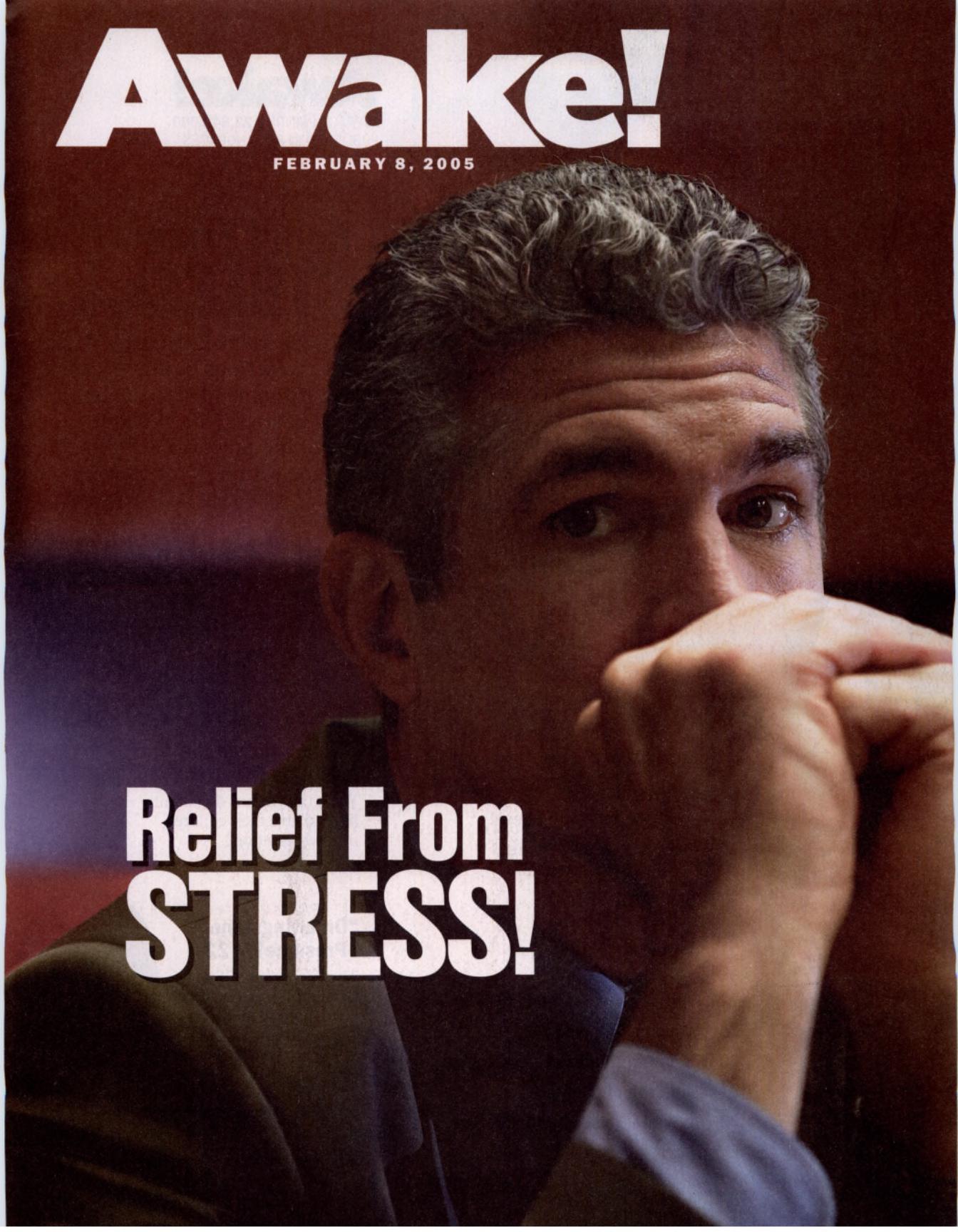
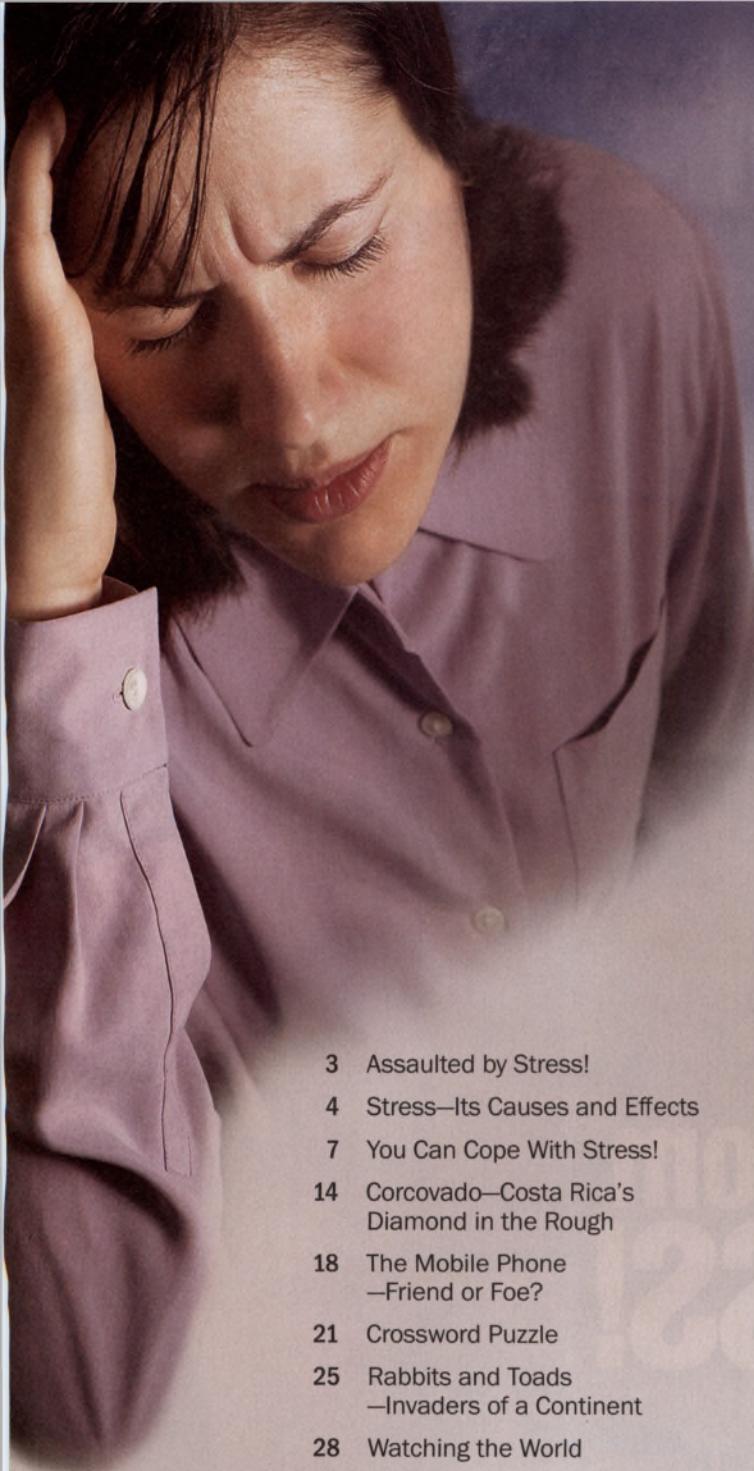


Awake!

FEBRUARY 8, 2005



Relief From
STRESS!



Awake!

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Relief From **STRESS!** 3-11

Many experts believe that stress is a serious health threat. What are some of the common causes of stress? Read about some of the practical ways you can cope with it.



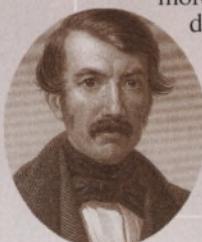
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◀ From the book *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa, 1855*

Assaulted by STRESS!

AMERICA'S #1 Health Problem." So reads the headline of an article published by the American Institute of Stress that claims the biggest threat to health today is neither cancer nor AIDS. The report says: "It has been estimated that 75-90 percent of all visits to primary care physicians are for stress related problems."

It is no exaggeration to say that people today are being assaulted by stress. According to the National Consumers League, "work is the top source of stress for adults who have problems and stress in their lives (39%), followed by family (30%). Other sources include health (10%), concern about the economy (9%) and concern about international conflict and terrorism (4%)."

However, stress is hardly unique to the United States. A British survey in 2002 estimated that "over half a million individuals in Britain believed in 2001/2 that they were experiencing work-related stress at a level that was making them ill." As a result of "work-related stress, depression or anxiety," there are "an estimated thirteen and a half million reported lost working days per year in Britain."

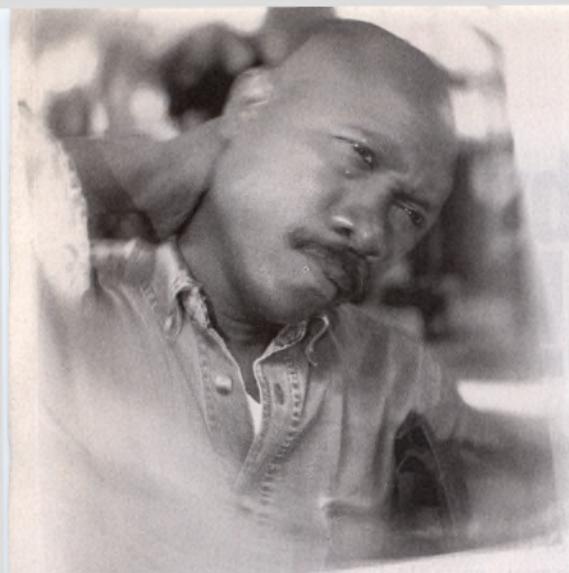
The picture is no less bleak in mainland Europe. According to the European Agency for Safety

and Health at Work, "work-related stress has been shown to affect millions of European workers across all types of employment sectors." One survey revealed that there are "about 41 million [European Union] workers affected by work-related stress each year."

What about Asia? A report issued by a conference held in Tokyo concluded: "Job stress is a common concern among many countries in the world, both developing and industrialized countries." The report observed that "several countries in East Asia, including China, Korea and Taiwan, have rapidly industrialized and economically grown. These countries now have a lot of concerns on job stress and its adverse effects on worker health."

However, you do not need a research study to tell you that people are under stress. More than likely, stress is exacting its toll on you too! What harmful effect can stress have upon you and your loved ones? How can families learn to cope? The following articles will explore these issues.

*For many,
their job is their
primary source
of stress*



STRESS Its Causes and Effects

The Stress of Making a Living

King Solomon said: "With a man there is nothing better than that he should eat and indeed drink and cause his soul to see good because of his hard work." (Ecclesiastes 2:24) However, for many employees, the workplace is a caldron of pressures.

A report from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work stated that workers are often stressed on their jobs because, among other things, there is poor communication between management and employees, management gives workers little say in decisions that affect them, there are conflicts with fellow workers, or there is job insecurity and/or inadequate pay. Whatever the reasons, coping with the strains of the workplace may leave working parents with little energy to deal with the demands of their families. And those demands can be enormous. In the United States, for example, during a one-year period, some 50 million people provided care for an ill or elderly family member. Financial problems can also be a potent source of family stress. Rita, a mother of two, faced financial distress when her husband, Leandro,

WHAT is stress? According to one expert, stress may be defined as "any physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension." Does this mean that stress is inherently harmful? No. As Dr. Melissa C. Stöppler observes, "a mild degree of stress and tension can sometimes be beneficial. Feeling mildly stressed when carrying out a project or assignment often compels us to do a good job and to work energetically."

So when is stress a problem? Says Stöppler: "It is only when stress is overwhelming, or poorly managed, that its negative effects appear." Consider some common sources of stress.

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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had an automobile accident, leaving him in a wheelchair. Rita admits: "Financial problems cause tension. When you do not have the money to cover all the expenses in the home, it affects your mood."

The Pressures on Single Parents

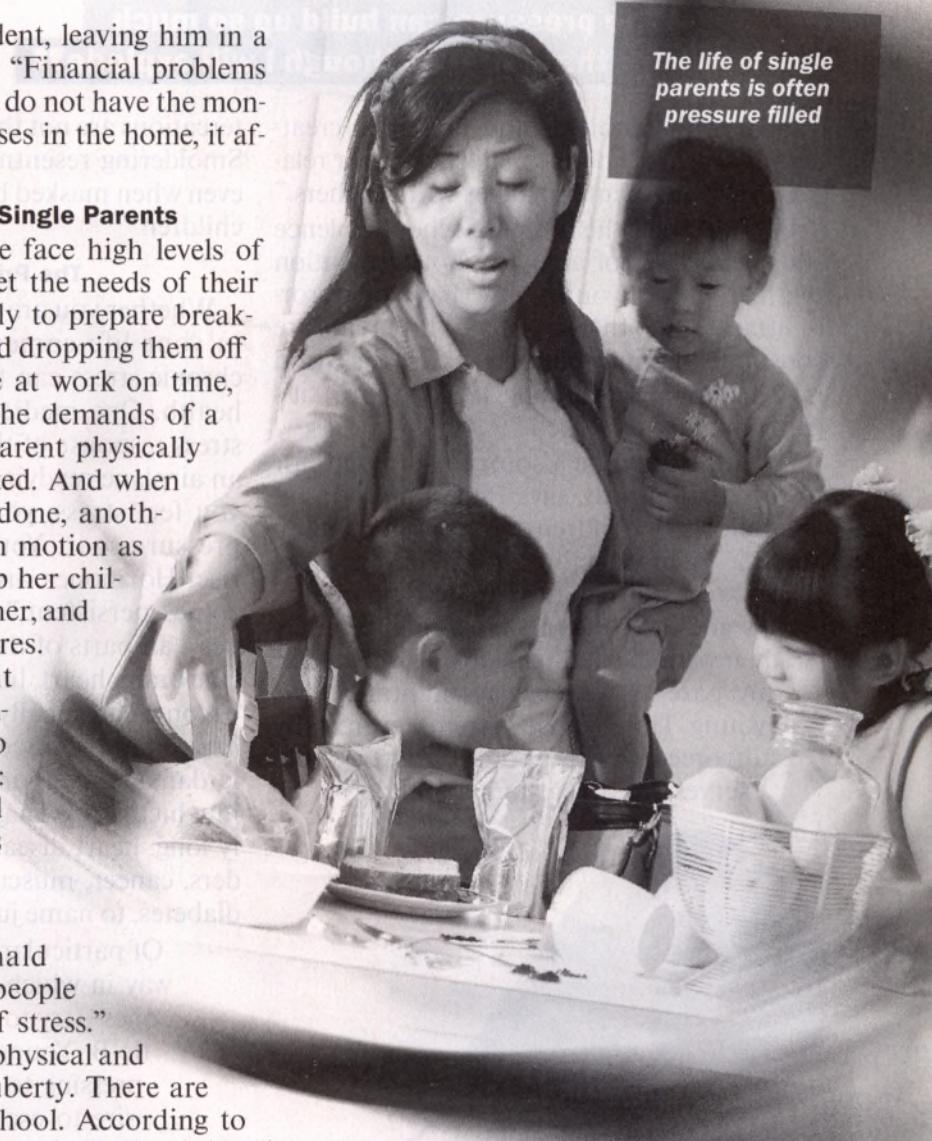
Single parents likewise face high levels of stress as they try to meet the needs of their families. Getting up early to prepare breakfast, dressing children and dropping them off at school, rushing to be at work on time, and then dealing with the demands of a job may leave a single parent physically and emotionally exhausted. And when a mother's workday is done, another cycle of stress is set in motion as she hurries off to pick up her children from school, fix dinner, and care for household chores.

Maria, a single parent with four teenage daughters, compares her life to a pressure cooker, saying: "The pressure can build up so much that I feel as though I will explode."

Children Under Stress

Says sociologist Ronald L. Pitzer: "Many young people experience high levels of stress." They must deal with the physical and emotional changes of puberty. There are also the pressures of school. According to the book *Childstress!* the typical school day "is

The life of single parents is often pressure filled



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

"The pressure can build up so much that I feel as though I will explode!"

fraught with problems and pressures creating stress—in academics, sports, in peer relationships and in interchanges with teachers."

In some areas the threat of school violence adds to feelings of anxiety—not to mention the fears many youths now have of terrorist attacks and other disasters. "If parents are constantly talking about how scary the world is right now," writes one teenage girl, "it's going to make us scared."

Parents should be a source of strength for their children. But, says Pitzer: "All too often, efforts by children and teens to communicate intense feelings are minimized, denied, rationalized, or ignored by parents."

In some cases parents are immobilized by their own marital tensions. "It seems like my parents were always fighting," says young Tito, whose parents eventually divorced. As the book *Childstress!* observes, "physical fights and verbal al-

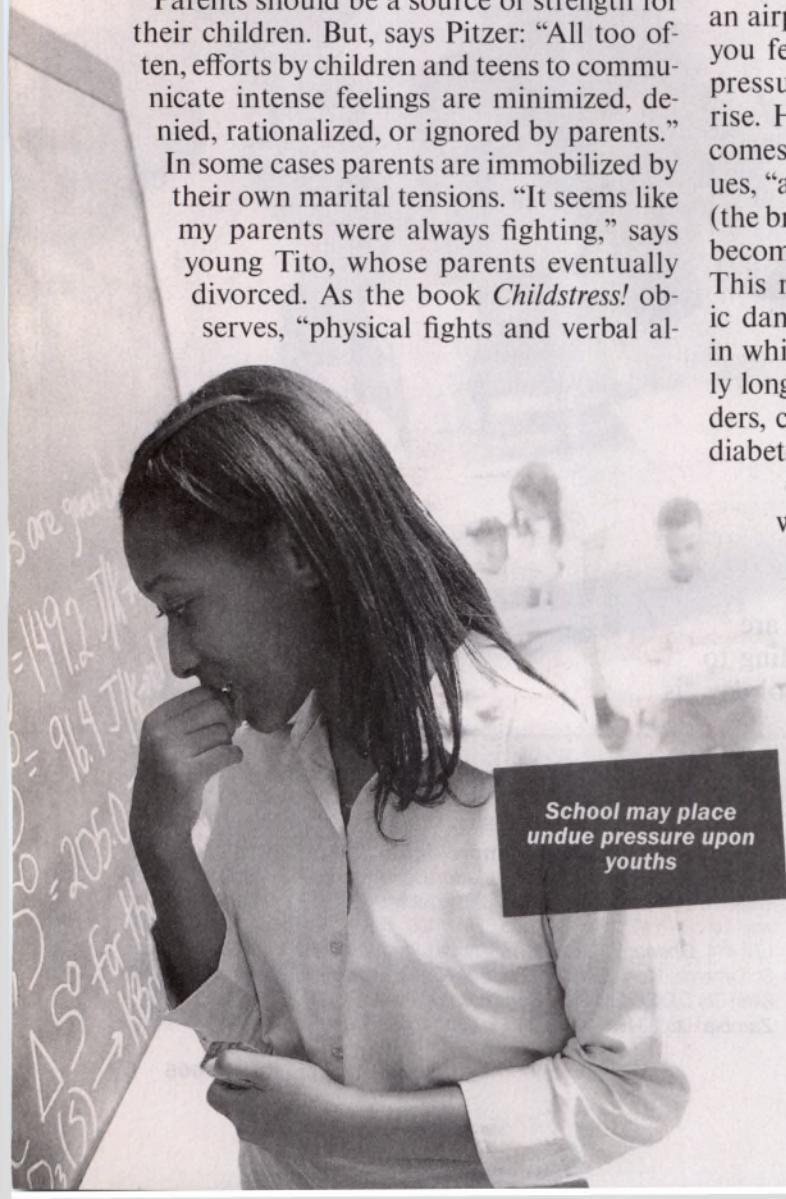
tercations are not the only causes for trauma. Smoldering resentment that transmits itself even when masked by honied words unsettles children."

The Price of Stress

Whether you are young or old or the stress in your life comes from work or school, chronic stress can take a heavy toll on your health. One medical writer explains: "The stress response of the body is somewhat like an airplane readying for take-off." Yes, when you feel stress, your heart rate and blood pressure soar. Your levels of blood sugar rise. Hormones are released. "If stress becomes persistent," the same writer continues, "all parts of the body's stress apparatus (the brain, heart, lungs, vessels, and muscles) become chronically over- or under-activated. This may produce physical or psychologic damage over time." The list of illnesses in which stress may play a role is alarmingly long: heart disease, stroke, immune disorders, cancer, musculoskeletal disorders, and diabetes, to name just a few.

Of particular concern is the unhealthy way in which many—especially young ones—try to cope with stress. Dr. Bettie B. Youngs laments: "It is very depressing to find out that in their desire to escape from pain, teenagers take routes such as alcohol and drug abuse, truancy, delinquency, sexual promiscuity, aggression and violence, and running away from home—routes that lead them into problems more overwhelming than those they were trying to escape."

Stress is a fact of modern living; it cannot be avoided entirely. But as the next article will show, there is much we can do to *manage* stress!



School may place
undue pressure upon
youths

You Can Cope With STRESS!

THE struggle to balance work, family, and outside commitments has intensified in recent years." So says a recent book on family life. Yes, we live in stressful times. This is hardly a surprise to students of the Bible, though, because it predicted that these would be "critical times hard to deal with."—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

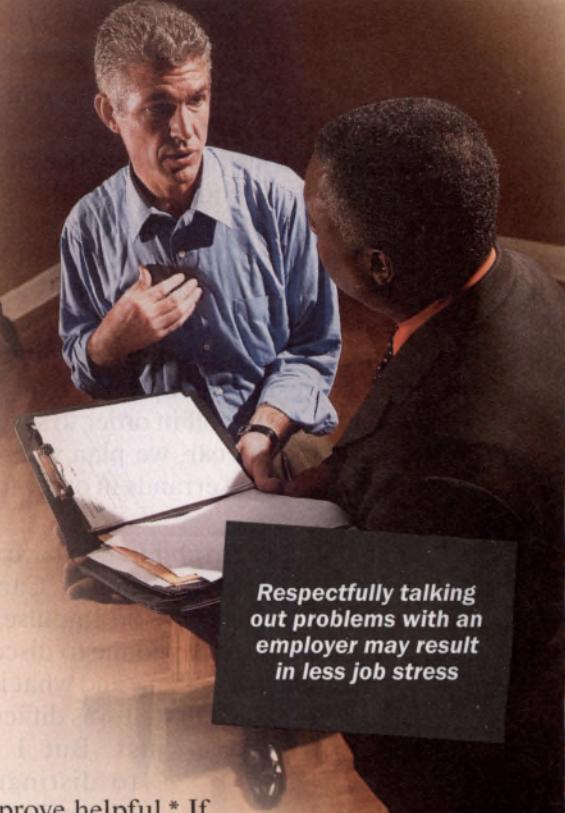
"Stress is normal," says Jesús, a father of three children. "So you have to know how to control it." Granted, controlling stress may be easier said than done. Nevertheless, there are both practical suggestions and Bible principles that can help you.

Coping With Job Stress

Are you under stress, perhaps because of conditions on your job? Suffering in silence may only make you feel more pressured. As the Bible says at Proverbs 15:22, "there is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk."

Researchers on stress in the workplace recommend "talking to your employer: if they don't know there's a problem, they can't help." This doesn't mean venting rage and frustration. "Calmness itself allays great sins," states Ecclesiastes 10:4. Be businesslike and avoid a confrontational approach. Perhaps you can convince your employer that less job stress will mean more productivity.

The same can be said for other work-related problems, such as tensions and conflicts with workmates. Look for productive ways to confront such problems, perhaps doing research if necessary. A number of articles have been published in this journal that might



Respectfully talking out problems with an employer may result in less job stress

prove helpful.* If the situation seems beyond salvaging, it may be best to consider changing employment.

Relieving Financial Pressure

The Bible also has advice that can help you to deal with financial pressure. Jesus Christ exhorted: "Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear." (Matthew 6:25) How is that possible? By cultivating the confidence that Jehovah God will provide your basic needs. (Matthew 6:33) God's promise is no empty platitude. Millions of Christians today are sustained by it.

Of course, you also need "practical wisdom" when it comes to money. (Proverbs 2:7; Ecclesiastes 7:12) The

* See the series "Victimized at Work—What Can You Do?" in our issue of May 8, 2004.

Bible reminds us: "We have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Timothy 6:7, 8) Learning to be content with less is realistic and practical. Recall Leandro, who became wheelchair-bound as a result of an accident. He and his wife took steps to conserve their money. Leandro explains: "We try to economize. For example, if a light is not being used, we turn it off in order to save on electricity. As for the car, we plan where we are going and combine errands in order to save on fuel."

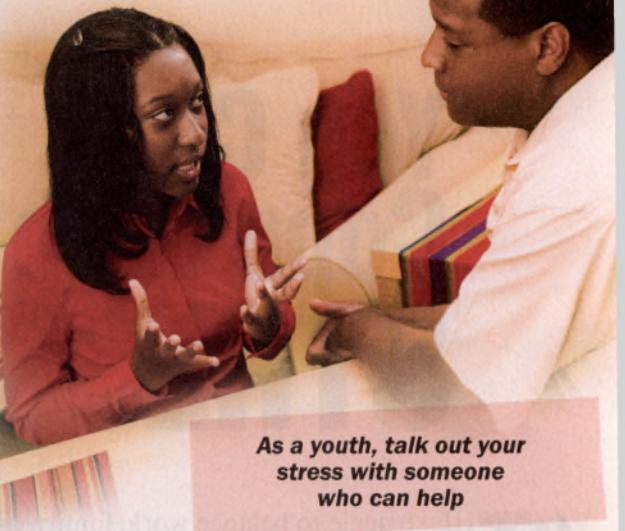
Parents can help children to have the right attitude. Leandro's daughter Carmen admits: "I tend to buy on impulse, but my parents have helped me to discern what is really necessary and what is not. At first, it was difficult to adjust. But I learned to distinguish between wanting and needing."

Parents can discuss ways of conserving money with their children

Communication—A Stress Reliever

Home should be a haven from stress, but oftentimes it is one of the biggest sources of it. The reason? "Couples . . . who are mildly distressed, or those who are hostile," says the book *Survival Strategies for Couples*, "cite lack of communication as the most frequent source of discord."

Bible principles can help couples to improve their ability to communicate. The Bible says that there is "a time to keep quiet and a time to speak" and that "a word at its right



As a youth, talk out your stress with someone who can help

time is O how good!" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7; Proverbs 15:23) Knowing this might prevent you from bringing up an emotional subject when your mate is tired or stressed out. Is it not better to wait for the right time—when your mate is more likely to be disposed to listen?

True, if you have had to endure a difficult day at work, it may not be easy to be calm or patient. But what can happen when we vent our frustrations by speaking harshly to our marriage mate? The Bible reminds us that "a word causing pain makes anger to come up." (Proverbs 15:1) By way of contrast, "pleasant sayings are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and a healing to the bones." (Proverbs 16:24) It may take real determination to keep marital discussions free of "malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech." (Ephesians 4:31) The benefits, however, are worth it. Couples who communicate can be a source of mutual comfort and support. "With those consulting together there is wisdom," says Proverbs 13:10.*

The Challenge of Parent-Child Communication

Communicating with children is challenging—especially when time is at a premium.

* For further information, see chapter 3 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Bible encourages parents to speak to their offspring at every opportunity, such as 'when sitting in the house and when walking on the road.' (Deuteronomy 6:6-8) "One must seek opportunities to talk," says Leandro. "When I am in the car with my son, I take advantage of the opportunity to talk with him."

Granted, not all parents find it easy to communicate with their children. Alejandra, a mother of three, admits: "I did not know how to listen. Lack of good communication made me feel angry and guilty." How might a parent improve? Begin by learning to be "swift about hearing." (James 1:19) "Active listening is a most effective tool for reducing stress," says Dr. Bettie B. Youngs. You must pay attention to how you listen. Make eye contact. Avoid minimizing your children's problems. Encourage your children to express their feelings. Ask appropriate questions. Generously express your love and confidence that they will do what is right. (2 Thessalonians 3:4) Pray with your children.

It takes effort to practice healthy communication. But doing so can help you minimize stress in your family. Communication can help you to discern if your children are experiencing stress. You can better give your children wise direction if you understand their feel-

ings and circumstances. Finally, young ones who are encouraged to talk out their stresses will be less prone to act them out through misconduct.

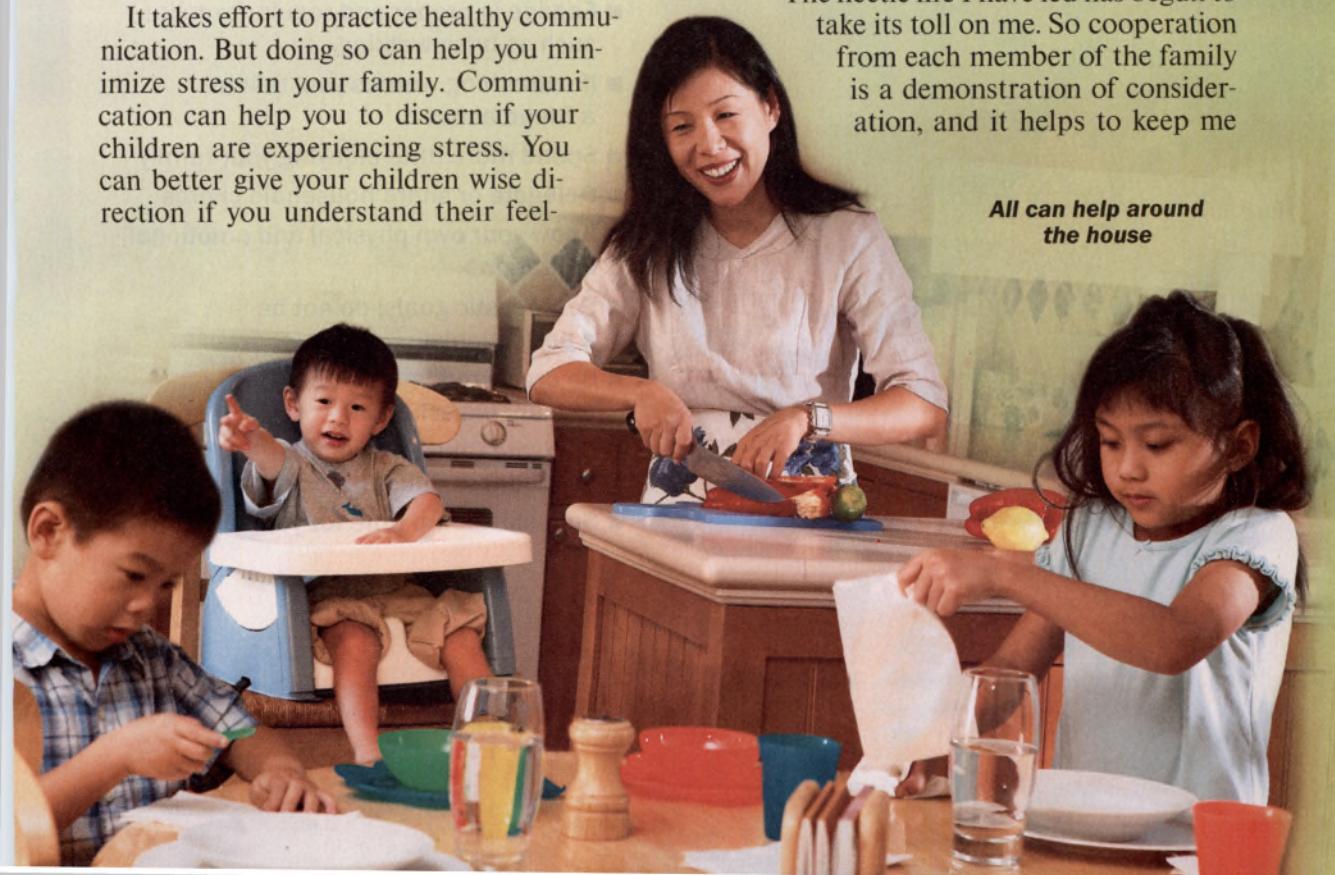
Cooperation—The Key to Handling Chores

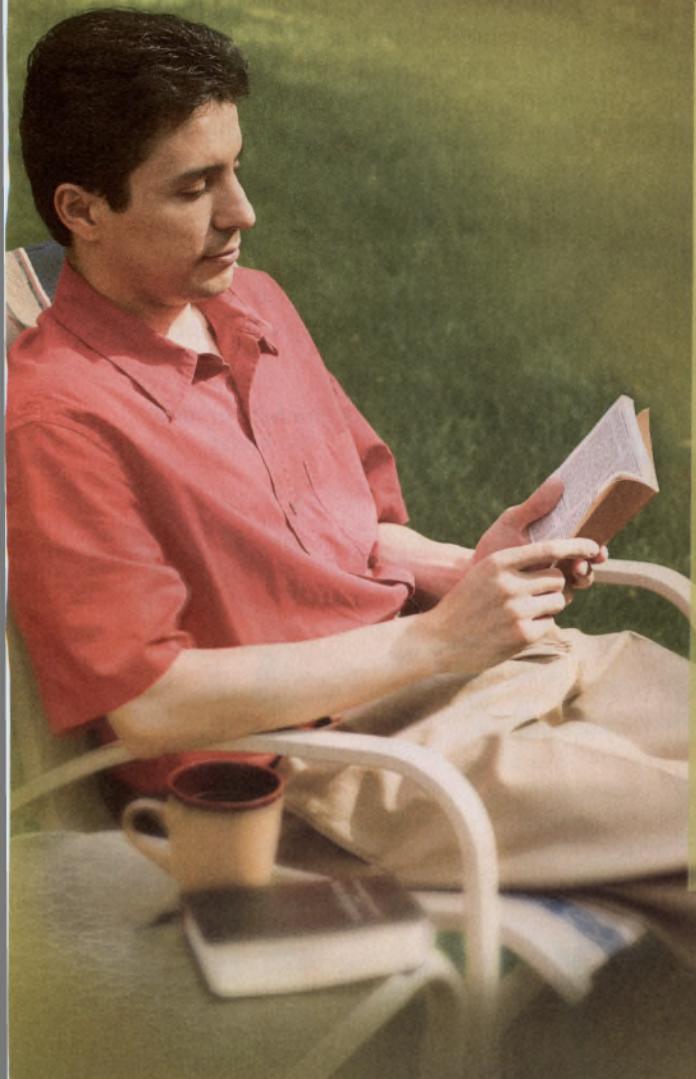
When both husband and wife work secularly, caring for household chores can become another source of stress. Some working mothers cope by simplifying their household routines. They may conclude that it is neither possible nor practical to serve elaborate meals. Recall Jesus' advice to a woman who was fixing an elaborate meal: "A few things, though, are needed, or just one." (Luke 10:42) So simplify. The book *The Single-Parent Family* suggests: "Make stews and other one-pot meals to cut down on cleanup." Yes, simplifying your household routine can reduce stress.

Even at that, there may be many things that need to be done. Admits one working mother: "When I was young, I could handle everything. Now that I am older, it is more difficult.

The hectic life I have led has begun to take its toll on me. So cooperation from each member of the family is a demonstration of consideration, and it helps to keep me

All can help around the house





How to Reduce Stress

- Give your body sufficient rest each day
- Maintain a reasonable diet.
Avoid overeating
- Engage in proper and regular exercise,
such as brisk walking
- If something worries you, talk to
a friend about it
- Spend more time enjoying your family
- Delegate or share household chores
- Know your own physical and emotional
limitations
- Set realistic goals; do not be
a perfectionist
- Be organized; have a balanced,
reasonable schedule
- Cultivate Christian qualities such
as mildness and patience
- Set aside some time for yourself

**“When I was young, I could handle everything.
Now that I am older, it is more difficult. The hectic life
I have led has begun to take its toll on me”**

from developing serious stress.” Yes, if all family members pitch in, chores can be done without putting an undue load on anyone. A book on parenting observes: “Assigning children household chores is one of the best ways to build . . . a feeling of competence. Regular chores establish helpful habits and good attitudes about work.” Doing household chores together can also give you an opportunity to spend time with your children.

Young Julieta says: “I can see that my mother feels good when I take some of the burden off her. That gives me pleasure and makes me feel responsible. It helps me to appreciate my home. Learning how to take care of household chores has given me a foundation for the future.” Mary Carmen similarly relates: “From the time we were small, my parents taught us children to look after ourselves. This has given us a great advantage.”

Healthy Ways to Face Stress

Stress is a modern-day fact of life; you cannot avoid it. You can, however, learn to cope with it. (See the box on page 10.) Following the principles of the Bible can help. For example, if you feel overwhelmed by some situation, remember that “there exists a friend sticking closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24) Talk things over with a mature friend or with your marriage mate. “Don’t bottle it up,” says sociologist Ronald L. Pitzer. “Confide your feelings and worry to some level-headed person who is likely to understand and care.”

The Bible also speaks of “dealing rewardingly with [one’s] own soul.” (Proverbs 11:17) Yes, it is fine to care for your own needs. The Bible says: “Better is a handful of rest than a double handful of hard work and striving after the wind.” (Ecclesiastes 4:6) Setting aside some time for yourself can do wonders—even if it is just a few minutes in the early morning

so you can enjoy a cup of tea, read, pray, or meditate in peace.

Moderate exercise and a healthful diet are also helpful. A book on parenting reminds us: “When you spend some of your valuable time and energy on yourself, you are, in essence, filling your personal-resource bank. . . . Constantly giving means that you’ve got to be sure there’s something going back in as well, or you’ll risk becoming emotionally short-changed, if not actually bankrupt.”

In addition, the Bible helps one to develop qualities needed to cope with stress, such as “mildness of temper,” patience, and kindness. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Timothy 6:11) More than that, the Bible offers hope—the promise of a coming new world in which all of the things that promote human misery will pass away! (Revelation 21:1-4) It therefore makes sense to cultivate the habit of reading the Bible daily. If you would like help in getting such a program started, Jehovah’s Witnesses would be delighted to give you personal assistance, free of charge.

This is not to say that a Christian leads a stress-free life. But Jesus said that it is possible to avoid becoming “weighed down with . . . anxieties of life.” (Luke 21:34, 35) Also, if you come to know Jehovah God as a friend, he can be a real refuge for you! (Psalm 62:8) He can help you to cope with the stresses of life.

In Our Next Issue

- The Role of Mothers as Educators
- Where Six Continents Meet
- Happy to “Go the Extra Mile”

GIVING CHILDREN THE ATTENTION THEY NEED

DID the Son of God have time to spend with children? Some of his disciples did not think so. On one occasion they tried to keep little ones from getting close to Jesus. He responded by saying: "Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them." He then lovingly received a group of children and spoke with them. (Mark 10:13-16) Jesus thus showed that he was willing to give children his attention. How can parents today follow his example? By properly training their children and spending time with them.

Of course, responsible parents actively pursue their children's well-being and avoid mistreating them. It might even be said that it is "natural" for parents to show respect and consideration for their children. The Bible warns, however, that many in our day would no longer have "natural affection." (2 Timothy 3:1-3) And for those who do maintain a loving interest in their children, there is always something to learn when it comes to responsible parenting. The following Bible principles are therefore welcome reminders for parents who want the best for their children.

Training Without Irritating

Dr. Robert Coles, a noted teacher and research psychiatrist, once said: "Within the child there is a developing moral sense. I happen to think it is God-given, that there is a craving for a moral order." Who is to satisfy this hunger and thirst for moral guidance?

At Ephesians 6:4, the Scriptures exhort: "You, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the dis-

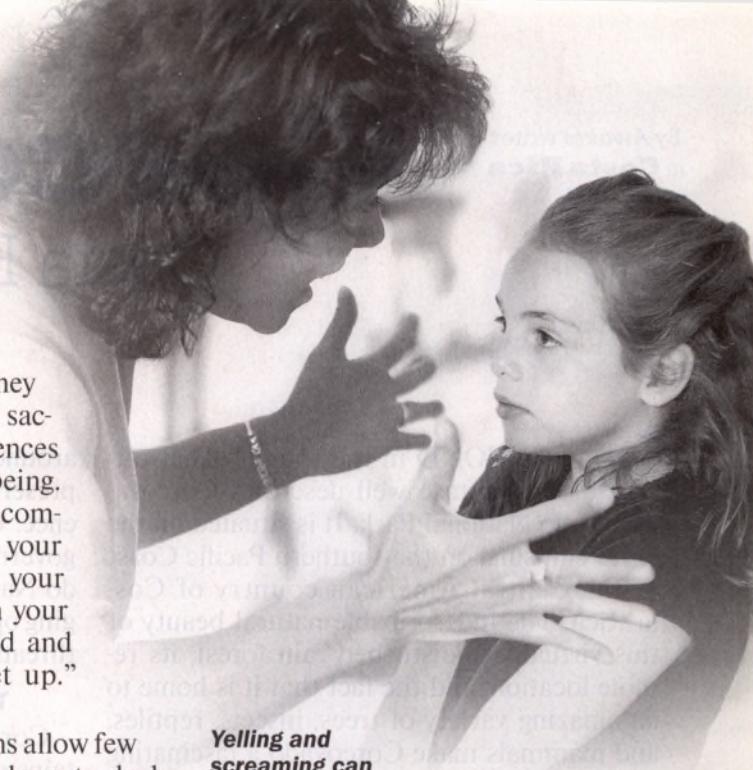
cipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." Did you notice that the scripture particularly charges the father with the responsibility of instilling in his children a love for God and a deep appreciation for divine standards? In verse 1 of Ephesians chapter 6, the apostle Paul made reference to both the father and the mother when he told children to 'be obedient to their parents.*

Of course, if the father is absent, then the mother must assume this responsibility. Many single mothers have successfully reared their children in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah God. However, if the mother marries, the Christian husband should take the lead. The mother should willingly follow that lead in training and disciplining their children.

How do you discipline or train your children without "irritating" them? There are no secret formulas, especially since every child is different. But parents must give much thought to their manner of discipline, always showing love and respect for their children. Interestingly, this matter of not irritating your children is repeated in the Scriptures at Colossians 3:21. There, fathers are again admonished: "Do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted."

Some parents yell and scream at their children. Undoubtedly this exasperates their young ones. But the Bible urges: "Let all

* Here Paul used the Greek word *go-neu'sin*, from *go-neus'*, meaning "parent." But in verse 4 he used the Greek word *pa-te'res*, meaning "fathers."

A black and white photograph showing a woman with curly hair shouting at a young girl. The woman's hands are raised, and her mouth is open as if she is screaming. The girl looks distressed, with her head down and hands covering her face.

malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and *screaming* and abusive speech be taken away from you." (Ephesians 4:31) The Bible also says that "a slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all."—2 Timothy 2:24.

Give Them Your Time

Giving your children the attention they need also means that you are willing to sacrifice pleasures and personal conveniences for the sake of your children's well-being. The Bible says: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up."

—Deuteronomy 6: 7.

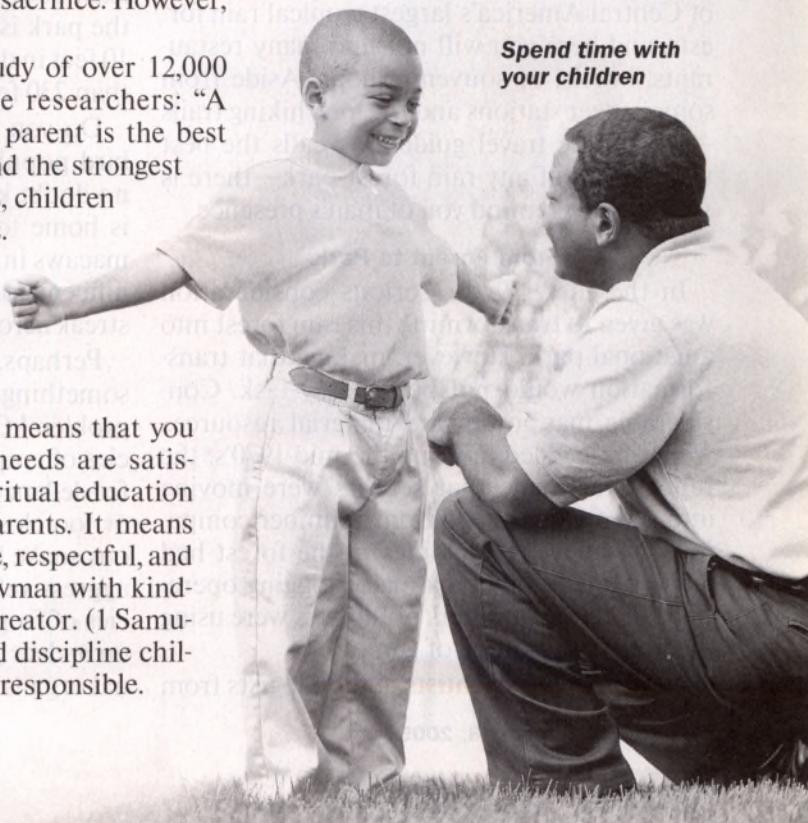
Today, demanding financial obligations allow few parents to be with their children from dawn to dusk. Yet, Deuteronomy emphasizes that parents "must" find time to spend with their young ones. Doing so requires good organization as well as sacrifice. However, children need such attention.

Consider the results of one study of over 12,000 teenagers. The conclusion of the researchers: "A strong emotional connection to a parent is the best guarantee of a teenager's health and the strongest barrier to high-risk behaviors." Yes, children crave attention from their parents.

A mother once asked her children, "If you could have anything you wanted, what would you like most?" All four responded, "More time with Mom and Dad."

Being a responsible parent thus means that you make sure that your children's needs are satisfied, including their need for spiritual education and close friendship with their parents. It means helping children to become capable, respectful, and honest adults who treat their fellowman with kindness and who bring glory to their Creator. (1 Samuel 2:26) Yes, when parents train and discipline children in a godly way, they are being responsible.

Yelling and screaming can distress a child

A black and white photograph of a father and son playing together outdoors. The father is crouching down, holding his son's arms as they both laugh and smile. They appear to be in a park or grassy area.

Spend time with your children

Corcovado
National Park

Corcovado

Costa Rica's Diamond in the Rough

A DIAMOND in the rough." That oft-used phrase well describes Corcovado National Park. It is situated on the Osa Peninsula, on the southern Pacific Coast of the Central American country of Costa Rica. The indescribable natural beauty of this virtually undisturbed rain forest, its remote location, and the fact that it is home to an amazing variety of trees, insects, reptiles, and mammals make Corcovado a fascinating place to visit.

While this park is beautiful, however, it is a diamond in the *rough*. It is situated in one of Central America's largest tropical rain forests, and here you will not find many restaurants, hotels, or souvenir shops. Aside from some ranger stations and the long hiking trails—which one travel guidebook calls the best trail system of any rain forest park—there is very little to remind you of man's presence.

From Forest to Park

In the early 1970's, serious consideration was given to transforming this rain forest into a national park. However, making that transformation would not be an easy task. Considerable manpower and material resources would be needed. During the mid-1970's, the report was made that settlers were moving into the region. In addition, a lumber company with huge landholdings in the forest had made plans to launch a major logging operation, and large numbers of hunters were using the forest as a source of game.

Nevertheless, scientists and biologists from

around the world who recognized the value of preserving this rain forest exerted their influence. On October 31, 1975, the Costa Rican government announced the birth of Corcovado National Park. Since then, large-scale logging operations and hunting have ceased to be threats.

The Different Facets of Corcovado

Corcovado's 133,000-acre land area contains great diversity. No less than eight habitats, or ecosystems, exist within the borders of the park. Within these ecosystems are at least 500 species of trees. The largest tree in the park is a silk-cotton tree. Measuring over 10 feet in diameter, it reaches a height of more than 230 feet.

Do you enjoy bird-watching? Corcovado's bird population of nearly 400 species would no doubt keep you busy and happy. The park is home to the largest population of scarlet macaws in the country. As they fly, their magnificent colors, lit by the tropical sun, seem to streak across the sky.

Perhaps, though, you would rather study something a little more down to earth. No problem! Corcovado offers 116 different species of amphibians and reptiles, including the fer-de-lance snake. Don't examine it too long or too closely, however, because this poisonous snake has a reputation for being uniquely aggressive! Among the amphibians is a species of frog that is transparent—if it is placed on a clear glass surface, you can see its internal organs functioning!



**White fungi and
red mushrooms**

©kevinschafer.com

Rain forest

Steve Pace

You could also spend time watching some of the 140 mammals that make Corcovado their home. These include jaguars, ocelots, four types of monkey, three species of ant-eater, two species of sloth, and two kinds of armadillo. The park also contains as many as 10,000 varieties of insects.

Shirley Ramirez Carvajal, biologist and park coordinator for the program of wildlife management in Corcovado, told *Awake!* of a project for radio-collaring jaguars and other

animals. This will help scientists study their eating patterns and the extent of their habitat. The information will then aid park officials in determining if the borders of the park need to be extended to ensure that there is sufficient food for the animal population. Expanding the park could also serve to protect animals from the genetic dangers of inbreeding.

There is more to Corcovado, however, than its abundant wildlife. You may visit the Salsipuedes Cave, famous for housing

part of the treasure of the English sailor and explorer Sir Francis Drake. Only a few miles north of Corcovado is Drake Bay, where, it is said, the explorer landed in 1579 during his circumnavigation of the globe.

Gold fever once threatened this "diamond." Gold nuggets weighing up to two pounds sparked the first wave of fever in the 1930's. Later, in the 1960's, another gold rush occurred and then yet another a few years after the park's establishment. The latter prompted several hundred miners to move there. The government banned miners from Corcovado in 1986.

Like any other place, Corcovado is not without its problems. *Awake!* talked with Gerardo A. Chaves, sub-administrator of Corcovado National Park, who mentioned that along with the ongoing struggle for finances and resources, other concerns include deforestation outside the boundaries of the park and the problem of poaching. If Corcovado is to continue to thrive, no doubt each of these concerns will have to be addressed in the near future.

Surely, Corcovado National Park remains one of the most unspoiled areas on earth. Indeed, just as a literal diamond is loved for its beauty and endurance, Costa Rica's diamond in the rough will no doubt be appreciated and enjoyed by thousands of visitors in years to come, who value the natural and inherent beauty of the earth. For Christians, the park is a reminder of just how beautiful the entire earth will be when God transforms it into a global paradise!—Luke 23:43.

The rain forest extends right up to the beach





Squirrel monkeys



Hiker beneath a waterfall



Ocelot

Motmot

Scarlet macaw

Sloth





THE MOBILE PHONE Friend or Foe?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRALIA

SOME years ago, the term "mobile phone" was something of a misnomer. Phones were only "mobile" if you were very strong or if you had one installed in your car, since their batteries were extremely heavy. The phones were bigger than shoe boxes, and they cost thousands of dollars.

Today there are some 1.35 billion mobile phones. In some countries more than half the population own them. Most fit in the palm of your hand, and they are sometimes even provided free of charge.* The Australian journal *The Bulletin* reports: "Nearly as many of these devices are in use as [there are] TV sets and personal computers combined." In over 20 countries, there are now more mobile phones than fixed phone lines. One industry expert describes mobile phones as not just a technological marvel but "a social phenomenon."

What effect are mobile phones having on society? Are they friend or foe?

A Boon to Business

The booming sales of mobile phones are a boon to many businesses. One large firm stated: "The mobile telephone market is the largest consumer electronics segment ever." In other words, more money is spent on mobile phones now than on any other electronic device in the past.

In Australia, for example, more than 15 million of the 20 million inhabitants own a mobile phone. The customers of just one of the many telephone companies in that country made 7.5 billion mobile-phone calls in a recent year. Worldwide, mobile

phones generate billions of dollars a year for telecommunication companies. It is easy to see why big business views the mobile phone as a friend.

Creating a New Language

Many of the millions of messages exchanged between these high-tech devices are, not in the form of speech, but in the form of the written word. Instead of speaking into the handset, a growing number of mobile-phone users—especially youths—are using a facility called the Short Message Service (SMS). This service allows them, at relatively little expense, to type and send brief messages to each other. Because communicating in this way requires typing a message on the phone's tiny keypad, SMS devotees use an abbreviated form of language that combines letters

*Worldwide,
about 30 billion
text messages
are sent
each month*



* Phones are at times supplied free to those who sign a contract with the phone service supplier to spend a certain amount on calls over a set period.

and numbers to make word sounds. Despite the inconvenience of composing and typing a message as opposed to speaking with the recipient, each month about 30 billion messages are exchanged worldwide.

What are all these messages about? A British study discovered that 42 percent of youths between the ages of 18 and 24 use SMS to flirt, 20 percent use this chic form of communication to ask a person out on a date, and 13 percent have used SMS to end a relationship.

Some social commentators worry that the mangled spelling and syntax used in SMS messages is harming the literacy skills of young ones. Others disagree, stating that the SMS phenomenon is "spawning the revival of writing in a new generation." A spokesperson for a firm that produces an Australian dictionary told the *Sun-Herald* newspaper: "It's not often we get the opportunity to develop a whole new style [of language] . . . the combination of text messaging [SMS] and the internet means young people are doing a lot more writing. [They] have to be fluent and articulate enough to pick up the style and master the in-words and the code . . . of the genre."

Some Unfriendly Tendencies

While mobile phones are a useful tool both for socializing and for conducting business, to many employees these devices might sometimes seem more like a fetter than a friend—making them feel chained to the office. One survey found that 80 percent of advertising employees and 60 percent of construction workers feel pressured to be

SUGGESTIONS FOR MOBILE-PHONE USE

1. Lower the volume of your voice if you are using your phone in a public place. The microphone on the phone is very sensitive, and those around you are unlikely to be interested in your private conversation.
2. Turn the phone off or set it to the silent-vibrate function when at religious gatherings, at business meetings, at a movie or other public event, or in a restaurant.
3. Do not use a hand-held phone while driving.



available, either to their employers or to clients, at all times. The pressure people feel to respond to a mobile-phone call no matter where they are or what they are doing is creating what one researcher calls a "culture of interruptions." In response, engineers have developed a building material for use in restaurants and theaters that can block out mobile-phone signals.—See the box "Suggestions for Mobile-Phone Use."

More than just creating annoying intrusions, these ubiquitous devices have the potential to become a public enemy. A Canadian study found that using a mobile phone while driving is as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol. Professor Mark Stevenson, of the Injury Research Centre at the University of Western Australia, explains that holding a conversation on the telephone is considerably more difficult than just having a conversation in the car with someone. Despite the dangers and the fact that police in some places can fine offending drivers, a recent survey found that 1 in 5 Australian drivers sent SMS messages and one third made or received calls on their mobile handsets while driving.

The dangers of inappropriate mobile-phone use extend to air travel. While the wiring in newer aircraft is shielded from mobile-phone signals, some aircraft still in service are said to be susceptible to

interference. *New Scientist* reports: "In tests aboard two airliners, Britain's Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] has confirmed that cellphone radiation interferes with flight-critical electronics." Identifying a key threat posed by the phones, a CAA spokesman said: "A cellphone emits more power the further it is from a base station. So as an aircraft climbs, the mobile signal increases in power, boosting the interference level at a critical time in a flight." An Australian study found that personal electronic devices, including mobile phones, caused a number of incidents where commercial aircraft suffered in-flight problems because passengers ignored the warnings to turn the devices off while on board.

Mobile Phones and Cancer

Controversy still continues over whether the radio frequencies emitted from mobile phones and the base stations that relay their signals can cause cancer in humans. Because hundreds of millions of people use these devices, even if only a small percentage were to develop health problems, that would translate into a major health risk. Therefore, dozens of in-depth scientific studies have investigated the effect of mobile-phone radiation on living tissue. What conclusions have been reached?

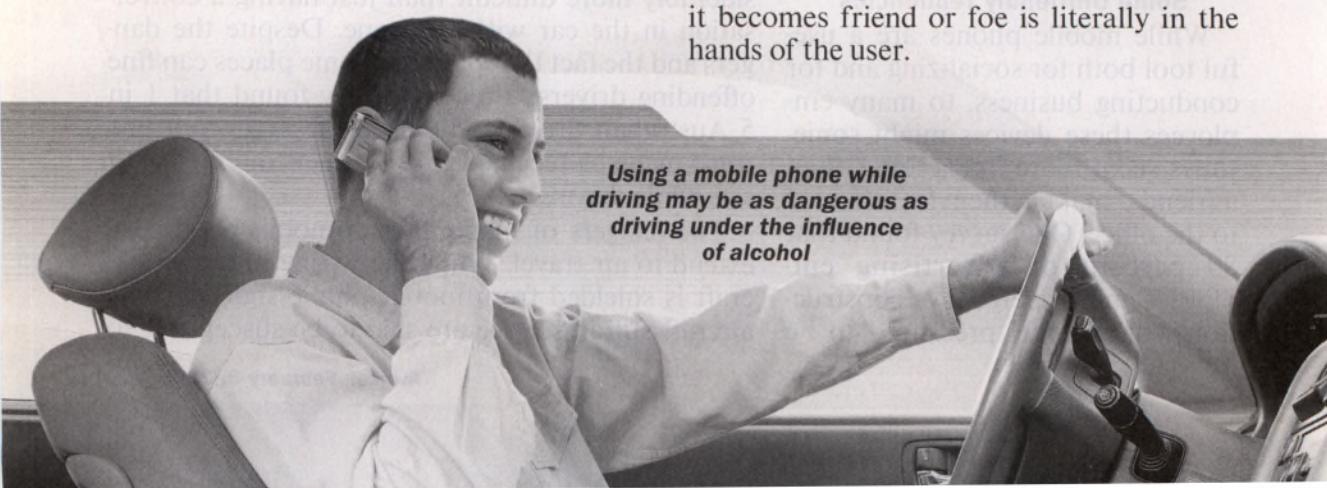
The Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) released a report

stating: "The Expert Group believes that, on the basis of the evidence currently available, there is no need for the general population to be worried about the use of mobile phones." *New Scientist* also reported: "Despite scare stories in recent years, the majority of evidence to date suggests that exposure to mobile phone radio frequency emissions does not have adverse effects on health. Studies that have shown effects have proved difficult to reproduce."

Because of lingering doubts about the health effects of mobile phones, millions of dollars continue to be poured into further research. Until a definitive answer is found, the IEGMP recommends the following: "Use [mobile] phones for as short a time as possible. Use phones with low specific energy absorption rate (SAR) values. Use hands-free kits and other devices provided they have been proved to reduce SAR." The Expert Group also recommends that "children less than sixteen years of age should be discouraged from using mobile phones," since the developing nervous system of children would make them "more vulnerable to any unrecognised health risks."

Though dogged by controversy, the mobile phone is having a profound impact both economically and socially. Like its electronic cousins—the TV and the personal computer—the mobile phone has the potential to be either a useful slave or a demanding master. The power to determine whether it becomes friend or foe is literally in the hands of the user.

Using a mobile phone while driving may be as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol



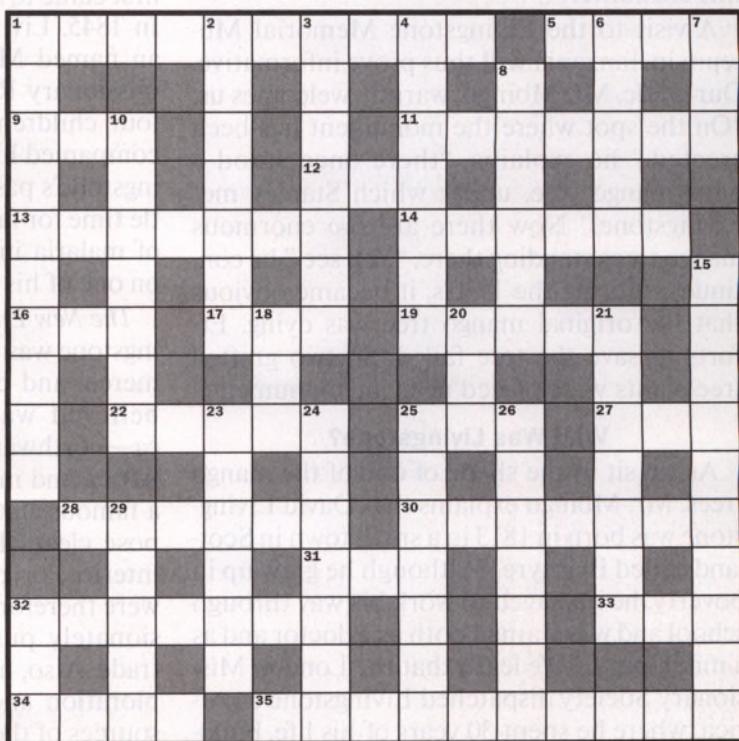
Crossword Puzzle

Clues Across

1. Because God replaced fleshly Israel, spiritual Israel can be called this [2 words] (1 Peter 2:9)
5. The town where Jesus performed his first miracle (John 2:11)
9. From this, God produced Adam's counterpart, Eve (Genesis 2:22)
11. Recognizing the Israelites' inability to save themselves, Isaiah likened them to something that fades away (Isaiah 64:6)
12. Although he judged Israel for 40 years, his sons were "good-for-nothing men" (1 Samuel 2:12)
13. Instead of following God's instruction to drive out the Canaanites of this city, the Zebulunites subjected them to forced labor (Judges 1:30)
14. Some Bible manuscripts render this as "the Ethiopians" or "Ethiopia" (Habakkuk 3:7, footnote)
16. This dry measure of ancient times corresponded to the homer and equaled ten baths (Luke 16:7)
17. Jesus told the Pharisees that they knew how to interpret the appearance of this yet could not interpret "the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:3)
19. Paul counseled the Colossians to persevere in prayer and to remain in this state of mind (Colossians 4:2)
22. One of God's gifts to man by which we can render praise and thanksgiving to Him (Ephesians 5:19, 20)
25. He attacks God's people because they dwell in security and enjoy prosperity (Ezekiel 38:14-16)
27. The place in Edom where King Hadar resided (Genesis 36:39)
28. Jesus said that the religious leaders honored God with their lips but that these were far removed from him (Mark 7:6)
30. Jehovah told Israel that by failing to give their tithes, they were in effect doing this to him (Malachi 3:8-10)
31. This son of Noah was involved in an incident that brought a curse on his son Canaan (Genesis 9:22-25)
32. A son of Elnaam and one of David's mighty men (1 Chronicles 11:46)
33. The land of this tribe became synonymous with the extreme north of the land of Israel (Judges 20:1)
34. The yarns that extend lengthwise in a loom (Isaiah 38:12)
35. Asked to choose one of three forms of punishment after he had disobeyed God and numbered Israel, David incurred this one (2 Samuel 24:12-15)

Clues Down

1. Two books of the Hebrew Scriptures bear this name, indicating that they are a record of happenings in the order in which they occurred
2. This Christian brother, in Rome at the time of Paul's last imprisonment, sent his greetings to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:21)
3. Noisy partying or merrymaking (Amos 6:7)
4. Governor Felix was informed that Paul was from this province (Acts 23:34)
6. Although he was Absalom's army chief in the rebellion against David, he also became David's army chief after Absalom was slain (2 Samuel 17: 25; 19:13)
7. Reverential fear (Hebrews 12:28)
8. This third king of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel usurped the throne after killing his predecessor, Nadab (1 Kings 15:27, 28)
10. It was near this village that Shimei cursed David (2 Samuel 16:5, 6)
15. Excessive gratification of one's desires (2 Peter 2:7)
18. The 22nd letter of the Greek alphabet
20. The person that (Hebrews 1:1)
21. Removed the contents of (2 Chronicles 24:11)
23. It was a man of this profession who was told by Jesus: "You are not far from the kingdom of God" (Mark 12:32-34)
24. General Joab selected an unnamed runner of this lineage to deliver the news to King David that his son Absalom had died (2 Samuel 18:21, 32)
25. On seeing this item that belonged to Joseph, Jacob concluded that his son had been devoured by a wild beast (Genesis 37:31-33)
26. The name of the angel who told Mary the news that she had been chosen to give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:26-31)
29. In a psalm, David acknowledged that he was born with this (Psalm 51:5)
32. It was foretold that ten men from the nations would take hold of the skirt of a man of this nationality (Zechariah 8:23)



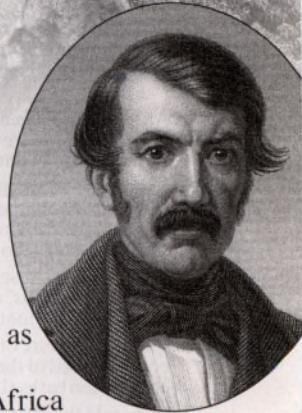


By Awake! writer
in Tanzania

"Dr. Livingstone, I Presume?"

*"Under the mango tree which then stood here,
Henry M. Stanley met David Livingstone, 10 November 1871."*

—Plaque at the Livingstone Memorial Monument
in Ujiji at Lake Tanganyika, Tanzania.



David
Livingstone

IT WAS well over a century ago that Stanley gave the famous greeting: "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" Outside Tanzania, likely very few would understand the significance of this encounter.

A visit to the Livingstone Memorial Museum in Tanzania will thus prove informative. Our guide, Mr. Mbingo, warmly welcomes us. "On the spot where the monument has been erected," he explains, "there once stood a huge mango tree, under which Stanley met Livingstone." Now there are *two* enormous mango trees standing there. "You see," he continues, "during the 1920's, it became obvious that the original mango tree was dying. Efforts to save the tree failed. So two grafted tree-plants were placed near the monument."

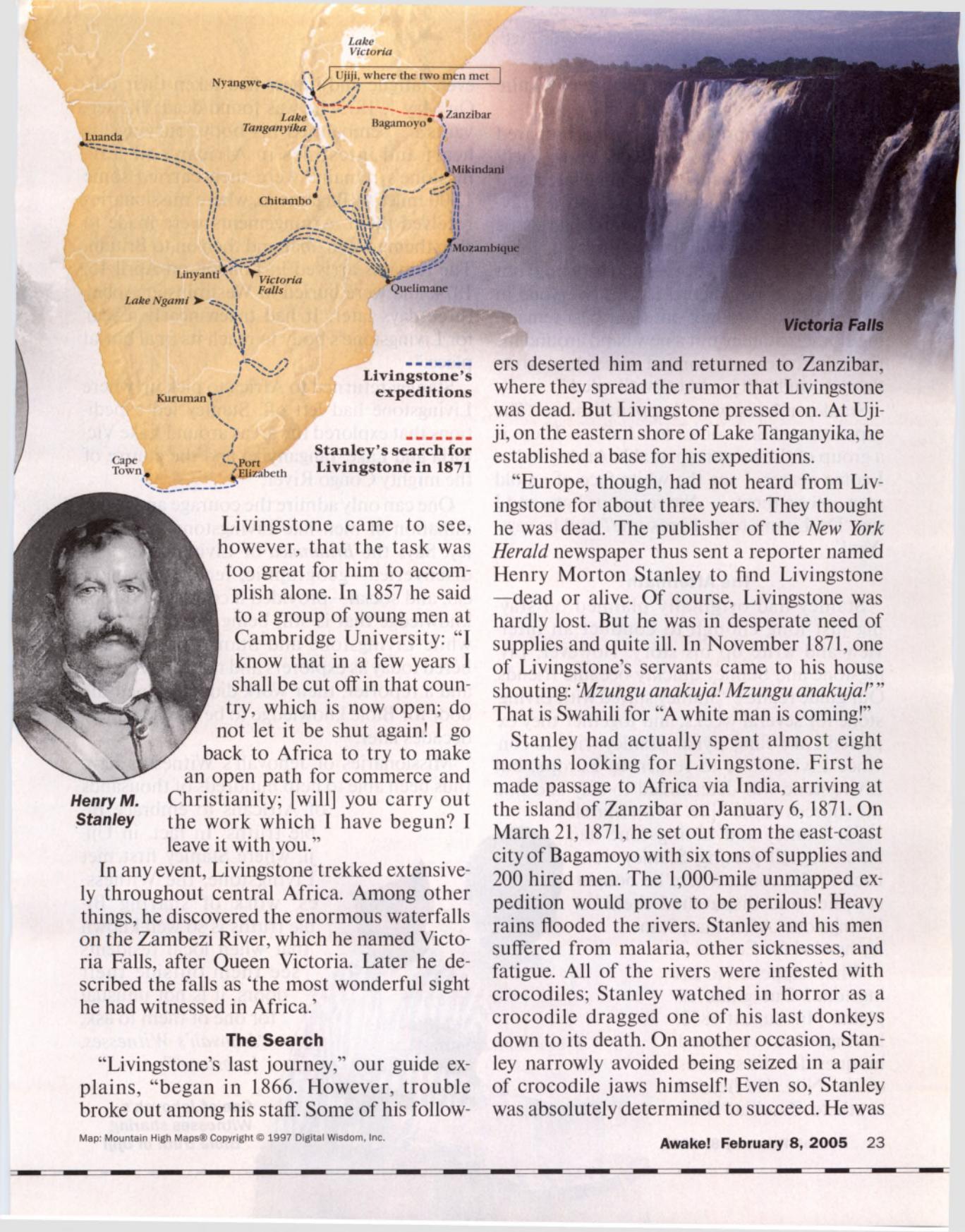
Who Was Livingstone?

As we sit in the shade of one of the mango trees, Mr. Mbingo explains that David Livingstone was born in 1813 in a small town in Scotland called Blantyre. "Although he grew up in poverty, he managed to work his way through school and was trained both as a doctor and as a missionary." We learn that the London Missionary Society dispatched Livingstone to Africa, where he spent 30 years of his life, build-

ing a reputation for himself as an explorer and missionary.

"Dr. Livingstone came to Africa three times," says our guide. "He first came to South Africa in 1841. In 1845, Livingstone wed a woman named Mary Moffat, daughter of fellow missionary Robert Moffat." Livingstone had four children by Mary. And though she accompanied him on many of his journeys, Livingstone's passion for exploration left him little time for family life. Mary Livingstone died of malaria in 1862 while accompanying him on one of his expeditions.

The New Encyclopædia Britannica says: "Livingstone was ready to push Christianity, commerce, and civilization—the trinity that he believed was destined to open up Africa—northward beyond the frontiers of South Africa and into the heart of the continent. In a famous statement in 1853 he made his purpose clear: 'I shall open up a path into the interior, or perish.'" Livingstone's journeys were therefore not purely evangelical. He passionately pushed for abolition of the slave trade. Also, he developed a fascination for exploration and set a goal of discovering the sources of the Nile.



**Henry M.
Stanley**

Livingstone came to see, however, that the task was too great for him to accomplish alone. In 1857 he said to a group of young men at Cambridge University: "I know that in a few years I shall be cut off in that country, which is now open; do not let it be shut again! I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity; [will] you carry out the work which I have begun? I leave it with you."

In any event, Livingstone trekked extensively throughout central Africa. Among other things, he discovered the enormous waterfalls on the Zambezi River, which he named Victoria Falls, after Queen Victoria. Later he described the falls as 'the most wonderful sight he had witnessed in Africa.'

The Search

"Livingstone's last journey," our guide explains, "began in 1866. However, trouble broke out among his staff. Some of his follow-

ers deserted him and returned to Zanzibar, where they spread the rumor that Livingstone was dead. But Livingstone pressed on. At Ujiji, on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, he established a base for his expeditions.

"Europe, though, had not heard from Livingstone for about three years. They thought he was dead. The publisher of the *New York Herald* newspaper thus sent a reporter named Henry Morton Stanley to find Livingstone—dead or alive. Of course, Livingstone was hardly lost. But he was in desperate need of supplies and quite ill. In November 1871, one of Livingstone's servants came to his house shouting: '*Mzungu anakuja! Mzungu anakuja!*' That is Swahili for 'A white man is coming!'

Stanley had actually spent almost eight months looking for Livingstone. First he made passage to Africa via India, arriving at the island of Zanzibar on January 6, 1871. On March 21, 1871, he set out from the east-coast city of Bagamoyo with six tons of supplies and 200 hired men. The 1,000-mile unmapped expedition would prove to be perilous! Heavy rains flooded the rivers. Stanley and his men suffered from malaria, other sicknesses, and fatigue. All of the rivers were infested with crocodiles; Stanley watched in horror as a crocodile dragged one of his last donkeys down to its death. On another occasion, Stanley narrowly avoided being seized in a pair of crocodile jaws himself! Even so, Stanley was absolutely determined to succeed. He was

encouraged by reports that a very old white man lived in the area of Ujiji.

As Stanley approached Ujiji, he prepared for the encounter. The book *Stanley*, by Richard Hall, says: "Stanley was emaciated and tired, but he felt he could put on a braver show than [previous explorers] had as he marched into the town. It was, after all, going to be a moment of history—and he would not only make it, but record it too. Everyone in the expedition brought out their best remaining clothes. Stanley put a new band around his topee [pith helmet], donned some clean white flannels, and had his boots well oiled."

Stanley relates what happened next: "The expedition at last comes to a halt . . . There is a group of the most respectable Arabs; and as I come nearer, I see the white face of an old man among them. . . . We raise our hats, and I say, 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume?' and he says, 'Yes.'"

The Aftermath

Stanley had originally planned on staying just long enough to conduct an interview and write up his story. However, Livingstone and Stanley quickly became friends. Our guide relates: "Stanley stayed with Livingstone for several weeks, and together they explored Lake Tanganyika. Stanley tried to convince Livingstone to return to Europe, but Livingstone was determined to stay and find the sources of the Nile. So on March 14, 1872, Stanley and Livingstone had an emotional parting. Stanley went back to the coast, where he bought supplies and dispatched them to Livingstone. After that, Stanley headed for Europe."

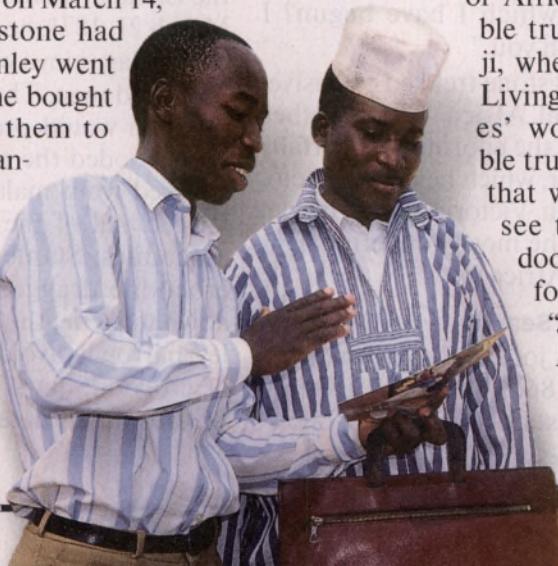
What happened to Livingstone? Our guide explains: "In August 1872, Livingstone resumed his quest for the sources of the Nile. He headed south to Zambia. How-

ever, fatigue and illness had taken their toll. On May 1, 1873, he was found dead. His servants . . . embalmed his body, burying his heart and intestines in African soil. Livingstone's remains were then carried some 1,500 miles to Bagamoyo, where missionaries received them. Arrangements were made to ship them to Zanzibar and then on to Britain. The remains arrived in London on April 15, 1874, and were buried in Westminster Abbey three days later. It had taken nearly a year for Livingstone's body to reach its final burial place."

Stanley returned to Africa to pick up where Livingstone had left off. Stanley led expeditions that explored the areas around Lake Victoria and Lake Tanganyika and the course of the mighty Congo River.

One can only admire the courage and determination of men like Livingstone and Stanley. Says the *Britannica* of Livingstone: "His discoveries—geographic, technical, medical, and social—provided a complex body of knowledge that is still being explored." And while Livingstone and Stanley are remembered today as explorers and not as a preacher and a reporter, their work did help open the door for Bible knowledge to be spread widely decades later.

Missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses have thus been able to help hundreds of thousands of Africans to embrace Bible truths. In fact, in Ujiji, where Stanley first met Livingstone, the Witnesses' work of sharing Bible truths is so well-known that when local residents see them outside their doors, it is not unusual for one of them to ask, "Jehovah's Witnesses, I presume?"



One of Jehovah's Witnesses sharing Bible truth in Ujiji



Rabbits and Toads INVADERS OF A CONTINENT

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRALIA

THE battlefield is a scarred, barren wasteland. The once lush field is now pitted with deep holes. The bodies of combatants litter its surface. These soldiers are not clad in camouflage green with boots and bayonets but with soft coats of fur and sharp teeth. They are Australia's plague of feral rabbits.

Rabbits, Rabbits, Everywhere

European rabbits launched their incursion on the southeastern tip of Australia in 1859. Imported for the amusement of local sportsmen, they were soon hunted, not for sport, but in a desperate bid to control their numbers.

Rabbits: Department of Agriculture, Western Australia;
toad: David Hancock/© SkyScans

While the European rabbit took 900 years to colonize Britain, in just 50 years it overran an area of Australia more than half the size of Europe. With adult females producing up to 40 young a year, rabbits pushed the front line of assault across the continent at a rate of up to 60 miles a year. A report from the Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) states: "It was the fastest rate of any colonising mammal anywhere in the world." The effects were devastating.

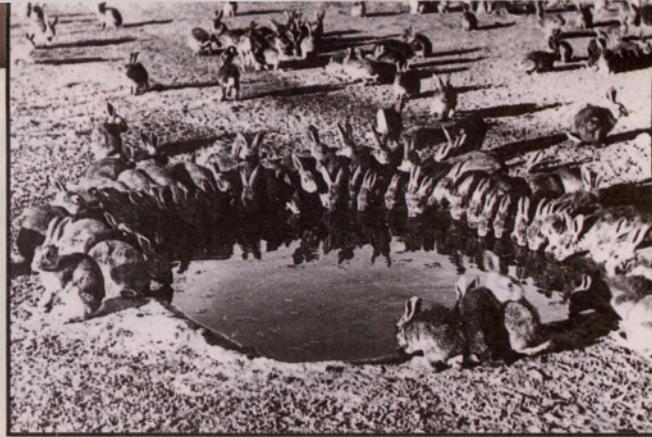
Rabbits consume the fodder of native animals and commandeer their burrows; they are blamed for the localized extinction of numerous species. They are even

held responsible for clearing forests. As one researcher explains, "they eat tree seedlings so that when the adult trees die there are no young ones to replace them." When they invade a small island, the results can be catastrophic. "Rabbits introduced onto Laysan Island in 1903 had by 1936 eliminated three endemic bird species and 22 of the 26 plant species.... In 1923 the island was a barren waste of sand with a few stunted trees," states a BRS report.

Deploying Weapons of Mass Destruction

In Australia rabbits were shot, trapped, and poisoned. The famous Rabbit Proof Fence—stretching 1,139 miles across the state of Western Australia—was built in an attempt to halt their advance.* But nothing seemed to be able to hold back the invading army.

Then, in 1950 a counterattack was launched using a biological weapon—the myxomatosis virus. This virus dramatically reduced the rabbit population, estimated by that time to be a staggering 600 million. Carried by mosquitoes and fleas, myxomatosis affects only rabbits, and it killed 500 million of the invaders in just two years. However, rabbits rapidly developed resistance to the disease, and survivors reproduced with a



Thirsty invaders at a water hole on Wardang Island, Spencer Gulf, South Australia

vengeance. Thus, by the 1990's their numbers had soared to about 300 million. Another defense was desperately needed.

Bad News—Good News

In 1995 a second biological weapon, rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD), was released in Australia. RHD first appeared in China in 1984. By 1998 it had spread to Europe and shortly afterward wiped out 30 million domestic rabbits in Italy. RHD was bad news for the European rabbit industry but good news for Australian farmers, as ten million rabbits were destroyed in the first two months following its release. The virus seems to confine itself to rabbits, which die 30 to 40 hours after infection, with no visible signs of distress. By 2003, RHD had reduced rabbit numbers in many drier parts of Australia by 85 percent or more.

Without rabbits to nibble their foliage, native orchids in one South Australian national park increased eightfold in less than five years. In other parts of that state, there has been "significant early regeneration of native shrubs . . . in areas where regular outbreaks of the disease had occurred," states *Ecos* magazine. Introduced predators, such as foxes and feral cats, have also declined in some areas because of the lack of rabbits. Both ecologists and farmers are pleased by the effectiveness of this

* See *Awake!* of February 8, 2003, page 14.

A hero turned villain—the cane toad invasion continues



new weapon, since rabbits have cost the Australian economy up to \$600 million a year. However, the long-term effect of this disease on Australia's resilient rabbit population is yet to be determined.

From Shining Knight to Ugly Toad

While scientists may have won the day against feral rabbits, they seem to have met their match with a more recent invader—the cane toad. Like the rabbit, this villain did not sneak into the country but was deliberately imported. Why?

Early in the 20th century, two species of sugarcane beetle threatened the existence of Australia's sugarcane industry, currently worth two billion dollars annually to the economy. In 1935, *Bufo marinus*, or the cane toad, a fist-sized amphibian with a reputation for being a voracious beetle eater, was thought to be the savior of cane growers. Despite the misgivings of some scientists, the toad was imported from South America via Hawaii and was released into Queensland's cane fields.

Upon release the cane toad ignored the cane beetles and became a renegade. These creatures are toxic in every stage of their development from egg to adult. As they transform from tadpoles to toads, special glands grow under their skin, which exude a highly poisonous milky slime when the toads become annoyed. Cane toads are known to kill native lizards, snakes, wild dogs, and even crocodiles that are foolish enough to ingest them. They are prolific breeders and have now spread more than 600 miles from their original release points. Population densities reach up to ten times that found in their native country, Venezuela. Like a Biblical plague, they invade fields, infest homes, and lurk in toilet bowls. Advancing at a rate of 15 miles a year, they have now entered an area that could be described as toad paradise—the world-heritage-listed Kakadu National

Park in the Northern Territory. The Australian government has spent millions of dollars funding research aimed at halting the toads' progress, yet no effective method has been found. The battle is not over, but so far the toads are winning.

Why the Conflict?

In an undisturbed ecosystem, organisms have their own natural regulators that keep their population numbers restrained. However, when liberated from the checks and balances of their native environments, seemingly harmless creatures may reproduce so fast that they wreak havoc.

The enormous damage resulting from uncontrolled populations of introduced animals and plants was not foreseen by the first European settlers in Australia. True, many imported species have proved beneficial. In fact, Australians are now completely dependent on introduced species of plants and animals—sheep, cattle, wheat, rice, and other staples. However, the rabbit and the cane toad are sobering reminders of the need for caution when humans choose to manipulate earth's dazzlingly complex web of life.

Crossword Solutions

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

Watching the World

Easy Access to Drugs

In Poland, recreational drugs are easier to obtain than beer, reports *Wprost* magazine. "They are accessible in each disco; in clubs, pubs, and hostels; and at colleges, high schools, [and] junior high schools." Moreover, in bigger cities, drugs "can be ordered by phone and received faster than pizza," says the journal. Low prices, wide availability, and the fact that "synthetic drugs are considered to be harmless," says *Wprost*, have led more than half of all Polish teenagers to experiment with them "at least once." According to Katarzyna Puławska-Popielarz, the head of a rehabilitation center for youths, long-term abuse of one such drug, speed, has resulted in "suicides, heart attacks, psychoses, and extreme emaciation."

Revival of Latin Mass

In Germany, "church services in Latin are enjoying more and more popularity," reports the newsmagazine *Focus*. Priests in "cities such as Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, and Münster have recognized that, in spite of otherwise falling attendances, they can fill their churches with Latin," notes the magazine. The popularity of Latin Mass led one church in Munich to increase the number of Masses using

Technology Quells Conversation

"The prospect of a face-to-face conversation frightens many Britons because of their increasing dependence on modern technology," reports *The Times* of London. A survey of 1,000 adults, conducted by British Gas, found that daily the average person spends just under four hours of his waking life "using technology originally intended to give people more time to themselves." According to the report, "the average Briton spends 88 minutes a day on a landline telephone, a further 62 minutes on a mobile telephone, 53 minutes e-mailing and 22 minutes text messaging." The survey concluded that communication skills, such as talking face-to-face, are damaged. Many of those surveyed admitted that they used text messaging "as a way of cutting out conversational frills or to avoid conversation altogether."



Latin liturgy from two times a month to twice a week, plus public holidays.

A Century of War

"Genocide has helped make the 20th century the bloodiest in history," reports the *Buenos Aires Herald*. Genocide is defined as the systematic and planned extermination of an entire national, racial, political, or ethnic group. It is estimated that over 41 million people were slaughtered during the 20th century. One recent example is Rwanda, where in 1994 some 800,000 people were killed, mostly by "civil-

ians spurred on by hate propaganda." Scholars say that during a 100-day period, an average of 8,000 people a day were killed. That rate is "five times faster than the gas chambers used by the Nazis in World War II," states the *Herald*.

How Alligators Hunt

A doctoral student at the University of Maryland has discovered what had previously eluded the experts—pressure receptors on the snouts of alligators, which enable them to detect the movement of prey in the water. Lining the jaws of alligators and

other reptiles of the crocodilian family are tiny bumps that look like pinprick-sized dots. Biologist Daphne Soares discovered that they are actually tiny pressure-detecting mounds that allow these reptiles to detect small disturbances on the water surface around them. "Crocodilians hunt at night, half-submerged in water, waiting for prey to disrupt the water surface. Their jaw rests right at the interface of air and water," explains Soares. "When they're hungry, they quickly attack anything that disturbs that interface." The dome pressure receptors, as she has named them, are so

sensitive that they can detect the impact of a single drop of water.

Living Garbage Cans

An international study regarding the impact of litter on marine life shows that the average fulmar, a seabird in the North Sea, has 30 pieces of plastic in its stomach. That is "double the amount found in fulmars in the early 1980s," reports London's newspaper *The Guardian*. Fulmars were studied because "they eat almost anything and do not regurgitate what they ingest." Among the plastic items found in the stomachs of dead fulmars were toys, tools, ropes, polystyrene

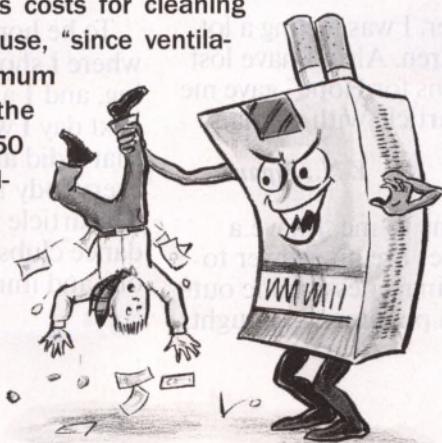
cups, mattress foam, plastic bottles, and cigarette lighters. Dr. Dan Barlow, head of research at Friends of the Earth Scotland, says: "From this research we know marine animals around Scotland's coast are being turned into living dustbins [garbage cans]." The paper adds: "More than 100 of the world's 300 species of seabird are known to eat plastic accidentally."

Internet Sign Language

For years deaf people have used teletype machines and, more recently, E-mail to communicate with friends. Now, the proliferation of Webcams, Internet computer cameras, is enabling the deaf to use sign language over the Internet. Even so, according to Canada's *National Post*, "the webcam's narrow field of view and two-dimensional perspective means certain nuances are lost, just as a raised eyebrow or a smirk is lost over the telephone." Slow Internet connections and other technical problems can make signing over Webcams more difficult. How do the deaf overcome such obstacles? Signers prolong and repeat signs and have learned "to adapt their movements or body position to compensate for problems with perspective," says the *Post*. Signers have also found that they can add emphasis to what they say by moving their hands closer to the camera to increase their apparent size.

Costly Habit

Smoking is costly, not only to smokers but also to their employers and to nonsmokers, according to Professor Kari Reijula of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. Work time lost to smoking breaks alone "costs the national economy nearly 16.6 million euros [\$21 million] a year," reports the Finnish Broadcasting Company Web site. It is estimated that "workers who smoke one pack of cigarettes a day miss the equivalent of 17 working days annually." Sick leave adds to the bill. Reijula further notes: "Studies show that employees who smoke also have higher accident rates." In addition, according to the report, smoking increases costs for cleaning as well as for electricity use, "since ventilation must be kept at maximum power." More serious is the fact that "as many as 250 non-smoking Finns annually die from diseases linked to exposure to second-hand smoke at work or in their free time."

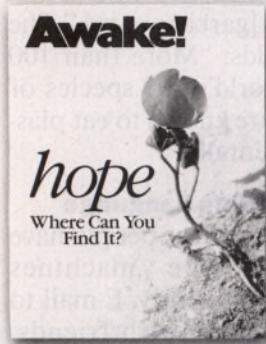


From Our Readers

Hope This is just a brief note to express our deepest appreciation for the series "Hope—Where Can You Find It?" (April 22, 2004) We read it together as a family, and by the time we got to the end, we

were choking back the tears. The artwork with the flower was a beautiful visual touch.

**H. H. & L. H.,
United States**



My mother died a week before I received this issue, and I found great comfort in the words "The dead are in the safest situation imaginable, like an infant protected within its mother's womb."

I am still grieving over my mother's death, but I am happy that she is safe in Jehovah's memory.

V. L., United States

I have been reading *Awake!* for nearly 50 years, and it never ceases to amaze me that you can take a subject that you have talked about many times and come up with a fresh approach. That research on pessimism was truly worthy of consideration.

T. H., United States

I have a terminal illness. I try to stay positive, but today I woke up feeling despair. So I read and re-read the articles. There was a depth of understanding in the articles, and I derived a great deal of comfort from them.

B. J., Britain

My husband is fighting cancer. I was feeling a lot of stress in caring for our children. Also, I have lost my job. But the section "Reasons for Hope" gave me strength. I want to share this article with as many people as possible.

Y. N., Japan

When something bad happens to me, I have a tendency to panic. These articles are an answer to a prayer! The steps to overcoming a pessimistic outlook were so specific that when pessimistic thoughts

appear, I am able to apply the steps one by one. I keep this series at my bedside and look at it every day.

S. T., Japan

Preening Birds Preening birds have always been a common sight where I live. Having read the article "Just Keeping Up Appearances?" (April 22, 2004), I now appreciate the many benefits preening brings to birds. I want to thank you for your educational presentation of information about God's unique creatures.

E. K., Nigeria

I read articles on plants, animals, and birds with great pleasure. I learned from this article that for birds, cleanliness is a matter of life and death. I never thought about this before.

K. G., Russia

Dance Clubs Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . What About Youth Dance Clubs?" (April 22, 2004) I agree that such clubs are not for Christians. I regret that I didn't know Jehovah earlier in my life when I used to go to such clubs.

L., Indonesia

To be honest, I have gone to places where I should not have. I love dancing, and I always made excuses. The next day I would feel guilty. It wasn't that I did anything bad; it was what everybody around me was doing! The article exposed the truth about dance clubs—that many are dangerous and immoral.

D. K., Australia



The Cave of the Marbles

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

STANDING on a carpet of millions of cave "marbles," an American speleologist, or cave explorer, could not help but exclaim, "Thank you, God, for giving me life to see this wonder!" He was visiting the Cave of the Marbles, a cave system in southeastern Mexico that measures 1,730 feet in length and 56 feet in depth. Inside, one can view awesome rock formations. Having heard of the cave, we wanted to see it for ourselves.

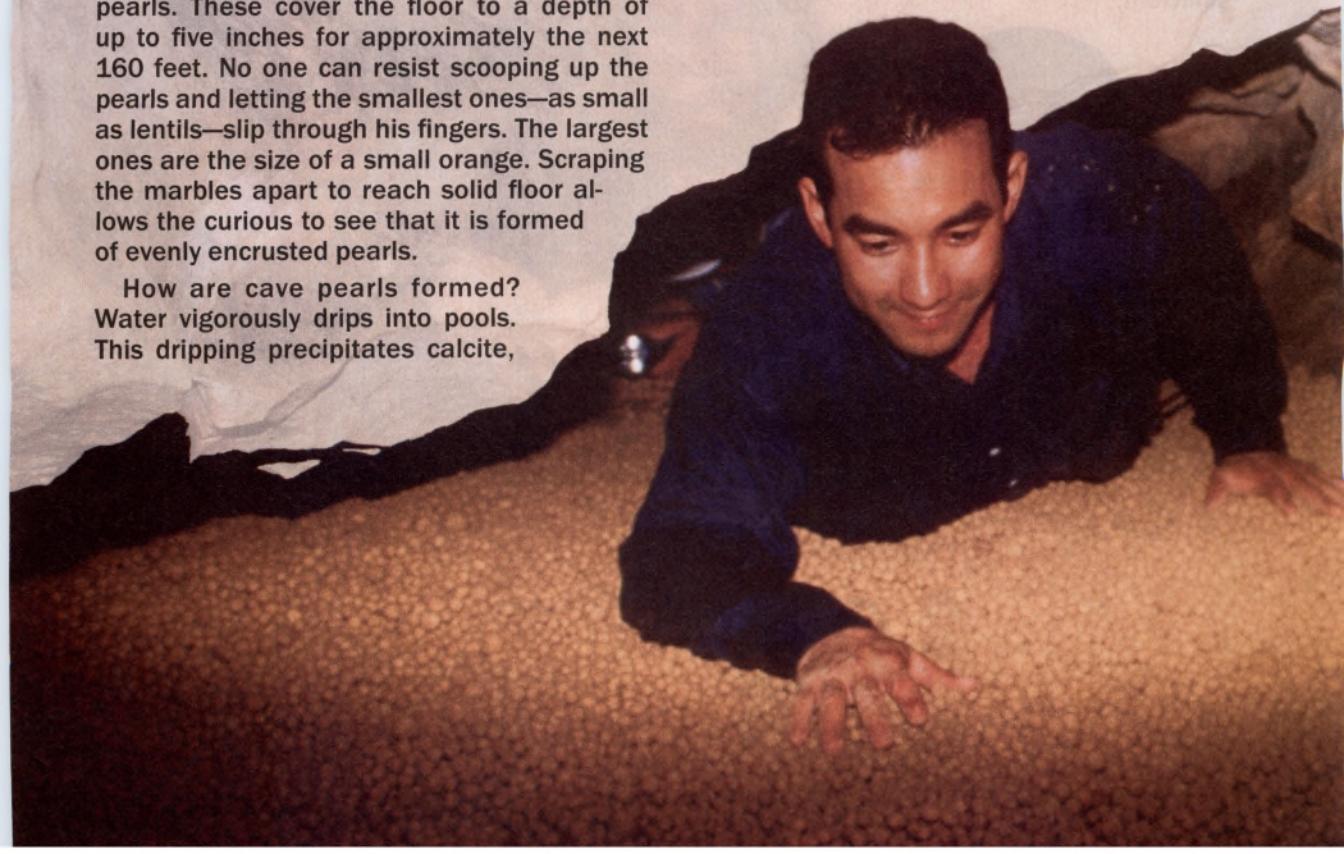
The cave is on a privately owned ranch, so we are fortunate to be acquainted with the owner's wife. As we pass through an opening to the hallway of the marbles, we are able to see some 200 million calcite balls, or cave pearls. These cover the floor to a depth of up to five inches for approximately the next 160 feet. No one can resist scooping up the pearls and letting the smallest ones—as small as lentils—slip through his fingers. The largest ones are the size of a small orange. Scraping the marbles apart to reach solid floor allows the curious to see that it is formed of evenly encrusted pearls.

How are cave pearls formed? Water vigorously drips into pools. This dripping precipitates calcite,

which coats a piece of foreign matter, such as sand, bone fragments, or even soda straws. In this way, as more calcite is gradually added, a pearl is formed.

Although this cave has been known by locals for years, it is only recently that specialists from abroad, captivated by its great number of pearls, have visited it. At the present, efforts to research this outstanding cave and preserve it are under way.

Places such as the Cave of Marbles remind us of the words of Psalm 111:2: "The works of Jehovah are great, searched for on the part of all those delighting in them."



A Highly Praised Textbook for Youths

THE headmaster of Tigoni Academy for Girls in Limuru, Kenya, wrote the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in that country requesting copies of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*. He said: "As you know, dealing with teenagers can be challenging. We have two copies of your book, which have been helpful to both teachers and students. It has enough information and fits our needs and those of our teenagers."

The headmaster then said: "The [school] administration would like to use this helpful book to instruct our girls. They like the book very much. Our parents are very positive regarding all efforts to help their children. For now, we think 25 copies of the book will be sufficient."

The *Young People Ask* book probes into thoughts and feelings of youth. It stirs healthy discussion on such subjects as: "How Can I Get My Folks to Give Me More Freedom?," "Should I Leave Home?," "How Can I Make Real Friends?," "What Career Should I Choose?," "What About Sex Before Marriage?," and "How Do I Know If It's Real Love?"

