, what punishment will they receive?

#### The First Act of Divine Punishment

According to the Bible, God created the first human pair perfect. (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 32:4) He placed them in a paradise

garden and gave them the opportunity to live forever. However, the first humans, Adam and Eve, had one restriction. God warned them: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die."—Genesis 2:16, 17.

Sadly, our first parents failed that simple test of loyalty and obedience. The Creator was obliged to sentence them to death. "In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return."—Genesis 3:19.

Had Adam and Eve been in danger of burning in hell, would not God have warned them about such a punishment? The fact is

#### "The dead . . . are conscious of nothing at all."-Ecclesiastes 9:5

that he mentioned nothing about suffering after death. How could they suffer? They did not have immortal souls that would survive after death. The Bible makes this very clear: "The soul that is sinning—it itself will die." -Ezekiel 18:4.\*

As the Giver of life, our Creator knows all there is to know about life and death. He tells us in his Word that "the dead . . . are conscious of nothing at all." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) That is why Adam and Eve could not suffer in a fiery hell after their death. They simply returned to the dust and ceased to exist. They were "conscious of nothing at all."

#### Can We Suffer After Death?

The Bible says at Romans 5:12: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men." Really, then, is it reasonable to believe that people suffer in hellfire for their sins, when Adam, the one who brought death upon the entire human race, simply became dust after dving?—1 Corinthians 15:22.

We all come under the same law that Adam was under. "The wages sin pays is death." Moreover, once a person dies, he is "acquitted from his sin." (Romans 6:7, 23) If both good and bad people die and nobody experiences suffering after death, where is God's justice?

#### God's Justice

God's purpose for obedient mankind has not changed since he created the first human couple and directed them to have children and take care of the earth. (Genesis 1: 28) This is clearly still his purpose, as he later declared: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."-Psalm 37:29.

Note that the righteous will live on this earth. They will have a life of perfect health and happiness. God's original purpose to have the earth filled with a righteous race of people will indeed "have certain success." This will occur when he replaces this present wicked system of things with a new world.-Isaiah 55:11; Daniel 2:44; Revelation 21:4.

Billions of people who have died in ignorance of God's requirements will benefit from a resurrection and will receive instruction for life in God's new world. (Isajah 11:9; John 5: 28, 29) On the other hand, anyone who refuses to conform to God's laws will be punished with "the second death." This is the death from which they will never awake.-Revelation 21:8; Jeremiah 51:57.

Clearly, as a God of love, Jehovah will not torture people in hellfire. (1 John 4:8) Nor will he tolerate wickedness indefinitely. Accordingly, Psalm 145:20 assures us that "Jehovah is guarding all those loving him, but all the wicked ones he will annihilate." Is that not loving and just?

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

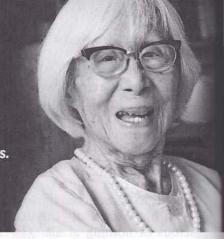
- Do we have an immortal soul?—Ezekiel 18:4.
- What is the condition of the dead?—Ecclesiastes 9:5.
- How will God punish the wicked?—Psalm 145:20.

<sup>\*</sup> In the Bible, "soul" means the entire person-not something separate from the body. Genesis 2:7 says: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." Adam was not given a soul apart from his body. Rather, Adam himself was a living soul.

# Faithful to God for Over 70 Years

AS TOLD BY JOSEPHINE ELIAS

"Do not worry," my husband whispered through the prison bars. "Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah." I too was determined to stay faithful. Today I still feel the same way.



WAS born in 1916 in Sukabumi, a small city in the highlands of West Java, Indonesia. My parents were wealthy Chinese who lived in a large house with servants. I had five brothers, three older and two younger. I was the only girl, and I became quite a tomboy. I clambered over rooftops and enjoyed sports. Yet, there was a matter that caused me great concern.

I dreaded the prospect of burning in hell. Naughty girls were sent to hell, my school-teachers said. And because I was naughty, I felt I would end up there. Later, while attending high school in Jakarta (then called Batavia), I became ill. The doctor thought I would die, so the landlady tried to comfort me by saying that I would soon be in heaven. I feared, however, that I was destined for hell.

My mother, Kang Nio, and my older brother Dodo rushed to Jakarta to get me. On our way home, Dodo asked, "Did you know that the Bible does not teach hellfire?"

"How do you know?" I asked. Mother read scriptures from the Bible showing that the dead are unconscious and are awaiting a resurrection. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; John 5:28, 29) "We learned these things from Jehovah's Witnesses," they explained. They handed me a small booklet entitled *Where Are the Dead?* which I started reading immediately.\* Be-

fore arriving home, I declared, "This is the truth!"

#### Voicing My Faith

My family had by then moved to Bandung, a large city in West Java. There I slowly recovered from my illness. In March 1937, we were visited by Clem Deschamp, an Australian Witness serving in Jakarta. During his visit my mother, my older brothers—Felix, Dodo, and Peng—and I were baptized in symbol of our dedication to God. Later, my younger brothers, Hartanto and Jusak, and my father, Tan Gim Hok, also became Witnesses.\*

After we were baptized, we joined Clem in a special nine-day preaching campaign. He showed us how to preach using a testimony card that contained a simple Bible message in three languages. We also witnessed informally to relatives and friends. Soon our small group in Bandung became a congregation, the second in Indonesia.

Later that year our family moved to Jakarta to preach to its 80,000 Chinese inhabitants. Mother, Felix, and I took up the full-time Christian ministry as pioneers. I also preached in Bandung, Surabaya, and other places. For the most part, I preached alone. I was young, strong, and happy to be serving God. However, war clouds were looming

<sup>\*</sup> Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but now out of print.

<sup>\*</sup> The whole family stayed faithful to Jehovah. Josephine and Jusak, the sole surviving members, still serve Jehovah zealously in Jakarta.

on the horizon, and my faith would soon be tested.

#### **War Brings Trials**

In December 1941, Asia plunged into the chaos of World War II. The Imperial Japanese Army seized Indonesia in a viselike grip. Our Bible literature was banned, and we could not preach openly. I carried a chessboard when visiting interested people at their homes so that others would think I was merely playing chess.

In 1943, I married André, a fearless pioneer with a booming voice that commanded attention. Together we smuggled Bible literature to Witnesses throughout Java. Capture would have meant torture and death. We had many narrow escapes.

Once while boarding a train at Sukabumi, André and I were confronted by the dreaded Kempeitai, the Japanese military police. I carried banned literature deep inside my bag. "What do you have in the bag?" demanded a policeman.

"Clothes," André replied.

"And what is underneath the clothes?" he asked.

"More clothes," said André.

"But what is at the bottom of the bag?" the policeman inquired. I held my breath and prayed silently to Jehovah. "You had better check for yourself," André replied.

The policeman's assistant thrust his hand deep into the bag. Suddenly, he screamed in pain and vanked his hand from the bag. He had been pricked by a pin. The embarrassed officer quickly ordered us to close the bag and board the train.

On another trip to Sukabumi, the Kempeitai identified me as a Witness and summoned me to their local headquarters. André and my brother Felix followed along with me. There André was interrogated first. Ouestions rained down on him like hammer blows. "Who are Jehovah's Witnesses? Do you oppose the Japanese government? Are you a spy?"

"We are servants of Almighty God and have done nothing wrong," replied André. The commanding officer grabbed a samurai sword from the wall and held it aloft.

"What if I kill you now?" he snarled. André placed his head on the office desk and silently prayed. After a long pause, laughter erupted. "You are brave!" said the officer. He then dismissed André and called Felix and me in. When our testimony agreed with André's, the officer barked: "You are not spies. Get out of here!"

#### "I am a soldier for God's Kingdom, and a soldier cannot serve in two armies at the same time"

The three of us walked home, joyfully praising Jehovah. Little did we know that even more difficult trials lay immediately ahead.

#### More Tests of Faith

Several months later, André was denounced by "false brothers" and imprisoned by the Kempeitai. (2 Corinthians 11:26) I visited him in jail. He was thin and weak. He had survived by eating food scraps scavenged from the cell gutter. The jailers had not broken his integrity. As mentioned at the outset, he whispered through the prison bars: "Do not worry. Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah. They can carry me out as a corpse but not as a traitor."

After six months in jail, André appeared before the Jakarta High Court. Our family and friends crowded the courtroom. The atmosphere was tense.

"Why won't you join the Japanese army?" demanded the judge.

"I am a soldier for God's Kingdom," replied André, "and a soldier cannot serve in two armies at the same time."

"Would you tell others not to join the army?" asked the judge.

"No," said André, "it is for them to decide."

André continued his defense, quoting extensively from the Bible. The judge, a devout

#### "You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion"

Muslim, was impressed. "Our beliefs may differ, but I will not force a person to disobey his conscience," said the judge. "You are free."

A wave of relief swept through the courtroom, and my heart leaped. André came to me and held my hand. Family and friends gathered around us, excitedly offering their congratulations.

#### **Preaching True Freedom**

After World War II ended, a four-year revolution against Dutch colonial rule erupted in Indonesia. Thousands of people were killed, and the residents of entire villages fled from their homes. Patriots tried to force us to shout their war cry "Merdeka," meaning "Freedom." But we told them we were neutral in such political affairs.

Despite the violence, we resumed preaching from house to house. We used our old testimony cards and the literature that we had saved from before the war. In May 1948, when the violence eased, André and I began to pioneer again, becoming the only pioneers in In-

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- A House Divided—The Impact of Divorce on Adolescents
- You Can Succeed as a Single Parent
- What About Living Together Before Marriage?

donesia. Three years later we were thrilled to welcome 14 Witnesses to Jakarta, all of them graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in upstate New York, in the United States. The training they gave us equipped us for further responsibilities.

In June 1952, André and I accepted a special pioneer assignment in Semarang, central Java. The next year we ourselves attended the 22nd class of Gilead. After graduation we returned to Indonesia and were assigned to Kupang, Timor. Later assignments took us to South Sulawesi and North Sulawesi. There we faced further tests of faith.

#### Banned Again

In 1965 a coup attempt led to the death of hundreds of thousands of people. Some of Christendom's clergy took sides and claimed that Jehovah's Witnesses were Communists. Fortunately, the authorities were not easily deceived. The clergy, however, refused to give up their slanderous attacks on the Witnesses. Finally, on December 25, 1976, Jehovah's Witnesses were banned.

Soon after the ban was announced, the district attorney in Manado summoned André to his office. "Do you know that Jehovah's Witnesses are banned?" he asked.

"Yes," replied André.

"Are you now prepared to change your religion?" asked the official.

André leaned forward and dramatically beat his chest. "You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion," he boomed.

Stunned, the attorney asked, "What should I type in my report?"

"Write that I am still one of Jehovah's Witnesses and have done nothing wrong," said André.

"I must confiscate your literature," said the attorney.

That night young Witnesses removed the literature from our house, leaving empty box-



es behind. We continued to preach, using the Bible. As for the district attorney, he never bothered us again.

#### A Wonderful Life!

André and I later pioneered in Surabaya, on the island of Java, and on Bangka, an island off southeast Sumatra. In 1982, however, poor health forced us to return to Jakarta. Here, in 2000, André died at the age of 85, a

zealous pioneer to the end. The year after his death, the ban was lifted.

What a wonderful life I have had! Today I am 93, and I have spent more than 70 years in the pioneer ministry. In 1937, when I was baptized, there were only 25 of Jehovah's Witnesses in Indonesia. Today, there are nearly 22,000. How I rejoice to have shared in that growth! But my journey has just begun. I want to serve God faithfully forever.



# The Sea Buckthorn A TREE OF MANY USES

■ Traveling in Russia in early autumn, visitors to the countryside may come across the sea buckthorn,\* a small shrub or tree, laden with small beadlike berries of a bright-orange hue. Instead of growing in clusters, the berries literally coat each branch and twig with an eyecatching layer of color.

The berries are edible, but watch out for the sharp thorns when picking berries by hand! You must pick each one individually and take care not to crush it. Favoring cold climates, the sea buckthorn is often found in mountainous regions from northwestern Europe to the Altai Mountains in Central Asia, as well as in western and northern China and in the northern Himalayas. For centuries the berries have been prized in such areas as China, Russia, and Tibet.

Mention of the sea buckthorn is found in both classic Tibetan medicinal texts and ancient Greek texts. Its Greek name, Hippophaë, means "shiny horse." The name is thought to refer to the ancient Greek practice of somehow using

\* Perhaps so named because of its growth along the shores of Europe and Asia.

the tree's berries or leaves to give racehorses a shiny coat.

The sea buckthorn was introduced to North America by Russian immigrants at the beginning of the 20th century when shrubs from Siberia were brought to Canada and the United States for commercial cultivation. Many countries now cultivate the shrub as an important food and medicinal crop.

Among other things, seabuckthorn berries contain vitamins C and E, folic acid, carotenoids, fatty acids, and flavonoids. Recent medical

research has examined claims of the benefits of the sea buckthorn in cancer therapy, as well as in reducing cardiovascular risk factors and treating gastrointestinal ulcers, skin disorders, and liver ailments. The berry also makes a refreshing, tangy drink and is used as a tonic for various ailments.

A prized part of the sea-buckthorn berry is its small black seed. The oil in this seed contains most of the nutrients found in the berry. Some studies suggest that sea-buckthorn oil

helps boost the immune system. In addition, cosmetics and skincare products make use of the oil because of its acclaimed rejuvenating effects.

If you ever visit Russia, you may see and admire the beauty of the orange-gold berries of the sea buckthorn. Yet, as we have already noted, there is more to this plant than its beauty. Indeed, it is one of the many creations that testify to the wisdom and goodness of our Creator!

#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

# How can I control my temper?

How often do yo	u lose your temper?
□ Never	☐ Every month
☐ Every week	☐ Every day
Who is most like your temper?	ely to make you lose
☐ No one	☐ Schoolmates
☐ Parents	☐ Siblings
□ Other	
Below, describe typically provoke	a situation that es your anger.
0	

F YOU put a v next to "Never" and "No one" and left the last entry blank, congratulations—you have control of your temper!

However, everyone reacts differently to trying situations and has shortcomings in one way or another. The Bible writer James said: "We all stumble many times." (James 3:2) In fact, when it comes to your temper, you may feel as does 17-year-old Serena.\* "I have this pent-up energy," she says, "and often I take it out on whoever upsets me next. It could be my parents, my sister, or even my dog!"

#### Separating Myths From Facts

Do you find it difficult to keep a lid on your temper? If so, help is available. But first, let's dispel a few myths.



■ Myth: "I can't control my temper—I come from a long line of hotheads!"

Fact: You may well be "disposed to rage" -perhaps because of the influence of family, environment, or other factors. But what you do with that rage is within your control. (Proverbs 29:22) The question is, Where do you want to be when it comes to your emotions—in the driver's seat or in the passenger's seat? Others have learned to control their anger, and so can you!—Colossians 3:8-10.

Key Scripture: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you."-Ephesians 4:31.

■ Myth: "If I'm angry, it's better to let it all out than to bottle it up inside."

**Fact:** Both approaches can be harmful to your health. True, there's a time to "give vent" to your concern. (Job 10:1) But that doesn't mean you should walk around like a stick of dynamite looking for a fuse. You can learn to express strong emotions without exploding.

Key Scripture: "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, . . . keeping himself restrained." -2 Timothy 2:24.

<sup>\*</sup> Some names in this article have been changed.





"If I'm completely stressed, going for a fast walk releases the energy, and the air clears my head."-Elizabeth, Ireland.

"I mentally remove myself from the situation and ask, 'What would happen if I started velling?' I always end up seeing that it wouldn't help!"-Graeme, Australia.



■ Myth: "If I'm 'gentle toward all,' everyone will walk all over me."

Fact: People can sense that it takes real strength to display self-control, and they will respect you more if you do that.

Key Scripture: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." —Romans 12:18.

#### Taming Your Temper

If you tend to be temperamental, perhaps until now you've blamed others for your outbursts. For example, have you ever said, "She provoked me" or "He made me lose my temper"? If so, your very words suggest that others are holding the remote control to your emotions. How can you regain command? Try the following.

Assume responsibility. It all starts with acknowledging that you-and only you-can "make" yourself angry. So take fingerpointing accusations out of your vocabulary. Instead of saying, "She provoked me," admit to yourself. 'I allowed myself to be provoked.' Instead of saying, "He made me lose my temper." acknowledge to yourself, 'I chose to overreact.' Once you accept responsibility for your actions, you'll be better able to change them.-Galatians 6:5.

Anticipate the problem. The Bible says: "Sensible people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later." (Proverbs 22:3, Today's English Version) The key, then, is to anticipate the problem. Ask yourself, 'When is my temper most likely to flare?' For example, a girl named Megan says: "I work nights, and when I finish my shift, I'm extremely tired. That's when almost anything can send me over the edge."

Ouestion: In what circumstances is your temper likely to flare?

Plan a better response. When provoked, take a deep breath, lower your voice, and speak slowly. Instead of making an accusation ("You thief! You took my sweater without asking!") try expressing how the action affects you. ("I really get frustrated when I want to wear my sweater and I find out that you 'borrowed' it without asking me.")

#### DID YOU KNOW?

At times, God himself feels angry. Yet, his emotions are always justified, and he maintains complete control. He never overreacts!—See Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 32:4; and Isaiah 48:9.

Exercise: Think of a recent situation in which you lost your temper.

1. What provoked you?

2. How did you react? (What did you say and/or do?)

3. What might have been a better response?

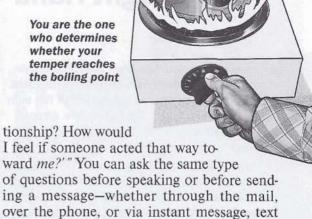
Consider the consequences. Several Bible principles can help you to do that. For example:

- Proverbs 12:18: "There exists the one speaking thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword." Words can hurt, and when you lose your temper, you're almost sure to say something you'll regret later.
- Proverbs 29:11: "All his spirit is what a stupid one lets out, but he that is wise keeps it calm to the last." In the end, a tirade only makes vou look foolish.
- Proverbs 14:30: "A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism." A bad temper is bad for your health! Says a girl named Anita: "High blood pressure runs in my family, and the fact that I am prone to stress makes me think twice about losing my temper."

The lesson? Think of the consequences of your words and actions. Says 18-year-old Heather: "I ask myself, 'What if I lose my temper with this person? What will he or she think of me? How will it affect our rela-

You are the one who determines whether your temper reaches the boiling point

message, or e-mail.



Question: What could result if someone upset you and in response you sent him or her an irate message?

Get help. "People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron," says Proverbs 27: 17. (TEV) Why not ask a parent or a mature friend how he or she keeps calm?

Monitor your progress. Keep a journal. and monitor your progress. Each time you lose control, write down (1) what happened. (2) how you reacted, and (3) a better response. In time, you'll find that the better response becomes your first one!

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

#### TO THINK ABOUT

At times, even people we wouldn't think would lose their temper have done so momentarily. What lessons can be learned from these examples?

- Moses.-Numbers 20:1-12; Psalm 106:32, 33.
- Paul and Barnabas. -Acts 15:36-40.

# Keeping Fast Hold of God's Right Hand

■ Jezreel in Mexico was born with a rare skin disorder called congenital lamellar ichthyosis. It resulted in scaling and callousing of the skin on much of his body. "This gives me a repulsive appearance," explains Jezreel, "but the disorder is not contagious."

From the time Jezreel was little, he received treatment in various hospitals. At the age of two, he was put in a sterile environment in an isolation unit to avoid infections. However, nothing improved his skin condition. He was given psychiatric treatment to deal with his feelings of rejection.

People who believe that Jezreel's disease may be contagious often avoid him. This was particularly difficult for him to deal with when he was a child and wanted to play with other children. He recalls, "They would make fun of me and call me hurtful names like Mummy and Extraterrestrial."

On the other hand, suffering from this visible disorder has given Jezreel opportunities to talk to others about his Bible-based hope. People often approach him and ask if he was burned. When he says no, they ask him what is responsible for his appearance. He explains his skin disorder and tells them that presently there is no known cure.

He then adds, "I have the best hope in the world because Jehovah God promises that those who obey his laws will live in a new world that is free of sickness and pain." (Revelation 21:3, 4) Discussing his condition in this way has allowed Jezreel to start Bible studies with people, and he has had the joy of seeing a number of them become fellow worshippers of God.



"I am grateful that I was born into a Christian family," Jezreel says, "and that as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I have close friends. None of them reject me because of my appearance. I was baptized at the age of 17, and in the 14 years since then, I have had many privileges of serving our Creator."

Jezreel keeps in mind Jehovah's encouraging words found at Isaiah 41:10, 13, which read: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you.... I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness. For I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, 'Do not be afraid. I myself will help you.'"

Keeping fast hold of Jehovah's right hand has helped Jezreel overcome selfconsciousness and cope with the problems associated with this disease. Along with millions of others, he awaits the fulfillment of God's grand promises.



OW do you obtain food? Do you buy it or grow it for yourself? Not long ago most of mankind were subsistence farmers-that is, they lived on food they grew for themselves. But now in some industrialized nations, only 1 person out of 50 works in farming. How did such a transformation occur?

Improvements in farming efficiency began slowly and then accelerated. Every step was traumatic for millions of families, and the process still continues worldwide. A look at how progress in farming has affected people can help you to understand the world today.

#### A Revolution Begins

Surprisingly, one of the biggest steps leading away from subsistence farming in Europe occurred during the 12th century when the horse collar was introduced. It enabled a horse to work without choking itself. Horses thus harnessed could pull harder, faster, and longer than the oxen that were formerly used. With horsepower, farmers could increase

their production. They could use iron plows on land that was previously impossible to cultivate. Another early step forward was the introduction of soil-improvement crops-such as beans, peas, clover, and alfalfa-which enrich the earth with nitrogen. Richer soil produced crops that were more abundant.

Those early advances were enough to permit some farmers to grow a surplus of food to sell. This led to the growth of towns, where people could purchase their food and work as manufacturers and tradesmen. From among these rich manufacturers, tradesmen, and farmers came the inventors of the first farming machines.

About 1700, Jethro Tull, an English farmer, invented a horse-drawn seed drill that replaced hand sowing, a practice that wasted seed. In 1831, in the United States, Cyrus Mc-Cormick invented a horse-drawn mechanical reaper that could harvest grain five times faster than could a man with a handheld scythe.

Also about that time, traders began bringing fertilizers into Europe from the Andean coast of South America. The use of machines and fertilizer produced a dramatic increase in farm production. But how did it affect people?

Progress in farming made the industrial revolution possible by providing plenty of cheap food for the towns. This revolution occurred first in Britain about 1750-1850. Thousands of families had to move to industrial towns to work in coal mines, iron foundries, shipyards, and textile mills. They had little choice. The small farmers who could not afford the new farming methods received less cash for their produce and so could not pay their rent. They had to leave their farms to live in overcrowded, disease-ridden slums. Instead of families farming together, men now had to work away from home. Even children worked long hours in factories. Other nations soon experienced similar changes.

#### Scientific Farming Brings More Changes

By 1850, some nations were prosperous enough to finance agricultural research. The scientific study of agriculture has led to continued change down to our day. For example, plant breeders studied genetics and developed plants with greater yields or disease resistance. Researchers also discovered the exact mixture of nitrates and phosphates needed for specific crops and soils. Weeds had kept farm laborers busy hoeing throughout the growing season. But many such workers lost their jobs when scientists developed sophisticated herbicides that slowed the growth of weeds. Insects, worms, and weevils are also old enemies of the cultivator. However, farmers can now select from an armory of chemicals to deal with almost any pest.\*

The livestock farmer's life has also changed. Robotic milkers and computerized feeders allow one herdsman and his helper to

care for up to 200 cows. Farmers can also get calves and pigs to put on weight faster than ever before by raising them in sheds instead of in open fields, thus controlling their temperature and diet.

The returns from scientific farming were often spectacular. Some farmers increased their yield per worker to a hundred or even a thousand times preindustrial levels. But how did those developments affect people's lives?

#### The Farmer's Lifestyle Changed

Machines have transformed the farmer's way of life in many places. Most farmers and farm laborers now have to be skilled in operating and maintaining sophisticated machinery. And increasingly, they are lone workers. Gone is the camaraderie of sowing, hoeing, and harvesting in teams.

In many lands a new type of farmer has emerged, a highly educated businessman specializing in the mass production of just a few agricultural products or only one. He has invested heavily in land, buildings, and machinery. However, he is far from independent. Giant food-processing companies and supermarket chains dictate not only prices but also the variety, size, and color of his product. Agricultural engineers design his production system, and specialized companies supply him with the precise fertilizers, pesticides, and hybrid seeds needed for the specific conditions on his farm. He has come a long way from the farming methods of his ancestors. But he continues to struggle, and some people are concerned about the possible harmful effects of certain farming techniques.

#### **Farmers Still in Crisis**

In prosperous countries many farmers are still being forced off the land because they cannot compete with big farming corporations. Some farmers can only hang onto their cherished way of life by diversifying into leisure services including tourist accommodations or activities such as camping, golfing, and producing country crafts. Others turn to

<sup>\*</sup> Awake! does not endorse any particular form of farming techniques.

specialty products—organic food, flowers, ostriches, and alpacas.

In poorer countries, where as much as 80 percent of the population may earn their living by working the land, many subsistence farmers are also experiencing traumatic change. International companies using industrial farming methods may acquire most of the best land to grow crops for distant markets. With few, if any, machines, subsistence farmers often work barren land or tiny plots to provide food for their families.

The massive movement of population from villages to cities now occurring in many lands is the culmination of a process that began centuries ago. The change from an agricultural way of life to one that is urban still benefits some and distresses others. Few governments, if any, have provided effective and compassionate help for the people affected. How mankind needs the Kingdom of God, under which there will be a change to a better way of life!—Isaiah 9:6.



Eusebio lives in the Andes, where he raises crops and tends 14 head of cattle. "They all have names," he says. "I like farming. We grow all of our own vegetables. My wife and I help our neighbors to plow and reap, and then they help us. None of us have machines. We plow with bulls, and on steep slopes we dig by hand.

"Disease once killed off most of our cattle. After that I took a short course in veterinary practice. We haven't lost a single animal to disease since then, and now I can help the neighbors with their animals. We sell cheese at the village market, but we earn very little. Even so, we always have food for our six children."

Richard farms more than two square miles of Canadian prairie. He works alone except for a single hired hand who works with him in sowing and harvesting seasons.

"Nowadays, the strain of farming is more mental than physical," says Richard. "Both my tractor and my harvester have air-conditioned cabins that protect me from dust and insects. I have machines that are 30 feet wide, so I can seed or harvest a quarter of a square mile in a single day. But I depend heavily on the machines, and that's where the stress comes in. Occasionally, I have to replace them on credit. Whether I can repay the loan depends on things beyond my control—rainfall, frost, market prices, and interest rates. The stress of farming has led to many marriage problems among farmers here, and even to suicide."

# HEROD THE GREAT A Master Builder

ORE than 2,000 years ago, he reigned for about three decades. His kingdom was based in Judea and included some of the surrounding areas. He is known in history as Herod the Great.

Herod is often remembered as a jealous murderer, not only of his family members but also of helpless little boys. When astrologers from the East reported to him that a future king had been born, Herod feigned a desire to honor the child. He asked them to find the child and return to him after that. But when God warned the astrologers not to return, Herod ordered the murder of all the boys two years of age and under in Bethlehem, the city where the astrologers had found Jesus, as well as its surrounding districts.—Matthew 2:1-18.

Earlier in his life, however, Herod had won the favor of many because of his remarkable building projects. He built temples, amphitheaters, hippodromes, and aqueducts, as well as palatial fortresses with luxurious bathhouses. His projects were truly impressive—even to modern engineers who study the sites.

Herod chose dramatic locations and integrated the architecture with the natural topography. His palaces were decorated with elaborate frescoes, rich stuccowork, and mosaic floors. He also introduced the Romanstyle bathhouse to Judea, with hot and warm rooms and heating systems under the floor. In effect, he built entire cities, one of them with an artificial harbor.

#### Caesarea-A Port City

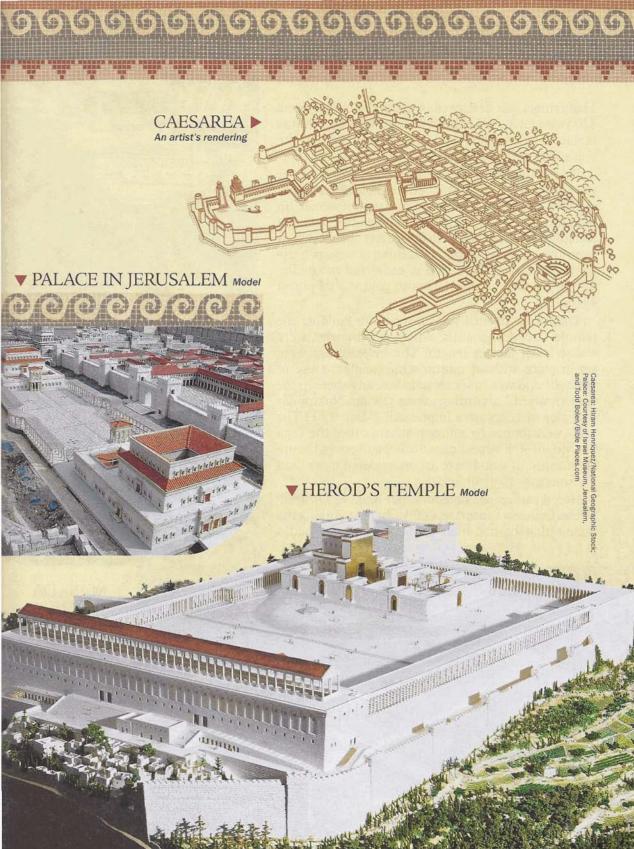
Herod built one of the largest seaports of the Roman world in Caesarea. Its dimensions have astonished archaeologists. There was anchorage space to accommodate a hundred ships, serving as a silent witness to the international trade center that Caesarea became.

The piers and breakwaters were constructed with the most advanced techniques of the era. However, scholars were puzzled as to how workmen could have handled the colossal blocks measuring approximately 50 feet by 10 feet by 9 feet that the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus described. In recent times, divers have discovered that blocks Herod used were actually of concrete. To build the piers and breakwaters, the workers poured the concrete into wooden frames and then submerged and anchored them.

The well-planned port city included a temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus, a palace, a hippodrome, a 4,000-seat theater, and an underground sewage system. Aqueducts and tunnels delivered fresh water to Caesarea from springs in the Mount Carmel range nearly four miles away.

#### Jerusalem and Herod's Temple

The greatest of Herod's projects was the temple he built in Jerusalem. The original temple on the site was built by King Solomon, who followed architectural plans his father, David, had received by inspiration from God. (1 Kings 6:1; 1 Chronicles 28:11, 12)



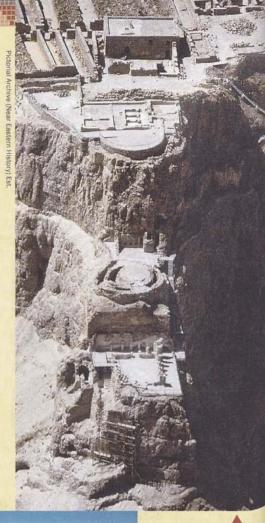
# 

That temple was destroyed by the Babylonians some 420 years later, and about 90 years after that, it was replaced by a rather modest structure built by Judah's Governor Zerubbabel.

Regarding the temple that Herod built on the same site, Josephus wrote: It was "covered on all sides with massive plates of gold, the sun was no sooner up than it radiated so fiery a flash that persons straining to look at it were compelled to avert their eyes, as from the solar rays. To approaching strangers it appeared from a distance like a snow-clad mountain; for all that was not overlaid with gold was of purest white."

Thousands of men were involved in building the temple's retaining walls, which on the west were about 1,600 feet in length. The huge stones were set in place without mortar. One weighed close to 400 tons and was "unequaled in size anywhere in the ancient world," according to one scholar. No wonder disciples of Jesus were impressed! (Mark 13:1) The walls were topped by a huge platform called the Temple Mount—the largest man-made platform in the ancient world. It could have accommodated more than 25 American football fields!

Herod was responsible for other buildings in Jerusalem. One was the fortress of Antonia, adjoining the temple that he had built earlier. Herod also had a





MASADA
Ruins of the
three-tiered
palace

# 

palace constructed, as well as three unique multistory towers built at the entrance of the city.

#### Samaria and Jericho

Herod received as a gift from Augustus Caesar the ancient city of Samaria, which he renamed Sebaste. He embellished the city with various structures, including what was possibly a stadium surrounded by colonnades. He also constructed many sizable buildings decorated with ornate frescoes.

Jericho lies about 820 feet below sea level in the Jordan Valley and enjoys a subtropical climate. It extended over some 2,500 acres and had the character of a garden city. There Herod constructed a winter palace. He combined three palaces that he had built into one expansive dwelling, endowing each building with reception halls, baths, gardens, and swimming pools. No wonder he preferred Jericho as a winter residence!

#### **Outstanding Palace-Fortresses**

Yet, Herod had another option for winter living. He developed a fortress on the towering rock plateau known as Masada, which rises over 1,300 feet above the Dead Sea. At that location he built an elegant, three-tiered palace with a terrace and bathing pools, as well as another palace that featured a Roman bathhouse with heating pipes in the walls and a lavatory with a flushing system!

In that hostile desert environment, Herod created what one might call a royal health resort. He equipped it with a dozen cisterns able to hold some 10,500,000 gallons of water. Since the fortress was also provided with an efficient system for collecting and storing rainwater, there was ample water to grow crops and enjoy swimming pools and baths.

Another of Herod's remarkable feats of engineering was his palace-fortress of Herodium, located on a prominent hill about three miles southeast of Bethlehem. It consisted of two main parts: Upper Herodium and Lower Herodium. The upper part included an imposing palace-fortress topped by a five-story east tower—now in ruins—that once dominated the skyline. Two years ago international news agencies reported that remains of Herod's tomb had been discovered on the upper slopes of Herodium, stating that this confirmed Josephus' first-century report of Herod's funeral procession there.

Lower Herodium once had a complex of palace annexes and offices. The focal point was a Roman-style garden—embellished with columns—encircling an immense pool with a decorative island in the middle. The pool was almost double the size of a modern Olympic pool. It served as a reservoir, but it was also used for swimming and even for boating. The water came via aqueduct from a spring three and a half miles away.

Some years ago a visitor said this about the surrounding landscape: "To the east, we could see all the way to the Dead Sea. Here before us was the Judean wilderness where David successfully eluded his pursuer, Saul. Seeing the ruggedness of the territory, we understood how he could do so, especially since from his youth he must have been very familiar with the territory. We thought, too, that, while pasturing his sheep, David perhaps often climbed this very hill for the magnificent view we were enjoying."

Volumes have been written about Herod's building projects. There is much speculation as to why he launched such an extensive building program. Some have said it was for personal fame or to curry political favor. Whatever the motive, this brief overview confirms the fact that Herod the Great, besides being a ruthless despot, was a master builder.

## A Pillar on the Sea

■ Have you ever seen a waterspout? One formed off the coast of Tahiti on December 25, 2005. The long funnel of whirling wind and water between the sea and the sky lasted for about 30 minutes. Then it slowly turned white and disappeared.

Waterspouts are sometimes called tornadoes over water, but they are usually weaker than tornadoes in their intensity. They generally last about ten minutes, although some have continued for an hour. Because they develop at sea, their detection usually depends on chance observations. This makes it difficult for meteorologists to understand them fully. According to reports, they may make a loud noise, similar to that of a freight train.

When describing his emotional turmoil, a Bible psalmist of ancient times wrote: 'Watery deep to watery deep is calling at the sound of your waterspouts.' (Psalm 42:7) Although we cannot say that this type of waterspout is what the Bible psalmist was referring to, his feelings might well have been depicted by this phenomenon. He said that his soul was "in despair" and was "boisterous" within him. Yet, he drew comfort from his God. "Wait for God," he declared to his own soul, "for I shall yet laud him as the grand salvation of my person and as my God."—Psalm 42:11.

Just like the psalmist, we may experience afflictions that can be compared with a tornadolike whirlwind over the sea. But if we wait for God, he will prove to be the grand salvation for us.

#### FROM OUR READERS



Young People Ask . . . What if My Sibling Has Committed Suicide? (June 2008) Before she died, my older sister battled depression for five years. Since I had witnessed the misery of her illness, I thought, 'What a pitiful life she had!' However, the Awake! article suggested that we recall pleasant memories. While recalling my pleasant memories, I began to feel that it wasn't "a pitiful life" but that my sister actually had a happy life, as there were more happy times than hard times.

S. Y., Japan

Young People Ask . . . Why Don't My Parents Trust Me? (April 2008) By reading and applying the Bible principles found in Awake! I learned that building trust and maturing is like a flight of stairs, not a door you immediately walk through. To be given more freedom, I needed to prove myself to my parents. I had to finish my chores and do my school homework. Thank you for articles like this one.

T. L., United States

**Living With Albinism** (July 2008) As a person living with this condition, I was at first happy to see the article. However, I was unhappy to see the word "albino" used in the article over and over again. It has been used in very derogatory forms as a word of hate toward people with this condition.

#### A. L., United States

"Awake!" responds: We apologize for any distress this may have caused our readers. Our use of the word "albino" was derived from its medical usage. We admit, however, that some have used the term in a hurtful way. On the other hand, many with albinism accept the word and do not feel offended by its usage. It certainly was not our intent to malign anyone.

**1.** Ananias has no money in his hand. **2.** The aposte Peter is missing from the picture. **3.** Deborah.—Judges 4:4-9. **4.** Jabin.—Judges 4:2. **5.** True.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

Thank you for publishing this article, for I too am an albino like John. To read an article about albinism that was true, factual, thoughtful, educational, and informative was most appreciated. As a result, my friends better understand my condition.

T. M., United States

#### A Love More Powerful Than a Hurricane!

(August 2008) Articles like this remind me not to be anxious about the future but to rely fully on God. Three years ago I experienced brotherly affection when a flood destroyed the house of my unbelieving parents. Jehovah's Witnesses from the local congregation quickly came to their aid. I thank Jehovah that I am part of his organization.

D. W., Poland

The Wonders of Corn (August 2008) Our family planted corn in our vegetable garden, but we were not able to harvest even-size kernels. Now, thanks to this article, we understand the reason. We were only able to plant five or six seedlings, so they weren't being pollinated the way a large field would be. Last year, by carefully pollinating each strand of the "silk road," we were able to harvest sweet, delicious corn with even-size kernels. Thank you very much.

R. W., Japan

#### **Human Rights for Indigenous Peoples**

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted in 2007, has now been translated into Maya and Nahuatl, the two most widely spoken indigenous languages in Mexico. "At least 10 million people [in Mexico] are not aware of their rights," says the newspaper *El Universal*. "Therefore, they often do not know that they are victims of abuse." The translations, it is said, will be a tool for enabling these people to have their basic human rights respected.

#### **Selling Virginity**

The readiness of some Polish youths to have their first sexual experience for money shocks sociologists, reports the magazine Newsweek Polska. "A simple message reaches young people from all sides: everything is for sale," says psychologist Jacek Kurzępa of the University of Zielona Góra. An increasing number are even auctioning off their virginity on the Internet. The price that young people pay for making such a choice, however, is high. "That decision has an impact on the rest of [one's] life and the future relationship with a partner," says Kurzępa.

■ "Nine out of every ten disasters are now climate-related. Recorded disasters have doubled in number from 200 a year to more than 400 over the past two decades."—JOHN HOLMES, UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR.

#### The Amazon Once Hosted Urban Civilization

Vast areas of southern Amazonia believed to be virgin forests may once have hosted urban communities "surrounded by large walls." This conclusion was reached by anthropologists working in Mato Grosso, Brazil. There they discovered "networks of walled towns and smaller villages" overgrown by tropical forest and covering an area of perhaps 11,600 square miles. Some of the towns occupied 150 acres. A report by the University of Florida, whose anthropologists made the discovery, says that the settlements "date from around 1250 to 1650, when European colonists and the diseases they brought likely killed most of their inhabitants."

#### **Plants Aid Postoperative Recovery**

It has long been suspected that contact with nature can reduce stress, produce positive feelings, and ease the suffering of the sick. New research confirms that belief. "Patients were randomly assigned to hospital rooms with or without plants during their postoperative recovery periods," explains *Science Daily*. Patients who

needed significantly less pain medication, had better heart rate and blood pressure, and reported greater satisfaction with their rooms than their counterparts. Some 93 percent of those exposed to plants said that these were the "most positive" aspect of their rooms.

had plants in their rooms experienced less pain,

# **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

#### What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read Acts 5:1-5. Now look at the picture. What features are missing? Write your answers on the lines below, and complete the picture by coloring it and drawing in the missing elements.

1
---

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, do you think, did Ananias lie? What lessons do you learn from this account?

#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 11 What happens to the soul that sins? Fzekiel 18:

PAGE 11 Of what are the dead conscious? Ecclesiastes 9:\_

PAGE 17 What do we all do many times? James 3:\_

PAGE 17 What should you let be taken away from you? Ephesians 4:\_\_\_\_



#### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### What Do You Know About Judge Barak?

Read Judges 4:1-24. Now answer the following questions.

Who was the prophetess that helped him?

True or false? Judge Barak lived after Joshua.

He delivered Israel from which king of Canaan?

FOR DISCUSSION: What part did women play in the victory that Israel gained over the Canaanites? What important part do women play today in serving God?



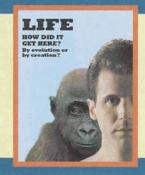
Awake! September 2009



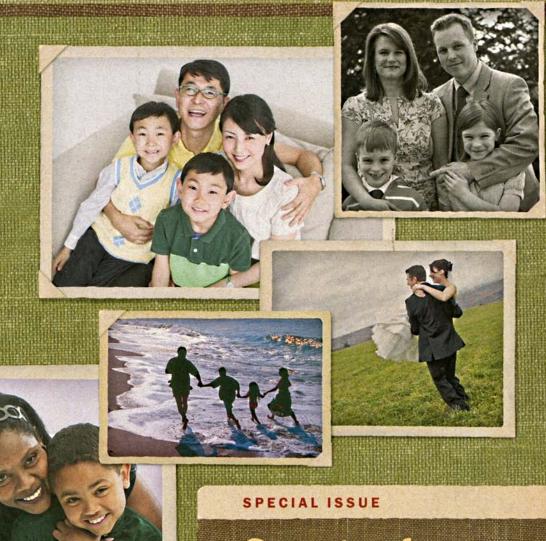
When she was 12, a girl in Mexico named Aspen was asked by her biology teacher to explain to the seventh-grade class why she believed in creation instead of evolution. Aspen made a good defense, explaining that every organism has a perfect design, which proves the existence of a designer and creator. Knowing that Aspen's parents are geologists, the teacher then asked her to prepare and present information on whether the fossil record supports creation.

The next day Aspen took some sample fossils to school and told the class that the fossil record does not give evidence of gradual changes. She also explained that each group of fossils appears in a different geological era, corroborating the Genesis account of creative days.

The school principal was present and congratulated Aspen on her conviction and defense of creation. The biology teacher commented that
creation makes
everything clear,
while evolution
leaves many
doubts. Aspen
then left literature
that provides scientific support for creation with her teacher,
her fellow students, and the principal.



# ANG CEL



Secrets of Family Success



# Secrets of Family Success 3-9

We hear so much about what goes wrong in families that fail. But what goes right in those that thrive? The opening series of articles in this special issue of *Awake!* identifies seven secrets of success.

- 3 Secret 1: The Right Priorities
- 4 Secret 2: Commitment
- 5 Secret 3: Teamwork
- 6 Secret 4: Respect
- 7 Secret 5: Reasonableness
- 8 Secret 6: Forgiveness
- 9 Secret 7: A Firm Foundation
- Young People Ask How Can I Get to Know My Parents Better?
- 14 Profiles in Success-Part 1
- 22 Profiles in Success-Part 2
- 28 The Bible's Viewpoint What About Living Together Before Marriage?
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 In This Issue



### A House Divided—The Impact of Divorce on Adolescents

Divorce often devastates adolescents more than younger children. Why?



## You Can Succeed as a Single Parent

Are you raising children alone? Bible principles can help!

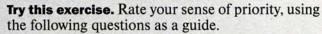


# The Right Priorities

"Make sure of the more important things." -Philippians 1:10.

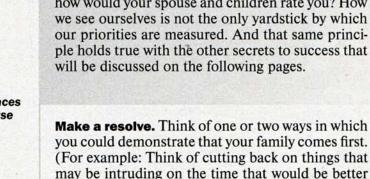
What this means. In successful marriages, each spouse puts the other's needs ahead of self, possessions, job, friends, and even other relatives. Husband and wife spend plenty of time with each other and with the children. Both are willing to make sacrifices for the interests of the family. -Philippians 2:4.

Why it matters. The Bible places high importance on the family. In fact, the apostle Paul wrote that a person who does not provide for his family "is worse than a person without faith." (1 Timothy 5:8) Yet, over time, a person's priorities may change. For example, one family counselor noted that many who attended a conference he held seemed more focused on career than on family. He says it was as if they expected to learn "quick-fix techniques" so that they could "check 'family' off their 'to do' list and get back to focusing on their professions." The lesson? It is easier to say that we put family first than to show it.



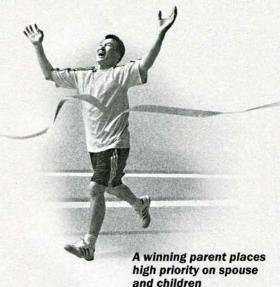
- When my spouse or child needs to talk, do I give that person my attention as soon as possible?
- When talking to others about my activities. do I often find myself discussing things I do with my family?
- Would I turn down added responsibility (on the job or elsewhere) if my family needed my time?

If you answered yes to the above questions, you might assume that you have the right priorities. But how would your spouse and children rate you? How we see ourselves is not the only vardstick by which our priorities are measured. And that same principle holds true with the other secrets to success that will be discussed on the following pages.



Why not share your resolves with your family? When one member shows willingness to change, the others are more likely to follow.

spent with your spouse and children.)



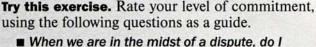
### Commitment

"What God has yoked together let no man put apart."—Matthew 19:6.

What this means. Successful couples view their marriage as a permanent union. When a problem arises, they strive to solve it rather than use it as an excuse to abandon the marriage. When spouses have a sense of commitment, they feel secure. Each trusts that the other will continue to honor the union.

Why it matters. In many ways, commitment is the backbone of a marriage relationship. Yet, after repeated conflicts, commitment can seem more like a trap than a trust. In effect, "till death do us part" becomes little more than a cold contract—one that the mates wish had loopholes. They might not abandon the marriage *literally*, but they could "walk out" in other ways—for example, by retreating into stony silence when serious issues need to be discussed.

Commitment is like a guardrail that prevents your marriage from going off course



- When we are in the midst of a dispute, do I find myself regretting that I married my spouse?
- Do I often daydream about being with someone other than my spouse?
- Do I sometimes tell my spouse, "I'm leaving you" or "I'm going to find someone who appreciates me"?

Make a resolve. Think of one or two actions you could take to strengthen your commitment. (Some ideas: Write an occasional note to your spouse, keep photos of your spouse on display at work, or phone your spouse each day from work, just to stay in touch.)

Why not come up with several suggestions and then ask your spouse which would be most meaningful to him or her?



THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a world-wide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

### **Teamwork**

"Two are better than one . . . If one of them should fall, the other one can raise his partner up."—Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10.

what this means. Successful couples respect God's headship arrangement as outlined in the Bible. (Ephesians 5:22-24) Nevertheless, both husband and wife view their marriage in terms of "ours" and "we" rather than "mine" and "me." When there is teamwork, husband and wife are no longer single at heart. They are "one flesh"—a Bible term that describes not only the permanence of the union but also its intimacy.—Genesis 2:24.

Why it matters. If you and your spouse are not a team, minor events may quickly become major issues with each of you attacking the other rather than the problem at hand. In contrast, when you and your spouse are a team, you become like pilot and copilot with the same flight plan rather than two pilots on a collision course. When you disagree, you work out practical solutions instead of wasting time and emotional energy blaming and accusing.

Teamwork means that you are pilot and copilot with the same flight plan

**Try this exercise.** Rate your spirit of teamwork by answering the following questions.

- Do I view the money I earn as "all mine," since I am the one who earned it?
- Do I keep my distance from my spouse's relatives, even though he or she is close to them?
- To relax fully, do I need to be away from my spouse?



**Make a resolve.** Think of one or two ways you could show yourself to be more team-oriented with your spouse.

Why not ask your spouse what he or she would suggest?

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, °° Danish, ° Dutch, \*° English, †° Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, °° French, †° Georgian, German, \*° Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, \*° Japanese, \*° Ranada, Kirghiz, Korean, \*° ° Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, \*° Polish, †° Portuguese, \*° ° Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, \*° ° Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, \*° Swahili, Swedish, \*° Tagalog, Tamii, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: P0 Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: P0 Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: P0 Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: P0 Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: P0 Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>®</sup> MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

## Respect

"Let all . . . screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you."—Ephesians 4:31.

what this means. Both troubled and successful families have disagreements. But successful families discuss matters without resorting to sarcasm, insults, and other forms of abusive speech. Family members treat one another as they themselves would like to be treated.—Matthew 7:12.

Why it matters. Words can become weapons producing devastating effects. A Bible proverb says: "It is better to be living in a waste land, than with a bittertongued and angry woman." (Proverbs 21:19, *The Bible in Basic English*) Of course, the same could be said of a bitter-tongued man. And when it comes to parenting, the Bible states: "Do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted." (Colossians 3:21) Children who are constantly criticized may come to feel that it is impossible to please their parents. They may even give up trying.



Just as ocean waves can erode solid rock, a pattern of hurtful speech can weaken a family

**Try this exercise.** Rate the level of respect in your family by answering the following questions.

- In my family, do disagreements usually end with one person storming out of the room?
- When I speak to my spouse or children, do I resort to using insulting words, such as "stupid," "idiot," or something similar?
- Was I raised in an atmosphere in which abusive speech was common?

Make a resolve. Think of one or two goals you could set with regard to showing respect in your speech. (Idea: Resolve to use "I" statements instead of "you" statements. For example, "I feel hurt when you ...," rather than "You are always ...")

Why not let your spouse know of your goal(s)? In three months, check with your spouse to see how you have progressed.

Think of some limits you can set so that you do not use abusive speech when communicating with your children.

Why not apologize to your children for times when you may have spoken to them harshly or sarcastically?

### Reasonableness

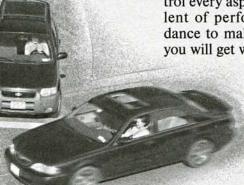
"Let your reasonableness become known."

—Philippians 4:5.

What this means. In successful families, husbands and wives make allowances for each other's mistakes. (Romans 3:23) They are also neither unduly rigid nor overly permissive with their children. They set a modest number of household rules. When correction is needed, they give it "to the proper degree."—Jeremiah 30:11.

Why it matters. The Bible says that "the wisdom from above is . . . reasonable." (James 3:17) God himself does not demand perfection from imperfect humans, so why should a married couple demand it from each other? Really, nitpicking over minor faults only produces resentment, not improvement. It is best to accept the fact that "we all stumble many times." —James 3:2.

Successful parents display reasonableness when dealing with their children. Their discipline is not excessive, nor are they "hard to please." (1 Peter 2:18) They grant freedoms to adolescents who demonstrate a sense of responsibility. They do not try to micromanage. One reference work notes that trying to control every aspect of an adolescent's life "is the equivalent of performing a violent and exhausting rain dance to make it rain. There won't be any rain, but you will get worn out."



Like a careful driver, a reasonable family member is prepared to yield

**Try this exercise.** Rate your level of reasonableness by answering the following questions.

- When was the last time you praised your spouse?
- When was the last time you criticized your spouse?

Make a resolve. If you struggled to find an answer to the first question in the accompanying exercise but had no problem answering the second, think of a goal you could set with regard to your expectations.

Why not discuss with your spouse what resolves you both might make?

Think of some freedoms you could grant your adolescent as he or she demonstrates a sense of responsibility.

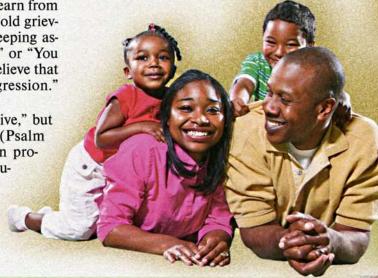
Why not have an open discussion with your adolescent about such issues as curfews?

# Forgiveness

"Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely."—Colossians 3:13.

What this means. Successful couples learn from the past; but they do not keep track of old grievances and then use these to make sweeping assertions, such as "You are always late" or "You never listen." Both husband and wife believe that "it is beauty . . . to pass over transgression."—Proverbs 19:11.

Why it matters. God is "ready to forgive," but that is not always so with humans. (Psalm 86:5) Old wrongs left unresolved can produce layers of resentment that accumulate to the point where forgiveness seems impossible. Each spouse may retreat into an emotional corner—each one remaining callous to the other's feelings. Both feel trapped in a loveless marriage.



**Try this exercise.** Look at old photographs of you and your spouse taken earlier in your marriage or during your courtship. Try to rekindle the warmth you felt before problems crept in and clouded your view. Then think of the qualities that first attracted you to your spouse.

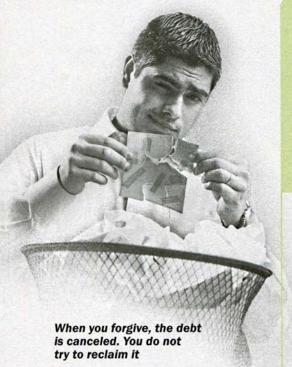
- What qualities do you most admire about your spouse now?
- Think of some positive effects that your being a more forgiving person might have on your children.

Make a resolve. Think of one or two ways you will determine to keep past grievances out of present disagreements you may have with your spouse.

Why not praise your spouse for the qualities you admire about him or her?—Proverbs 31:28, 29.

Consider some ways you will demonstrate forgiveness with your children.

Why not discuss with your children the subject of forgiveness and how the ability to forgive benefits each member of the family?



Secret 7

### A Firm Foundation

What this means. Strong families do not endure automatically, any more than a house just keeps standing for many decades. A solid structure needs a firm foundation, and the same is true of a strong family. Successful families are built on a source of guidance that works.

Why it matters. Advice on family life abounds in books, magazines, and TV programs. Some marriage counselors would urge troubled couples to stay together, while others would urge those same couples to split up. Experts even change their own thinking on such topics. For instance, in 1994 a popular therapist who specializes in adolescent issues wrote that earlier in her career, she felt that "children were better off with happy single parents rather than unhappy married parents. I thought divorce was a better option than struggling with a bad marriage." After two decades of experience, though, she had a change of heart. She stated: "Divorce shatters many children."

Opinions are subject to change, but the best advice that can be found will always in some way reflect the principles found in God's Word, the Bible. Reading this series of articles, you may have noted that a Bible principle is given at the top of pages 3-8. Such principles have helped many families to find true success. Like all other families, they experience problems. The difference is that the Bible has provided them with a firm foundation for marriage and family life. We would expect that to be true of the Bible, for its Author, Jehovah God, is the Originator of the family.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

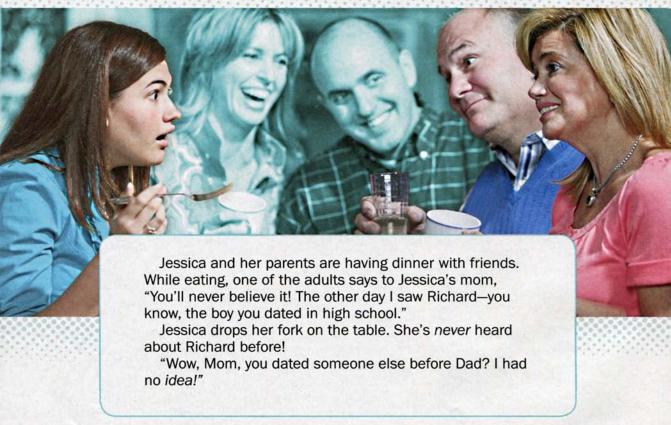
Try this exercise. Make a list of the scriptures quoted at the top of pages 3 through 8. Add any other Bible texts that have helped you. Keep a list of these handy, and refer to them often.

Make a resolve. Determine to apply the Bible in your family life.



With a firm Scriptural foundation, your family can withstand the storms that threaten it

### How can I get to know my parents better?



AVE you, like Jessica, ever learned something about your parents that surprised you? If so, perhaps that made you wonder what else you didn't know about them!

Why is there often room to get to know your parents better? What benefits could come from learning more about them? And how can you do so?

#### More to Learn

Why might there be things you don't know about your parents? Sometimes, physical distance is to blame. "My parents divorced when I was eight years old," says Jacob,\* now 22. "After that, I saw my dad only a few times a year. There's a lot about him that I wish I knew."

Even if you've lived with your parents for years, they probably haven't told you everything about themselves. Why not? Like all of us, parents sometimes feel embarrassed about mistakes they've made in the past. (Romans 3:23) Also, they may worry that if they reveal their shortcomings, you'll think less of

<sup>\*</sup> Some names in this article have been changed.

them—or feel emboldened to take greater liberties yourself.

Often, though, there are things your parents haven't told you simply because the subjects never came up. A young man named Cameron says, "It's amazing how you can live with your parents for years and still have more to learn about them!" Why not take the initiative to draw your parents out? Consider four benefits you'll likely gain.

Benefit #1: Your parents will probably appreciate your interest. No doubt they'll be pleased that you care enough to ask about their life. And who knows—they may even respond with greater empathy for you and your feelings!—Matthew 7:12.

Benefit #2: You'll gain insight into your parents' point of view. For example, did your parents have less materially in the past? This might explain why they're as frugal as they are now, even if that seems unnecessary to you.

Such insight into your parents' thinking can be helpful. A young man named Cody observes, "By learning how my parents think, I can consider how my words will affect them before I speak."—Proverbs 15:23.

Benefit #3: You may become more comfortable talking about your own life. "I felt uneasy talking to Dad about a boy that I liked," says 18-year-old Bridgette. "But when I did open up to Dad, he told me about the first time he fell in love and how great a feeling that was. He even told me about the day he broke up with his girlfriend and how bad he felt. That encouraged me to tell him more about my situation."

Benefit #4: You might learn something. Your parents' life experiences can help you deal with your own frustrations and challenges. "I want to learn how my parents manage to care for a large family with many different physical, emotional, and spiritual needs," says Joshua, 16. "There must be some important lessons there." The Bible poses the question: "Is there not wisdom among the aged and understanding in length of days?"—Job 12:12.

#### Take the Initiative

If you would like to get to know your parents better, how can you do so? Here are some suggestions.

Choose the right setting. The setting doesn't always have to be formal. Rather, aim for casual conversations. You might toss around a ball, work together on a project, or take a walk or drive with your parents. "I've had good conversations

with my parents during road

Ask your parents to show you photographs or other items from their past. These can often spark lively conversations



trips," says Cody, mentioned earlier. "Sure, it's easier just to plug in earphones or go to sleep, but I've found that initiating a

conversation is always worth the effort!"

Ask questions. Let's face it: Even in the right setting, your mom probably won't tell you out of the blue about her first crush, and your dad may not mention the time he wrecked the family car. But your parents just might tell you such things if you ask!—For ideas on questions to ask, see the box on page 12.

Be flexible. Often the answer to one question will lead to some other story or topic. You might be tempted to steer the conversation back on track, but resist that urge! Remember, your goal isn't simply to gather facts. Rather, it is to develop a closer bond with your parents, and one of the best ways to do that is to talk about things that matter to them.—Philippians 2:4.

Be discerning. "A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with



Ask your parents questions such as the following:

MARRIAGE: How did you and Mom (or Dad) meet? What first drew you to each other? Where did you live after you were married?

**CHILDHOOD:** Where were you born? How well did you get along with your siblings? Were your parents strict or lenient with you?

**EDUCATION:** What was your best subject in school? What was your worst? Did you have a favorite teacher? What made that teacher so special?

**SECULAR WORK:** What was your first job? Did you enjoy it? If you could choose any line of work, what would it be?

INTERESTS: If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be? What hobby or skill would you like to develop?

**SPIRITUAL HISTORY:** Were you raised as a Christian? If not, what sparked your interest in the Bible? What challenges did you face in conforming to Bible principles?

VALUES: What do you think are the most important factors in a good friendship? in a happy life? in a successful marriage? What is the best piece of advice you ever received?

Try this experiment: Choose a few of the questions above and try to anticipate your parents' answers. Then, ask the questions and compare their answers with what you thought they would say.

insight can draw them out." (Proverbs 20:5, Today's English Version) You especially need insight, or discernment, when drawing your parents out on sensitive topics. For instance, maybe you're curious about the sort of embarrassing mistakes your dad made when he was your age and how he would handle things differently if he had it to do over again. But before jumping into such issues, you might say, "Do you mind if I ask about . . ."

Be tactful. When your parents tell you about themselves, be "swift about hearing, slow about speaking." (James 1:19) Whatever you do, don't ridicule or insult your parents for what they've just shared. Remarks such as "Wow! I can't believe you did that!" or "So that's why you're so strict with me!" will not make your dad or mom want to open up further. Neither will your sharing personal matters with others outside your family.

### It's Never Too Late!

The above suggestions can help you to get better acquainted with your parents while you still live at home. But what if you've already moved away? The same principles can help you reconnect with your parents—or even connect with a parent you never really knew. That's what Ja-

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

### TO THINK ABOUT

- What subjects mentioned in this article would you like to ask your parents about?
- How might learning more about your parents help you to understand yourself better?

cob, mentioned earlier, has found. Although now living on his own, he says, "I've been getting to know my dad better lately, and I'm enjoying it." So whether you live at home or have moved away, it's never too late to get to know your parents. Why not try the suggestions in this article to help you do so?

### A NOTE TO PARENTS

You're eating dinner with your husband, your daughter, and some family friends. During the conversation, your friend mentions someone whom you dated—and broke up with—before meeting your husband. You haven't shared this story with your daughter before. Now she wants to know more. What will you do?

Usually, it's best to welcome your child's questions. After all, anytime that he or she is asking questions and listening to your answers is time when you are communicating—something most parents desire.

Just how much should you tell your son or daughter about your past? Naturally, you might prefer to withhold embarrassing information. Yet, where appropriate, revealing some of your mistakes and struggles can be helpful to your children. How so?

Consider an example. The apostle Paul once disclosed about himself: "When I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me... Miserable man that I am!" (Romans 7:21-24) Jehovah God inspired those words and caused them to be recorded and preserved in the Bible for

our benefit. (2 Timothy 3:16) And we do indeed benefit, for who of us cannot relate to Paul's candid expression?

Similarly, hearing about your good choices and your mistakes can help your children better relate to you. Granted, you were raised in a different era. However, while times have changed, human nature has not; neither have Scriptural principles. (Psalm 119:144) Discussing challenges you've faced-and how you overcame them-can help your teenagers as they work through their problems. "When you discover that your parents have faced challenges similar to your own, it makes your parents seem a lot more real," says a young man named Cameron. He

adds, "The next time you have a problem, you wonder if your parents have been through this before too."

A caution: Not all stories necessarily need to end with counsel. True, you might be concerned that your teen will draw the wrong conclusion or even feel justified in making similar mistakes himself. But instead of summarizing what you want your child to take away from the discussion ("That's why you should never ..."), briefly state how you feel. ("In hindsight, I wish I hadn't done such and such because . . . ") Your son or daughter can thus learn a valuable lesson from your experience without feeling as if he or she has been given a lecture. -Ephesians 6:4.

"One time, I admitted to my mother that I felt more at ease with my schoolmates than with fellow Christians. The next day, there was a letter from Mom on my desk. In the letter she told me how she too had felt the lack of friends among fellow believers. She reminded me of individuals in the Bible who served God even when there wasn't anyone for them to be with who would encourage them. She also commended me for the efforts I had made to cultivate wholesome friendships. I was surprised to learn that I was not the only one who had faced this problem. My mother had too, and I was so happy to learn about it that I cried. I was very encouraged by what my mother told me, and I was strengthened to do what was right."—Junko, 17, Japan.

### **Profiles in Success**

PARTONE

As this special issue of *Awake!* has already shown, successful families are not problem free. That fact is hardly surprising, for we live in what the Bible describes as "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) Problems of one sort or another are certain to arise in every family.

Remember, though, that success does not depend on having socalled ideal circumstances. On the contrary, Jesus said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matthew 5:3) Families that fill their spiritual need by following Bible principles have found a secret to success—despite their negative circumstances. Consider some examples.

Caring for a disabled child. The Bible places a high priority on caring for family members, including those with special needs. It states: "If anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith."—1 Timothy 5:8.

On page 15, Victor, a father in South Africa, relates how he and his wife have cared for a disabled child for more than four decades.

**Growing up adopted.** Bible principles can help a person gain a balanced sense of self-worth—even if abandoned by his or her birth parents. Indeed, the Bible says that Jehovah God is a "helper" to those who are fatherless.—Psalm 10:14.

On page 16, Kenyatta, a young woman in the United States, describes how she has learned to cope with the emotional effects of never having met her birth parents.

Coping with the death of a parent. Losing a mother or a father may leave emotional scars that are difficult to heal. The Bible can help. Its Author, Jehovah, is "the God of all comfort."—2 Corinthians 1:3.

On page 17, Angela, a young woman in Australia, explains how her relationship with God is helping her to cope with a painful loss.

All families have some challenges to deal with. As the stories on the following pages will illustrate, those who apply Bible principles have found a vital secret that helps them to cope successfully with the challenges they face.







# Caring for a Disabled Child

As told by Victor Maynes, South Africa



"Ever since his birth, Andrew has relied on us to dress him, bathe him, and at times even help him to eat. He is now 44 years old."



WE SUSPECTED something was wrong when Andrew was not walking after his first year. Then, about that time, he had a seizure. We rushed Andrew to the hospital, where we learned that he had epilepsy. But that wasn't all. Further tests confirmed that Andrew was brain damaged.

After much trial and error, we were able to bring Andrew's seizures under control. For a while, he had to take four different medications three times a day. Of course, his mental disability cannot be improved with medicine. Even now, at age 44, Andrew has the mental capacity of a five- or six-year-old child.

Doctors advised us to put Andrew in a special facility, but we decided not to do that. We were in a position to meet Andrew's needs, so we decided that we would care for him at home, despite the inevitable challenges.

Thus, we have made caretaking a family affair. Our other children—we had two girls and a boy living at home—were a great support, and I am thankful to them! Also, as Jehovah's Witnesses, we have had wonderful support from members of our congregation. At times, they have provided meals for us or have even looked after Andrew as we engaged in the ministry or took care of other matters.

We have always kept close to our hearts the words of Isaiah 33:24, which contain God's promise that one day "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" We fully believe that God will carry out his purpose to bring about a new world and to wipe out all sickness. (2 Peter 3:13) So we look forward to the day when Andrew will be well. In the meantime, we have faith in Jesus' words that if we put the interests of God's Kingdom first in our lives, the things we need will be provided. (Matthew 6:33) We have always found that to be the case. We have never lacked anything.

Granted, not all are able to care for an ailing family member at home. To those who are doing so, I would first recommend intense and regular prayer. (1 Peter 5:6, 7) Second, give plenty of tender loving care to your child, and never underestimate his or her capacity to learn to love Jehovah God. (Ephesians 6:4) Third, involve your whole family, and allow them to help. Fourth, remember that *your* home is where your child will receive the most love. Of course, circumstances vary. For our part, we have never regretted caring for Andrew at home. To me, he is the most lovable child—the most lovable *man*—I know.

# Growing Up Adopted

As told by Kenyatta Young, United States



"If you're a stepchild, there's a biological connection. But having been adopted, I don't have that. I don't even know who I look like."



HAVE no idea who my father is, and I've never met my birth mother. She abused alcohol and drugs when she was pregnant with me. I was put into foster care at birth and was in several foster homes before being adopted at just under two years of age.

My adoptive dad says that when the case worker showed him my picture, he just had to adopt me. I immediately clicked with my new mom. I told her that she was my mom and that I wanted to go home with her.

I remember as a child, though, having the fear that I would do something wrong and would be sent back to foster care. I felt that I couldn't be moody or even get sick the way other kids did. I even tried to avoid catching a cold! My parents kept reassuring me that they loved me and that they weren't going to abandon me.

Even as an adult, I sometimes wrestle with the feeling that I'm not as valued as those who were raised by their biological parents. Just when I come to terms with it all, someone will say to me, "You should be so thankful that you have wonderful parents who found it in their hearts to adopt you!" I am grateful, but such comments make me feel that there's something wrong with me and that it somehow took extraordinary effort for someone to love me.

It's hard for me to deal with the fact that I'll probably never know who my biological father is. Sometimes I'm hurt that my birth mother did not get her life together so that she could keep me, as if I weren't worth the energy. Other times I feel sorry for her. I often think that if I ever met her, I would want to let her know that I succeeded in life and that she should not feel bad about giving me up.

My adoptive parents are Jehovah's Witnesses, and one of the best gifts I have received from them is a knowledge of the Bible. I always find the words of Psalm 27:10 comforting: "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up." That is certainly true in my case. And there are some positive results of being adopted. For example, I'm fascinated by people—their backgrounds and their lives-probably because I don't know my own, biologically. I love people, and that's really important in the Christian ministry. Being one of Jehovah's Witnesses and talking about the Bible gives me dignity and purpose. When I'm depressed, I get out there and help others. By teaching people about the Bible, I find that I can really connect with them. Everybody has a story.

# Coping With the Death of a Parent

As told by Angela Rutgers, Australia



"When my dad died, I felt as if someone had cut a giant hole in my safety net. The one person who knew everything and who could fix anything in my life was no longer there."



WY FATHER passed away ten years ago when I was a teenager. Six months earlier, he had surgery, and while he was still in the recovery room, the doctor told us that nothing more could be done. My mom desperately needed more information, my brother fainted, and I felt trapped in a whirlwind of emotions that I couldn't escape. Six months later, my dad died.

I went through a period of conflicting emotions. I wanted my friends to understand what I was going through, but I didn't want to be treated as a victim. So I made an effort not to show them what I was feeling. On the other hand, I felt that to allow myself to enjoy their company would have been to imply that my life had a degree of normalcy, which it did not. I wonder now just what I must have put my friends through!

Do I suffer from feelings of guilt about Dad's death? Yes, I do! I wish I had told him "I love you!" more often. I wish I had hugged him more or spent more time with him. No matter how much I tell myself, 'He wouldn't want you to think that,' it still gets to me.

As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I find great comfort in the Bible-based resurrection hope. (John 5:28, 29) I try to imagine

that my dad has just gone overseas on a trip and that one day he will come home, the exact date being unknown. Oddly, when people said to me, "Your dad will come back in the resurrection," that didn't encourage me at first. I felt, 'I want my dad back right now!' But the illustration of the overseas trip helped. It alluded to the resurrection, while enabling me to cope with the immediate loss.

Fellow Christians have been a tremendous support. I remember one in particular who told me that he was very uncomfortable talking about my dad's death, but he said that he was thinking of me and my family all the time. I hung on to that comment. It helped me through the days when no one said anything, because it made me realize that even if they didn't speak up, they were thinking of me and my family. That meant so much to me!

Four months after Dad's death, Mom got more involved in the ministry, and I could see that her greatest joy came from that. So I joined her. It's amazing how helping others helps you to cope. It has strengthened my faith in Jehovah's Word and his promises, and it helps me even now to focus on the big picture.



# A House Divided

The Impact of Divorce on Adolescents



THE experts thought they had it right. 'You need to focus on *your* happiness,' they advised parents in troubled marriages, quickly adding: 'Don't worry about the children. They're resilient. It's easier for them to deal with divorce than to live with two parents who can't get along!'

Yet, some counselors who once sang the praises of divorce have changed their tune. 'Divorce is war,' they now say. 'Neither party walks away without wounds; nor do the children.'

### The Myth of Easy Divorce

It could make a hit TV sitcom. The plot? Dad and Mom divorce. Mom gets custody of the children and then marries a widower with children of his own. Week after week the

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Technology—Blessing or Curse?
- Is It Possible to Love One's Enemies?
- What Can I Wear?

mismatched family faces one absurd predicament after another—each one being resolved in 30 minutes flat with no shortage of witty humor in the process.

Perhaps the above situation makes for entertaining TV. But a real-life divorce is no sitcom. On the contrary, the process is painful. "Divorce is litigation," writes M. Gary Neuman in his book Emotional Infidelity. "Someone is suing someone. The second you decide to divorce, you are giving up control over your child. You are also giving up control over your finances, and perhaps even where you will live. You may resolve your issues in mediation, but maybe not. Ultimately, a stranger called a judge could be the one to tell you how often you will see your child and how much of your money you will keep. Unfortunately, that stranger doesn't think exactly like you."

Often, divorce merely exchanges one set of problems for another. Indeed, everything from living arrangements to financial status may change—and likely not for the better. And then there is the impact divorce has on children.

#### **Divorce and Adolescents**

Divorce can devastate children, regardless of their age. Some claim that adolescents fare better. After all, the reasoning goes, they are more mature and are in the process of separating from their parents anyway. However, researchers see a flip side to the coin. They have found that because of those very factors, divorce can hit adolescents the hardest.\* Consider the following:

- As they navigate their way toward adulthood, adolescents are highly insecure, perhaps even more so than when they were children. Do not let their independent streak fool you—adolescents need the anchor of family stability as never before.
- At the very time in life when adolescents are learning to forge mature friendships, divorce teaches them to be skeptical of such values as trust, loyalty, and love. Later, as adults, they may avoid close relationships altogether.
- While it is common for children of all ages to act out their pain, adolescents are more likely to do so in dangerous ways, in-

cluding delinquency, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse.

This is not to say that adolescents whose parents divorce are doomed emotionally or otherwise. They can succeed, especially if they have a relationship with both parents.\* However, it is naive to think that divorce will always be, as some might say, 'better for the children' or that it will put an end to all tension between spouses. In fact, some find that they have to deal more with their "intolerable" spouse after the divorce than before and on much more volatile issues, such as financial support or child custody. In such cases divorce does not end family problems; it simply moves them to a different arena.

### **A Third Option**

What if you are in a troubled marriage and have thought about divorce? This article has presented compelling reasons to reconsider. Divorce is not a cure-all for marital misery.

But do not misunderstand: The answer is not simply to tolerate a bad marriage. There is another option—If your marriage is in trouble, why not work to make it better? Do not

<sup>\*</sup> Admittedly, this is not always possible, especially if a parent has abandoned the family or is in some other way blatantly irresponsible or even dangerous -1 Timothy 5:8.



#### 'THIS TIME I'LL GET IT RIGHT'

Studies reveal that second marriages have a higher failure rate than first ones, and third marriages fare even worse. In his book *Emotional Infidelity*, M. Gary Neuman points out one reason for this. "If you have difficulties in your first marriage," he writes, "it's not all about your poor choice of a spouse. It's about you. You fell in love with this person. You worked with this person to create whatever you have or don't have." Neuman's conclusion? "It's better to get rid of the problem and keep your spouse than to get rid of your spouse and keep the problem."

<sup>\*</sup>This article focuses on adolescents, but divorce affects younger children as well. For more information, see *Awake!* issues of December 8, 1997, pages 3-12, and April 22, 1991, pages 3-11.

hastily dismiss this idea by asserting that your marital problems are incurable. Ask yourself these questions:

- 'What qualities initially drew me to my spouse? Are not those qualities still there to a degree?'—Proverbs 31:10, 29.
- 'Can the feelings that I had before marriage be rekindled?'—Song of Solomon 2:2; 4:7.
- 'Despite the actions of my mate, what can I do to apply the suggestions found on pages 3 to 9 of this magazine?'—Romans 12:18.
- 'Can I explain to my mate (face-to-face or in writing) just how I would like our relationship to improve?'—Job 10:1.
- 'Can we sit down with a mature friend who can help us set realistic goals to improve our marriage?'—Proverbs 27:17.

The Bible says: "The shrewd one considers his steps." (Proverbs 14:15) That principle applies not just when choosing a mate but also when considering what to do about a marriage relationship that is faltering. Indeed, as brought out on page 9 of this magazine, successful families also have problems—the difference is in how they handle them.

To illustrate: Imagine that you have embarked on a long journey by car. It is inevitable that you will encounter problems along the way, including severe weather, traffic jams, and roadblocks. On occasion, you may even get lost. What will you do? Turn around and go back or find a way to overcome the obstacle and move forward? On the day of your wedding, you embarked on a journey that was sure to bring its share of problems, for the Bible says that "those who marry will have pain and grief." (1 Corinthians 7:28, The New English Bible) The question is not whether problems will arise but how you will face them when they do. Can you find a way to overcome the obstacle and move forward? Even if you feel that your marriage is hopelessly lost, will you try to get help?-James 5:14.



Work to uphold the commitment you made on your wedding day

#### **A Divine Institution**

Marriage is a divine institution that should not be taken lightly. (Genesis 2:24) When problems seem insurmountable, remember the points discussed in this article.

- **1.** Try to rekindle the love that you once felt.—Song of Solomon 8:6.
- **2.** Decide what *you* can do to make your marriage better, and then do it.—James 1:22.
- **3.** Clearly but respectfully tell your mate —either face-to-face or in writing—what improvements you feel need to be made in the marriage.—Job 7:11.
- **4.** Get help. You do not have to save your marriage by yourself!

#### IF A MARRIAGE ENDS

The Bible acknowledges that extreme circumstances may lead to divorce.\* If that is the case in your family, how can you help your adolescent children to cope?

Tell your adolescent what is happening. If possible, both parents should do this. Together, let your adolescent know that the decision to divorce is final. Give assurance that he or she is not to blame and will continue to be loved by both parents.

Get off the battlefield—the war is over. Some parents remain entangled in conflict long after the divorce. They become, as one expert puts it, "legally divorced but still emotionally betrothed combatants who have not been able to negotiate a truce with peace." Not only does this deprive adolescents of their parents—since Dad and Mom always seem caught up in one skirmish or another—but it also encourages them to pit one parent against the other in order to get their way. For instance, a boy might tell his mother: "Dad lets me stay out as late as I want. Why won't you?" Not wanting her son to defect to the "enemy camp," Mom relents.

Let your adolescent talk. Adolescents may reason, 'If my parents stopped loving each other, they may stop loving me' or 'If my parents broke the rules, why can't I?' To alleviate your adolescent's fears and to correct flawed thinking, give him or her plenty of opportunity to talk. But a caution: Do not switch roles and look to your adolescent for emotional support. This is your child, not your confidant.

Encourage the adolescent to have a healthy relationship with your ex-spouse. The person you divorced is your ex-spouse but not your child's ex-parent. Bad-mouthing that person is damaging. Says the book Teens in Turmoil—A Path to Change for Parents, Adolescents, and Their Families: "If parents choose to use their children as artillery on the divorce battlefield, they must expect to reap what they have sown."

Take care of yourself. At times, you will feel overwhelmed. But do not give up. Maintain a healthy routine. If you are a Christian, stay involved in spiritual activities. Doing so will help you and your adolescent to maintain balance.—Psalm 18:2; Matthew 28:19, 20; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

If you share custody, encourage your adolescent to have a healthy relationship with your ex-spouse



<sup>\*</sup> According to the Bible, only sexual relations outside the marriage provide adequate grounds to end the marriage with the opportunity to remarry. (Matthew 19:9) If unfaithfulness occurs, it is up to the innocent mate—not to family members or others—to decide whether divorce is the best option.—Galatians 6:5.

### **Profiles in Success**

PART TWO

As brought out in "Profiles in Success-Part 1," Bible principles can provide families with an anchor in times of despair.\* To those who live by his standards, Jehovah God promises: "I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give advice with my eye upon you."—Psalm 32:8.

Coping with financial hardship. Money matters are often at the root of intense marital disputes. But Bible principles can help families to put financial issues in perspective. Jesus said: "Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear. . . . Your heavenly Father knows you need all these things."—Matthew 6:25, 32,

On page 23, Issachar, in the United States, relates how he and his family coped with financial hardship after their home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

When illness afflicts a family member. Virtually all humans get sick. Often, the condition is temporary and recovery is quick. But what if a family member becomes chronically ill? The Bible says that Jehovah can sustain those who are on a sickbed. (Psalm 41: 1-3) How can the family be a means through which Jehovah provides such care?

On page 24, Hajime, a husband in Japan, relates how he and his daughters pulled together to help his wife, Noriko, after she was diagnosed with a devastating illness.

When a child dies. The death of a child is one of the greatest tragedies that a family can face. Jehovah promises to wipe away the tears of sorrow that such terrible losses cause. (Revelation 21:1-4) Even now, he provides comfort for the bereaved.—Psalm 147:3.

On page 25, Fernando and Dilma, in the United States, relate how the Bible strengthened them to deal with the death of their infant daughter.

The Bible is a reliable guide for families who face adversity, as the accounts on the following pages illustrate.







<sup>\*</sup> See pages 14-17 of this magazine.

# Coping With Financial Hardship

As told by Issachar Nichols, United States



"Hurricane Katrina destroyed our home, leaving behind only a slab of concrete. The school where I worked sat in water for a month and a half."

DURING the summer of 2005, my wife, Michelle, and I, along with our two-year-old daughter, Sydney, lived in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, U.S.A. As Jehovah's Witnesses, Michelle and I had the goal of having as full a share as possible in the Christian ministry. I was a vocational teacher, and the school where I taught was in nearby New Orleans, Louisiana. My schedule allowed me to work three days a week and to devote much of the remaining time to teaching others about the Bible. We were comfortable with our routine. Then came the news that Hurricane Katrina was threatening to strike. We arranged to evacuate immediately.

When the storm was over, our house in Bay St. Louis was ruined and so was the school I taught at in New Orleans. Insurance and government grant money enabled us to obtain housing, but I found it difficult to find a stable source of income. In addition, my wife contracted a viral infection from contaminated water. Her immune system weakened, and she thereafter became infected with West Nile virus from a mosquito bite. Meanwhile, insurance costs and living expenses escalated.

To adjust to our new circumstances, we learned to be more frugal in spending, even on necessities. I had to be less choosy about the type of work I would accept.



I will admit that losing our possessions was not easy for us. But we were grateful to be alive. And the whole experience underscored the fact that material things have limited value. In fact, we were reminded of Jesus' words: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses."—Luke 12:15.

We also realized that no matter how bad we felt about our own losses, there were many who had lost more—some even their lives. That is one reason why, immediately following the disaster, I got busy helping out with relief efforts, giving emotional support to others who had suffered loss.

Throughout this ordeal, Psalm 102:17 has been particularly comforting to us. It states that Jehovah God "will certainly turn to the prayer of those stripped of everything, and not despise their prayer." As a family, we have felt his support!

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck the U.S. Gulf Coast in 2005, Jehovah's Witnesses quickly set up 13 relief centers, nine warehouses, and four fuel depots. Nearly 17,000 Witness volunteers streamed in from the United States and 13 other lands to help with the relief efforts. They have repaired thousands of homes.

# When **Illness**Afflicts a Family Member

As told by Hajime Ito, Japan



"Cooking together was a favorite pastime—until Noriko became ill. Now she cannot eat or drink through her mouth or even talk. She is confined to a wheelchair and breathes through a respirator."



N May 2006, my wife, Noriko, began having difficulty speaking. That summer she started having problems eating and drinking. By September she was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)—a progressive disease that affects the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. In just four months, our life changed completely. And her problems were just beginning.

In time, Noriko's tongue became paralyzed, as did her right hand. A procedure called a gastrostomy enabled her to be fed through a tube, and then a tracheostomy—a surgical opening in the neck to allow the passage of air—rendered her unable to speak. I can't imagine how devastating this was for Noriko, since she had always been so active. We are Jehovah's Witnesses, and Noriko and my daughters had been devoting their full time to the Christian ministry. Now Noriko relies on a respirator to breathe, and she is mainly confined to bed.

Still, this does not stop Noriko! For example, she attends Christian meetings in a wheelchair, with the respirator attached. Her hearing has deteriorated, so my daughter writes large notes for her during the meeting so that she can benefit from the program. And even though Noriko has had to discontinue the full-time ministry, she still writes letters to people, teaching them about the Bible's message of hope by using special equip-

ment that is installed on our personal computer.—2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-4.

We have cooperated as a family to help Noriko. Both of my daughters obtained new employment so they would be available to help more at home. The three of us take care of the many daily chores that Noriko used to perform.

Sometimes in the morning when I look at Noriko, she seems tired. I think to myself, 'I would like to tell her to take it easy today.' But Noriko wants to share the Bible's message with others. When I start to prepare the computer for her, Noriko's eyes shine! When she writes, her condition improves. I have come to see the value of "always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord."—1 Corinthians 15:58.

The experience of ALS sufferer Jason Stuart, related in the January 2006 issue of *Awake!*, has greatly helped Noriko to avoid becoming despondent. In fact, when hospital staff members wondered why she had such a positive attitude, Noriko told them about the article, and we distributed copies of it to the staff. My wife is greatly sustained by teaching others about her faith.

Noriko and I have been married for 30 years, but during the past three years, I have come to appreciate things about her that I previously took for granted. I am so happy that I married her!

# When a Child Dies

As told by Fernando and Dilma Freitas, United States



"The trauma of the death of a child is something that just cannot be explained. There can be no greater pain."

OUR daughter, whom we named Precious, died on April 16, 2006. She was only ten days old. About three months into the pregnancy, it was determined that our unborn child had a serious heart-related condition. As the delivery drew closer, it became apparent that she would die shortly after her birth—if she lived at all. This was extremely difficult for us to accept. We had three healthy children. We could not believe that our baby would die.

After Precious was born, an experienced specialist in chromosomal disorders diagnosed her with a rare condition called Trisomy 18, which affects only about 1 in 5,000 babies. It was clear that she would not survive long. We felt utterly helpless because there was so little we could do. The one thing we *could* do was be with her for the short duration of her life. So that is what we did.

We are so grateful for the ten days that we had with Precious. During that time we and our three daughters bonded with her. We held her, talked to her, hugged her, kissed her, and took as many photographs of her as we could. We even talked about who in the family she most resembled. The specialist who diagnosed Precious' condition visited us every day in the hospital. He



cried with us and told us how sorry he was. He even drew a picture of Precious while he was talking to us for him to remember her. He gave us a copy.

Being Jehovah's Witnesses, we fully believe, as the Bible teaches, that God will restore paradisaic conditions to our earth and that he yearns to bring back to life on earth those who have died—including infants, such as Precious. (Job 14:14, 15; John 5:28, 29) We look forward to the day when we will hold her and embrace her again. Every time we hear the word "paradise," that hope warms our hearts! In the meantime, we take comfort in the fact that Precious is in God's memory and is no longer suffering.—Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10.



# You **Can** Succeed as a Single Parent

T HAS been said that if the two-parent home were an animal, it would likely be on the endangered species list. Consider: There are more than 13 million single parents in the United States alone, the vast majority being single mothers. Research indicates that about half of all children in that country will spend at least some of their youth in a single-parent home.

If you are a single parent, be assured that your family life can succeed. Try to implement the following suggestions.

■ Avoid negative labels. The Bible says: "All the days of the afflicted one are bad; but the one that is good at heart has a feast constantly." (Proverbs 15:15) True, your life may not seem to be a banquet. But as this verse in-

dicates, cheerfulness is more a matter of the heart than of one's circumstances. (Proverbs 17:22) Little good is accomplished by thinking of your children as doomed or of your home as hopelessly broken. Such labels will only dispirit you and make it more difficult for you to fulfill your parental duties.—Proverbs 24:10.

Suggestion: Make a list of any negative statements you use to describe your situation, and then write down next to each one a positive statement to replace it. For example, replace "This is too much for me" with "I am capable of handling my responsibility as a single parent, and I can get the help I need."—Philippians 4:13.

■ Budget your money. The wallet is where many single parents—especially single moth-

ers—are hit the hardest. Yet, in some cases financial stress can be eased with effective budgeting skills. A Bible proverb states: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself." (Proverbs 22:3) To avoid financial "calamity," planning and forethought are essential.

Suggestion: Work out a budget on paper. Keep a record of your expenses for a month and find out where your money is going. Take a hard look at your spending habits. Are you relying too much on credit? Do you buy your children things to compensate for the lack of a second parent? If your children are old enough, sit down with them and brainstorm how money can be saved. It will be good training for them. And they may even have a few practical ideas!

■ Deal peaceably with your ex-spouse. If you share custody, be aware that bad-mouthing your ex to your child—or using your child as a spy to find out what is going on in your ex's life—is unhealthy.\* It is far better to forge a working relationship with your ex regarding discipline or any other issue that affects the welfare of your child. The Bible says: "Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody"—and that includes your ex.—Romans 12:18, Today's English Ver-

Suggestion: The next time a disagreement arises, treat your ex as you would a workmate. On the job, you would strive to be amicable with everyone—even those you do not particularly admire. Take the same approach with your ex. The two of you may not always agree, but each spark does not need to ignite a fire.—Luke 12:58.

sion.

■ Be a good example. Ask yourself: 'What values and attitudes do I want my children to adopt? Do I reflect those values and attitudes in my own life?' For example, are you gener-

ally happy, despite your single-parent status? Or do you let your circumstances cast a pall over your outlook on life? Are you stuck in resentment over the way your ex has treated you? Or are you resilient in the face of injustices over which you have no control? (Proverbs 15:18) Granted, those are not easy issues, and you will not face them perfectly. Still, your children are likely to adopt the same attitudes about life that they see you display.

Suggestion: Write down on paper three qualities that you would like each of your children to display when they become adults.\* Next to each quality, write out what you can do right now to set an example that will nurture that quality in your child.

pace of life, it is all too easy to let your physical and emotional health slide. Do not fall into that trap! Taking care of your "spiritual need" is a must! (Matthew 5:3) Remember—a car without fuel will not get far. Neither will you if you do not take time to "refuel."

There is also "a time to laugh" and "a time to skip about." (Ecclesiastes 3:4) Recreation is *not* a waste of time. It refreshes you and renews your strength so that you can carry on as a single parent.

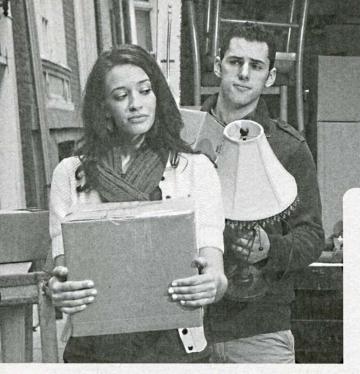
Suggestion: Talk to other single parents about how they take care of themselves. While you "make sure of the more important things," can you also spend at least some time each week doing something that you simply enjoy? (Philippians 1:10) Write down on paper what you would like to do and when you might do it.

 Corinth. • Making a tent. • Aquila, Priscilla, and Paul. 2. Manasseh.—Judges 6:15. 3. Midian.—Judges 6:6. 4. False.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

<sup>\*</sup> For more information, see the article "A House Divided -The Impact of Divorce on Adolescents," on pages 18-21 of this magazine.

<sup>\*</sup> Some possibilities are "respect," "reasonableness," and "forgiveness," which are discussed on pages 6-8 of this magazine.



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

# What About Living Together Before Marriage?

WOULD you buy a suit or a dress without first trying it on? Likely not. After all, if you later found that the garment did not fit, you would have wasted your time and money.

Many people apply a similar logic to marriage. They feel that it is better for a man and woman to live together before making a commitment to become husband and wife. 'If things do not work out,' they reason, 'a man and woman can walk away without having to deal with the complex and costly process of divorce.'

Perhaps some who feel that way have seen a married friend endure an abusive relationship. Or they may have witnessed the traumatic effects of a loveless marriage. As a result, they might view living together as a wise precaution.

What is the Bible's viewpoint on this matter? To answer, we first need to consider what God's Word has to say about the institution of marriage.

#### "One Flesh"

The Bible promotes a lofty view of marriage, and this is not surprising, for the ar-

rangement was authorized and established by Jehovah God himself. (Genesis 2:21-24) From the beginning, Jehovah purposed that through marriage a man and woman would become "one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) After quoting the passage in the Bible where this is pointed out, Jesus added: "What God has yoked together let no man put apart."—Matthew 19:6.

Granted, some who marry will later divorce.\* When this occurs, however, it is not because of some lack in the marriage arrangement itself; rather, it is because of the failure of one or both mates to live up to their wedding vows.

To illustrate: Suppose a man and woman own a car, but they do not maintain it according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the car breaks down as a result, who is to blame? The manufacturer or the owners who failed to perform routine maintenance?

The same principle applies to marriage. When a husband and wife maintain their rela-

<sup>\*</sup> The Bible allows for divorce and remarriage if a mate engages in sexual relations outside of marriage.—Matthew 19:9.

tionship and are determined to work out their problems by applying Bible principles, divorce is far less likely. There is a feeling of security in the marriage because a personal commitment has been made by each spouse. Marriage then becomes the basis for a loving relationship.

#### "Abstain From Fornication"

Still, some might wonder: 'Why not live together first? Would not testing the relationship before making such a commitment show regard for the sanctity of marriage?'

The Bible's answer is clear. Paul wrote: "Abstain from fornication." (1 Thessalonians 4:3) The term "fornication" refers to all sexual relations outside

of marriage. That would include sex between a cohabiting couple, even if they intend to get married. According to the Bible, then, it would be wrong for a couple to live together—even if their intention was to marry later.

Is the Bible's view out of date? Some might think so. After all, in many lands, living together—with or without intending to marry—is considered normal. But think of the results. Have those who cohabit found the secret to family success? Are they happier than couples who marry? Do couples who live together before marriage have a higher rate of faithfulness after marriage? Studies indicate the contrary. Indeed, married couples who previously lived together have been found to experience higher levels of marital discord and eventual divorce.

Some experts would say that such studies are flawed. "People who choose to marry

#### "SINNING AGAINST HIS OWN BODY"

The Bible states: "He that practices fornication is sinning against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6: 18) In recent decades the truthfulness of those words has been underscored by the millions who have died from AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. But that is not all. Studies suggest that depression and suicide attempts are more common among youths who are sexually active. Promiscuity also leads to unwanted pregnancy, which in some cases presents a temptation to abort the unborn. In view of the facts, we can conclude that the Bible's moral code is *not* old-fashioned.

without first [cohabiting] are already a different group of people than those who decide to [cohabit] first," writes one psychologist. She asserts that living together is not the key factor; instead, the issue is "valuing the state of being married."

Even if that is true, it simply underscores the importance of cultivating God's view of marriage. The Bible says: "Let marriage be honorable among all." (Hebrews 13:4) When a man and a woman vow to remain one flesh and then show honor for the marriage arrangement, they have a bond that cannot easily be severed.—Ecclesiastes 4:12.

So to return to the opening analogy, it *does* make sense to try on a suit or a dress before buying it. However, the parallel to that is not living together. Rather, it is taking sufficient time to get to know the person you are considering as a marriage mate. This vital but often overlooked step is one of many secrets of family success.

#### **HAVE YOU WONDERED?**

- Why does the Bible limit sexual intimacy to marriage partners?

  —Psalm 84:11: 1 Corinthians 6:18.
- What qualities should you look for in a mate?—Ruth 1:16, 17; Proverbs 31:10-31.

### WATCHING THE WORLD

### **Multiple Languages?**

Many parents fear that exposing young children to a second language will jeopardize their ability to speak their mother tongue. Yet, the opposite is true, says a research team led by neuroscientist Laura-Ann Petitto in Toronto, Canada. "Neural tissue that you're born with . . . is ready and in place to learn language," says Petitto, "and it can handle multiple languages." In school, bilingual children often outperform children who speak only one language. However, says the *Toronto Star*, "parents must take the lead in teaching young children a second language if they want them to have all of the benefits that come along with being bilingual."

### **Pornography Disturbs Children**

Children are confronted with harmful pornographic and violent Internet videos at an increasingly early age. According to Heinz-Peter Meidinger, chairman of the German Association of Philologists, boys 12 and older often know how and where to find Web sites featuring extreme violence or degrading pornography. While children may appear outwardly tough and unconcerned, inwardly many are shocked and disturbed at viewing it. Meidinger urges parents to be interested in

- "About one-third of girls in the United States get pregnant before age 20."—CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, U.S.A.
- A U.S. study of 420 men as "victims of domestic violence" found that "nearly three out of 10 have been battered or otherwise abused."—AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.

what is on their child's mind and on his or her computer.

### **Planning for Divorce**

A record number of Australians are signing prenuptial agreements that require their partner to meet specific lifestyle conditions, reports Sydney's *Sunday Telegraph*. Prenuptial agreements are contracts that spell out how couples will divide their assets in the event of divorce. Many agreements now stipulate the lifestyle each partner must maintain for the marriage to last. Clauses can define who cooks, cleans, or drives, as well as whether pets are allowed, how much each partner can weigh, who walks the dog, and who takes out the trash. Lawyer Christine Jeffress notes that people "have less expectation that their relationship is going to last forever."

### **Parents Struggling to Show Affection**

"An increasing number of parents need an instruction manual on how to treat their little children, since they are apparently incapable of showing them natural affection," says the Polish magazine Newsweek Polska. Parents need to be taught the basics, such as hugging their children, playing with them, and singing to them. These activities are vital for children's balanced development. Research shows, however, that "among Polish families, watching television and shopping took first place in the most common ways that parents spend time with their children." Playing together came in only sixth.

### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

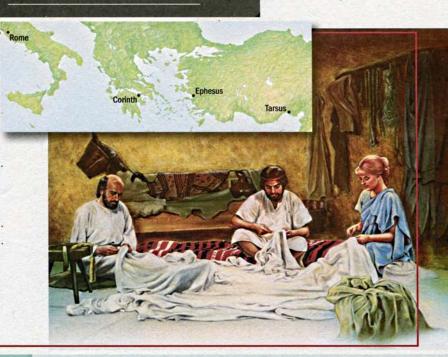
### Where Did It Happen?

1. In which city did this event take place?

CLUE: Read Acts 18:1-3. Circle your answer on the map.

- What are the three people doing?
- What are the names of the married couple, and what is the name of their friend?

FOR DISCUSSION: What is the name of another person that this couple helped? CLUE: Read Acts 18:24-26. What type of work do you think this couple enjoyed most, and why?





### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 3 A person who does not provide for his family is worse than what? 1 Timothy 5:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 5 Why are two better than one? Ecclesiastes 4:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 11 Wisdom can be found among whom? Job 12:\_\_\_

PAGE 29 What should a person abstain from?

1 Thessalonians 4:\_\_\_\_

### What Do You Know About Judge Gideon?

Read Judges 6:1-7:25. Now answer the following questions.

He was from which tribe?

He delivered Israel from which nation?

True or false? He lived before Moses.

FOR DISCUSSION: What quality did Gideon display when first appointed by Jehovah? CLUE: Read Judges 6:14-16. Do you think that this is a good quality? Explain why you answer that way.





- What seven factors can help your marriage succeed? See pages 3-9.
- How can adolescents get to know their parents better? See pages 10-13.
- Is it a good idea to live together before getting married?
   See pages 28-29.
- How can you succeed as a single parent?
   See pages 26-27.
- How can children be helped to cope if their parents divorce? See pages 18-21.

These are just some of the questions about family life that are addressed in this special issue of "Awake!"

Would you like more information? Fill in the coupon below, and send it to the address shown on the coupon or to an appropriate address on page 5 of this magazine.

☐ Without obligation,
I request a copy of the
book shown here.
Indicate which language

<sup>☐</sup> Please contact me concerning a free home Bible study.



Name		
Address		
City	State	ZIP Code



# Awake!

PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

- 3 An Explosion of Technology
- 4 Blessing or Curse?
- 6 Parents-Guide Your Children
- 8 Use Technology Considerately and Economically
- 15 Bolivia's "Lost World"
- Young People Ask What Can I Wear?
- 22 We Are All One Family
- 24 See God's Name in Denmark
- 26 Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 What You Need Is in the Bible!



### Is It Possible to Love One's Enemies?

Hatred and violence breed hatred and violence. See how love can break that ugly cycle.



### From Silent Service to Sacred Service

After being made Engineer Officer on the first of a new class of ballistic-missile nuclear submarines, a naval officer made a major career change. Read why.



# TECHNOLOGY BLESSING OR CURSE? 3-9

Cell phones, computers, the Internet and, of course, television have become a part of modern-day life. Learn how to keep these devices in their proper place.



N Albania it is not unusual to see an older person riding a donkey while talking on a cell phone. In India a beggar might pause in his solicitations to make or take a call on his phone. Yes, from cell phones to computers to television, technology has found its way into every corner of the world-even crossing the divide between rich and poor-and has become a part of life for many.

The pervasiveness of technology is perhaps most apparent in the proliferation of cell phones, many of which are no longer just phones. Advanced models enable users to access the Internet, send and receive e-mail and text messages, watch TV, listen to music, take photos, navigate by the Global Positioning System (GPS), and-oh, yes-phone someone!

According to a report in the Washington Post newspaper, a multimedia smartphone "now has more processing power than did the North American Air Defense Command in 1965." The Post also states: "There is now one cellphone for every two humans on Earth," and at least 30 nations have more cell phones than people. Indeed, we are witnessing "the fastest global diffusion of

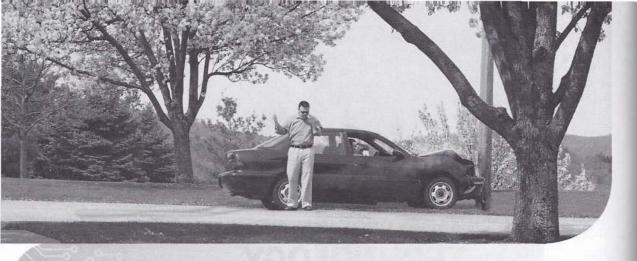
any technology in human history," says the paper.

Worldwide, almost 60 percent of users live in developing lands, making the cell phone the first high-tech communications device to have the majority of its users in those lands. Afghanistan, for example, added about 140.-000 subscribers a month in 2008, while in recent years Africa has seen cell-phone use grow nearly 50 percent annually.

But the communications revolution has its downside. Cell phones, pagers, and laptop computers make people accessible almost anytime, anywhere, causing some users to feel caught in an electronic web. At the other extreme are technology "addicts," who have a compulsion to be connected, to know what is going on.

"Addiction," distraction, interruption -these are perhaps the most recognized problems associated with popular communications and media technology.\* But the same devices also have much power for good. How, then, can you use them in a balanced, wise, and considerate way? The following articles address this question.

This series of articles focuses on such devices as cell phones, computers, and television, as well as the Internet. Unless otherwise stated, "technology" refers to these products.



### **BLESSING OR CURSE?**

A driver loses control of his car and hits a utility pole, seriously injuring a passenger. Immediately, he uses his cell phone to call for help. But why did he lose control? He momentarily took his eyes off the road to answer his phone.

AS THIS example illustrates, the products of modern technology can be either a blessing or a curse—the choice depends on us. Few people, though, would prefer to go back to the comparatively crude products of yesteryear. Computers, for example, spare us tedious tasks, enable us to buy and bank conveniently online, and help us keep in touch with others by e-mail, voice mail, or video link.

Not too long ago, family members would go their various ways in the morning and not speak to one another again until evening. But now, "70% of couples in which both partners have cellphones contact each other daily just to say hello, 64% contact each other to coordinate schedules, and 42% of parents contact their children daily using a cellphone," says a report in *USA Today*.

### Do Not Let an Asset Become a Liability

Can the excessive or improper use of technology be harmful mentally and physically? Consider the example of two newlyweds in one Western land. According to a news report, they "were on the phone constantly—in

### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a world-wide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

4 Awake! November 2009

Vol. 90, No. 11 Monthly

ENGLISH

their cars, at the gym, even calling each other from different rooms inside their own house." At times, they accrued 4,000 minutes—more than 66 hours—a month, and they said that they could not cope without their phones. They have the "classic signs of addiction," noted Dr. Harris Stratyner, a mental-health specialist. "It's like they are having a relationship through an object."

That example may seem extreme, but it reflects a worrisome trend. For many people, the thought of being out of contact for even an hour is unbearable. "We always need to check out e-mail, we always need to be on the Internet, we always have to be on instant messaging with our friends," said one woman in her 20's.

If being connected "takes up more and more of your time and it becomes the preferred activity in your life to the exclusion of everything else, that's the surest warning signal that something is not quite right," says Dr. Brian Yeo in *The Business Times of Singapore*. Moreover, people who closet themselves away for hours on end with their gadgets often get little if any exercise and risk developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or some other serious condition.

Other dangers are more immediate. In regard to cell phones, for instance, a recent study concluded that motorists who talk on either handheld or hands-free devices are as impaired as drunk drivers! Texting while driving can also be lethal, and one survey found that approximately 40 percent of drivers be-

tween the ages of 16 and 27 text while behind the wheel. Moreover, if you are tempted to use a cell phone to talk or text while driving, keep in mind that should you have an accident, the police and your insurance company may check your cell-phone use in the moments leading up to the crash. A phone call or a simple text message can prove to be very costly!\* An investigation into a 2008 train wreck that cost 25 lives in California, U.S.A., revealed that the engineer had sent a text message seconds before the crash. He never even applied the brakes.

Because a growing number of children use cell phones and computers, as well as entertainment media, they need to learn to use these devices wisely and responsibly. How can they be helped? Please read the following article.

\* All who strive to live by Bible teachings should be particularly concerned about being distracted by anything in any potentially dangerous situation.

-Genesis 9:5, 6; Romans 13:1.

Is being connected taking up more and more of your time?

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, ° Danish, ° Dutch, † ° English, † ° Estonian, Ewe, Filian, Finnish, ° French, † ° Georgian, German, † ° Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hilligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, † ° Japanese, † ° Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, † ° Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macdonian, Mallagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, † ° Polish, † ° Portuguese, † ° Punjab, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, † ° Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinnala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, † ° Swahili, Swedish, † ° Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

+ CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: P0 Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: P0 Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: P0 Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: P0 Box 103, Id Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. Puerto Rico: P0 Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

## PARENTS GUIDE YOUR CHILDREN

"In the past, we only had to be concerned about too much TV exposure. Now we have video games, computers and cell phones. It is overwhelming for young children and creates patterns of behaviors similar to addiction patterns . . . Their brains get used to too much auditory and visual stimulation—and in the absence of these stimulations, they do not know what to do with themselves."—Mali Mann, M.D.

WE LIVE in an increasingly "wired" world thanks to advances in communications technology and the Internet. Many young people cannot leave home without their portable media player or cell phone. And as these and other devices become more powerful, more versatile, and less expensive, the present flood of communications technology may only intensify, creating even more challenges for parents in regard to supervising, training, and disciplining their children.

Those challenges can be met when parents do two important things. First: Recognize the truth of the following statement found in the Bible at Proverbs 22:15: "All children are foolish, but firm correction will make them change." (Contemporary English Version) Second: Understand the power of technology to influence children in a positive or negative way, and strive to make it positive.

#### Start Early!

In many homes, TV is a child's introduction to technology. In fact, TV often becomes the babysitter. Yet, some mental-health professionals believe that premature and excessive exposure to TV can foster disinterest in physical exercise, confusion between reality and fantasy, emotional problems and, later in the classroom, inattentiveness. Some children, says Dr. Mali Mann, may even "get diagnosed incorrectly with Attention Deficit Disorder [ADD] or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD], or even be erroneously labeled with bipolar disorder." According-

ly, some authorities recommend no television viewing for children under the age of two.

"The most important thing that happens in the first couple of years of a child's life is they form a deep connection with their parents," says American Academy of Pediatrics spokesperson Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg. That connection is forged when parents talk and play with their little ones and read to them. And as many parents know, children who are regularly read to develop a love for reading, which is another valuable asset.

To be sure, a knowledge of computers and related technologies may be important, even essential, for millions of children. But if you detect that your children are becoming abnormally focused on computers, computer games, the Internet, and the like, it may be wise to broaden their interests. How? Why not introduce them to an interesting craft or a musical instrument—anything wholesome that may be different, absorbing, and stimulating?

A well-chosen activity may do more than offer a refreshing diversion. It may also help your child to develop patience, tenacity, self-control, and creativity—qualities that are essential for success in life, where solutions to problems are not always just the click of a mouse away.

#### Children Need "Wisdom and Thinking Ability"

In the Bible, adults and children are encouraged to develop their "power of reason,"



Children need a broad range of activities that expand the mind and nurture patience and tenacity

or thinking ability. (Romans 12:1; Proverbs 1: 8, 9; 3:21) This, in turn, enables us to distinguish not only right from wrong but also what is wise from what is unwise. To illustrate, it is not illegal to spend hours playing computer games or watching TV, but is it wise? It is not illegal to buy the latest gadgets or software, but once again, is it wise? How, then, can you help your children to develop a wise heart in regard to technology?

■ Explain the dangers. When it comes to technology and the Internet, children may be quick learners, but lacking wisdom and experience, they tend to be naive. So show them the dangers to avoid and how to avoid them. Consider online social networks, for example. Granted, such networks may allow young ones to express their identity and meet other young people, but the sites are also a "shopping mall" for sexual predators and others with bad motives.\* (1 Corinthians 15:33) Prudent parents, therefore, urge their children not to divulge personal details online.#

\* Parents will find it helpful to read the article "Children Online-What Parents Should Know," in the October 2008 issue of Awake! In the issues of March and December 2007 and January 2008, you will find helpful articles on pornography, video games, and the Internet.

"Some teens also use cell phones to send lewd images of themselves to their friends. Termed "sexting," the practice is not only debasing but also foolish, for regardless of the sender's purpose, the photos are often shared with others.

Of course, children have a right to privacy commensurate with their level of maturity. But as a parent, you have both the God-given authority and the responsibility to train and supervise your children. (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4) Hopefully, they will recognize your concern, not as a needless intrusion, but as an expres-

sion of unselfish love.

"But," you may say, "how can I help my children if I don't understand the devices they use?" Well, why not learn at least the basics? Melba, in her 90's, never touched a computer till she was over 80. "When I first tried to use the thing," she says, "I wanted to chuck it out the window. After a couple of months, I got the hang of it, and now I can handle e-mail and other functions quite easily."

■ Set appropriate limits on your child's use of technology. If your child isolates himself for hours on end watching TV, surfing the Internet, or playing computer games, why not consider establishing technology-free times and zones in the home? This may help your son or daughter learn the value of the following Bible principle: "For everything there is an appointed time." That means there is a time for family, a time for friends, a time for homework, a time to eat, a time to get some exercise, and so on. (Ecclesiastes 3:1) Reasonable rules, consistently enforced, give family life structure and help children develop good manners, consideration for others, and sociability.

In the final article of this series, we will look at some principles that may help all of us -adults and children-to use technology not just considerately but also economically.



# USE TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATELY AND ECONOMICALLY

Katherine, who is in her 20's, uses a computer at work. But at home she found herself constantly surfing the Web, shopping online, and keeping up with countless e-mails. Still, her use of technology was moderate compared with that of younger colleagues. "Why do they bother me all the time with silly text messages?" she asks. "I'm a human! Why can't they talk to me on the phone?"

THERE is irony in Katherine's question, for the phone too is an indirect link. Still, Katherine has a point: Many gadgets that were designed to connect people may, in fact, put emotional distance between them. To help you find a good balance in your use of technology, consider the following Bible principles.

men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matthew 7:12) When we apply those words of Jesus Christ to our use of cell phones and computers, we treat others with respect and show good manners. "My husband and I were at a restaurant," says a woman named Anne. "Two men were having a meal together at an adjacent table. One of

them, though, spent the entire time on his cell phone, talking and eating. We felt sorry for his companion, who ate 'alone.'" How would you feel if you were that companion? Hurt? Offended? Yes, the fact that we may be able to use a cell phone almost anywhere and at any time does not mean we should. Jesus' words ought to be our guiding principle.

is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves."
(Ephesians 5:15, 16) Time is a precious gift
from God and should not be squandered.
Granted, technology can save time. The Internet, for example, can speed up research, banking, and shopping. But it can also steal time if
we spend hours aimlessly surfing the Web.

Another potential time waster is multitasking-working on a computer while watching TV and talking on the phone, or toggling between, say, e-mail and other programs. Why can multitasking be counterproductive?

"It's almost impossible to gain a depth of knowledge of any of the tasks you do while you're multitasking," states neuroscientist Dr. Jordan Grafman. We simply cannot focus on a number of things at the same time; something has to suffer. Hence, multitasking can result in superficiality and poor retention. Also, the rapid-fire switching of attention causes people to make more mistakes and take "far longer-often double the time or more-to get the jobs done than if they were done sequentially," says a report in Time magazine. So think twice before multitasking: your day may not be long enough!

■ "Guard against every sort of covetousness, because even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) Material possessions, no matter how costly or fancy, cannot give us life or true happiness. Only God can. "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need," said Jesus. (Matthew 5:3) The commercial world, on the other hand, equates happiness with material things. 'Buy, buy, buy,' it says. 'You must have the latest.' Do not be deceived. Instead, be wise. Analyze your motives and needs before parting with your hard-earned money. Remember, too, that many high-tech products rapidly depreciate in value. So if you do need a certain gadget, ask yourself: 'Must I have the very latest? And do I need one with all the costly extras, which I may never use?'

#### A Blessing or a Curse-Your Choice

Katherine, mentioned earlier, was alarmed when her home computer failed. "At first I was in shock," she says, "but I decided to postpone replacing it. After a month, my nerves were more relaxed, and I read more. I use a computer at work, so I can still keep in

#### CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS. AND GOOD MANNERS

How can you use your cell phone and computer considerately? Consider the following suggestions.

- Avoid taking or making a phone call when or where you may disturb others. Turn your phone off if necessary.
- Do not let your phone disrupt important face-to-face conversations unless absolutely necessary.
- When you are talking on the phone, give the person you are speaking to your full attention.
- Do not take someone's picture with your cell phone if this may be impolite or embarrassing to the individual.
- Resist the temptation to forward every "interesting" e-mail you receive. The recipients may not appreciate it.

touch with my friends outside of work hours. But I no longer feel driven to be constantly connected. Technology no longer rules my life."

To be sure, many products of science and technology are practical and can save us much time and energy. So by all means use them if you need to, but do so responsibly and considerately. How? Put people before technology. Avoid squandering precious time and money on gadgets or software that you do not need. Do not use the Internet and other media to watch moral filth and violence. And do not become a technology "addict." In short, be wise-apply the divinely inspired, time-tested principles found in God's written Word, the Holy Bible. Yes, "Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment."-Proverbs 2:6.

# Is It Possible to Love One's Enemies?



"I say to you," said Jesus Christ, "continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous."—Matthew 5:44, 45.

DO YOU see religion as a force for love and peace or for hatred and violence? Today many see it as the latter, especially when religion is fused with politics, ethnicity, or nationalism. Yet, as Jesus' words show, those who are true 'sons of God' imitate God's love —even toward their enemies.

Another servant of God stated: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink . . . Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good." (Romans 12: 20, 21) But is such love really possible in this divided world? Jehovah's Witnesses unequivocally answer yes! Consider the example of Jesus and his early followers.

#### They Loved Their Enemies

Jesus taught the truth about God, and many listened to him with pleasure. Others,

however, turned against him, some out of ignorance. (John 7:12, 13; Acts 2:36-38; 3:15, 17) Nevertheless, Jesus continued to share his lifesaving message with all, including opposers. (Mark 12:13-34) Why? He knew that some might change their ways, recognize him as the Messiah, and conform to the spiritual truths found in God's Word.—John 7:1, 37-46; 17:17.

Even on the night of his unjust arrest by armed opponents, Jesus showed love for his enemies. In fact, he healed one of his captors, whom the apostle Peter had struck with a sword. On that occasion Jesus stated an important principle that guides his true followers to this day. He said: "All those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:48-52; John 18:10, 11) Some 30 years later, Peter wrote: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps

closely. . . . When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to [God]." (1 Peter 2:21, 23) Clearly, Peter had learned that love, not retaliation, is the way of Christ's true followers.—Matthew 5:9.

All who 'follow Jesus' steps closely' reflect his loving, gracious disposition. "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, . . . keeping himself restrained under evil," says 2 Timothy 2:24. Those qualities would be evident in the Christian's way of life, which is one of peace and reconciliation.

#### Peaceable 'Ambassadors for Christ'

To his fellow believers, the apostle Paul wrote: "We are therefore ambassadors substituting for Christ . . . As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.'" (2 Corinthians 5:20) Ambassadors do not meddle in the internal political and military affairs of the countries where they serve. Rather, they remain neutral. Their job is to represent and advocate the government for which they speak.

The same is true of Christ's ambassadors and envoys. They view Jesus as King and advocate his heavenly Kingdom by peacefully proclaiming the good news. (Matthew 24:14; John 18:36) Thus, Paul wrote to Christians of his day: "We do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning... reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God."—2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6: 13-20.

When Paul penned those words, Christians were being persecuted in many lands. To be sure, they could have retaliated. Instead, they continued to love their enemies and to share the message of reconciliation with all who would listen. The *Encyclopedia of Religion and War* states: "The earliest followers of Jesus rejected war and military service," recognizing these practices as "incompatible with the love ethic of Jesus and the injunction to love one's enemies."\*

Like the early Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses recognize Jesus as their King. They also recognize him as King of God's Kingdom—a heavenly government that will soon bring about lasting peace and security on earth. (Daniel 2:44; Matthew 6:9, 10) Hence, like ambassadors and envoys, they proclaim the excellencies of that Kingdom. At the same time, they strive to be good citizens of the lands in which they live, paying their taxes and obeying the law where it does not conflict with God's law.—Acts 5:29; Romans 13: 1, 7.

Sadly, though, like the early Christians, the Witnesses are sometimes misunderstood, maligned, and persecuted. Still, they never retaliate. Rather, they try to be "peaceable with all men," hoping that some opposers may "become reconciled to God" and have the prospect of everlasting life. —Romans 12:18; John 17:3.

"Like the first-century Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses legally defend their religious freedoms when necessary.—Acts 25: 11: Philippians 1:7.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- How should Christians treat their enemies?-Matthew 5:43-45; Romans 12:20, 21.
- When persecuted, how did Jesus respond?-1 Peter 2:21, 23.
- Why did the early Christians renounce physical warfare?—2 Corinthians 5:20; 10:3-5.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Christian writers prior to Constantine [Roman emperor 306-337 C.E.] unanimously condemned killing in war," says the *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*. A shift in attitude occurred when the apostasy foretold in the Bible became rampant.—Acts 20:29, 30; 1 Timothy 4:1.

# From Silent Service to Sacred Service



AS TOLD BY ANDREW HOGG

"If we ever have to launch our nuclear warheads," said the commanding officer of our submarine, "we have failed in our mission." This prompted lively discussions on the ethics of nuclear warfare. How, though, did I come to be in the submarine service, also called the silent service because of our efforts to remain undetected?

WAS born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., in 1944. As I grew up, I was influenced by my father, grandfather, and uncle, who had all served in the armed forces, viewing this as the highest human endeavor. As a boy, I toured the nearby navy yard and saw my first submarine. From that moment on, the submarine service was my goal. During my senior year in high school, I was accepted into the U.S. Naval Academy. I graduated four years later, in June 1966.

I entered the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program for training in nuclear engineering and submarine operations. Then, in April 1967, I married Mary Lee Carter, my dear wife to this day. Finally, in March 1968, I realized my boyhood dreams when I was assigned to my first ship, the submarine USS *Jack*. About a year later, Mary Lee gave birth to the first of our two children—our daughter, Allison.

In 1971, I was made Engineer Officer of the USS Andrew Jackson, whose captain made the statement mentioned at the outset. While at sea in this Polaris missile submarine, we experienced an emergency that is the dread of all submariners—fire. A little after midnight,

while I was relaxing with some fellow officers, we felt a thump. Then came the *gong*, *gong*, *gong* of the general alarm and the words, "Fire in machinery room one!"

Because I was responsible for nearly all mechanical and electrical systems, I raced aft to survey the damage. A flash fire had occurred in one of the ship's oxygen generators, which help to produce breathable air. Four of us quickly donned air-breathing masks and purged any flammable gases from the area. Fortunately, no one was hurt. Despite the mishap, we were able to stay on our assigned patrol—a testimony to the good training of the crew.

#### I Chose to Read About a Peacemaker

To help us cope with the stresses of work, we were encouraged to spend a few hours each week looking into something cultural. I usually read the biographies of noteworthy military men. This time, however, I decided to read about someone well-known as a peacemaker—Jesus Christ. Using the Bible I had received at my graduation from the naval academy, I launched into the Gospels. But my reading raised more questions than it answered. I needed help.



The USS "Los Angeles" U.S. Navy photo



With Mary Lee today

Near the end of our patrol, our commanding officer convened a meeting of the officers in the wardroom and announced: "Gentlemen, our engineer has just been assigned to the best job in the United States Navy. He will be the Engineer Officer on the first ship of the navy's newest class of attack submarine." I was stunned!

My new assignment took my family to Newport News, Virginia, where the USS Los Angeles was under construction. My work involved overseeing the testing of engineering systems and developing technical manuals and training programs. The work was extremely complex but satisfying. Meanwhile, Mary Lee gave birth to our son, Drew. Now I was the father of two, and my thoughts once again turned to God: 'What does he think about war? What happens when you die? Is there a hell?'

#### Answers at Last!

At about that time, my wife began having discussions with two of Jehovah's Witnesses. One day when I phoned home from the shipyard, Mary Lee said, "Two 'Bible ladies' are here."

"What church are they from?" I asked.

"Jehovah's Witnesses," she replied.

I had no idea who the Witnesses were, but I wanted to understand the Bible. "Invite them to come over one evening," I said. Shortly thereafter, one of them returned with her husband, and my wife and I began to study the

Finally, I began to get answers to the questions that had puzzled me for years. For example. I learned that the dead are "conscious of nothing at all," as if in a deep sleep—a comparison Jesus used. (Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 11:11-14) The dead, therefore, are experiencing neither bliss nor torment but are "sleeping" in death, awaiting a resurrection.

Mary Lee and I also began to attend Christian meetings at the local Kingdom Hall. There we saw Witnesses-from different cultural, educational, and ethnic backgrounds-all serving God in peace and unity. The Bible really can improve people's lives, my wife and I concluded.-Psalm 19:7-10.

#### A Time of Decision

When the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 broke out, U.S. Atlantic Fleet submarines were deployed. Things could easily have escalated, and it really began to dawn on me that only God's Kingdom, not human politics, will bring true and lasting peace. In fact, I had often prayed "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth," but I did not know what that meant. (Matthew 6:9, 10, King James Version) Now, though, I understood that God's Kingdom is a heavenly government that will soon rule over the entire earth, cleansing it of all evil and evildoers.—Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14.

A passage of Scripture that particularly concerned me was 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4. True Christians, it states, "do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God." Those "weapons," I learned, are of a spiritual nature, and they include "the sword of the spirit"—the Holy Bible.—Ephesians 6:17.

# We resolved to serve the ultimate "Commander in Chief"

I was now at a fork in the road. Would I continue in my present career, which I had found to be both challenging and enjoyable, or would I harmonize my life with Bible truth? After giving the matter much prayerful thought, I concluded that if I was truly sincere about being a peacemaker, I should do it God's way.

#### My New "Commander in Chief"

Mary Lee and I prayerfully discussed our future and resolved that we would serve the ultimate "Commander in Chief"—Jehovah God. We each decided to dedicate our life to Jehovah, and I submitted my resignation from the navy. I was then transferred to Norfolk, Virginia, to await my discharge. Most of my fellow officers were puzzled by my decision, and some were antagonistic. But others were genuinely interested in my Biblical stand and accorded me respect.

I received my discharge in 1974. That same year my wife and I symbolized our dedica-

tion to God by water baptism at the "Divine Purpose" District Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Hampton, Virginia. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Our new life had begun.

#### **Facing New Challenges**

Mary Lee and I had two small children, no income, and only enough money to last a couple of months. I sent my résumé to a number of employers and left matters in God's hands. Before long, a utility company offered me work. The pay was about half my navy pay, but the job allowed our family to stay in the area.

As my wife and I made spiritual progress, we wanted to do more in Jehovah's service. A Witness family we knew had moved to central Virginia to serve where the need for Bible teachers was greater, and they invited us to visit them. One visit was all it took, and we started making plans to move. I put in a request for a transfer, and to my delight, it was accepted. In fact, it came with a promotion! And the utility company agreed to cover our moving expenses. 'Yes,' we thought, 'God truly does care for those who strive to do his will.'—Matthew 6:33.

Because our family has maintained a relatively simple lifestyle, Mary Lee and I have been able to serve in the full-time ministry. This, in turn, allowed us to spend a lot of time with our two fine children while they were growing up. Indeed, the results have brought us immeasurable joy, for both Allison and Drew continue "walking in the truth."—3 John 4; Proverbs 23:24.

Yes, there have been times when finances, housing, health, and just growing older have made us anxious. But Jehovah has always stood by us. Do I regret having left the "silent service"? Not at all! As Mary Lee and I reflect on our lives, we can say without a hint of doubt that serving Jehovah is, without question, the most noble and rewarding human endeavor.—Ecclesiastes 12:13.

# "LOST WORLD"



N 1906 the president of Britain's Royal Geographical Society discussed with Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett the great economic potential of South America. Pushing a chart in front of Fawcett, he said: "Look at this area! It's full of blank spaces because so little is known of it." He then offered the colonel the job of exploring the region. Fawcett accepted.

In his journals Fawcett described the heavily forested slopes of what is now known as the Huanchaca Plateau in Bolivia. He called the area "a lost world."\* Some believe that Fawcett's journals and photographs inspired famous British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to write the novel *The Lost World*, which describes a mythical world of "ape men" and terrifying dinosaurs that had supposedly survived to modern times. Today, this relatively pristine part of Amazonia includes Bolivia's magnificent Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, which was designated a World Heritage site in the year 2000."

Located in the far northeast of Bolivia along the Brazilian border, the park is an almost untouched wilderness that covers an area of nearly 5,900 square miles. It encompasses five ecosystems: upland evergreen forest, deciduous forest, upland dry savanna, savanna wetlands, and forest wet-

lands. The Huanchaca Plateau itself is a 2,000-square-mile sandstone escarpment that rises 1,800 feet above the surrounding plain and runs like a 93-mile-long backbone parallel to the eastern border of the park. The numerous rivers that drain the plateau and surrounding plain feed some 20 waterfalls, including the Salto Susana Falls, the Arco Iris Falls, the Federico Ahlfeld Falls, the Gemelas Falls, and El Encanto Falls.

#### **Our Adventure Begins**

Somewhat protected by its isolation, the park is a magnet for ecotourists, many of whom fly there from Santa Cruz, in central Bolivia. We decided to drive the 440 miles, which gave us a much closer look at the Bolivian countryside. At one spot we saw ahead of us what seemed to be a cloud of colorful leaves flittering across the road. The "leaves," however, turned out to be butterflies, and we were not the only observers. A platoon of hungry lizards were scampering about, feasting on their hapless prey.

When we arrived at the national park, we met our guide, Guido, in the village of La Florida, on the banks of the Paragua River. Guido took us and our vehicle across the river on a pontoon boat, and from there we drove the short distance to Los Fierros camp. Along the way we spotted a fox and a scissor-tailed nightjar—a handsome bird that swooped across the road in front of us.

After a night's sleep, we awoke to the raucous sound of birds—four beautiful blue-andyellow macaws perched high in a tree outside

<sup>\*</sup> In May 1925, Fawcett wrote to his wife about his expedition. It was his last communication, and his disappearance still remains a mystery.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Created in 1979, the park was originally named Huanchaca National Park. The new name was given it in 1988 in honor of Bolivian biologist Noel Kempff Mercado, who was murdered on the plateau by drug traffickers after he stumbled across an illegal cocaine laboratory.



our cabin. It was as if they were calling out, "Welcome to our home!" This fine start to our first day in the park told us that we were in for a treat.

#### **Teeming With Life**

Noel Kempff Mercado National Park boasts over 600 species of birds, 139 different mammals (more than in all of North America), 74 varieties of reptiles, and perhaps some 3,000 kinds of butterflies—not to mention countless other insects. The birds include more than 20 varieties of parrots, as well as the harpy eagle, the hoatzin, and the helmeted manakin. Nick Acheson, a local bird guide and conservationist, told us that "rare species like the rufous-sided pygmy-tyrant and the black-and-tawny seedeater draw bird-watchers from all over the world."

Among the many mammals are giant anteaters, maned wolves, jaguars, peccaries, tapirs, and pampas deer. The numerous rivers that surround and drain the park are also filled with life, including 62 kinds of amphibians and 254 species of fish, as well as caimans, giant river otters, capybaras, and beautiful pink dolphins. The park truly is a nature lover's paradise!

Because of the big cats in Amazonia, many visitors have concerns about safety—and so did we. The administrator of Los Fierros camp told us about his first night in the park. "I awoke at midnight with the strange

feeling that I was being watched," he related. "I looked out the window of my cabin to see a jaguar staring at me, a mere insect screen separating us! Terrified, I locked myself in the bathroom until dawn." That was not what we wanted to hear!

But then the administrator continued: "I soon learned that this curious feline often visits at night and is not considered dangerous. In fact, on hot days jaguars often enter the camp and lie on the cool, tiled patios of the cabins. As you might imagine, that can be an unnerving sight to newcomers! In the past, we always carried a rifle, especially when guiding night tours, but now we never take one. The animals haven't changed; our attitude toward them has." Nevertheless, he cautioned us to treat all wild animals with respect.

#### The Jungle Walk to El Encanto Falls

The park's many waterfalls are a big attraction. We started out early on our walk with Guido, our guide, to El Encanto Falls, which spill down 262 feet from the Huanchaca Plateau. As we walked the 3.5 miles through the rain forest, spider monkeys and howler monkeys greeted us from the branches above. Both species are appropriately named—spider monkeys because they are all arms and legs and howler monkeys because they make a loud crying sound that can be heard up to two miles away! Up ahead, a red-throated piping-guan, a turkeylike bird, dashed across



El Encanto Falls

our path in search of breakfast. Guido drew our attention to tracks along the banks of the nearby stream. His trained eye identified the footprints of two different kinds of deer, as well as a tapir, a jaguar, and a cougar. We sensed that eyes of all kinds were observing us from numerous hiding places and that day and night this place throbs with life.

The watchful creatures have abundant foliage to hide behind, for the various land-scapes and habitats in the park support a profusion of plants of every kind. In fact, an estimated 4,000 species thrive in the area, including over 100 varieties of orchids, as well as a wide range of trees, ferns, bromeliads, and vines. Our eyes feasted on the colors and our noses captured the fragrances as we savored the delicious fruits growing near the path. The latter included mangaba fruit, which grows on a tree, and passion fruit, which grows on a vine.

Finally, as we crossed a stream, we began to hear the distant sound of falling water, which got louder with every step we took. Then, suddenly, we entered a clearing, and there before us towered majestic El Encanto Falls, the lower portion shrouded in mist. Ferns and bromeliads decorated the rock walls around the crystal-clear pool. "On hot days," said Guido, "monkeys come down to the water to cool off." We took the hint and cooled off too, all the while absorbing the unspoiled tranquillity of this beautiful place and

the pleasant sound of the falling water.

# Conservation —The Legacy of Noel Kempff Mercado

Conservationist Noel Kempff Mercado died in 1986. Nevertheless, the

work he began of protecting this part of Bolivia continues. In 1996 the governments of Bolivia and the United States agreed to protect 2.2 million acres of rain forest and promote sustainable development in an effort to mitigate the emissions of greenhouse gases in other parts of the world. The following year the government of Bolivia and three energy companies started the Noel Kempff Climate Action Project, which, among other things, resulted in the termination of logging rights on 2.2 million acres of forest. This area was then added to the park, doubling its size.

Our visit to this magnificent place heightened our appreciation for the Creator and for the beauty and diversity of the life he placed on planet Earth. Says Psalm 104:24: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made. The earth is full of your productions." Indeed, as we walked the trails in this unspoiled "lost world," we felt an almost instinctive desire to tread lightly, to absorb the beauty, and to take nothing home with us but the pictures in our cameras and the memories in our hearts.

#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

## What can I wear?



Heather is ready to walk out the door, and her parents can't believe their eyes.

"You're wearing **that?"** her dad blurts out.

"Why not?" Heather replies, sounding astonished. "I'm just going to the mall with friends."

"Not in **that** outfit!" her mom says.

"But Mom," Heather whines, "this is what **all** the kids are wearing, . . . and besides, it makes a statement!"

"Well, we don't like what it's stating!" Dad shoots back. "Now go upstairs and change, young lady, or you're not going anywhere!"

WARDROBE wars are nothing new. Your parents may have fought similar battles with their parents when they were your age. And back then, they probably felt the same way you feel today! But now they've switched sides, and the issue of what you can wear causes one skirmish after another.

You say: It's comfortable.

They say: It's sloppy.

You say: It's so adorable!

They say: It's too provocative.

You say: It's half-price.

**They say:** It *should* be. . . . Half of it is missing!

Is there any way to declare a cease-fire? Yes! Megan, now 23, knows the secret. "There doesn't have to be an argument," she says. "There can be an agreement." Agreement?

Does that mean you have to dress like a 40-year-old? Relax! To agree just means that you and your parents discuss your differences and brainstorm other options that they—and you—can be happy with. The benefits?

- 1. You'll look your best, even to your peers.
- 2. Your parents will be less likely to criticize what you wear.
- **3.** After seeing how responsible you are in this area, your parents may even grant you other freedoms.

So let's get started. Think of a "must-have" outfit that you've spotted online or at the store. The first thing to do is . . .

#### Consider Bible Principles

The Bible says surprisingly little about dress. In fact, you could read aloud all the Scriptural admonition that directly relates to

#### > wardrobe work sheet

Instructions: Copy this page. Have your parents fill out the column on the right while you fill out the left-hand column. Later, swap work sheets with your parents, and discuss your answers. Are there any surprises? What did each of you learn about the others' perspective that you did not know before?

#### **FOR YOU**

Think about a particular outfit that you want to wear or purchase.

- Why do you like this particular outfit? Number the factors below in order of your priority.
- ..... Brand name
- ..... Appeal to the opposite sex
- ..... Acceptability to peers
- ..... Comfort
- ..... Price
- ..... Other .....
- My parents' initial reaction to this outfit will probably be
- ☐ "No way!"
  - ☐ "Maybe."
  - ☐ "No problem."
- The most likely reason for their objection is
  - "It's too provocative."
  - "It's too sloppy."
- "It's too trendy."
- "It reflects badly on us as your parents."
  - "It's too expensive."
  - ☐ Other

#### FOR YOUR PARENTS

Think about a particular outfit that your adolescent wants to wear or purchase.

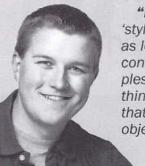
- Why, do you think, does your child like this outfit? Number the factors below according to what you think are his or her priorities.
- ..... Brand name
- ..... Appeal to the opposite sex
- ..... Acceptability to peers
- ..... Comfort
- ..... Price
- My initial reaction is
  - ☐ "No way!"
  - ☐ "Maybe."
  - "No problem."
- The reason for my objection is
  - "It's too provocative."
  - "It's too sloppy."
  - "It's too trendy."
  - "It reflects badly on us as your parents."
  - "It's too expensive."
  - ☐ Other ....

#### **CAN WE WORK TOGETHER ON THIS?**

- What merit can I see in my parents' view? .....
- What, if anything, can be done to make the garment acceptable?
- Is our objection to this outfit merely a matter of our personal taste?
- ☐ Yes ☐ Possibly ☐ No
- What, if anything, can be done to make the garment acceptable?

THE DECISION

#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY



"It's all right to have 'style' in what you wear, as long as it doesn't conflict with Bible principles. There are a lot of things that you can buy that look good and are not objectionable."—Derrick.

"When I was a teenager, I wanted to be independent. I didn't like being told what I could wear. In time, though, I realized that I wasn't getting the respect I wanted—not until I started considering the opinion of my parents and older ones."



-Megan.



"When I see girls wearing sleazy clothes, my respect for them decreases. On the other hand, when I see people wearing modest yet cute clothing, I think to myself, 'That's how I want people to see me.'"

—Nataleine.

the subject in just a couple of minutes! In that time, though, you would find solid, valuable guidelines. For example:

■ The Bible advises women to adorn themselves "with modesty and soundness of mind."\*—1 Timothy 2:9, 10.

The word "modesty" might make you worry. 'Do I have to wear a sack?' you may wonder. Not at all! In this context, modesty means that your clothes show you have self-respect and consideration for others' feelings. (2 Corinthians 6:3) A wide variety of clothing fits those criteria. "It might be challenging," says Danielle, 23, "but you *can* be fashionable without wearing extreme styles."

■ The Bible says that when it comes to appearance, you should focus on "the secret person of the heart"—or, as *Today's English Version* renders it, "your true inner self."—1 Peter 3:4.

An immodest outfit may momentarily turn heads, but it's your inner beauty that will win the long-term respect of adults and your peers. Your peers? Yes—even they may see the folly of excessive styles. "It's sickening to see the way women practically throw themselves at men by what they wear!" says 16-year-old Brittany. Kay would agree. Describing a former friend, she says: "Everything she wore had 'look-at-me' written all over it. She wanted the attention of the guys, and to get it she would wear the most eye-catching outfits she could find."

Fashion Tip: Avoid styles that highlight sexuality. They make you appear desperate and

#### TO THINK ABOUT

Think of an outfit you'd like to purchase. Then ask yourself:

- What "message" does it convey?
- What possible reaction might it cause in others?
- Am I really seeking that reaction and its consequences?

<sup>\*</sup> While such Biblical admonition is directed to women, the principles apply to both genders. See the box "What About Boys?"

self-absorbed. They could also make you a target for harassment—or worse. In contrast, modest clothing enhances your appearance and highlights your good qualities.

#### Get Your Parents' Input

Stuffing a daring outfit into your backpack and changing into it at school is *not* the way to go. You'll gain more trust from your parents if you're open and honest with them, even in things that you think you *could* get away with. In fact, you'd probably do well to seek out their opinion when you're considering an outfit.—Proverbs 15:22.

But why would you want to do *that?* Isn't it your parents' job to *stifle* your fashion sense? Not really. True, your dad and mom may look at things from a different perspective. But sometimes that's what you need. "I appreciate my parents' advice," says 17-year-old Nataleine, "because I don't want to walk out of the house embarrassing myself or to be the one that people are talking about negatively because of my appearance."

Besides, let's face it: As long as you're under your parents' roof, you're under their authority. (Colossians 3:20) Still, once you understand their views—and they, yours—you

#### WHAT ABOUT BOYS?

The Bible principles discussed in this article apply to boys too. Be modest. Let the secret person of your heart—your true inner self—shine through. When considering an item of clothing, ask yourself: 'What will it say about me? Does this "statement" reflect who I really am?' Remember, clothing is a form of expression. Make sure that your clothes reflect the ideals that you believe in!

might be surprised at how often you can come to an agreement. As a result, the wardrobe wars may finally be over!

**Fashion Tip:** When trying on clothing, think of more than what you see in the mirror. A seemingly modest outfit may change when you sit down or bend over to pick up something. If possible, get the opinion of a parent or a mature friend.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

#### A NOTE TO PARENTS

Consider the opening scenario in this article, and imagine that Heather is your daughter. You cannot help but notice the skimpy outfit she's wearing—a little too much of nothing, in your view. Your reaction is immediate, "Go upstairs and change, young lady, or you're not going anywhere!" Such a response may well get results. After all, your daughter has little choice but to comply. But how do you teach her to

change her thinking and not just her clothes?

First, remember that the consequences of immodesty must matter as much or more to your adolescent than they do to you. Deep down, your adolescent does not want to look foolish or invite unwanted attention. Patiently point out that immodest styles are really not flattering.\* Recommend alternatives.

- Second, "let your reasonableness become known."
  (Philippians 4:5) Ask yourself, 'Does the garment violate a Bible principle, or is this just a matter of personal taste?'
  (2 Corinthians 1:24) If it is a matter of taste, can you make a concession?
- Third, don't just tell your adolescent what is *not* acceptable. Help him or her to find clothes that are appropriate. It will be well worth your time and effort.

<sup>\*</sup> Your adolescent is likely very bodyconscious, so be careful not to imply that his or her appearance is somehow flawed.



OW do you feel about people of a skin color or ethnic group different from your own? Do you view them as equals? Sadly, many view certain races as inferior. "Racism," according to one reference, is "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a

particular race."

This belief has resulted in much harm. Feelings of racial superiority have "provided justification for colonial treatment and slavery of other groups of people," wrote Professor Wen-Shing Tseng in his *Handbook of Cultural Psychiatry*. He added that race has been used "to justify social, economic, and political inequalities." Even today, racism exists in many parts of the world. But is this hurtful belief based on truth? What do science and the Bible say?

#### What Does Science Say?

Discoveries in genetics have confirmed the fallacy of racism. Researchers studying people from different continents have found that the differences in DNA between any two randomly chosen individuals from virtually anywhere in the world amounted to about 0.5 percent.\* And 86 to 90 percent of those differences occurred within any one racial group. Therefore, just 14 percent or less of the 0.5 percent variation occurred between racial groups.

Because "humans are genetically homogeneous," says the journal *Nature*, "genetics can and should be an important tool in helping to both illuminate and defuse the race issue."

Such thinking is not new. Beginning in 1950 the United Nations Educational, Scien-

<sup>\*</sup>The relatively few genetic differences between humans may, however, be significant medically, for some diseases appear to have a genetic link.

tific, and Cultural Organization published a series of statements intended to combat racism. The statements were authored by anthropologists, geneticists, and sociologists. Yet, racism persists. Clearly, an awareness of the facts is not enough. The heart, or the inner person, must also be reached. "Out of the heart come wicked reasonings," said Jesus Christ.—Matthew 15:19, 20.

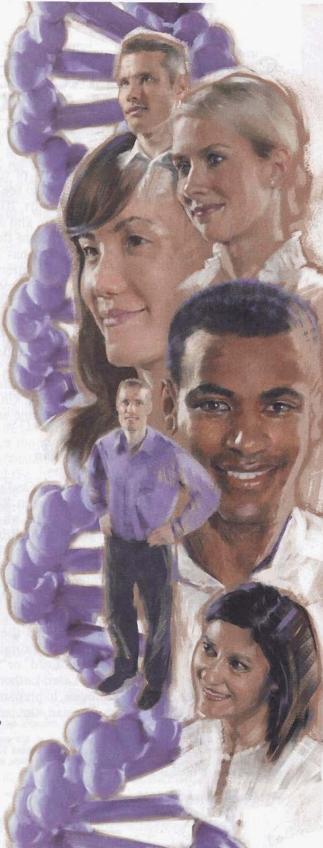
#### The Bible's Viewpoint

The Bible was written to appeal to the heart. For example, in addition to stating the scientific truth that "[God] made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth," the Bible also says: "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35; 17: 26) Does that not warm your heart toward God?—Deuteronomy 32:4.

Jehovah God wants us to show that we love him by becoming like him. "Become imitators of God, as beloved children, and go on walking in love," says Ephesians 5:1, 2. "Walking in love" includes loving people as God does, regardless of their skin color or ethnicity.—Mark 12:31.

God will not accept as his servants those whose hearts are filled with badness, including hatred and racial prejudice. (1 John 3: 15) In fact, the time is fast approaching when God will wipe all wicked people off the face of the earth. Only those who imitate his qualities will remain. Then mankind will truly be just one family—physically and spiritually. —Psalm 37:29, 34, 38.

"Humans are genetically homogeneous," or essentially the same



# See God's Name

who visit Copenhagen are surprised to see God's name, Jehovah, or its Hebrew counterpart, הוה, inscribed on castles and other buildings in and around the capital.\* For example, in the center of the city, the **Dockyard Church** (Holmens Kirke) has a gate that features God's name in large gold letters. The name also appears inside the gate on a commemorative plaque dated 1661.

Within walking distance of the Dockyard Church stands a building called the **Round Tower** (Rundetårn). On the outer wall, the divine name appears in large Hebrew letters as part of a sign in Latin. Translated, it reads: "Let Jehovah direct right doctrine and justice into the heart of the crowned King Christian the Fourth." How did God's name become so wellknown in Denmark?

#### The Protestant Reformation and Bible Translation

A major factor in the dissemination of God's name was the Protestant Reformation. European Reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Huldrych Zwingli made an earnest study of the Bible and its original languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine, or common, Greek. As a result, they became familiar with God's personal name. "This name Jehovah . . . belongs exclusively to the true God," said Martin Luther in a sermon.

Nevertheless, when Luther translated the Bible into German, he adhered to the unscriptural tradition of rendering the divine name as "Lord" or "God," thus using titles, not God's name. Later, Luther asked an associate, **Johannes Bugenhagen**, to prepare a version of Luther's Bible in Low German, the language



The Dockyard Church gate

#### The Round Tower



<sup>\*</sup> These four characters, called the Tetragrammaton, are consonants and are read from right to left. They are usually transliterated YHWH or JHVH. In ancient times, the reader supplied the missing vowels, as is common today when abbreviations are read.



#### TYCHO BRAHE AND GOD'S NAME

In 1597, famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe left his native country after disagreements with the Danish nobility and King Christian IV. In a farewell poem to Denmark, Brahe wrote in Latin: "Foreign people shall act kindly towards me—so is the will of Jehovah."



Auerst de name Jehoua/ verth nummer in der Schrifte einer Cromation den Kingele. Jehoua von de Minschen gegenen / Sunder allene der better Weltere of de Joden salt Aame Gastuck bekennen von Leren/driven wunder dars des, mede/vonde dörnen en nicht vehspreken. Dessen Aamen schal och hebben/Alcsinade Göne Das puds/alse Jeremias wystaget im 23. Cap. Dath



Johannes Bugenhagen used God's name in the preface of the Low German version of Luther's Bible, 1541

spoken in northern Germany and southern Denmark. In his preface to the 1541 edition (the first edition was published in 1533), Bugenhagen made several references to the divine name, including the statement: "Jehovah is God's holy name."

In 1604, a young theologian named Hans Paulsen Resen spoke to King Christian IV about certain errors in the Danish translation of Luther's Bible. Resen then asked for permission to prepare a new translation based on the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Permission was granted. In a note on Genesis 2:4, Resen wrote that "Jehovah" is "the Supreme Being, the only Lord."\*

As the divine name became known, it began to appear in public places. For example, in 1624, after **Hans Paulsen Resen** had been appointed bishop, he ordered that a plaque be installed in the Bronshoj Church. At the top of the plaque, inscribed in gold, is God's name in Danish, Jehova. Also, on many of his writings as bishop, Resen included with his signature the words "Jehovah beholds."

Toward the end of the 18th century, Johann David Michaelis' German translation of the Bible was published in Danish. This Bible too contains the divine name in many places. Likewise, in the 19th century, Bible translators Christian Kalkar and others incorporated the divine name in most of the places where it appears in the original text. Then, in 1985, Jehovah's Witnesses released the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in Danish. Bible lovers were thrilled to see the name Jehovah faithfully rendered more than 7,000 times.

Jesus Christ said in a prayer to God: "I have made your name manifest." (John 17:6) And in his model prayer, sometimes called the Our Father prayer, Jesus said: "Let your name be sanctified [made holy]." (Matthew 6:9) As the religious history of Denmark shows, many have taken those words seriously.

<sup>\*</sup> Genesis 2:4 contains the first occurrence of God's distinctive personal name in the original text of the Holy Bible. That name, which appears some 7,000 times in the original text, means "He Causes to Become," thus identifying Jehovah as the One whose purpose is always accomplished. What he says happens.

# Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

CONTENTED and healthy, a newborn baby lies cradled in its mother's arms. The father is aglow with pride. Because this happy scene occurs millions of times every year, it is easy to take normal childbirth for granted. After all, it is a natural process—so, what is there to worry about?

Granted, births usually go well, but not always. Hence, prudent prospective parents take reasonable measures to avoid unnecessary complications. For example, they learn about the causes of childbirth problems, they seek quality prenatal care, and they take some simple steps to reduce risks during labor and delivery. Let us consider these points in more detail.

#### **Causes of Childbirth Problems**

One cause of childbirth problems for both mother and baby is lack of good care during pregnancy. Dr. Cheung Kam-lau, consultant pediatrician for the neonatal care unit of Prince of Wales Hospital in Hong Kong, says that "having no prenatal care can put pregnancies in high risk." He also states that "most of these mothers expect healthy, chubby babies, but things just don't always happen ideally."



Regarding the problems that can affect mothers, the Journal of the American Medical Women's Association states that "the major direct causes of maternal mortality" are excessive bleeding, obstructed labor, infection, and abnormally high blood pressure. Effective treatments are well-known, however, and in most cases "modern medical care . . . does not require highly technical interventions," the journal adds.

Readily available care could also help many babies. The UN Chronicle reports that

According to figures released in October 2007, one woman dies nearly every minute-536,000 a year-because of problems associated with pregnancy. -United Nations Population Fund

"two thirds of newborn deaths could be prevented if all mothers and newborns" obtained medical treatment that is "well-known, feasible and deliverable without complex technology." Sadly, though, the lack of knowledge and the laxity in prenatal care on the part of mothers is all too common, reports the Philippines News Agency.

#### **Optimal Prenatal Care** for Mother and Baby

"Healthier mothers have healthier babies." says the UN Chronicle. It also observes that when a woman gets inadequate medical care or none at all during pregnancy, childbirth, and the period thereafter, her baby also receives little or no medical care.

In some lands it may be difficult for a pregnant woman to get adequate care. Perhaps she has far to travel, or she may be unable to cover medical costs. Still, if at all possible, an expectant mother should try to get at least some professional prenatal care. This is particularly important for a woman who lives by

the teachings found in the Holy Bible, which states that human life is sacred, including that of the unborn.-Exodus 21:22, 23;\* Deuteronomy 22:8.

Does adequate care mean seeing a doctor every week? No, not necessarily. In regard to certain common complications that arise during pregnancy and childbirth, the World Health Organization (WHO) "found that women who visited their doctors only four times during their pregnancy" enjoyed results that "were comparable to those who had 12 or more visits."

#### What Doctors May Do

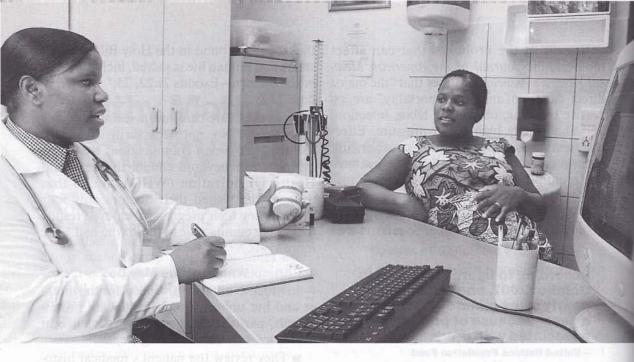
In order to improve prospects for the mother and her unborn child, health-care professionals, particularly those who specialize in obstetrics, take the following steps:

- They review the patient's medical history and perform an examination to determine risk and forestall complications that may involve the mother or her developing baby.
- They may take blood and urine samples to check for such problems as anemia, infection, Rh incompatibility, and disease. The latter may include diabetes, rubella, sexually transmitted diseases, and kidney disease, which can elevate blood pressure.
- When advisable and acceptable to the patient, they may recommend vaccinations for such things as influenza, tetanus, and Rh incompatibility.
- They may also recommend vitamin supplements, especially folic acid.

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Does the Universe Have a Purpose?
- You Can Satisfy Your Spiritual Need
- How I Lost My Love for War

<sup>\*</sup> The original Hebrew text refers to a fatal accident to either mother or unborn child.



When doctors identify the risks associated with individual pregnancies and take the needed precautions-or help the mother to do so-they enhance the prospects of a positive outcome for her and her unborn baby.

#### Minimizing Risks **During Labor and Delivery**

"The most dangerous time for a pregnant woman is the critical period around labour and delivery," says Joy Phumaphi, former assistant director general for Family and Community Health at WHO. What can be done to prevent serious problems, even lifethreatening ones, at this critical time? Actually, the steps are simple, but they do need to be taken in advance.\* This is especially important for those who refuse blood transfusions

5. Ammon.-Judges 11:4. 6. True. 4. Manasseh.-Numbers 26:29; Judges 11:1. place in the desert not in a crowded town. riding in a chariot not on a horse. 3. The event took T. Philip was likely by himself. Z. the eunich was

#### ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

for Bible-based reasons or for those who want to avoid blood because of the significant medical risks.-Acts 15:20, 28, 29.

Such patients should do what they reasonably can to ensure that the health-care provider, whether a doctor or a midwife, is both

"Each year 3.3 million babies are stillborn and more than 4 million newborns die within 28 days of coming into the world."-UN Chronicle

competent and experienced in administering medical alternatives to blood transfusion. Also, expectant parents would be wise to check that the hospital or delivery facility is willing to cooperate.\* Here are two good

<sup>\*</sup> See the box "Preparation During Pregnancy."

<sup>\*</sup> Couples who are Jehovah's Witnesses may consult with the local Hospital Liaison Committee (HLC) for Jehovah's Witnesses before the birth of their child. Committee members visit hospitals and doctors to provide them with medical information on the nonblood management of Witness patients. Additionally, HLCs likely can assist in finding a physician who respects the patient's beliefs and who has experience in nonblood medical management.

questions to ask the doctor: 1. What will you do if the mother or the baby loses a significant amount of blood or if there are other complications? 2. If you are not here when the baby comes, what alternative arrangements will be made?

The prudent woman will, of course, check with her doctor to ensure that her blood count is as high as possible within the normal range prior to labor. To build up the patient's blood, the doctor, in turn, might recommend that she take folic acid and other B-group vitamins, as well as iron supplements.

The doctor will also consider a number of other factors. For example, did his patient's prenatal visits reveal any health problems that may need attention? Does the prospective mother need to be off her feet? Should she get more rest? Would it be wise for her to gain or lose weight or get more exercise? And does she need to give more attention to bodily hygiene, including oral hygiene?

Studies show that gum disease in pregnant women is associated with an increased risk of preeclampsia, a serious complication that is characterized by, among other things, a sudden rise in blood pressure, severe headache, and edema (excess buildup of fluid in the tissues).\* Preeclampsia can lead to premature delivery and is a leading cause of fetal and maternal death, especially in developing lands.

Indeed, a careful physician will give attention to any sign of infection in the prospective mother. And if she has premature labor pains, he will recommend prompt hospitalization, which can be lifesaving.

"Women risk death to give life," says Dr. Quazi Monirul Islam, director at WHO's Department of Making Pregnancy Safer. But good medical care during pregnancy, at birth, and immediately afterward can help to avert many complications, even death. Most important, of course, try to maintain good health. After all, if you want a healthy baby, you need to do your best to be a healthy mother.

#### PREPARATION DURING PREGNANCY

- Choose your hospital, doctor, or midwife wisely by doing advance research.
- Make regular visits to your doctor or midwife, establishing a trusting, friendly relationship.
- 3. Give careful attention to your health. If possible, take the appropriate vitamins, but avoid medication (even overthe-counter products) unless your doctor approves. It is wise to avoid alcohol. "Although the highest risk is to babies whose mothers drink heavily, it is not clear yet
- whether there is any completely safe level of alcohol during pregnancy," states the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.
- 4. If you experience premature labor pains (prior to the 37th week), contact your doctor or maternity ward immediately. Prompt attention may help to prevent a premature delivery and the complications that can result.\*
- \* Blood transfusions are commonly given to anemic premature babies, whose organs have difficulty producing sufficient red blood cells.
- 5. Document personal decisions relating to medical care. For example, many have found it helpful to have a durable power of attorney (DPA) card filled out ahead of time. Find out what is used and legally acceptable in your country.
- 6. After the birth be mindful of your health and that of your baby, especially if the baby came prematurely. Consult the pediatrician right away if you observe any problems.

<sup>\*</sup> Although more studies are required to determine if gum disease causes an increased risk of preeclampsia, it is always wise to take good care of your gums and teeth.

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### **Buses Promote Atheism**

"There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." This slogan has been displayed on 200 buses in London, England; on another 600 countrywide; and on two giant screens in London's Oxford Street, reports *The Guardian* newspaper. The originators say that their campaign is in response to religious advertising that condemns nonbelievers to hellfire. The word "probably" is used in order to meet the rules of Britain's Advertising Standards Authority, since it is impossible to prove that God does not exist. One objective of the campaign is to encourage more atheists to "come out," to reveal their views.

#### **Risks of Programming Early Childbirth**

In the United States, more and more infants are delivered early—by induced labor or by Cesarean section—out of convenience. However, the "last weeks of pregnancy are more important than once thought," says *The Wall Street Journal*. A study of some 15,000 newborns showed that for every week a baby remained in the womb between the 32nd and 39th weeks, there was a 23 percent drop in seizures, jaundice, respiratory distress, and brain hemorrhages. Infants born at 32 to

- In a survey of some 2,000 people in Germany, almost 40 percent of teens 14 to 19 years of age thought it was all right to end a relationship by text message or e-mail. Over 80 percent of those 50 and older considered this totally unacceptable.—FRANKFURTER NEUE PRESSE, GERMANY.
- It is estimated that 2.3 trillion text messages were sent worldwide during 2008.—HITU NEWS, TAHITI.
- "How much does smoking shorten a person's life? By five to ten years, on average."—UC BERKELEY WELLNESS LETTER, U.S.A.
- It is estimated that up to 60 percent of personal computers used in offices in the United States are left on overnight. As a result, some 14.4 million tons of carbon dioxide are needlessly emitted by electric power plants every year.—WORLD WATCH, U.S.A.

36 weeks had increased risk of mild behavioral and cognitive problems. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists thus recommends that babies not be delivered "before 39 weeks unless there is a medical reason to do so," says the *Journal*.

#### **Climbing Stairs Improves Health**

"Taking the stairs regularly is a simple and practical means to improving health," reports the British medical journal *The Lancet*. Researchers asked 69 sedentary employees to use only the stairs at their place of work instead of the elevators. After 12 weeks, the workers' aerobic capacity had increased by 8.6 percent, which gave them "a 15% reduction in all-cause mortality risk." The workers also saw significant improvement in their "blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, fat mass, and waist circumference."

#### **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

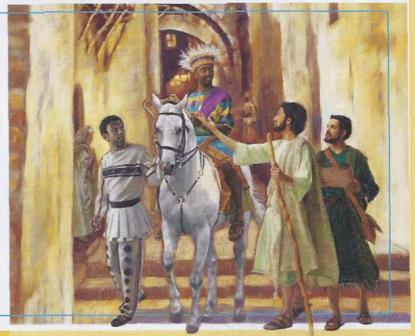
#### What Is Wrong With This Picture?

Read Acts 8:26-40. Now look at the picture. What features are incorrect? Write your answers on the lines below.

1.....

3

FOR DISCUSSION: Why was the eunuch unable to understand what he was reading? How was he helped to understand? In what ways can you imitate the eunuch?





#### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 8 What should you "buy out"? Ephesians 5:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 9 What should we guard against? Luke 12:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 10 If your enemy is hungry, what should you do?

PAGE 20 When it comes to appearance, what should we focus on? 1 Peter 3:\_\_\_\_\_

#### What Do You Know About Judge Jephthah?

Read Judges 11:1-12:7. Now answer the following questions.

He was from which one of the 12 tribes of Israel?

CLUE: See Numbers 26:29.

True or false? He lived after Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel).

He delivered Israel from which nation?

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, do you think, did Jephthah's daughter cooperate with her father's vow? How might you imitate Jephthah's daughter?



Awake! November 2009



## What You Need Is in the Bible!

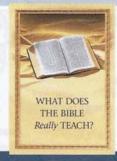
■ A French-speaking couple who are Jehovah's Witnesses entered an apartment building in the city of Ajaccio, on the Mediterranean island of Corsica. On the floor they found a blank envelope containing 400 euros. The wife explains what they did next: "We attached a note to the public notice board in the lobby, saying that the person who lost the envelope could call us at our number."

The next evening a woman called. After she gave proof that she was the one who had lost the money, she arranged to meet the couple. Astonished that someone would return her money, she arrived with a bouquet of flowers. The envelope she had lost contained her wages, and the next day she was going on vacation for a month.

While she was away, she sent the couple a card, thanking them once again for their kind gesture. When the woman returned from vacation, the two Witnesses called on her and spoke about the practical value of the Bible in family life and in everyday conduct, subjects that were of interest to her.

Using the book What Does the Bible Really Teach? the couple took the opportunity to discuss a few points from the chapter "How to Make Your Family Life Happy." The woman was impressed and exclaimed: "Why, everything I need is in the Bible!" She then accepted a free Bible study.





# Awake

DECEMBER 2009

# Does the Universe have a purpose?

ALSO: WHAT KIND OF STAR LED THE "WISE MEN" TO JESUS? PAGE 11



PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

### Does the Universe have a purpose? 3-10

Scientists fail to agree on whether the universe fulfills any purpose. Yet, there is a reasonable explanation that sheds light on the purpose of human life and the universe that surrounds us.

- Awestruck by Nature!
- Purposeful Design or Mindless Process?
- Why Are We Here?
- 11 What Kind of Star Led the "Wise Men" to Jesus?
- 14 Watching the World
- Great Monsters of the Deep Sea
- 18 Young People Ask How Can I Talk to My Parents?
- The Importance of Showing Affection
- Was It Designed? 23 The Owl's Feather
- Beware of Lead Poisoning! 28
- 30 Subject Index for 2009 Awake!
- How Would You Answer? 31
- She Stood Up for What She Believed

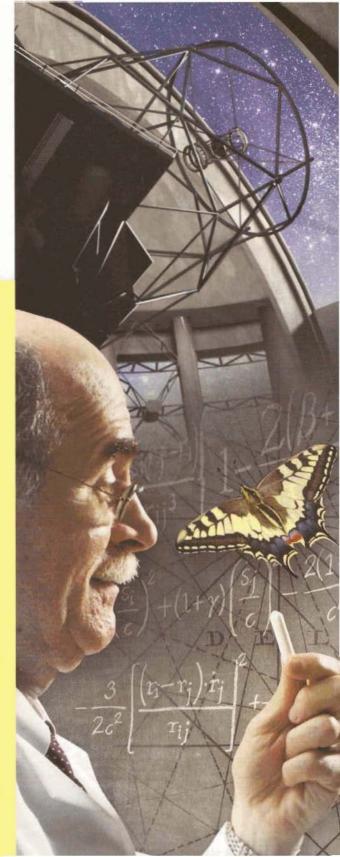


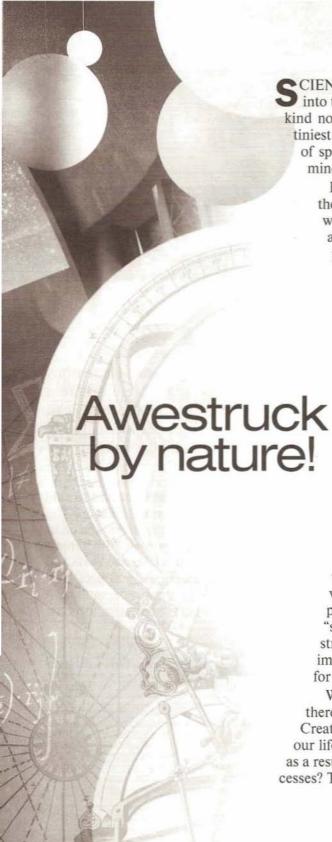
#### You Can Satisfy **Your Spiritual Need**

There are a wide variety of cultural and religious practices that offer to fill our need for spirituality. Does it matter how you choose to satisfy your spiritual need? Consider the Bible's clear answer.

#### **How I Lost My Love for War**

Read the intriguing story of a man who loved warfare but later found a better purpose in life.





CIENTIFIC research has provided many insights into the workings of the universe, or cosmos. Mankind now has a better understanding of it-from the tiniest building blocks of matter to the vast expanses of space. Even so, what remains to be learned is mind-boggling.

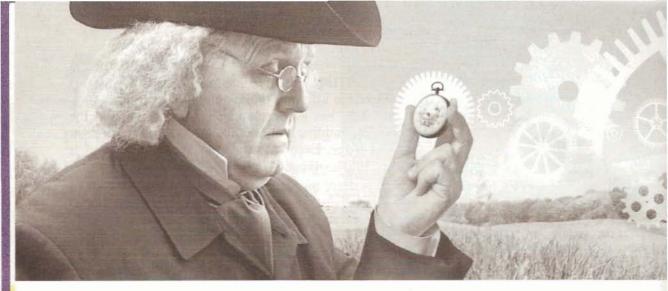
> Here on earth, we occupy a minuscule part of the vast universe. Yet, in our terrestrial home, we are awestruck by nature's great complexity and beauty-a splendid flower, a breathtaking panorama, the spectacular plumage of a bird. a butterfly's wings, a fiery sunset, or the smile of a loved one.

Many people have found sufficient evidence in the physical universe to believe in the existence of an intelligent First Cause. The laws of physics, they say, seem to have been fine-tuned to support life. If the universe were set up just slightly differently, life would be impossible. Still, life, in all its fantastic diversity, is all around us.

Cosmologist Paul Davies writes: "As the cosmic drama unfolds, it looks as if there is a script-a coherent scheme of things . . . Nature is not an arbitrary juxtaposition of events but the manifestation of ingeniously interweaving mathematical laws." Some scientists agree with Davies. Others do not.

For instance, Nobel laureate physicist Steven Weinberg, proclaimed: "The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it seems pointless." Ironically, Weinberg also stated that "sometimes nature seems more beautiful than strictly necessary. . . . It is almost irresistible to imagine that all this beauty was somehow laid on for our benefit."

Which is it? If there is fine-tuning, then must there not also be a Master Tuner-a Designer, a Creator—with a purpose? Is there some purpose to our life and to our universe? Or are we here merely as a result of unguided and directionless physical processes? The following articles address these questions.



# Purposeful design or mindless process?

In 1802, English clergyman and theologian William Paley expounded his reasons for belief in a Creator. He stated that if while crossing a heath, he were to find a stone lying on the ground, he might reasonably conclude that natural processes had put it there. But if instead he were to find a watch, he would scarcely come to the same conclusion. Why? For the simple reason that a watch has all the hallmarks of design and purpose.

PALEY'S ideas had a profound influence on the English naturalist Charles Darwin. Yet, contrary to Paley's logic, Darwin later proposed that the apparent design in living organisms could be explained by a process that he termed "natural selection." Darwinian evolution was seen by many as the definitive answer to arguments for design.

A great deal has been written on the subject since the days of Paley and Darwin. The arguments in favor of design on the one hand and of natural selection on the other have frequently been refined, elaborated on, and updated. And both sides of the subject have greatly influenced what people believe about purpose—or lack of purpose—in the universe.

#### Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. 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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures —With References.

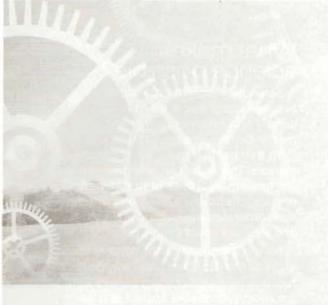
Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Socretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brookyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Awake!, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. 2009 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Awake! December 2009

Vol. 90, No. 12

Monthly

ENGLISH



What you believe might well influence how purposeful you feel your life is. How so?

## The Logical Consequences of Darwinism

Belief in Darwin's theory has led many sincere people to conclude that their existence is devoid of real purpose. If the cosmos and everything in it are the product of spontaneous combinations of elements after the primordial big bang, then there can be no real purpose to life. The late Nobel Prize-winning biologist Jacques Monod stated: "Man knows at last that he is alone in the unfeeling immensity of the universe from which he emerged by chance. His destiny is nowhere spelled out, nor is his duty."

A similar thought is expressed by Oxford professor of chemistry Peter William Atkins, who declares: "I regard the existence of this

extraordinary universe as having a wonderful, awesome grandeur. It hangs there in all its glory, wholly and completely useless."

By no means do all scientists agree with that outlook. And for very good reasons.

## Fine-Tuning—Evidence of Purposeful Design?

When they examine the laws of nature, many investigators balk at the notion of a cosmos without purpose. They are impressed, for example, by the fundamental forces that regulate the universe. The laws underlying these forces appear to have been fine-tuned in such a way as to produce a universe capable of supporting life. "Changing the existing laws by even a scintilla could have lethal consequences," says cosmologist Paul Davies. For example, if protons were slightly heavier than neutrons, rather than slightly lighter as they are, all protons would have turned into neutrons. Would that have been so bad? "Without protons and their crucial electric charge," explains Davies, "atoms could not exist."

The electromagnetic force attracts electrons to protons, allowing molecules to form. If this force were significantly weaker, electrons would not be held in orbit around the nucleus of an atom, and no molecules could form. If, on the other hand, this force were much stronger, electrons would be stuck to the nucleus of an atom. In that case, chemical reactions and life would simply be impossible.

A slight difference in the electromagnetic force would affect the sun and the solar

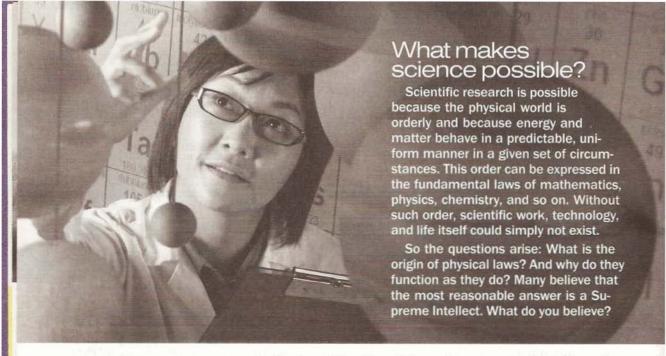
Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese° (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, °° Danish, °° Danish, °° English, °° Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, °° French, †°° Georgian, German, \*°° Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hilligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, (gbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, \*°° Japanese, \*° Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, \*°° Lavian, Lingalia, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Maiagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, \*° Polish, \*°° Portuguese, \*°° Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, \*°° Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Silovak, Slovenian, Spanish, \*°° Swahili, Swedish, \*° Tagalog, Tamii, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. America, United States of: 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Australia: PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. Bahamas: PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. Britain: The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. Canada: PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Germany: Zweigbüro, Am Steinfels, 65618 Selters. Guam: 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. Guyana: 352-360 Tyrell St. Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. Hawaii: 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. Jamaica: PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. Japan: 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496, Puerto Rico: PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. South Africa: Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. Trinidad and Tobago: Lower Rapsey Street & Laxml Lane, Curepe.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.



energy that reaches our earth. Such a difference could easily make photosynthesis in plants difficult or impossible. So the precise strength of the electromagnetic force determines whether life on earth is possible or not.\*\*

The book Science & Christianity-Four Views has an interesting way of illustrating the delicacy of the balance of forces and elements in the cosmos. The writer asked his readers to visualize an explorer's visit to an imaginary "control room for the whole universe." There, the explorer observes rows and rows of dials that can be set to any value, and he learns that each has to be calibrated to a precise setting in order for life to be possible.

One dial sets the strength of the force of gravity, one the strength of electromagnetic attraction, another the ratio between the mass of the neutron and the proton, and so on. As the explorer examines these numerous dials, he sees that they could have been set to different values. It also becomes clear to him, after meticulous calculation, that even a small change in any one of the dial settings would modify the architecture of the cosmos in such a way that life in it would cease to exist. Yet, each dial is set to precisely the right value needed to keep the universe running and habitable. What should the visitor deduce about how the dials came to be set the way they are?

Astronomer George Greenstein states: "As we survey all the evidence, the thought insistently arises that some supernatural agency—or, rather, Agency—must be involved. Is it



<sup>\*</sup> For more information on this topic, please see pages 10-26 of the book *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

possible that suddenly, without intending to, we have stumbled upon scientific proof of the existence of a Supreme Being?"

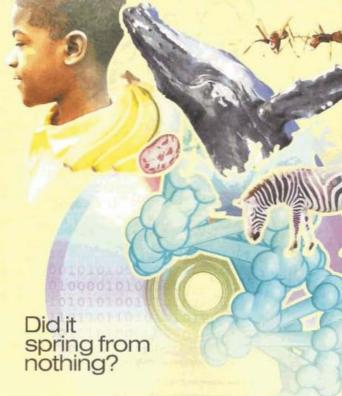
What do you think? Which explanation best fits the fine-tuning observable in the cosmos? Purposeful design or mindless process?

## 'We're Just Here -That's All There is to it'

Atheists, of course, have their counterarguments. Some shrug off the apparent fine-tuning in nature, saying: 'Of course the observable universe is capable of supporting human life. If it weren't, we wouldn't be here to worry about it. So there's really nothing to explain. We're just here, and that's all there is to it.' But do you find that a satisfying explanation for our existence?

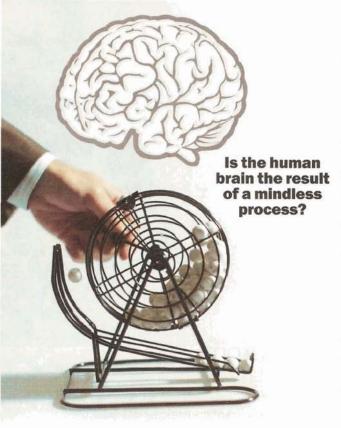
Another argument is that it will someday be proved that only one possible set of numbers can work in the equations that express the fundamental laws of nature. That is, the dials mentioned above *had* to be turned to the right settings for the universe to exist at all. Some say, 'It's that way because it had to be that way!' Even if this circular reasoning were true, it would still not provide an ultimate explanation for our existence. In short, is it just a coincidence that the universe exists and that it is life-supporting?

In efforts to explain by natural processes alone the design and fine-tuning evident in the cosmos, still others turn to what has been called the multiverse, or many-universe, theory. According to this hypothesis, perhaps we live in just one of countless universes—all of which have different conditions, but none of which have any purpose or design. Now according to that line of reasoning and the laws of probability, if you have



The DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecules in each living cell contain elaborate, detailed instructions necessary for the correct development of organisms. Although DNA is much more complex, it could be compared to the digital information embedded on a DVD. When processed, the coded data on a DVD makes it possible for one to watch a video or listen to music. Similarly, DNA molecules, shaped like twisted rope ladders, carry encoded information that underpins all life and that makes living things differ—bananas from beans, zebras from ants, humans from whales.

Hardly would anyone suggest that the digital information on a DVD could possibly be a product of spontaneous events. Is it reasonable to propose that the highly complex information in DNA sprang from nothing?



enough universes, eventually one of them should have the right conditions to support life. However, there actually is no scientific evidence to support the multiverse theory. It is pure speculation.

After stating that he did not subscribe to that hypothesis, Nobel Prize-winning biochemist Christian de Duve said: "In my opinion, life and mind are such extraordinary manifestations of matter that they remain meaningful, however many universes unable to give rise to them exist or are possible. Diluting our universe with trillions of others in no way diminishes the significance of its unique properties, which I see as revealing clues to the 'Ultimate Reality' that lies behind them."

#### **Human Consciousness**

The fact that we form theories for the existence of the cosmos is remarkable. In a universe without purpose, such an ability would have to be nothing but the result of a mindless process. Does that seem reasonable to you?

The human brain has been described as "the most marvelous and mysterious object in the whole universe." No amount of knowledge in the fields of physics and chemistry can in itself produce adequate explanations for the human capacity for abstract thought and our widespread search for purpose in life.

Either the human mind, with its quest for understanding, was put in place by a superior intelligence, or it arose randomly. Which of these two possibilities seems more reasonable to you?

#### **Another Explanation?**

Science, indeed, has told us much about how the cosmos, the world, and living organisms work. For some people, the more science tells us, "the more improbable our existence seems." Improbable, that is, if our being here were merely a product of evolution. However, to use the words of science writer John Horgan, "reality seems awfully designed and, in some ways, too good to be here through pure chance." Physicist Freeman Dyson similarly commented: "The more I examine the universe and study the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense must have known that we were coming."

In view of the evidence—complexity in nature, fine-tuning, apparent design, and human consciousness—would it not be logical at least to consider the possibility of the existence of a Creator? A very good reason for doing so is that a Creator should be able to tell us how life appeared and whether life has a purpose—questions that science is incapable of answering.

These questions are addressed by the writings called the Bible, or the Holy Scriptures, whose writers claimed to be inspired by the Creator. Why not consider what the Bible says on these matters?

### Why are we here?

ACCORDING to the Bible, God, whose name is Jehovah, is supremely intelligent. He is the Source of all cosmic power and the Creator of the universe. (Psalm 83:18: 92:5) The first chapter of the Bible states: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Thereafter, God made man in his "image"-that is to say, with qualities like his own-and God told man to multiply and fill the earth.-Genesis 1:1, 26, 28,

Does this mean that God created the universe, including the earth with its many animals and plants, simply to accommodate humankind? And are we here merely to enjoy life for a few decades, eat, drink, and produce offspring?

#### Why Did God Create Us?

Jehovah God created mankind as an expression of his love-he wanted to share life and happiness with humans. Doubtless, God experienced great joy in fashioning physical creations of all kinds, so that man would be surrounded by beauty and plenty. Above all, humans were to have a meaningful relationship with their Creator, knowing him and communicating with him. They were created to live forever under perfect, peaceful conditions.—Genesis 3:8, 9; Psalm 37:11, 29.

Jehovah also assigned humans fulfilling and meaningful work to do. God told the first humans: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." (Genesis 1: 28) Yes, the first couple and their offspring were to transform the whole earth into a paradise of pleasure.

Things did not immediately work out as Je-

hovah purposed.\* Nevertheless, God's original purpose for mankind will be fulfilled. -Isaiah 46:9-11: 55:11.

In the meantime, man's desire-his needto know God and to have a relationship with him is manifest in his search for purpose. Man was created as an intelligent creature with the desire to explore and understand. And the Bible says that man will go on accumulating satisfying knowledge of God and his creation forever.

One Bible writer expressed man's purpose this way: "I have seen the occupation that God has given to the sons of mankind in which to be occupied. Everything he has

#### Man was created as an intelligent creature with the desire to explore and understand

made pretty in its time. Even time indefinite he has put in their heart, that mankind may never find out the work that the true God has made from the start to the finish. I have come to know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good during one's life; and also that every man should eat and indeed drink and see good for all his hard work. It is the gift of God." (Ecclesiastes 3:10-13) So there will never be an end to what mankind can find out about God and his creation.

#### **Learn About God**

You can get to know Jehovah by examining his creation. One Bible writer said that God's "invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are

<sup>\*</sup> For many people, the existence of evil and suffering is an obstacle to belief in a loving Creator. On this topic, please see chapter 11 of the book What Does the Bible Really Teach? published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

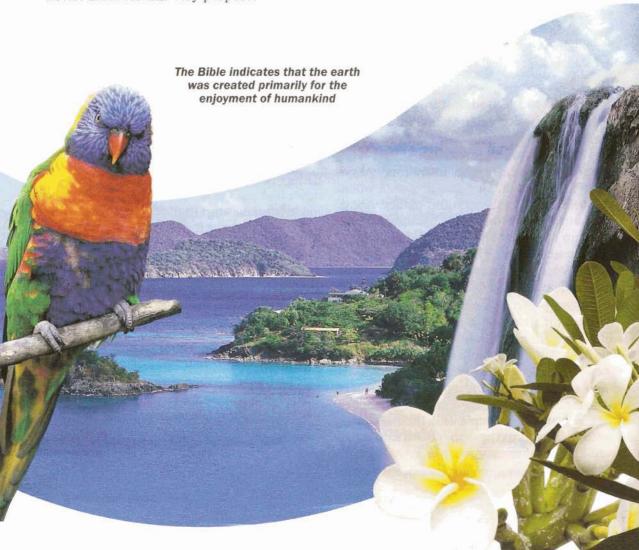
perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship." (Romans 1:20) Yes, much about Jehovah's love, wisdom, and power is evident in creation.

Another vital source of information about God is the Bible. That inspired book tells us much more about Jehovah—his views, qualities, and purpose—than can be learned from examining his creation.

The Bible states regarding God's purpose: "As regards the heavens, to Jehovah the heavens belong, but the earth he has given to the sons of men." (Psalm 115:16) It would seem that the only adequate place in this universe for mankind to live is on the earth, which Jehovah made for this very purpose.

So, what of the boundless cosmos? Are all the stars around us just there to keep our solar system in perfect equilibrium so that life on earth is possible? Are the heavenly bodies just there to make the night sky beautiful? We have to recognize that there are many things we still do not know. But that is a good thing! Why?

Eternity will not suffice for mankind to understand all that God has done and purposed. He wants our future to be one of endless discovery and endless joy. Everlasting life in happiness on earth will give obedient mankind ample opportunity to discover much, much more about the universe.





■ The peculiar nature of the star caught the eve of "wise men" from the East, eventually leading them to young Jesus, relates the Bible writer Matthew. (Matthew 2:1-12, King James Version) Popular Christmas stories portray the star as a good sign from heaven. One reference work refers to the star as part of a "divine pre-arrangement whereby . . . the child Jesus was honored and acknowledged by the Father as his beloved Son." Even Christmas carols honor that star. What was this star?

Some have suggested that it was a natural celestial phenomenon. A number of scholars have proposed that it was a conjunction of planets. However, as The New Bible Dictionary points out, "such a phenomenon could not naturally be referred to as 'a star.' " Multiple planets passing close to each other would still appear as individual points of light and not as a single star. Some have suggested other celestial phenomena, such as a comet or a supernova. However, none of these phenomena could maneuver through the sky in a way that would lead the men to a specific city and then stop over a specific house.

Could the star have been a natural event or could it have appeared by divine providence? Consider some facts: The "wise men" were not what we would today call academics; neither were they kings. They were, as most modern English translations read, "astrologers." They engaged in a practice condemned in the Holy Scriptures. (Deuteronomy 18:10-12) Note that

only these astrologers were reported to have "seen" the star. If the star had been an actual star, it would have been as visible as a beacon to the public in general. But even King Herod had to ask them about the details of its appearance. This star guided the astrologers first to Jerusalem, to Herod, a mortal enemy of the future Messiah. He intended to kill the child Jesus. Then the star shifted direction and led the astrologers south to Bethlehem where Jesus was, thus placing Jesus' life in danger.

These facts give evidence that the star was from an evil source, most likely Satan the Devil. The Bible describes him as using "lying signs and portents." (2 Thessalonians 2:9) It should thus not surprise true Christians that Satan could make only astrologers see a starlike object and could jockey that "star" to lead them to God's Son, whom he wanted to destroy. Of course, no one can outmaneuver Jehovah God. Thus, it comes as no surprise that the Devil's ploy to bring an early death to Jesus was thwarted.

It is noteworthy, however, that God did in fact announce Jesus' birth through miraculous means. On the very night of Jesus' birth, an angel appeared to a group of shepherds and announced the birth of a "Savior." The angel also provided directions so that the shepherds could visit Jesus. Then a multitude of angels appeared and proceeded to praise God. (Luke 2: 8-14) God used these angels and not the star to inform people of Jesus' birth.

#### THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

### You Can Satisfy Your Spiritual Need

UMANS possess a spiritual need that is as fundamental as the need for food. When it comes to nutrition, however, we have many good choices because of the great variety of lifesustaining foods available. Is it the same with spirituality? There are endless cultural and religious practices that are said to provide satisfaction.

Many feel that as long as you do something spiritual, it really does not matter what you choose to believe or what form of worship you engage in. What do you think? Does it matter how you satisfy your spiritual need? What does the Bible say?

#### What True Spirituality Involves

At Genesis 1:27, the Bible reveals the source of our spiritual capacity: "God proceeded to create the man in his image, in God's image he created him; male and female he created them." Since Jehovah God is a spirit, this refers, not to any physical likeness, but to a resemblance based on qualities held in common. Like his Creator, the first man, Adam, could value and display

such qualities as unselfish love, kindness, compassion, justice, and self-control. He was also endowed with a conscience, an inner moral sense, to guide his use of free will in harmony with God's laws. These characteristics made him different from the animal creation and uniquely equipped him to carry out his Creator's will.—Genesis 1:28; Romans 2:14.



The Bible identifies an element essential to human spirituality. At 1 Corinthians 2: 12-15, it describes a spiritual person as one who receives the spirit that is from God. This spirit is God's active force, and its operation is a prerequisite to getting to know spiritual things. A person is thus able to examine and understand issues from a spiritual perspective. By contrast, a person lacking God's spirit is called a physical man, one who considers spiritual things as foolishness. As a result, his conclusions are limited to what human wisdom alone reveals.

Hence, while our spiritual capacity stems from being made in God's image, genuine spirituality is not realized through self-awareness, human wisdom, or personal achievement. It requires the influence of God's holy spirit. In fact, those who refuse to be influenced by God's spirit, choosing instead to pursue their own desires and ungodly things, are described as not having spirituality. They are driven by fleshly appetites and inclinations.—1 Corinthians 2:14; Jude 18, 19.

#### Filling the Need

True spiritual fulfillment begins with acknowledging Jehovah as the Creator and recognizing that we owe our existence to him. (Revelation 4:11) We thus realize that our life has meaning only to the extent that we do his will. (Psalm 115:1) Doing God's will provides purpose in life, an aspect of our spiritual need that is as vital as our physical need for food. That is why Jesus, a man renowned for his spirituality, could say: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me." (John 4: 34) Doing God's will invigorated him, bringing him refreshment and satisfaction.

Since we are created in God's image, true spiritual satisfaction also depends on our conforming our personality to his. (Colossians 3: 10) By so doing, we avoid conduct that demeans us or that damages our relationships with others. (Ephesians 4:24-32) Choosing to live by Jehovah's standards elevates our lives and contributes to real peace of mind, since we are spared the plague of a guilty conscience.—Romans 2:15.

Jesus revealed another fundamental truth regarding filling our spiritual need when he said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through

#### Failing to satisfy our spiritual need properly will ultimately result in harm

Jehovah's mouth." (Matthew 4:4) Our spirituality requires constant attention. Through the Bible, Jehovah provides the answers to life's questions—questions that are common to all people.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

#### Source of True Happiness

A person might relieve hunger pangs by eating junk food. Similarly, we could "fill up" on activities or philosophies that seem to satisfy our spiritual appetite. But just as surely as a poor diet leads to malnutrition, disease, or worse, failing to satisfy our spiritual need properly will ultimately result in harm.

If, however, we develop a relationship with Jehovah God, seek to do his will, and follow his guidance, we will find the truth behind the Bible's words: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need."—Matthew 5:3.

#### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Where does your spiritual need come from?—Genesis 1:27.
- Can we satisfy our spiritual need on our own?—1 Corinthians 2:12-15.
- What must we do to fill our spiritual need?—Matthew 4:4; John 4:34; Colossians 3:10.

#### WATCHING THE WORLD

#### **Youths Consider Peers Spoiled**

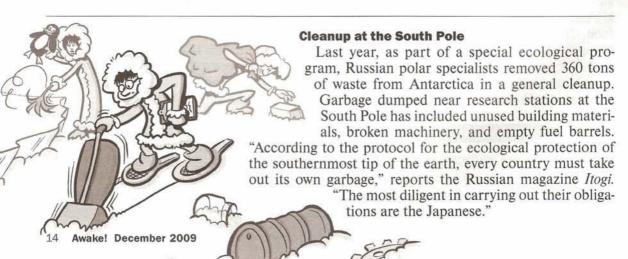
According to the newspaper de Volkskrant, young people in the Netherlands "feel that their peers are being spoiled" and that they "receive too much encouragement to feel good about themselves, resulting in a lack of consideration toward others." Among people aged 16 to 24, "no less than 2 out of every 3 . . . feel that young people's rights are no longer balanced with their duties," reports the newspaper. The general opinion is that "youths demand a lot . . . and seldom ask themselves what they can contribute to society."

#### **Children Make Lunch**

When a Japanese school principal sought ways to get parents and children to spend more time together, the school adopted his idea to have pupils prepare their own lunch boxes one day a month. Now hundreds of schools do the same. "Children are not expected to do everything themselves from the start," says Japan's IHT Asahi Shimbun. "Each grade has its own goal. Children in the lower elementary grades enlist their families to help come up with a menu and shop for ingredients.... The focus in the upper grades is on drawing up a balanced menu." The result? "Schools have reported that children's cooking skills improved, less food was wasted and families had something new to talk about,"

- A recent study "has found that six in 10 Britons think that religion has become a divisive force."—THE CATHOLIC HERALD, BRITAIN.
- The world's biggest photovoltaic plant has been set up in Portugal. Solar cells cover 600 acres and will be capable of producing enough electricity for some 30,000 homes.—*EL PAÍS*, SPAIN.
- Worldwide, 900,000 youngsters die of unnatural causes each year—more than 2,000 every day. The primary causes are road accidents, drownings, and burns. —DIE WELT, GERMANY.
- "Although the rate of net loss of forest has decreased in recent years, the world is still losing about [80 square miles] of forest a day."—FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ITALY.
- In January 2009, five pirates drowned just after their group reportedly received a \$3,000,000 (U.S.) ransom for a Saudi oil tanker. The body of one of them washed ashore with \$153,000 in cash in a plastic bag in his pocket.—ASSOCIATED PRESS, SOMALIA.

says the newspaper. Children also claim "to have learned to appreciate what their parents do for them."







century, and these creatures have never been studied in the wild.

#### Gigantic Whales of the Sea

Colossal and giant squids, however, are just a meal for an even larger animal, the **sperm whale**, which can grow to about 60 feet in length and weigh as much as 50 tons. One tooth alone weighs two pounds! Dead sperm whales have been found with portions of giant squid in their stomach. These whales also had circular scars from squid suckers on their huge, blunt heads, showing that the squid put up a hard fight. In 1965 the crew of a Soviet whaleboat claimed to have seen a battle between a giant squid and a 40-ton sperm whale. Neither survived. The strangled whale was found afloat in the sea, with the head of the squid in its stomach.

Huge indeed are the giant squid and the sperm whale, yet the **blue whale**, the largest mammal, surpasses them in size. The longest blue whale on record was a 108-foot adult female caught in Antarctica. The blue whale may weigh as much as 150 tons. The weight

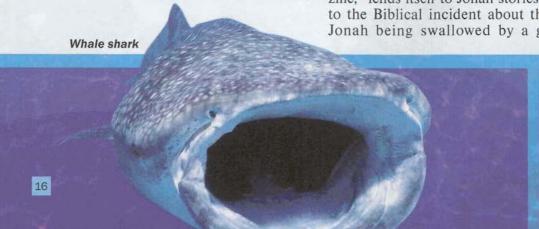
of its tongue alone is equal to that of an adult elephant! And just imagine—it gives birth to a three-ton calf that is 23 to 27 feet long! Hunted by whalers, the blue whale became nearly extinct by the 1960's and today is classified as a critically endangered species.

#### The Ferocious and the Gentle

With its 3,000 formidable teeth, the **great** white shark is perhaps the most frightening carnivorous fish. The largest great white on record was 23 feet long and weighed 7,000 pounds. This shark has an extraordinary sense of smell, being able to detect one drop of blood diluted in 25 gallons of water!

The **whale shark** is the largest of living fish, averaging some 25 feet in length. However, some can reach nearly twice that size. Its mouth can be up to four feet wide, easily capable of swallowing a man. But far from being a ferocious predator of other large sea creatures, this gentle giant feeds on tiny plankton and small fish.

"The whale shark's unusual digestive anatomy," reported *National Geographic* magazine, "lends itself to Jonah stories," referring to the Biblical incident about the prophet Jonah being swallowed by a great fish.



#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

### How can I talk to my parents?

"I tried really hard to tell my parents how I felt, but it didn't come out right—and they just cut me off. It took a lot for me to get up the nerve to express myself, and it was a complete failure!"—Rosa.\*

WHEN you were younger, your parents were probably the first ones you ran to for advice. You told them any news, large or small. You freely expressed your thoughts and feelings, and you had confidence in their advice.

Now, though, you may feel that your parents just can't relate to you anymore. "One evening at meal-time I began to cry and pour out my feelings," says a girl named Edie. "My parents *listened*, but they didn't seem to *understand*." The result? "I just went to my bedroom and cried some more!"

On the other hand, sometimes you might prefer *not* to open up to your parents. "I talk to my parents about many subjects," says a boy named Christopher. "But I like it that sometimes they don't know *everything* I'm thinking."

Is it wrong to keep some thoughts to yourself? Not necessarily—as long as you're not being deceitful. (Proverbs 3:32) Nevertheless, whether your parents don't seem to understand you or you are holding back, one thing is certain: You need to talk to your parents—and they need to hear from you.

#### **Keep Talking!**

In some ways, communicating with your parents is like driving a car. If you encounter a roadblock, you don't give up; you simply find another route. Consider some examples.



#### MIXED MESSAGES?

Are you having trouble communicating with your parents? Maybe what you're saying isn't what they're hearing.

#### When you say . . .

"I don't want to talk about it."

#### Your parents hear . . .

"I'll freely share my thoughts and feelings with my friends, but you're not important enough in my life for me to open up to you."

#### When you say . . .

"You wouldn't understand."

#### Your parents hear . . .

"You're too old and out of touch. Forget about even trying to understand my world."

<sup>\*</sup> Some names have been changed.



**Roadblock #1: You need to talk, but your parents don't seem to be listening.** "I find it difficult to communicate with my father," says a girl named Leah. "Sometimes I'll talk to him for a while and then he'll say, 'I'm sorry, were you speaking to me?'"

QUESTION: What if Leah really needs to discuss a problem? She has at least three options.

Option

Yell at her dad. Leah might scream: "Come on, this is important! Listen!" Option

**Stop talking to her dad.** Leah could simply give up on trying to tell her problems to her parents.

Option

C

Wait for a better time and bring up the subject again. Leah could speak with her dad face-to-face, or she might even write him a letter about her problem.

#### Which option do you think Leah should choose?

Let's explore each option to see where it would likely lead. Leah's dad is distracted—and thus unaware of her frustration. So if Leah chooses **Option A**, her screaming might seem to come out of nowhere. This option probably wouldn't make Leah's dad more receptive to her words, and it wouldn't show respect and honor for her parents. (Ephesians 6:2) Really, then, this option leads to a no-win situation.

While **Option B** might be the easiest course to take, it's not the wisest. Why? Because "there is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment." (Proverbs 15:22) To deal successfully with her problems, Leah needs to talk to her parents—and if they're going to be of any help, they

need to know what's going on in her life. Ceasing to talk accomplishes neither.

With **Option C**, however, Leah doesn't let a roadblock become a dead end. Rather, she tries to discuss the subject another time. And if she chooses to write her dad a letter, Leah might feel better right away. Writing the letter may also help her to formulate exactly what she wants to say when her dad *is* listening. When he reads the letter, Leah's dad will learn what she was trying to tell him, which may help him to understand her plight better. Option C thus benefits both Leah *and* her dad.

What other options might Leah have? See if you can think of one, and write it below. Then, write down where that option will likely lead.



A communication roadblock need not be a dead end—you can find a way to talk to your parents!



**Roadblock #2: Your parents want to talk, but you'd rather not.** "There's nothing worse than being hit with questions immediately after a hard day at school," says a girl named Sarah. "I just want to forget about school, but right away my parents start asking: 'How was your day? Were there any problems?' "No doubt, Sarah's parents ask such questions with the best of intentions. Still, she laments, "It's hard to talk about school when I'm tired and stressed."

**QUESTION: What can Sarah do in this situation?** As with the previous example, she has at least three options.

Option

A

Refuse to talk. She might say: "Just leave me alone. I don't want to talk right now!" Option

B

Go ahead and talk. Despite feeling stressed, Sarah could begrudgingly answer her parents' questions. Option

C

Defer the "school" talk but keep the conversation going on another topic. Sarah might suggest that they could discuss school at another time, when she knows that she'll be in a better frame of mind. Then she could say, with genuine interest: "Tell me about your day. How did things go for you?"

#### Which option do you think Sarah should choose?



Again, let's explore each option to see where it would likely lead.

Before choosing **Option A**, Sarah feels stressed and isn't inclined to talk. After choosing this option, she would still feel stressed, but she'd also feel guilty for blowing up at her parents.—Proverbs 29:11.

Meanwhile, Sarah's parents wouldn't appreciate her outburst—or the silence that would follow. They might suspect that Sarah is hiding something. They might try even harder to get her to open up, which, of course, would frustrate her even more. In the end, this option leads to a no-win situation.

**Option B** is obviously a better choice than **Option A.** After all, at least Sarah and her par-

ents would be talking. But since the conversation wouldn't be heartfelt, both Sarah and her parents wouldn't get what they want either—a relaxed, open discussion.

With **Option C**, however, Sarah would feel better because the "school" talk has been delayed for now. Her parents would appreciate her effort to make conversation, so they'd be happy too. This option likely has the best chance of success because both sides are applying the principle found at Philippians 2:4, which says: "Look out for one another's interests, not just for your own."—Today's English Version.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype

#### TO THINK ABOUT

- What role does timing play in good communication?—Proverbs 25:11.
- Why is talking to your parents worth the effort?—Job 12:12.



#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

"I told my parents about a problem I had at school, and I was surprised at how readily they listened. With their help the problem was easy to solve!"—Natalie.

"Communicating with your parents isn't always easy, but when you do open up and talk to them, you feel as if a huge weight has been lifted off your mind."—Devenye.



#### A NOTE TO PARENTS

As a concerned parent, perhaps you wonder whether your children find it hard to talk to you. Consider what some youths told Awake! about why they hold back from talking to their parents. Then, ask yourself the accompanying questions, and look up the cited scriptures.

"I find it hard to approach Dad because he has a lot on his plate, both at work and in the congregation. There never really seems to be a convenient time to talk to him."—Andrew.

'Have I unwittingly sent the message that I'm too busy to talk to my teenagers? If so, how can I make myself more approachable? What time can I regularly set aside to talk with my children?'—Deuteronomy 6:7.

"I approached my mother in tears about an argument I'd had at school. I wanted her to comfort me, but instead she just reprimanded me. Since then, I haven't approached her about anything important."—Kenji.

'How do I respond when my children approach me with a problem? Even if correction is in order, can I learn to stop and listen with empathy before giving advice?'—James 1:19.

"It seems that every time parents say we can talk and they won't get angry, they still become upset. Then the teen feels betrayed."—Rachel. 'If my child tells me something that is upsetting, how can I control my initial reaction?'

—Proverbs 10:19.

"Many times when I opened up to Mom about very private matters, she turned around and told them to her friends. I lost confidence in her for a long time."—Chantelle.

'Do I show consideration for my child's feelings by not spreading private matters that he or she has confided to me?'—Proverbs 25:9.

"I have a lot of things I want to talk about with my parents. I just need their help to start the conversation."—Courtney. 'Can I take the initiative to talk to my adolescent? What times are best for talking?'

-Ecclesiastes 3:7.



UG them a lot!" said a professor of child psychiatry to a first-time mother who had just given birth to twins. She had asked him for advice on the best way to bring up her children. "Love and affection have to be shown in numerous ways," the professor added, "such as by hugs and kisses, by expressions of warmth, understanding, happiness, generosity, and forgiveness and, when necessary, by reasoned discipline. We should never assume that our children know that we love them."

Tiffany Field, director of the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami, Florida, U.S.A., seems to agree with the above recommendation. "Touch is as essential to the growth and well-being of a child as diet and exercise," she asserts.

Do adults need physical expressions of affection too? Yes. Clinical psychologist Claude Steiner concluded from his research that verbal and physical encouragement are essential for our emotional well-being, whatever our age. Laura, a nurse who cares for a large group of elderly people, says: "I have seen that expressions of affection toward the elderly really make a difference. When you treat them kindly and touch them, you win their trust and they follow your instructions willingly. Furthermore, such affectionate treatment shows respect for their dignity."

Moreover, expressing affection benefits the giver as much as the receiver. As Jesus Christ once said, "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35) It is especially rewarding when affection is

expressed toward those who are worried, depressed, or insecure. Many incidents in the Bible describe how such ones received this kind of help.

Imagine how comforting it must have been for "a man full of leprosy," an outcast of society, to feel a compassionate touch from none other than Jesus Christ!—Luke 5:12, 13; Matthew 8:1-3.

Think about how much stronger the elderly prophet Daniel must have felt when an angel of God fortified him with warm encouragement and touched him three times. Those loving touches and upbuilding words were just what Daniel needed to help him recover from his physical and mental exhaustion.—Daniel 10:9-11, 15, 16, 18, 19.

On one occasion, dear friends of the apostle Paul traveled about 30 miles from Ephesus to Miletus to meet him. There Paul told them that they might not see him again. How encouraged the apostle must have felt when his loyal friends "hugged him and kissed him good-bye"!—Acts 20:36, 37, Today's English Version.

Thus, both the Bible and modern research encourage us to show affection to one another. Satisfying this need brings physical and emotional benefits. Clearly, sincere appropriate expressions of affection are not just for children.

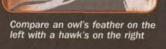
**1.** No tour-footed creatures. **2.** No creeping trings. **3.** No birds. **4.** Dan,—Judges 13:2-5. **5.** The Philistines.—Judges 13:1. **6.** False.



ed as air flows over the top of the wing at the downstroke. The downy feathers found elsewhere on the owl's body help absorb the remaining sound.

Aircraft designers would like to tap into the secret of the owl's virtually silent flight. Quieter planes would mean that airports with stringent noise limits could allow flights to take off and land at later hours of the night-and earlier hours of the morning. Some improvements are already being planned. "We are just now coming along," says Geoffrey Lilley, professor emeritus of aeronautics at England's University of Southampton. He adds that it could be decades before such a quiet plane could be designed.

What do you think? Was the owl's noise-reducing trailing feather a product of chance? Or was it designed?





## How I Lost My LOVE FOR WAR

AS TOLD BY THOMAS STUBENVOLL

WAS born in New York City on November 8, 1944. I grew up in the South Bronx, at that time a neighborhood divided into racial enclaves. As a boy, I spent much time on the streets, and I soon learned to respect the territorial boundaries of the various ethnic gangs. Those gangs were feared for their criminal activities and violent temperament.

By the time I was 12 years old, I belonged to a gang. We called ourselves The Skulls. My partners and I would break into railroad freight cars and steal cases of peanut butter and other food items. Gangs with boys in their late teens were far more brazen. There were many bloody fights between such gangs. On one occasion a good friend of mine was stabbed to death in front of my eyes.

#### Fascinated by War

The gang scene didn't really make me happy. After a while, I just wanted to move out of the city. My uncle Eddie had been in the Korean War, where he served as a member of the Marine Corps, a branch of the U.S. military. Uncle Eddie's description of the Marines fascinated me. I was told that every Marine is a disciplined leader and a tough warrior trained to act decisively. The Marine Corps motto, Semper fidelis, Latin for "always faithful," highlights its strict code of loyalty and commitment. Soon, there was nothing I wanted more than to be a skilled Marine.

On November 8, 1961, the very day I turned 17, I enlisted as a Marine recruit. Less than four months later, I graduated from boot camp as

Serving as a drill instructor (top) and in the infantry in Vietnam (left)

My injuries earned me the Purple Heart, but they were not serious enough to stop me from fighting

a Marine. That was the start of an 11-year career in the military.

I joined the military during peacetime. Still, the life of a Marine is one of constant training. First, I was sent to Oahu, Hawaii, where for two years I received intense training in infantry tactics and guerrilla warfare. I became a marksman, able to hit a ten-inch bull's-eye at 500 yards. I was trained in martial arts, the use of explosives, map reading, demolition, and communications. I relished every moment.

After Hawaii, I spent six months in Japan on a mission to guard underwater weapons at the Atsugi Naval Air Station. Soon hostilities between the United States and North Vietnam escalated, and I was assigned as part of a Marine detachment on the USS Ranger, an aircraft carrier. From the Gulf of Tonkin, our ship joined in the aerial bombardment of North Vietnam. Finally, I was fighting a real war. Still, I felt that by just being on a ship, I was missing out on the real action.

#### The Realities of War

In the spring of 1966, while on the Ranger, I was honorably discharged after four years of military service. Most soldiers in my position would gladly have returned home and avoided the bloodbath that was about to take place. But I had become a devoted Marine, a professional warrior, and I wasn't about to quit. I decided to reenlist.

I wanted to fight. That is what I was trained for. So I volunteered to serve in the infantry. It didn't matter where I was assigned, as long as I was a Marine Corps infantryman. Being a good Marine was my mission in life, and the war was becoming my god.

In October 1967, I was sent to Vietnam. Nervous and excited, I was immediately taken to the front lines in the province of Quang Tri. Less than a day later, I found myself in the middle of a bloody battle.

Men were being killed and wounded all around me. I could see the dust kicked up by the impact of enemy bullets hitting the ground. There was no shelter other than a few bushes. I just started shooting. It was terrible. I thought I was going to die. Finally, the fight was over. I

survived, but I cannot say the same for the men I helped to carry back.

For the following 20 months, I shared in the most intense fighting of the Vietnam War. Seven days a week and almost around the clock, I was either shooting or trying not to be shot, either laying ambushes or being ambushed. During most of that time, I exchanged fire with the enemy from holes in

> Seven days a week and almost around the clock, I was either shooting or trying not to be shot, either laying ambushes or being ambushed

the ground that quickly turned into mud pits when it rained. Sometimes it was cold and unbearably uncomfortable. In such holes I both ate and slept.

My search-and-destroy missions took me in and out of the humid jungle, with the ever-present danger of the enemy jumping out of the thick underbrush. At times, for hours on end, I was under the constant pounding of artillery exploding around me. During one battle near Khe Sanh, about three fourths of my platoon were injured or killed—only 13 of us were left.

January 30, 1968, found me at an army base, where I could sleep in a tent for the first time in over a year. The relative comfort was shattered early that morning when I was awakened by the deafening sound of a mortar

explosion. I was wounded. Several pieces of shrapnel became lodged in my shoulder and back. That morning the enemy had begun a massive invasion.

My injuries earned me the Purple Heart, a medal of military decoration, but they were not serious enough to stop me from fighting. The medics quickly plucked out the shrapnel, and I was soon on my way to the city of Hue, where one of the major battles of the war took place. There I operated as a veritable killing machine. Shooting the enemy was nothing to me. For 32 days, I spent every waking hour going from house to house hunting down and killing the enemy.

At the time, I felt absolutely justified. 'After all,' I reasoned, 'the enemy was killing thousands of innocent men, women, and children in the city of Hue. The streets and alleys were strewn with thousands of corpses. There were booby traps everywhere, even beneath some of the corpses. We were under the constant threat of enemy snipers.' None of this deterred me. In my mind, killing the enemy was the right thing to do.

#### An Unhealthy Appetite for War

Some time after the battle of Hue, I completed my 13-month tour of duty. The war was raging, however, and I wanted more of it. So I volunteered to stay in Vietnam for another tour. By then I was a staff sergeant and

was assigned to a special mission. It involved leading detachments of Marines into small hamlets in the countryside. There we interacted with civilians, training them to protect their communities.

We were in a constant state of alert because the enemy would often blend in with the local people. At night we moved about stealthily —hunting, catching, and killing enemy combatants. Despite the extreme tension, my love for war only kept growing.

My second tour in Vietnam passed quickly. Again I asked to remain in the battlefields. This time my superiors denied my request, perhaps noticing my unhealthy appetite for war. But my career as a Marine wasn't over. I was sent back to the United States to be a drill instructor, training recruits. For three and a half years, I focused on my duties as a drill instructor. I had much to share with my recruits, and I did my best to turn each of them into the mean fighting machine that I myself had become.

#### I Found a Better Purpose in Life

I befriended a fellow drill instructor. His wife had just left him. His sister, Christine Antisdel, who had recently become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, offered to move in with him and help him care for his two very young children. That was the first time I had ever heard about the Witnesses.

I was raised as a Catholic and went to Catholic school for eight years. At church I even served as an altar boy. Still, I knew virtually nothing about the Bible. Christine changed that. She introduced me to Bible



Christine and I have devoted our 36 years together to helping others acquire Bible knowledge truths that I had never heard before. I learned what the Bible really teaches and what it doesn't teach.

For example, I learned that the Bible doesn't teach that God punishes people in a fiery hell after death. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10) It doesn't teach that God is part of a Trinity. (John 14:28) The Bible, however, does teach that God will eliminate wickedness, pain, and death and that obedient mankind will live forever in an earthly paradise. (Psalm 37:9-11; Revelation 21:3, 4) I also learned the truth about God's moral standards, (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) I learned that God has a name, Jehovah. (Psalm 83:18) All of this was fascinating!

In November 1972, I was transferred to another base, where I was to teach warfare tactics to noncommissioned officers. There I began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. I attended their meetings and was very impressed by the friendly atmosphere and genuine brotherhood of the Witnesses.

But the more I learned about the Bible, the more my conscience bothered me. The truths of the Bible were so much in conflict with my way of life. I had dedicated my life to the promotion of nationalistic warfare and violence, things that God hates.

I concluded that I could not be a Marine and worship Jehovah God at the same time. It was then that I lost my love for war. I decided to quit my profession. After months of paperwork, interviews, and a psychiatric examination. I received an honorable discharge -this time as a conscientious objector. Thus ended my 11 years of service with the Marine Corps.

Now I could say to Jehovah the words of Isaiah 6:8: "Here I am! Send me." Yes, I was ready to use my energy and enthusiasm in serving the true God instead of serving in the Marine Corps. I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses on July 27, 1973. Five months later I married Christine Antisdel, the first Witness I ever met.

Christine and I have devoted our 36 years together to helping others acquire Bible knowledge and draw closer to God. For eight years we served as missionaries in the Dominican Republic. For the past 18 years, I have served as a traveling minister. My wife

> After drawing closer to Jehovah God, I deeply regret having taken the lives of fellow humans during the war

and I have visited hundreds of Spanishspeaking congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the United States.

To this very day, I am not aware of any emotional or mental ill effects from my war days. No shell shock, no post-traumatic stress disorder, no nightmares, no flashbacks. Still, after drawing closer to Jehovah God, I deeply regret having taken the lives of fellow humans during the war.

Mine was quite a transformation-but a worthwhile one. Now I feel forgiven by God for what I did in the past. Instead of taking life away, my mission is now to offer people the hope of life on a paradise earth forever. As a Marine, I did what I did out of ignorance and misguided zeal. As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, having learned what the Bible teaches, I do what I do out of a firm conviction that there is a true, living God, that he is a loving God, and that in the end, only good things will happen to those who love and obey him.

#### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Are You Working Too Hard?
- Can Mealtime Strengthen Your Family Values?
- Cultivating Orchids—How Patience Pays Off

## LEAD POISONING!

In recent years governments have issued emergency recalls of such consumer products as toys and jewelry. Why? Dangerous levels of lead have been detected in some of these items, and young children tend to suck or chew on them. Lead poisoning can be especially dangerous for children under six years of age, since their central nervous system is still developing.

ACCORDING to a study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, lead inhibits a protein that is important for brain development and cognition. Studies show that children absorb up to 50 percent of the lead ingested, whereas adults usually absorb only 10 to 15 percent.

Recent research has suggested that even levels of lead that fall under some government-issued toxicity limits may cause harm. The problems, according to the National Safety Council in the United States, can include "learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, behavioral problems, stunted growth, impaired hearing, and kidney damage" in children. Women who may become pregnant should take extra precautions to avoid exposure because lead can harm the fetus.\*

Lead can also contaminate food and drink prepared in leadglazed earthenware, which is customarily used in some parts of Asia and Latin America. Sometimes drinking water is stored in clay pots to keep it cool, and hot beverages are served in glazed mugs. A study of children under five years of age in Mexico City revealed that nearly half the children over 18 months of age had high levels of lead in their blood. Food prepared in glazed ceramics was mentioned as the reason. Lead imparts a smooth, glasslike finish to clay items, but it can leach out, especially from dishware that is heated or exposed to some fruits and vegetables.

#### Other Sources of Lead Poisoning

Although in recent years most developed countries have phased out lead from their gasoline, the World Health Organiza-

<sup>\*</sup> Adults can also get lead poisoning, resulting in nerve disorders, muscle and joint pain, or problems with memory and concentration.



tion (WHO) says that there are nearly 100 countries in the world that still use leaded gas. Lead does not break down or burn up. Thus, tiny particles from vehicle emissions contaminate the soil along highways. Lead dust is then breathed in or tracked into homes.

Another major source of lead contamination is lead-based paint that was used in homes before laws were enacted to regulate it. In the United States alone, an estimated 38 million homes—40 percent of all housing—has lead paint. Flaking paint or the lead dust resulting from renovations can pose a particular hazard.

Many older cities and homes have lead pipes or lead-soldered copper pipes for water. The Mayo Clinic, a distinguished medical center in the United States, recommends letting cold water from such pipes run for 30 to 60 seconds before you drink it. Hot water from these pipes should not be used at all for drinking and cooking—especially not for preparing infant formula.

Lead levels in the blood greatly decrease when the source of the exposure to lead is removed. People who are concerned about lead in their blood may wish to have a blood test. Health care should be sought if harmful levels are detected.

#### **Need for Public Awareness**

Lead poisoning can result from the accumulation of lead in the body over a period of time. But a one-time ingestion in sufficient amounts can kill. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reports that in 2006 a preschooler died from the effects of swallowing a piece of metallic jewelry containing high levels of lead.

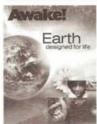
Highlighting the need for public awareness, a medical encyclopedia states that, at present, 1 in 20 preschoolers in the United States has high levels of lead in his or her blood. If that is true of a country where the use of lead is regulated, what might be said of lands where such regulations are nonexistent? Indeed, everyone must beware!

#### SOME SYMPTOMS OF LEAD POISONING IN CHILDREN

Abdominal pain, aggressiveness, anemia, attention problems, constipation, fatigue, headaches, irritability, loss of developmental skills, low appetite and energy, slow growth.—MEDLINE PLUS MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA.

#### SUBJECT INDEX FOR 2009 AWAKE!













ANIMALS AND PLANTS

Birds Crash Into Buildings, 2/09 Boxfish, 7/09 Cyphochilus Beetle's Shell, 5/09 Elephant, 4/09 Endangered Species (Spain), 3/09 Faithful Parents (laughing doves), 8/09 Giants Roamed Europe, 5/09 Harpy Eagle, 5/09 Lotus Leaf, 4/09 Modern Farming, 9/09 Mollusk Shell, 8/09 Monsters of Deep Sea, 12/09 Owl's Feather, 12/09 Sea Buckthorn, 9/09 Sloth, 7/09 Squid's Beak, 3/09 Toucan's Beak, 1/09

#### **ECONOMICS AND EMPLOYMENT**

Bicycle That Sharpens Knives, 2/09 Money, Master or Servant? 3/09

#### HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Wing of Nature's Fliers, 2/09

Abortion, 6/09 Childhood Obesity, 3/09 Depression, 7/09 Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, 11/09 Lead Poisoning, 12/09 Prescription Drug Abuse, 5/09 Sun Exposure, 6/09 Thyroid, 5/09 Who Answers Calls for Help? (paramedics), 4/09

#### **HUMAN RELATIONS**

Challenges of Youth, 9/09 Children With Learning Disabilities, 1/09 Give Children Good Start, 6/09 Impact of Divorce on Adolescents, 10/09 Importance of Showing Affection, 12/09 Prejudice and Discrimination, 8/09 Secrets of Family Success, 10/09 Stressed-Out Children, 5/09 Succeed as Single Parent, 10/09 We Are All One Family, 11/09 Whistled Speech, 2/09

#### JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

'Answers Our Questions' (Young People Ask, Volume 2), 7/09 'Best Book on World's Religions'

(Mankind's Search for God), 1/09

'Drawer Only Jehovah Can Open' (tomb), 8/09 Keeping Hold of God's Hand (skin disease),

"Keep on the Watch!" Conventions, 5/09, 6/09

My Little Pink Book (Great Teacher book), 3/09

Patient's Right to Choose, 6/09 Stood Up for What She Believed, 12/09 Teacher Changes View (Georgia), 3/09 What You Need Is in the Bible! 11/09

#### LANDS AND PEOPLES

Albarracin (Spain), 7/09 Bolivia's "Lost World," 11/09 Bucharest (Romania), 4/09 Endangered Species (Spain), 3/09 Forgotten Slaves of South Seas, 1/09 God's Name in Denmark, 11/09 Ploydiy (Bulgaria), 6/09 Rickshaws (Bangladesh), 7/09 Salt Seekers of Sahara, 1/09 Tabáky Beauty Treatment (Madagascar), 7/09

#### LIFE STORIES

Faithful for Over 70 Years (J. Elias), 9/09 From Silent Service to Sacred Service (A. Hogg), 11/09 How I Lost Love for War (T. Stubenvoll). 12/09 I Fled the Killing Fields (S. Tan), 5/09 Thirty Years of Underground Translation (O. Mockutė), 6/09 We Found What We Were Looking For (B. Tallman), 1/09

Dyslexia Has Not Held Me Back

(M. Henborg), 2/09

Blessed by Putting God First (P. Worou), 3/09

#### MISCELLANEOUS

Driving-Keep It Safe, 7/09 Espresso, 8/09 Herod the Great-Master Builder, 9/09 Pillar on the Sea (waterspout), 9/09 Pizza, 1/09 Under Pressure In School and Out, 4/09

#### RELIGION

Catholic Youth Urged to Witness, 6/09 God's Name in Denmark, 11/09 What Star Led "Wise Men" to Jesus? 12/09

#### SCIENCE

Battle for Secrecy, 8/09 Cyphochilus Beetle's Shell, 5/09 Earth Designed for Life, 2/09 Improve Memory, 2/09 Lotus Leaf, 4/09 Mapped the World (Mercator), 4/09 Mars Up Close, 2/09 Mollusk Shell, 8/09 Mystery Unraveled (Antikythera Mechanism), 3/09 Owl's Feather, 12/09 Receipt Corroborates Bible, 5/09 Squid's Beak, 3/09

Technology, 11/09 Toucan's Beak, 1/09 Universe Full of Surprises, 8/09 Universe Have a Purpose? 12/09

Wing of Nature's Fliers, 2/09

THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT Afraid of the Dead? 6/09 Clergy-Laity Distinction, 8/09 Cremation, 3/09 God Want You to Be Rich? 5/09 Living Together Before Marriage, 10/09 Marital Fidelity, 4/09 Possible to Love One's Enemies? 11/09 Problems a Punishment From God? 1/09 Satisfy Spiritual Need, 12/09 Will Bad People Burn in Hell? 9/09 Wrong to Change Religion? 7/09

#### Your Future Predestined? 2/09 WORLD AFFAIRS AND CONDITIONS

Blunders Led to World War, 8/09 Challenges of Youth, 9/09 Modern Farming, 9/09 Prejudice and Discrimination, 8/09 Running Out of Water? 1/09

#### YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

Do I Need Better Friends? 3/09 How Control Temper? 9/09 How Cope With Death of Parent? 8/09 How Get Over a Breakup? 2/09 How Get to Know Parents Better? 10/09 How Make Bible Reading Enjoyable? 4/09 How Manage My Time? 6/09 How Talk to My Parents? 12/09 Should We Break Up? 1/09 What Can I Wear? 11/09 Why Afraid to Share My Faith? 7/09 Why Don't Girls Like Me? 5/09













#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

#### What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read Acts 10:9-48. Now look at the picture. What features are missing? Write your answers on the lines below, and then draw in the missing features.

2

FOR DISCUSSION: What lesson do you think Jehovah was teaching Peter? CLUE: Read Acts 10:28, 34, 35. How can you show that you learned from Peter's lesson when you deal with people of another race or culture?





#### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

#### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 9 What will mankind never find out? Ecclesiastes 3:\_

PAGE 10 The earth has been given to whom? Psalm 115:\_

PAGE 13 To be happy, we must be conscious of what? Matthew 5:\_\_\_\_

PAGE 19 When are plans frustrated? Proverbs 15:\_\_

#### What Do You Know About Judge Samson?

4.....

He was from which tribe?

so powerful? CLUE: Read Hebrews True or false? He lived after 11:32-34. What part of Samson's the prophet Samuel.





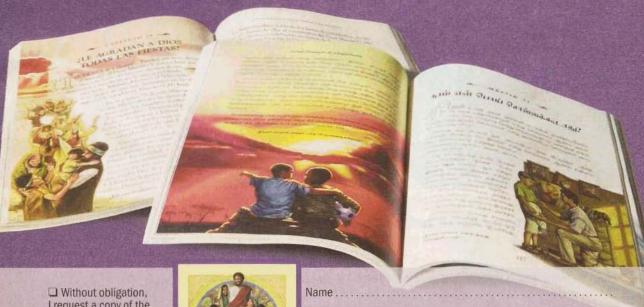
# She Stood Up for What She Believed

■ During a recent holiday season, the first-grade class of seven-year-old Morgan was assigned to read a story about Christmas. Morgan reminded the teacher that she felt that this celebration was not in harmony with the Bible. Her teacher kindly allowed her to choose to read a story that did not offend her conscience.

Sometime later, a school awards ceremony was held, and Morgan's family was invited to attend. Morgan was surprised when at the ceremony she was presented with an award for her courage in holding firmly to what she believed. When asked how she had developed such courage, she explained that she and her family read together from the book *Learn From the Great Teacher*, the lessons of which are drawn from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

This 256-page book, with colorful illustrations throughout, provides a basis for parents to enjoy interactive discussions with their children. It includes such chapters as "Why We Should Not Lie," "Do All Parties Please God?," and "Help to Overcome Our Fears."

If you would like a copy, please fill in the accompanying coupon, and mail it to the address provided or to an appropriate address on page 5 of this magazine.



☐ Without obligation, I request a copy of the book shown here. Indicate which language.

☐ Please contact me concerning a free home Bible study.

LEARN FROM THE GREAT TEACHER

Name	
Address	
************	