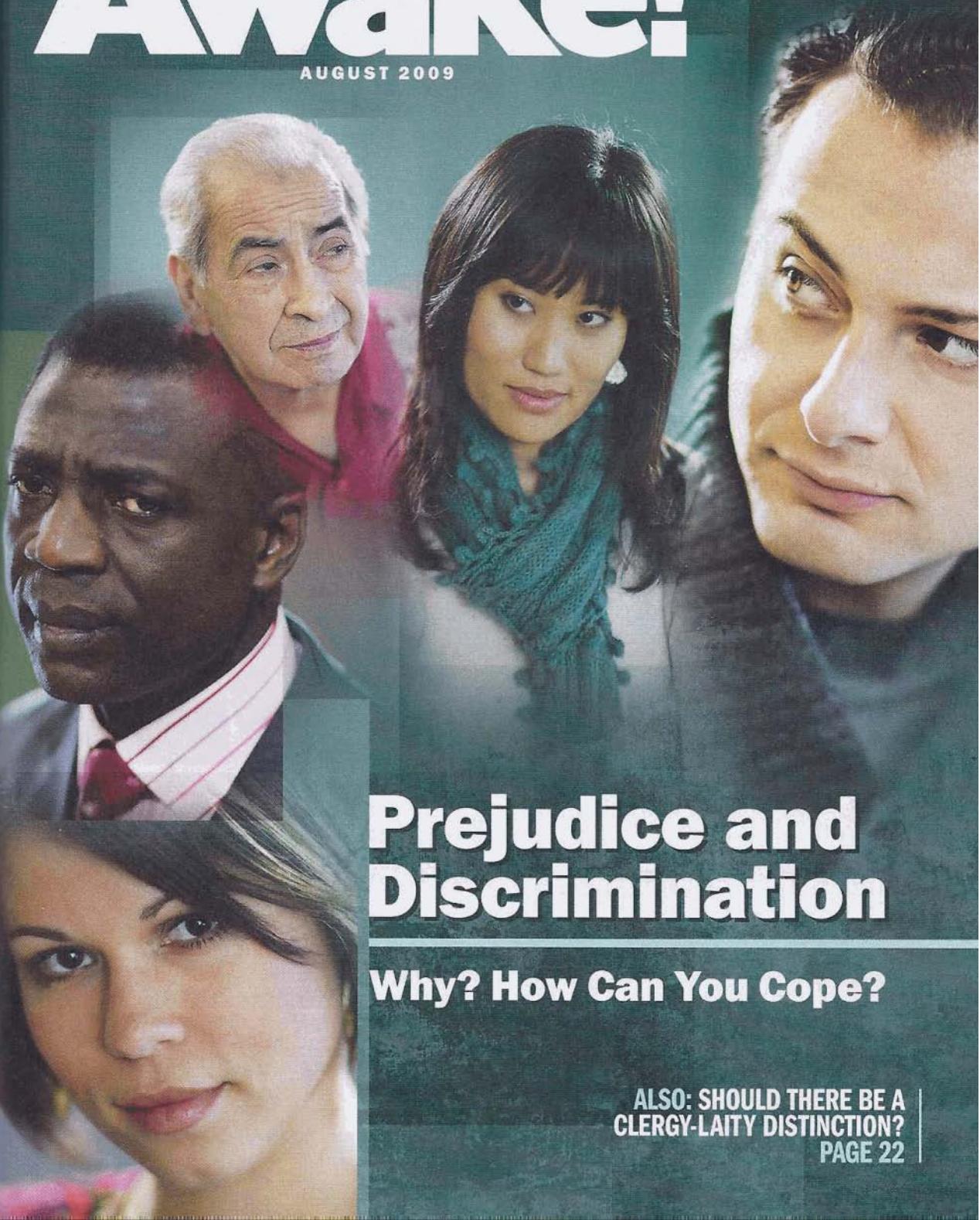


# Awake!

AUGUST 2009



## Prejudice and Discrimination

**Why? How Can You Cope?**

ALSO: SHOULD THERE BE A  
CLERGY-LAITY DISTINCTION?  
PAGE 22

# Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000  
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- 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'

10

## 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.

16

## 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

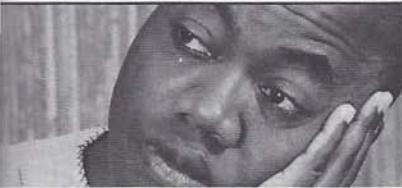
Millions of people constantly have to endure unfair discrimination. What factors underlie this serious social injustice? Is there a remedy?

# 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.*

HAVE 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 exam-

ple 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.

**D**ESPITE 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.

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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<sup>o</sup> (audio Mandarin only), Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Ciembra, Croatian, Czech,<sup>o</sup> Danish,<sup>o</sup> Dutch,<sup>o</sup> English,<sup>o</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,<sup>o</sup> French,<sup>o</sup> Georgian, German,<sup>o</sup> Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,<sup>o</sup> Japanese,<sup>o</sup> Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean,<sup>o</sup> Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian,<sup>o</sup> Polish,<sup>o</sup> Portuguese,<sup>o</sup> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian,<sup>o</sup> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhalala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,<sup>o</sup> Swahili, Swedish,<sup>o</sup> Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

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## 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.*

**A**S 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.

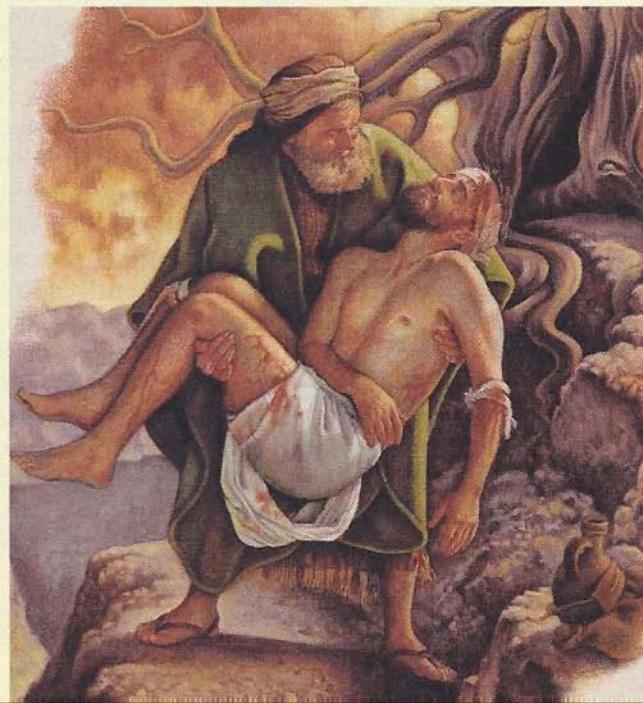
Yet, Jesus did not "return evil for evil." (Romans 12:17) For example, when individual Pharisees—members of a Jewish sect that opposed Jesus—sincerely approached him with questions, he kindly answered them. (John 3:1-21) He even dined with Pharisees, including one who had exhibited a measure of prejudice 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.

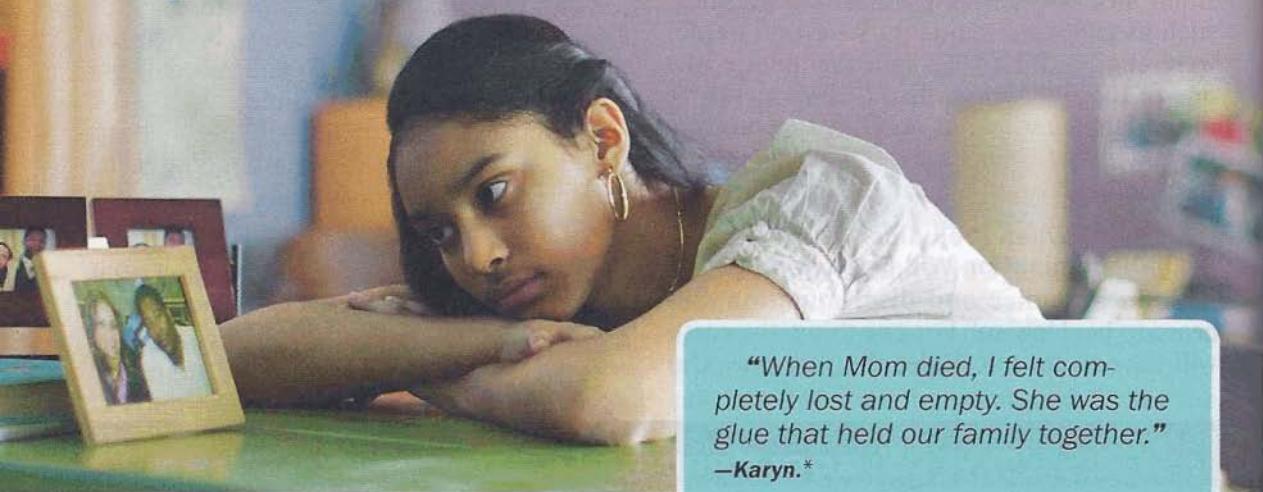
\* If you would like to have a free Bible study at a time and place of your convenience, call the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses or one of the branch offices listed on page 5. Or contact Jehovah's Witnesses at the Web site [www.watchtower.org](http://www.watchtower.org).

## 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 loyal to him.

# How can I cope with the death of a parent?



*"When Mom died, I felt completely lost and empty. She was the glue that held our family together."*

*—Karyn.\**

**F**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 *you*. Below, describe (1) how you felt when you first found out about your parent's death and (2) how you feel now.<sup>#</sup>

(1) .....

(2) .....

\* Names in this article have been changed.

<sup>#</sup> 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

\* 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.

### 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!*"\*

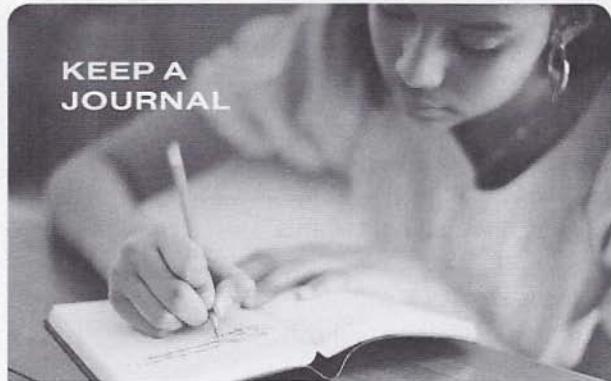
**Communicate your feelings.** Proverbs 12:25 states: "Kind words will cheer you up." (*Today's English Version*) Keeping your feelings bottled up inside may make it difficult for you to deal with your grief. On the other hand, discussing your feelings with someone

\* 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.

### Grief can be like waves that crash ashore at unexpected moments



## KEEP A JOURNAL



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

\* 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.

## TO THINK ABOUT

- Which suggestions in this article will you use?
- Below, list a few scriptures that will comfort you when grief seems overwhelming.

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?\*

\* Some have been comforted by the following scriptures: Psalm 34:18; 102:17; 147:3; Isaiah 25:8; John 5:28, 29.

#### 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,

\* For simplicity, we refer to the child as a male. However, the principles discussed apply to both genders.

#### 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.

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More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site  
[www.watchtower.org/ype](http://www.watchtower.org/ype)

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.

**T**O 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 possible. 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-

# The Art of Making Espresso

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!"

\* 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*.

#### 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.

# A UNIVERSE FULL OF SURPRISES

**J**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 pub-

lished 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 century 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,

\* 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."

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.

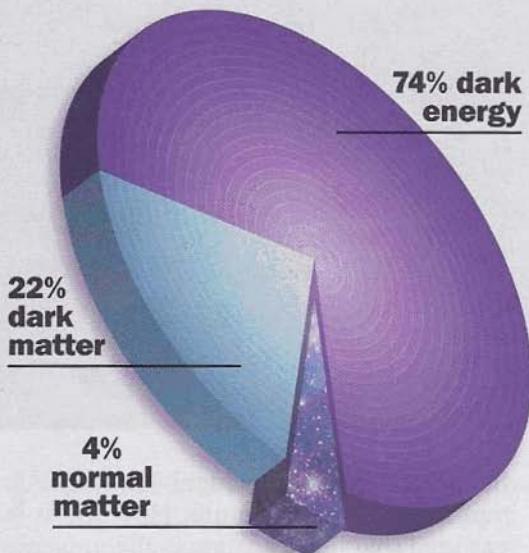
While more precise measurements have provided answers to some questions, other questions have been raised—questions that cast doubt on our present understanding of matter and the fundamental forces of nature.

#### 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!



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

\* The exploding stars are called type Ia supernovas, and they may shine as brightly as a billion suns for a short time. Astronomers use these supernovas as a standard for measurement.

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

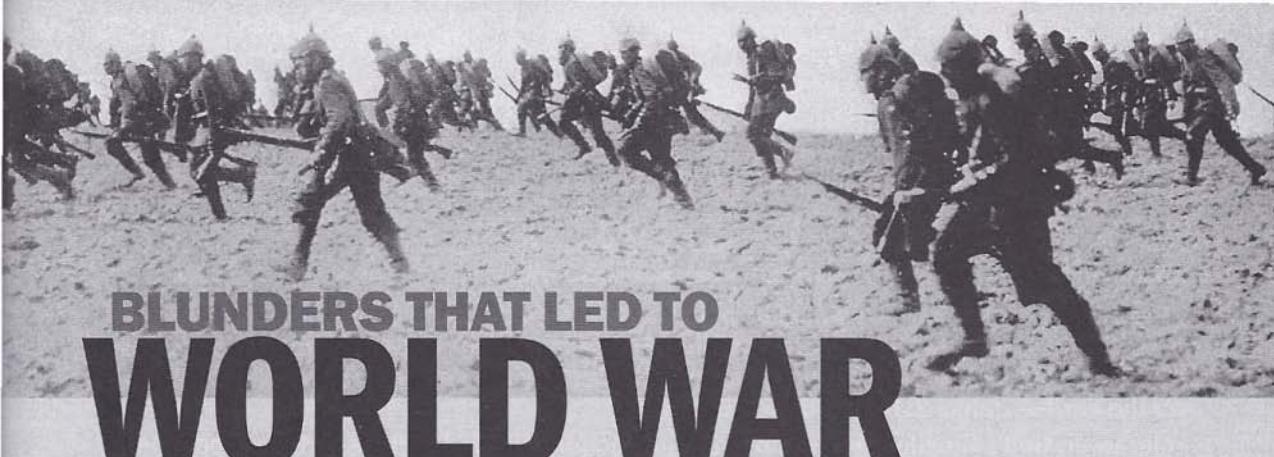
Science is in search of answers, but all too often one set of answers leads to another layer of puzzles. This fact calls to mind a profound statement recorded in the Bible at Ecclesiastes 3:11. It reads: "Everything [God] has made pretty in its time. Even time indefinite he has put in their heart, that 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.

\* 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.



# BLUNDERS THAT LED TO WORLD WAR

*Could a third world war begin by accident? Could statesmen and their military advisers grossly miscalculate risks and cause the loss of millions of lives?*

**W**E 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

\* Bosnia is now part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## WORLD WAR—A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

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.\*

\* 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.

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

\* 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.

of men would be mired in trench warfare for years.

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

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?***

**I**N THE New Testament and during the 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?

\* 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.

# 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.

#### 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.

# Faithful, Cooperative Parents



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.

■ The temperature on the South African highveld, or interior plateau, is close to freezing. From my warm third-floor 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

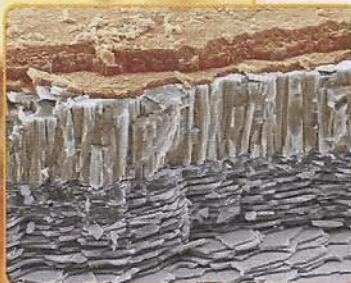
ready to relieve her mate. Even after the chicks have left the

nest, both parents will continue feeding them until they can

fend for themselves.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Mollusk Shell



■ 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."

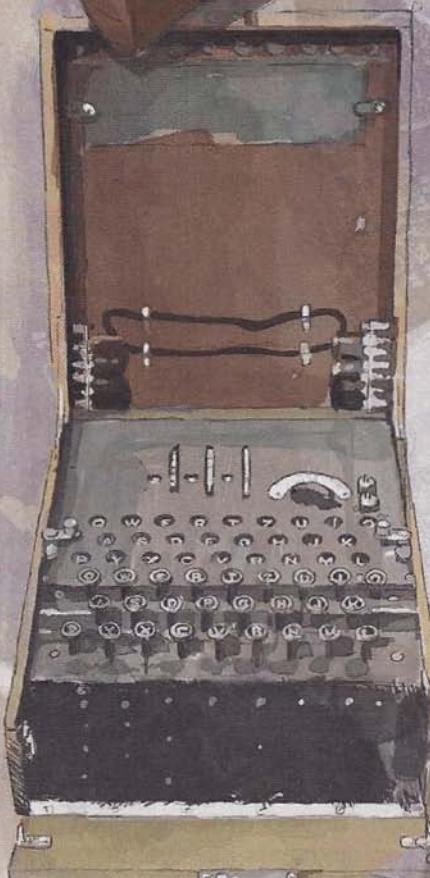
**What do you think?** Did the shell of the mollusk with its amazing strength come about by chance? Or was it designed?

\* Mollusks are soft-bodied, boneless animals. Sea mollusks include clams, mussels, oysters, scallops, octopuses and squid.

**Enlarged cross-section of the inner layer of a mollusk shell**

Inset: © Eye of Science/Photo Researchers, Inc.

Ancient Spartan  
scytale



A 20th-century  
German Enigma  
machine

Today complex  
encryptions  
protect personal  
information

# THE BATTLE FOR SECRECY

## YOU ARE INVOLVED!

*Have you ever solved an anagram? Have you ever purchased something online or used a computer to access your bank records? If so, then you have entered the world of codes, ciphers, encryption, and decryption.*

UNTIL recent times, secret codes usually involved governments, ambassadors, spies, and the military. But not anymore. With the advent of computers and the Internet, valuable data are often kept secret by a number of elements, including passwords, which are authenticated every time users access their records. Indeed, never before has secrecy played such a big role in everyday life.

Hence, we may rightly ask: How safe is my confidential data? Can I do more to heighten security? Before considering these questions, reflect for a moment on the long battle between code makers and code breakers—a conflict that is almost as old as writing itself.

### Secret Scripts

One form of secret writing with a long history is called steganography, or “covered writing.” The objective of steganography is to hide the very existence of the message. The ancient historian Herodotus recorded that a Greek exile saw that Persia was preparing to attack his homeland. Wanting to warn his people, he wrote messages on wooden tablets and coated them with wax to conceal the text, a trick also employed by the ancient Romans. According to Herodotus, the Greek’s simple ruse deprived

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 sub-

stitution 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 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 overlap.

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- You Can Meet the Challenges of Youth
- Will Bad People Burn in Hell?
- Herod the Great—A Master Builder

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 electricaly 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 soft-

ware to capture numbers from credit cards and debit cards used for payment at cash registers.

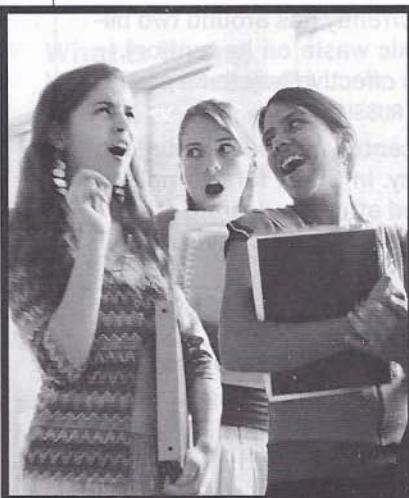
### Is Your Confidential Data Safe?

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.

\* Encrypted Web pages on Web browsers have secure-transaction symbols, such as a lock symbol or "https://" in the address bar. The *s* means secure.



**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 swear-word 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.jw.org](http://www.jw.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 lame, not blind. 3. The lame man was near a temple gate not in the country. 4. Benjamin.—Judges 15:15. 5. Elijah.—Judges 1:14. 6. True.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

## 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."

## Catching Cactus Thieves

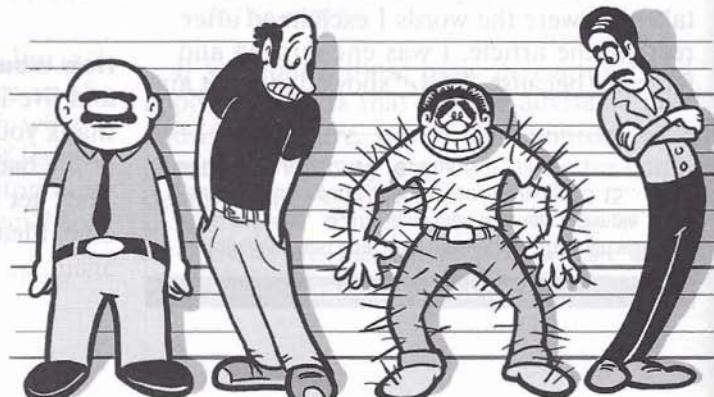
The Saguaro National Park, Arizona, U.S.A., is losing some of its signature cactuses to thieves. "Everybody wants a saguaro in their front yard," says Jim McGinnis, of the Arizona Department of Agriculture's office of special investigations. So it is not uncommon to see a vehicle in the desert carrying 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.

■ "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 eight-day, 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."

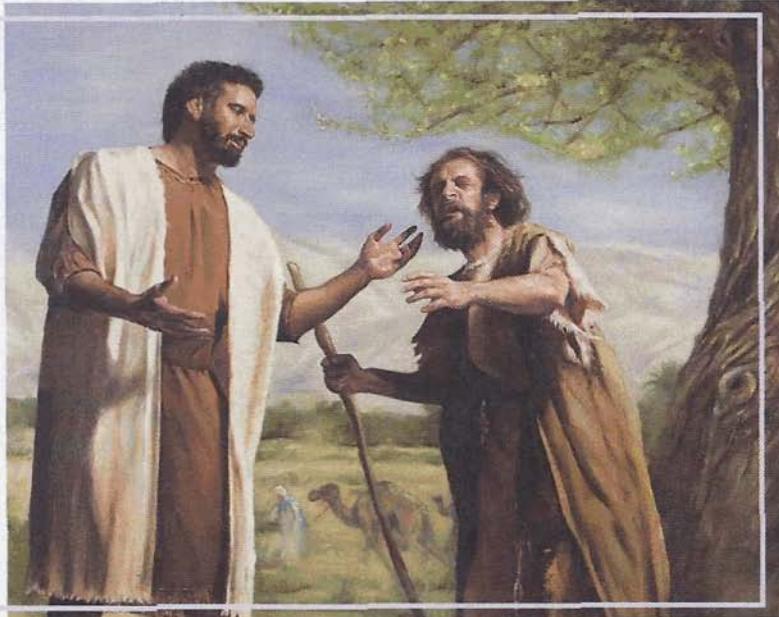


### What Is Wrong With This Picture?

Read Acts 3:1-10. Now look at the picture. What features are incorrect? Write your answers on the lines below.

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 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?** Luke 9:\_\_\_\_\_

### What Do You Know About Judge Ehud?

Read Judges 3:12-30. Now answer the following questions.

- 4.....  
He was from which tribe?

- 5.....  
He delivered Israel from which ruler?

- 6.....  
True or false?  
He lived before  
King David.

**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?



# '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.

