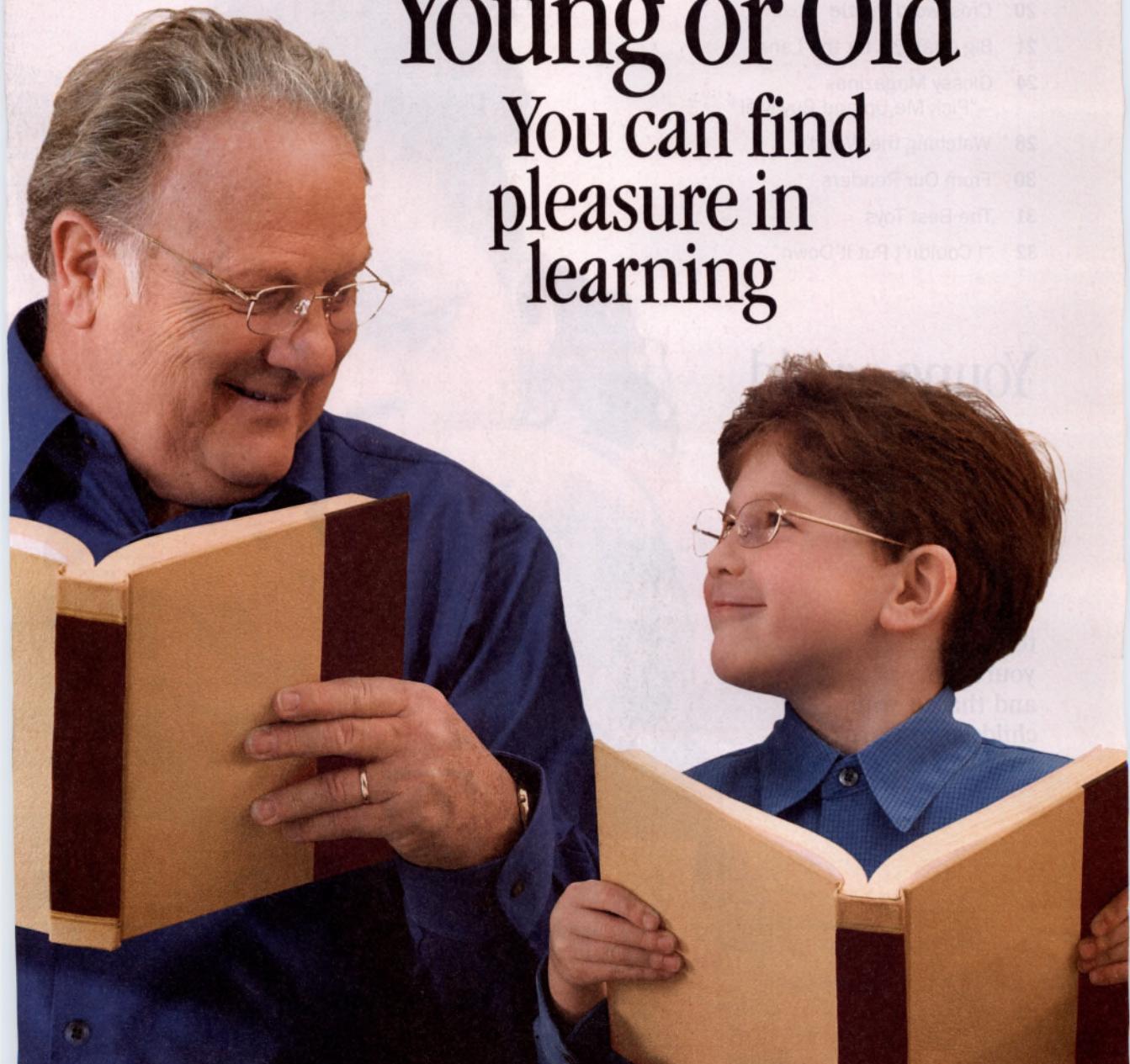


Awake!

AUGUST 8, 2004

Young or Old You can find pleasure in learning



Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 22,530,000
PUBLISHED IN 87 LANGUAGES

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Young or Old
You can find
pleasure in
learning

3-12

Do you want to enhance your ability and that of your children to learn? How can it be done?



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ATHENS 2004



The Olympics Return to Their Birthplace 14

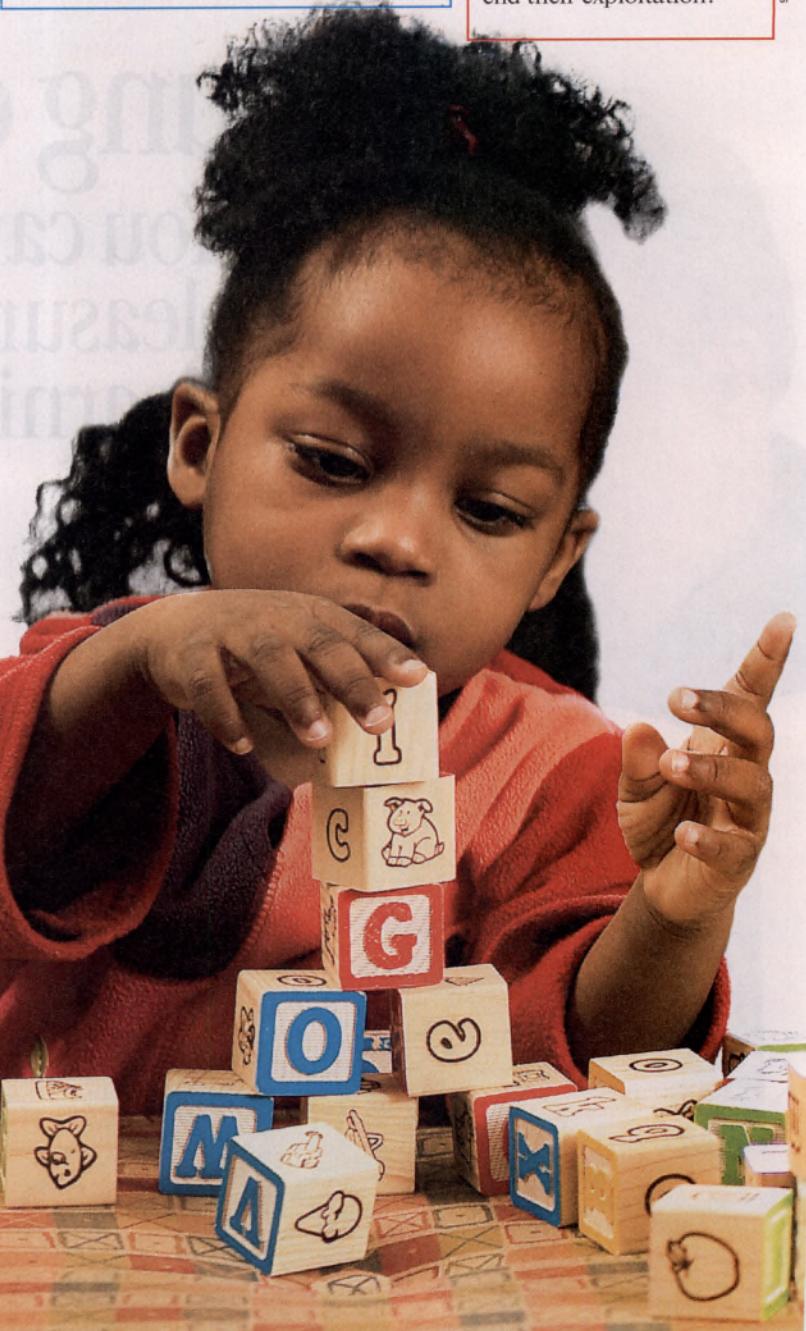
The Olympic Games originated in Greece. They return there this August.



© Mikkel Ostergaard/Panos Pictures

Does God Really Care About Children? 18

How will God act to end their exploitation?



A NEWBORN deer has an inner drive to stand erect on its long, wobbly legs and follow its mother. A human baby, on the other hand, may not walk for a year. Yet, humans are gifted with a truly amazing brain vastly superior to that of any animal. This superiority is reflected in a child's insatiable curiosity and passion for discovery and knowledge.

In order to satisfy that curiosity, normal, healthy babies turn their world into a type of laboratory. Hand them an object, and they will study it with every sense, including taste! And the experimentation does not stop there. As every parent

Born to Learn

"Birds fly, fish swim; man thinks and learns."

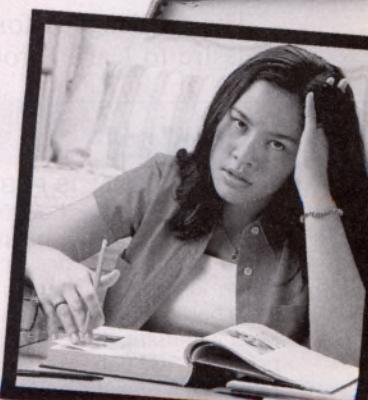
—JOHN HOLT, AUTHOR AND EDUCATOR.

knows, babies will bend, bash, shake, and break things—often with glee—in their quest to understand and experience their environment.

Children's appetite for knowledge becomes even more evident when they begin to speak—an amazing feat in its own right! Overnight, it seems, children become the embodiment of the question mark. Questions, such as 'Why this?' 'Why that?' shoot from their lips in an endless barrage, testing many a parent's patience. They "do much of their learning in great bursts of passion and enthusiasm," said author John Holt.

Then, a few years later, children in many lands step into a new world of learning—one of teachers, textbooks, desks, and perhaps hundreds of other children. Sadly, after years at school, many young ones become less eager to learn in that way. Some even come to view school as stressful or as a drudgery. Maybe certain subjects or teachers fail to inspire them. Or perhaps the pressure to attain good grades causes them unbearable anxiety.

■ **Sadly, many youths face stress and anxiety at school**



Acquired negative attitudes toward such learning may persist into adulthood and even old age, making those affected shy away from anything involving deep thought, study, or research. Elderly people have an additional obstacle to contend with—the belief that advanced age automatically impairs learning ability. But as we will see, that view is unwarranted.

Do you want to enhance your ability and desire to learn, regardless of your age? If you are a parent, do you want your children to be better students and to enjoy learning throughout their school years and beyond? If so, then please read on.



How to Nurture a Love for Learning

"Teach a child how he should live, and he will remember it all his life."—PROVERBS 22:6, TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION.

HAVE you ever tried to get children to sleep when something interesting was happening? Though tired, tearful, and even irritable, they will struggle to stay awake and involved. Their "need to make sense of the world and to be skillful in it is as deep and strong as their need for food or rest or sleep. At times it may be even stronger," writes author John Holt.

The challenge is for children to maintain a desire to learn throughout life, including,

of course, the school years. While there is no sure formula for success, there are a number of proved strategies that parents, teachers, and children can apply. More important than any strategy, however, is love.

Let Love Bring Out the Best

Children crave parental love. It gives them a sense of security, making them more willing to communicate, ask questions, and explore. Love moves parents to talk regularly

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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The Internet and TV—Helpful or Harmful?

"Use of the Internet is a mixed blessing," says the book *A Mind at a Time*. Learning how to find information can be very useful, but some students, the book explains, just "download information without really understanding or integrating it. Thus, the process runs the risk of becoming a new mode of passive learning or perhaps even a way of acquiring plagiarizing skills."

Spending excessive time watching TV, researchers say, may retard problem-solving and listening skills, blunt the imagination, and do nothing to build character. "Television sets should come, as cigarettes do, emblazoned with a warning about their hazards to a person's well-being," observes the book *Eager to Learn*.

What children need most, suggests another reference, is "exposure to language (reading and conversation), love, and lots of warm hugs."

with their children and to take an interest in their education. Research indicates that "parents appear to be the primary influence on a child's motivation to learn," points out the book *Eager to Learn—Helping Children Become Motivated and Love Learning*. The effects of that influence are amplified when parents work along with teachers. "No force is as powerful in rejuvenating a child's motivation to learn as a parent and teacher working in collaboration," the book states.

Parents also influence their children's ability to learn. In a long-term study of 43 families, reported in the book *Inside the Brain*, researchers "found that children who were talked to the most [during their first three years of life] had strikingly higher IQs than children whose parents didn't talk to them very much." The book adds that "parents who talk to their children the most tend to

praise the children's accomplishments, respond to their questions, provide guidance rather than commands, and use many different words in a variety of combinations." If you are a parent, do you communicate regularly and meaningfully with your children?

Love Is Kind and Understanding

Children vary in their abilities and aptitudes. Naturally, parents would not want to allow these differences to influence the love they show. In today's world, however, people are often assessed according to their abilities, which can cause some children "to view competitive achievement as a test of their personal value," according to the book *Thinking and Learning Skills*. Besides leaving these children "too easily threatened by failure," this belief can also lead to their feeling undue anxiety and stress. The magazine *India Today* notes

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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.

that anxiety resulting from academic pressure and a lack of family support is considered to be a key factor in the threefold increase in India's teen suicide rates over the past 25 years.

Emotional harm may also result if children are labeled as "dumb" or "stupid." Such cruel remarks discourage learning rather than promote it. A parent's love, however, should always be kind, supporting a child's natural desire to learn—and at his or her own pace, without fear of humiliation. (1 Corinthians 13:4) If a child has a learning problem, loving parents try to help, never making the child feel silly or worthless. True, that may call for patience and tact, but it is well worth the effort. How does one cultivate such love? Having a spiritual outlook is an important first step.

A Spiritual Outlook Gives Balance

Bible-based spirituality is especially valuable for a number of reasons. For one thing, it helps us put secular learning in proper perspective, seeing it as important but not as all-important. Math, for example, may have many practical uses, but it cannot make one a moral, principled person.

The Bible also encourages us to be balanced in the amount of time we devote to secular studies, saying: "To the making of many books there is no end, and much devotion to them is wearisome to the flesh." (Ecclesiastes 12:12) True, children need to get a good basic education, but this should not consume all their time. They also need room for other wholesome activities, especially those of a spiritual nature, which educate the inner person.

Another facet of Bible-based spirituality is modesty. (Micah 6:8) Modest people accept their limitations, and they do not fall victim to the intense ambition and cutthroat competition that are evident in many educational institutions. These unwholesome traits "make for a depressive combination," says *India Today*. Young or old, we fare much better when we heed the inspired advice of the Bible:

"Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another." "But let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person."—Galatians 5:26; 6:4.

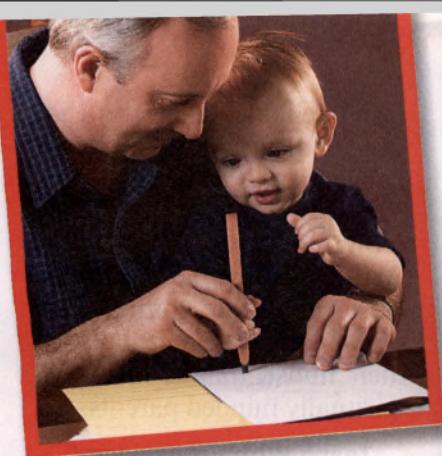
How can parents apply this in their children's education? One way is by encouraging each child to set personal goals and to make comparisons with himself. For instance, if your son recently had a math or spelling test, have him compare his results with those of an earlier test. Then offer appropriate commendation or encouragement. In this way, you help him to set attainable goals, to monitor his progress, and to address any weaknesses, while not comparing him with others.

Nowadays, however, some capable young people would rather not do well at school for fear of being ridiculed. "It is just not 'cool' to be a good student," is a view that some youths adopt. Can a spiritual outlook help here? Yes, indeed! Consider Colossians 3:23, which says: "Whatever you are doing, put your whole heart into it, as if you were doing it for the Lord and not for men." (*The New English Bible*) Can you think of a higher motive for working hard than pleasing God? Such a noble outlook gives one the strength to resist unwholesome peer pressure.

Teach Children to Love Reading

Reading and writing are fundamental to a good education—secular and spiritual. Parents can foster a love for the written word by reading to children from infancy. Daphne, who works as a proofreader, is glad that her parents read to her regularly as a child. "They nurtured within me a love for the written word," she explains. "As a result, I could read before I went to school. My parents also taught me to do research so that I could find answers to my own questions. This training has been invaluable, right down to today."

On the other hand, Holt, quoted earlier,



Families That Make a Success of Learning

The following habits and characteristics can help your family to make a success of learning:

- Frequent communication of high but reasonable expectations to children, given in love
- A view of hard work as a key to success
- An active life-style, not a sedentary one
- Many hours of home-centered learning each week for the children and activities that include school homework, reading for leisure, hobbies, family projects, and household training and duties
- A view of the family as a mutual-support system and problem-solving unit
- Clearly understood household rules, consistently enforced
- Frequent contact with teachers
- An emphasis on spiritual growth

Based on the book *Eager to Learn—Helping Children Become Motivated and Love Learning*.

■ **Parents, do you teach your children to enjoy reading?**





■ Parents and teachers should work together to help children learn



cautions that reading to children "isn't some kind of magic pill." He adds: "If the reading isn't fun for both parent and child, it will do more harm than good. . . . Even children who like being read aloud to . . . don't like it when the parents don't like it." Hence, Holt suggests that parents select books that they also enjoy, keeping in mind that children may want to hear the books read many times! Two books that millions of parents worldwide enjoy reading to their little ones are *Learn From the Great Teacher* and *My Book of Bible Stories*, both published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Specifically prepared for children, these publications are richly illustrated, stimulate thinking, and teach godly principles.

Timothy, a first-century Christian, was blessed with a mother and a grandmother who took active interest in his education, especially his spiritual education. (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15) Timothy grew up to be exceptionally responsible

and reliable—qualities that secular learning alone cannot engender. (Philippians 2:19, 20; 1 Timothy 4:12-15) Today congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the world have many fine young "Timothys"—male and female—in their midst, thanks to loving, spiritually-minded parents.

Teach With Enthusiasm!

For the teacher who wants to instill a love for learning in others, "one word sums it all up—enthusiasm," says the book *Eager to Learn*. "By their very presence, enthusiastic teachers tell students that they care about what they are teaching, and this value radiates through them with vitality."

In reality, though, not every parent or teacher bub-

Ways to Enhance Learning and Make It More Enjoyable



Be Interested Be absorbed in something, and you more readily learn it. The book *Motivated Minds—Raising Children to Love Learning* makes the following observation: "Researchers have shown decisively that when children study because they enjoy it, their learning is deeper, richer, and longer lasting. They are also more persistent, more creative, and more eager to do challenging work."



Relate Learning to Life Author and educator Richard L. Weaver II writes: "When there is a direct connection between classroom learning and your practical experience, there is an electrical spark that turns on the light bulb of understanding."



Try to Comprehend When people try to understand something, they stimulate both their thinking ability and their memory. Rote learning has its place, but it is no substitute

bles with enthusiasm. Wise students, therefore, try to be self-motivated, to view learning as their own responsibility. After all, says the aforementioned book, "no one is going to sit

next to our children the rest of their lives and help them to study, to do quality work, to think, and to make the extra effort that develops excellent skills."

Once again, this puts the focus not so much on the school as on the home and on the values children learn there. Parents, are you enthusiastic about learning? Does your home provide a wholesome learning environment, one that emphasizes spiritual values? (Ephesians 6:4) Remember, both your example and your teaching will influence your children long after they leave school and home.—See the box "Families That Make a Success of Learning," on page 7.

Recognize That People Learn in Different Ways

No two minds are exactly alike; each has its own way of learning. What works well for one person may not work as well for another. Hence, Dr. Mel Levine, in his book *A Mind at a Time*, states: "To treat all children the same way is to treat them unequally. Different kids have different learning needs; they have a right to have their needs met."



for comprehension. "With all that you acquire, acquire understanding. Highly esteem it, and it will exalt you," says Proverbs 4:7, 8.

Concentrate "Concentration is at the very heart of learning," explains the book *Teaching Your Child Concentration*. "[It] is so important that it has been called a fundamental prerequisite of intelligence and has even been equated with intelligence itself." Concentration can be taught. A key is to start with brief periods of study and then lengthen them incrementally.

Paraphrase "The most competent students are the ones who are the most proficient paraphrasers," says Dr. Mel Levine in his book *A Mind at a Time*. Paraphrasing reduces information into smaller, manageable chunks, which are easier to remember. Good notetakers exploit this principle by not taking notes verbatim.



Associate In *The Brain Book*, Peter Russell likens memories to hooks suspended on previous memories. In short, recall is enhanced when you clearly associate new things with what you already know. The more associations you make, the better the recall.



Visualize Vivid images last. Therefore, visualize material where possible. Mnemonic experts use this technique, often creating exaggerated or humorous mental pictures as a memory aid.



Review Within 24 hours we can forget up to 80 percent of what we studied. By doing a brief review after a study session, then again a day, a week, a month, and even six months later, we vastly improve our recall, even raising it to near 100 percent.

■ **Age need not prevent learning**



For example, some people grasp and remember ideas better when they see pictures or diagrams. Others prefer the written word or the spoken word—better still, maybe a combination of these. “The best way to remember something is to change it, to transform the information in some manner,” says Levine. “If it’s visual, make it verbal, if it’s verbal create a diagram or picture of it.” This approach makes study not only more rewarding but also more enjoyable.

Of course, you may have to experiment to see what method works best for you. Hans, a full-time Christian minister, conducted a Bible study with George, an elderly man with only a basic education. George had difficulty grasping points and remembering them. So Hans tried illustrating key points with simple sketches on a pad. “That was a turning point for George,” said Hans. “In fact, he began to grasp and retain ideas so well that he surprised himself! Once I discovered how his mind functioned, I found that he was much sharper than I had initially given him credit for. Soon, his self-confidence grew, and he

began to look forward to our lessons as never before.”

You Are Never Too Old to Learn

“What the brain can do depends on whether or not it is used,” says *Inside the Brain*. “It is the ultimate use-it-or-lose-it machine, and it is eager to learn new skills.” The book also states: “Just as exercise keeps people vigorous into their seventies and eighties, researchers are demonstrating that mental workouts can do the same for the aging brain. Aging has long been thought to be an irreversible downhill slide into mental befuddlement. But the new research shows that [this] was little more than a self-fulfilling prophecy, usually the result of brain disuse. Furthermore, people do not lose massive numbers of brain cells each day as they grow older, as was once thought.” A severe slide in mental function is usually a sign of disease, including cardiovascular disease.

Granted, some decline in mental performance may occur in later years but not necessarily in critical ways. The active brain, researchers say, resists deterioration—and all the more so if the person also has a good routine of physical exercise. “The more one is involved in learning activities, the more one’s ability to learn expands. Continuing learners are better learners,” says the book *Elderlearning—New Frontier in an Aging Society*.

This fact was demonstrated in Australia in a 20-year study of individuals aged 60 to 98. The decline in intelligence scores for many participants was only about 1 percent per year. However, “some individuals, including nonagenarians, did not decline at all,” says the report. “These tended to be people who had participated in the disciplined learning experiments involving study of a foreign language and/or a musical instrument.”

George, mentioned earlier, was in his 70’s when he began to study God’s Word. Likewise, Virginia, now in her 80’s, and her late husband, Robert, also began to study the Bible when advanced in years. Says Virginia: “Though legally blind, Robert gave short Bible-based talks at the Kingdom Hall from outlines that he had memorized. As for me, I had never enjoyed reading, but now I love to read. In fact, early this morning I read an entire issue of *Awake!*”

George, Robert, and Virginia are just three examples of the many older ones who defy the stereotypes and make good use of their minds. Research shows that 70 or 80 years of learning is to the brain what a thimbleful of water is to a large drum of water—it hardly even makes a mark. Why does the brain have such vast reserves?

Designed to Learn Forever

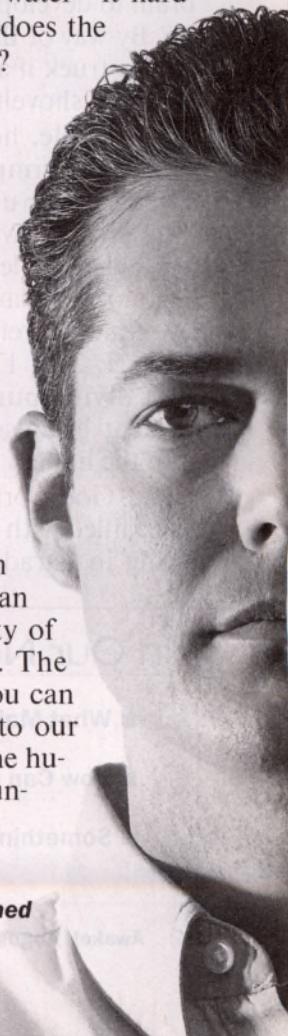
“In every head is a formidable powerhouse, a compact, efficient organ whose capacity seems to expand further towards infinity the more we learn of it.” —TONY BUZAN AND TERENCE DIXON, SCIENCE WRITERS.

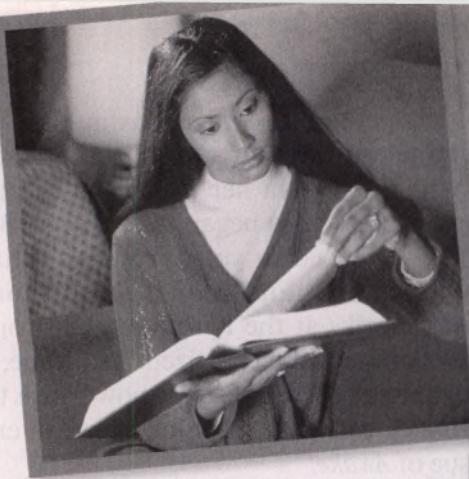
HOW much can the human brain learn? That question continues to fascinate and baffle researchers. In *The Brain Book*, Peter Russell writes: “The more that is learned about the human brain, the more its capacities and potentials are found to go far beyond earlier speculations.”

In regard to memory, for instance, our brain has an enormous capacity. “Memory is not like a container that gradually fills up,” says Russell, “it is more like a tree growing hooks onto which the memories are hung.

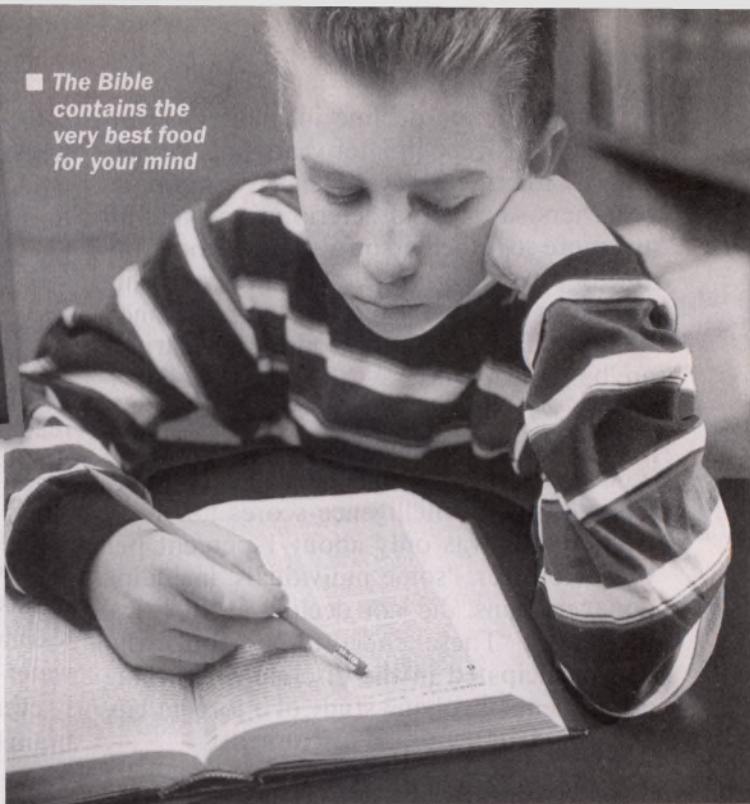
Everything you remember is another set of hooks on which more new memories can be attached. So the capacity of memory keeps on growing. The more you know, the more you can know.” This brings us back to our earlier question, Why does the human brain have such vast, untapped reserves?

■ **Reflecting God’s purpose,
the human brain was designed
to learn forever**





■ *The Bible contains the very best food for your mind*



The theory of evolution offers no reasonable answer. Relying heavily on the notion of survival of the fittest, evolution leaves thinking people baffled as to what drove the human brain to develop its enormous capacity. By way of illustration, why build a huge truck if all you will ever carry is a mere shovelful of sand?

The Bible, however, offers a refreshingly simple yet logical explanation. First, it tells us that our original parents—Adam and Eve—were formed in God's image, able to reflect God's wonderful qualities. Second, it explains that they were designed to live—and therefore to learn—forever. (Genesis 1:27; 2:16, 17) The human brain reflects that divine purpose, albeit imperfectly at present because of the introduction of sin into the human family.—Romans 5:12.

But God's original purpose for the earth to be filled with perfect, God-fearing humans living in Paradise will be realized. Indeed,

Jehovah gave his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as a ransom sacrifice in our behalf in order that we may gain everlasting life.—Matthew 20:28; John 3:16.

The Very Best Mental Food

Jehovah also gave us his inspired Word, the Holy Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21) Because this precious volume is a product of holy spirit, it is no exaggeration to say that it contains the very best mental and spiritual food for humankind. (Psalm 19:7-10) Indeed, Jesus himself said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth."—Matthew 4:4.

So whether you are young or old, why not set aside a little time each day to read God's precious 'utterances'? Those who do so and who apply what they learn will benefit both now and in the future. Yes, they can enjoy the prospect of living and learning forever, just as God originally purposed. What a wonderful hope that is!—Ecclesiastes 3:11; John 17:3.

In Our Next Issue

- **What Makes a Good Father?**
- **How Can I Avoid Premarital Sex?**
- **Something Better Than Fame**

A MODERN-DAY *Good Samaritan*

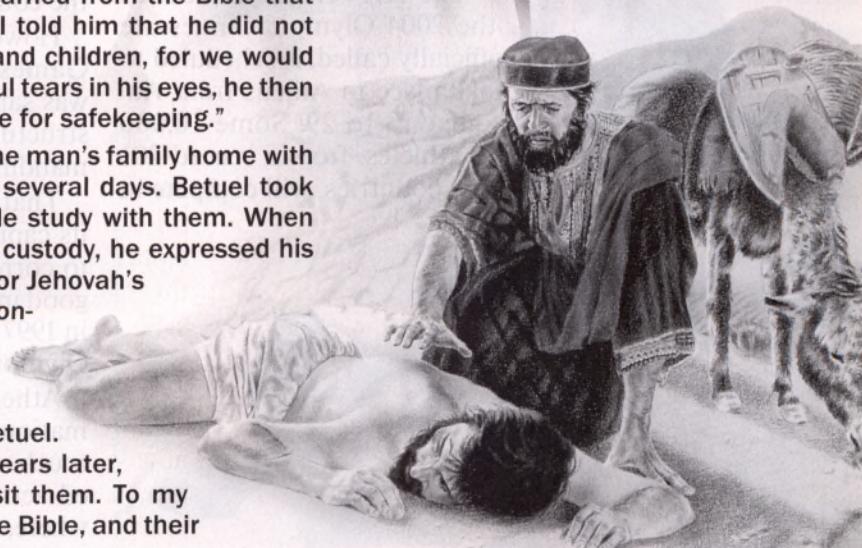
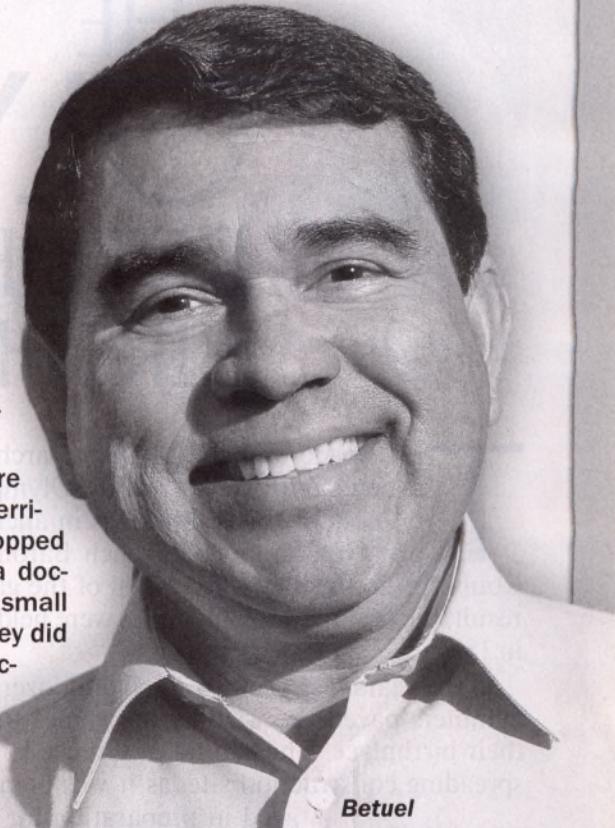
BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

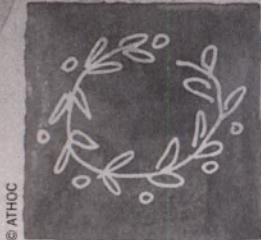
Many of us have heard the Bible story about a neighborly man often called the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:29-37) In this parable Jesus Christ showed to what extraordinary lengths a Samaritan man went in demonstrating love for his neighbor in need. Do such good Samaritans exist today? Consider the following account from Mexico.

Returning from a trip, Betuel and his family were a few miles away from home when they saw a terrible automobile accident on the highway. They stopped to offer assistance. One of the drivers involved, a doctor, asked them to take his pregnant wife and two small daughters to the nearest hospital for treatment. They did so, and then Betuel returned to the scene of the accident to see what further aid he could render.

Betuel relates: "The federal highway patrol had arrived, and the doctor was to be held for investigation because there had been loss of life. When the doctor asked me why I was helping him, I explained that we are Jehovah's Witnesses and that we had learned from the Bible that we should love our neighbor. I told him that he did not need to worry about his wife and children, for we would take care of them. With grateful tears in his eyes, he then turned his valuables over to me for safekeeping."

Betuel and his family took the man's family home with them and cared for them for several days. Betuel took the opportunity to start a Bible study with them. When the doctor was released from custody, he expressed his gratitude and his admiration for Jehovah's Witnesses. He promised to continue the Bible study in his hometown, and he said that if his wife gave birth to a son, he would be named after Betuel. Betuel continues: "Now, two years later, we had the opportunity to visit them. To my surprise, they were studying the Bible, and their little boy's name was Betuel!"





ATHENS 2004



THE OLYMPICS RETURN TO THEIR BIRTHPLACE

THE spade and the shovel of archaeologists ushered in the rebirth of the Olympic Games in modern times. Findings in ancient Olympia, Greece, moved French Baron Pierre de Coubertin to push for the revival of the games. As a result, the first modern Olympics were held in Athens in 1896.

In the years just prior to 2004, bulldozers and jack-hammers paved the way for the games to return to their birthplace. The capital of Greece looked like a spreading construction site, as it was being modernized in preparation for the Olympics.

The XXVIII Olympiad, as the 2004 Olympic Games are officially called, is scheduled to take place in Athens from August 13 to 29. Some 10,000 athletes, from a record 201 countries, will compete in

28 sports. Sporting events will be held at 38 venues and will culminate in more than 300 medal ceremonies. About 21,500 members of the media will be outnumbered by some 55,000 hardworking security personnel.

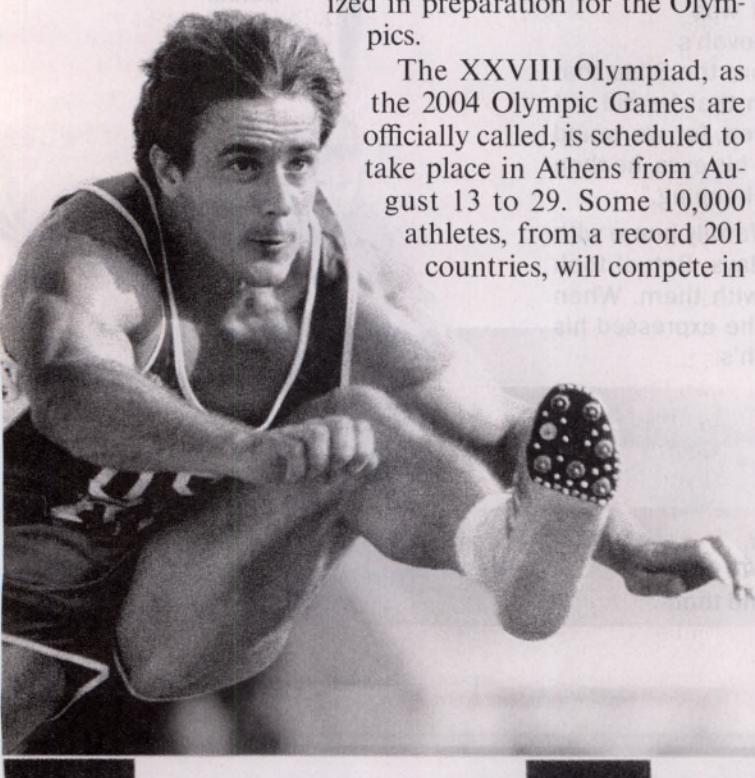
A Hurdle Race

Athens had for a long time set its sights on luring the Olympic Games back to their birthplace. Marking the centennial of the modern games, the year 1996 seemed to be the most fitting for the return of the Olympics to the country of their birth.

However, Athens' bid for the 1996 Games was unsuccessful. The city was said to lack the necessary infrastructure needed for the two very demanding weeks of the games.

That rejection jolted Greece and its capital into action. Athens vowed to correct the situation. Armed with good intentions and a few solid plans, in 1997 the city bid again, for the 2004 Olympic Games. This time it won.

Athens braced itself for a transformation. The desire to host the games touched off a wave of unprecedented activity and development. Everywhere, machines broke ground to improve the infrastructure and build





◀ Athens Olympic
sports complex

Medal design
for 2004 ▶



roads and venues for the games. Even during boiling-hot weekends in the middle of summer, one could see excavators, cranes, and people hard at work everywhere.

In March 2001 the first aircraft landed at the new international airport of Athens, one that has achieved top world ranking in its category. Also, a total of 75 miles of new roads were planned, and 55 miles of existing thoroughfares were slated to be upgraded. Some 40 overpasses were included in the new road system to ease traffic. New metro lines were created, with provisions for the addition of 15 miles of tram lines. A 20-mile suburban railway dotted with modern train stations was designed to divert traffic and cut atmospheric pollution.

In short, Athens attempted in a few years to transform itself into a new city, with more pockets of greenery, a cleaner environment, and a new transportation system. Jacques Rogge, president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), noted: "People who knew Athens before the Games and will see Athens after the Games will not recognize the city."

Aerial photo: AP Photo/Thanassis Stavrakis; medal design: © ATHOC

Ideals Challenged

The organizers of the Olympics love to stress the ideals associated with the games—"noble competition, sport, peace, culture, and education." The other side of the coin, however, includes politics, nationalism, commerce, and corruption.

Traditionally, the Olympics have generated high television ratings and lucrative advertising packages, making the sponsorship of the games a tremendous marketing tool. "The Olympics is now big business," said Australian researcher Murray Phillips, "and many decisions are made for strategic commercial reasons."

Others decry the flagrant nationalism manifested at the games. Efforts are being made to introduce an Olympic truce, a cessation of hostilities and war during the games. However, beyond its symbolic meaning, such a measure will not bring results unless the reasons for conflict are eliminated. "The Games are an arena for power politics," observed science professor Brian Martin. He added: "At the Olympics, competition between athletes is turned into competition between states. Athletes can't participate if their country doesn't. Victories by individuals and teams are treated as national victories, symbolised by flags and anthems . . . [The Olympics] have simply provided another arena for the continuation of violence between individuals in events and between states in the struggle for power and status. . . . The Olympic movement is powerless to turn its original goal of promoting peace into reality."



▲ Athens metro



Athens international airport ▶



A Marathon of Preparations

As the date of the opening ceremony of the Olympics approached, the pace picked up. IOC President Rogge likened the progress of construction and preparation to *syrtaki*, Greece's traditional dance.

Half jokingly, he said: "I would describe it as a piece of music —like the *syrtaki*. It starts very slowly, it accelerates all the time, and by the end, you can't follow the pace."

True to that assessment, the Olympic Village—"the backbone of the entire Olympics preparation effort"—sprang out of nowhere in one of the northern suburbs of Athens. This project, which will host some 16,000 athletes and team officials during the Olympic Games, is the largest housing project ever undertaken in Greece. After the games it will become home to about 10,000 city residents.

The connection between ancient history and the legacy of the modern games has not been lost on the organizers of the Olympics. Some ceremonies will take place in ancient Olympia. Other major archaeological sites will be showcased during parallel cultural Olympic events. A new rowing center was built near the site of the renowned battle of Marathon. And the marathon runners can claim that they have run the original course. The organizers of the games have





▲ Olympic Village under construction

Agios Kosmas Sailing Centre ▶



chosen the exact route used by the Athenian soldier who in 490 B.C.E. ran the 26 miles from Marathon to Athens to announce the defeat of the Persians.

And the Gold Goes to . . .

When the fireworks go off at the opening ceremony of the games, the 75,000-seat Olympic Stadium will be the center of attraction. For many, this renovated stadium is the “jewel of the crown” of the Athens Olympic facilities. What makes this stadium unique is its roof, conceived and designed by the famous Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava.

An engineering wonder, the roof is made of glass panels weighing a total of 16,000 tons and is designed to cover an area of 108,000 square feet. It will rest on two colossal arcs, each with a span of 997 feet and a height of 262 feet—almost two thirds the size of Australia’s Sydney Harbour Bridge! The steel tubes making up the arcs weigh between 9,000 and 10,000 tons each and are “big enough to drive a bus through,” according to



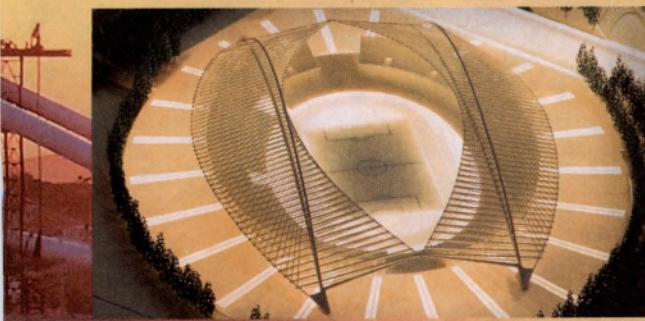
a construction expert. The total weight of the roof is expected to be two times that of the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

Why is such a giant roof needed? Think of the heat produced by the scorching August sun in Athens! The glass panels have a special coating that reflects 60 percent of the sunlight. There are other reasons too. The design of the roof was envisioned as the landmark of the games. As former Greek culture minister Evangelos Venizelos put it, “it is the big architectural landmark and the symbol of the Athens Olympic games.”

After the closing ceremony, such landmarks will provide reminders of the hard work required to host such a monumental event. Athenians hope that all the infrastructure prepared for the Olympics will help improve the quality of life in their city. And as always, they will continue taking their challenges in stride—just as they do the *syrtaki*.

◀ Olympic Stadium roof under construction

A miniature model of the completed roof ▶



© ATHOC

The Bible's Viewpoint

DOES GOD REALLY CARE ABOUT CHILDREN?

HUNDREDS of millions of children are exploited, abused, and violently attacked each year. Many work as virtual slaves in hazardous conditions. Others are abducted and forced to become soldiers or child prostitutes. The trust of many children has been further betrayed by incest and other horrific acts of child abuse.

Understandably, sincere, caring individuals are troubled by the plight of children. While admitting that human greed and depravity are largely responsible

for such mistreatment, some may still find it hard to accept that a God of love would allow such injustice. They may feel that God has abandoned these children and that maybe he does not really care. Is that true? Does the tragic fact that children are exploited and often abused mean that God does not care about them? What does the Bible say?

God Condemns Abusers

Jehovah God never purposed that children be exploited by ruthless adults. The abuse of children is one of the most tragic consequences of mankind's rebellion in the garden of Eden. That rejection of God's sovereignty opened the door to

© Mikkel
Ostergaard
/Panos
Pictures



cruel exploitation of humans by their fellowmen.—Genesis 3:11-13, 16; Ecclesiastes 8:9.

God abhors those who take advantage of the weak and the defenseless. Many ancient nations that did not serve Jehovah practiced child sacrifice, but Jehovah said that this was ‘a thing that he had not commanded and that had not come up into his heart.’ (Jeremiah 7:31) God warned his ancient people: “If you should afflict [the fatherless boy] at all, then if he cries out to me at all, I shall unfailingly hear his outcry; and my anger will indeed blaze.”—Exodus 22:22-24.

Jehovah Loves Children

God’s concern for children is evident in the wise instructions he gives human parents. Children raised in a secure home are more likely to become mature, well-adjusted adults. Thus, our Creator instituted marriage, a life-long arrangement whereby “a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24) In the Bible, sexual relations are authorized only within marriage so that any resulting children can be cared for in a stable environment.—Hebrews 13:4.

The Scriptures also emphasize the importance of parental training. “Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah,” the Bible says, “the fruitage of the belly is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the sons of youth.” (Psalm 127:3, 4) Children are a precious gift from God, and he wants them to thrive. God exhorts parents to give their children good direction in life, just as an archer carefully aims when firing his arrows. “Fathers,” God’s Word instructs, “do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.”—Ephesians 6:4.

Another way Jehovah has shown his love for children is by teaching parents to protect their children from predators. In ancient Israel, even “the little ones” were commanded

to listen to the Law, which included identification of proper and improper sexual conduct. (Deuteronomy 31:12; Leviticus 18:6-24) God wants parents to do everything they can to protect their children from anyone who might exploit or abuse them.

A Hope for Children

Jehovah’s abiding love for children was beautifully demonstrated by Jesus Christ, who perfectly mirrors his Father’s personality. (John 5:19) When his apostles, in a mistaken attempt to help Jesus, refused to let parents bring their small children to him, Jesus indignantly corrected them. “Let the young children come to me,” he said. And then, “he took the children into his arms and began blessing them.” (Mark 10:13-16) Children are not insignificant in the eyes of either Jehovah God or his Son.

In fact, through his appointed King, Jesus Christ, God will soon act to relieve children who are maltreated. The greedy exploiters and ruthless abusers of this world will be done away with forever. (Psalm 37:10, 11) As for the meek ones who seek Jehovah, the Bible says: “He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Revelation 21:3, 4.

In the meantime, God shows his love right now by offering spiritual and emotional help for all who are exploited and abused. “The lost one I shall search for,” he promises, “and the dispersed one I shall bring back, and the broken one I shall bandage and the ailing one I shall strengthen.” (Ezekiel 34:16) Through his Word, his holy spirit, and the Christian congregation, Jehovah comforts children who are downtrodden and impoverished. What a joy to know that now, just as he will in the future, “the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort, . . . comforts us in all our tribulation.”—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

Crossword Puzzle

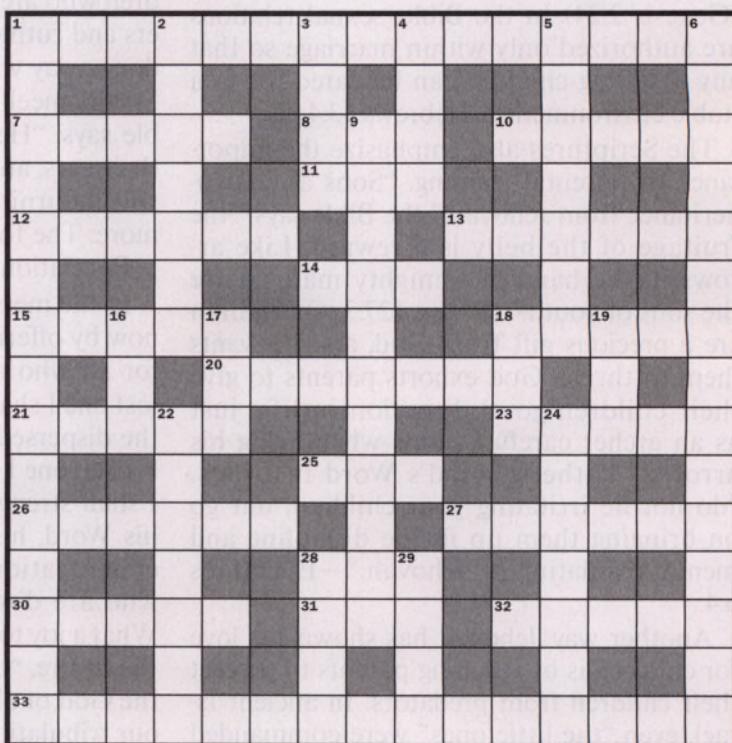
Clues Across

1. The sacred place of worship built by Solomon and later rebuilt by Zerubbabel was often referred to as this [3 words] (Jeremiah 7:4)
7. To bring to bear with sustained effort (Luke 13:24)
8. Samuel became a prophet during the lifetime of this high priest (1 Samuel 3:10-13)
10. The Amorite name for Mount Hermon (Deuteronomy 3:9)
11. One of the cities that allied with Canaanite King Jabin of Hazor to fight against Joshua (Joshua 11:2)
12. One of the six sons that Abraham had by his second wife, Keturah (Genesis 25:1, 2)
13. One of Haman's ten sons (Esther 9:9, 10)
14. Jesus said that this wine is never put into old wineskins (Luke 5:37)
15. The sword that Ehud made to kill oppressive King Eglon of Moab had two of these (Judges 3:16)
18. Both Peter and Paul refer to Jesus as the chief one (Acts 5:31; Hebrews 12:2)
20. In the absolute sense, only Jehovah is this (2 Samuel 22:31)
21. Sheep in ancient Israel had this type of tail (Leviticus 3:9)
23. This powerful bird of prey is noted for its farsightedness (Job 39:27, 29)
25. This title is used in the Bible to refer to Jehovah, to others that are worshiped, and to men (Exodus 7:1)
26. His son Abdon judged Israel for eight years (Judges 12:13, 14)
27. The prophet through whom Jehovah foretold the way Solomon's kingdom would be split (1 Kings 11:29-32)
28. Jesus referred to this domestic fowl when illustrating how he had desired to gather the unresponsive people of Jerusalem (Luke 13:34)

30. It was near this site that Tamar disguised herself as a prostitute (Genesis 38:14)
31. Jesus called this "the lamp of the body" (Matthew 6:22)
32. This Israelite's grandson was stoned to death for abusing Jehovah's name (Leviticus 24:11)
33. Expression used to refer to a land that Jehovah would bring to shame [3 words] (Jeremiah 46:24)

Clues Down

1. Daniel was assured that his prophecy would be understood during this period [5 words] (Daniel 12:4)
2. A short, usually fictitious, narrative from which a moral or spiritual truth is drawn
3. Was indebted for (Matthew 18:24)
4. This seventh judge of Israel had 30 sons (Judges 10:3-5)
5. Hole (Acts 9:25)
6. When giving the sign of his presence, Jesus warned against believing those who said this [4 words] (Mark 13:21)
9. This improper desire can lead one "astray from the faith" and can bring "many pains" [3 words] (1 Timothy 6:10)
16. Obtain (Matthew 10:41)
17. At Jehovah's direction, Moses sent out 12 men to Canaan to do this (Numbers 13:2)
18. Adam claimed that regarding the forbidden fruit, he did this because of Eve (Genesis 3:12)
19. Jesus pointed out that a father would not be so unloving as to hand his son a scorpion when he asked for this (Luke 11:12)
22. Speaking (1 Timothy 2:7)
24. Enduring (Hebrews 10:34)
28. At this place (Genesis 15:16)
29. At Acts 25:11, this was the Caesar to whom Paul appealed for judgment when on trial before Festus



BIG CHANGES FOR THE LAND

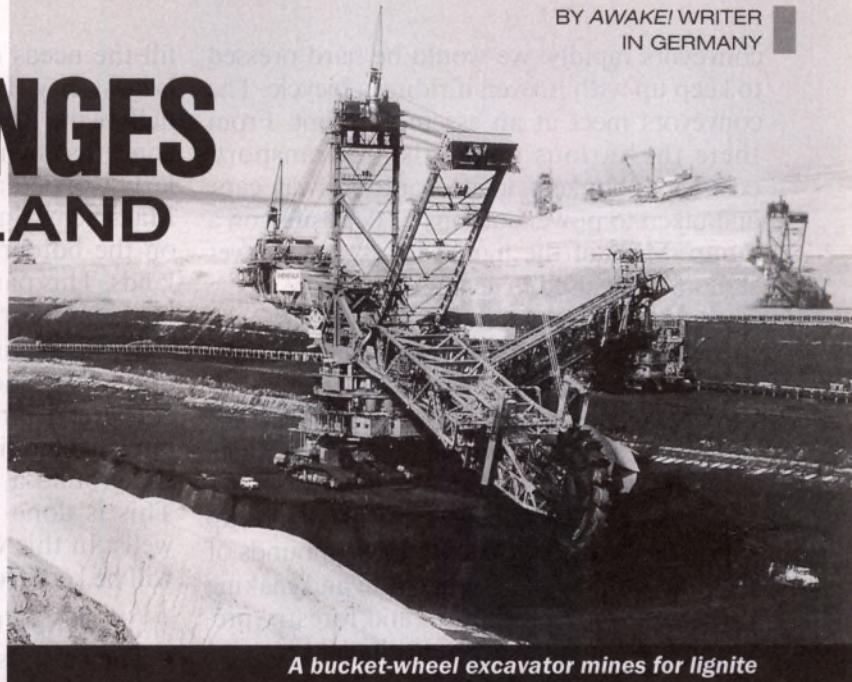
"LEAVING our home nearly broke my wife's heart," said Dieter. "Michaela, our 11-year-old daughter, got all choked up too. But we had no choice." Are these the words of a family of refugees fleeing a war zone? No, this family lives in one of the mining regions of Germany.

Over the past 55 years, some 33,000 people in Germany's Rhineland shared the same fate as Dieter and his family. They were resettled to make way for opencut mining of lignite, or brown coal. Increasing industrial demand for energy means that some 180 million tons of lignite is taken from opencut mines each year in Germany alone. That is equivalent to about 25 times the estimated weight of the Cheops Pyramid in Egypt.

What effect does this have on the land and on the people who live on it? *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* states: "Large-scale opencut mining often entails widespread resettlement and drastic changes."^{*} Let us take a look at opencut mining in the Rhineland and at the people whose lives have been affected by it.

Opencut Mining for Lignite

The Cologne-Aachen basin on the Lower Rhine River is the largest single lignite region in Europe. This area is almost as large as the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg or Yosem-



A bucket-wheel excavator mines for lignite

Rheinbraun AG

ite National Park in California, U.S.A. The lignite is found below the surface, covered by layers of gravel, sand, or clay, which first need to be scraped away. These top layers are called the overburden.

To get at the lignite, bucket-wheel excavators strip away the overburden. One such excavator removes enough overburden each day to fill 16,000 semitrailers. To prevent the sides from caving in as the mine goes deeper and deeper, the cut is made to form terraces, or steps. Individual working levels on the excavating side of the mine are called benches. Look at the bucket-wheel excavators working on these benches, pictured above. They are some of the largest machines in the world. At a height of 310 feet, they are about twice as tall as New York's Statue of Liberty.

Once it has been stripped off by an excavator, the overburden is taken away by conveyor. Try to imagine how much material has to be transported. For each cubic yard of coal extracted in Germany's Rhineland, over 4.6 cubic yards of overburden has to be removed. The material moves along the

* The question of opencut mining and its effect on the environment is controversial in some places. *Awake!* takes a neutral stance on such questions.

conveyors rapidly; we would be hard pressed to keep up with it, even if riding a bicycle. The conveyors meet at an assembly point. From there the various materials are transported to coal bunkers, loaded onto railway cars, and taken to power stations or deposited on a dump. Most of the lignite is taken to power stations to be used in generating energy.

As far as possible, the overburden is used to refill areas where the lignite has been extracted. The machines that do the refilling are called spreaders. They pour the soil into the mine, layer by layer, until the hole is filled. Any remaining overburden is placed on outside dumps. These are mounds that can be up to 650 feet high. Integrating these mounds of overburden into the countryside and making them useful for agriculture and forestry presents landscapers with a real challenge.

Lowering the Groundwater Table

Opencut mining inevitably has a major impact on the landscape and on natural cycles. To keep the opencut mine dry, the groundwater table is lowered to a level below the deepest point of the mine. The amount of water pumped out each year in Germany would

Crossword Solutions

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I	S	H	B	A	K	V	A	R	I	S	A	I		
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fill the needs of the residents of Germany's largest city, Berlin, for almost three and a half years. The extraction of so much water concerns environmentalists, who are particularly worried about the threat to the nearby Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park, situated on the border of Germany and the Netherlands. This park is a natural wetland, providing habitat for many plants and birds.

Those in charge of the opencut mine have given assurance that there is no reason for concern. To make up for the water pumped out when mining, water is being put back into the ground a short distance from the mine. This is done in part by means of seepage wells. In this way it is hoped that the region will be kept from drying out.

A New Landscape Takes Shape

The earth is in a state of constant change. Some 25,000 million tons of sediment are swept into the oceans each year, without our even noticing it. Changes to the landscape are more obvious, however, to a person standing at the edge of an opencut mine. Here a new landscape takes shape. What has this meant for the Rhineland lignite area?

In the Cologne-Aachen basin, areas previously mined have been reclaimed and turned into agricultural land, forests, and parks. Moreover, watercourses have been diverted, as have roads and railroads. *Lignite Mining in the Rhineland* explains: "[Reclamation] is not the attempt to reproduce nature. Man can only provide initial assistance. The major part of the work is done by nature itself." So far, over 65 percent of the land affected has been made reusable, the largest area being used for agriculture. For that purpose, fertile topsoil was spread as evenly as possible to a depth of six feet on top of the permeable spoil. For several years company-owned farms cultivated the area, after which the land was released for general agricultural use.

A small sector of the new forests and artificial lakes have become conservation areas



A spreader fills the mine with fertile soil



A former opencut mine transformed

protected by law. Some endangered species have even made the reclaimed areas their home. The delicate butterfly called the popular admiral and birds such as the great reed warbler are just two of these. In addition, plants such as the common bladderwort and the military orchid are there. Residents of the cities of Cologne and Bonn have discovered the former opencut mine to be a place where they can go to rest and relax.

Resettlement and a New Start

One of the most challenging tasks associated with opencut mining is the resettlement of people living directly on top of the lignite. Whole communities have to be moved before mining can commence.

Resettlement requires major planning, which starts some 10 to 15 years ahead of the event. Efforts are made to keep village communities together when they are moved to a new location. Experience has shown that about half the people affected want to stay within the same community with their neighbors, whereas others see the move as a chance to make a fresh start elsewhere. People forced to move are compensated, but putting a value on some things is impossible. For instance, how can you be compensated for the loss of the wonderful view you have out your living room window or the close relationships you enjoy with your neighbors? Everything might be different in your new environment.

Resettlement is more than just moving houses; mining alters the environment forever. Parents never have the chance to show their children where they grew up and went to school. One's childhood home is gone forever. How do people cope with the situation? *Awake!* asked some of them.

Friedhelm lives in a village that is about to be resettled. Building a new house—for him, the second time around—at his age is not a welcome prospect. “Building the first house taught us many valuable lessons,” says Inge, his wife, “but we no longer have the strength to do it again.” Constructing a new home, which may involve living on a building site for some years, can present a real challenge.

Werner and Margarethe think that most people gain materially from being moved. But certain groups—such as the elderly, farmers, and tradesmen—are hit particularly hard. For some people who have their own business, starting up again in a new location is simply too expensive. One farmer who resettled and who ran his new farm on reclaimed land for over 20 years says he thinks things have turned out reasonably well. His attitude is, “Make the best of the situation, for it cannot be changed anyway.”

How true that is! In time, Dieter and his family, mentioned at the beginning, also grew accustomed to their new home. They are just three of the many people who can say from experience that opencut mining brings big changes for the land and those who live on it.

Glossy Magazines

"Pick Me Up and Buy Me!"



HERE they sit, colorful and bright, all vying for your attention. You didn't even mean to stop to look, but now you are attracted by their colorful display. The glossy magazines on the newsstand all seem to be saying, "Pick me up and buy me!" And while it may generally be true that you can't judge a book by its cover, it must be admitted that cover pictures on glossy magazines do have a special impact on prospective buyers. In many countries these magazines, often referred to as glossies, flood the market, and competition for sales is intense.

Magazines can be divided into two main categories: specialized magazines—also called trade and technical magazines—and consumer magazines. The latter seem to cover just about any subject, but publishers do target certain groups. Magazines that publish regularly are usually called periodicals, and those with a more academic content are known as journals. Magazines differ from newspapers in form and content, being more compact and printed on better quality paper, which usually gives that glossy finish, so attractive to the buyer. In content, magazines generally have less concern for rapidly changing events and news items than do newspapers. They represent a variety of writers and cover a wide range of information and opinions. They also employ different writing styles, ranging from factual reporting to a more personal or emotional style.

As you stand gazing at the newsstand display, several things will no doubt govern your choice or even help you decide whether to buy or not. Your gender will have a strong bearing, of course, as will your personal interests and perhaps, above all, the cost of the magazine. Yes, glossies can be quite expensive, perhaps three or four times the price of a newspaper. Still, today's newspaper will soon be discarded for tomorrow's, whereas a magazine may have a longer

life. The one you select can be read in a leisurely manner, and you may keep it for weeks or months and perhaps pass it on to others. Libraries are sometimes interested in older copies of magazines, and some magazines become collector's items.

A Good Value?

Whether you think glossies are worth the cost will, of course, be a personal decision. The main reason for their relatively high price tag is that they are quite expensive to produce. A publisher must do extensive market research before launching a new magazine onto an already crowded market. These days, consolidated companies undertake the publishing and printing of up to 30 or more different magazines and use their own printery. Even so, their outlay is heavy, as each publication requires its own staff.

If you look inside the cover of a consumer magazine, you will be surprised to see how many editors and managers are needed. Each one cares for a different feature included in the contents, and each has his or her own staff. The larger magazines generally employ their own writers and photographers, although many writers and photographers work independently or free-lance through an agency, which means they must be hired on a regular or part-time basis.

All material submitted by writers is checked by proofreaders. Much of it is largely rewritten or at least adjusted to some extent by copy editors. Pictures form a major part of glossy magazines, so graphic designers are needed. Compilers start the work on the general layout, deciding what will appear on each page. The text and illustra-



Magazines can influence attitudes about body image

tions must be presented in a way that will attract the reader and lead the eye to each part in turn. Most publishing firms use a stylebook—a manual that outlines what terms and styles are to be used in their publications. The final responsibility lies with the chief editor. He or she will have to make on-the-spot decisions, so as not to delay publication. A preproduction copy will be prepared for examination by the senior staff before the magazine goes to print.

Costs include printing and distributing as well as staff salaries. Because not all copies printed will be sold, retailers usually accept bulk supplies on a sale-or-return basis. You would

be correct in thinking that the retail price does not cover the cost of production. In fact, the average consumer magazine could not remain on the market if it did not devote a large proportion of its content to advertising. A recent international glossy of 200 pages had over 80 full pages of advertising. Advertisers realize that quality glossy paper and four-color printing will show their products to good advantage.

In Australia it is estimated that each individual, on average, will spend 1.2 minutes a day reading a magazine. This compares with an estimated 1.1 minutes a day going to the movies or 0.7 minutes a day listening to music tapes. No doubt this is one reason why magazines provide a lucrative medium for advertising.

The Appeal

While we cannot examine every magazine published, we might take a brief look at magazines for women. The content of women's glossies has come under review lately, for

while some people consider them harmless, others feel they are exploitative of women. Certainly they generate excitement and glamour, and this contributes to their sales. However, women's magazines have undergone a change in the last few years. Some of the journals that used to feature only home management now feature more celebrity articles. Articles on health have also become popular. Women used to enjoy the short stories, and it was the running serials that often boosted sales. But now only a few glossies carry short stories and serials.

What sells glossies today? It is what appears on the cover that seems to call out, "Pick me up and buy me!" If a woman is shown on the cover, she must be famous or beautiful. The cover model must also be young and slim, and digital photo retouching brings out the best in the photograph. What about the wording on the cover? This, of course, must vary according to the age groups and life-styles that are being targeted. Some magazine covers highlight fashion; others offer prizes to be won. The cover is often a guide to what is inside the magazine.

Can Glossies Influence Us?

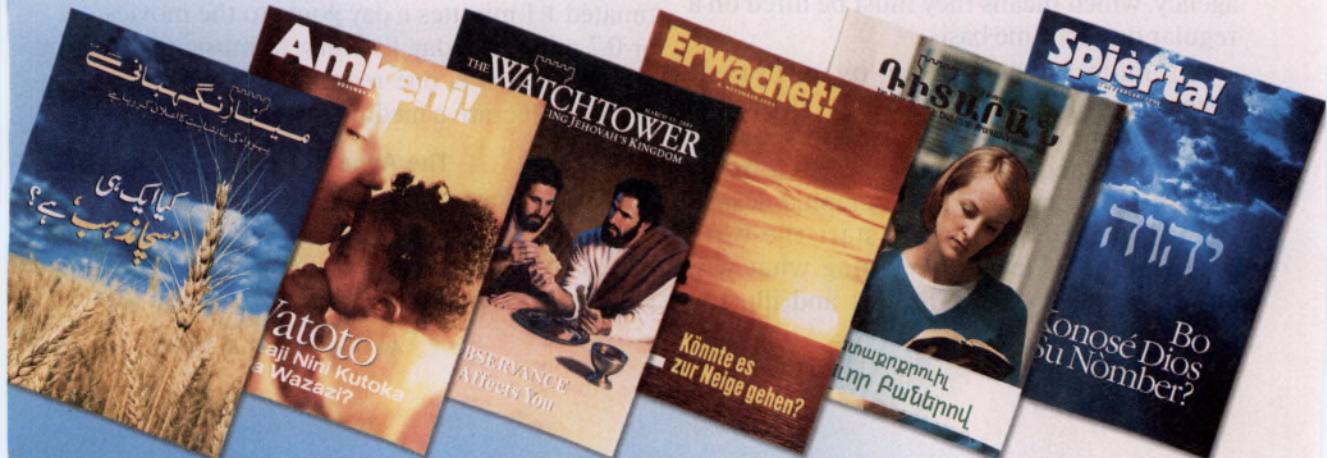
Magazine publishers claim that they know what women want. And it is true that they do extensive market research in order to find out what women in general want. But it may

well be asked, Are they meeting a need that really exists, or have they themselves created a need in order to feed it? Let us consider ways in which many women's glossies mold people's thinking. First, the continual coverage of the life-styles and opinions of celebrities. This may be what people want to read about, but could there be hidden dangers? In his study *About Face*, Jonathan Cole, a clinical neurophysiologist at the University of Southampton, England, warns that knowing a face without having met its owner or heard its voice can bring about an artificial intimacy. Add to this the volume of information written about celebrities, which perhaps explains the modern phenomenon of the public's deep grief over the death of people they did not know but whose photographs they had frequently seen appearing in glossy magazines. Of course, television and newspaper reports can also add to this illusion of intimacy.

Another matter under current review is the potential of magazines to influence women's attitudes toward what is considered an acceptable body image. While standards vary in different lands, the general message coming through current women's magazines in developed countries is that thin is in. Censure has come from some educators, parents, and even

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Although they are not glossies, The Watchtower has a circulation of over 25 million copies in 148 languages and the Awake! a circulation of over 22 million copies in 87 languages



models themselves who say that the images constantly displayed in women's glossies must take some of the blame for the rise in eating disorders and the constant dieting fads of women—in particular, young women.

To test the validity of such allegations, an Australian edition of an international magazine conducted a survey among its readers and invited a panel of experts to comment on the results. Over 2,000 women took part, with 82 percent of them between 16 and 29 years of age. A recommended weight chart was consulted—that is, weight according to height, age, and so forth. About 60 percent of the women thought that they were overweight, although only 22.6 percent were heavier than recommended. While 59 percent of those who weighed less than recommended thought they were within the normal weight range, 58 percent who were described as being in the normal range thought that they were overweight. Only 12 percent were satisfied with their weight. Some criticized the chart supplied by Australia's Commonwealth Department of Health, claiming that the weight range given on the chart for each height was too great. In addition, 67 percent admitted that they envied other women's bodies constantly, and 1 in 8 admitted that she currently has or previously had a compulsive eating disorder.

Fiona Pelly, the nutritionist on the panel, said: "It's obvious that weight is taking over as a major priority in women's lives." And Dr. Janice Russell, director of an eating disorder clinic in Sydney, commented: "What's even more damaging is that feelings like guilt and envy are prominent [in the survey]. It's not healthy to be subject to those sort[s] of feelings all the time."

The most significant finding, however, was that although some of the respondents admitted that they copied movie stars, 72 percent said that models appearing in magazines

influenced them the most. One young woman, who was helped by a diet clinic, said she felt proud to weigh 120 pounds but admitted: "I still feel the pressure, from the media, magazines and celebrities." Other surveys carried out elsewhere have come up with similar results.

Two Magazines of a Different Sort

One of the most wholesome and informative magazines available is the one you hold in your hand, *Awake!* You did not purchase it from a newsstand—a passerby may have offered it to you, or perhaps someone brought it to your home. Published, printed, and distributed internationally by volunteers, this magazine is offered at no cost. Writers for *Awake!* send articles from all over the world, and they too are volunteers, as are all its artists and translators. The *Awake!* magazine first appeared in 1946. Its predecessors were *Consolation* and *The Golden Age*, which began publishing in 1919. These journals have always been published without paid advertising of any kind. *Awake!* is currently printed in 87 languages, many of them twice monthly, and has a worldwide circulation of over 22 million copies.

The Watchtower, which is the companion magazine of *Awake!* has an even more impressive record, now being printed in 148 languages. *The Watchtower* comes off the press at over 25 million copies per issue and has been in circulation since 1879. Between them these two journals have made a fine contribution toward informing people regarding important issues in their lives, and they are of interest to men, women, and young people the world over.

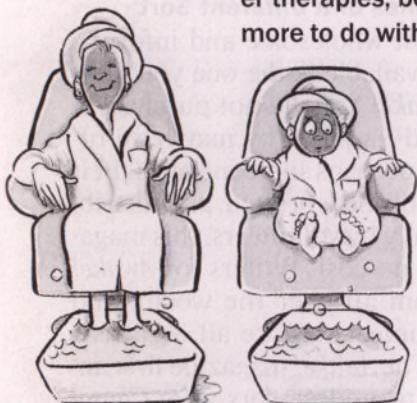
All of us need to reflect on the fact that we are not born with knowledge. Wisdom and knowledge are accrued as we grow and develop, and often our opinions are formed and our life-style developed as a result of what we read. That is why it is so important to select worthwhile and upbuilding reading matter.

Watching the World

Spas for Tots

Wellness centers that provide spa treatments for very young children are springing up in Germany and elsewhere, reports the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*. Children as young as four years of age receive warm oil massages and other therapies, besides general pampering. Some experts believe that all of this has more to do with making money than with improving children's health.

For the sake of profit, says Peter Wippermann, director of the Hamburg Office of Trends, "the children are being pressed into a grown-up world." According to Dr. Christoph Kampmann, head of the pediatric institute at Mainz University, one concern is that "it will turn children into extreme individualists with an upper-class mentality, who are completely focused on themselves." Rather than getting spa treatment for common childhood discomforts, "children should be out climbing trees and romping around," says the report. "This definitely prevents posture problems, regulates appetite, and promotes good sleep."



Warmer Weather and Wildlife Population

"The number of spiders in Australia, including potentially deadly redbacks, is exploding as scientists suspect global warming is wreaking havoc in wildlife populations," reports *The Weekend Australian*. According to Dr. Robert Raven of the Queensland Museum, spiders that usually breed only once yearly were expected to breed three or four times this year. "Spiders which should be juveniles at this time of year are already adults," he said. "We're looking at some spiders doubling their lifespan." Researchers also believe that warmer weather is affecting bird life. The newspaper states: "Birds such as forest

kingfishers, which normally breed once a year, are raising two broods." Birds are also "breeding earlier and returning earlier from wintering in Europe, suggesting changes might be global."

More Moons Discovered

Improved technology has led to a doubling in just six years of the number of moons known to exist in our solar system, according to *¿Cómo ves?* the science magazine of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. By the end of 2003, there were 136 moons known to orbit seven of the planets—only Mercury and Venus appear to have none—and astronomers expect to find even more. Jupiter has the most known

moons (61), followed by Saturn (31), Uranus (27), Neptune (13), and Mars (2). Pluto and Earth have one moon each.

Fatigue May Signal Heart Attack

According to one study, "unusual fatigue and sleeplessness might be early warning signs of a heart attack in women," reports the international edition of *The Miami Herald*. While only 30 percent of women in the study reported chest pain as an early sign, 71 percent had felt unusual fatigue more than a month before a heart attack. "The fatigue is unexplained and unusual," says Professor Jean McSweeney of the University of Arkansas

for Medical Sciences, adding that "for some, it's so severe that they can't make a bed without resting as they tuck the sheets. . . . Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women." She notes, "If we can get women to recognize the symptoms early, we can get them treatment and prevent or delay a heart attack."

Flood Protection for Venice

Venice, Italy, built on about 120 islands in the Adriatic Sea, is subject to regular flooding. After extensive studies and debates, the Italian government has given the go-ahead for the construction of a system of hinged barriers across the three mouths of the lagoon. The barriers will consist of 79 steel boxes, each about 100 feet high, 65 feet wide, and 15 feet thick. In normal conditions the boxes will be filled with water so that they lie flat on the seabed, thus permitting navi-

gation and the ebb and flow of the tide. But when flooding is expected, air will be pumped into the boxes. Now buoyant, they will swing up from the seafloor like drawbridges until the boxes rise above the surface. Side by side, the boxes will form a long barrier that will keep floodwaters out. The system is expected to be operational by 2011.

Smoking News

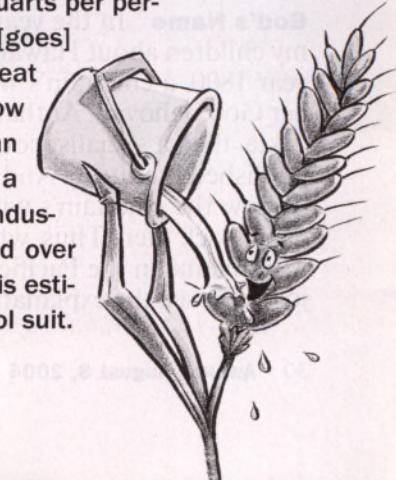
• "Researchers found that a smoking ban in bars, restaurants and other indoor businesses in Helena, Mont[ana], was associated with a nearly 60% drop in hospital admissions for heart attacks in the six months that it was in effect," reports *The Wall Street Journal*. After a local court overturned the smoking ban, the rate of heart attacks returned to previous levels. "This is a strong piece of evidence of the need to

avoid the dangers of second-hand smoke," said cardiologist Sidney Smith.

• "State governments, once the tobacco industry's fiercest foes, now find themselves in an unusual position: They are poised to try to rescue the country's biggest cigarette maker," states the *Journal*. The reason? A judge ruled that the company must post a \$12-billion bond in order to appeal a court case. This would have forced them into bankruptcy, and billions of dollars in settlement money from a previous case would have stopped. The State governments "became hooked on the money, which for many states is staving off budgetary catastrophe," the article noted. This "sent the states scurrying to switch sides." Two weeks later the judge reversed his decision and allowed the company to post a smaller bond.

Thirsty Agriculture

"Australia is the driest inhabited continent, but we have the highest per capita water use in the world," states the *Australian* newspaper. Every day, Australia uses an average of 950 quarts of water per person, compared with 630 quarts per person for North America. "Three-quarters of the water used in Australia [goes] to irrigated agriculture," states the report. Producing one pound of wheat takes 430 quarts of water. For a dairy to produce a quart of milk, cow pastures soak up about 600 quarts of water. It also takes more than 8,000 quarts to produce a pound of butter and 21,000 quarts for a pound of pasture-fed beefsteak. Cloth production is also a thirsty industry. Producing a pound of cotton requires 2,300 quarts of water, and over 73,000 quarts of water are needed to produce one pound of wool. It is estimated that 650,000 quarts of water are used to produce just one wool suit.



From Our Readers

Resistant Germs I read your magazine with great interest. I especially liked the series "Resistant Germs—A Global Menace." (October 22, 2003) I would very much like to obtain your magazine in the future and also have a Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Y. G., Russia



I considered rebelling in order to maintain my own identity. Thanks to this article, I learned that I would regret doing so later. I now realize that I must find my place in the congregation and just be myself.

L. D., France

I understand the feelings of the young ones quoted in the article. In the past I was overly conscious that the congregation expected a lot from me because of my well-known father and uncle. My family name was like a product brand name that followed me wherever I went. When I was unable to fulfill expectations, I felt like a failure. But now I am learning that the most important thing is how Jehovah views us.

S. S., Japan

God's Name In the year 1983, I bought a book for my children about Hawaii. It told of how, in about the year 1800, a chieftain's wife gave a witness about her God, Jehovah. At that time it was very rare in Slovakia, then a socialist country, to read God's name in published literature. And for years it was a mystery to us how the chieftain's wife could have known God's name back then. Thus, when reading the article "Jehovah's Name in the Pacific" (October 22, 2003), we rejoiced to see the explanation.

E. G., Slovakia

Missionary in Africa I appreciated the life story of Ernest Pandachuk, "My Foundation for a Purposeful Life." (October 22, 2003) I face various problems, such as rearing my son on my own and coping with poor health. But my problems cannot be compared with what some of our Christian brothers in Africa have faced. The article touched my heart and moved me to meditate on Jesus' promise found at Matthew 6:33 that Jehovah will care for those who seek first the Kingdom.

M. C., Russia

Watching the World I want to express my appreciation for the section called "Watching the World." It's the first thing I read in the magazine, and I can't wait to see the illustrations. The drawings encourage me to read about subjects to which I would not normally be drawn—for example, the item "Noisy Fish," in the October 22, 2003, issue. How funny!

N. N., United States

In the "Watching the World" item "Mosquito Protection" (August 8, 2003), you refer to a report that recommends taking "300 milligrams of vitamin B₁ daily." A daily intake of this amount would have an adverse effect on the body.

H. M., Japan

"Awake!" responds: Authorities do not agree on how much vitamin B₁ (thiamine) is harmful. Some recommend a daily intake of as little as 1.1 milligrams. However, a report published by the World Health Organization says that according to some reports, "oral doses of 500 mg taken daily for a month were found to be nontoxic." At any rate, this will no doubt be a subject for further research.



The Best Toys

What kind of toy should I get for my child? How much money should I spend? If you are a parent, probably you have asked these questions many times. Well, the good news is that the best toys may be the ones that are the least expensive.

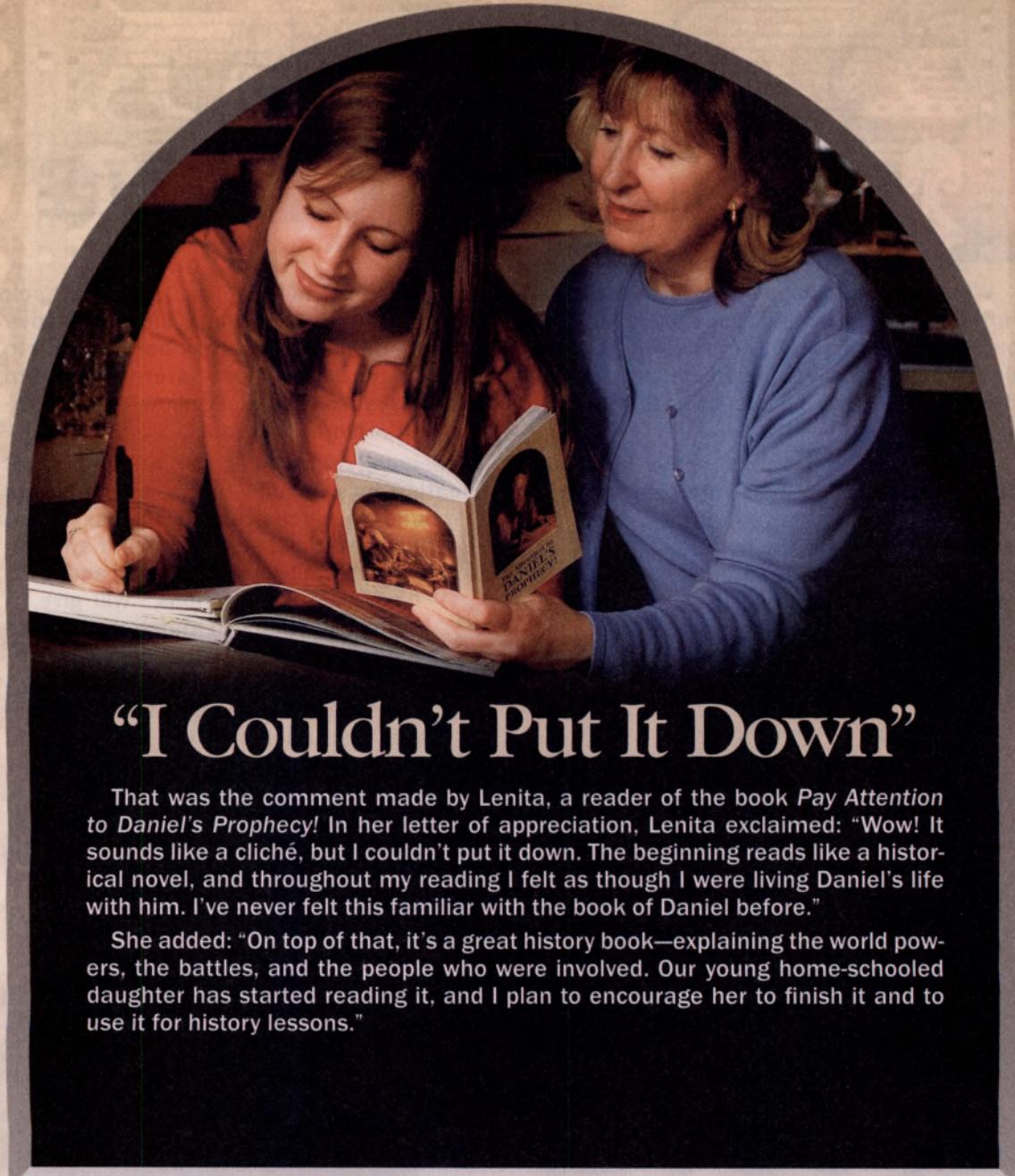
"Kids benefit more from active manipulation and exploration than from passive watching, so simple toys that demand imagination are better than flashy battery-powered cars or talking dolls, which

limit what your child can do," says the book *Motivated Minds—Raising Children to Love Learning*. The latter toys may be "fun at first, but children usually lose interest in them quickly because they don't allow them to experiment, explore, or create."

Depending on a child's age, mentally stimulating toys include things as simple as building blocks, empty boxes, paper, art materials, and even sand and water. "Small toys, like farm animals," says *Motivated Minds*, "will give [a child] a chance to match, group, and compare, and to develop his language skills by making up stories." The book also suggests simple musical instruments—if you are prepared to endure the noise—because these allow children to explore sounds and their patterns.

Children have vivid imaginations, and they are eager both to learn and to play. So why not help them in all three areas by choosing their toys wisely.

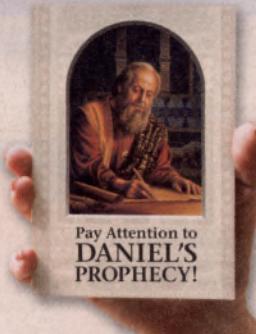




"I Couldn't Put It Down"

That was the comment made by Lenita, a reader of the book *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!* In her letter of appreciation, Lenita exclaimed: "Wow! It sounds like a cliché, but I couldn't put it down. The beginning reads like a historical novel, and throughout my reading I felt as though I were living Daniel's life with him. I've never felt this familiar with the book of Daniel before."

She added: "On top of that, it's a great history book—explaining the world powers, the battles, and the people who were involved. Our young home-schooled daughter has started reading it, and I plan to encourage her to finish it and to use it for history lessons."



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