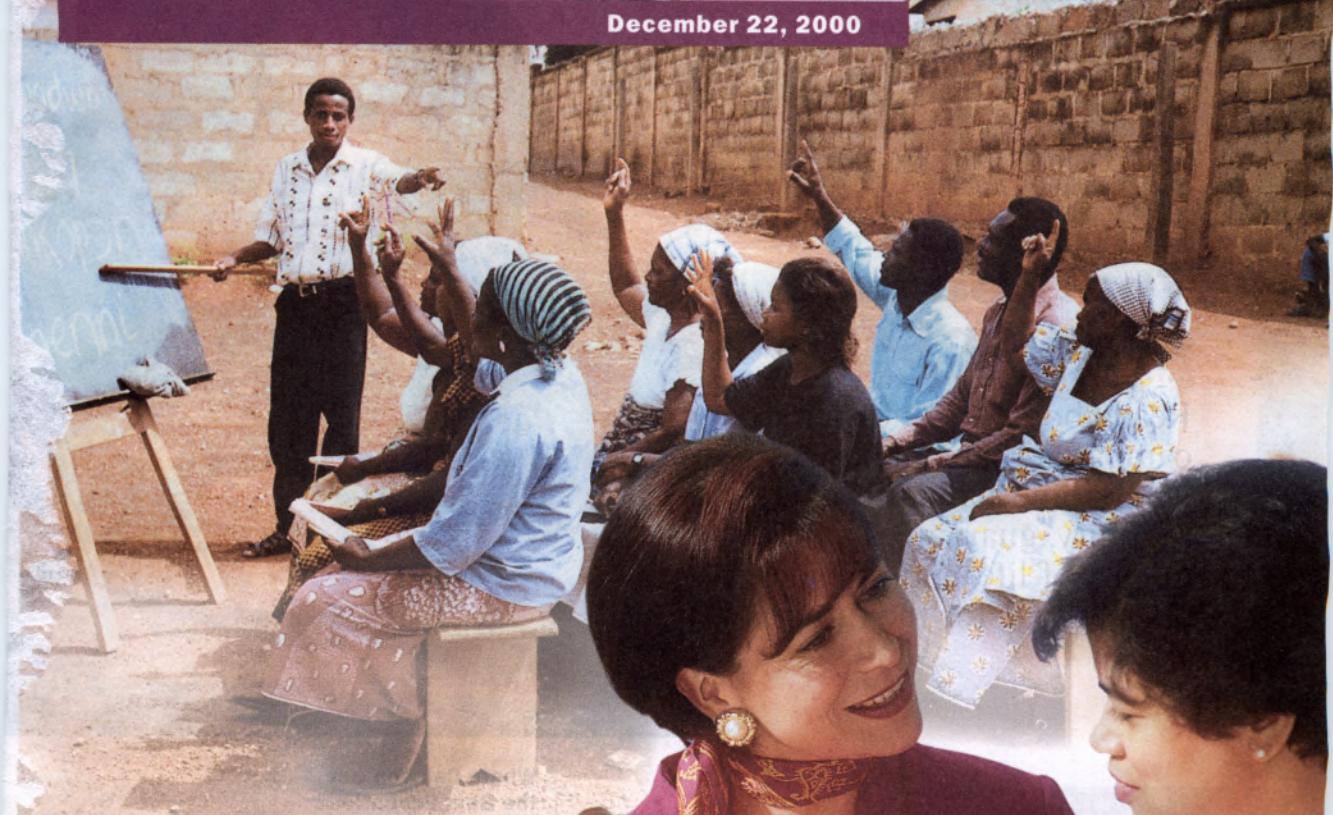


Awake!

December 22, 2000

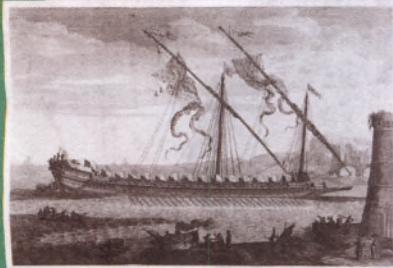


Education
**THAT LEADS TO
A BETTER LIFE**

Average Printing 20,381,000
Published in 82 Languages

Education That Leads to a Better Life 3-11

Read about an educational campaign that emphasizes wholesome standards of morality, guarantees a better quality of life, and provides a solid hope for the future.



Rowing to Death 12

The role of 17th-century galleys in French history is a story of pride and human suffering.

Provided With a Hope That Sustains Me 20

Her mother was murdered, and her father committed suicide. Learn how Tatjana courageously faced her mother's killer.



Where Can You Get the Best Education?	3
A Far-Reaching Educational Program	4
Education for Life	10
Tulips Helped Them Survive	16
The First One a Hundred Years Ago	17
Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope Now That Dad Has Left Us?	25
Watching the World	28
From Our Readers	30
Index to Volume 81 of Awake!	31
Skeptical but Still Searching	32

Where Can You Get the Best Education?

**"What sculpture is to a block of marble,
education is to the soul."**—Joseph Addison, 1711.

DID you ever go to school? Most people can answer yes—but not everyone can. As we enter the 21st century, untold millions of children are receiving no regular schooling. This has been true for a long time, so that today close to one billion adults are illiterate.

Yet, a good education is a basic need. Rather than viewing it as an unachievable luxury, many today perceive it as a right of both children and adults. But how can a good education be possible without the proper resources? What if there are insufficient books, a lack of qualified teachers, and not enough schools?

Indeed, where can people get a quality education that encourages individual participation, expands their knowledge of the world around them, and provides them with spiritual values that can transform their lives? What education emphasizes wholesome standards of morality, shows how to achieve a better quality of life, and provides a solid hope for the future? Is such an education really available to everyone?

Basis for the Best Education

As surprising as it may seem, we can confidently answer yes, that a quality education is available to all. This is because a powerful educational tool exists that can provide a basis for it. It is a time-honored "textbook" that is available, in whole or in part, in more than

2,200 languages of the world. Essentially everyone on earth has access to it in a language that he or she can understand. What book is this?

It is the Bible, a book that has been widely acclaimed as the most important book ever written. "Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated," wrote the early 20th-century scholar William Lyon Phelps. "No other learning or culture, no matter how extensive or elegant, can . . . form a proper substitute."

The Bible is a collection of books written over a period of some 1,600 years. Of this important library of books, Phelps added: "Our ideas, our wisdom, our philosophy, our literature, our art, our ideals, come more from the Bible than from all other books put together. . . . I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible."

Today a phenomenal, Bible-based educational work is being carried out worldwide by the Christian community of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such education goes beyond the basics of reading and writing. It provides mental and moral development. In a positive way, it affects people's outlook on the future, offering the basis for valid hope that what lies ahead will be far better than what lies behind.

Please learn about this education-for-life program by reading the following article.

A Far-Reaching Educational Program

"Only the educated are free."—Epictetus, c. 100 C.E.

THE 19th-century antislavery activist William H. Seward believed that "the whole hope of human progress is suspended on the ever growing influence of the Bible."

Jehovah's Witnesses too have high regard for the Bible. They are convinced that those who apply its principles become better husbands, better wives, better children—yes, the best people in the world. So they obey the command of Jesus Christ: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

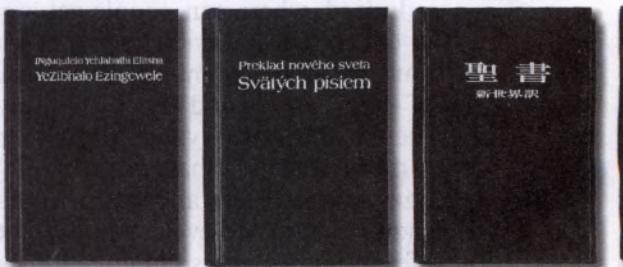
In the pursuit of this goal of teaching people the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses have embarked on what may be the most widespread educational campaign in human history. How far-reaching is it?

A Worldwide Publishing Work

In their public ministry, the Witnesses use Bible translations that are available in hundreds of languages. But they have also produced the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in 21 languages and the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures*

(so-called New Testament) in 16 additional languages. Also, they are in the process of translating this Bible into 11 more languages. The Witnesses also produce literature that enhances appreciation for the Bible and contributes to a better understanding of it.

For example, this journal, *Awake!*, is published in 82 languages, and an average of more than 20,380,000 copies of each issue are printed. Its companion magazine, *The Watchtower*, has an average printing of 22,398,000 copies per issue in 137 languages. *This amounts to the printing of well over a billion copies of these magazines each year!* Moreover, *The Watchtower* is printed simultaneously in 124 of these languages and



Awake!

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is 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.

Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; Milton G. Henschel, President; Lyman A. Swingle, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589.

Vol. 81, No. 24 Printed in U.S.A. © 2000 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Semimonthly ENGLISH

Awake! in 58. So, worldwide the information in these journals is being read by people of many language groups *at the same time* in their own language.

In addition, in recent decades Jehovah's Witnesses have produced hundreds of millions of copies of Bible-study aids. The book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* had a printing of over 107 million copies. Later, *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* surpassed 81 million copies, and more recently, *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* has surpassed 75 million copies in 146 languages. Also, over 113 million copies of the 32-page brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* have been printed in 240 languages.

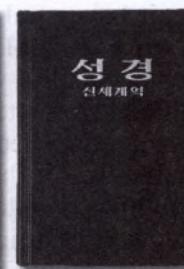
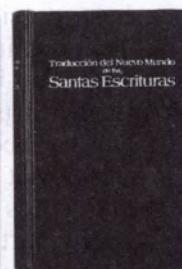
Other books have been produced to fill particular needs. *My Book of Bible Stories*, designed for children, has reached a printing of over 51 million. Two books prepared especially with teenagers in mind, *Your Youth—Getting the Best Out Of It* and *Questions*

**Over 100 million copies of the
“New World Translation” have been
produced in 37 languages**

Young People Ask—Answers That Work, have a combined printing of over 53 million. And *The Secret of Family Happiness*, which has assisted millions of families to cope with their problems, has been printed in 115 languages.

Four other publications released since 1985 that build faith especially in the Creator, his Son, and the Bible have a combined printing of over 117 million copies. These are *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*, *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*, *The Bible—God’s Word or Man’s?*, and *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?*

Today Bible-based publications produced by Jehovah's Witnesses are available in 353 languages, and some of these will be released soon in an additional 38 languages. Indeed, well over 20 billion books, booklets, brochures, and magazines have been printed by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1970! What is more, nearly six million teachers are busy disseminating Bible knowledge in more than 230 countries. But how has all of this become possible, and how are people's lives affected?



**Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address.
Publication of *Awake!* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.**

Semimonthly Languages Available by Mail:

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech,^{*} Danish,^{*} Dutch, English,^{*} Estonian, Finnish,^{*} French, German,^{*} Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,^{*} Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,^{*} Swahili, Swedish,^{*} Tagalog, Ukrainian, Zulu

Monthly Languages Available by Mail:

Albanian, Amharic, Chicewa, Cibemba, Ewe, Georgian, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Nepali, New Guinea Pidgin, Papiamento, Sepedi, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhala, Tamil, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Xhosa, Yoruba.

* Audiocassettes also available.

Offices of the Watch Tower Society in selected countries

America, United States of

Waukill, 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,

Edo State

South Africa, Private Bag X2067,

Krugersdorp, 1740

Zambia, Box 33459, Lusaka

10101

Zimbabwe, P. Bag A-6113,

Avondale

Why In Their Own Languages

As you can well imagine, it takes a huge coordinated effort to produce quality literature simultaneously in over a hundred languages. Translation teams, who have volunteered their time and skills, utilize computer systems to achieve high levels of quality, accuracy, and speed. Thus, even for languages in which there is a limited staff of translators, publications are made available quickly. Presently, more than 1,950 men and women are involved in this global, not-for-profit translation work. But why is such an effort made? Is it really worth it, since so many who speak the lesser-known languages also have some knowledge of a major one?

Jehovah's Witnesses have discovered that the effort truly is worthwhile for a reason identified by William Tyndale, a renowned Bible translator of the 16th century. He wrote: "I had perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text."

True, it has not always been possible for people to have Bible publications in their mother tongue. But when these can be provided, Bible truths touch their hearts more quickly and more deeply. This has been noted in countries of the former Soviet Union where ethnic peoples speak scores of native languages. During the early part of the last century, many of these peoples were absorbed into the Soviet Union and were taught—and required to use—the Russian language. Thus, they read and write Russian and, at the same time, speak their native tongue.

Especially since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, many of these people want to use their mother tongue. This is true for those whose native language is Adyge, Altai, Belorussian, Georgian, Kirghiz, Komi,

Ossetian, Tuvian, or any one of dozens of others. Although most can converse in Russian, Bible literature in Russian does not so readily touch their hearts. On the other hand, literature in their local vernacular has remarkable appeal. "It's good that you are starting to produce literature in our language," noted one who received a Bible tract in Altai.

Another example of this is Greenland, an Arctic island with a population of only about 60,000 people. Both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are printed in Greenlandic, and these magazines are quite popular—as are other publications that Jehovah's Witnesses print in the Greenlandic language. In fact, such literature can be found in many homes in the island's most distant settlements.

In the South Pacific, some 7,000 people speak Nauruan, 4,500 Tokelauan, and 12,000 Rotuman. The Witnesses now produce Bible tracts and brochures in those languages as well as monthly editions of *The Watchtower* in Niuean, spoken by about 8,000, and Tuvaluan, spoken by some 11,000. Jehovah's Witnesses are, in fact, one of the largest publishers of printed material in little-known languages, producing Bible literature in such tongues as Bislama, Hiri Motu, Papiamento, Mauritian Creole, New Guinea Pidgin, Seychelles-Creole, Solomon Islands Pidgin, and scores of others.

Often the smaller the population speaking a language, the more isolated and poor the community. Yet, literacy rates for such regions may be high. And the Bible in the local language is often one of the few publications available to the local residents. In fact, there is not even a newspaper in some of these languages, since producing one is not commercially viable.

Why an Appreciated Work

Because Jehovah's Witnesses provide literature that improves the quality of people's lives, many people have praised their



**Worldwide nearly 2,000 share
in translating the publications
of Jehovah's Witnesses.
(Zulu team in South Africa, left;
and Japanese translator, below)**

translation efforts. Linda Crowl, a worker with the Institute for Pacific Studies, based at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji, said that the translation work of the Witnesses is "the most exciting thing that is happening in the Pacific." She recommends their publications because of their excellent quality.

When the quarterly edition of *Awake!* was started in the Samoan language, local newspapers as well as the national TV news carried the story. During the broadcast the cover of *Awake!* was shown, and the magazine was opened to each article. These were then featured one at a time.

Significantly, in some countries translators of Witness publications are regularly consulted by local language institutes about grammar, orthography, coinage of new terms, and so on. Clearly, the free educational work done by Jehovah's Witnesses has touched the lives of many more people than just those who have become active members of their congregations.



**Over one billion "Watchtower"
and "Awake!" magazines are
printed each year**

Literacy classes are conducted by Jehovah's Witnesses around the world.
(Mexico, right; and Burundi, below.
Ghana shown on our cover)



Yet, as noted in the preceding article, close to one billion adults—nearly one sixth of the world's population—are illiterate. What has been done to help such ones benefit from the vital information available through reading and study?

Filling Basic Educational Needs

In many countries the Witnesses have organized free literacy programs, teaching people how to read and write. They have even developed their own instruction manuals, such as the publication *Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing*, which has been produced in 28 languages. Many thousands of individuals, including women and the elderly, have been helped to become literate by means of these classes.

In Burundi, Jehovah's Witnesses have conducted literacy classes that have assisted hundreds of people to read and write. After reviewing the good results of this program, the National Office of Adult Literacy of that country awarded four Witness instructors a prize on International Literacy Day, September 8, 1999.

The following report was received regarding literacy classes in some 700 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in Mozambique: "Over the past four years, 5,089 students have graduated, and at present we have 4,000 enrolled." One student wrote:



"I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the school . . . I was a person who knew nothing. Thanks to the school, I can read, and although still needing practice, I can write."

Since 1946, when records began to be kept in Mexico, over 143,000 people there have been taught to read and write in special schools established to teach these skills. A 63-year-old woman wrote: "I am very grateful to Jehovah's Witnesses, who taught me how to read and write. My life had been miserable. Now, though, I can go to the Bible for counsel, and I have found happiness in its message."

In the South American country of Brazil, the Witnesses have also taught thousands to read and write. "Learning to read was like being freed from chains after many years," said one 64-year-old. "I now have access to all kinds of information. Most important, reading and studying the Bible has freed me from false teachings."

Often Bible teachers who are Jehovah's Witnesses help their students on an individual basis to learn to read. In the Philippines, Martina was in her 80's when a Witness visited her. Martina wanted a regular Bible study, but she did not know how to read. With the help of her Bible teacher, Martina made progress, and with additional training at the local congregation, she became qualified to use the Bible in teaching others. Today she is a literate, full-time Bible teacher.

Clearly, the capacity to become literate is present among all peoples. Yet we might ask, Does knowledge from the Bible regarding God and his purposes actually benefit people? The final article of this series will answer that question.

"I Cannot Express in Words . . . "

Governmental authorities, academics, and ordinary people have all taken note of the efforts of Jehovah's Witnesses to promote the education of people worldwide. Here is a sampling of their comments:

"My government and I are especially happy because this book [*You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, in Tuvaluan] is yet another new and vital addition to the essential 'riches' of Tuvalu. You should be very happy with the part that you have played—an excellent part in the building up of the spiritual life of the people of this nation. It is my belief that this work will be written into the history of Tuvalu with regard to the printing of educational books."—**Dr. T. Puapua, former prime minister of Tuvalu, South Pacific.**

"Jehovah's Witnesses have a very active publishing programme, which uses the most up-to-date technology in the South Pacific. . . . This publishing feat is all the more remarkable when one considers the vagaries of communication . . . among the Pacific Islands."—**Linda Crowl, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.**

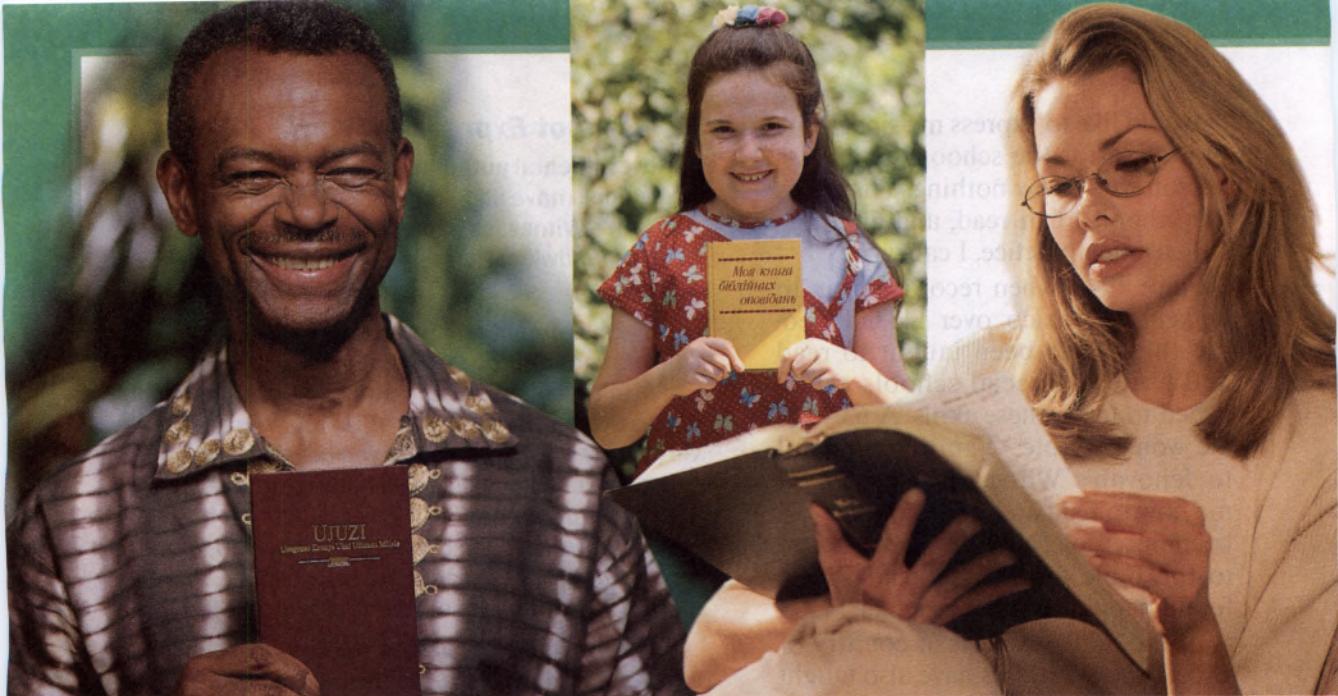
"How wonderful and powerful is the book *The Secret of Family Happiness* in the Isoko language! We thank the volunteers working in the Isoko translation team for helping us get the full understanding of the book."—**C.O.A., Nigeria.**

"I cannot express in words how grateful I am for this translation of the Bible [the *New World Translation* in Serbian], which is easy to understand. In the past, I tried to read the whole Bible, but I always found myself giving up quickly because I was not able to understand the language. I am now able to read this unique translation and to understand it!"—**J. A., Yugoslavia.**

"Thank you for the fine, instructive, and upbuilding publications translated into the Tiv language. In fact, words cannot express all the benefits and the encouragement derived from these books and brochures. These publications have reached thousands."—**P.T.S., Nigeria.**



36 million copies
115 languages



Education for Life

***"The Bible [is] the supreme guide in the art of living."*—Thomas Tiplady, 1924.**

IT IS no exaggeration to say that a Bible-based education can transform lives. It has brought meaning and hope to those who have known emptiness and desperation. A single parent from the country of Namibia wrote to the South Africa branch of Jehovah's Witnesses:

"I am 29 years old, and I read the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work* in just two days. It touched my heart deeply because I am really lonely. My boyfriend died in a car accident and left me with two kids. We are suffering very much. I sometimes used to think it would be better to kill them and then myself. But when I got this book, I changed my mind. Please help me with a free Bible study."

The Bible is a guidebook that can help peo-

ple succeed in every area of life—in relationships with their family, their workmates, and people in the community. (Psalm 19:7; 2 Timothy 3:16) It provides sound guidance on how to pursue what is good and to avoid what is bad. It is a book that deals realistically with life. As you read it, you will find that it is full of accounts about real people. You will see what made the lives of some happy and rewarding and of others painful and miserable. It will become plain to you which things are worthwhile and which are not.

Education for Life Now

The Bible emphasizes the importance of practical wisdom. It says: "Wisdom is the prime thing. Acquire wisdom." (Proverbs 4:7) It also acknowledges that humans often lack wisdom, and so it admonishes: "If

any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all.”—James 1:5.

How does our Creator, Jehovah God, give wisdom generously? He does so by means of his Word, the Bible, which he encourages us to read. God appeals: “My son, if you will receive my sayings and treasure up my own commandments with yourself, so as to pay attention to wisdom . . . , you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God. For Jehovah himself gives wisdom.” (Proverbs 2:1, 2, 5, 6) When we apply the counsel found in God’s Word and see how practical it is, we realize that it truly reflects divine wisdom.

Take, for example, the matter of coping with poverty. The Bible recommends industriousness and warns against pursuits that waste limited resources. Thus, such vices as the use of tobacco and overindulgence in alcoholic beverages are clearly contrary to Biblical principles.—Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:26; 23:19-21; 2 Corinthians 7:1.

What about the effect that our companions can have on our lives? The Bible says: “He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly.” (Proverbs 13:20) Have you observed that peer pressure has often led people—young and old alike—into drunkenness, drug abuse, and immorality? Yes, if we mix with ones who practice such things, we will become like them, even as the Bible says: “Bad associations spoil useful habits.”—1 Corinthians 15:33.

Surely, all of us want to be happy. But how is that possible? Did you realize that the Bible says that it is not necessarily *things* that can make us happy but, rather, proper *attitudes* and *relationships*, particularly a good relationship with God? (1 Timothy 6:6-10) Jesus Christ, in his famous Sermon on the Mount, said that those who are truly happy are “conscious of their spiritual need,” “mild-

tempered,” “thirsting for righteousness,” “merciful,” “pure in heart,” and “peaceable.”—Matthew 5:1-9.

When you think deeply about the teachings of the Bible, you will appreciate how they can help guide our lives. As a source of advice, the Bible is unique. Its counsel is always beneficial—it is never merely theoretical and never works to our harm. Those who apply what the Bible advises always benefit.

Education for Life

Yet, in addition to being of benefit to us right now, the Bible provides hope for life in the future. It tells of a dramatic cleansing of the earth and a transforming of it into a gorgeous home for those who serve God. Note this heartwarming account of the future: “Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Revelation 21:3, 4; Proverbs 2:21, 22.

Just think: No more sickly children, no more starvation, no more dreaded diseases that sap the body’s strength, no more biting pain! Tears of frustration, disappointment, and grief will vanish, as the conditions causing such things will be changed or removed. Since willfully wicked people will have been destroyed by God’s angelic forces, the thieves, murderers, liars, and others who make life insecure will no longer exist. People will be able to have their own homes and enjoy them in security.—Isaiah 25:8, 9; 33:24; 65:17-25.

Does that sound good to you? Would you like to learn more about applying Bible principles so that you can benefit yourself now and in the future? If so, please contact Jehovah’s Witnesses, and they will be glad to include you and your family in their global “education for life” program.

ROWING TO DEATH

By Awake! writer in France

WE CAN just imagine the sight. Crowds stare as the French king's newly commissioned galley leaves the Mediterranean port of Marseilles. It is one of the most beautiful ships ever to sail the seas. Intricate carvings as well as lavish gold and pearl ornamentation grace the stern. The finest embroidered cloths add regal splendor to the deck. As the morning light glistens on the baroque extravagance, some proudly reflect on King Louis XIV's reputation as "the Sun King."

By the 17th century, galleys were of only limited military use, yet King Louis XIV decided to increase the number of his vessels to 40—the largest galley fleet in the Mediterranean. Experts estimate that 20 would have amply served his needs. What was the purpose of such a large fleet?

The king's adviser Jean-Baptiste Colbert explained: "There is no power that better characterizes the greatness of a prince and gives him more fame among foreigners than that of the galleys." Indeed, the primary reason for Louis' galleys was prestige. Yet, what was the price of that prestige?

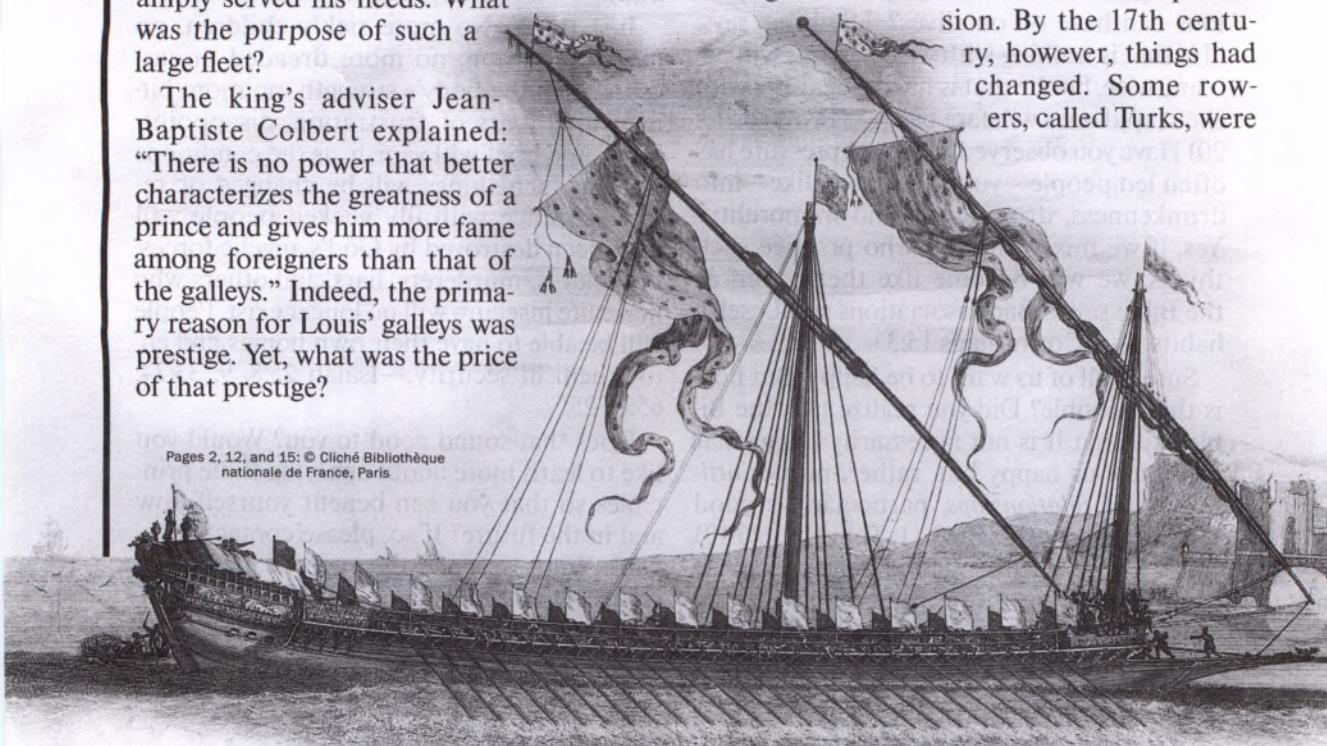
Consider the human suffering. Packed on a ship's deck—less than 150 feet long and 30 feet wide—were 450 rowers. They lived and worked in this cramped environment for months at a time. Their skin became ulcerated from the salty sea air, and their bodies bore the scars of frequent beatings. Half would die in what French historians call France's "greatest spoiler of men."

Indeed, what meant pomp and glory for a few meant misery and death for many others. Where, though, did the king get the many thousands of rowers to man his 40 vessels?

Finding Rowers

In the Middle Ages, galley rowers—or *galeotti*, as they were called—were freemen, and rowing was considered an honorable profession. By the 17th century, however, things had changed. Some rowers, called Turks, were

Pages 2, 12, and 15: © Cliché Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris



purchased from the Ottoman Empire. Most were Muslims, although some were adherents of Orthodoxy. Prisoners of war were also used.

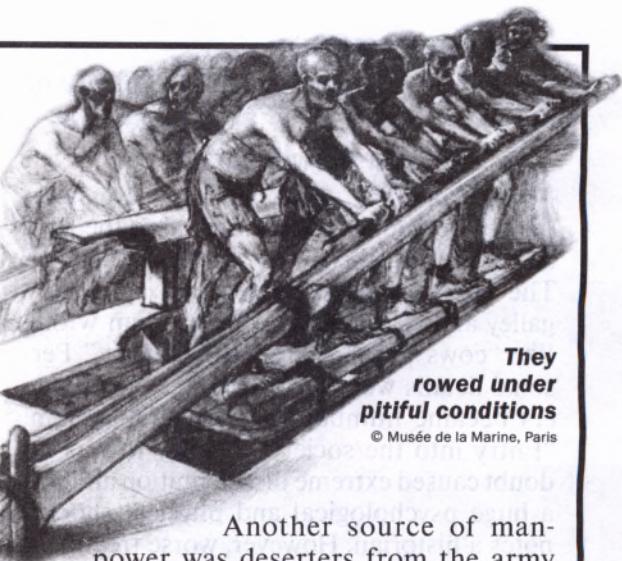
"Among the most obnoxious and senseless initiatives that were undertaken to 'strengthen' the crew was undoubtedly the sending of Iroquois warriors to the galleys of the Sun King," observe French historians. Seizing Native Americans proved to be a mistake. In 1689 they had to be sent home after the Iroquois nations threatened the early French colonists.

Louis' ambitious projects, however, required more rowers. Colbert found the solution. He informed magistrates of the king's wish that they "condemn the greatest number of criminals possible and that even the death penalty be converted to that of the galleys." Using criminals this way was not new. Convicts had been used as galley slaves during the wars with Italy some two centuries earlier. However, the number sent to the galleys during the reigns of Louis XIV and his great-grandson Louis XV was without precedent. Between 1680 and 1748, about 60,000 men were condemned to row. Who were these galley slaves?

Who Were the Recruits?

Up to half of those sent to the galleys were common criminals. They ranged from murderers to petty thieves. Smugglers were also punished in this way, at times making up a large number of those who manned the oars.

In addition, socially marginalized individuals were forced to man the galleys. In 1666 the officer in charge of them in Marseilles wrote: "I would like a decision to be made to take the lazy, the pilgrims, . . . the Gypsies, and other wanderers and fill up whole galleys with them. . . . That would clean the world of its burdensome filth." Thus, under the pretext of maintaining public order, Gypsies and paupers were recruited. And in 1660, even Polish pilgrims visiting a sanctuary in France were forcibly enlisted!



They rowed under pitiful conditions

© Musée de la Marine, Paris

Another source of man-

power was deserters from the army who, after capture, were given a life sentence on the galleys. Runaways had their nose and ears mutilated, their cheeks branded with the fleur-de-lis, and their head shaved. During the numerous wars of Louis XIV from 1685 to 1715, about 17,000 deserters were sent to the galleys. What awaited these men?

Their Suffering

The galley rowers' agony actually began even before going to sea. Initially, they were left in temporary prisons for up to six months before being chained with hundreds of others and dragged to Marseilles. For some, such as those sent from Brittany or Paris, this forced march was a 500-mile nightmare lasting over a month. One contemporary called it "the worst punishment for the convicts." Many died on the road.

However, it was not just the length of the journey or the meager rations that killed them. Guards severely mistreated the prisoners. Beatings and deprivation of food and sleep took a heavy toll. In addition, people along the route showed little sympathy for the men who regularly crisscrossed the French landscape. In reply to his supplication for water, local women are said to have answered one of the prisoners: "Walk, walk!"

Where you're going, you'll have plenty of water!"

Half Did Not Survive

Many of those convicted had never seen the sea, let alone galleys. Arrival at the port of Marseilles, then, was a rude awakening. The prisoners were herded onto an empty galley and examined, as one of them wrote, like "cows purchased at the market." Personal details were recorded, and the prisoners became numbers in the galley system. "Entry into the society of galley rowers no doubt caused extreme disorientation and was a huge psychological and physical shock," notes a historian. However, worse treatment awaited them.

In a compartment measuring just seven and a half feet in length and four feet in width, five men lived and rowed for months at a time chained to their benches. Each rower had a space of just a foot and a half in which to sit. Space was so cramped that the men could not even bend their arms while pulling the oars, each of which measured at least 39 feet in length and weighed over 280 pounds. Rowing for hours at a time was backbreaking work that tore the rowers' muscles, greatly taxing their strength and stamina. It was "comparable to the most difficult tasks performed in a tropical climate," explains a historian.

Galleys were low-lying, and the rowers were only about three feet above the water-

line. As a result, they were constantly soaked, they often rowed with their feet in water, and their skin was eaten by the salty air. Food rations were meager. "Convicts would do anything to survive," notes a historian. Escape was almost out of the question. The bounty placed on the head of escapees motivated local peasants to join the hunt for any who tried to get away. Only 1 in 100 succeeded.

Sentences were rarely respected. Thus, a rower condemned for a few years might find himself still at the oar some 25 years later. About a third of the men died within three years. Overall, half the rowers did not survive. Mortality was just as high for the rowers on land as at sea. During the winter of 1709/10, one third of them died because of famine and the extreme weather. Tragically, some had been sent to the galleys just because of their religion.

Condemned for Their Faith

In 1685, King Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, and Protestantism was banned in France.* About 1,500 Protestants were condemned to the galleys because they refused to convert to Catholicism or tried to flee the country. Punishing "heretics" this way had been tried in 1545, when in one week 600 Waldenses[#] were sent to the galleys by order of King Francis I. Under Louis XIV, the so-called very Christian king, the persecution took on new dimensions.

Why were Protestants sent to the galleys? An official of the king indicated the reason: "There is no other way to bring back the heretics besides force." A historian adds: "The king hoped that as soon as they breathed the 'galley air,' most of the condemned Protestants would abandon the religion for which they had made so many sacrifices." Most, however, refused to abjure their faith so as to be set free. As a result, they were often subjected to horrific public beatings at the instigation of the ships' Catholic chaplains. Some died; others bore scars for the rest of their lives.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Can We Save Our Marriage?

The Mystery of Nan Madol

From a Slow Death to a Happy Life

* See *The Watchtower* of August 15, 1998, pages 25-9.

[#] See *The Watchtower* of August 1, 1981, pages 12-15.



The caption in French above the picture reads: "Certain and honest ways to bring heretics back to the Catholic faith." The picture is dated 1686

of the time, galley rowers stayed in Marseilles, where they became part of the city's economic scene, working in nearby soap factories or selling the clothes that they knitted. Finally, in 1748 a law was passed that in effect sounded the galleys' death knell.

Galleys still haunt French consciousness. Faced with hardship, French people will often exclaim: *"Quelle galère!"* or literally in English, "What a galley!" We owe much of what we know about life on the galleys to personal accounts written by Protestant rowers. In the face of blatant religious discrimination, they formed an organization of mutual aid and moral support. Endurance and hope were important to their survival, and compromise was out of the question.

Interestingly, even taking into account the religious intolerance of the time, historians have expressed their surprise that judges were prepared to "enforce, without batting an eye, legislation that gave an equal status to honest, loyal subjects and the worst criminals."

Indeed, the memory of the galley slaves remains a powerful testimony to the terrible injustices that humans have inflicted on their fellowmen. Yes, "man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Happily, the time is near at hand when God's appointed Ruler, Jesus Christ, "will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper."—Psalm 72:12-14.

Despite this cruel violence, Protestants actively shared their faith with others. As a consequence, some, including at least one Catholic chaplain, became Protestants. Those considered the most dangerous, the educated Protestants, were taken off the boats and thrown into dungeons to die. This did not, however, stop the Protestant galley rowers from helping one another, even to the point of arranging literacy classes for their fellows who could not read.

The condemned kept sight of why they were being persecuted. "The more I suffer, the more I love the truth that makes me suffer," Protestant Pierre Serres wrote. Many countries were appalled to hear of France's religious persecution. In 1713, Queen Anne of England successfully pressed for the release of many who had been condemned. Ironically, Protestants who had previously been banned from leaving France were now expelled.

Death of the Galleys

Eventually, the galleys drifted into oblivion, victims of naval realities and a lack of funding. King Louis XIV's financial problems resulted in cutbacks. By 1720, only 15 boats remained, and their activity was greatly reduced. Much

Tulips Helped Them Survive

DURING the final months of World War II in Europe, a Nazi blockade stopped all waterway food shipments into the major cities in the west of the Netherlands. The consequences were devastating, as many who lived through that period can testify.

A person normally needs about 1,600 to 2,800 calories a day. But by April 1945, some of those living in Amsterdam, Delft, The Hague, Leiden, Rotterdam, and Utrecht were subsisting on daily rations that amounted to between 500 and 600 calories a day. It is believed that as a result, during the Hunger Winter of 1944/45, at least 10,000 civilians died from malnutrition.

According to survivor Susan Monkman, her family resorted to eating tulip bulbs. "The tulip bulbs were unbelievably sharp-edged," says Monkman. "No amount of simmering would soften them. Nevertheless we were happy to chew them slowly and carefully. They left us with sore throats for days." To help reduce the irritation, a few carrots or a sugar beet, if available, would be mixed with the bulbs.

One four-ounce portion of tulip bulbs contains some 148 calories, 3 grams of protein, 0.2 grams of fat, and 32 grams of carbohydrate. Thus, the unpalatable diet of tulip bulbs may have helped save many Dutchers from starvation.

Man's terrible inhumanity to man, examples of which are indelibly engraved on the minds of many, illustrates how desperately humankind needs the realization of the Bible promise: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to [God's] promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Peter 3:13.

Internationaal Bloembollen Centrum, Holland

THE FIRST ONE A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The legal charter of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society was officially recorded in Pennsylvania, U.S.A., on December 15, 1884.* There the headquarters of this society was established. Later, on April 23, 1900, property for the first branch office was secured in London, England. It was located at 131 Gipsy Lane, Forest Gate, in East London, as shown here.



WHEN that first branch was established a hundred years ago, England had a total of 138 Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called. Two years later, in 1902, a second branch was opened, in Germany; and by 1904, additional branches had been set up in Australia and Switzerland.

In 1918, the year World War I ended, there were 3,868 Bible Students reporting preaching activity worldwide. The following year the fifth branch of the Watch Tower Society was established—this one in Canada. Then, as the proclamation of the Bible's message gained momentum, new branches were opened in many different countries, six in 1921 alone.

By 1931, when the Bible Students adopted the Bible-based name Jehovah's Witnesses, there were 40 branch offices throughout the world. (Isaiah 43:10-12) During the next three years, the number increased to 49! By 1938 there was a peak of 59,047 Wit-

nesses preaching in 52 countries, but by then fierce opposition had begun to threaten their Christian activity in many places.

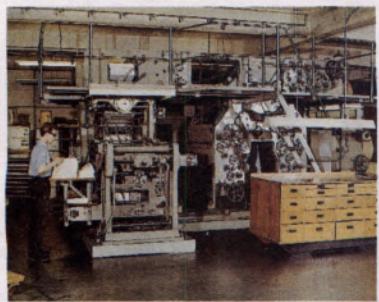
As political totalitarianism and dictatorships spread from country to country and World War II broke out in September 1939, branch offices of Jehovah's Witnesses were closed in one country after another. By 1942, only 25 were still operating. Amazingly, however, during that most devastating war in human history, Jehovah's Witnesses remained active worldwide and enjoyed one of their greatest rates of growth in modern history.

Even as World War II was ending in 1945—and many parts of the world lay in ruins—branch



Tom Hart, believed to have been the first Bible Student in England

* Then called Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society.



**London
branch at
34 Craven
Terrace
(In photo
on right)**



offices of the Witnesses were reopened and new ones were established. By 1946 there were 57 worldwide. And how many active Witnesses were there? A peak of 176,456! That is almost three times as many as in 1938!

How the First Branches Expanded

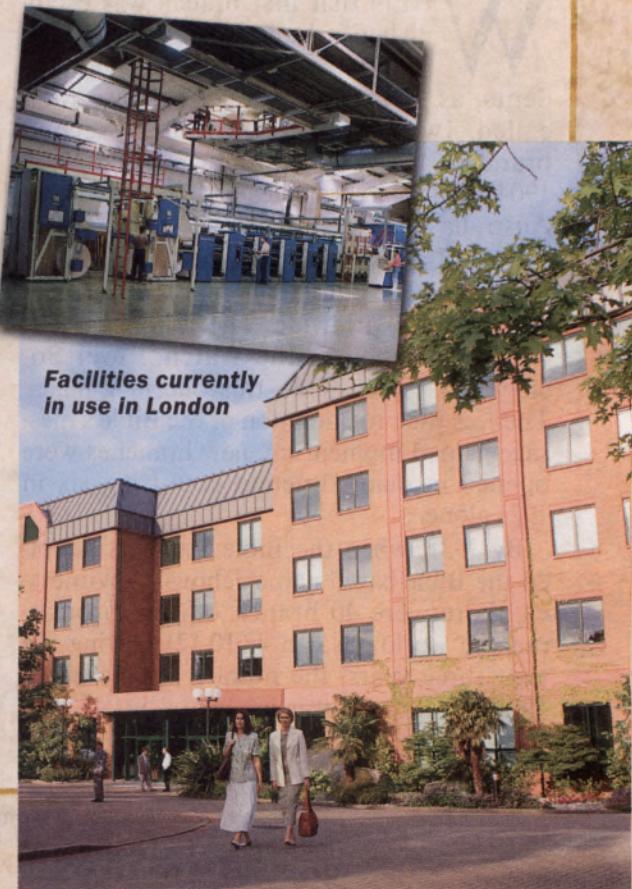
In 1911 the first branch of the Watch Tower Society, in London, England, was moved to 34 Craven Terrace, where more office and living space was available. Then on April 26, 1959, new branch facilities in Mill Hill, London, were dedicated. Later the living quarters were enlarged, and eventually (in 1993) a 200,000-square-foot printery and administrative complex was dedicated nearby. Here over 90 million copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are produced annually in 23 languages.

The expansion of the Society's second branch was even more dramatic. In 1923 the Germany branch was moved to Magdeburg. *The Watchtower* of July 15, 1923, was the first to roll off the Society's own printing press there. During the next few years, adjacent property was purchased, buildings were added, and bindery equipment and additional presses were obtained. In 1933 the

branch was confiscated by the Nazis, the Witnesses were banned and, in time, two thousand of them were sent to concentration camps.

When World War II ended in 1945, the property in Magdeburg, then part of East Germany, was returned and the branch was reestablished. But on August 30, 1950, Communist police stormed the facilities and arrested the workers, and the Witnesses in East Germany were banned. In the meantime, in 1947 property had been purchased in Wiesbaden, West Germany. During the following decades, the branch buildings constructed there were repeatedly enlarged to keep up with literature demands.

Because no further room for expansion was available in Wiesbaden, some 75 acres were purchased near Selters in 1979. After about five years of construction, a large



**Facilities currently
in use in London**

branch was dedicated on April 21, 1984. It has since been expanded, so that it can accommodate well over a thousand branch workers. Each month over 16 million magazines in more than 30 languages roll off the huge offset printing presses in Selters; and in a recent year, over 18 million books, including Bibles, were produced by the bindery.

Other Major Printing Branches

A branch was first established in Kobe, Japan, in 1927, but severe persecution of the Witnesses during World War II curtailed their activity. Shortly after the war, however, the branch was reestablished, in Tokyo. When no further space for expansion was available there, a new branch was constructed in Numazu. It was dedicated in 1973. When these facilities were quickly outgrown, large new ones were built in Ebina, and these were dedicated in 1982. Expanded facilities at this site, which can accommodate 900 workers, were recently completed. In the Japanese language alone, over 94 million copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were printed in 1999, as were millions of books.

The expansion of branch facilities has been similar in country after country. A branch was established in Mexico City, Mexico, in 1929. Then, when the number of Witnesses had reached 60,000, a spacious new facility was built outside the city. It was dedicated in 1974, and additions to it were completed in 1985 and 1989. Now nearing completion are a large new printing facility and additional living quarters. As a result, the Mexico branch will soon be able to accommodate 1,200 workers. Already the branch is providing magazines and books for the more than 500,000 Witnesses and millions of other people in Mexico as well as for people living in nearby countries.

In 1923 a branch office was organized in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and later fine new quarters were built there. But since São

Paulo is the business and transportation center of Brazil, in 1968 a new branch was constructed in that city. By the mid-1970's, there were about 100,000 Witnesses in Brazil. However, further expansion was impossible in São Paulo, so a 285-acre site was purchased at Cesário Lange, about 90 miles outside São Paulo. On March 21, 1981, the branch facilities at that new location were dedicated. As a result of expansion at this site, the branch can accommodate some 1,200 people. Magazines and books are produced in Brazil for much of South America as well as for other parts of the world.

Another large printing branch was completed in the early 1990's, near Bogotá, Colombia. There *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines are produced for distribution throughout northwestern South America.

Other branches that print millions of magazines annually are located in Argentina, Australia, Canada, Finland, Italy, Korea, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, and Spain. The branch in Italy also produces millions of books, including Bibles, each year in many languages. Of course, much of the annual production, which amounts to more than 40 million books and over *one billion* magazines, is still carried out at the headquarters of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in Brooklyn, New York, as well as at its printery in upstate New York.

Truly, it is remarkable that the number of branch offices has increased from one a hundred years ago to 109 today that serve the needs of Jehovah's Witnesses in 234 lands. And to think that these are staffed by some 13,000 dedicated Christian volunteers! Surely, their work along with that of the some 5,500 volunteers associated with the Society's headquarters has been vital to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus Christ that 'this good news of God's Kingdom would be preached in all the inhabited earth before the end comes.'—Matthew 24:14.



Provided With a Hope That Sustains Me

AS TOLD BY TATJANA VILEYSKA

*Our happy family was destroyed when Mother
was beaten to death in our apartment.*

Father committed suicide four months later.

*After that I no longer wanted to live.
So why am I still around to tell the story?
Let me explain.*

"White Magic Is Good"

Pjotr*, a distant relative, had an accident while working in a coal mine and suffered head injuries that required treatment in a special clinic. Concerned about his health, he consulted a *koldun*. The sorcerer put Pjotr in touch with the spirit world. Although his wife and my parents told him that sorcery was foolish, he felt that he knew better. "What I practice is white magic," he asserted. "Black magic is wicked, but white magic is good."

Pjotr claimed to have powers that enabled him to foretell the future and protect people from harm. Nonetheless, Pjotr's wife left him. Hence, Pjotr would come to stay with us, sometimes for weeks at a time. His influence on the family was terrible. At any rate, Mother and Father started to have serious arguments. Eventually, they separated and

* Name has been changed.

DONETSK, in eastern Ukraine, is a city of smelting furnaces and coal mines. The population of over a million speak Russian and are hardworking and friendly. Some of them believe in astrology or spiritism, and many use the horoscope to inquire about the future. Others turn to sorcerers, or *kolduns*, as they are known in Russian. Some of these people seek contact with the dead in hopes of finding relief from sickness or just for fun.

Father was a shoemaker. Although he professed to be an atheist, he felt that we were put on the earth by someone. He would say: "We are only guests on this planet." Mother attended church every Easter because, as she put it, "If there is a God, if he does exist, then we ought to go." I was born in May 1963. My older sister, Lubov, and my younger brother, Alexandr, completed our happy family.

divorced. We children moved into another apartment with Mother, and Pjotr—her blood relative—moved in with us.

Lubov got married and moved to Uganda, in Africa, with her husband. In October 1984, Alexandr went on vacation and I traveled to the town of Gorlovka for a week. When I left home, Mom and I said a casual good-bye. How I wish that I had said more to her or had even stayed home! You see, I never saw Mom alive again.

"Your Dear Mother Is Dead"

When I returned from Gorlovka, the apartment was locked, and a notice from the police forbidding entrance hung on the door. A shiver went down my spine. I went to our neighbors. Olga was too upset to talk. Her husband, Vladimir, said kindly: "Tanja, something dreadful has happened. Your dear mother is dead. Pjotr killed her. Afterward, he came to our apartment, telephoned the police, and turned himself in."

The police confirmed the terrible news and gave me the keys to our apartment. I was filled with hatred for Pjotr. In a rage I grabbed most of his belongings—including his books on magic—threw them into a blanket, and took them to a field nearby, where I burned them.

Alexandr heard the news, and he shared my hatred for Pjotr. Then Alexandr was drafted into the army and moved away. Father moved into the apartment with me, and Lubov returned from Uganda and stayed with us for a short while. At times, we had reason to feel that wicked spirit forces were harassing us. Additionally, Father had awful dreams. He felt that he was to blame for Mother's death. "If only I had stayed with her," he would say, "she would still be alive." Before long, Father fell into a deep depression. Within four months of Mother's death, he committed suicide.

After Father's funeral Alexandr returned to the military, and Lubov to Uganda. I tried to make a new start by studying at the Makeyevka Institute of Construction Engineering, which was just 30 minutes from home. I decorated and refurbished the apartment, hoping to blot out some of the memories. But there was still reason to suspect demonic harassment.

"Oh God, If You Really Exist"

Alexandr completed his military service and moved back home. But he and I started to have arguments. He got married, and for some months I moved to Rostov, a Russian city on the coast of the Sea of Azov, about 110 miles from home. Eventually, I decided to get rid of every last item that had belonged to Pjotr.

I became so depressed myself that I too planned to commit suicide. But Mother's words kept ringing in my ears: "If there is a God, if he does exist." One night, I prayed for the first time. "Oh God," I begged, "if you really exist, please show me the meaning of life." A couple of days later, a letter arrived from Lubov inviting me to visit her in Uganda. So I postponed my plans to kill myself.

Surprises In Uganda

There can be few places on earth so dissimilar to Ukraine as Uganda. My plane landed in Entebbe in March 1989. When I stepped out of the airplane, I stepped into an oven. I had never known such heat! This was not surprising, since that was my first trip outside the Soviet Union. People spoke English, a language I did not understand.

I climbed into a taxi for the 45-minute ride to Kampala. The landscape was so different from what I was used to that it almost seemed as if I were on another planet! But my beaming taxi driver was kindness itself, and he finally located the home of Lubov and her husband, Joseph. What a relief!

Lubov was studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. I had never heard of them, but Lubov was eager to inform me. She followed me around the house telling me everything she had learned, beginning with Genesis and continuing through Revelation. Believe me, it was hard to take!

One day the Witnesses who studied with Lubov came to visit. One of them was named Marianne. She did not try to preach to me right away, since at the time I could not understand much English anyway. But her warm, friendly eyes told me that she was a sincere, happy person. She showed me a picture of Paradise in the booklet "*Look! I Am Making All Things New.*" "Look at this woman," she urged. "That is you, and this other woman is me. We are together in Paradise with all these other people. Is that not wonderful?"

Other Witnesses in Kampala seemed to take turns visiting Lubov and Joseph. They were so friendly that I suspected that they were just trying to make an impression on me. A few weeks later, I attended my first meeting, which was the observance of the Lord's Evening Meal. (Luke 22:19) Although I did not understand what was said, I was once again struck by how friendly the people were.

'Read It From Cover to Cover'

Marianne gave me a Russian Bible—the first one I had ever owned. "Read the Bible from cover to cover," she implored. "Even if you do not understand everything, just read it!"

I was deeply touched by Marianne's gift, and I decided to follow her advice. 'After all,' I thought, 'what is the point of having a Bible if I do not bother to read it?'

When I returned to Ukraine, I took my Bible along. For the next few months, I worked in Moscow, Russia, and used my free time to begin reading through the Bi-

ble. By the time I returned to Uganda nine months later, I had completed half of it. After my return to Kampala, Marianne showed me from the Bible a wonderful hope for the future. A paradise! A resurrection! Seeing Mom and Dad again! I realized that what I was learning was the answer to my prayer while I was in Donetsk.—Acts 24:15; Revelation 21:3-5.

When we studied the subject of evil spirits, I listened with bated breath. The Bible confirmed what I had long suspected. There is no such thing as good or harmless magic. All of it is fraught with danger. I needed no greater proof of that than what had happened in our own family. When I burned Pjotr's belongings, I had unknowingly done the right thing. Early Christians also burned their articles of magic when they started to serve Jehovah.—Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Acts 19:19.

The more I understood the Bible, the surer I became that I had found the truth. I quit smoking, and in December of 1990, I was baptized in symbol of my dedication to Jehovah. Lubov was immersed just three months before I was; and Joseph, in 1993.

Back to Donetsk

In 1991, I returned to Donetsk. That same year Jehovah's Witnesses in Ukraine were granted legal recognition, which meant that we could assemble freely and preach openly. We started conversations on the street with anyone who had time to spare. We soon discovered that even in a land where many people professed to be atheists, many were curious about God's Kingdom.

In the early 1990's, Bible literature was in short supply, so we operated a lending library on the streets of Donetsk. We erected a stand in the main city square to display copies of our books and booklets. Soon friendly, inquisitive people stopped

to ask questions. Those who wanted literature took it on loan, and they were offered a home Bible study.

In 1992, I became a pioneer, a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses, and in September 1993, I was invited to join a team of translators at the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Selters, Germany. In September 1998 we transferred to Poland while awaiting the completion of our new branch facilities in Lviv, Ukraine.

The growth among Jehovah's people in Ukraine has been astonishing. Whereas Donetsk had one congregation with 110 Witnesses in 1991, it now has 24 congregations with more than 3,000 Witnesses! A visit to Donetsk in 1997 brought not only pleasant encounters but also an episode that caused me distress.

"Pjotr Is Searching for You"

During my stay in Donetsk, Juliya, a Witness who knew our family, shocked me by saying: "Pjotr is searching for you. He wants to talk to you."

At home that evening I cried and prayed to Jehovah. What did Pjotr want with me? I knew that he had served several years in detention for his crime. I hated him for what he had done, and I felt that he didn't deserve to learn about Jehovah's new world. I prayed about the matter for some days and then realized that it was not for me to decide who is worthy to receive eternal life. I recalled Jesus Christ's promise to the criminal hanging next to him on a stake—that the criminal would be with him in Paradise. —Luke 23:42, 43.

With these thoughts in mind, I determined to see Pjotr and give him a witness about the Messianic Kingdom and God's new system of things. Accompanied by two Christian brothers, I went to the address given me by Juliya. There, for the first time since Mother's death, I came face-to-face with Pjotr.

The atmosphere was tense. I explained to Pjotr that I had become a Witness of Jehovah and that the Bible had helped me to

Embraced by Marianne and Helnz Wertholz, missionaries who studied with me in Uganda





Working as part of the Ukrainian translation team in Poland

understand why in this system we must all experience problems, sometimes even personal tragedies. I also told Pjotr how terrible it had been for us to lose our mother and then our father.

Pjotr explained that a voice had told him to kill my mom, and he went on to describe in detail what had happened on that day. As I listened to his horrible story, my disgust was mixed with pity, for he seemed nervous, like a hunted animal. Once Pjotr

For the first time since Mother's death, I came face-to-face with her killer

finished talking, I tried to show him some of the wonderful promises in the Bible. He claimed to believe in Jesus, so I asked:

"Do you have a Bible?"

"Not yet. But I have ordered one," he answered.

"You may know already that according to the Bible, the personal name of the true God is Jehovah."—Psalm 83:18.

Upon hearing that name, Pjotr became agitated. "Do not mention that name to me," he said. "I cannot stand that name." We got absolutely nowhere in our attempts to tell Pjotr about the wonderful promises of God.

I left with one thought clear in my mind: If I had not come to know Jehovah, I might have been murdered as Mother was, I might have committed suicide as Father did, or I might have been manipulated to do horrible things as Pjotr was. How deeply grateful I am to have come to know the true God, Jehovah!

Look to the Future, Not the Past

These harrowing experiences have left their mark on my emotions. Even now the memories sometimes cause me pain and distress. But when I came to know Jehovah and his purposes, the healing process began. Bible truth has taught me to focus, not on the past, but on the future. And what a future Jehovah has waiting for his servants!

That future includes the resurrection of the dead to an earthly paradise. What joy I will experience when I welcome my parents back to life! Father was, in effect, right when he said: "We are only guests on this planet." And Mother's inclination to believe that God really exists was certainly a correct one. My deepest yearning is to be able to teach Mom and Dad Bible truths when they are resurrected into God's new system of things.

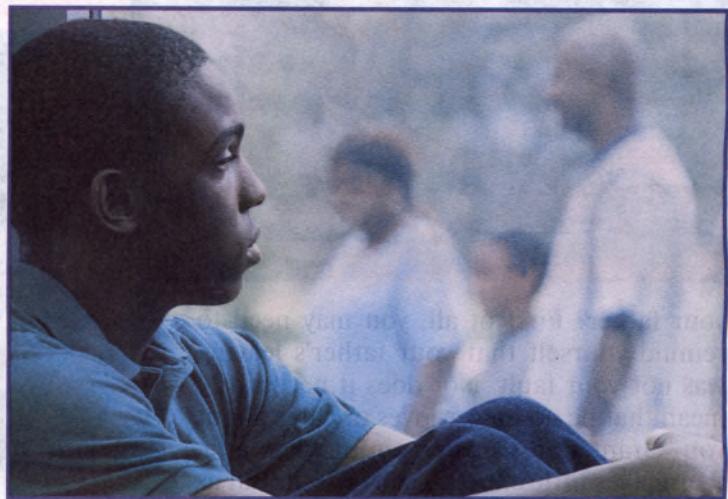
"Growing up without my dad was hard. I just wanted a little attention."—Henry.*

JOAN was 13 years old when her father left home. Caught in the grip of an addiction to alcohol, he made few attempts to contact his children after his departure. Sad to say, Joan is not alone; many youths have been abandoned by their fathers.

If this has happened to you, you may very well find it hard to cope. Feelings of pain and anger may overwhelm you from time to time. You may sometimes feel sad and depressed. You may even be tempted to rebel. As the Bible writer Solomon once said, "mere oppression may make a wise one act crazy."—Ecclesiastes 7:7.

'Acting Crazy'

James 'acted crazy' after his father left home. James said: "I didn't listen to any authority, not even my mom. I got into a lot of fights. I was always lying and sneaking out at night because there was no one to discipline me. Mom tried to stop me, but she couldn't." Did rebelling really improve James' lot in life? Hardly. James says that before long he was "experimenting with drugs, skipping school, and failing at school." The misbehavior soon escalated. "I stole from stores," he confesses, "and I mugged people too. I was



How Can I Cope Now That Dad Has Left Us?

arrested twice and put in prison for a short time, but that didn't stop me."

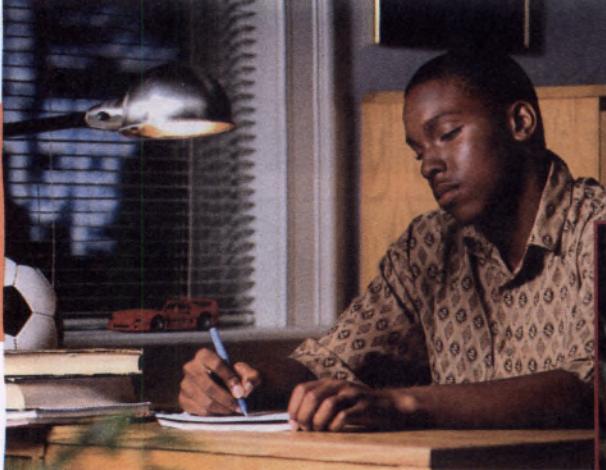
When asked what made him so rebellious, James said: "Because my father was gone, I had no discipline. I really didn't think of how much I was hurting my mom, my little brother and sister, and myself too. I wanted the attention and discipline of my dad."

But rebelling only makes a bad situation worse. (Job 36:18, 21) James, for example, brought problems not only on himself but also on his mother and siblings, who suffered unnecessary stress and strain. Even more serious is the fact that rebellious behavior can put one at odds with God himself. After all, Jehovah commands young people to be obedient to their mother.—Proverbs 1:8; 30:17.

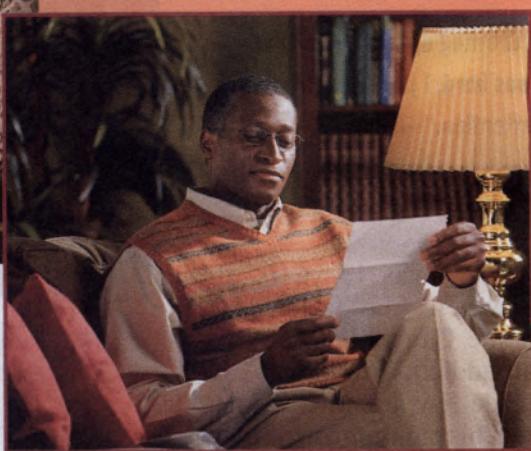
Getting Past the Anger

How, then, can you deal with the anger and resentment that you might feel toward

* Names have been changed.



Some youths have taken the initiative to contact their father



your father? First of all, you may need to remind yourself that your father's leaving was not your fault. Nor does it necessarily mean that he no longer loves or cares about you. Granted, it can be painful when a father makes little effort to call or visit. But as the preceding article in this series showed,* many absentee fathers lose touch with their children, not because they do not love them, but because they are overwhelmed with guilt and shame. Others, like Joan's father, are addicted to drugs or alcohol, and this impedes their ability to function.

Whatever the situation, try to remember that your parents are imperfect. The Bible declares: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23; 5:12) True, this does not excuse hurtful or irresponsible behavior. But recognizing the fact that we are all inherently imperfect may make it easier for you to let go of destructive anger and resentment.

What is said at Ecclesiastes 7:10 can help you deal with the anger and the resentment that you may feel toward your parents. Notice how it warns against focusing on the past: "Do not say: 'Why has it happened that the former days proved to be better than these?' for it is not due to wisdom that you have asked about this." Thus, rather than dwelling on the way things once were, it's

better to focus on making the best of your situation.

Taking the Initiative

For example, you might consider taking the initiative to make contact with your father. True, he is the one who left you and you might rightly feel that it is his responsibility to make the first move. But if he has failed to do so and the lack of contact with him is making you sad and unhappy, might it be worth your while to try to improve the situation yourself? Consider how Jesus Christ handled things when some of his friends hurt him. On the last night of his human life, his apostles abandoned him. Peter had bragged that he would stick with Jesus no matter what. Yet, Peter denied Jesus—not once but three times!—Matthew 26:31-35; Luke 22:54-62.

Even so, Jesus continued to love Peter in spite of Peter's shortcomings. After Jesus' resurrection, Jesus made the first move to reestablish their relationship by making a special appearance to Peter. (1 Corinthians 15:5) Interestingly, when Jesus asked Peter the question, "Do you love me?" Peter's response was "Yes, Lord, you know I have af-

* See the article "Young People Ask . . . Why Did Dad Leave Us?" in our issue of November 22, 2000.

fection for you." In spite of his shameful actions, Peter still loved Jesus.—John 21:15.

As was true in the case of Peter and Jesus, the situation with your father may not be as hopeless as it seems. Perhaps he would respond if you took some initiative such as making a phone call, writing a letter, or making a visit. Henry, mentioned at the outset, recalls: "I wrote to my dad once, and he sent me a letter back saying that he was proud of me. I framed that letter and kept it on my wall for years. I still have it to this day."

Joan and her siblings likewise took the initiative to visit their alcoholic father. "He wasn't in the best condition," Joan admits, "but it was still good to see him." Perhaps taking the initiative will work for you. If there is no response at first, you might want to let some time pass and then try again.

Coping With the Pain of Rejection

Solomon reminds us that there is "a time to seek and a time to give up as lost." (Ecclesiastes 3:6) Sometimes a youth must face the painful fact that his or her father does not want to have a relationship with his children. If this is true of your father, perhaps one day he will realize how much he has lost in failing to maintain a relationship with you.

In the meantime, though, be assured that his rejection of you does not mean that you are worthless. The Bible psalmist David stated: "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up." (Psalm 27:10) Yes, you still have great value in the eyes of God.—Luke 12:6, 7.

So if you feel down or depressed, draw close to God in prayer. (Psalm 62:8) Tell him exactly how you feel. Be assured that he will listen to you and comfort you. Another Bible psalmist wrote: "When my disquieting thoughts became many inside of me, your own consolations began to fondle my soul." —Psalm 94:19.

Warm association with fellow Christians can also help you to cope with such rejection. Proverbs 17:17 says: "A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress." You can find such true companions within the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. It may be particularly helpful to get to know some of the congregation overseers. Joan's brother Peter gives this advice: "Talk with the older ones in the congregation, and they will help a lot. If you have been abandoned by your father, let them know how you feel." The congregation overseers may also offer some practical suggestions on handling some of the responsibilities that your father formerly cared for, such as home repair.

Your mother may also be a source of support. True, she may be suffering emotional distress herself. But if you respectfully express your feelings, she will no doubt do her best to respond.

Support Your Family!

Your father's absence may impact your family in a number of ways. Your mother may have to take on a job—perhaps even two jobs—to make ends meet. You and your siblings may have to shoulder more household responsibilities. But you can cope with such changes if you cultivate unselfish Christian love. (Colossians 3:14) This can help you to maintain a positive attitude and to squelch resentment. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Says Peter: "Helping my family is the right thing to do, and I get a good feeling knowing that I am helping my mom and my sisters."

Without a doubt, a father's leaving home is a tragic, painful event. But you can be sure that with God's help and the help of loving Christian friends and family, you and your family can cope.*

* For further information on living in a single-parent household, see the "Young People Ask . . ." articles appearing in the issues of December 22, 1990, and March 22, 1991.

Crime's Fastest-Growing Business

Trafficking in humans "is the fastest growing criminal market in the world," says Pino Arlacchi, director general of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. According to Mr. Arlacchi, it is estimated that some 200 million people are under the control of the traffickers. While 11.5 million people were shipped out of Africa in 400 years of slavery, over 30 million women and children have been moved within and from Southeast Asia in just the past decade. Most have been used as sweatshop labor or for sexual purposes. Mr. Arlacchi proposes that governments that no longer have antislavery laws reintroduce them.

Torture and Brutality in Europe

"Death during forcible deportation, torture in detention, systematic police ill-treatment, and ethnic and religious repression" are among the human rights abuses observable in Europe, reports a news release by Amnesty International. "While many people in Europe enjoy basic human rights, some people, including asylum-seekers and ethnic and religious minorities, continue to experience a side of Europe that runs contrary to its image as a bastion of human rights and freedom," says the bulletin. "Nothing demonstrates this more than the spread and frequency of allegations of police brutality. From the United Kingdom to Azerbaijan, individuals have suffered . . . cruel, inhu-

man or degrading treatment at the hands of police." Those responsible are often not brought to justice, the organization claims. It cites the following example: "In July [1999], the European Court of Human Rights found France guilty of violating international standards on torture and fair trials" in the case of an immigrant in police custody. "At the end of the year the accused policemen were still in their posts," the report adds.

Older People Deserve Respect



A six-month study showed that baby talk is frequently used in nursing homes. Yet talking to older people in such a way not only robs them of their dignity but is also bad for their well-being, reports the German health newsletter *Apotheken Umschau*. Such lack of respect reportedly has a negative effect on health. Says Christine Sowinski of the German Association of Elderly Care: "The less older people are respected, the earlier they decay physically and mentally." She recommends that derogatory and childish terms be eliminated from nursing routines, "since the underlying attitude will change with the language."

Religious People Live Longer?

"Regular involvement in religious activities goes hand in hand with better physical health and a longer life, according to a statistical analysis of 42 independent studies published since 1977 that have addressed this issue," states *Science News*. "Religious involvement, especially the public type, showed a statistically significant relationship to higher survival rates, the scientists say." Several reasons have been proposed for the findings—the shunning of risky behaviors, marital stability, less depression associated with matters beyond direct control, greater social contacts, and positive emotions and attitudes. One report concludes: "Frequent religious attendance has now been found . . . to be associated with a reduced hazard of dying, particularly among women. Frequent religious attenders . . . reported greater social support, less depression, and better health practices."

India's Population Passes One Billion

On May 11, 2000, the population of India was said to have reached one billion. However, the Associated Press explained: "Deciding when India reaches the 1 billion mark is tricky in a nation where 42,000 children are born every day and medical records are scanty." As a result of the population growth, hunger and illiteracy increase, despite the great advances made in food produc-

tion and education. Although millions live in poverty, a new child is regarded as a potential wage earner, one who is able to work and help the family meet their needs.

Thwarted by Those He Sought to Save

"A California sailor who embarked on a solo voyage across the Pacific dedicated to saving the whales called off the effort . . . after an encounter with two whales," reports *The New York Times*. The sailor, Michael Reppy, set out from San Francisco on his way to Yokohama, Japan. He was seeking to make record time in his 60-foot ocean racer, *Thursday's Child*, "to publicize the plight of captive whales." But just one day out, two whales "blew by," and the boat became difficult to control. "He found that the bottom of the rudder was gone, presumably knocked off by one of the passing whales," says the *Times*. A previous attempt in 1997 "to draw attention to the plight of marine animals" ended when his boat capsized some 300 miles from Tokyo.

DDT Kept Alive to Fight Malaria

"DDT, a pesticide which has been banned in Europe and the US for nearly 30 years, is likely to escape worldwide prohibition because of its effectiveness in eliminating the mosquitoes responsible for one of the world's biggest killers—malaria," reports the magazine *BBC Wildlife*. "Though DDT is a highly toxic compound proven to have a negative impact on wildlife, health campaigners say it

is still one of the most important weapons against malaria, a disease which kills 2.7 million people a year and leaves up to 500 million chronically ill." While supporting a ban on DDT for agricultural purposes, the World Health Organization argues that it should be used for malaria control until a safe and effective alternative can be developed.

The Turtles Are Back!



Conservationists were encouraged this year to see the highest mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles on the east coast of India since the mid-1980's. According to the environmental magazine *Down to Earth*, this was surprising because of the damage done to the coastline of the state of Orissa by a cyclone in 1999. This coastline is the world's largest nesting site for these endangered creatures. Between March 13 and 20, over 1,230,000 turtles came up from the sea, and 711,000 of them laid eggs, even though 28,000 turtles were killed by fishing trawlers near the shore. Threats to the turtles come from various sources—wild pigs and dogs that eat the eggs, poachers who supply turtle flesh to those who consider it a delicacy, and trawlers that lack "turtle exclusion devices" on their nets.

Chernobyl Fallout

The 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster "will cause 50,000 new cases of thyroid cancer among young people living in the worst-affected region," says *The Guardian* of London. According to a World Health Organization report, over seven million people have been affected so far and the exact number may never be known. Three million children require treatment, and many will die prematurely. In Ukraine 73,000 people are said to be permanently disabled. About 23 percent of those involved in the clean-up operations were incapacitated, and one fifth of the forest in Belarus remains contaminated. In a foreword to the report, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said: "Chernobyl is a word we would all like to erase from our memory," but "more than 7 million] of our fellow human beings do not have the luxury of forgetting. They are still suffering, every day, as a result of what happened."

Virtual Church

The Catholic archdiocese of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, plans to "introduce a computer network to provide the faithful with the chance to reflect, confess sins and seek pastoral advice online," reports the *Calgary Herald*. Richard Osicki, director of communications for the archdiocese, hopes that the network will motivate many nominal Christians, about 75 percent of whom never attend church, to resume religious activity. "We're opening up the church beyond the physical buildings. We're saying you can communicate with God while you're sitting in front of your computer," he said.

FROM OUR READERS

Huntington's Disease I had to express my sincere thanks for the article "Huntington's Disease—Understanding a Genetic Tragedy." (March 22, 2000) For 20 years I cared for my husband, who was afflicted with this disease. An article such as this, written with sensitivity and understanding, is going to be welcomed by many.

N. G., New Zealand

Thank you for the article. Your explanation was simpler than our doctor's. My mother was diagnosed with Huntington's disease [HD] about three years ago. It is very painful to watch her struggle to talk, eat, and walk. One thing you didn't mention is that long-term memory seems to stay intact longer than short-term memory. So talking about old friends or sharing old pictures with someone who has advanced HD can be helpful and comforting.

J. M., United States

My husband was diagnosed with Huntington's disease four years ago. About a year and a half ago, I wrote to the publishers of *Awake!* and asked for help on this subject. When I saw this article, I cried tears of relief and joy.

D. B., United States

Hepatitis Transmission It seems that a mistake appeared in the April 22, 2000, "Watching the World" item "Most Common Blood-Borne Infection." You said that the hepatitis C virus [HCV] was spread primarily through sexual contact or through infected blood. Actually, sexual transmission is exceptional and only occurs under specific circumstances, such as during menstruation.

C. A., France

The brief item may have given the wrong impression, since sexual contact does not appear to play as large a role in spreading hepatitis C as does intravenous drug use. According to the "Harvard Health Letter" of February 1996,

spouses of HCV-positive people are at little or no risk. Even so, an article in the August 19, 1999, issue of "The New England Journal of Medicine" reported regarding the prevalence of HCV infection in the United States from 1988 to 1994: "The strongest factors independently associated with HCV infection were illegal drug use and high-risk sexual behavior." It also stated: "Although the spread of HCV through sexual activity might be inefficient, . . . the large number of chronically infected persons in the population provides numerous opportunities for exposure among persons who have multiple sexual partners."—ED.

Body Piercing Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . What About Body Piercing?" (March 22, 2000) I am 16 years old and have been thinking for some time about having my body pierced. Although I had asked several people for their view on this, I was still unsure of what to think. However, the clear and informative article helped me to realize that body piercing is definitely not for me, even though it is very popular.

E. C., England

As a former singer for a punk rock band, I found your article on body piercing to be very timely. How ironic it is that people seek to be individuals by following the latest trends!

F. S., United States

Morality Yesterday I read the series of articles "What Has Happened to Morals?" (April 8, 2000) What a dose of reality! This series shows just how ugly sin is. In all honesty, before becoming one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I was an extremely immoral person. Even now I struggle against strong fleshly desires. However, with Jehovah's love and care, the assistance of loving elders, the support of my Christian brothers and sisters, and articles like these, I now have the upper hand in the fight.

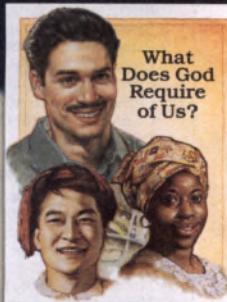
J.C.P., United States

Skeptical but Still Searching

In a letter to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Slovenia, a man who said that he was baptized as a Roman Catholic requested: "Please send me a copy of the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* I would also like some information as to how I could regularly receive the *Awake!* magazine at my home."

The man explained: "Please don't misunderstand me. I'm rather a skeptic when it comes to religion, but I was almost shocked when I read *Awake!* as it was not at all dogmatic but explained things in a very straightforward and instructive manner. Just look at the Roman Catholic weekly magazine *Družina* [Family], which literally brainwashes people, telling them who they should vote for—who is for us and who isn't."

The man explained why he had not filled out the coupon on the back of *Awake!* to request the *Require* brochure but had chosen to write a personal letter instead. "I did not want to ruin the *Awake!* magazine," he said. "I wanted to keep it whole!"



113 million copies
240 languages