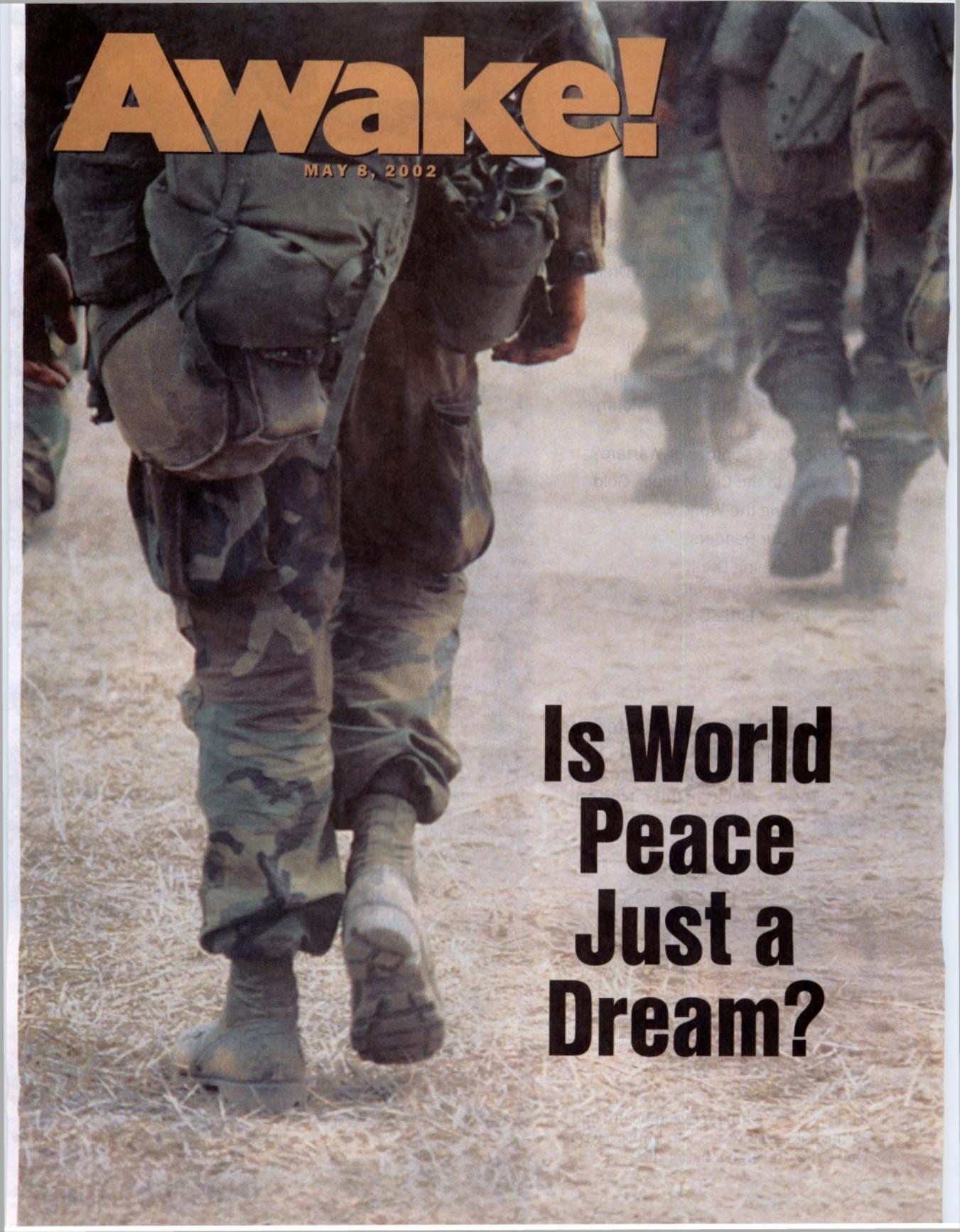


Awake!

MAY 8, 2002



**Is World
Peace
Just a
Dream?**

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 21,153,000
PUBLISHED IN 87 LANGUAGES

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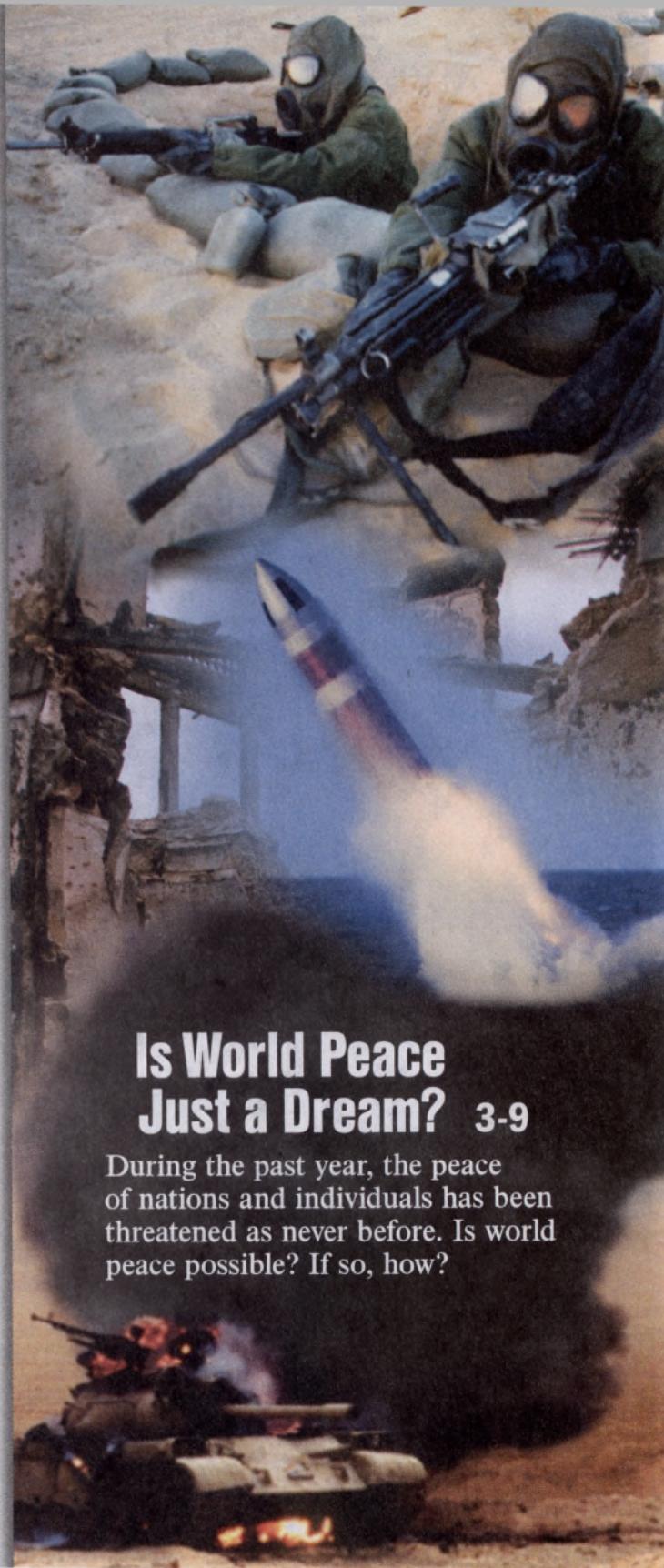
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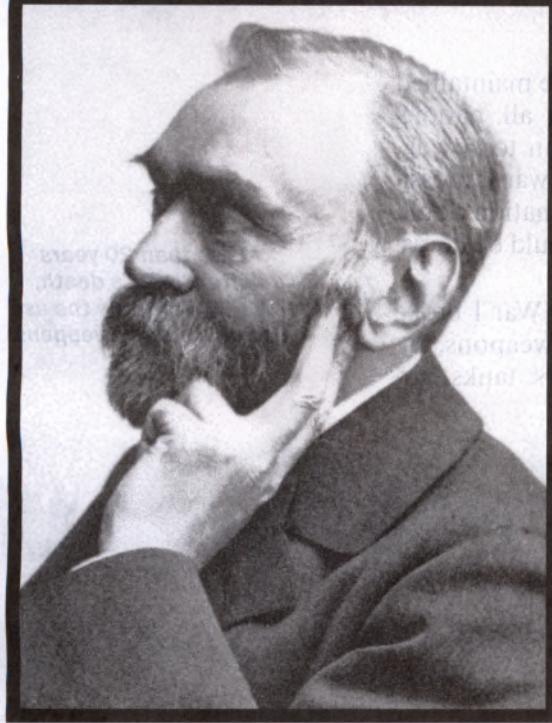
There is a close link between health and eating habits. How can you improve your well-being through a better diet?



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During the past year, the peace of nations and individuals has been threatened as never before. Is world peace possible? If so, how?

ADVOCATE OF WAR OR PROMOTER OF PEACE?



"I should like to invent a substance or machine with such terrible power of mass destruction that war would thereby be made impossible forever"

—ALFRED BERNHARD NOBEL

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SWEDEN

Each year, the Nobel prize is awarded to individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions toward the good of humanity in a number of fields. When did this tradition start, and how is it related to the quest for world peace?

HIS name is associated with the betterment of mankind, yet he amassed great wealth selling weapons of war. Who was he? Alfred Bernhard Nobel, a Swedish industrialist and chemist. Nobel has been lauded for his humanitarian efforts, but he has also been called "a merchant of death." Why? Because Nobel invented dynamite, and during his life he made a fortune manufacturing and selling lethal explosives.

After Nobel's death in 1896, however, a startling discovery was made. His will stipulated that \$9 million be set aside and that each year the interest accrued be awarded to individuals who made noteworthy achievements in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and peace.

At first, many people were perplexed. Why would an explosives entrepreneur be so eager to award benevolent and even peaceful attainments? Some assumed that Nobel was conscience-stricken over the destructive nature of his lifework. Others, however, came to feel that Nobel was working for peace all along. Indeed, it seems he believed that as weapons became more deadly, war would become less likely. "Perhaps my factories will put an end to war even sooner than your congresses," he reportedly told one writer, adding: "On the day when two army camps may mutually annihilate each other in a second, all civilized nations will probably recoil with horror and disband their troops."

Did Nobel's prediction prove true? What lessons were learned during the century that elapsed after Nobel's death?

A CENTURY OF VIOLENCE

ALFRED NOBEL believed that peace could be maintained if nations possessed deadly weapons. After all, nations could quickly unite and bring gruesome ruin to any aggressor. "This would be a force that would make war impossible," he wrote. According to Nobel's view, no sane nation would provoke a conflict if the consequences to itself would be devastating. But what has the past century revealed?

Less than 20 years after Nobel's death, World War I broke out. This conflict saw the use of new deadly weapons, including machine guns, poison gas, flamethrowers, tanks, airplanes, and submarines. Nearly ten million soldiers were killed, and more than twice that number were wounded. The barbarity of World War I caused renewed interest in peace. This led to the formation of the League of Nations. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, a prominent figure in this cause, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919.

Yet, any hopes that war would end once and for all were dashed when, in 1939, World War II broke out. In many respects this was even more horrendous than World War I. During this conflict

***Less than 20 years
after Nobel's death,
World War I saw the use
of new deadly weapons***



U.S. National Archives photo

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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Adolf Hitler expanded Nobel's factory in Krümmel into one of Germany's largest ammunition factories, with over 9,000 employees. Then, at the end of the war, Nobel's factory was completely annihilated by an Allied air raid that dropped more than a thousand bombs. Ironically, those bombs were developed with the help of Nobel's own inventions.

The century that elapsed after Nobel's death saw not only two world wars but also countless smaller conflicts. Weapons proliferated during that period, and some of them became even more sinister. Consider a few of the military devices that have been prominent in the decades since Nobel's death.

Small arms and light weapons. These include handguns, rifles, grenades, machine

guns, mortars, and other portable devices. Small arms and light weapons are inexpensive, easy to maintain, and even easier to use.

Have the presence of these weapons

—and the threat they bring to civilians—been a deterrent to war?

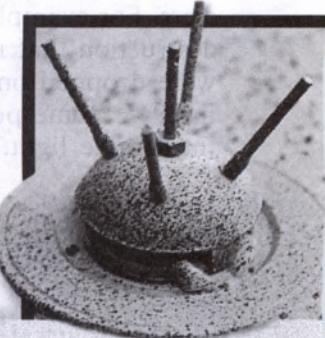
Hardly! In the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Michael Klare writes that light weapons have become

“the principal tool of combat in the overwhelming majority of conflicts in the post-Cold War era.” In fact, up to 90 percent of casualties in recent wars have been the result of small arms and light weapons. More than four million people were killed by these devices during the 1990's alone. In many cases, light weapons are wielded by youths who have no military training and no qualms about violating traditional rules of war.

Land mines. By the close of the 20th century, about 70 people on the average were being maimed or killed by land mines *each day!* Most of them were civilians, not soldiers. Often, land mines are used, not to kill, but to maim and spread fear and terror among those who experience the cruel damage that they inflict.

Granted, much effort has been made in recent years to clear mines. But some say that for every mine cleared, 20 more are planted and that there may be 60 million land mines buried across the globe.

UN/DPI Photo 158198C by J. Isaac



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Would you welcome more information? Write Jehovah's Witnesses at the appropriate address: **America, United States of:** Wallkill, NY 12589. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4. **Ghana:** P. O. Box GP 760, Accra. **Jamaica:** P. O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **New Zealand:** P.O. Box 75-142, Manurewa. **Nigeria:** P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, 300001, Edo State. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Zambia:** Box 33459, Lusaka 10101. **Zimbabwe:** Private Bag WG-5001, Westgate.



The fact that land mines cannot tell the difference between the footfall of a soldier and that of a child playing in a field has not deterred the manufacture and use of these hideous devices.

Nuclear weapons. With the invention of nuclear weapons, for the first time an entire city could be obliterated within seconds, without a single skirmish between soldiers. For example, consider the horrendous destruction that resulted when atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Some people were blinded by the intolerable light. Others were poisoned by

Victims of land mines in Cambodia, Iraq, and Azerbaijan

radiation. Many were killed by fire and heat. The combined death toll for these two cities is estimated at nearly 300,000!

Of course, some would argue that the bombing of those cities prevented many deaths that would have occurred had the war continued by conventional means. Nevertheless, appalled by the tremendous loss of life, some began to lobby for worldwide control over this gruesome weapon. Indeed, many began to fear that man had developed the capacity to destroy himself.

Has the development of nuclear weapons made peace more likely? Some say yes. They

***At any given moment, says the Committee
on Nuclear Policy, thousands of nuclear
devices are on hair-trigger alert***



The hideous nature of chemical weapons gained wide publicity when sarin was used in the Tokyo subway system in 1995

Asahi Shimbun/Sipa Press

point to the fact that these powerful weapons have not been used in warfare for over half a century. Nevertheless, Nobel's belief that weapons of mass destruction would cause war to suffocate itself has not proved true, for wars with conventional weapons continue. Besides, at any given moment, says the Committee on Nuclear Policy, thousands of nuclear devices are on hair-trigger alert. And in this age when terrorism is a grave concern, many fear what would happen if nuclear material fell into the "wrong" hands. Even in the "right" hands, there is concern that a single accident could plunge the world into a thermonuclear catastrophe. Clearly, when it comes to destructive weapons, this is not the peace that Nobel envisioned.

Biological and chemical weapons.

Germ warfare includes the use of deadly bacteria, such as anthrax, or a virus, such as smallpox. Smallpox is particularly dangerous because it is highly communicable. Then there is the threat of chemical weapons, such as poison gas. These toxic substances come in many forms, and though they have been outlawed for

decades, this has not deterred their use.

Have these gruesome weapons and the threat they bring caused people to react as Nobel predicted—to "recoil with horror and disband their troops"? On the contrary, they have only heightened the fear that one day these weapons might be used—even by amateurs. More than a decade ago, the director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament

Agency stated: "Chemical weapons can be manufactured in almost anybody's garage, as long as you have a little high-school chemistry behind you."

There is no question that the 20th century was marked by wars more destructive than those of any other era. Now at the beginning of the 21st century, the prospect of peace seems even more illusory—especially after the terrorist attacks that took place in New York City and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. "Virtually no one dares ask whether the balance of technolo-

gy might tilt too far toward empowering the evil," writes Steven Levy in *Newsweek* magazine. He adds: "Who would have a clue of how to address that situation? Human beings have a track record of pursuing what they see as progress and asking questions later. While refusing to think the Unthinkable, we create the circumstances that allow it to occur."

Thus far, history has taught us that the invention of terrible explosives and deadly weapons has not brought this world any closer to peace. Is world peace, then, just a dream?



Taming Nitroglycerin

The Italian chemist Ascanio Sobrero discovered nitroglycerin, a heavy, oily explosive liquid, in 1846. The substance proved to be hazardous. Sobrero was badly cut in the face by glass splinters from an explosion, and eventually he gave up working with the substance. Moreover, there was a problem with the liquid that Sobrero could not solve: If poured out and hit with a hammer, only the part of the liquid that was hit by the hammer exploded, without affecting the rest of the oil.

Nobel solved the problem when he invented a practical detonator, using a small quantity of one explosive that could ignite a large quantity of another explosive. Then, in 1865, Nobel invented the blasting cap—a little capsule containing mercury fulminate that was inserted into a container of nitroglycerin and then ignited by a fuse.

However, working with nitroglycerin was still hazardous. In 1864, for example, an explosion in Nobel's workshop outside Stockholm killed five peo-

ple—including Nobel's youngest brother, Emil. Nobel's factory at Krümmel, Germany, was blown up twice. Then, too, some people were using the liquid as lamp oil, as shoe polish, or as a lubricant for wagon wheels—with serious consequences. Even when mountains were being blasted, excess oil could seep into cracks and later cause accidents.

In 1867, Nobel converted the oil into a solid by mixing nitroglycerin with kieselguhr, a nonexplosive, porous substance. Nobel coined the name dynamite from the Greek *dynamis*, which means "power." Although Nobel later de-

veloped even more advanced explosives, dynamite is regarded as one of his most important inventions.

Of course, Nobel's explosives have also had noncombat uses. For example, they played a prominent role in the construction of the St. Gotthard tunnels (1872–82), the blasting of underwater cliffs in New York's East River (1876, 1885), and the digging of the Corinth Canal in Greece (1881–93). Nevertheless, from the time of its invention, dynamite quickly gained a reputation as a tool of destruction and death.

Colombian police station destroyed by dynamite-rigged explosives



WORLD PEACE IS NOT JUST A DREAM!

If Alfred Nobel could look back upon the past century, would he feel optimistic about prospects for world peace? No doubt, he would be glad to know that many have put forth sincere efforts to end war. Nevertheless, he would be faced with a harsh reality. Professor Hugh Thomas sums it up well: "The twentieth century—although generally one of social improvement and heightened governmental concern for the lives of the poor—has been dominated by the machine gun, the tank, the B-52, the nuclear bomb and, finally, the missile. It has been marked by wars more bloody and destructive than those of any other age." Thomas adds that "it is, therefore, a matter of opinion as to whether the era can really be characterized as progressive or not."

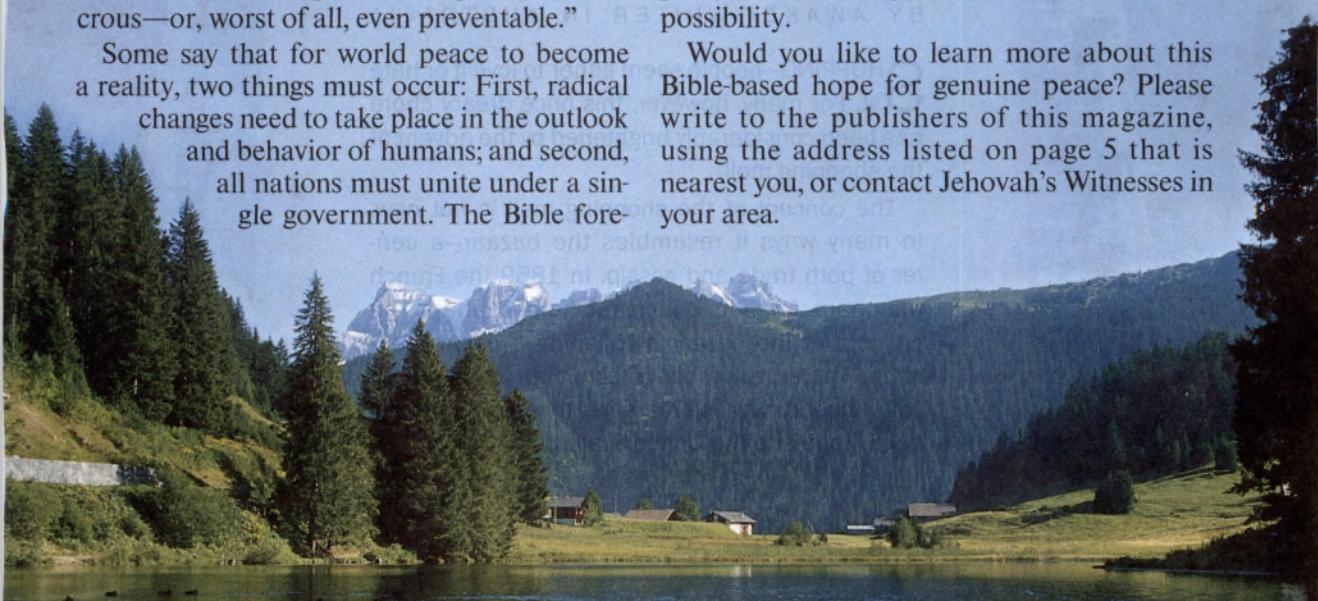
Do the prospects for world peace seem greater now that we have entered the 21st century? Hardly! Alluding to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City and in Washington, D.C., *Newsweek* magazine states: "In a world where 767s can turn into guided missiles, nothing seems impossible, ludicrous—or, worst of all, even preventable."

Some say that for world peace to become a reality, two things must occur: First, radical changes need to take place in the outlook and behavior of humans; and second, all nations must unite under a single government. The Bible fore-

tells a time when peace will be achieved—but not through the efforts of mankind. Psalm 46:9 says regarding the Creator, Jehovah God: "*He* is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." How will God accomplish this? By means of his Kingdom, for which many sincere people have repeatedly prayed. That Kingdom is, not an elusive condition of the heart, but a real government through which God will establish peace from one end of the earth to the other. The inspired prophet Isaiah foretold that subjects of that government will not "learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4) By means of a worldwide educational program, people will learn to live in peace and thus "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears."

Even now, Jehovah's Witnesses are doing this. They refuse to take up arms against their fellowman, although they belong to many different ethnic groups and are living in over 200 different lands. Their neutral position in the midst of a war-ravaged world proves that peace is not a Utopian dream but a realistic possibility.

Would you like to learn more about this Bible-based hope for genuine peace? Please write to the publishers of this magazine, using the address listed on page 5 that is nearest you, or contact Jehovah's Witnesses in your area.





MALLS

Where Business and Pleasure Mix

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRALIA

SHOPPING—people seem either to love it or hate it. For many, however, this once dreary chore has been considerably brightened by the advent of the shopping mall.

The concept of the shopping mall is not new. In many ways it resembles the bazaar—a center of both trade and gossip. In 1859 the French merchant Aristide Boucicaut helped adapt the concept of the bazaar by opening a department store. There, a number of commodities could be sold. Department stores spread rapidly throughout Europe and the United States.

Among those who capitalized on the idea was Frank Woolworth. By March of 1912, nearly 600 stores bore his name. In time, the idea of putting department stores and specialty shops under one roof developed into the now famous shopping mall. Generally speaking, shopping malls have proved to be good business for retailers, with one mall boasting an annual turnover of \$200 million.

A major focus of mall planning is comfort for shoppers. One way to achieve this is to cater to their stomachs. Restaurants and fast-food outlets ensure that happy, satisfied customers will be more likely to linger. Another basic psychology of consumerism is to appeal to people's wants rather than their needs. One newspaper stated that a shopping mall is a place "where a suburban housewife can become a voyeur of luxury in an air conditioned, neon lit, 'through the looking glass' world where literally millions of dollars worth of goods lie spread before her—the princely smorgasbord of the consumer society."

The next step, of course, is to convert wanting into buying. A proven way to do this is to make buying a pleasure! Advertisers try not to be gender specific. Yet, as indicated above, women constitute a primary target. From the beginning, shopping-mall managers and advertisers have been vying for women's patronage, including mothers with children. Indeed, child-care facilities, youth entertainment, cinemas, and gaming parlors make it possible for customers not only to shop but also to chat and congregate at malls. And coffee shops provide a relaxed atmosphere for meeting and resting. For sports-minded patrons, one Australian mall maintains an ice-skating rink, while another features a bowling alley.

Malls also seem to have a strong attraction for young people. "I've got a lot of friends who come here," says one youth. "Every time I come here, I can run into somebody I know. . . . This is our place, at this table." But many elderly ones also enjoy regular visits to shopping malls. "I come here for the friendship," says a woman of 86

years. "This is the friendliest place I know. . . . My life would be miserable without it."

On the other hand, many shoppers believe that the mall fits the description given it in the book *Shelf Life*—a "selling machine." *The Humanist* journal goes even further and describes shopping malls as "that portion of our culture that accords human beings no more value than the contents of their wallets." Of course, in such an atmosphere, balance has to be maintained so that one does not become ensnared by materialism.—Matthew 6:19-21.

Shopping Snares

Some avoid malls because they find crowds in a confined space to be daunting. And there is no question that some shopping malls do get very congested, especially on weekends. For example, visitors to one shopping mall in Sydney, Australia, total almost 19 million per year—equivalent to the entire population of Australia. Crowds, however, frustrate more than just shoppers. And problems with shoplifting seem to increase when malls are frequented by large numbers of youths. Thus, *SundayLife!* magazine states: "One of the most significant social dilemmas of mall culture is how to deal with the huge numbers of young people who gather there."

Another dilemma for some shopkeepers is how to cope with the constantly escalating cost of rent. "This is making some businesses go broke," lamented one such tenant. *Forbes* magazine puts it this way: "Malls can gussy up their look and bring in snazzier tenants. But that isn't cheap." The article even forecasts a possible slowing down of the mall retail business in America—troubling news for that land's 1,900 regional malls. "Their customers are a dwindling breed," the article states.

What does the future hold for these shopping giants? As with so many aspects of life, this remains to be seen. But one thing seems certain: People will always enjoy finding a place where they can mix business with pleasure!

LET'S TRY WRITING IN HANKUL!

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

EACH OF THE WORLD'S WRITING SYSTEMS HAS ITS OWN HISTORY, USUALLY QUITE ANCIENT. ONE ALPHABET, HOWEVER, WAS CRAFTED JUST FIVE CENTURIES AGO, AND IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE LEARNED IN A SINGLE MORNING! IT IS THE KOREAN ALPHABET CALLED HANKUL, OR HANGUL. THE STORY OF ITS DEVELOPMENT AND USE IS FASCINATING.

BEFORE Hankul was created, the Korean language did not have its own script. For more than a thousand years, educated Koreans wrote their language using Chinese characters. Over the years, however, various attempts were made to devise a better writing system. But since all of them were based on Chinese characters, only the well-educated could use them.

An Alphabet Ordered by a King

In the 15th century C.E., King Sejong of the Korean Yi dynasty began to contemplate the frustrations of his subjects who could neither read nor write. Most had no way of appealing to the authorities with complaints except orally. This problem perplexed King Sejong, who is reputed always to have given a listening ear to the common people.

Hence, King Sejong spearheaded the creation of an alphabet that would both suit spoken Korean and be easy to learn and use. The completion of this project was announced in 1446. In the preface of his proclamation, King Sejong stated: "Being of foreign origin, Chinese characters are incapable of capturing uniquely Korean meanings. Therefore, many common people



have no way to express their thoughts and feelings. Out of my sympathy for their difficulties, I have created a set of 28 letters. The letters are very easy to learn, and it is my fervent hope that they improve the quality of life of all people."

Sadly, some scholars opposed Hankul, precisely because it was so easy to learn! They derisively called it *Amkul*, meaning "women's letters." They disdained a system that could be learned even by women, who back then were not taught to read in the schools. This prejudice against Hankul persisted among upper-class Koreans for some time. In fact, more than 400 years elapsed before the Korean government declared that Hankul could be used in official documents.

Hankul and the Bible

The Bible played an important role in the history of Hankul. Although

HANKUL CONSONANTS AND VOWELS

CONSONANTS:

ㄱ	(g,k)	ㅏ	(ah)
ㄴ	(n)	ㅑ	(yah)
ㄷ	(d,t)	ㅓ	(ə)
ㄹ	(r,l)	ㅕ	(yə)
ㅁ	(m)	ㅗ	(o)
ㅂ	(b,p)	ㅛ	(yo)
ㅅ	(s)	ㅜ	(u)
ㅇ*		ㅠ	(yu)
ㅈ	(ch,j)	ㅡ	(ə)
ㅊ	(ch')	ㅣ	(i, as in "machine")
ㅋ	(k')		
ㅌ	(t')		
ㅍ	(p')	ㅓ	(ə) + ㅣ(i)
ㅎ	(h)		= ㅓㅓ (e)

AN EXAMPLE OF MULTIPLE VOWELS

*The consonant ㅇ is silent except as a final consonant, when it is pronounced "ng."

The vowels ㅓ, ㅕ, and ㅡ are pronounced with a tight smile; ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, and ㅠ are said with pursed lips. The consonants ㅊ, ㅋ, ㅌ, and ㅍ are accompanied by an *h* sound.

King Sejong



WRITING KOREAN WORDS

All Korean syllables consist of two or three parts: an initial sound, a middle sound (a vowel or vowels) and, usually, an ending sound. Words are made up of one or more syllables. Each syllable is written inside an imaginary box, as shown below. The initial sound (a consonant or the silent ㅇ) is written at the top or upper left. If the middle vowel is vertically shaped, it is written to the right of the initial sound, while horizontally shaped vowels are written under it. Letters may also be doubled, adding stress, and multiple vowels may be compressed and written alongside each other. If the syllable has a final consonant, it always appears in the bottom position. In this way, thousands of different syllables can be represented with Hankul.

EXAMPLES:

ㅅ (s) + ㅗ (o) = 소 (so) cow

ㅅ (s) + ㅏ (a) + ㅗ (o) = 상 (sang) prize

ㄱ (k) + ㅗ (o) + ㅁ (m) = 곰 (gom) bear

ㅁ (m) + ㅗ (o) + ㄱ (k) = 목 (mok) neck

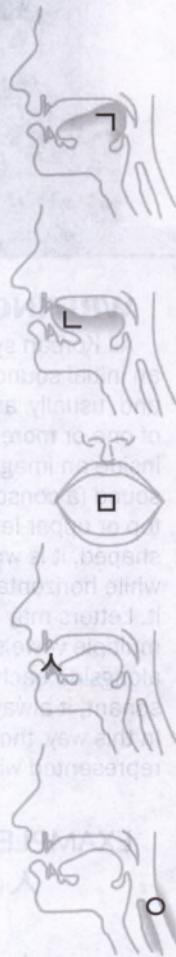
ㅅ (s) + ㅏ (a), ㄹ (r) + ㅓ (a) + ㅗ (o) = 사랑 (sa-rang) love

THE KOREAN ALPHABET

In the days of King Sejong, the Hankul alphabet consisted of 28 letters, of which 24 are still in use. Among them, 14 are consonants and 10 are vowels. The five basic consonants resemble the parts of the mouth and throat used to produce them: ㄱ (g, k), the arched tongue touching the back of the palate; ㄴ (n), the tip of the tongue curled up to touch the front of the palate; ㅁ (m), the mouth, viewed from the front; ㅅ (s) the teeth; ㅇ (ng), the open throat. Strokes are added to these basic consonants to represent other related consonants—those produced with the mouth in approximately the same position.

The vowels symbolize the round sky with a dot (•),* the flat land with a horizontal stroke (—), and a standing man with a vertical stroke (|). These were to represent the vowels produced with the tongue in the front, middle, and back positions.

* In modern Hankul, this letter is not used.



many Korean religious publications written with Chinese characters were brought into Korea, missionaries did not bring in Chinese Bibles, although these were available. In 1887, however, the Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament) were translated into Korean and published in Hankul in Mukden, China.*

* The first complete Korean Bible was published in 1911.

Finally, there was a Bible in Korean that could be read by nearly anyone—even by women and children who had never had the opportunity to learn Chinese characters. Today there are at least eight Bible versions in modern Hankul, including the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

Easy to Learn

One of the scholars who helped create the Korean alphabet said of Hankul: "The wise can learn it in one morning, and even the unwise can learn it in ten days." In fact, some of Hankul's early opponents disparagingly called the alphabet *Achimgul*—"morning letters." They considered Hankul too simple for them because it could be learned in a single morning!

In any event, the ease of learning Hankul has helped virtually to eradicate illiteracy from Korea. Indeed, by the time they enter school, most children have mastered it. What is more, in Korean schools there are no spelling contests! Why not? Because Hankul represents the sounds of Korean speech so accurately that writing them down correctly as you hear them presents no challenge.

Hankul can even be used to write non-Korean words. Would you like to try it? Although the accompanying charts do not show all the details, they may at least help you to write your own name in Hankul. In that way you can experience firsthand the versatility of the alphabet that can be learned in a single morning!

Her Initiative Was Rewarded

MANY YOUTHS AMONG JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES set a fine example in speaking boldly about their faith. Consider Stella, a teenager from Salonika, Greece. "At one of our Christian meetings," she says, "ways of using our videos to help others get to know Jehovah were discussed. I thought of a way I could use the video *Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name*. The following day I spoke to the school principal, and I suggested that the video be shown at school. To my surprise, he had no objection—as long as the teachers agreed.

"Later the same day, the principal told me that the video could be shown the following week—but only after school. I was disappointed because I thought that my classmates would not sacrifice their free time to see the video. Nevertheless, the next day I invited everyone to attend. Not only did they accept but they also invited students from other classes. Six teachers—including a theologian—came to see the video as well.

"Everyone paid rapt attention. Afterward, the principal invited me to moderate a question-and-answer discussion. Many students were impressed with the volunteer work carried out at the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, which

was shown in the video. 'Even though they are not paid, they perform their tasks with joy!' one student exclaimed.

"I told all in attendance about our Bible-based publications. I also distributed *Kingdom News* No. 36, 'The New Millennium—What Does the Future Hold for You?' The principal asked for more copies so that he could give them to the teachers who were not present.

"Afterward, many students talked to their friends about the video. I was glad that I had taken this opportunity to give a witness. My classmates show me more respect; but more important, they show respect for the God I worship!"





MEET THE MYSTERIOUS Snow Leopard

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN FINLAND

FEW animals are as mysterious as the snow leopard. Only a handful of people have seen one in the wild, and very little is known about how these animals live.

The snow leopard is a prominent attraction at Finland's Helsinki Zoo. The curious habits of this feline—considered by many to be the most beautiful of the large cats—make it a fascinating creature.

Cat on the Top of the World

Although it can be found in no less than a dozen countries from Bhutan to Russia, the snow leopard is usually associated with the Himalayas. These mountains—the highest in the world—are breathtakingly beautiful. But they are no place for humans. Indeed, the mountains of Central Asia are among the coldest and most rugged places in the world.



The snow leopard, however, is quite content at altitudes of 10,000 to 15,000 feet. Its thick coat of fur provides adequate protection against the cold, while a large nasal cavity enables the animal to obtain the needed oxygen in the thin mountain air. The snow leopard's broad, furry

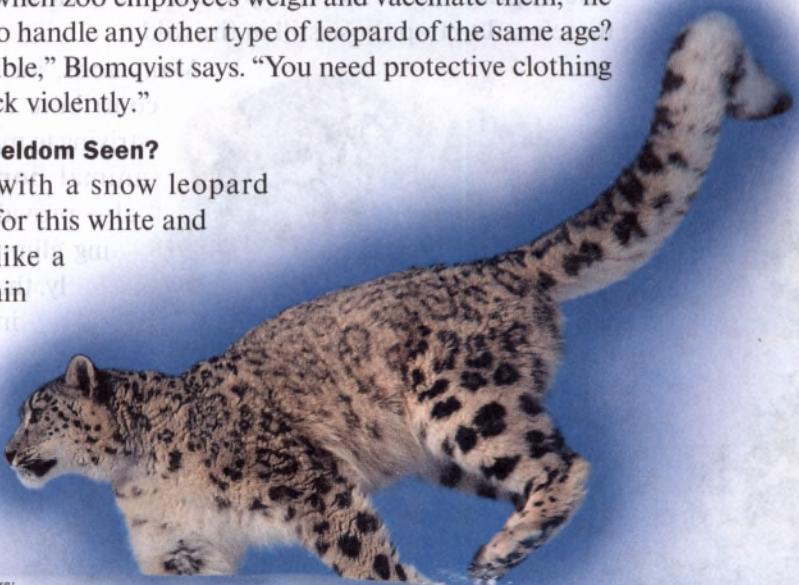


paws allow it to move nimbly through deep snow. But what about the rugged mountain terrain? This is no problem because using its long furry tail as a rudder, the snow leopard can leap some 50 feet from one cliff to another, surpassing the jump of even the gray kangaroo.

The snow leopard generally weighs between 60 and 100 pounds and measures about two feet tall and seven feet from nose to tail. But what makes the snow leopard truly unique is its disposition. "It is very mild-tempered," says Leif Blomqvist, curator of the Helsinki Zoo. "The snow leopard forms relationships with humans easily, and in the morning at the zoo, it comes to greet its caretaker." Blomqvist adds that the mild temperament is observed even in the cubs. "They don't struggle when zoo employees weigh and vaccinate them," he says. But what if you were to handle any other type of leopard of the same age? "The task is almost impossible," Blomqvist says. "You need protective clothing and gloves, as they fight back violently."

Why Seldom Seen?

Playing hide-and-seek with a snow leopard would be very frustrating, for this white and gray cat seems to blend like a chameleon into the mountain terrain. Its effective camouflage is one reason why so few snow leopards have been seen in the wild. Why, some researchers who have ventured into the rough mountains



to study this mysterious cat have returned home without a single glimpse of the animal!

The fact that snow leopards are such hermits adds to the difficulty of sighting one. Additionally, their territories are quite large, since their prey, which is usually a wild sheep or goat, tends to be scarce in the mountains. Sadly, poachers—greedy for the snow leopard's coat of fur—have contributed toward reducing their population to the extent that currently the snow leopard is listed as an endangered species.* Zoos are doing much to preserve this exceptional animal.



Chuck Dresner/Saint Louis Zoo

Similar studbooks are kept of many species living in zoos but especially of endangered species. A studbook lists details of all zoo-dwelling animals of one particular species. Zoos are responsible to inform the studbook keeper of new cubs as well as of transfers and deaths of animals. The studbooks are used to select suitable breeding partners for captive animals. "Because such populations are relatively small, degeneration and inbreeding can easily occur," explains Blomqvist.

More than a hundred cubs have been born in the Helsinki Zoo alone, and most of them have been sent to foreign zoos. To ensure variety in the population, captive snow leopards are frequently exchanged between zoos. The captive snow leopard population is now so varied that there is no more need to trap those still in the wild.

Many zoos, including the one in Helsinki, contribute to wildlife conservation by striving to maintain a genetically healthy animal population. Of course, they also provide visitors with a fascinating glimpse of unique animals. Truly, the snow leopard makes a lasting impression and is a credit to the Creator, who 'has made everything pretty.'

—Ecclesiastes 3:11



* It is difficult to specify how many snow leopards are left. Estimates range from 3,500 to 7,000.

Comfort for Those Who Mourn

THE terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, in New York City and in Washington, D.C., horrified people all over the world. In one day, thousands died, including hundreds of heroic fire fighters, policemen, and paramedics.

Since that event, Jehovah's Witnesses have made a concerted effort to comfort those who have lost loved ones in the tragedy. They have done this in order "to bind up the brokenhearted" and "to comfort all the mourning ones."—Isaiah 61:1, 2.

Over the years, Jehovah's Witnesses have found that those who lose loved ones in death often ponder over the questions that follow. The Bible has the answers. Why not check the Scriptural references below in your own copy of the Bible?

Is a person's death predestined?

At Ecclesiastes 9:11, the Bible states that "time and unforeseen occurrence" ("chance," *New English Bible*) befall all mankind. If death is predestined, why does the Bible encourage us to take safety precautions?—For instance, see Deuteronomy 22:8.

Why do we die?

The first human pair, Adam and Eve, were placed in an earthly paradise. If they had remained obedient, they would not have died. Death was to result only if humans disobeyed God. (Genesis 1:28; 2:15-17) Sadly, Adam and Eve did disobey their Creator. As a result, they paid the penalty—death. Since all humans have descended from Adam and Eve, all have inherited sin and death. The Bible explains: "Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men."—Romans 5:12.

What is the condition of the dead?

After Adam rebelled, God said: "You [will] return to the ground, for out of it you were

taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:19) Hence, death is a state of total unconsciousness—really, nonexistence. The Bible states: "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing at all.*" (Ecclesiastes 9:5) The Bible also says that when a person dies, "he goes back to his ground; *in that day his thoughts do perish.*"—Psalm 146:3, 4.

Don't we have a soul that survives death?

The Bible clearly teaches that your soul is simply *you*, not some abstract entity that will survive your death. (Genesis 2:7; Proverbs 2:10; Jeremiah 2:34) Since this is so, we can say that when a person dies, a soul has died. The Bible clearly states: "The soul [that is, the person] that is sinning . . . will die."—Ezekiel 18:4.

What hope is there for those who have died?

The Bible reveals that it is God's purpose to restore the dead to life by means of a resurrection to a paradise earth, where sickness and death will be no more. Jesus said: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."—John 5:28, 29; Revelation 21:1-4.

When speaking of his recently deceased friend Lazarus, Jesus compared death to sleep. (John 11:11-13) Moreover, after Jesus resurrected him, Lazarus said nothing about having been in a place of torment or a place of bliss during the brief period of his death. (John 11:37-44) This is understandable, for the dead are unconscious. They do not experience suffering but await the "hour" in which they will be raised. In any event, the fact that Jesus resurrected Lazarus shows that the dead can live again. Indeed, by this miracle Jesus showed on a small scale what will take place on earth under the rule of God's Kingdom. (Acts 24:15) What a comfort that is for those who lose their loved ones in death during this turbulent time!

DOES GOD APPROVE OF WARFARE?



HOW often rulers, generals, and even clergy have declared or endorsed war in the name of God! In 1095, with the blessing of Pope Urban II, the First Crusade set out to retake the "Holy City" Jerusalem for Christendom. But before reaching their goal, one band of Crusaders was annihilated by Turks, whose zeal for Allah matched the Crusaders' faith in the Trinity.

In August 1914, a young German wrote from his World War I encampment: "If there is justice and divine guidance in history—and of that I am absolutely certain—then victory must be ours." In that same month, Czar Nicholas II launched Russia's armies against Germany, while proclaiming: "I send my soul's greeting to my valiant troops and my noble allies. God is with us!"

Thus emboldened, millions of soldiers have gone to the front, fully believing that God was on their side. Many people feel that God allows such fighting as the price of freedom, and they point to the wars in the Hebrew Scriptures (commonly called the Old Testament) as support. Is their interpretation of God's Word correct?

The Wars of Ancient Israel

Jehovah God decreed that Israel should make war to rid the Promised Land of the de-

praved Canaanites. (Leviticus 18:1, 24-28; Deuteronomy 20:16-18) Just as God had punished evildoers by means of a deluge in Noah's day and fire in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, so he wielded the nation of Israel as his sword of execution.—Genesis 6:12, 17; 19:13, 24, 25.

According to the Bible, Israel fought other battles under God's direction, usually to repel unprovoked enemy threats. When the nation obeyed Jehovah, the wars it fought ended favorably. (Exodus 34:24; 2 Samuel 5:17-25) But disaster usually resulted when Israel dared to do battle contrary to divine counsel. Consider the case of King Jeroboam. Ignoring a direct prophetic warning, he dispatched his huge army in civil war against Judah. When the mayhem finally ended, 500,000 of Jeroboam's soldiers were dead. (2 Chronicles 13:12-18) Even faithful King Josiah once picked a battle that was not his. The rash decision cost him his life. —2 Chronicles 35:20-24.

What do these events show? That in ancient Israel, the decision to make war rested with God. (Deuteronomy 32:35, 43) He had his people fight for specific purposes. However, these purposes were long ago accomplished. Furthermore, Jehovah foretold that those who serve him "in the final part of the days" would "beat their swords into plowshares" and not

**Soldiers being blessed by ►
Greek Orthodox priests
before taking off for
Kosovo, June 11, 1999**

AP Photo/Giorgos Nissiotis



◀ **General Francisco Franco of Spain, posing with several Catholic clergymen**

U.S. National Archives photo

"learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:2-4) Clearly, Biblical wars do not justify modern-day conflicts, none of which are fought under God's direction or at his command.

The Effect of Christ's Teaching

While on earth, Jesus demonstrated how to replace hatred with unselfish love, commanding: "Love one another, just as I have loved you." (John 15:12) He also said: "Happy are the peaceable." (Matthew 5:9) Here the Greek word for "peaceable" means more than enjoying a state of tranquillity. It really entails *cultivating* peace, *actively working* to promote goodwill.

When Jesus was being arrested, the apostle Peter tried to defend him with a lethal weapon. But the Son of God reprimanded him, saying: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:52) How did first-century Christians apply those words? Note the following quotations:

"A careful review of all the information available [shows] that, until the time of Marcus Aurelius [121-180 C.E.], no Christian became a soldier; and no soldier, after becoming a Christian, remained in military service."—*The Rise of Christianity*.

"The behavior of the [early] Christians was very different from that of the Romans. . . . Since Christ had preached peace, they refused to become soldiers."—*Our World Through the Ages*.

Because Christ's disciples refused to serve in the emperor's legions, the Romans put many of them to death. Why did Christians maintain such an unpopular stand? Because Jesus taught them to be peacemakers.

Modern Warfare

Imagine the dreadful situation if Christ's followers were to fight in opposing armies, trying to kill one another. Such a scenario would be contrary to Christian principles. Really, those who obey the God of the Bible would not harm anyone—not even their enemies.*—Matthew 5:43-45.

Clearly, God does not put his blessing on modern carnal warfare between humans. Being peaceable, true Christians advocate the peace that will be established worldwide under God's Kingdom.

* The Bible mentions "Har-Magedon," also called "the war of the great day of God the Almighty." This refers, not to human warfare, but to God's selective destruction of evildoers. Hence, Har-Magedon cannot be used to justify modern-day human conflicts or to assume that God is blessing them.—Revelation 16:14, 16; 21:8.



A Visit to the City of Black Gold

Ouro Prêto

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BRAZIL

YOU may never have heard of the Brazilian town of Ouro Prêto, but in the 18th century, its population was three times larger than was that of New York City, and its revenues once provided the funds to rebuild the earthquake-leveled city of Lisbon in Portugal. In 1980, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization added Ouro Prêto to the World Heritage List, now including nearly 700 sites that excel in cultural and natural value. Why was Ouro Prêto given this status? Consider the history of this unique town.

A Golden Drink

During the first half of the 17th century, scores of Portuguese explorers, called *bandeirantes*, scouted Brazil in search of new land, Indian slaves, and gold. One expedition pushed inland until it reached Itacolomi Mountain. There, Duarte Lopes approached a brook to quench his thirst. He scooped some water into his wooden bowl and drank. Then he noticed small black stones in the bowl.

Lopes sold the stones to a friend who, suspecting that they were valuable, sent them to the governor of Rio de Janeiro. On examining the stones, the governor saw that they were of the finest gold covered by a thin, black layer of iron oxide. But where did the gold come from? As soon as Lopes described Itacolomi, the search was on. In 1698, *bandeirante* Antônio Dias de Oliveira found the mountain from which it had come. At breakneck pace, gold hunters rushed to an encampment near

the find, later called Vila Rica. Before long, Vila Rica had 80,000 inhabitants. In time, it became the capital of Minas Gerais and was named Ouro Prêto, meaning "Black Gold."

Black Gold Turns Red

Between 1700 and 1820, prospectors mined 1,200 tons of gold—80 percent of the gold produced worldwide during that time. But where did all that gold go? Mined gold was cast into bars at the *Casa dos Contos*, or House of Coinage. After that, one fifth of the gold, the levied tax, ended up in the treasure chest of Portugal's royal family.

The colonists opposed the tax. One of them was Felipe dos Santos, who roused miners, military men, and church members against the Portuguese Crown. But the Portuguese fought back. In 1720, dos Santos was hanged and his body was dragged through the streets by horses. The miners went back to the pits, and the taxes continued to rise.

However, this was only a temporary stop to rebellion. Later in the same century came Joaquim da Silva Xavier, nicknamed Tiradentes, meaning "tooth puller"—a reference to one of his jobs. He was among a group of poets, jurists, and military men of Ouro Prêto who met regularly in the house of Toledo, a priest. At first, the conversations were mostly philosophical banter, but then they switched to the politics of those days. Later their conversations turned rebellious when the group discussed, in whispered tones, the suffocating demands of the Portuguese Crown.



**When the iron oxide
is removed, the black
stones become
gold nuggets**

Portugal's queen, Dona Maria I, had warned that rebels would be beheaded. Nevertheless, in 1788, Tiradentes, then a military ensign, took the lead in the *Inconfidência Mineira*, or the Rebellion of the State of Minas Gerais.

A spy disclosed the names of the conspirators. One by one, they were arrested and exiled to Africa to die. Tiradentes languished in a humid prison cell in Rio de Janeiro until he was hanged and beheaded on April 21, 1792. Tiradentes' head was displayed on a post in Ouro Prêto's city square, and his quartered limbs were staked along several roads. For the time being, this discouraged any potential rebels. But three decades later, in 1822, Brazil gained its independence from Portugal.

Treasures of Art, History, and Religion

In time, Ouro Prêto's gold ran out, and then its importance declined. But the town retained

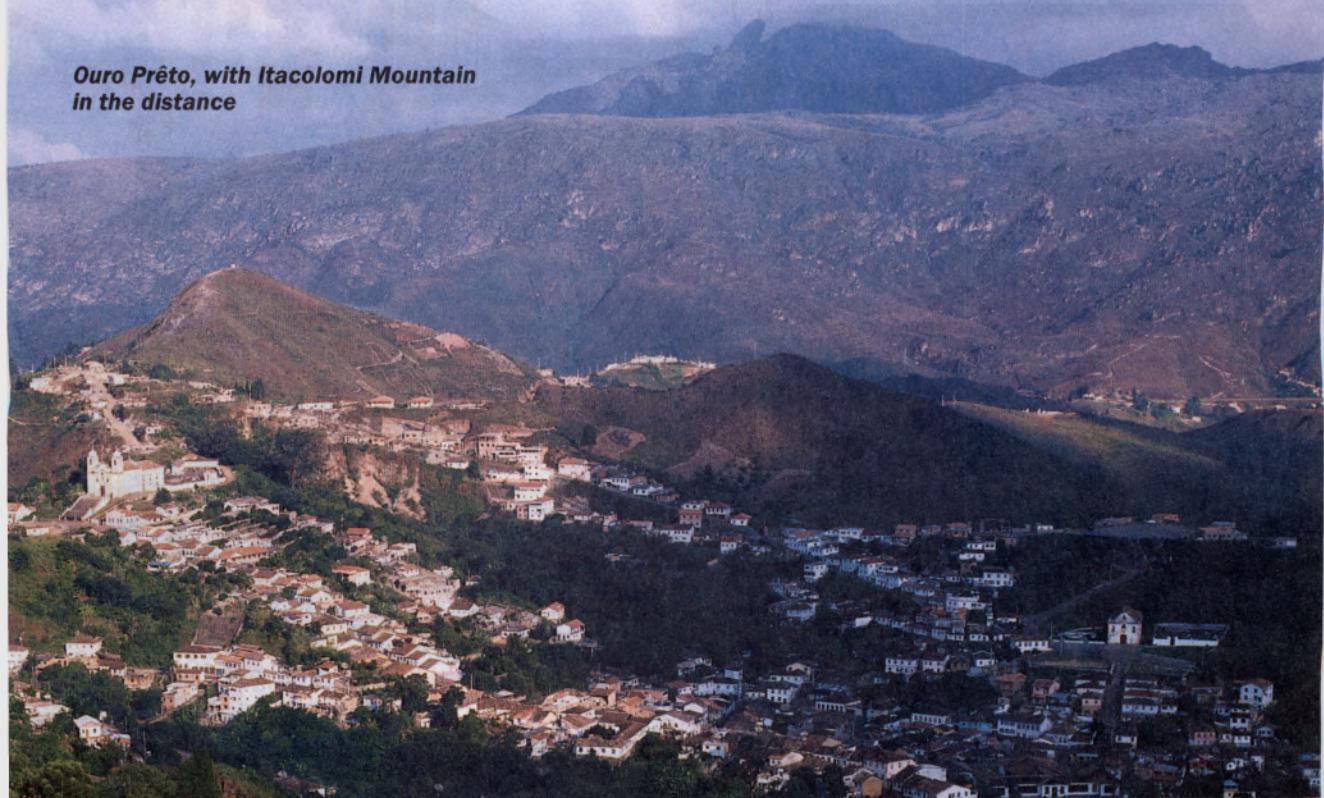
some artifacts and other reminders of its history. Some of these are easily found in the Inconfidência Museum, located at Praça Tiradentes. Formerly used as a town hall and prison, the museum keeps the memories of art, history, and the town's tragedy alive.

The displays include Tiradentes' death warrant, issued by Dona Maria I, and pieces of the gallows used for his execution. Under masonry slabs, laid out in a row like beds in a dormitory, are buried the remains of some of Tiradentes' fellow conspirators. On another floor the rooms safeguard antique, colonial, and imperial furnishings.

Gemstone Utopia

A walk to the upper end of Praça Tiradentes leads to another treasure chest—the Governor's Palace, which used to accommodate governors and State presidents. Presently, it houses the Escola de Minas, a school for advanced studies in mine engineering, geology, and metallurgy. The school's museum majestically showcases an outstanding collection of 20,000 samples of 3,000 different types of

**Ouro Prêto, with Itacolomi Mountain
in the distance**





**Inconfidência Museum,
Praça Tiradentes**



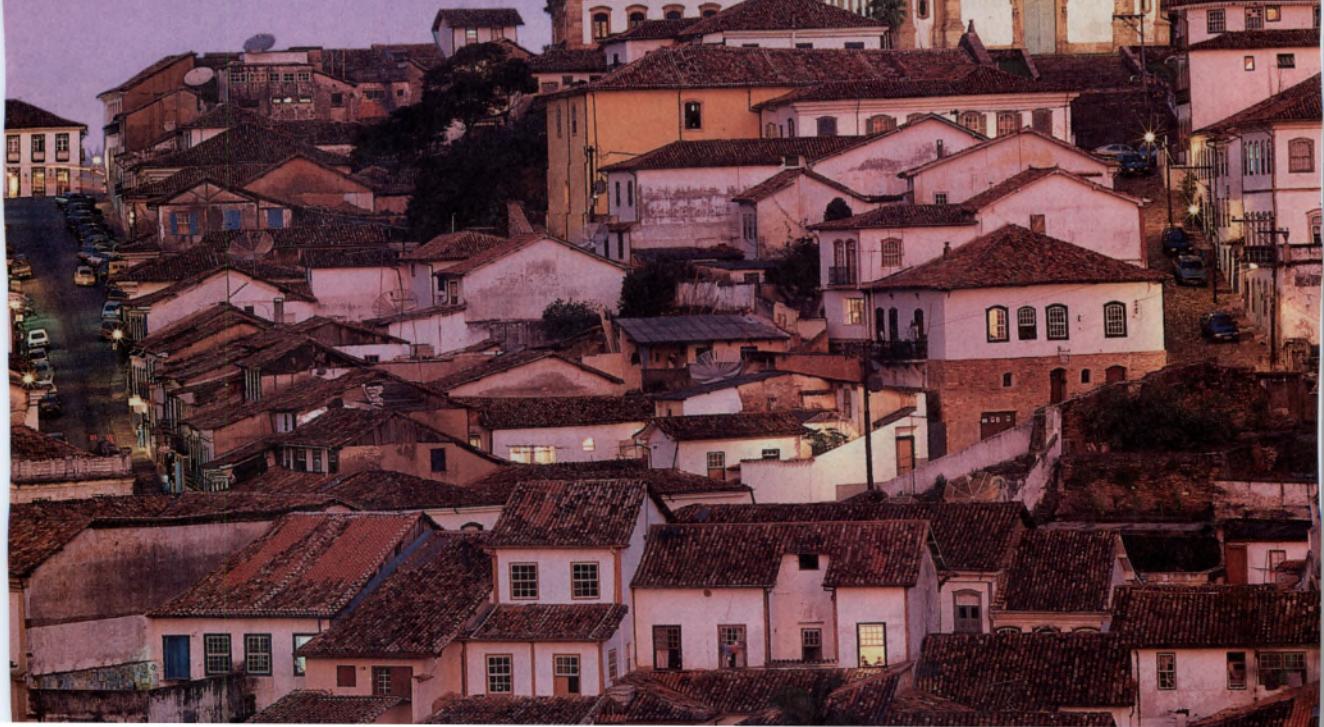
Gems: Brasil Gemas, Ouro Preto, MG

minerals, gemstones, crystals and, of course, *ouro preto*, black gold.

Gold is no longer a major resource today. Nevertheless, the region continues to yield aquamarine and emerald beryls and yellow imperial topaz. Some 50 years ago, the art of gem cutting was known only to a handful of experts. But today there are clusters of free-lance gem hunters and jewelry stores around Praça Tiradentes. The store managers will not only give you a lesson in identifying the gemstones but also introduce you to the gem cutters and polishers working in the back rooms. They, in turn, are pleased to show you how the cutting is done. This gesture of hospitality reflects the townsfolk's feeling of being privileged to live in a town with a fascinating history.

If you are planning to visit Brazil, make sure that a stroll through photogenic Ouro Preto is included in your travel plans.

◀ **Aquamarine, yellow
imperial topaz, and
emerald**



Nutritious Foods Within Your Reach



BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

ANGÉLICA and her family of ten lived in a small rural town in the state of Oaxaca, in Mexico. They were poor, and their diet consisted of corn tortillas, beans, hot-pepper sauces, watery rice, sweet bread, and tea. "We didn't grow much," Angélica says. "We were small and skinny. We would often get sick—stomach problems, parasites, and colds."

Angélica and her family decided to move to Mexico City, hoping to find work that would enable them to improve their economic situation. She believes that their diet is much better

now because it includes milk, eggs, meat, cream, a few vegetables, and a variety of processed foods. But has their diet really become more nutritious?

Malnutrition—How Widespread?

Worldwide, some 800 million people are in danger of dying from malnutrition. According to the 1998 World Health Report of the World Health Organization (WHO), about 50 percent of all deaths among children under five years of age are associated with malnutrition. Even those who manage to survive are often in poor health.

At the other extreme, it is claimed by some that as many as 800 million people are in danger of dying from excesses in eating. An unbalanced diet can lead to such chronic illnesses as obesity, atherosclerosis, hypertension, diabetes, cirrhosis, and various types of cancer. Summing up the matter, WHO states: "Malnutrition thus covers a broad spectrum of ills, including undernutrition, specific nutrient deficiencies, and over-nutrition; and it kills, maims, retards, cripples, blinds, and impairs human development on a truly massive scale worldwide."

Within the same country, there can be both undernutrition and obesity. Within the same home, there can be infant malnutrition as well as chronic problems with obesity in adults. In some cases the same person who was undernourished as a child is obese as an adult. The latter can happen to those who move from the country to the city.

Many people do not understand the relationship between their state of health and their eating habits. Perhaps this is because the effect of a poor diet on one's health is not manifest immediately. But a healthful diet can prevent many illnesses. In fact, WHO estimates that up to 40 percent of cancer cases

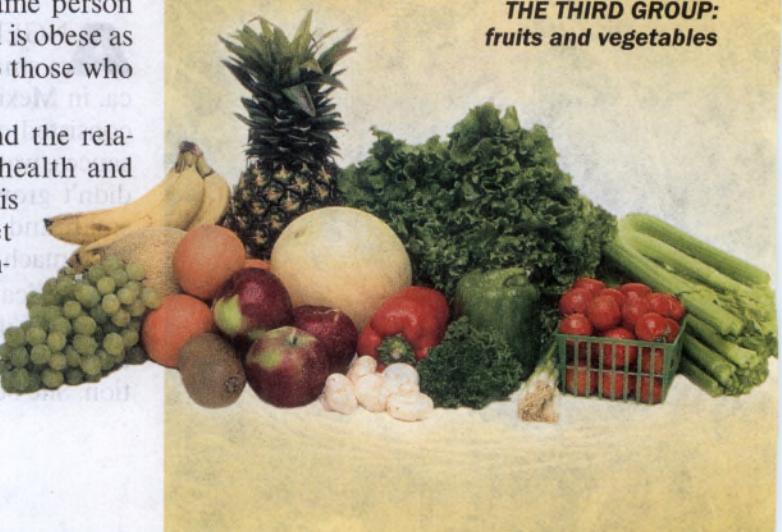
THE FIRST GROUP:
cereals and tubers



THE SECOND GROUP:
legumes, meat, fish, eggs,
and milk and its derivatives



THE THIRD GROUP:
fruits and vegetables



could be prevented by better eating habits and by exercise. But how can you improve your diet?

How to Improve Your Diet

Some consider food to be divided into three main groups. The first group includes cereals, such as corn, wheat, rice, oats, rye, barley, and millet, as well as tubers, such as potatoes and yams. These carbohydrates supply quick energy. The second group includes legumes, such as beans, soybeans, lentils, chick-peas, and broad beans, and some foods of animal origin, such as meat, fish, eggs, and milk and its derivatives. These are a source of protein, iron, zinc, and several vitamins. The third group includes fruits and vegetables. These provide essential vitamins and minerals. They also supply fiber and provide energy, and they represent the only natural source of vitamin C.

According to Dr. Héctor Bourges, director of nutrition at the Salvador Zubirán National Institute of Medical Sciences and Nutrition (INCMNSZ) of Mexico, a healthful diet must be complete, sufficient, and balanced. He suggests that we "include at least one food from each group in each meal and vary as much as possible the foods that are used within each group, as well as the form in which they are prepared."

Consider the case of María. She and her family lived in Atopixco, a rural community in the state of Hidalgo, Mexico. They were very poor, and their basic diet consisted of tortillas, beans, pasta, rice, and hot peppers. In contrast with Angélica's family, mentioned at the outset, their diet also included small squashes, chayotes, mushrooms, and potheads, such as purslane and pigweed, many of which were gathered in the countryside. They tried to eat fruit in season occasionally. Their efforts resulted in better health.

Dr. Adolfo Chávez, head of the Applied Nutrition and Nutritional Education Department of the INCMNSZ, recommends using animal products to complement the dish-

es, not as the basis of the diet. For example, you might prepare a dish using just a few eggs combined with potatoes, vegetables, or beans. "This is what in [the field of] nutrition is known as 'extending,'" says Dr. Chávez. A note of caution, however: Always wash fruits and vegetables carefully, especially those that are to be eaten raw.

A diet must also be suitable for each individual, and such factors as age, sex, and life-style must be considered. For adults, some suggest eating two portions of fruit and/or vegetables at each meal and increasing the consumption of whole-grain cereals and legumes. It is recommended by some that foods of animal origin be consumed only in small portions at each meal, with preference given to fish, skinless chicken, and lean meats. It is also suggested that the consumption of fats and sugars be limited.

Even those who live in developing countries and who are affected by poverty can sometimes improve their diet. How? By choosing nutritious foods and by varying and combining them, such as mixing cereals and legumes. By using small amounts of meat or eggs to enhance the nutritional value of a dish. By taking advantage of the green plants that grow in your area and of fruits in season.

Our Creator causes "food to go forth from the earth" for mankind's enjoyment. (Psalm 104:14) The Bible, at Ecclesiastes 9:7, says: "Go, eat your food with rejoicing." Without a doubt, by using balance and moderation, we can enjoy the benefits of the delicious and nutritious foods that the Creator has provided.

In Our Next Issue

- Globalization—Curse or Cure?
 - A Unique Sanctuary of Mediterranean Wildlife
 - Protect Your Hearing!
-

Watching the World

More Out-of-Wedlock Children

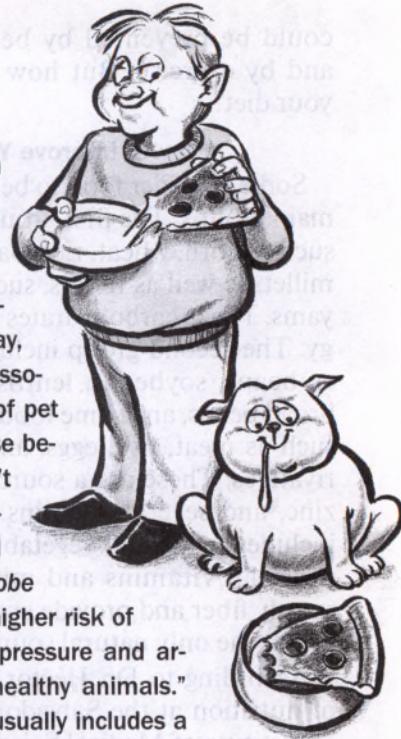
According to Eurostat, a European statistical agency, currently 1 baby in 4 in the European Union is born out of wedlock, reports the German newspaper *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. In 1980 the rate was less than 1 in 10. The lowest incidence of unwed childbirth—4 percent—is found in Greece. On the other end of the spectrum, in Sweden more than half of all births are out of wedlock. Ireland has seen the biggest change. The number of out-of-wedlock children born there rose from just 5 percent in 1980 to 31.8 percent in 2000. Such significant increases “prove that there has been a marked change in attitude toward marriage and family among Europeans,” states the report.

Hornets Build With Magnets

“Hornets are master builders who use the insect equivalent of a surveyor’s spirit level to ensure that their nests are aligned correctly,” states London’s newspaper *The Daily Telegraph*. A team of scientists from Tel Aviv University, in Israel, who studied oriental hornets discovered that the insects glue a tiny magnetic crystal—measuring four thousandths of an inch across and containing titanium, iron, and oxygen—to the roof of every hexagonal chamber in a comb. “Hornet nests are usually built from layers of horizontal combs supported by vertical struts,” states the report. Just how the magnets work is as yet unknown, but evidently “the network of crystals helps the insects to orientate in the dark and ensures that the hornets’

Pudgy Pets

“Obesity is the number one health problem affecting dogs and cats,” reports *The Globe and Mail* of Canada. “The causes are similar in humans and animals: poor eating habits and lack of exercise.” Berney Pukay, of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association council, blames the life-style of pet owners: “We don’t get enough exercise because we’re rushed. The dog doesn’t get enough exercise because the owner is rushed. We need comfort food so our pets get comfort food.” The *Globe* warns that “overweight pets have a higher risk of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and arthritis. . . . They die younger than healthy animals.” Veterinary treatment for obese pets usually includes a restricted diet and, for dogs, increased exercise.



nest is not dangerously lopsided. A study is now under way to find out whether other wasps, or even bees, use the same technique.”

Young Women and Osteoporosis

An increasing number of young women are putting themselves at risk for osteoporosis later in life because of excessive dieting, warns Japan’s *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper. With osteoporosis, a disease that afflicts many older women, bone density becomes so low that the bones break easily. Bone formation in women is closely linked to female hormones. From the start of menstruation, bone density increases rapidly and peaks at about age 20, before starting to decline at about age 40. “The higher the peak of bone

density, even if it lessens afterward, the longer it will take to get to the point where bones break easily,” explains Professor Ikuko Ezawa of Japan’s Women’s University. Therefore, she adds: “It is very important to get the most bone density possible by the age of 20.” However, young women show little concern about osteoporosis. “In general, they don’t take in sufficient nutrition,” says Ezawa. “In particular, lack of calcium and lack of exercise have a direct effect on the bones.”

Happy and Healthy at 100

According to a report in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* newspaper, “80 percent of people over 100 years of age feel they are healthy and feel good every day.” The number of centenarians in Japan first passed 1,000 in 1981,

and it reached 13,000 in the year 2000. Recently, Japan's Foundation of Health and Stamina conducted a survey of more than 1,900 centenarians, apparently the largest study ever done on the "quality of life" of seniors over 100. "A larger number of the men, 43.6 percent, as opposed to women, 25.8 percent, say that they 'have a purpose in life,'" reported the newspaper. Most of the centenarians mentioned "family," "long life," and "enjoying good health and living happily" among their life purposes. Hence, *Yomiuri Shimbun* suggests that "having something to live for leads to long life."

Living Alone

A recent census revealed that in France 1 person in 8 now lives alone. This proportion is twice what it was 30 years

ago, reports the French daily *Le Monde*. The statistics include youths who do not as yet have a partner as well as the elderly. More women live alone than men, and the article notes that "the higher a woman's social status, the more likely she is to live on her own." The census also reveals that since 1990, there has been a 22-percent increase in the number of single-parent families and a 16-percent increase in the number of couples without children. "In total," concludes the article, "there are now more childless couples and people living alone than there are households with children."

Sexually Active Teens

A report by Britain's Family Matters Institute indicates that teenagers are "twice as likely to have had sex if their parents were separated or if their

parents were cohabiting rather than married," says *The Guardian* of London. One quarter of sexually active 13-year-olds have had at least four sexual partners, and 1 in 5 young teenagers were drunk when they lost their virginity. The report stresses the need for "a strong emphasis upon marriage as the ideal type of family unit for raising children." Problems arise when there are 'weak parent-teen relationships, infrequent contact, and less supervision.' The report concludes: "Until the parents of young teenagers begin to take more responsibility for their children's behaviour, the level of underage sex will not decline and teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease will continue to rise."

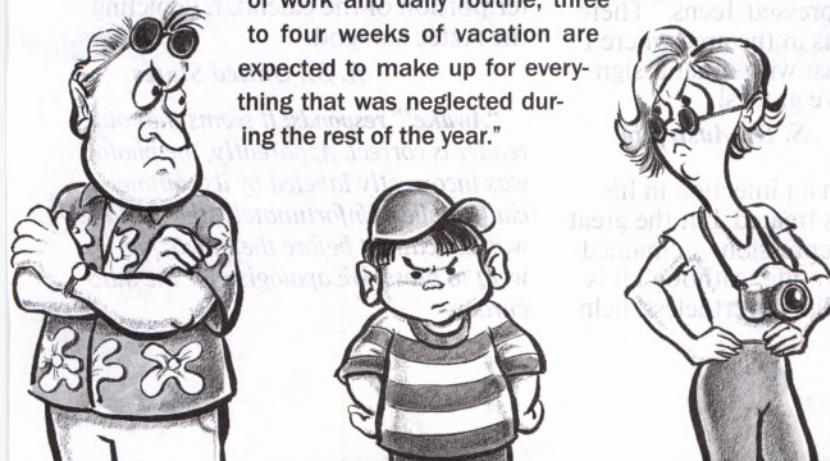
Drowsy Drivers

Sleep experts, along with traffic-safety advocates, are advising motorists not to drive when they are overtired, reports the *Fleet Maintenance & Safety Report*. Although sleep researchers recommend at least eight hours of sleep every night, studies show that many people try to get by on much less. Surveys also show that drivers between the ages of 19 and 29 are more likely than other age groups to drive when drowsy and are more inclined to increase their speed when they feel sleepy. "Alcohol also increases the risk of falling asleep behind the wheel," states the report. David Willis, president of the American Automobile Association Foundation for Traffic Safety, points out that playing the radio or lowering the window will not keep you awake, but a short nap may help you get over drowsiness. Willis stresses: "The only cure for drowsiness is sleep."

Vacation Frustration

"If you are packing your bags for the nicest weeks of the year, be careful!" cautions the Hamburg newspaper *Die Welt*. Strife and squabbling spoil many a family vacation. According to one German study, "one divorce in three is filed after a shared vacation." Why? One factor may be unaccustomed closeness and togetherness, resulting in family members' getting on each other's nerves. To avoid a crisis, psychologists suggest planning out vacations in advance, scheduling common activities with enough flexibility to accommodate individual wishes. "Excessively high expectations play a role [in the vacation dilemma]," states *Die Welt*. "Since the year consists of eleven months

of work and daily routine, three to four weeks of vacation are expected to make up for everything that was neglected during the rest of the year."



From Our Readers

Worrying I want to express thanks for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Stop Worrying So Much?" (September 22, 2001) I am 17 years old, and every day I wonder how my life will turn out after I graduate from high school. I try to keep my worries to myself because I don't want to bother others, so I suffer inside. The article helped me to see the value of talking with my mother and with mature ones in the congregation.



L. R., United States

I am 17 years old. I frequently worry about my mother's health, my schoolwork, and household chores. My mother is always elbowing me at Christian meetings when counsel is given about worrying. So I appreciated the practical suggestions in the article about prioritizing my time and also about doing unpleasant tasks rather than putting them off. Thank you for this article.

H. H., United States

As a father and Christian elder, I can see that our youths are concerned about the future. Your advice to talk things over with parents and to handle problems promptly is good. Thank you for your continued interest in our young people.

R. H., Canada

Depressed Teens I had a school assignment to write a paper on a social issue of my choice that would be appropriate for adolescents. I used the September 8, 2001, cover series, "Help for Depressed Teens." There is a lot of depression among teens in the area where I live. I have used *Awake!* in the past with other assignments—and I received impressive grades!

S. H., Australia

Our teenage son suffered from an infection in his heart and brain. The disease was treated, but the greater danger—the accompanying depression—remained undetected. Our son took his own life. Although it is too late to help him, this series did, nevertheless, help

us a great deal in understanding his disorder. We were filled with appreciation that this subject was discussed and that you showed such loving care for our youngsters.

G. & G. R., Germany

There are times when I feel really low and begin to think I am worthless. I have felt ashamed to talk about my feelings with my Christian parents or the congregation elders. However, when I read the sentence that said, "*You are not to blame* for your condition," I was so relieved! And I realized again that I am not alone.

H. T., Japan

Watching the World I am writing to congratulate you on the very funny drawings included in "Watching the World." They help me to remember the news items they illustrate and, above all, they make me smile. Continue with your excellent work!

A.I.P.B., Spain

Maya Calendar I believe I spotted an error in the article "The Maya—Yesterday and Today." (September 8, 2001) The picture appearing with the box "The Maya Calendar" is actually the Aztec calendar of the sun. More precisely, it is the center portion of the calendar, depicting the Aztec sun-god.

R. S., United States

"Awake!" responds: It seems that our reader is correct. Apparently, the photo was incorrectly labeled by its commercial supplier. Unfortunately, the mistake was not caught before the magazine went to press. We apologize for the inaccuracy.

BY AWAKE! WRITER
IN NIGER

A Refreshing Drink From an Exotic Plant

DO YOU enjoy a cold drink on a hot day? Many West African families enjoy a refreshing drink that is colorful, delicious, healthful, and economical—and, it is made from a plant. The drink is called *bissap*, and the flowering plant that it is derived from is the tropical roselle. This plant can reach a height of six feet or more. It is grown in different regions of the world but particularly in drier climates found in countries such as Niger, Mali, and Senegal.

How *Bissap* Is Prepared

One tablespoon of the plant's calyxes is placed in approximately one quart of water. The combination is brought to a boil and then allowed to steep for 15 to 20 minutes. The calyxes are strained off, and the tea can be drunk hot or cool, with or without sugar. Today we want to prepare a cold drink that the children will enjoy, so we will add sugar. Some families also prepare the drink with mint or with vanilla flavoring. The cold, bright-red *bissap* is poured into small, clear plastic bags, which are then knotted at the top. It is now ready to distribute to the eager children! They happily tear off a corner of the bag and enjoy their favorite drink. Of course, some prefer to drink it from a glass.

Besides being delicious, *bissap* is said to be good for you. It contains calcium, phosphorus, iron, vitamins A and C, and more! Some say that *bissap* is also a gentle laxative, a diuretic, and a stimulant for the liver. In any event, how happy we are that besides being beautiful to look at, this plant provides us with a healthful, refreshing drink!

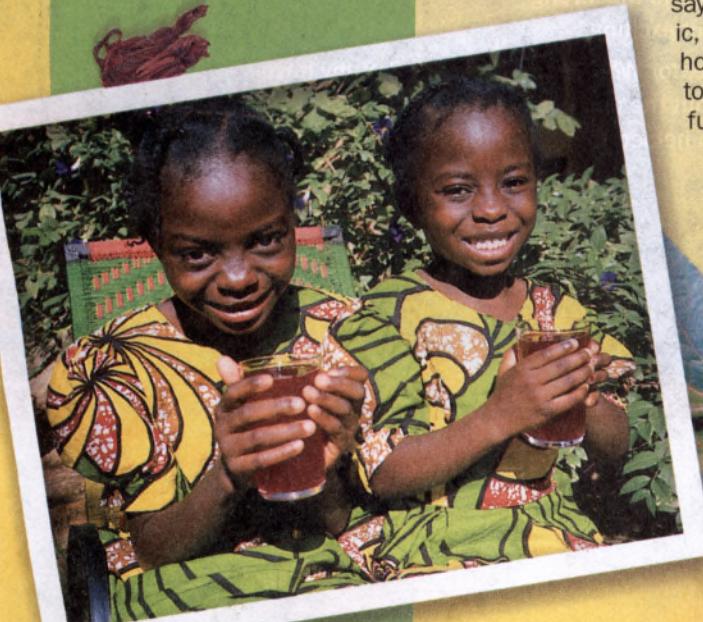


Photo by
Kazuo Yamasaki ▶

A "POTENT LITTLE BOOK"

When a young man left his job at a bank in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., to further his education, a fellow employee gave him a copy of the book *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* Later she received a letter from the man. He wrote:

'What a potent little book you gave me! I've been reading it these past few weeks, and it has some very profound arguments. I'm especially interested in the astronomical and geological argument of creation as "a deliberate intellectual act." I also found the strong emphasis on the Sermon on the Mount exciting.'

As a result of reading *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* many have been moved to think more deeply about the origin as well as the purpose of life. More important, many have been helped to reach informed conclusions.



Is There a
Creator
Who Cares About You?