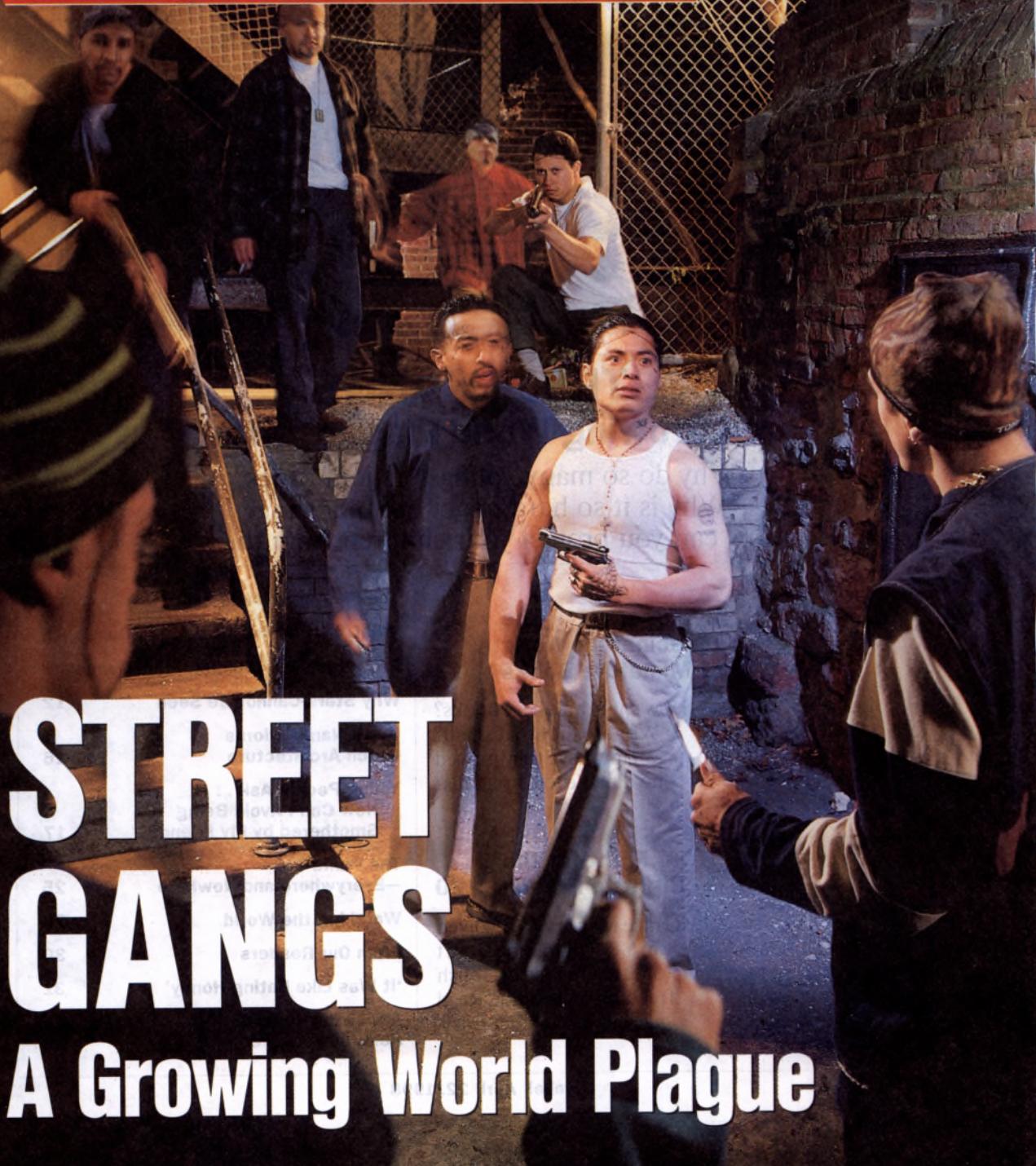


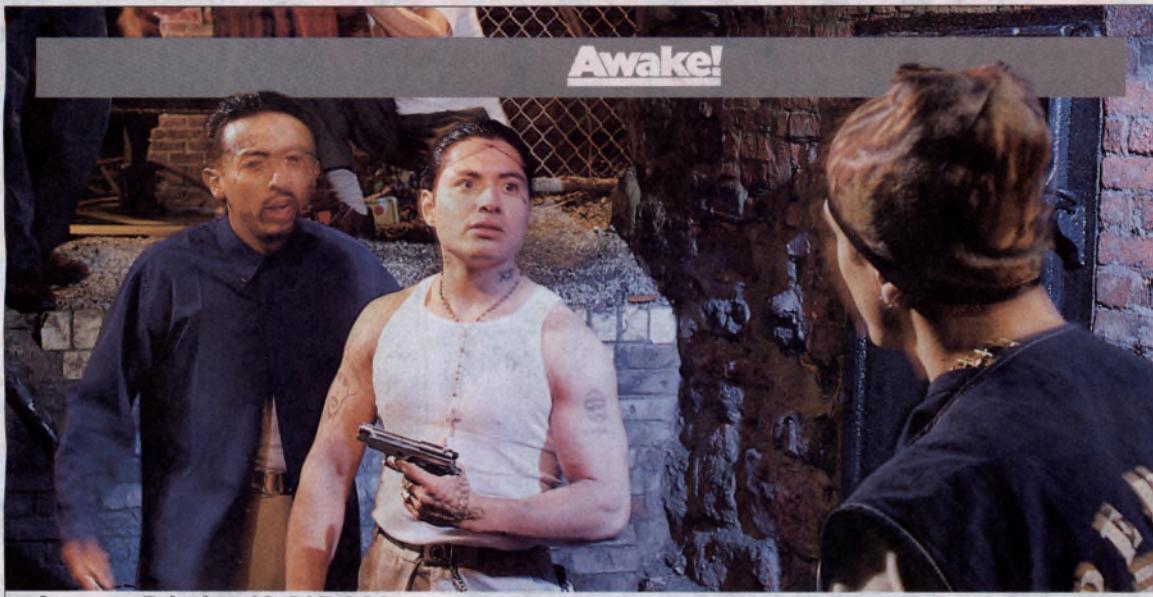
Awake!

April 22, 1998



STREET GANGS

A Growing World Plague



Awake!

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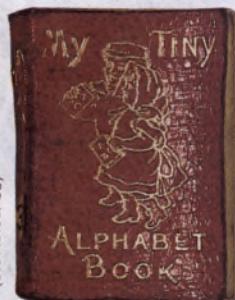
STREET GANGS A Growing World Plague 3-11

Why do so many youngsters join gangs?

Why is it so hard to get out of a gang?

How can you protect your children from them?

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How small are these books?

Why are they that small?

How have they proved invaluable to Christians?

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Grace Marsh was involved in a U.S. Supreme Court victory that helped establish freedom of worship. Read her fascinating story.



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THE PLAGUE SPREADS



Scott Olson/Sipa Press

Little Robert was only 11 years old, yet he was found facedown under a desolate bridge. There were two bullet holes in the back of his head. He had been killed, it was believed, by members of his own youth gang.

Fifteen-year-old Alex was headed toward gang membership and perhaps toward an early grave. But he saw a friend die, and he thought to himself:

'I don't want to end up like that.'

VIOLENT street gangs, once associated with the widely known Los Angeles gangs called the Bloods and the Crips, have spread worldwide. But wherever they are, gangs are amazingly alike. England's "Teddy Boys" shocked the world in the 1950's. *The Times* of London said that they used axes, knives, bicycle chains, and other weapons to "inflict terrible injuries" on innocent people. Knife fights broke out, cafés were ripped apart, and coffee bars were wrecked. People were molested, robbed, beaten up, and sometimes killed.

Die Welt of Hamburg, Germany, reported that more recently young people "on

their way to the disco or on their way home" have been set upon by gangs wielding "baseball bats, knives, and guns." Munich's *Süddeutsche Zeitung* said that skinheads in Berlin attack anyone "who is noticeably weaker —the homeless, the handicapped, retired women."

An *Awake!* correspondent in Spain reported that the problem of teenage gangs is a recent one there but is growing. *ABC*, a newspaper in Madrid, carried the headline "Skinheads—The New Nightmare of the Streets." A former skinhead from Spain said that they would sniff out "foreign pigs, prostitutes, and homosexuals." He added: "A night without violence [was] worthless."

In South Africa the *Cape Times* said that much of the violent crime there is "the by-product of a vicious gang culture." A book published in Cape Town says that South African gangs became "parasites" in the poorer townships and that they "robbed and raped members of their own communities and indulged in gang fights over territory, markets, and women."

O Estado de S. Paulo, a Brazilian newspaper, said that gangs there were "multiplying at a frightening rate." It stated that they would attack rival gangs, better-off youths, people of another race, and poor migrant workers. It also said that one day several gangs formed a dragnet, "robbed people on the beach . . . , fought among themselves," and turned a major avenue in Rio de Janeiro into "a war zone." Another report from Brazil said that the number of gangs is increasing both in large cities such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and in smaller towns.

The Canadian magazine *Maclean's* noted in 1995 that according to police estimates, there were at least eight active street gangs in Winnipeg, Canada. And newspapers in the United States have published pictures of gang members who have taken gang clothes and graffiti to isolated Indian reservations of the American Southwest.

In New York City, a rash of gang-related violence erupted last year. Members of the Bloods and the Crips, gangs originally prominent in Los Angeles, were said to have

been involved. According to the mayor of New York, between July and September, the police made 702 arrests in incidents directly related to street gangs.

The problem is no longer confined to major cities. The *Quad-City Times*, published in the central part of the United States, told of "increased violence among teen-agers, rampant drug use and a growing sense of hopelessness."

A Heartrending Plague

One gang is said to have started as a group of friends. But as its leader's reputation grew, so did the violence. The gang leader lived at his grandmother's house, which was shot at repeatedly, even when she was inside. A newspaper reported that there were more than 50 bullet holes in the house. The shots had apparently been fired in retaliation for acts that were blamed on the grandson's gang. In addition, the gang leader's brother was in jail as a result of gang-related activity, and his cousin, who had moved away to avoid the violence and had returned home for a visit, had been shot by someone in a passing van.

In Los Angeles, gang members shot at a car and killed an innocent three-year-old whose mother and boyfriend had mistakenly turned down the wrong street. A bullet smashed into a school and hit a teacher who was trying to help students learn to improve their lives. Many others have also been

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.

Would you welcome more information? Write Watch Tower at the appropriate address on page 5. Publication of *Awake!* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

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killed who had nothing to do with gangs but who became their victims. A Brooklyn, New York, mother became known in her neighborhood for the saddest of distinctions—losing all three of her young sons to gang violence.

What has caused this worldwide plague of youth violence, and how can we protect our dear children from it? How do gangs get started in the first place, and why are so many youths joining them? These questions are discussed in the following articles.

What We Should Know About Gangs



Wade, a former member of a California gang, said: "We were simply guys who lived in the same neighborhood. We started in elementary school together. We just didn't make the right decisions."

GANGS often began more or less as neighborhood groups. People in their early teens or younger gathered on a street corner. They did things together and then united to protect themselves from a more established group nearby. But soon their group began to sink to the level of its most violent members, and it became involved in dangerous criminal activities.

A rival gang from another street may have viewed the new group as its enemy. Anger

then led to violence. Drug traffickers used the gang to sell illegal drugs. Other criminal activities followed.

Luis was 11 years old when friends formed a gang. At age 12 he began using drugs. At 13 he was arrested for the first time. He took part in auto thefts, burglaries, and armed robberies. And he was in and out of jails for gang fighting and rioting.

We may be surprised at times by those who belong to gangs. Martha, a clean-cut,

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overachieving high school student, got good grades and was well behaved in school. However, she was the leader of a gang that dealt marijuana, heroin, and cocaine. It was not until one of her friends was shot several times and killed that she was frightened into changing her life.

Why They Join Gangs

Surprisingly, some gang members say they joined for love. They were looking for camaraderie, for a closeness they did not find at home. The newspaper *Die Zeit* of Hamburg, Germany, said that in street gangs young people try to find the security that they cannot find elsewhere. Eric, a former gang member, said that if you don't find love at home, "you go outside looking for something better."

One father, a former gang member, wrote about his early life experiences: "I was in and out of jails for disorderly conduct, gang fighting, rioting and eventually for attempted murder in a drive-by shooting." Later, when he had his son Ramiro, he had little time for the boy. When Ramiro grew older, he also joined a gang, and he was arrested by the police after a gang fight. When his father insisted that he get out of the gang, he shouted: "They are my family now."

A nurse in a Texas hospital, who had spoken with 114 young gunshot victims in slightly more than a year, said: "It's strange. I don't think I've ever heard one of them ask for their mother or any family member."

Significantly, it is not only children from poorer parts of town who join gangs. Several years ago the Canadian magazine *Maclean's* quoted police as saying that they had found youngsters from both the city's most affluent and its most impoverished neighborhoods in the same gang. These young ones from diverse backgrounds band together for a similar reason—they seek a sense of family togetherness that they do not find at home.

In some areas young people grow up viewing gang membership as a normal way of life. Sixteen-year-old Fernando explained: "They think joining the gang will help them solve their problems. They think: 'I'll get me some friends. They are big and carry guns. They will protect me, and nobody will do nothing.'" But new gang members soon find that being in a gang makes them the target of the gang's enemies.

Often gangs are found in neighborhoods where there is little money and too many guns. News reports tell of big-city schoolrooms in which 2 out of 3 students live in single-parent homes. Sometimes, a student's parent is a drug addict who may not come home at night, and the student must take her own fatherless child to day care before she goes to school in the mornings.

California's governor, Pete Wilson, said: "We have a terrible problem because a lot of kids are growing up without a father, without a male role model to give them love, direction, discipline and values—without a sense of why they should respect themselves or respect others." He said that this inability of some young people to sympathize with others is the reason they "can seemingly blow somebody away [shoot them dead] with not a flicker of remorse."

Although lack of family togetherness, personal training, and solid moral example are major factors in the growth of gangs, other factors are also involved. These include TV programs and movies that present violence as an easy solution to problems, a society that often labels the poor as failures and continually reminds them that they can't afford to do the things others do, and the growing number of single-parent families in which an overworked young mother must struggle to support one or more unsupervised children. A combination of most or all of these factors,

and perhaps of still others, has led to the growing worldwide plague of street gangs.

It's Hard to Get Out

True, after a time some gang members drift away from their gang, occupying themselves with other activities. Others may go to live with relatives in another area and thereby escape life in a gang. But often, getting out of a gang is not that easy.

Commonly, gang members have to undergo a violent beating by several members before they are permitted to leave a gang alive. In fact, people who have wanted to get out of certain gangs have actually had to suffer being shot. If they survived, they were permitted to leave! Is it worth such severe abuse to get out of a gang?

One former gang member explained why he wanted to get out: "Five of my friends are already dead." Indeed, life as a gang member can be almost unbelievably dangerous. *Time* magazine reported regarding one former member of a Chicago gang: "In his seven-year career, he's been shot in the stomach, hit in the head with a railroad tie, had his arm broken in a fight and been jailed twice for auto theft . . . But now that he's finally gone straight, even his former friends are out to get him."

A Better Life Possible

Eleno, a Brazilian, was once a member of the Headbangers, a gang that fought with knives and sometimes guns. Feeling underprivileged, he found satisfaction in breaking things and attacking people. A workmate talked with him about the Bible. Later Eleno attended an assembly of Jehovah's Witness-



Former members of rival gangs now united by Bible truth

es, where he met former associates who had left his gang as well as a former member of a rival gang. They greeted each other as brothers—so different from what would have occurred at an earlier time.

Does this really happen? Indeed it does! Recently a representative of *Awake!* sat down with former members of major gangs in Los Angeles who now serve with congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. After several hours of talking, one of them paused, leaned back, and said: "Look at this! Former Bloods and Crips sitting here loving each other as brothers!" They agreed that their change from ruthless gang members to men of kindness and love had resulted from the fact that they had learned godly principles through careful Bible study.

Could this really happen in the 1990's? Can gang members actually make such changes now? They can if they are willing to look into the powerful encouragement provided in God's Word and then bring their lives into harmony with Bible principles. If you should happen to be a gang member, why not consider making such a change?

The Bible urges us to "put away the old

personality which conforms to your former course of conduct" and to "put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." (Ephesians 4:22-24) How is that new personality developed? "Through accurate knowledge," the Bible says, one's personality can be "made new according to the image of [God] who created it."—Colossians 3:9-11.



Is it worth trying to make a change? Yes, it is! If you are a gang member, you will probably need help to make such a change. There are people in your own neighborhood who will be glad to assist you. Yet, parents are often in the position to exercise the greatest positive influence on their children. So we will now consider what parents can do to protect their children from gangs.

Protecting Our Children From Gangs

"Kids need people who care about them."

—Not My Kid—Gang Prevention for Parents.

NEXT to our relationship with God, our children are among our most precious possessions. We should talk with them, listen to them, hug them, and be sure they know that they are very important to us. We must teach them good things—to be honest and helpful, how to have a good life, and how to be kind to others.

The superintendent of a juvenile detention home put his finger on a big problem today, saying: "Values are not being taught within the family." Surely we need to give attention to doing this. We must live the way we want our children to live and let them see the joy that this adds to our lives. If we do not teach them proper values, how can we expect them to follow such values?

Today, a magazine published for American

schoolteachers, said that gangs often attract youths who "view themselves as failures" and who are "looking for security, a sense of belonging, and social acceptance." If we really give our children those things at home—security and a solid feeling of success both in the family and in their own lives—they will be far less likely to be attracted by false promises made by a gang.

The leader of a California police antigang unit tells of the shocked expressions he sees on parents' faces when the police knock at their door to say their child is in trouble. They can't believe that the one they thought they knew so well could have done something wrong. But their child had found new friends and had changed. The parents just hadn't noticed.

Taking Precautions Vital

People who live in areas where gangs are active say that both young people and older ones should use good judgment and not offer a challenge or a threat to a gang. Avoid large groups of gang members, and do not copy the way they look or act, including the style and color of clothing they wear. Imitating them could make you the target of a rival gang.

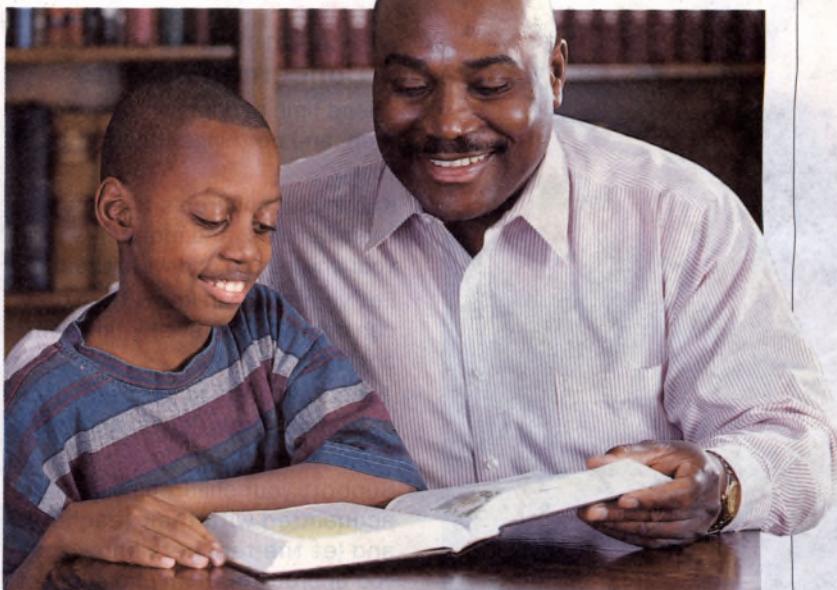
Also, if a person dresses or acts as if he wants to be part of a gang, its members may pressure

him into becoming one of them. The importance of knowing the attitudes of local gang members was illustrated by a father of three children in Chicago. He observed: 'If I wear my hat turned over to the right, they think I'm disrespecting them.' And that could lead to violence!

Be Involved With Your Children

One mother said: "We must be aware of our children—what they feel and what they do. We don't have a chance if we don't take a personal interest in their lives." Another said that the gang problem won't stop until parents stop it. She added: "Let's give them love. If they're lost, we're lost."

Do we know our children's friends, where our children go after school, and where they are in the evening after dark? Of course, not every mother can be home when her children get home from school. But single mothers who struggle valiantly to pay the rent and feed their children may be able to make



***Taking an Interest in
your child's schoolwork can be a protection***

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arrangements with other mothers or with someone they trust to provide afternoon supervision for their children.

A man who lives in a major gang area was asked how he would protect his own children from gangs. He said that he would take his son around the neighborhood to show him the outcome of gang activity. He would point to the graffiti and the run-down buildings and show him "that the area doesn't look safe and that gang members are just hanging around, hardly doing anything with their lives." He added: "Then I'd explain that living by Bible principles would prevent him from having an outcome like that."

Such a simple thing as our sincere interest in our children's schoolwork can be a protection for them. If their school has a parents' night or some other time when parents are invited to visit classrooms and talk with the teachers, make it a point to go. Know your children's teachers, and let them know of your concern for your child and of your



A Checklist for Concerned Parents

- ✓ Spend time at home with your children, and do things together as a family
- ✓ Know your children's friends and their families, and monitor where your children go and with whom
- ✓ Let your children know that they can come to you at any time with any problem
- ✓ Teach children to respect other people, their rights, and their ideas
- ✓ Support your children by getting acquainted with their teachers, and let the teachers know that you appreciate them and support their efforts
- ✓ Do not resolve problems by yelling or using violence



Your children need your warm affection

interest in his or her schooling. If the school does not have a school visitation program, try to find occasions to talk with the teachers about your child's progress in school and about how you might be able to help.

A survey in one large American city found that among students whose family helped or encouraged them with homework, 9 percent had joined a gang. But in families where such attention was not given, twice as many students—18 percent—had joined a gang. If our family is loving and close-knit and if we do wholesome things together, it will reduce the likelihood that our children will be attracted by the false promises of gangs.

What Our Children Really Need

Our children need the same things we do—love, kindness, and affection. Many children have never been touched in an affec-

tionate, loving manner or told that they really matter. May that never be the case with our children! May we hug them, tell them that we love them, and try to see that they live the moral way that we have taught them to live. They are too precious for us to treat them in any other way.

Gerald, a former gang member, explained: "I didn't have a father to look up to, so I went to the gangs to fill that void in my life." He began using drugs at the age of 12. But when he was 17, his mother began a regular home Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses. She applied the Bible's fine principles in her life. He says: "I saw the change in her, and I thought, 'There's got to be something to this.'" Her fine example prompted him to turn his life around.

Our children should see a good example in us—that we live the way we tell them to

live. They should be able to have a good feeling about their family, not for what it possesses, but for what it does. And the children should have been helped in such a way that they feel good about their own moral behavior. Former Los Angeles County district attorney Ira Reiner put it this way: "We must get to kids before they get into gangs."

Providing What They Need

It is not the material things we provide for our children that are of primary importance. What really counts is that we help them develop into loving and caring adults who have fine moral standards. The Bible says that righteous Jacob called his young ones "the children with whom God has favored [me]." (Genesis 33:5) If we look at our children that way—as gifts that God has given us—we will be more apt to treat them with love and to teach them to live honest, upright, and moral lives.

We will thus do all we can to live our own lives in such a way as to set the right example for our children. We will give them a proper and wholesome pride in their family, not in the family's material possessions, but in the kind of people we are. Thus, they will be less likely to look for support from those on the streets.

Looking back on his youth, a grandfather says: "I would never have done anything to bring shame on my family." He acknowledged that he felt this way because he was aware of the love that his parents had for him. True, demonstrating love for their children may not be easy for some mothers and fathers who never received love from their own parents. Nevertheless, parents need to work at showing love to their children.

Why is this so important? Because as "What's Up," a magazine published by the Utah Gang Investigators Association, said,

"when youths feel loved and secure—not financially secure, but emotionally secure—the needs that drive them into gangs often vanish."

Some readers may think that loving families like that hardly exist anymore. But they do. You can find many of them among the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses around the world. True, these families are not perfect, but they have a big advantage: They study what the Bible says about child rearing and strive to apply the Bible's godly principles in their own lives. Moreover, they teach these principles to their children.

Jehovah's Witnesses agree with the statement made in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*: "One cannot hope to have . . . teenagers 'Just say no' without giving them something to 'Say yes' to." In other words, if we want our children to say yes to good and wholesome things, we must guide them in that direction.

None of us would ever want to have to say, as did one father: 'In his gang my son found fellowship and respect that he had never felt before.' Nor would we ever want to hear our children say, as one young person did: "I joined the gang because I needed a family."

We, the parents, must be that family. And we must do everything we can to see that our precious young ones remain a warm and loving part of it.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Can Our Rain Forests Be Saved?

My Long Journey From Life and Death in Cambodia

How Significant Is the Year 2000?

Why Stars cannot Be Seen



WHO has not gazed at the night sky and marveled at the glittering beauty of countless stars stretching far into space? However, this awesome sight is slowly disappearing from our eyes. Why? Light pollution.

Light pollution is the overpowering, blinding glow produced by artificial lighting of streets, homes, commercial properties, public buildings, and sports grounds. As much as half of this light spreads upward into the sky, blotting out our view of most of the stars. How serious a problem is this? On a clear, dark night in northern Europe, for example, the naked eye can see about 2,000 stars. But this number drops to 200 for those living on the outskirts of a town, and in the middle of a brilliantly lit city, one might make out just 20 stars. Some astronomers fear that unless precautions are taken, no stars will be visible in northern Europe in 25 years' time.

Of course, some lighting is essential. It deters crime and makes vulnerable householders feel more secure. Too much intrusive light, however, contributes to stress and disrupts sleep patterns. Not only humans are affected. Migrating

birds and insects can be disoriented by light, and the circadian rhythm of plants can be upset.

But what can be done to alleviate the problem? One helpful measure is to ensure that outside lighting is well shaded and angled downward. Security lights can be sensor activated, rather than permanently lit. A French suburb tackled the problem by introducing outdoor high-pressure sodium lamps, which provide more precisely directed illumination, and by positioning hoods on existing low-pressure street lamps, directing light downward. Roads were resurfaced with light-absorbing black tar, and lights were switched off on public buildings after 11:00 p.m. Not only did this practically eliminate vertical light pollution and reduce reflected light by two thirds but energy efficiency was increased by 30 percent.

Of course, all such solutions take time and money—scarce commodities these days. How good it is to know that soon God's Kingdom government by his Son, Christ Jesus, will remove all forms of pollution! Then its subjects will once more be able to see clearly our Creator's handiwork, the beautiful starry heavens.—Psalm 19:1, 2; Revelation 11:18.

The Fascinating World of Miniature Books

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN BRITAIN

EXTRIMES are intriguing—the highest mountain, the deepest ocean, the tallest building, the longest tunnel—so, what about the smallest book? Miniature books are fascinating! Millions of them have been printed, on every conceivable subject and in at least 20 languages. If you have not explored their world, take a brief look now.

How do we define a miniature book? The accepted norm is a book that does not exceed three inches in either height or width. These measurements include the binding, although some meticulous collectors do prefer to consider just the book pages. Why were these miniature volumes printed?

Facets of the Art

Contrary to what one might expect, most miniature books are quite legible. Miniature almanacs, classic texts, novels, plays, dictionaries, and sacred writings can therefore be carried and used with little effort. Although years ago this would have been a prime reason to possess such tiny volumes, the modern collector is more concerned with another aspect of miniature books: the skill of those who printed and bound them.

Printers had to overcome many technical problems to design and make type that would be legible, with or without the use of a magnifying glass. Much of their work has resulted in books of great beauty. Paper and ink manufacturers also pooled their skills to ensure pristine clarity of the printed page.

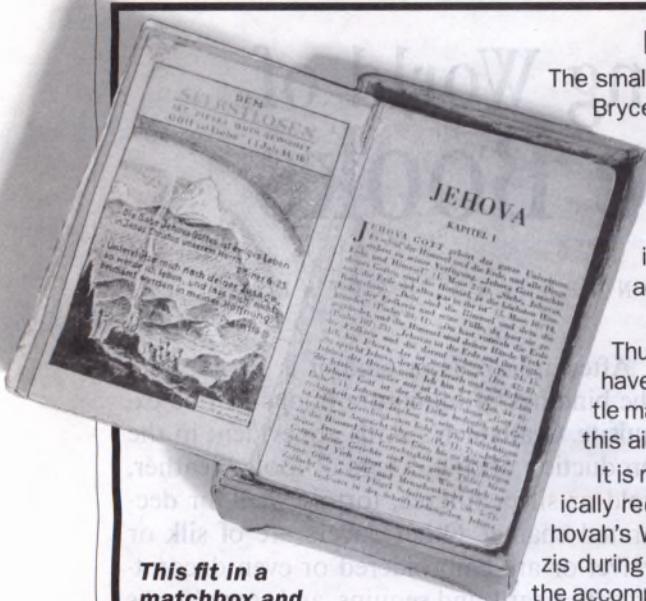
After a book is printed, it is bound; and the bindings of miniature books can be exquisite. Craftsmen's skills are evident in the production of tiny covers of tooled leather, gold or silver filigree, tortoiseshell, or decorated enamel. Other covers are of silk or velvet or are embroidered or even decorated with pearls and sequins, and some books have slipcases to preserve them.

The engravers who illustrated the texts created unbelievably detailed pictures, often covering less than one square inch of paper! An example is the portrait of Dr. Samuel Johnson, the English lexicographer, in the 368-page *Bryce's Thumb English Dictionary*, printed in the 1890's; and another is the illustration facing the title page of Shakespeare's *King Richard III*, dedicated in 1909 to the English actress Ellen Terry.

The *Bibliothèque Portative du Voyageur*, published in Paris, is a miniature library that is thought to have been carried by Napoléon



Although small, miniature books can be legible



This fit in a
matchbox and
was smuggled into
a concentration camp

Photomechanical Reduction

The smallest "New Testament" ever produced was by David Bryce, of Glasgow, Scotland, in 1895. It measures 3/4 by 5/8 inch and is only 5/16 inch thick! How was it possible to print this? "It is finely and clearly printed in photo-mechanical reduction," explains Louis Bondy in *Miniature Books*. With photography in its infancy a hundred years ago, this was no small achievement.

David Bryce also printed a number of complete Thumb Bibles using the same method. For those who have difficulty reading the fine print, each Bible has a little magnifying glass tucked inside the cover binding. With this aid, reading is possible for those who persevere.

It is noteworthy that the process of printing photographically reduced publications was turned to good use by Jehovah's Witnesses during their persecution both by the Nazis during World War II and by the Communists later. Seen in the accompanying illustration is a Bible study aid printed by this method. Concealed in a matchbox, it was smuggled to Witnesses in a Nazi concentration camp.

Bonaparte during his military campaigns. Its 49 volumes of French classics are kept in a leather-covered box, which when locked has the appearance of a large folio-size book.

Thumb Bibles

Thumb Bibles are not necessarily complete Bibles. Some are just "New Testaments." Others are epitomes of Bible stories or contain the whole history of the Bible condensed into about 7,000 words, and they were designed specifically to be read by children. They have such titles as *The Bible in Miniature*, *The History of the Holy Bible*, and *The Child's Bible*.

How did the thumb Bible get its name? The obvious explanation is that such a Bible is little bigger than the top part of a human thumb. Yet the book *Three Centuries of Thumb Bibles* suggests that the term may have been coined following the visit to England of the famous American mid-

et Charles Stratton, better known as General Tom Thumb. Backing up this claim is the fact that Tom Thumb visited England in 1844 and the term "thumb Bible" appears to have been used for the first time in London in 1849.

Unusual Scripture Volumes

A curious addition to the world of small Bibles is *The Finger New Testament*, printed about the turn of the century. It is only 1 3/16 inches wide and 3 9/16 inches long—finger length—hence, its name. However, since it is over three inches in length, it is not, strictly speaking, a miniature book, although it is generally classified with such Bibles. The 4-point type size used in this little volume is crystal clear and easily read by many without the use of magnification.

An unusual example is entitled *The Illustrated Bible*, with verses entitled *Railway to Heaven*. It remained in print for over 50 years during the early days of Britain's railways.

The author capitalized on the railways, with a two-page poem entitled "To Point You to Another Line." That other line is identified as "Jesus Christ, Jehovah's Son." The poem concludes: "My son, says God, give me thy heart. Make haste—or else the train will start."

Also unusual is the volume *My Morning Counsellor*, of the year 1900. It features a daily Bible text, and each month is prefaced by some form of the divine name. The form for February, for example, is "Jehovah-Shalom." Both this book and *The Illustrated Bible*, previously mentioned, demonstrate the fact that Jehovah, the name of God, was in common use in Britain a hundred years ago.

The Smallest?

Over the centuries many claims have been made for the smallest printed book. The first valid claim was made in 1674 when the book *Bloem-Hofje*, by C. van Lange, was printed in tiny type. *Miniature Books* describes it as being "the size of a finger-nail," and it set a record that held for over 200 years.

A famous edition of Dante's *La Divina Commedia* was printed in 2-point type, thought to be the smallest type ever em-

ployed—hardly legible to the naked eye. The book was produced in Padua, Italy, in 1878. It took a month to print 30 pages, and new type was necessary for every new form. Despite this, 1,000 copies were printed.

Reductions in size continued. In 1978 the nursery rhyme *Three Blind Mice* from the Gleniffer Press at Paisley, Scotland, became the "smallest book in the world." This limited edition was surpassed in 1985 by the same printers when they produced 85 copies of another nursery rhyme, *Old King Cole!* Each copy measures just 1/25 by 1/25 inch. The pages can be turned—with the aid of a needle!

Such minuscule books, described by Louis Bondy as "hardly more than specks of dust," give evidence of untold patience and craftsmanship. However, these tiny books go beyond the original concept of miniature books, which was to produce books that are legible and readily usable.

Fine collections of these delightful miniature volumes can be seen in museums, and many others are in private hands. If you ever enter their fascinating world, remember to handle these tiny books with great care. They are indeed works of art!

A library of miniature books



God's Name Adorns Czech Architecture

IN MANY parts of the world, the name Jehovah is associated exclusively with Jehovah's Witnesses. You may be surprised to know that in the Czech Republic, decorations on a number of historic structures include the Tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew letters (יהוה) that constitute the divine name, Jehovah.

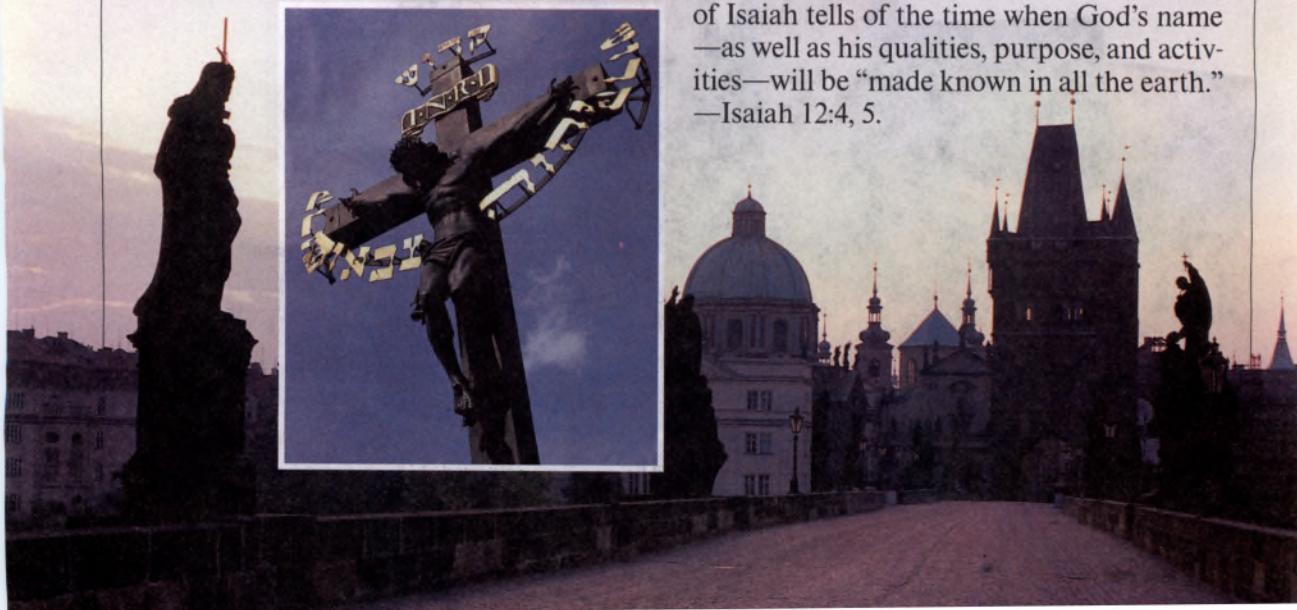
Perhaps the best-known example of the Tetragrammaton is on the Charles Bridge, built in 1357 across the lovely Vltava River, near the Old Town of Prague. This bridge is lined on both sides with sculptures, one of which catches the eye of almost everyone who passes. It is a statue of Jesus Christ on a cross, encircled by gleaming gold Hebrew characters—including the Tetragrammaton—that read "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of armies."

How did this expression, found in the Bible at Isaiah 6:3, come to be on this statue? An inscription on its base tells of a Jew who passed by one day in 1696 and supposedly spoke irreverently about the cross. Because of this, he was brought before the Royal Court of Appeal and was sentenced to pay

a penalty. In payment he provided a gilded halo for the cross, with the above citation.

Nearby are the Old-New Synagogue and the oldest Jewish cemetery in Europe. In this synagogue the cantor's stand bears the Tetragrammaton in a silver frame. But it is not only in Jewish buildings that the Tetragrammaton is to be found. Southeast of Prague, on a rocky spur overlooking the Sázava River, stands the medieval castle of Český Šternberk. Over the altar of the castle chapel are four golden letters—the Tetragrammaton. The letters appear to float in the air, as they are suspended on wires. Behind them a light gleams—but not from a lamp! A skylight, which cannot be seen from inside, casts a rosy glow on the white altar, above which the Tetragrammaton hovers.

The Tetragrammaton also appears in frescoes in other Czech buildings. They give further testimony that in the past many here were familiar with the name of God. Today, in the Czech Republic and in over 200 other lands, Jehovah's Witnesses rejoice to know the divine name and to teach others about it. (Isaiah 43:10-12) Moreover, the Bible book of Isaiah tells of the time when God's name—as well as his qualities, purpose, and activities—will be "made known in all the earth." —Isaiah 12:4, 5.



Young People Ask...



How Can I Avoid Being Smothered by My Friend?

"My friend acted as though she owned me. She gave me no breathing space."—Hollie.

THREE exists a friend sticking closer than a brother," says a wise proverb. (Proverbs 18:24) And if you have a friend who shares your convictions, sense of humor, or interests, you naturally want to be together. Says a youth named Caroline: "The closeness of my friendship with

some in the Christian congregation is a result of our taking part in activities together." As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, Caroline set aside a month in which she planned to spend 60 hours in the evangelizing work. Her friends organized their schedules to support her in this work!

But while togetherness has its benefits, sometimes it can feel like too much of a good thing. Hollie, quoted at the outset, feels smothered by one of her friends. And she is not alone in feeling this way. Hollie observes: "That seems to happen to other kids too. They almost live in each other's pockets until there is a huge explosion. Then they don't talk for weeks."

The problem is, telling a friend that you feel smothered and that you need more space is not easy. You may fear that you will hurt your friend's feelings. You may also fear that you will jeopardize your relationship. However, putting a healthy amount of space in a friendship is more likely to help than hurt.

To illustrate: In a public garden in Sydney, Australia, a large tree had to be enclosed by a chain fence. Why? Because battalions of visitors were gradually compacting the soil and choking the roots. Unprotected, the tree would have died. The same can be true of friendships. Too much togetherness can choke a relationship. King Solomon wrote: "Make your foot rare at the house of your fellowman, that he may not have his sufficiency of you and certainly hate you." —Proverbs 25:17.

The Need for Personal Time and Privacy

Why did Solomon say this? For one thing, all of us have a need for some personal time and privacy. Even Jesus Christ had such a need. Although he was close to his disciples, from time to time he would go off "by himself to pray." (Matthew 14:23; Mark 1:35)



True friends recognize each other's need for private time

God-fearing Isaac likewise found time to be alone. (Genesis 24:63) You too need a measure of personal time to handle such things as homework, chores, and your personal study of the Bible. And if your friends show a lack of consideration by overlooking your needs in this regard, resentment can easily flare up.

Don't be afraid, then, to let a friend know when you need some time to yourself. Since Christian love "does not look for its own interests," a true friend will usually try to be understanding. (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5; Proverbs 17:17) "During the period leading up to my final exams," writes a youth, "my friends were very supportive and understanding. I felt comfortable in asking them to leave when I needed time to study. Being honest with my

friends are—and what a worthwhile use of time together!

"Widen Out"

There is another reason why it is wise to put some space in a friendship. When we invest all our time and emotion in just one friendship, we may tend to neglect other important relationships—such as our relationship with our parents and siblings and with other Christians. We also greatly limit our emotional and spiritual growth. The Bible says: "By iron, iron itself is sharpened. So one man sharpens the face of another." (Proverbs 27:17) Obviously, there is only so much 'sharpening' you can receive by associating with just one person—especially when that one is a peer.

The Bible therefore discourages becom-

friends is easy; they know that all of us have responsibilities."

Of course, the Golden Rule requires that you extend the same consideration to your friends. (Matthew 7:12) A young person named Tamara writes: "My having many responsibilities has definitely made me more aware of my friend's need for time to herself." And when Tamara has duties at home, her friends do not urge her to rush through them or leave them until later. Rather, Tamara says, "they will usually help me do my work so that we can do things together afterward." What a treasure such unselfish

ing cliquish, narrow, or exclusive in our choice of friends. It urges us to "widen out." (2 Corinthians 6:13) "Even if you have a special relationship," advises the book *Moods and Feelings*, "it is important to make time to see other friends too."

Such advice is not always easy to apply. A Christian youth named Michael says: "Troy and I used to do everything together, both in the congregation and socially. We were inseparable. Then another young Witness moved into the congregation. He and I wanted to serve together as full-time evangelizers, so we began to spend time together." The result? "Troy stopped talking to me," says Michael, "and after making futile efforts at reconciling things, I stopped talking to him. This went on for a year." He describes their friendship as being "jealously possessive."

In a healthy relationship, however, friends do not treat each other like possessions. So if a friend proves resistant to your efforts to widen out, you need to have a heart-to-heart talk. Perhaps your friend simply needs assurance that you still cherish his or her friendship. Make it clear that you will continue to do things together.

Admittedly, it may take a while for your friend to adjust to the idea. Sixteen-year-old Zaneta, for example, felt twinges of jealousy when her close friend began spending time with others. But Zaneta says that she conquered these feelings, "thanks to prayer and personal Bible study." Thus she was able to maintain a close relationship with her friend. Michael's friend Troy also got over his initial jealousy, and they became good friends once again. Perhaps your friend will do likewise. Really, in the long run, widening out benefits everyone concerned. Seventeen-year-old Debbie finds that when her friends make new friends, "they often become my friends too."

What, though, if your friend simply refuses to accept these changes in your relationship? It may be that you'll have no choice but to go your separate ways. However, before concluding that all is lost, why not invite your parents' views on the matter? After all, God-fearing parents really are your closest friends. And they may have some practical suggestions that can help you salvage the friendship without compromising your need for space.

Spend Time With the Right Friends

A word of caution: Widening out does not mean being indiscriminate about your choice of friends. A book on friendship says: "It is natural to become like the people you spend a lot of time with. Sometimes this can happen without your knowing about it. You may begin to think and act like your peers regardless of how you may feel. In this way, your peer group may be in control of you." The Bible made this same point thousands of years ago when it said: "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.

When you are in school or on a job, you may have to spend time with people who are not interested in serving Jehovah. But when choosing close companions, remember the Bible's counsel: "Bad companions ruin good character."—1 Corinthians 15:33, Today's English Version.

Remember, too, that more important than any human friendship is one's friendship with our Creator, Jehovah God. Debbie, quoted earlier, has a number of good friends. Yet her advice is to "make sure that Jehovah always comes *first*." Faithful Abraham of old did, and Jehovah specially called him "my friend." (Isaiah 41:8) And consider this: Jehovah does not begrudge your giving time to your friends who also love him; in fact, he encourages it. What a true Friend he is!

Our Fight for the Right to Preach

As told by Grace Marsh

A few years ago, Professor Newton, then associated with Huntington College in Montgomery, Alabama, interviewed me about things that happened over 50 years ago. In 1946 a court case involving my activity as a minister of Jehovah's Witnesses was decided by the Supreme Court of the United States. Professor Newton's interest in what happened brought back many memories. Let me begin with my childhood.



I WAS born in 1906, in Randolph, Alabama, U.S.A., a fourth-generation Bible Student, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known. My great-grandfather Lewis Waldrop and my grandfather Sim Waldrop were baptized as Bible Students in the late 1800's.

Sim Waldrop's son Joseph was my father. Joseph made an impression on a girl named Belle by giving her a booklet that exposed the church teaching of hellfire. Belle was so delighted with what she read that she shared the booklet with her father, who was also intrigued by it. Later Joseph married Belle, and they had six children. I was the second oldest.

**With my grandfather
Sim Waldrop**

Each night, Father would gather the family around the fireplace and read aloud from the Bible and the *Watchtower* magazine. When he had finished reading, we would all kneel as Father said a heartfelt prayer. Every week, we traveled several miles in a horse-drawn wagon to Grandfather Sim's home for a meeting with fellow Bible Students.

At school our classmates often ridiculed us, calling us Russellites. That wasn't the insult that they meant it to be, for I highly regarded Charles Taze Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. How thrilled I was actually to see him

at an assembly in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1914! I can still remember him standing on the platform explaining the picture presentation called the "Photo-Drama of Creation."

In 1920 our family moved to Robertsdale, a small town east of Mobile, Alabama. Five years later I married Herbert Marsh. Herbert and I moved to Chicago, Illinois, and our son, Joseph Harold, was born there soon afterward. Sadly, I drifted away from the religion of my childhood, but it was still in my heart.

My Stand for Bible Truth

One day in 1930, I was shocked to my senses when I saw our landlord violently throw a Bible Student down the steps. I was enraged and spoke to our landlord about his behavior. He informed me that if I invited this man into our apartment, my husband and I could no longer live there. Needless to say, I promptly invited the Bible Student in for a cup of tea.

My husband and I attended a meeting of the Bible Students the following Sunday and were delighted to meet Joseph F. Rutherford, who had become president of the Watch Tower Society following Russell's death. Rutherford happened to be visiting Chicago at the time. These events stirred me to become active again in the Christian ministry. Soon thereafter, we moved back to Robertsdale, Alabama.

At a convention in Columbus, Ohio, in 1937, I made up my mind to become a pioneer, as full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses are called. In time, my husband, Herbert, was baptized, and soon he began serving as presiding overseer in the Robertsdale Congregation. Our son, Harold, was often my companion in the house-to-house ministry.

In 1941, I received an invitation to serve as a special pioneer in Brookhaven, Missis-

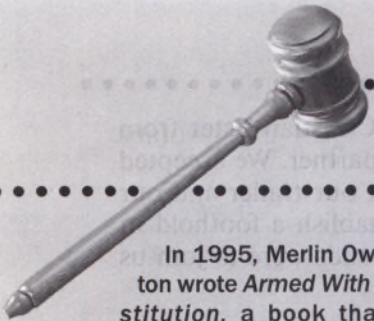
sippi. Violet Babin, a Christian sister from New Orleans, was my partner. We accepted the challenge and took our trailer and our children with us to establish a foothold in Brookhaven. Our husbands were to join us later.

At first, we had success in our ministry, and Violet's daughter and Harold were doing well in school. However, after Pearl Harbor was bombed by the Japanese in December of 1941 and the United States declared war, reaction to our work changed dramatically. There was a spirit of superpatriotism and a fear of conspiracy. Because of our political neutrality, people were suspicious of us, even accusing us of being German spies.

Harold was expelled from school because of his refusal to share in the flag ceremony. His teacher told me that Harold was smart and well-mannered, but the principal felt that he was a bad example because he did not salute the flag. The superintendent of schools was so upset with the principal and the school board's decision on this matter that he resigned and offered to pay for sending Harold to a private school!

We received threats of mob violence daily. On one occasion the police shoved us out of a lady's doorway, smashed our phonographs against a tree, broke our records of Bible lectures, tore our Bibles and literature to shreds, and finally set fire to everything they had confiscated. They told us to leave town before dark or we would be driven out by a mob. We quickly wrote and hand delivered letters to the town's officials, asking for protection. But they refused to provide any. I even called the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Jackson, Mississippi, and asked for help. They also advised us to leave town.

That night nearly one hundred angry men surrounded our trailer. We were two women alone with our children. We locked the doors, turned out the lights, and prayed



Armed With the Constitution

In 1995, Merlin Owen Newton wrote *Armed With the Constitution*, a book that documents the role of Jehovah's Witnesses in clarifying the application of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. At the time, Mrs. Newton was associate professor of history and political science at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama. Her thoroughly researched and well-documented book reviews two Alabama court cases that were carried

all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

One of these Supreme Court cases involved Grace Marsh, whose first-person story appears in the accompanying article. The other case, *Jones v. City of Opelika*, dealt with the right to disseminate religious beliefs through distribution of literature. Rosco and Thelma Jones, a black married couple, were full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In preparing her book, Professor Newton used contemporary periodicals and legal journals, Witnesses' memoirs and letters, interviews with and material published by the Witnesses themselves, and scholarly studies of Witness activities. The fascinating details and personal reflections provided by the defendants, attorneys, and judges in *Armed With the Constitution* have brought a piece of Jehovah's Witnesses' legal history to life.

fervently to Jehovah. Eventually, the crowd dispersed without harming us.

In view of these events, Herbert decided to join us in Brookhaven immediately. We took Harold back to his grandparents in Robertsdale, where the local school principal assured us that he would receive an education. When we returned to Brookhaven, the trailer had been vandalized and a warrant for our arrest had been nailed to one of the walls inside. Despite this opposition, we stood firm and continued in our ministry.

Arrested and Mistreated

In February of 1942, Herbert and I were arrested while we were conducting a Bible study in a modest little home. The man of the house was so angry at the treatment we received that he reached for his gun on the wall and threatened to shoot the policeman! We were charged with trespassing and were found guilty at the trial held the next day.

We were placed in a filthy, cold cell for 11 days. A local Baptist minister visited us while we were there, assuring us that if we

agreed to leave town, he would use his influence to set us free. We thought this was ironic, since his influence had put us there in the first place.

One corner of our cell had previously served as a toilet. The place was infested with bedbugs. Food was served on unwashed, dirty tin pans. As a result of these conditions, I became ill with pneumonia. A doctor was called in to see me, and we were released. That night a mob appeared at our trailer, so we went home to Robertsdale to await our trial.

The Trial

Baptists from all over the state came to Brookhaven for our trial, to lend support to the Baptist minister responsible for our arrest. This moved me to write a letter to my brother-in-law Oscar Skooglund, a staunch Baptist deacon. It was an impassioned letter and not very tactful. However, the treatment I received and what I wrote must have influenced Oscar for good, for in a short time, he became a strong Witness of Jehovah.

Our attorneys, G. C. Clark and Victor Blackwell, fellow Jehovah's Witnesses, were convinced that we would be unable to receive a fair trial in Brookhaven. So they decided to object the case out of court. Every time the prosecutor opened his mouth, one of our attorneys objected. They objected at least 50 times. Finally, the judge dismissed all charges.

A New Preaching Assignment

After resting up and regaining my health, I resumed pioneering, with my son Harold. In 1943 we were given an assignment closer to home, Whistler and Chickasaw, small communities near Mobile, Alabama. I thought that these new territories would be less hazardous, since the U.S. Supreme Court had

just rendered a number of rulings favorable to Jehovah's Witnesses and public attitudes toward our work had begun to improve.

Soon we had a group of Bible students in Whistler, and we needed our own meeting place. Anyone who could drive a nail worked on building our small Kingdom Hall, and 16 were in attendance for our first meeting. Chickasaw, however, was a different story, for it was a company town, owned by Gulf Shipbuilding Corporation. Yet, it looked like any other small town, with its business block, post office, and shopping center.

One day in December of 1943, Aileen Stephens, a fellow pioneer, and I were offering the latest copies of our Bible magazines to passersby in Chickasaw when Deputy Chatham told us that we had no right to preach, since we were on private property. We explained that we were not peddling and that our work was religious and was protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

More Arrests and Imprisonments

The following week Aileen and I met with E. B. Peebles, the vice president of Gulf Shipbuilding, and we explained the importance of our religious activity. He warned us that the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses would not be permitted in Chickasaw. We explained that people had gladly received us into their homes. Could he deny them the right to study the Bible? He became hostile

Grace Marsh today



and threatened to throw us into jail for trespassing.

I returned to Chickasaw time and again and was arrested each time. But, each time, I was released on bond. Eventually, the bond was raised to exorbitant levels, and I would spend more and more time in jail until we could raise the needed money. The jail conditions were unsanitary—no toilet facilities, filthy mattresses without sheets, and one dirty blanket for cover. As a result, my health problems resurfaced.

On January 27, 1944, the cases of six Witnesses arrested on December 24, 1943, were tried together, and my testimony was considered representative of the other defendants. Even though the trial revealed open discrimination against Jehovah's Witnesses, I was found guilty. We appealed the decision.

On January 15, 1945, the court of appeals announced its verdict: I was guilty of trespassing. Furthermore, the Alabama Supreme Court refused to hear my case. On May 3, 1945, Hayden Covington, one of Jehovah's Witnesses and a bold and energetic attorney, petitioned for appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

While Aileen and I were waiting to hear from the Supreme Court, we turned the tables on our accusers by filing a civil suit against E. B. Peebles and his allies in the sheriff's department, asking for damages. Our accusers tried to change the charge they had used against us from trespassing to obstructing traffic, but when I was in jail, I had smuggled out a paper signed by Deputy Chatham, charging us with trespassing. When this evidence was presented in court, Sheriff Holcombe jumped to his feet and almost swallowed his cigar! The trial, in February 1945, ended with a deadlocked jury.

The Supreme Court Decides

The U.S. Supreme Court was interested in my case because trespassing on private

property introduced a new aspect of the question of religious freedom. Covington proved that Chickasaw's regulation violated the liberties not only of the defendants but of the community as a whole.

On January 7, 1946, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the lower court ruling and rendered a historic decision in our favor. Justice Black delivered the decision, which included these words: "Insofar as the State [of Alabama] has attempted to impose criminal punishment on appellant [Grace Marsh] for undertaking to distribute religious literature in a company town, its action cannot stand."

An Ongoing Fight

Herbert and I finally settled in Fairhope, Alabama, and continued to work for Kingdom interests throughout the years. I lost Herbert in 1981, but I have many happy memories of our times together. My son, Harold, stopped serving Jehovah later in life and died soon thereafter, in 1984. This was one of my life's greatest heartaches.

I am thankful, though, that Harold and his wife, Elsie, gave me three wonderful granddaughters and that I now also have great-grandchildren who are baptized Witnesses. Three of my sisters, Margaret, Ellen Jo, and Crystal, are still living and continue as faithful servants of Jehovah. Crystal married Lyman Swingle, who is a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. They live at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, in Brooklyn, New York. In spite of severe health problems during the past few years, Crystal has remained a wonderful example and an encouragement to me.

In my more than 90 years, I have learned never to fear what man can do, for Jehovah is stronger than any sheriff, any judge, any man. As I reflect on these past events, I highly esteem the privilege of having had a share in 'defending and legally establishing the good news'!—Philippians 1:7.



The Puma Everywhere and Nowhere

By Awake! correspondent in Brazil

THE sky over South America's rain forest was turning that hard-to-describe color or it gets right before the tropical night erases the color. Then, suddenly and silently, there the puma was! It had warily stepped into a forest clearing and stopped in its tracks.

For a moment the big cat stood motionless, except for the tip of its tail, which kept moving like a low-speed windshield wiper. Then, when it noticed that it was being watched, the puma leapt across the clearing and dashed into the forest. That afternoon some years ago, I could see why racy sports

shoes, fast automobiles, and even fighter jets have borne its name. Clearly, the puma, or cougar, America's second-largest cat, is designed for speed.*

Bundle of Muscles

Because of its plain, tawny color, the puma may remind you of a lioness. The facial part of its head, though, is not as rectangular as that of its African cousin. Rather, the puma's head is round and small and is topped by equally round and small ears. From the side, its head looks like a bullet

* The largest cat in the Americas is the jaguar; see *Awake!*, August 22, 1990, pages 25-7.

Pictures: Courtesy São Paulo Zoo

"Live and Let Live"?

Legislation protecting the puma, or cougar, in the western United States has not only boosted the puma population but led to an increase in collisions between pumas and humans. The cause is obvious: A growing number of people are settling at the edge of the wilderness—in puma country—causing a public-safety

problem. Even so, puma attacks are still rare.

Researchers have documented 65 puma attacks on humans in the United States and Canada since 1890—that comes down to about 3 attacks every five years. Of those 65, perhaps 10 attacks were fatal. By comparison, in the United States alone, about

40 people a year die of bee stings.

"Given the opportunities available," notes wildlife biologist Kevin Hansen, "attacks on people are surprisingly rare events indeed, suggesting an overwhelming willingness on the part of the cougar to live and let live, at least where humans are concerned."

—streamlined and long. It gazes at you with large green eyes. A patch of white fur around its mouth gives the impression that it submerged its snout in a bowl of milk and forgot to wipe its mouth. Its body, lithe and lean, may measure five feet or more, not counting the thick, dark-tipped tail.

Long and sturdy hind legs cause its rump to be higher than its shoulders. Those powerful legs give this 130-pound bundle of muscles the booster power to blast off the ground like a rocket. Pumas have been seen to leap vertically to a height of 18 feet in one big jump. That's like pole-vaulting without bothering to use a pole!

When jumping down, the puma is equally impressive. It has been known to make flying jumps to the ground from a height of 60 feet. This is nearly twice the height of platforms used by Olympic platform divers, but the puma doesn't have the benefit of a filled swimming pool below. Even so, the cat hits the ground ready to bound away as if it had landed on a trampoline.

"This is a powerful, formidable animal," says wildlife biologist Kenneth Logan. "Once you learn how these cats make their living, they command a lot of respect." Remark-

ably, they seem to be practically everywhere—but nowhere.

Almost Everywhere, yet Invisible

When the first colonists settled in the New World, the puma's range spanned the entire continent, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It made a living in mountains, swamps, prairies, and jungles alike. Though hunters and farmers have now eliminated the puma from many parts of North America, it remains the all-American cat, still wandering from Canada to the tip of South America. If you measure the success of an animal by the extent of its geographic distribution and the diversity of its habitat, then the puma must be the most successful native American mammal today. The secret of its success?

The puma is well equipped for survival. It has a sturdy stomach and uses varied hunting methods. It can adjust to almost any kind of local food. "It is able to kill and drag an animal five times its size, but it also eats grasshoppers if nothing else is around," says a veterinarian who has examined the stomach contents of several pumas killed in Brazil. "When it comes to food, the puma is more versatile than any other species of cats."

Diverse food also calls for diverse hunting skills. Grabbing, let's say, a bird requires

a different tactic from pouncing on a deer. How does the puma do it? In Brazil's Atlantic forest, it attracts the tinamou by imitating the bird's call. "A perfect imitation," says one observer. "The tinamou calls only a few times, but the puma whistles on—10 or 20 times." Nevertheless, it works. The tinamou thinks a noisy male bird has invaded his territory and decides to step forward and confront his rival—a fatal move.

Whether you search for the puma in North, Central, or South America, it manages, for the most part, to stay out of sight—like the air, omnipresent but invisible. The adjectives most often used by researchers studying the puma are "secretive, elusive and wary." After killing about 70 pumas, one hunter admitted that "he had never seen one of his victims before the dogs had driven it up a tree." No wonder frustrated researchers have called the cat "maddeningly elusive"!

A Cat of Many Names

The all-American cat, though, is not only hard to spot but hard to define as well. The puma, states *The Guinness Book of Animal Records*, "has more names than any other mammal in the world." Besides the 40-odd names known in English, "it also has at least 18 native South American names and a further 25 native North American names."

Puma, the name most used by zoologists, comes from the Quechua language of Peru. Mountain lion, catamount, panther, painter, red tiger, and deer tiger are a few of the other names given to this cat.

Dr. Faiçal Simon, curator of the São Paulo Zoo and an expert on pumas, observed: "The puma's behavior and physical capabilities have little in common with the other big cats." This is truly a different kind of cat and one that varies in size and color. Up to 30 subspecies of the puma are recognized throughout the Americas, 6 of them in Brazil.

Should It Be Eliminated?

To many cattle ranchers in Brazil and elsewhere, the puma is vermin and ought to be shot at first sight. But does the puma really deserve the reputation of a serial cattle killer? "If wild animals are available, the puma rarely kills cattle," Dr. Simon explains. "The few times it happens surely don't justify a systematic destruction of this animal. Actually, by shooting pumas, ranchers are hurting themselves." In what way?

For example, in Brazil's Pantanal, a swamp-land larger than South Korea, where countless cattle roam freely, ranchers kill pumas. As a result, relates Dr. Simon, the armadillo population—the puma's preferred food in that region—is growing rapidly. Armadillos are armor-encased mammals that are the size of rabbits and that burrow holes. With no pumas around, the armadillos are turning Pantanal's pastures into killing fields. How so?

Well, cattle step in the holes, break their legs, and die. "Those ranchers are now losing more cattle than before because they've killed the pumas," says Dr. Simon. "It's just one more example of what happens when man interferes with nature."

A growing number of people in the Americas want to preserve the puma. Thus, authorities in some parts of North America have passed puma-friendly laws that regulate hunting and maintain the cat's habitat.

As a result, in the western United States, the puma is making a comeback, repopulating former habitats. Granted, not everyone welcomes this, but many do. *Smithsonian* magazine notes that the puma "has made a beautiful . . . transition in a relatively short period, from vermin to a very desired animal."

The puma is desired by nature lovers and by hunters. For the former, the cat is a majestic symbol of the wilderness, but for the latter, he remains a trophy. The question is, For how long can the puma be both?

WATCHING THE WORLD

Expensive Drug Habit

A U.S. government report estimates that Americans spent \$57.3 billion on illegal drugs in 1995. Cocaine accounted for two thirds of the sales, while heroin, marijuana, and other illicit drugs made up the remainder. The director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Barry McCaffrey, noted that the amount of money spent on these drugs could have bought four-year college educations for a million people or 22 billion gallons of milk to feed undernourished babies, reports the Associated Press. Moreover, this figure does not take into account the social costs, such as increased crime, disruption in personal and family lives, and the spread of diseases like hepatitis and AIDS.

Forgotten Law

How many of the Bible's Ten Commandments can you recite? A study in Rio de Janeiro found that more than 1 out of 4 Brazilians could not name any of them! Of those who knew at least one of the commandments, 42 percent mentioned "Do not kill" or "Do not steal." Others recalled "Do not desire your neighbor's wife" (38 percent), "Honor [your] father and mother" (22 percent), and "Do not bear false witness" (14 percent), reports *Veja*. Only 13 percent of the respondents remembered the third commandment: "Do not take God's holy name in vain."

Early IQ Tests for Children

Scientists studying human intelligence now believe that an infant's brain undergoes its most critical stage of development between birth and three years of age. It is also thought that in response to mental stimulation, permanent connections are established in the brain during this phase. Thus, some parents have begun giving their children IQ tests long



before they enter kindergarten, to help them gain a competitive edge, reports *Modern Maturity*. However, Dr. Barry Zuckerman, chairman of the department of pediatrics at the Boston University School of Medicine, expressed concern over parents who feel "pressured to 'stimulate' their baby every minute" in an attempt to produce a "super baby." Richard Weinberg, professor of child psychology, adds: "Pushing children to compete too early often backfires. Let your kids enjoy their childhood."

Careful Copyists

The texts making up the Greek Scriptures of the Bible have been meticulously copied and handed down with great care says Dr. Barbara Aland,

head of the Institute for New Testament Research, in Münster, Germany. "Mistakes or even theologically motivated changes are rare," reports the *Westfälische Nachrichten*. Since 1959 the institute has examined over 5,000 handwritten manuscripts, which date from the Middle Ages and classical antiquity. Some 90 percent of the manuscripts have been recorded on microfilm. Why did Bible copyists take such great care not to make mistakes? Because they "regarded themselves as 'copyists' and not authors," says the newspaper.

Is It Really Decaf?

Those who are sensitive to caffeine often turn to a decaffeinated beverage as an alternative. But what are your chances of getting true decaffeinated coffee when you ask for it? According to a report in *The New York Times*, they are about 1 in 3. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration defines decaffeinated coffee as having two to five milligrams of caffeine. But samples from 18 coffee merchants in New York City revealed that the amount of caffeine in a five-ounce cup varied widely, from 2.3 milligrams of caffeine to 114 milligrams! According to the National Coffee Association, a standard cup of regular coffee contains between 60 and 180 milligrams of caffeine.

Worldwide Deforestation

"Two thirds of the planet's forest cover has already been destroyed," reports *Jornal da*

Tarde. Of the earth's 30 million square miles of original forest areas, only 10 million remain. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has found that Asia is the most deforested continent, with 88 percent of its original vegetation destroyed. In Europe the figure is 62 percent, in Africa 45 percent, in Latin America 41 percent, and in North America 39 percent. Amazonia, home to the world's largest tropical rain forest, has more than 85 percent of its original forest remaining. *O Estado de S. Paulo* quotes WWF's Garo Batmanian as saying: "Brazil has the opportunity to avoid repeating the errors committed in other forests."

Treasures Stolen

A recent news release from Canada announced that "international crime rings are targeting Mesopotamian treasures that have been left virtually defenseless in the wake of the 1991 Persian Gulf war," reports *World Press Review*. In 1996, thieves broke into the Babylon Museum in broad daylight and seized cylinders and tablets that were inscribed with cuneiform writing. The rare antiquities, some dating back to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, were estimated to be worth more than \$735,000 on international art markets. Another area targeted by thieves is the ancient city of Al-Hadhr. In an effort to protect the remaining treasures, the government has sealed off all the city's doors and passageways with bricks and mortar, states the magazine.

Catholic Church Seeks Forgiveness

The Roman Catholic Church in France has issued a formal "Declaration of Repentance," asking God and the Jewish people for forgiveness for the "indifference" the Catholic Church showed toward the persecution of Jews under France's wartime Vichy government. From 1940 to 1944, more than 75,000 Jews were arrested and deported from France to Nazi death camps. In a statement read by Archbishop Olivier de Berranger, the church admitted that it had allowed its own interests "to obscure the biblical



imperative of respect for every human being created in the image of God," reports the French newspaper *Le Monde*. Although a handful of French clergy spoke out in favor of the Jews, the majority supported the Vichy government and its policies. The declaration stated in part: "The church must recognize that in regard to the persecution of the Jews, and especially in regard to manifold anti-Semitic measures decreed by the Vichy authorities, indifference by far prevailed over indignation. Silence was the rule, and words in favor of the victims the exception. . . . Today, we confess that this silence was a mistake. We also recognize that the church in France failed in its mission as the educator of people's consciences."

Destructive Weevils

Since the red palm weevil arrived on the Arabian Peninsula less than 20 years ago, this small insect has burrowed into thousands of date palms and caused untold damage. "There are even fears that dates—Arabia's 5,000-year-old 'fruit of life'—could be wiped out," reports *The Economist*. The weevil, measuring just two inches in length, bores a series of tunnels inside the palm's trunk and slowly kills the tree. Pesticides have had little effect on the insect, and it continues to multiply rapidly throughout the region.

Advantages of Older Employees

Workers over the age of 47 are more alert and more efficient in the morning than their younger colleagues, reports *The Times* of London. Since this pattern tends to reverse itself later in the day, Tom Reilly, of Liverpool's John Moores University, suggests that employers schedule older employees for early shifts and younger ones for afternoons and evenings. Speakers at the British Medical Association's conference on aging also revealed that supermarkets and do-it-yourself stores often prefer to employ older people. Why? Because they show more concern for customers and display knowledge regarding how to do things for which there are no written instructions. They also adhere to "ethical standards from which a company might have drifted," reports the newspaper.

FROM OUR READERS

Singapore The article "Singapore—Asia's Tarnished Jewel" (June 8, 1997) exposed the shocking way this modern government has treated peace-loving Christians. I personally know many of the Christian men and women there, and they are all nice, loving people. It encourages me that they serve Jehovah despite persecution.

I. O., Malaysia

Anger In the article "Why Control Your Anger?" (June 8, 1997), you say that Simeon and Levi were cursed by their father. I'm sure I've read somewhere that it was their anger that Jacob cursed.

S. L., United States

Our reader is correct on this point. "The Watchtower" of June 15, 1962, explained: "Jacob did not, in his dying breath, curse Simeon and Levi themselves. He cursed their anger, 'because it is cruel.' He cursed their fury, 'because it acts harshly.'"
—ED.

Diet The article "Your Diet—Can It Kill You?" (June 22, 1997) saved my life. After reading it, I told my wife to call the doctor at once, as the article described me perfectly. After examining me, my doctor scheduled me for surgery the next morning. He had me hospitalized immediately, since he was afraid I wouldn't survive the night. I am home now, recuperating from a triple bypass.

F. S., United States

At times, my husband and I find it difficult to control ourselves at meals. I have read other articles on diet, but this one discussed things in a simple and practical manner. I am sure that by putting your suggestions into practice, we will be able to keep ourselves in good health.

V. A., Brazil

Thanks for the series "Your Diet—Why Be Concerned." It helped me to see the risks of being overweight. I have started to follow all the suggestions in it, and with the help of Jehovah, I know I will control my eating.

V. Y. D., Liberia

Dragonflies Thank you so much for the thoroughly enjoyable article "Jewels of the Riverbank." (June 22, 1997) It was about one of my favorite aerial performers, the dragonfly. When I work in my garden, a dragonfly is almost always hovering or resting nearby. I asked a man who does landscaping why this is so. He said that a dragonfly's diet includes mosquitoes and that mosquitoes are attracted to people. So now I view this colorful creature as sort of a personal bodyguard!

J. F., United States

Search for Justice I enjoyed the article "Our Search for Justice." (June 22, 1997) God's righteous qualities certainly draw those who sigh and cry because of injustices. I am especially sensitive to injustice, and I have to make a real effort to adjust my views and actions according to God's standards.

D. L., Taiwan

I disagree with the introduction. When you speak of the Texan defenders of The Alamo, you do not say that they were bandits trying to snatch a territory that belonged to Mexico.

A. C., Mexico

We did not discuss the complex issues involved in the fight at The Alamo, as they did not seem to be germane to Antonio Villa's personal story. However, our May 22, 1971, issue of "Awake!" did state: "Most Americans forget, or never did know, that San Antonio had been part of Mexico. Mexico regarded the battle as the putting down of rebellion in her territory. America used it . . . to justify its intervention in Mexican affairs."—ED.

'It Was Like Eating Honey'

In MID-1993, at Altus, Oklahoma, U.S.A., a concerned father, a first sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, prayed for guidance to help his daughter, who was having marital problems and was contemplating divorce. The following morning one of Jehovah's Witnesses called at his door and offered him the July 8, 1993, issue of *Awake!*, which featured the subject "Divorce—The Door to a Happier Life?"

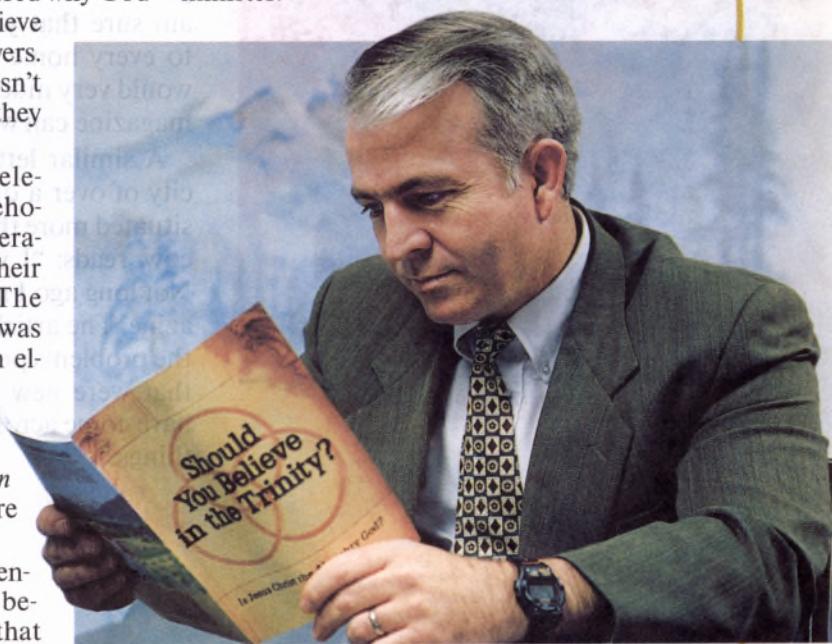
Although the man had never liked the Witnesses and had never listened to them before, he readily accepted and read that *Awake!* magazine. Later he shared scriptures and points from it with his daughter. He also read the issue of *The Watchtower* that had been left along with the *Awake!* It contained an article that prompted him to think deeply about his life-long belief in the Trinity. He realized that his prayer for help in connection with his daughter was being answered, yet he wondered why God would use people who don't believe in the Trinity to answer his prayers. He reasoned that surely God doesn't use people to answer prayers if they don't teach the truth.

He was thus prompted to telephone the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses to get some literature explaining in more detail their beliefs regarding the Trinity. The man who answered the phone was attending a meeting of Christian elders. The air force sergeant immediately went to the Kingdom Hall, where he was given the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* and the brochure *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*

That night, the man read the entire brochure. While reading it he became so excited, he said later, that

he had to pause and say to himself, 'Just slow down. This can't be happening. This is just too good to be true.' The brochure presented the Bible's proof against the doctrine of the Trinity so clearly that when he read it, he explained, "it was just like eating honey." The next evening he attended his first meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses and was delighted with what he heard.

After his first Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses and a thorough discussion on the Bible's view of smoking, he destroyed his cigarettes and never smoked again. A Bible study was held with him several times each week. Three months after reading the *Trinity* brochure, and after having retired from the military, he began sharing in the public preaching work with the Witnesses. Three months later he symbolized his dedication to Jehovah God and was baptized. He now serves as a full-time minister.



A Moscow Teacher Helped by *Awake!*



Пробудитесь!

22 февраля 1996 г.



A teacher wrote the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia to say that she plans to use articles from *Awake!* in her school classes. She explained:

"I feel that *Awake!* helps me to find new power to live, restores my spirit, and frees me from depressing thoughts. I am thankful to you for the wonderful articles about man's struggle with microbes [February 22, 1996, issue]. I am sure that your magazines bring goodness to every home that has them." She added: "I would very much like to receive *Awake!*... Your magazine can without a doubt help me."

A similar letter, received from Stavropol, a city of over a quarter of a million population, situated more than 700 miles southeast of Moscow, reads: "I would like to order the *Awake!* Not long ago I received two copies of this magazine. The articles showed an understanding of the problems people face. Some described facts that were new to me. This is the first time I have come across such a realistic description of things."