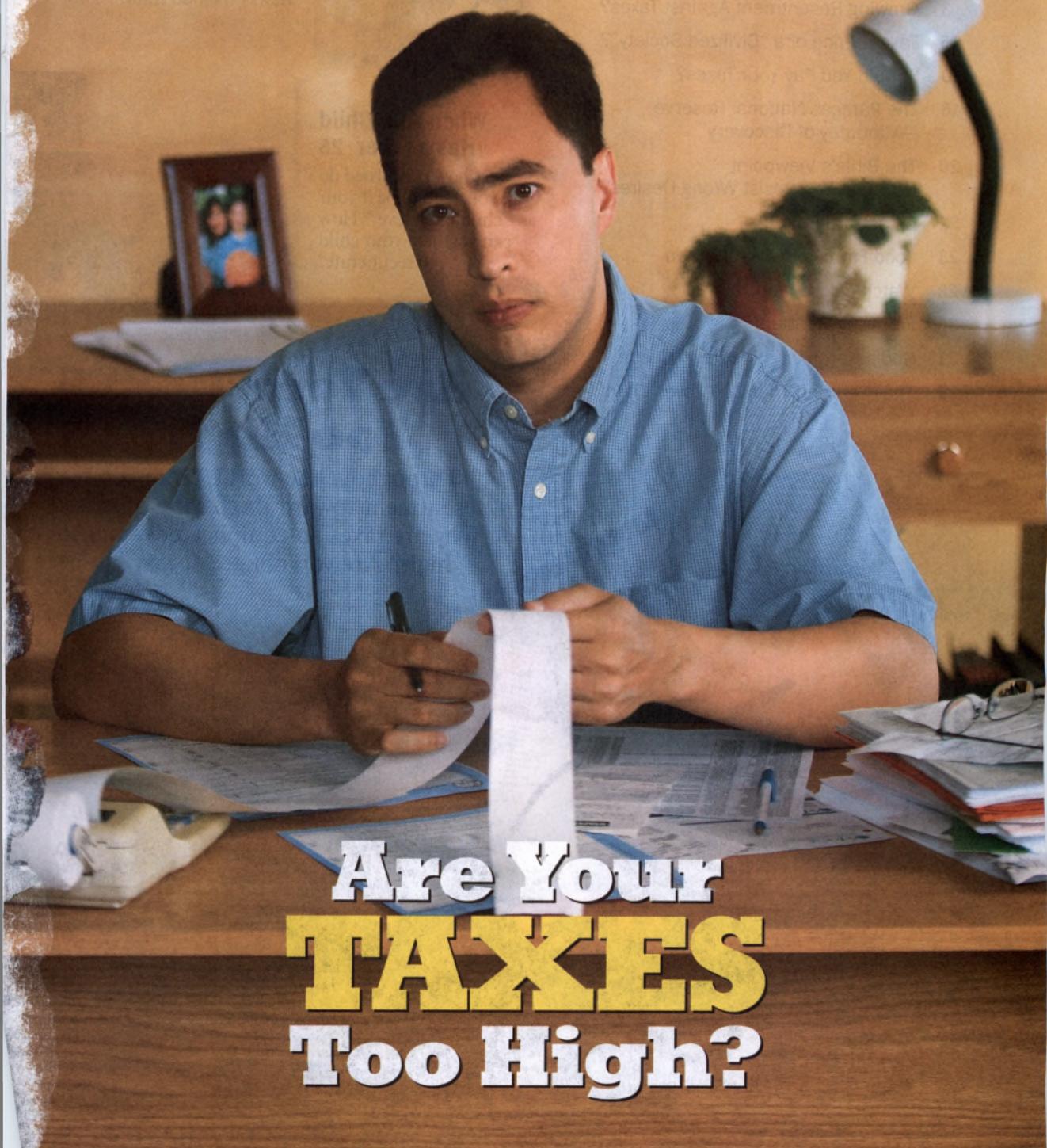


Awake!

DECEMBER 8, 2003



Are Your
TAXES
Too High?

Awake!

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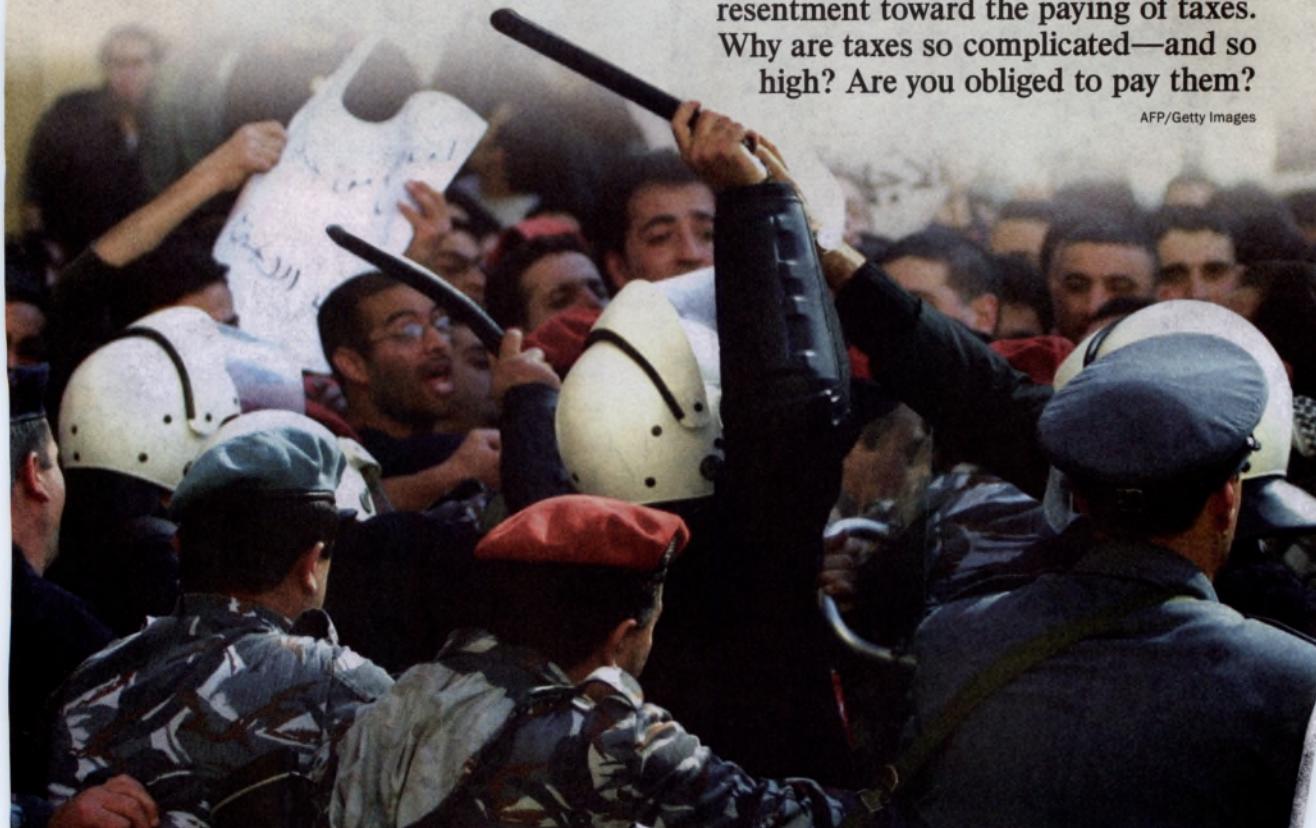
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Are Your TAXES Too High? 3-11

Throughout the world, there is often resentment toward the paying of taxes. Why are taxes so complicated—and so high? Are you obliged to pay them?

AFP/Getty Images



Growing Resentment Against Taxes?



"If I toil it is snatched away from me."

—Babylonian proverb, about 2300 B.C.E.

"In this world, nothing is certain but death and taxes."

—U.S. statesman Benjamin Franklin, 1789.

REUBEN works in sales. Every year nearly a third of his hard-earned wages evaporate in the form of taxes. "I don't see where all this money is going," he complains. "With so many government cutbacks, we're receiving less services than ever before."

Like it or not, though, taxes are a part of life. Writer Charles Adams says: "Governments have been taxing income in many ways as long as there [has] been civilized life." Taxes have often aroused resentment and have sometimes sparked revolt. The ancient Britons fought the Romans, saying: "How much better to have been slain than to go about with a tax on our heads!" In France hatred of the gabelle, a salt tax, helped spark the French Revolution, during which tax collectors were guillotined. Tax revolts also played a role in the U.S. war of independence, fought against England.

Not surprisingly, resentment against taxes continues to smolder to this day. Experts say that in developing lands tax systems are often "inefficient" and "unfair." According to one researcher, there is an impoverished African land that had "over 300 local taxes, the

administration of which was impossible even with the best of capacities. Proper collection and monitoring mechanisms are either non-existent or not applied, . . . creating opportunities for misuse." BBC News reported that in one Asian land, "local officials imposed dozens of . . . illegal charges—from fees for growing bananas to taxes on slaughtering pigs—either to top up [increase] the local finances or to pad their own pockets."

The gap between rich and poor fuels the fires of resentment. Says the UN publication *Africa Recovery*: "One of the many economic differences between developed and developing countries is that developed countries subsidize farmers while developing countries tax farmers. . . . World Bank studies suggest that US subsidies alone reduce West Africa's annual revenue from cotton exports by \$250 [million] a year." Farmers in developing lands may thus resent it when their government extracts taxes from their already meager earnings. A farmer in one Asian land says: "Whenever [government officials] came here they were bound to be asking for money."

Similar resentment was seen recently in South Africa when the government imposed a land tax on farmers. The farmers threatened court action. The tax "will cause bankruptcies

◀ Tax protesters clash with police

among farmers and further unemployment among farmworkers," charged a spokesman for the farmers. At times, resentment against taxation still results in violence. Reports BBC News: "Two [Asian] farmers were killed last year when police stormed a village where peasants were protesting against excessive taxes."

It is not only the poor who resent paying taxes, though. A survey in South Africa revealed that many affluent taxpayers "are not willing to pay additional taxes—even if this meant that the government would not be able to improve the services that are important

to them." World-renowned celebrities in the fields of music, film, sports, and politics have made headlines because of tax evasion. The book *The Decline (and Fall?) of the Income Tax* observes: "Sadly, our highest government officials, our presidents, have also been far from perfect role models in inspiring ordinary citizens to obey the tax law."

Perhaps you likewise feel that taxes are excessive, unfair, and overwhelming. How, then, should you view the paying of taxes? Do they serve any real purpose? Why are tax systems often so complex and seemingly unfair? The following articles explore these questions.



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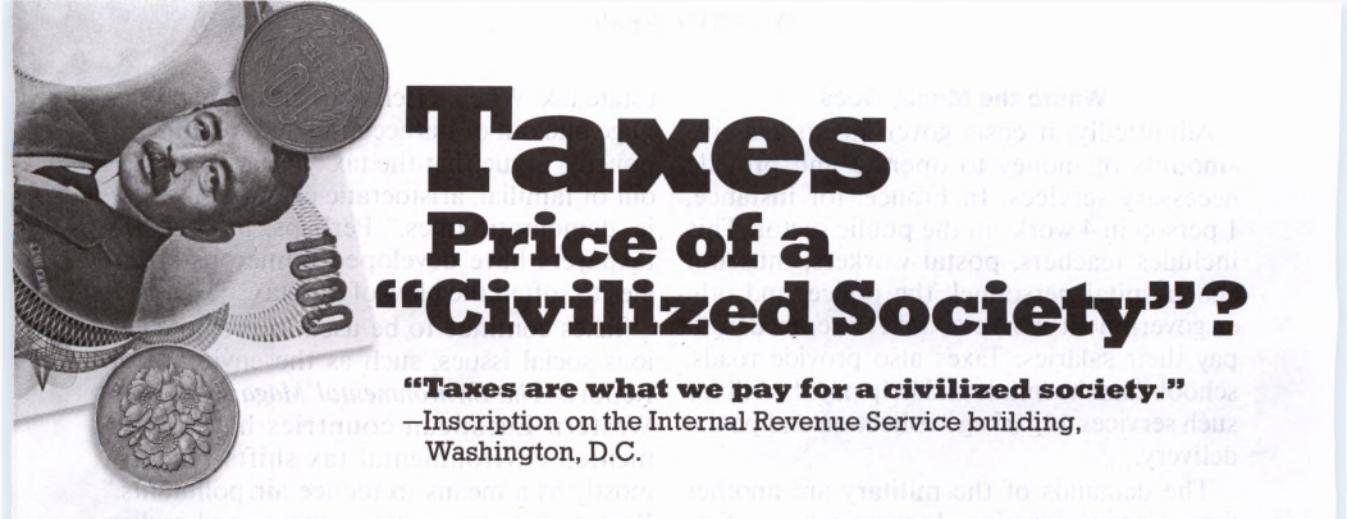
In developing lands the poor may carry an unfair share of the tax burden

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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Taxes Price of a “Civilized Society”?

“Taxes are what we pay for a civilized society.”

—Inscription on the Internal Revenue Service building,
Washington, D.C.

GOVERNMENTS argue that taxes are a necessary evil—the price of a “civilized society.” Whether you agree with that sentiment or not, it is undeniable that the price is usually a high one.

Taxes can be divided into two categories: direct and indirect. Income tax, corporate tax, and property tax are examples of *direct* taxes. Of these, income tax is probably the most resented. This is especially so in lands where income tax is progressive—the more you earn, the more tax you pay. Critics argue that progressive taxes punish hard work and success.

The *OECD Observer*, a publication of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, reminds us that in addition to taxes paid to central governments, “income earners may have to pay local, regional, provincial or state income taxes on top of the central government income tax. This is the case in Belgium, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Korea,

the Nordic countries, Spain, Switzerland and the United States.”

Indirect taxes include sales taxes, taxes on liquor and cigarettes, and customs duties. These are less visible than direct taxes but can still pack an economic punch, especially among the poor. In India’s magazine *Frontline*, writer Jayali Ghosh argues that it is a myth that middle-class and wealthy taxpayers pay the bulk of India’s tax bill. Ghosh says: “For the State governments, indirect taxes amount to more than 95 per cent of their total tax collection. . . . It is likely that poorer people actually pay out a larger share of their income in the form of taxes, than the rich.” High taxes on items for mass consumption, such as soap and food, evidently create this disparity.

Just what do governments do with all the money they collect?

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Where the Money Goes

Admittedly, it costs governments massive amounts of money to operate and provide necessary services. In France, for instance, 1 person in 4 works in the public sector. This includes teachers, postal workers, museum and hospital personnel, the police, and other government workers. Taxes are needed to pay their salaries. Taxes also provide roads, schools, and hospitals and help pay the bill for such services as garbage collection and postal delivery.

The demands of the military are another force driving taxation. Income tax was first levied on wealthy Britons to finance the war against the French in 1799. During World War II, however, the British government began requiring the working class to pay its share of income taxes. Today, oiling a nation's military machine continues to be a costly affair, even in times of peace. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimated world military expenditure in 2000 to be approximately 798 billion dollars.

Social Engineering

Taxes also serve as a means of "social engineering"—a tool to encourage or discourage certain forms of behavior. Taxing alcohol, for example, supposedly curbs excessive drinking. Thus, in many lands taxes make up about 35 percent of the retail cost of beer.

Heavy taxes are also levied on tobacco. In South Africa taxes make up from 45 to 50 percent of the cost of a pack of cigarettes. However, a government's motive in promoting such taxes may not always be purely altruistic. As writer Kenneth Warner observes in the magazine *Foreign Policy*, tobacco is "a powerful economic force that annually generates hundreds of billions of dollars in sales and billions more in tax revenues."

One notable example of social engineering took place early in the 20th century. U.S. lawmakers sought to curtail the formation of wealthy family dynasties. How? By creating an

estate tax. When a rich man dies, taxes take a huge bite out of his accumulated wealth. Proponents argue that the tax "diverts resources out of familial, aristocratic channels into civic, democratic ones." Perhaps, but wealthy taxpayers have developed numerous strategies to soften the blow of that tax.

Taxes continue to be used to promote various social issues, such as the environment. Reports *The Environmental Magazine*: "Nine Western European countries have implemented environmental tax shifts recently, mostly as a means to reduce air pollutants." Progressive income taxes, mentioned earlier, are yet another attempt at social engineering; the idea is to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. Some governments also give tax relief to those making charitable donations or to couples who have children.

Why So Complicated?

Whenever a new tax is proposed, legislators try to close any possible tax loopholes. Remember: Enormous amounts of money are at stake. The result? Tax laws tend to be complex and highly technical. An article in *Time* magazine explains that many of the complications in U.S. tax law "come in defining income," that is, in determining just what is taxable. Further complications come from the myriad rules "allowing various deductions and exemptions." It is not just the United States that has complicated tax laws, however. A recent edition of the United Kingdom's tax legislation ran to 9,521 pages, filling ten volumes.

The Office of Tax Policy Research at the University of Michigan reports: "Each year U.S. taxpayers spend over three billion hours on their income tax returns. . . . All together, the time and money spent by U.S. income taxpayers [in filling out tax returns] amounts to as much as \$100 billion every year, or about 10% of the tax collected. Much of this compliance cost is due to the mind-boggling complexity of the income tax law." Says Reuben, mentioned at the beginning of the first article

In many lands high taxes are placed on tobacco products and alcoholic beverages



Think Before You Move!

Tax systems vary from country to country. In fact, local income taxes may vary drastically within the same country. Is it worth considering a move to an area where tax rates are lower? Perhaps, but you should think before you move.

For example, an article in the *OECD Observer* reminds readers that the basic income-tax rate is not the whole story. It says: "The actual tax bill of individual taxpayers also reflects the impact of various deductions." For example, some countries have a low income-tax rate. But they offer "little in the way of basic relief, deductions

in this series: "I used to try to do my own taxes, but it was time-consuming, and I often felt I was paying more than I had to. So now I pay an accountant to do my taxes."—See the box "Complying With Tax Laws," on page 8.

Payers, Avoiders, and Evaders

Most people will at least begrudgingly acknowledge the benefits that taxes bring to their community. The head of the British Inland Revenue once explained: "Nobody enjoys paying income tax, but few people argue that we would be better off without it." Some estimate that the level of tax compliance in the United States is as high as 90 percent. One tax authority admits: "Much non-compliance stems from difficulty with the law and procedures, rather than from wilful evasion."

Even so, many find ways to avoid paying certain taxes. For instance, consider what an article in *U.S. News & World Report* said about corporate taxes: "Many firms legally skirt a large share of their liability—and sometimes all of it—through tax breaks and accounting maneuvers." Giving an example of one clever scheme, the article continues: "A U.S. corporation sets up a firm in a foreign tax haven. It then turns the U.S. operation

and exemptions." As a result, one could end up paying more there than in countries with higher tax rates that offer more tax exemptions and deductions.

In the United States, some consider moving to states that are free of state income taxes. But does this necessarily save one money? Not according to *Kiplinger's Personal Finance*, which says: "In several cases, our research shows that the states without an income tax make up the difference with higher rates for property taxes, sales taxes and other tax categories."

into a subsidiary of the foreign company.” The company is thus spared paying U.S. taxes—which might be as high as 35 percent—even though the “headquarters may be little more than a filing cabinet and a mailbox.”

Then there is out-and-out tax evasion. Reportedly, tax evasion is viewed as a “national sport” in one European nation. According to a survey in the United States, only 58 percent of men between the ages of 25 and 29 believed it was wrong not to declare all income. The survey’s authors admit: “The report doesn’t say great things for the ethics and morality of our society.” In Mexico tax evasion is estimated to be about 35 percent.

By and large, though, people acknowledge the need for taxes and do not mind paying their fair share. However, the famous words attributed to Tiberius Caesar ring true: “A good shepherd should shear his flock, not skin it.” If you feel victimized by a system that seems burdensome, unfair, and overly complex, just how should you view the paying of taxes?



Complying With Tax Laws

For many of us, paying taxes is a stressful, yes, taxing affair. Awake! thus asked a tax expert for some practical suggestions.

“Get good advice. This is essential, for tax law can be complicated, and ignorance of the law is very rarely accepted as a valid excuse for non-compliance. Although a taxpayer might think that tax officials are the enemy, they can often give accurate and simple instructions about how to deal with tax matters. Tax authorities would prefer that you get your tax right the first time. They do not want to prosecute you for noncompliance.

“If your finances are complicated, seek advice from a tax professional. But beware! While there are many tax professionals who have your best interests at heart, there are plenty who don’t. Seek a recommendation from a trusted friend or busi-

ness acquaintance, and check out the professional’s credentials.

“Act promptly. Penalties for late submission of information can be severe.

“Keep tidy records. Whatever your system of bookkeeping is, keep it up-to-date. That way, the work you will have to do at tax time will be kept to a minimum. You will also be in a much better position should your records be audited.

“Be honest. You might be tempted to cheat or perhaps to bend the rules a little. But tax officials have many ingenious ways of spotting false claims. It is always best to be honest.

“Be involved. If a paid tax preparer submits inaccurate information, it is still your responsibility. So be careful that your representative acts in accordance with your wishes.”



**Taxes finance many of
the services that we
might take for granted**





Should You Pay Your Taxes?

"Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor."

—Romans 13:7, *New International Version*.

IN THE face of escalating taxation, the above advice may seem hard to swallow. However, those are the words of the apostle Paul, and they are recorded in the Bible. No doubt you respect the Bible. But you may wonder, 'Must Christians really pay *all* taxes—including those some may consider unreasonable or unjust?'

Think about the admonition Jesus gave to his disciples. He knew that his Jewish countrymen bitterly resented the taxes imposed by Rome. Despite this, Jesus urged: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Mark 12:17) Interestingly, Jesus advocated paying tax to the very regime that would shortly execute him.

A few years later, Paul gave the advice quoted at the outset. He urged the paying of taxes, in spite of the fact that large amounts of tax money were used to fund Rome's military and to support the immoral and excessive life-style of the Roman emperors. Why did Paul take such an unpopular stance?

Superior Authorities

Consider the context of Paul's words. At Romans 13:1, he wrote: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God."

When the nation of Israel had God-fearing rulers, it was easy to view supporting the nation financially as a civic and religious duty. But did Christians have a similar responsibility when the rulers were unbelieving

True Christians obey tax laws

idol worshipers? Yes, they did! Paul's words showed that God had granted rulers the "authority" to rule.

Governments do a great deal to maintain order. This allows Christians to carry on their various spiritual activities. (Matthew 24:14; Hebrews 10:24, 25) Paul thus said regarding the prevailing governmental authority: "It is God's minister to you for your good." (Romans 13:4) Paul himself took advantage of the protection the Roman government offered. For example, when he found himself the victim of a mob, he was saved by Roman soldiers. Later he appealed to the Roman judicial system so that he could continue serving as a missionary.—Acts 22:22-29; 25:11, 12.

Paul therefore gave three reasons for paying taxes. First, he spoke about the "wrath" of the governments in punishing lawbreakers. Second, he explained that a godly individual's conscience would be adversely affected if he cheated on his taxes. Finally, he indicated that taxes are simply compensation for the services governments perform as "public servants."—Romans 13:1-6.



Jesus said: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar"

Did Paul's fellow Christians take his words to heart? Evidently so, for the second-century nominal Christian writer Justin Martyr (about 110 to 165 C.E.) said that Christians paid their taxes "more readily than all men." Today, when governments require payments, be they time or money, Christians continue to comply willingly.—Matthew 5:41.*

Of course, Christians are free to take advantage of any legal tax deductions. In some instances, they may be in a position to avail themselves of tax advantages granted to those contributing to religious organizations. Nevertheless, in obedience to God's Word, true Christians do not engage in tax evasion. They pay their taxes, letting the authorities take full responsibility for how they use the money.

Excessive taxation is just one way in which "man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Jehovah's Witnesses take comfort in the Bible's promise that soon justice will prevail for all under God's government—a government that will never burden people with unjust taxes.—Psalm 72:12, 13; Isaiah 9:7.

* Jesus' counsel to pay "Caesar's things to Caesar" was not necessarily limited to paying taxes. (Matthew 22:21) The *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Gospel of Matthew*, by Heinrich Meyer, explains: "By [Caesar's things] . . . we are not to understand merely the *civil tax*, but everything to which Caesar was entitled in virtue of his legitimate rule."

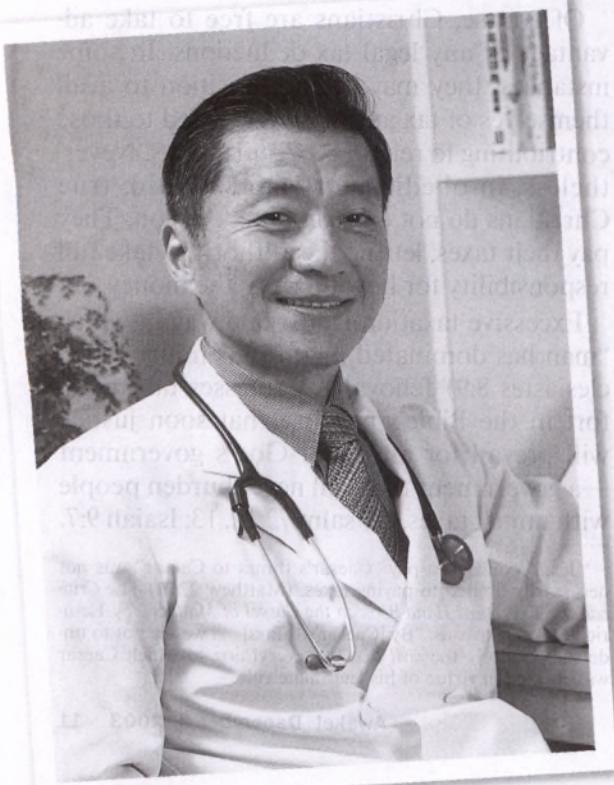
Early Christians paid their taxes "more readily than all men."

—JUSTIN MARTYR

I Accepted God's View of Blood

A PHYSICIAN TELLS HIS STORY

I WAS in the hospital auditorium, summarizing the results of an autopsy to a group of doctors. The patient who died had a malignant tumor, and I said, "We can conclude that the immediate cause of death in this patient was hemolysis [the destruction of red blood cells] and acute renal [kidney] failure caused by a massive blood transfusion."



One professor stood up and angrily shouted, "Are you saying we transfused the wrong type of blood?" I answered, "That is not what I meant." Showing some slides of tiny sections of the patient's kidney, I added, "We can see lysis [disintegration] of multiple red blood cells in the kidney and can thus conclude that this caused acute kidney failure."* The atmosphere grew tense, and my mouth went dry. Although I was a young doctor and he was a professor, I felt that I could not back down.

When this incident took place, I was not one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was born in 1943 in Sendai, a city in the northern part of Japan. As my father had been a pathologist and a psychiatrist, I decided to study medicine. In my second year of medical school, in 1970, I married a young woman named Masuko.

Moving Into the Field of Pathology

Masuko worked to help support us as I finished my schooling. The field of medicine

* According to the textbook *Modern Blood Banking and Transfusion Practices* by Dr. Denise M. Harmening, "delayed hemolytic transfusion reaction" can occur "in a patient who has previously been sensitized by transfusion, pregnancy, or transplant." In such cases, the antibodies that cause a patient to react adversely to a transfusion are "not detectable by standard pretransfusion methods." According to *Dailey's Notes on Blood*, hemolysis "can be triggered even when only a small amount of incompatible . . . blood is administered. When renal shutdown does occur the patient is slowly poisoned because the kidneys cannot remove impurities from the blood."

fascinated me. I was in awe of how well the human body is made! Even so, I never thought about the existence of a Creator. I thought that medical research could give meaning to my life. So after becoming a physician, I chose to continue my studies in medicine by entering the field of pathology—the study of the characteristics, causes, and effects of disease.

While performing autopsies on patients who had died of cancer, I began to have my doubts regarding the efficacy of blood transfusions. Patients with advanced cancer may be anemic as a result of bleeding. Because chemotherapy exacerbates anemia, doctors often prescribe blood transfusions. However, I came to suspect that transfusions might simply cause the cancer to spread. At any rate, today it is known that blood transfusions cause immunosuppression, which can increase the possibility of tumor recurrence and decrease the survival rate of cancer patients.*

In 1975, I encountered the case mentioned at the outset. The professor had been in charge of the case and was a specialist in hematology. So it was no wonder that he was furious when he heard me say that a blood transfusion caused the patient's death! However, I continued my presentation, and he gradually calmed down.

No Sickness or Death

It was about that time that my wife received a visit from an elderly lady who was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. She used the word "Jehovah" in her presentation, and my wife asked what that meant. The Witness answered, "Jehovah is the name of the true God." Masuko had been reading the Bible since she was a child, but the Bible she used had replaced God's name with "LORD." Now she knew that God was a person with a name!

Masuko immediately began studying the Bible with the elderly Witness. When I came home from the hospital about 1:00 a.m., my wife excitedly told me, "It says in the Bible that sickness and death are going to be done away with!" I answered, "That would be wonderful!" She continued, "Since the new world is com-

* The *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, August 1988, reported: "Patients receiving perioperative blood transfusions have a significantly worse prognosis than patients undergoing cancer surgery without a perioperative transfusion."



ing soon, I don't want you to waste your time." I took that to mean that she wanted me to quit being a doctor, so I got angry and our relationship became rather strained.

My wife did not give up on me, though. She prayerfully looked for appropriate scriptures and showed them to me. The words of Ecclesiastes 2:22, 23 especially reached my heart: "What does a man come to have for all his hard work and for the striving of his heart with which he is working hard under the sun? . . . During the night his heart just does not lie down. This too is mere vanity." This applied to what I was doing—devoting myself to medical science day and night without finding true satisfaction.

One Sunday morning in July 1975, when my wife left for the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, I suddenly made up my mind to go too.

My wife was very surprised to see me there, and I received a warm welcome from the Witnesses. From then on, I attended every Sunday meeting. About a month later, a Witness began conducting a Bible study with me. Three months after my wife had her first visit from Jehovah's Witnesses, she was baptized.

Accepting God's View of Blood

I soon learned that the Bible tells Christians to 'abstain from blood.' (Acts 15:28, 29; Genesis 9:4) Since I already had doubts about the effectiveness of blood transfusions, I had no difficulty accepting God's view of blood.* I thought, 'If there is a Creator and that is what he says, then it must be right.'

I also learned that the cause of sickness and death is Adamic sin. (Romans 5:12) At the time, I was carrying out a study on arteriosclerosis. As we get older, our arteries harden and narrow, causing such illnesses as heart disease, cerebrovascular disorders, and kidney disease. It made sense that the cause is our inherited imperfection. After that, my zeal for medicine began to wane. Only Jehovah God can do away with sickness and death!

In March 1976, seven months after beginning my Bible study, I quit my studies at the university hospital. I feared that I would never be able to work as a physician again, but I found work at another hospital. I got baptized in May 1976. I decided that the best way for me to use my life would be to serve as a full-time evangelizer, or pioneer, which I began to do in July 1977.

Defending God's View of Blood

In November 1979, Masuko and I moved to a congregation in Chiba Prefecture where there was a great need for preachers. I found a hospital where I could work part-time. On my first day of work, a group of surgeons surrounded me. They persistently asked me, "As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, what will you do

if a patient who needs a blood transfusion is brought in?"

I respectfully explained that I would follow what God says about blood. I explained that there were alternatives to blood transfusion and that I would do the best I could to help my patients. After about an hour's discussion, the chief of surgery answered, "I understand. But if a patient with massive blood loss is brought in, we will handle the situation." The chief of surgery was known as a difficult person, but after that discussion we developed a good relationship, and he always respected my beliefs.

Respect for Blood Put to the Test

While we were serving in Chiba, a new headquarters for Jehovah's Witnesses in

*"I explained that there
were alternatives to blood
transfusion and that I would
do the best I could to help
my patients"*

Japan was under construction in Ebina. My wife and I drove there once a week to care for the health of the Witness volunteers building this facility, called Bethel. After a few months, we received an invitation to serve at Ebina Bethel full-time. Thus, in March 1981 we began living in the temporary buildings used to house over 500 volunteer workers. In the morning, I helped clean the construction site bath and toilets, and in the afternoon I did medical checkups.

One of my patients was Ilma Iszlaub, who came to Japan from Australia as a missionary in 1949. She had leukemia and was told by her doctors that she had just a few months

* For more information on the Bible's teachings regarding blood, see the brochure *How Can Blood Save Your Life?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

“Bloodless surgeries have provided evidence of the benefits of avoiding blood transfusions”

to live. Ilma refused to accept blood transfusions to prolong her life and opted to live out her remaining days at Bethel. At that time medicines that stimulate red blood cell production, such as erythropoietin, were not yet available. So at times her hemoglobin was as low as 3 or 4 grams! (Normal is 12 to 15.) But I did what I could to treat her. Ilma continued to display her unshakable faith in God's Word until her death in January 1988—some seven years later!

Over the years a number of volunteers at the Japan branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses have needed surgery. To their credit, doctors at nearby hospitals have cooperated by performing the surgeries without blood. I have often been invited into the operating room to observe the procedures, and at times, I have even assisted in the operation. I am grateful to those doctors who show respect for the stand Jehovah's Witnesses take on blood. Working with them has provided me with many opportunities to share my beliefs. One of the doctors recently became a baptized Witness.

Interestingly, the efforts of doctors to treat Jehovah's Witnesses without blood have resulted in significant contributions to medicine. Bloodless surgeries have provided evidence of the benefits of avoiding blood transfusions. Studies show that the patients recover faster and with fewer problems after surgery.

Top: Giving a Bible lecture

Right: With my wife, Masuko, today

Continuing to Learn From the Greatest Physician

I try to keep up with the latest advances in medicine. Yet, I also continue to learn from Jehovah, the greatest Physician. He does not merely see what is on the surface but sees us as a whole person. (1 Samuel 16:7) As a doctor, I try to treat each patient as a whole person, not just focusing on his or her illness. This allows me to render a patient better medical care.

I continue to serve at Bethel, and helping others learn about Jehovah—including his view of blood—is still one of my greatest joys. My prayer is that the Great Physician, Jehovah God, will soon bring an end to all sickness and death.—*As told by Yasushi Aizawa.*





The Paracas

A JOURNEY

By *Awake!* writer in Peru

FOR many years tourists from all over the world have been drawn to Peru. The itinerary usually includes Lima; Cuzco, the Inca capital; the splendid ruins of Machu Picchu; the majestic Andes; and perhaps even a boat ride on the Amazon. Recently another attraction has been added to the list—the Paracas National Reserve. It is about 150 miles south of Lima, by way of the Pan-American Highway.

The Paracas National Reserve covers some 800,000 acres of coastal areas and the Paracas Peninsula. It was established in 1975 by the Peruvian government for the preservation of the abundant wildlife that permanently inhab-

its the area or annually migrate there. The reserve serves to encourage respect for the environment, while also promoting tourism. Over 100 archaeological sites have thus far been discovered, evidence of centuries of Paracas culture. The marine areas afford a home for sea lions, sea otters, dolphins, over two hundred species of birds, and four kinds of sea turtles.

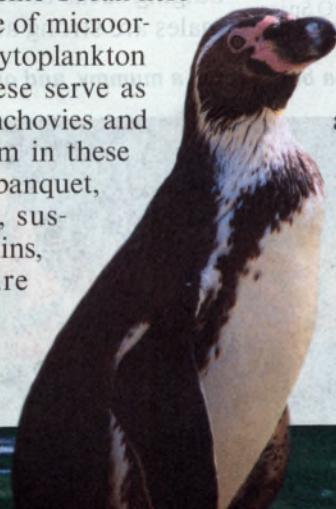
On a map, the Paracas Peninsula looks like a mere button on the much larger bulge of the continental landmass. As a result of this geographic position, the area is buffeted by vigorous trade winds, locally called *paracas*. These winds surge northward, pushing along the cold Peru Current, or Humboldt Current. The



National Reserve OF DISCOVERY

combination of chilly waters, shallow shores, and ocean upwellings has made the peninsula one of the most prolific marine wildlife zones in the world. The Pacific Ocean here is green with an abundance of microorganisms, including both phytoplankton and zooplankton, and these serve as food for the millions of anchovies and other small fish that swarm in these rich waters. This marine banquet, especially the anchovies, sustains many seabirds, penguins, and sea mammals that are protected in the reserve.

Humboldt penguin



Visiting the Ballestas Islands

Our journey begins at the docks in the bay at Paracas. Numerous small fishing boats are bobbing at anchor, their only passengers the local pelicans that sit preening and observing the activity of the people around them. Our speedboat arrives, and we eagerly step in and don our life jackets. Once away from the portside congestion, our boat picks up speed, giving us an exhilarating ride as we skim across the mild swells of the bay.

Our first stop is near the end of the peninsula. There, our guide comments

Coastline: © Carlos Salas/PromPeru; flamingos: © Arturo Bullard/PromPeru; penguin: © Heinz Plenge/PromPeru



The Candelabra

on a huge design on the hillside. It is called the Candelabra, although you might think it looks like a three-armed cactus. Some have suggested that the design is part of the drawings of the famous Nazca Lines.* Others have speculated that it was drawn by pirates or that it is a Masonic symbol made by the soldiers following revolutionary leader José de San Martín in 1820. Whatever its origin, this desert work of art is impressive to behold.

Once we are past the peninsula, our ride gets rougher. We can see the islands gleaming white in the morning sun. This, however, is not rock and sand but guano—seabird dung—which covers the islands.

We draw up to the Ballestas, or Crossbow, Islands, so named by the Spanish for the islands' natural bowlike archways. The pilot slows down the motor. Our first thought is,

* These are drawings of animals and geometric designs on the plains of Nazca, Peru, that are too big to be seen from ground level. See the article "The Nazca Lines—A UFO Spaceport?" in the January 8, 1982, issue of *Awake!*

"Who is observing whom?" for perched on crags and the uppermost rims of the islands are countless seabirds—pelicans, terns, sea gulls, boobies, a variety of cormorants, and even Humboldt penguins. While it may seem strange to see penguins in a tropical zone, the extremely cold waters and abundant fish supply make them feel right at home. Next, we spy sea lions sunning on every available rock platform. The islands are, for the most part, rock formations that plunge directly into the sea, and we admire how penguins and sea lions, so clumsy on land, manage to reach their perches.

Our guide regales us with facts and figures. "A male sea lion can weigh more than 300 kilos and has a harem of as many as 20 females," she explains. While the females have a shapely sea lion silhouette, the huge males look like bulging sacks of blubber. We learn that these males are strong and fearsome mammals that

Artifacts of the Paracas culture—a burial robe, a mummy, and one of the long heads



contend with each other for control of the harem and territory. The loser is often fatally wounded, thus providing food for the turkey vultures and condors that are also part of the food chain in these coastal waters. A sea lion has a rather hearty appetite, often devouring 20 pounds of fish during just one nighttime feeding. But these creatures are not aggressive toward us—just very curious.

As our pilot slowly steers us around each of the three islands and the stone archways, we notice the air is filled with the strong smell of guano. “In the archways,” our guide explains, “live vampire bats that feed on the sea lions while they sleep.” In the distance, we see what looks like a large, dark stain on the biggest island. It is a flock of *guanayes*, or cormorants, water birds that love togetherness. They are clustered tightly together resting and producing guano. Boobies make plummeting dives into the sea, while other birds glide past us at eye level.

Finally, we come to the ‘maternity ward,’ the largest beach area on the islands. We are thrilled to see many sea lions with squirming groups of dark-colored babies wriggling around the females. The beach is noisy with bellows, raspy guttural sounds, and high-pitched squeals. We are told that the pups may nurse for up to six months and that they learn to swim on their mother’s back.

As we make our way back to the docks, our guide says: “Sixty percent of the baby sea lions will perish before they are one year old. Some are squashed or are purposely eliminated by the males. Others drown. The El Niño weather phenomenon can also wreak havoc, as it forces the anchovies south to colder waters. Young sea lions do not have the strength to follow the adults to new feeding areas.”

Ironically, the greatest threat to the survival of the wildlife here may be man. Large numbers of sea lions have been slaughtered by hunters for their fur and by fishermen who consider them a nuisance. Sea turtles have been harvested for their meat, which is consid-

ered a delicacy, and for their shells, which are collector’s items. Bird populations have been disturbed by guano harvesters. The food supply has been depleted by overfishing. We are told that wildlife conservation methods are now the law. Perhaps such laws will influence people to be more conscious of conservation.

A Journey Into Paracas’ Past

Stepping onto solid ground, we are ready for the last half of our tour, which takes us to the Julio C. Tello Museum on the peninsula.

In 1925, Peruvian archaeologist Julio C. Tello and an associate made their first discovery on the peninsula. They named the area Long Head, for the elongated human skulls that lay half buried on the surface of the desolate ground. These were remains of the Paracas culture, which scholars estimate existed from 1000 B.C.E. to 200 B.C.E. The Paracas people had no written language. So while it is known *how* these people elongated skulls—using cushions, wooden rods, and string—no one knows *why*. In this same area, Tello made his next discovery—underground funereal caves shaped like upside-down goblets. The cloth-wrapped bodies, squatting in a fetal pose, were placed side by side, ready to be “born again” in the next life. Corn, peanuts, and sweet potatoes, as well as musical and ceremonial instruments, were also found in the caves.

Two years later Tello and another associate discovered an enormous burial ground, which they named Paracas Necropolis. It contained 429 burial bundles, some over five feet tall. These squatting mummies were each placed inside a basket. They were swathed in amazingly colorful, luxurious robes with multicolored embroidered designs, often with magical-religious motifs.

Samples of these burial robes, along with hundreds of other fascinating artifacts from the Paracas culture, can be viewed at the Julio C. Tello Museum.

We hope that our journey through the Paracas National Reserve has whetted your appetite for exploration of more of Peru’s treasures.

The Bible's Viewpoint

HOW CAN YOU RESIST WRONG DESIRES?

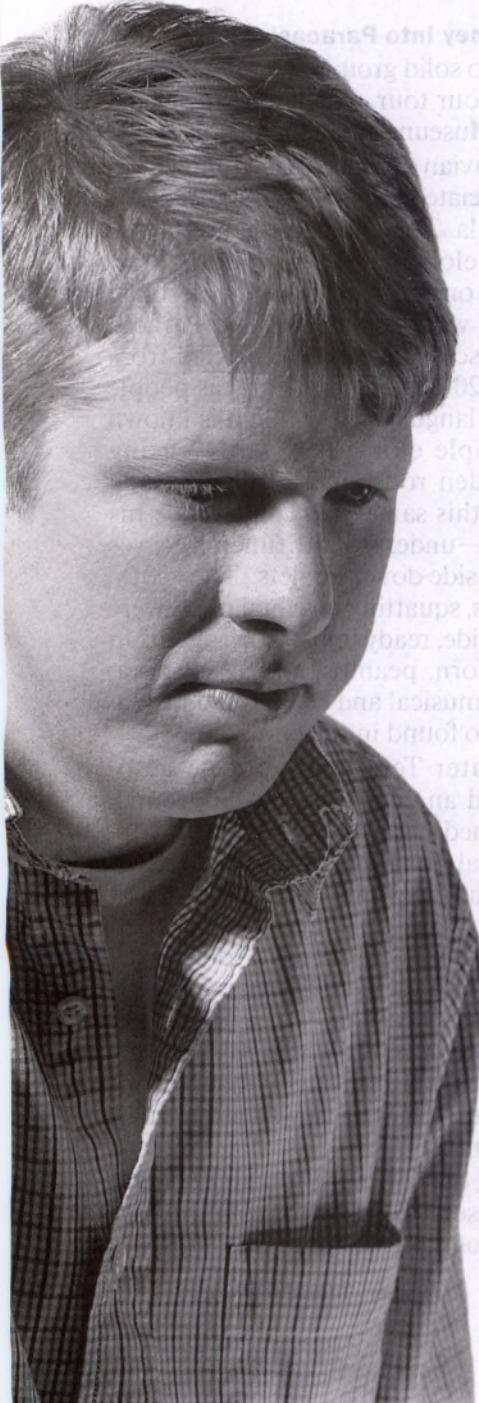
***“When I wish to do what is right,
what is bad is present with me.”*** —ROMANS 7:21

PERHAPS more than any other apostle, Paul worked hard to promote the lofty principles of Christianity. (1 Corinthians 15:9, 10) Still, he candidly made the above admission. He experienced a continual conflict between his mind and his wrong desires. Have you ever felt the way the apostle Paul did? Really, as imperfect creatures, who of us has not experienced that inner conflict?

For many, the battle to overcome wrong desires is especially intense. Some struggle with cravings for immoral sexual gratification. Others are enslaved by an addiction to gambling, tobacco, illicit drugs, or alcohol. When plagued with harmful and unclean desires, how can we resist them? What assistance is available? Will the battle against wrong desires ever end?

Love—The Key to Resisting Wrong Desires

Jesus pointed out the two greatest commandments in the Mosaic Law. The first was this: “You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.” (Matthew 22:37) If we love God as Jesus said we must, should not pleasing Him be our greatest desire? If so, that righteous desire can help us in our fight against even the most formidable wrong desires! This is not just an idealistic theory. Millions of Christians successfully battle wrong desires on a daily basis. How can you cultivate



such a strong attachment to God? By meditating appreciatively on his goodness as seen in his creation, in the Bible, and in his dealings with us personally.—Psalm 116:12, 14; 119:7, 9; Romans 1:20.

The second-greatest commandment Jesus cited was: “You must love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39) The apostle Paul said that love “does not behave indecently” and “does not look for its own interests.” Such unselfish love thus helps us to avoid any conduct that would hurt others. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) How can it be cultivated? By putting ourselves in the place of others and sincerely concerning ourselves with their feelings and lasting welfare.—Philippians 2:4.

What Assistance Is Available?

Because God understands how difficult it is for us to do what is right, he has provided assistance in several forms. Through his written Word, the Bible, he teaches us to hate what is bad and to develop a healthy respect for him. (Psalm 86:11; 97:10) The Bible contains true-life accounts that demonstrate the disastrous outcome of giving in to wrong desires. In addition, Jesus said that if we request it, God will give us His holy spirit, the greatest force in the universe. (Luke 11:13) It can strengthen our resolve to do what is right. Another provision is the mutual support and encouragement we can receive from other Christians who are also resisting wrong desires. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) As these positive influences crowd out negative ones, we are assisted in our struggle to do what is right. (Philippians 4:8) Does this approach really work?

Consider Fidel, who was known in his community as a drunkard. While under the influence of alcohol, he smoked tobacco, gambled, and fought with others. His study of the Bible and association with Jehovah’s Witnesses helped him to overcome those practices. He now enjoys a much better life with his wife and two children.

Someone might ask, ‘But what if I have a relapse?’ The apostle John addressed that possibility. He wrote: “My little children, I am writing you these things that you may not commit a sin. And yet, if anyone does commit a sin, we have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one. And he is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world’s.” (1 John 2:1, 2) Yes, Jesus’ sacrifice covers the errors of a person who repents and sincerely strives to make changes so as to please God. In view of that provision, what valid reason could anyone have for giving up in the fight to do what is right?

Wrong Desires Will Be Conquered

If we develop our love for God and neighbor and take advantage of God’s assistance, even now we can have success in our fight against wrong desires. Furthermore, God’s Word assures us that this struggle will not go on forever. In the near future, those who take advantage of God’s spiritual provisions will be completely healed, both physically and spiritually. (Revelation 21:3-5; 22:1, 2) They will be freed from the burden of sin and the death that it causes. (Romans 6:23) On the other hand, those who are intent on carrying out unclean and harmful desires will be excluded from those blessings.—Revelation 22:15.

How comforting it is to know that we will not have to struggle with wrong desires indefinitely. They will be completely and permanently removed. What a relief that will be!

In Our Next Issue

- **Children—What They Need From Parents**
- **Herbal Remedies—Can They Help You?**
- **Dress and Grooming Was My Stumbling Block**

Crossword Puzzle

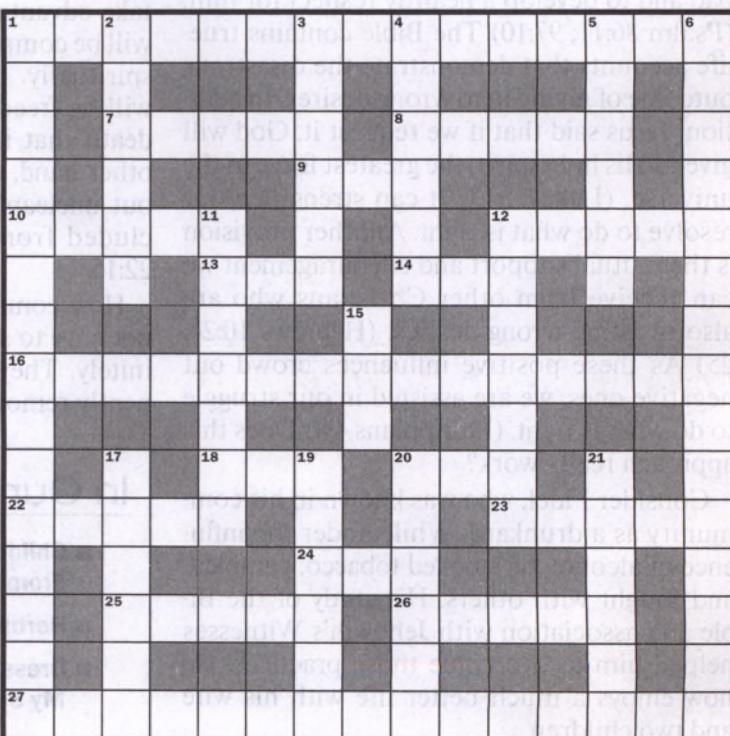
Clues Across

1. Jehovah decreed that these seasons would never cease [3 words] (Genesis 8:22)
7. One of two men mentioned in connection with the assassination of King Pekahiah of Israel by Pekah (2 Kings 15:25)
8. The Philistines encamped at Michmash made raids toward this land (1 Samuel 13:17)
9. One of the herbs that Jesus said the Pharisees would scrupulously tithe, while ignoring "the justice and the love of God" (Luke 11:42)
10. During the rule of Ahaz, the Syrians took control of this city away from Judah, and it was reoccupied by the Edomites (2 Kings 16:6)
12. Jesus said that he would come in this manner (Revelation 16:15)
13. A tree included along with the juniper and the cypress in "the very glory of Lebanon" (Isaiah 60:13)
14. Three thousand fearful men of Judah came to the crag Etam to do this to Samson in order to deliver him to the Philistines (Judges 15:11-13)
16. Jesus is this because he is the sole direct creation of Jehovah [3 words] (John 3:18)
18. Paul pointed out to the Thessalonians that a lazy person who refuses to work does not deserve to do this (2 Thessalonians 3:10)
20. Dwell (Micah 4:4; see footnote)
22. His son Eliasaph served as the chieftain of the tribe of Gad during Israel's wilderness wanderings (Numbers 7:42)
23. Jesus said that one must do this "vigorously to get in through the narrow door" (Luke 13:24)
24. The city that became synonymous with the extreme north of Israel (1 Samuel 3:20)
25. By means of this, God warned the astrologers who visited Jesus that they should not return to murderous King Herod (Matthew 2:12)
26. Used figuratively to denote that which is transitory (Psalm 102:3)

27. As titles are not multiplied before or after Jesus' name in the Scriptures, this combination is never found [3 words]

Clues Down

1. A congregation overseer is required to "have a fine testimony from people on the outside" so that he does not fall into this [4 words] (1 Timothy 3:7)
2. An Israelite among "the sons of Bani" who, after returning from Babylon, sent away his foreign wife (Ezra 10:34)
3. A place mentioned only by Micah (Micah 1:10)
4. The type of road running from Jerusalem to Gaza, where Philip taught the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26)
5. The place where Saul counted his forces before striking the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15:4)
6. Abraham lived most of his life as an alien and a temporary resident
7. because he awaited the city having these [2 words] (Hebrews 11:10)
11. Jehovah selected this chieftain to represent the tribe of Manasseh in dividing the land west of the Jordan (Numbers 34:23)
12. This term is applied to the wise woman whom Joab used to accomplish the return of Absalom from banishment (2 Samuel 14:4)
15. The abbreviated name of King Hezekiah's mother (2 Kings 18:2)
17. Barabbas, set free by Pilate in place of Jesus, was guilty of this crime (Luke 23:25)
19. A wilderness city rebuilt by King Solomon (2 Chronicles 8:4)
20. Conscious awareness or rationality (Luke 15:17)
21. Peter healed this man of Lydda who was paralyzed for eight years (Acts 9:32-34)





Food From Your Own Garden

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

IN MANY lands a daily concern of people is how they will feed their families. The high price of common vegetables often makes doing so a real challenge. Nevertheless, some have found a relatively simple solution—growing some of their own food!

You may very well want to try starting a small garden yourself. True, there may not be much land around your own home, but perhaps there is some land nearby that you could arrange to cultivate. Think of all the money you can save by producing delicious and healthy food! Gardening can even be a way for you to get some needed physical exercise. A garden can also be a family project that your children will enjoy. Indeed, cultivating a vegetable garden is educational.

It teaches such qualities as patience. (James 5:7)

Additionally, watching things grow can

draw you closer to the Creator of all good things.—Psalm 104:14.

Now do not imagine that growing your own food will be effortless or that you will get quick results. However, with determination and a little know-how, you can succeed!

A Family Meets the Challenge

Take, for example, Timothée and Lucie—a Christian couple with two children, who live in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic. They found that starting their own garden was a practical and enjoyable way to stretch their modest earnings.

When Lucie was 13 years old, she cultivated a small garden next to her home, working in it after school and on weekends. She took pleasure in watching it grow. It was not until years later, though, that the idea of starting a garden for her family came to her mind. She arranged to use a nearby field that was basically serving as a garbage heap. Lucie saw its





Timothée and Lucie drawing water for their family garden

potential. Far from resulting in a ruined parcel of land, the disintegration of the garbage over the years had created soil useful for growing food. Lucie and Timothée decided to turn that land into a flourishing garden.

Getting Started

First, though, they had to do some research. They talked to others who knew about vegetable cultivation, and they listened carefully. Since the plot of land was in need of irrigation, they even learned how to dig their own well. Reading books on gardening also proved helpful.

They read about plant interactions, and they learned that some plants help one another to thrive. However, some plants actually hinder one another's growth. Some say that carrots and tomatoes are ideal partners in a vegetable garden. Likewise, planting celery and cauliflower together is advantageous for both. And dill is a "friend" of peas, cucumbers, lettuce, and onions. However, green lettuce and parsley do not do well together. Onions will harm green beans and peas. When plants are harmful to one another, they weaken and become an easy target for pests and harmful insects.



An allotment garden in Munich, Germany

Timothée and Lucie also learned that it was unwise to cultivate a single plant crop on a plot of land. If it was attacked by insects or disease, they could lose everything. Planting a well-chosen variety of plants helped them minimize that risk. Herbs and flowers added color, life, and beauty to their vegetable garden and attracted bees and other useful insects that help gardens remain healthy.

This couple also found ways to avoid using poisonous sprays on their crops. They learned that simply planting garlic can help rid a garden of certain pests.*

It took much hard work and patience, but today Timothée and Lucie have a thriving garden. It produces cabbage, parsley, tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, and eggplants—sometimes more than the family can consume!

Grow Your Own Garden!

It is not just in Africa, though, that people have discovered the practicality of having their own garden. In Germany, for example, there are over a million urban allotment gardens. Sometimes called Schrebergaerten (after the German physician Daniel Schreber), the allotment gardens are clusters of small parcels of land (between 2,000 and 4,000 square feet) that are rented out to city dwellers. According to one researcher, these tiny gardens "play an important role for the production of fresh fruits and vegetables." The gardens also serve as patches of "paradise" for the gardeners—a place to work and relax.

The Bible promises that one day soon the entire earth will be a global garden—a genuine paradise. (Luke 23:43) In the meantime, though, perhaps you can find a patch of land and have the joy of obtaining food from your own little garden.

* For further suggestions on ridding a garden of pests without pesticides, see the article "Gardening the Organic Way," in the March 22, 2002, issue of *Awake!*



WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS A FEVER

"I don't feel good!" When your child makes this plaintive cry, you may immediately check his temperature. If he has a fever, you may understandably feel alarmed.

According to a study done by The Johns Hopkins Children's Center in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., 91 percent of parents believed that "even a relatively moderate fever could cause at least one harmful effect, such as seizures or brain damage." The same study shows that "89% of parents gave their child fever-reducing medicines before their child's temperature reached 102 degrees Fahrenheit (38.9 degrees Celsius)."

Just how alarmed should you be when your child develops a fever? And what are the best ways to treat it?

Fever's Important Role

What causes a fever? Although average normal body temperature is about 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit (measured orally), a person's tem-

perature commonly varies throughout the day by a single degree or more.* Your temperature may thus be lower in the morning and higher in the late afternoon. The hypothalamus, at the base of the brain, regulates body temperature, much the way a thermostat does. A fever results when the immune system, apparently in response to an invasion of bacteria or viruses, produces substances in the blood called pyrogens. This causes the hypothalamus to "reset" to a higher level.

While fever can cause discomfort and dehydration, it is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, fevers seem to play a key role in helping the body throw off bacterial and viral infections, according to the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. "The viruses that cause colds and other respiratory infections like cool temperatures. By producing

* Temperature may vary according to where the measurement is taken and the type of thermometer used.

a low-grade fever your body may actually be helping eliminate the virus." Thus, this authority further states that "reducing low-grade fevers is unnecessary and may hinder your child's natural healing mechanisms." Interestingly, one hospital in Mexico even treats certain conditions by elevating the body's temperature, a treatment called hyperthermia.

Dr. Al Sacchetti of the American College of Emergency Physicians says: "Fever itself is rarely a problem. However it is a sign that infection may be present. Therefore, when a child has a fever, the focus should be on the child, and the possible infection, and not the reading on the thermometer." The American Academy of Pediatrics notes: "Fevers under 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) generally do not need to be treated unless your child is uncomfortable or has a history of febrile convulsions. Even higher temperatures are not in themselves dangerous or significant unless your child has a history of convulsions or a chronic disease. It is more important to watch how your child is behaving. If he is eating and sleeping well, and has periods of playfulness, he probably doesn't need any treatment."

How to Treat a Mild Fever

This does not mean there is nothing you can do to assist your child. Some medical experts give the following recommendations for treating a mild fever: Keep your child's room comfortably cool. Dress the child lightly. (Overheating can aggravate the fever.) Encourage the child to take in extra fluids, such as water, diluted fruit juices, and soup, because fever can lead to dehydration.* (Drinks containing caffeine, such as colas or black tea, are diuretics and might cause further dehydration.) In-

* See the April 8, 1995, issue of *Awake!* page 11, for making a rehydration formula that can be used in cases of fever accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting.



Call the Doctor if a Feverish Child . . .

- Is three months of age or younger and has a rectal temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Is between three and six months of age and has a temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Is older than six months and has a temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Refuses liquids and shows signs of dehydration
- Has a seizure or is extremely listless
- Is still feverish after 72 hours
- Cries inconsolably or shows signs of confusion or delirium
- Has a rash, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, or repeated vomiting
- Has a stiff neck or sudden severe headache

Source: The American Academy of Pediatrics

fants should continue to be breast-fed. Avoid foods difficult to digest, as a fever decreases stomach activity.

When a child's fever goes higher than 102 degrees Fahrenheit, an over-the-counter fever-reducing medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, is often given. It is important, though, that the dosage on the label be followed. (Children under two years of age should not be given any medication without the advice of a doctor.) Fever-reducing medications are not antiviral. Therefore, they do not speed up a child's recovery from a cold or other illnesses like that, but they may alleviate discomfort. Some experts recommend that aspirin not be given to children under 16 to reduce a fever, as it has been linked to Reye's syndrome—a potentially life-threatening illness.*

A sponge bath can also reduce a fever. Sit the child in a tub of one to two inches of *lukewarm*

* Reye's syndrome is an acute neurological illness that can develop in children following a viral infection.

water, and sponge him off. (Do not use rubbing alcohol, as it can be toxic.)

The accompanying box has some helpful information about when one might decide to call a doctor. Medical attention is particularly important for someone who lives in an area where such virulent fevers as dengue, Ebola virus, typhoid fever, or yellow fever are prevalent.

By and large, then, your best course of action is to make your child more comfortable. Remember that it is rare for a fever to be high enough to cause neurological damage or death. Even fever-induced seizures, while alarming, usually produce no lasting effects.

Of course, prevention is the best medicine, and one of the most effective ways to protect your child from infection is to teach him or her basic hygiene. Children should be taught to wash their hands often—especially before eating, after using the toilet, after spending time in a crowded public place, or after petting animals. If, in spite of your best efforts, your child does get a mild fever, do not overreact. As we have learned, there is much you can do to help your child recuperate.

Crossword Solutions

S	U	M	M	E	R	A	N	D	W	I	N	T	E	R
N	A	A	R	I	E	H	S	H	U	A	L	A	E	E
R	D	D	E	U	E	L	A	E	X	E	R	T	A	A
O	I	I	A	S	H	T	I	E	M	M	O	I	I	D
T	H	E	O	N	L	Y	B	E	G	O	T	T	E	N
H	I	I	A	K	U									
E	M	E	A	T	S	I	T	A						
D	E	U	E	L	A	E	X	E	R	T	A	A	A	A
E	R	R	D	E	A	M	S	M	O	K	E	O	O	O
V	D	R	E	A	M	S	M	O	K	E	O	O	O	O
I	E	E	R	E	A	N	N	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
L	O	R	D	C	H	R	I	S	T	J	E	S	U	S

Watching the World

Mid-Life Divorce

In Germany "more couples than ever are separating after a long-term marriage," reports *Berliner Morgenpost*. Gina Kästele, a marriage therapist from Munich, Germany, says that women's growing independence, especially in financial matters, is a major factor. "The man has lost his former significance as breadwinner," says Kästele. A common view is that mid-life divorces are a result of couples' putting off divorce until the children move out of the home. More often, though, says Kästele, mid-life divorces stem from the husband's having an extramarital affair.

The Power of a Smile

"Up to 74 percent of respondents would not like to do business with gloomy people, and 69 percent could not make friends with them." So reports *Wprost* magazine regarding a study by the Institute of Sociology at Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland. One reason

cited is that sad people are often perceived as hiding something. People who work in the public eye have long known this, which explains why "politicians, business people, pop stars, TV announcers, and public relations, marketing, and sales people smile" so often, says *Wprost*. Researchers also found that when we smile, more blood reaches our brain, and this improves our mood. One businesswoman said: "I try to smile even when I do not feel like smiling. When I do smile, I feel a change inside, and it really makes me feel better."

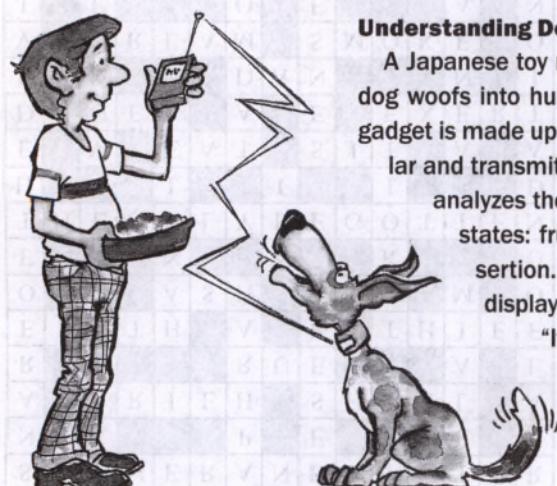
Campfire Caution

More than 70 percent of children's campfire burns in Australia are "caused by hot embers rather than flames," reports the *Medical Journal of Australia (MJA)*. Moreover, in Australia most campfire burns occur "the morning after the campfire had been considered to be extinguished." How so? Researchers

found that when campfires were extinguished with water, the residue of the fire dropped to 60 degrees Fahrenheit after eight hours. In contrast, campfires extinguished with sand remained as hot as 200 degrees Fahrenheit after eight hours—sufficient to cause a third-degree burn after one second of contact with the skin. "Because extinguishing with sand disguises the danger," the *MJA* says, "the only safe way to extinguish a campfire is with water."

Cancerous Moles

Most moles on the skin are benign. Nevertheless, it is good to keep an eye out for cancerous moles. According to Mexico City's *Milenio* newspaper, the following are signs that you should seek medical examination of a mole: One half of the mole is not equal in size to the other half, the border is irregular, there is a change in color and size, the diameter is larger than 1/4 inch [the size of a pencil eraser], or the mole bleeds or



Understanding Dog Language?

A Japanese toy maker has developed a device purported to translate dog woofs into human words, reports *Japan Information Network*. The gadget is made up of a wireless microphone that attaches to a dog's collar and transmits sounds to a small receiver. The receiver supposedly analyzes the dog's sounds and classifies them into six emotional states: frustration, anger, happiness, sadness, desire, and assertion. The results are shown on the receiver's liquid crystal display, and they include such phrases as "I'm feeling great!"

"It's so annoying!" and "Come on, play with me!" The manufacturer said that it sold 300,000 of the \$100 devices in Japan and hopes to reach one million units when it is introduced in South Korea and the United States.

No Trust in the Churches

"Germans put a lot of trust in the police and the army, but not in churches," reports the newspaper *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. In its "survey on trust," the World Economic Forum found that of 17 major public institutions, churches came in last. Sociologist Armin Nassehi said that in these times of growing insecurity, Germans put more trust in organizations that "distinguish between good and evil," such as the police and the armed forces. Why the mistrust of churches? Says Nassehi: "Despite a renaissance of religiousness, people do not believe that the church can solve their truly fundamental problems." The churches in Germany have "little more than rituals to offer," he notes.

itches. Dr. Nancy Pulido Diaz, from La Raza National Medical Center, says: "Those that require more vigilance are the moles that people are born with and those that appear on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet."

Learning a Foreign Language

Would you like to learn a foreign language? The Polish magazine *Poradnik Domowy* gives the following pointers. "An inherent feature of learning a language is making mistakes. Accepting this fact is the first step to success." Added to this is "the willingness to take risks." If we do not know how to say something, "sometimes we have to trust our intuition, or we simply need to guess," which is better than refraining from speaking. "We rarely realize that the source of our problems may be fear or shame," says the magazine. "If we manage to overcome these weaknesses, no doubt we will progress faster." A good teacher can also help one to overcome fear and progress faster.

Violence Killed 1.6 Million

"Violence killed 1.6 million people in 2000, matching tuberculosis and surpassing malaria in their death tolls, according to a new World Health Organization report that attempts for the first time to quantify a vast spectrum of brutality," says *The Wall Street Journal*. The estimate is based on data gathered from 70 countries and includes war, assaults, suicides, and shootings. "Researchers found that violent fatalities represent about 3% of all deaths in the world," the article adds. "The scope of violence—against women, children, the elderly, young men and communities in general—proved far greater than they expected. One reason for that, researchers suggest, is violence frequently goes unreported." The breakdown for violent deaths was: Suicide—50 percent, homicide—30 percent, and war—20 percent. Eastern Europe had the highest suicide rates, led by the Russian Federation and Lithuania. The ratio of gun-related

deaths was highest in Albania—22 per 100,000 people. The United States had 11.3 per 100,000, while the United Kingdom and Japan had 0.3 and 0.1 per 100,000 respectively.

Audio "Drag Racing"

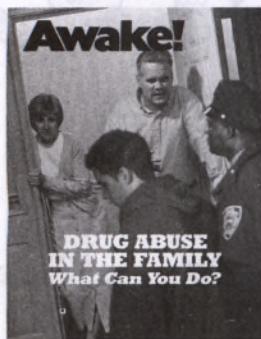
How much louder is one man's car stereo than another's? This question has given rise to a new international competition known as dB drag racing, reports *National Public Radio*, in the United States. At organized meets, the sound levels of car stereos—measured in decibels, or dB—are tested with instruments placed inside the vehicles. Sound that can be heard outside the car is wasted, so contestants beef up their cars' structure to prevent sound from escaping. "In the most heavily modified vehicles, . . . the windows are three [or] four inches thick," says competitor Wayne Harris, "and the doors have been reinforced with concrete and steel braces." Contestants do not sit inside their cars with the sound system turned up—and for good reason.



From Our Readers

Drug Abuse The front cover of the April 8, 2003, issue ("Drug Abuse in the Family—What Can You Do?") caught my eye. I've been studying the Bible with a woman named Linda. Two of her sons are hooked on drugs. The next morning I studied that issue with her—paragraph by paragraph. It gave her much encouragement and strength. The material came at just the right time.

C. M., United States



I direct a consulting service that helps families deal with drug addiction and alcoholism. Although I am a Catholic, I am an avid reader of

Awake! I want to send my thanks for the series on drug abuse in the family. I read it with great interest, as it will help me in my work with young ones.

H. C., Ecuador

Using Hands I read the article "Eating Without Cutlery" in the April 8, 2003, issue. I am ten years old, and I tried to eat hot beef hash with my hands. It was very difficult. But it was fun, and the hash tasted good! Thank you for this article. Lately I've been taking *Awake!* with me to school and reading it during recess.

M. T., Japan

Bible Quizzes I want to let you know that I love the crossword puzzles that you publish. I have been learning a lot from them.

R. N., United States

I have taught my children the Bible since they were very young. But now that they are older, it is harder to interest them in spiritual things. So I've been looking for ways to help them. When I received the April 8 issue and considered the feature "Do You Know?" I got an idea. Right away I adapted the questions for my children, making them multiple choice, and I posted the questions on the wall. At first, they were curt about it, but after a while they started answering the questions. Now we make the questions a topic of family conversation.

R. M., Japan

"Awake!" responds: The Bible quiz "Do You Know?" appears in certain language editions of "Awake!" that do not contain a crossword puzzle.

Coconuts I really enjoyed the article "One of the Most Useful Nuts on Earth," in the March 22, 2003, issue. A friend and I make soap together as a hobby. We use coconut oil in our soap, as it is good for the skin and makes a lot of bubbly lather. After this article I appreciate the coconut even more.

C. B., Canada

Free Speech I just finished reading the series "U.S. Supreme Court and Free Speech." (January 8, 2003) The series caused a veritable sea of emotions to well up in me—astonishment that the debate on this topic is still going on in the United States, admiration at how our Christian brothers skillfully presented our point of view, and deep appreciation that just decisions can be rendered even in this unjust world. I experience much joy in carrying on the work of preaching the good news. Such articles expand our horizons.

O. S., Belarus

Privacy The series "Is Your Privacy in Danger?" (January 22, 2003) helped me to gain a better understanding of what it means to respect the rights of others. Tampering with the privacy of others is, in fact, a form of theft with unpleasant consequences. As Christians, we are naturally close to one another. But we can easily forget that there are boundaries we should not cross.

T. M., Czech Republic



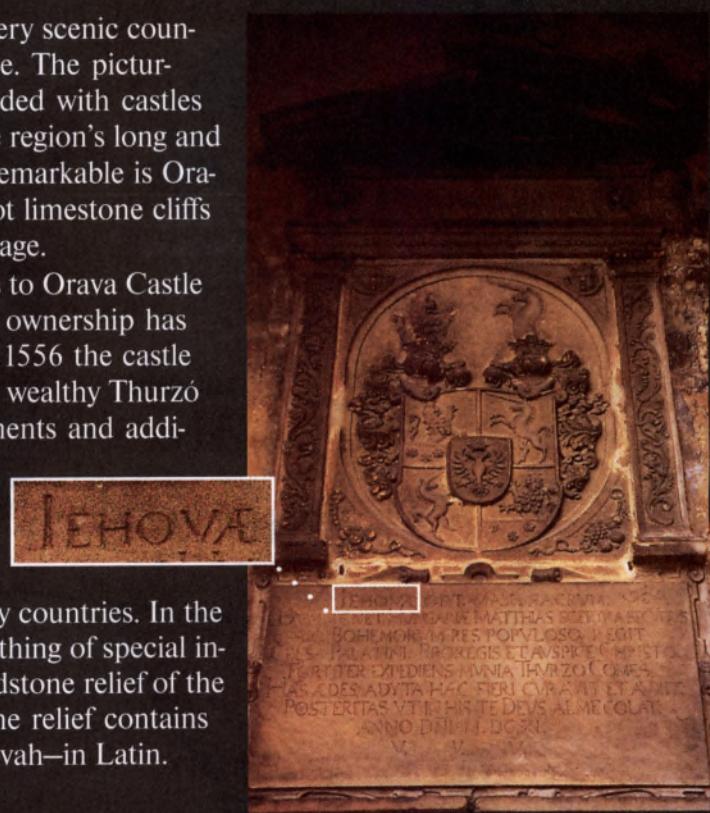
BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SLOVAKIA

GOD'S NAME ON A MEDIEVAL CASTLE

SLOVAKIA is a small but very scenic country in the heart of Europe. The picturesque countryside is studded with castles that stand as monuments to the region's long and rich history. Among the most remarkable is Orava Castle, built atop the 365-foot limestone cliffs that tower over the adjacent village.

The first historical references to Orava Castle date from 1267. Since then, its ownership has changed hands many times. In 1556 the castle came into the possession of the wealthy Thurzó family. Among other improvements and additions, the Thurzós built the castle's chapel.

Each year Orava Castle and its exhibits draw tens of thousands of visitors from many countries. In the courtyard visitors can see something of special interest that is preserved in a sandstone relief of the Thurzó family coat of arms. The relief contains the Biblical name of God—Jehovah—in Latin.



They Learned That God Loves Them

■ Some find it hard to believe that anyone—even God—could dearly love them. So after reading the book *Draw Close to Jehovah*, many wrote letters expressing appreciation for the assurance that it provides. “I am overwhelmed by how much he loves me, even with all my failings,” wrote a woman from Decatur, Illinois, U.S.A.

She further wrote: “I cried with joy when I read the statement [on page 117]: ‘As a just, or righteous, Father, Jehovah balances firmness for what is right with tender compassion toward his earthly children, who need his help and forgiveness.’”

A man from Ripon, California, wrote: “Thank you so much for showing me that Jehovah does love me. He does care. I’m not just some number on a piece of paper.” A woman in New Hampshire said: “At times I feel I can’t put the book down.” She explained: “I have had a very difficult time truly believing that Jehovah could love me.” So the book was just what she needed.

