

Awake!

SEPTEMBER 8, 2003



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FASHION?

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Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING **22,755,000**
PUBLISHED IN **85 LANGUAGES**

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Is beauty defined by what we wear or by what we are?



The Changing Face of FASHION

WHETHER we realize it or not, our daily decisions as to what we will wear are shaped at least to a degree by fashion. Ultimately, the forces of fashion largely determine what is available to buy.

Even items of clothing that we now take for granted were once the latest style. The man's dress shirt and necktie, for instance, became the fashion rage over a century ago. And the woman's sweater became an established style back in the 1920's.

Two basic desires fuel the fashion industry—novelty and conformity. Nearly everyone likes to wear something new. That is why we sometimes buy clothes, not because an older garment has worn out, but simply because we want a change. At the same time, we do not want to look out of place, so we buy clothes that conform to some degree to the style worn by our associates. Over the centuries the clothing industry has catered to—and sometimes exploited—these desires for novelty and conformity.

A Brief History

To create a style, designers use five basic elements: color, silhouette, drape, texture, and line balance (or patterns on the surface of the material). The options available to designers and dressmakers in all five areas have multiplied over the years. In ancient Egypt, for example, locally produced see-through linen was the fabric of choice, and it was ideal for a warm climate. But since linen could not be dyed easily, it was usually



just one color—bleached white. Still, Egyptian fashion designers pleated the material so that their clothes had a pleasing drape and silhouette. Thus one of the world's most enduring styles was born.

By the first century C.E., new fabrics and colors were available. Affluent Romans imported silk from China or India, although the expense of transport made woven silk as costly as gold. Another fashionable material was dyed wool from Tyre, a pound of which could cost 1,000 denarii—three years' wages for a typical worker. The new dyes and materials enabled wealthy Roman women to wear a stola—a long, ample outer garment—of blue cotton from India or perhaps yellow silk from China.

Although new styles arose periodically, in past eras a costly garment would likely be in fashion for a lifetime. Changes came slowly and usually affected just the nobility. With the coming of the industrial revolution, however, fashion became much more relevant to the common people.

During the 19th century, whole industries arose to clothe both the rich and the poor. Mechanized cotton and woolen mills proliferated, and the price of fabrics came down. Because of sewing machines, clothes could be produced more cheaply, and new synthetic dyes offered a much greater choice of colors.

Social and technological changes played an even greater role in clothing the masses. In Western Europe and North America, people had more money to spend. In the 1850's, women's magazines appeared, and soon thereafter department stores began to offer ready-to-wear clothes in standard sizes. Also in the 19th century, Charles Frederick Worth introduced fashion shows, using live models to spark the interest of prospective clients.

In the 20th century, new synthetic fibers, such as rayon, nylon, and polyester, offered manufacturers a wider array of fabrics. Computerized designs made it easy to produce new styles, and because of globalization, new fashion trends could appear almost simultaneously on the streets of Tokyo, New York, Paris, and São Paulo. Meanwhile, designers and manufacturers have found new ways to promote their products.

Today young people have taken the place of the wealthy as the most ardent fashion enthusiasts. Every month, millions of them buy new clothes, and the trade produces hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of clothing a year.* But are there hidden snares?

* In one recent year, the value of garments produced was estimated at \$335 billion.

This ancient Egyptian linen garment was one of the world's most enduring fashions

Photograph taken by courtesy of the British Museum



In ancient Rome women wore a stola

From the book
Historia del Traje, 1917



The kimono has survived since approximately 650 C.E.

From the newspaper
La Ilustración Artística,
Volume X, 1891

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.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589. © 2003 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

The Image Makers

For centuries kings and nobles set the standards of dress. In the 17th century, King Louis XIII of France decided to wear a wig to cover his baldness. Before long, European nobles were shaving their heads and wearing wigs—a style that lasted more than a century.

In the 19th century, women's magazines brought fashion trends to the fore and even offered inexpensive patterns so that women could make their own clothes. In the 20th century, as movies and television gained popularity, stars became international idols and

set trends in fashion. Popular musicians too sported radical styles, which many youths quickly imitated. Today, little has changed, as advertisers make effective use of fashion shows, glossy magazines, billboards, shop windows, and television advertisements to generate a demand for new clothes.

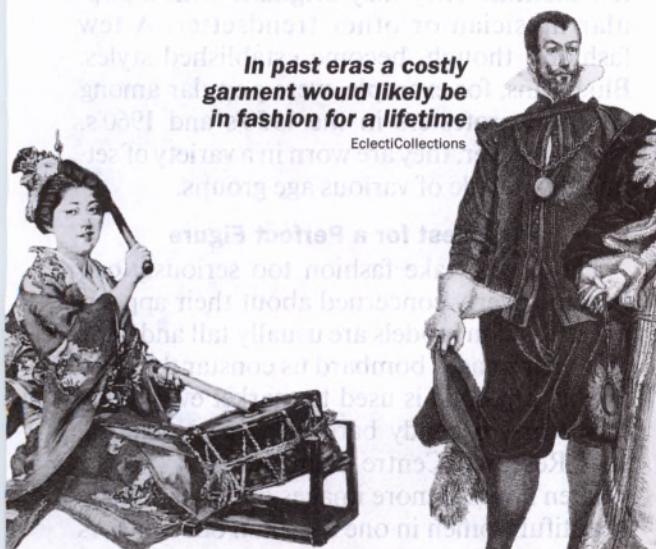


King Louis XIII

From the book *The Historian's History of the World*

In past eras a costly garment would likely be in fashion for a lifetime

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Semimonthly Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Arabic, Cebuano, Croatian, Czech,² Danish,² Dutch, English,² Estonian, Finnish,² French,² German,² Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,² Japanese,² Korean,² Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese,² Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,² Swahili, Swedish,² Tagalog, Ukrainian

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The industrial revolution made it possible for common people to be more fashion conscious

EclectiCollections

Publication of *Awake!* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References is used.

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The Dark Side of Glamour

THREE is no doubt that following fashion can help you to improve your appearance and boost your self-confidence. The right outfit can minimize some physical flaws and even enhance your positive features. It can also have a bearing on how you are viewed by others.

But there is a dark side to the fashion world, one that cannot be ignored. Shoppers can become trapped in an endless cycle of replenishing their wardrobe. After all, the industry keeps churning out new styles. This is no accident, for fashion houses make more money when clothes become obsolete quickly. As designer Gabrielle Chanel put it, "fashion is made to become unfashionable." Thus, the unwary consumer might feel obligated to buy new clothes just to keep up to date.

There is also the danger of succumbing to the subtle pressure of advertising. Fashion companies spend millions of dollars promoting their products, often portraying a certain carefree life-style that those who wear their label supposedly enjoy. These messages can have a powerful impact. "Nothing is more traumatic for teenagers than not having the 'right brand' of shoes," says a schoolteacher in Spain.

The Lure of Fads

Some groups use a certain style of clothing to identify themselves. What they wear may convey a rejection of society, a liberal life-style, or even violent or racist ideals. Although some of these styles may be outrageous or shock-

ing, there is usually a high degree of conformity within the group. Even some who do not endorse the group's ideals may be attracted to the style. Those who adopt these trends of dress may give others the impression that they share and promote the group's core beliefs.

Fads usually come and go, some within a few months. They may originate with a popular musician or other trendsetter. A few fashions, though, become established styles. Blue jeans, for example, were popular among youthful protesters in the 1950's and 1960's. Now, however, they are worn in a variety of settings by people of various age groups.

The Quest for a Perfect Figure

Those who take fashion too seriously can become overly concerned about their appearance. Fashion models are usually tall and slim, and their images bombard us constantly.* The "right" physique is used to market everything from cars to candy bars. Britain's Social Issues Research Centre estimates that "young women now see more images of outstandingly beautiful women in one day than our mothers saw throughout their entire adolescence."

This barrage of images can have a detrimental effect. In the United States, for example, a survey quoted in *Newsweek* found that 90 percent of white teenagers were dissatisfied with their bodies. Some of these will do virtually anything to attain the 'ideal figure.' Yet,

* Models are usually expected to be "at least 5 ft. 9 in., bone thin, have full lips, high cheekbones, large eyes, long legs and a straight, not too prominent nose," reports *Time* magazine.

Some have been led down the slippery slope of anorexia



Keeping up with fads can be costly

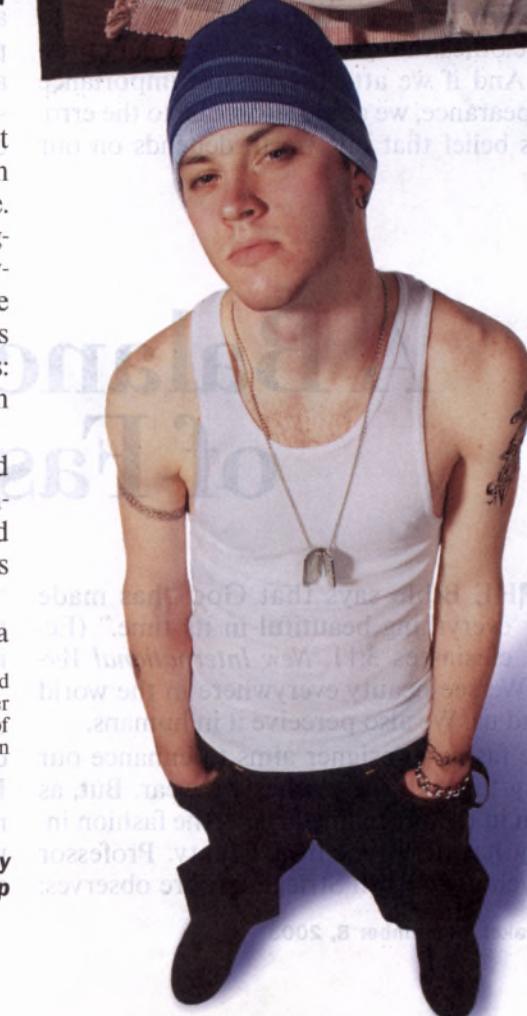
the Social Issues Research Centre claims that less than 5 percent of the female population can achieve the media ideal of weight and size. Nevertheless, the idolizing of the very thin figure has led millions of young women into slavery. It has led some down the slippery slope of anorexia nervosa.* Spanish model Nieves Álvarez, who suffered from anorexia, admits: "Putting on weight frightened me more than dying."

True, eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia can be caused by a number of other factors. However, Drs. Anne Guillemot and Michel Laxenaire state: "The cult of slimness bears some responsibility."

Clearly, fashion has a positive side and a

* The U.S. National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders estimates that eight million people suffer from anorexia in the United States alone and that a number of cases prove fatal. The vast majority of these (86 percent) began to suffer from eating disorders before the age of 21.

Adopting some clothing trends may identify you with a certain group





Would Anyone Really Wear That?

The fashion houses of New York, Paris, and Milan parade exclusive clothing of top designers every spring and fall. Apart from their huge price tag, many of these creations seem highly impractical, if not unwearable. "The extravagant, outrageous designs you see are not really created with the public in

mind," says Spanish designer Juan Duyos. "The purpose of the fashion show may be more to draw attention to the designer or the brand name than to sell the clothes that are on display. For example, a striking collection that draws a lot of comment from the media might help to sell a designer brand of perfume."

negative side. It fills a basic human desire to look presentable and have something new to wear. But fashion extremes could lead us to wear clothes that give others a wrong impression. And if we attach excessive importance to appearance, we could subscribe to the erroneous belief that our worth depends on our

'packaging' rather than on our inner values. "We have to begin to value more a person's ability and inner self, rather than simple wrapping," says Álvarez, quoted earlier. But such a change in standards is unlikely to happen soon. How, then, can we find a balanced view of fashion?

A Balanced View of Fashion

THE Bible says that God "has made everything beautiful in its time." (Ecclesiastes 3:11, *New International Version*) We see beauty everywhere in the world around us. We also perceive it in humans.

The fashion designer aims to enhance our beauty through the clothes we wear. But, as shown in the preceding article, the fashion industry has also redefined beauty. Professor of psychology Ruth Striegel-Moore observes:

"We've become so used to seeing extremely thin women, we've come to think this is what is beautiful."

Clearly, it would be unwise to let the world's current concept of beauty pressure us into conformity. In her book *Always in Style*, Doris Pöoser points out that "today's woman has no need to change or camouflage her body whenever a new 'ideal' emerges." Indeed, why should we allow the media to impose its own

particular stereotype? "How much easier it is being ourselves, instead of trying frantically to change what we have," Pooser says.

Ageless Beauty

Self-confidence and satisfaction in life depend on much more than looking good. "True happiness comes from within," writes Judy Sargent, a former anorexia sufferer. "It cannot be gleaned from reading the numbers off of a bathroom scale." The Bible takes the matter a step further. "Your beauty," wrote the apostle Peter, "should consist of your true inner self, the ageless beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit,

**Real beauty comes from within,
not from what you wear**

which is of the greatest value in God's sight."

—1 Peter 3:4, *Today's English Version*.

The ageless beauty to which Peter refers surpasses physical charm because of its permanence and its value in the eyes of God. Many centuries ago a wise king observed: "Charm may be false, and prettiness may be vain; but the woman that fears Jehovah is the one that procures praise for herself."—Proverbs 31:30.

Although physical beauty may attract more attention today, many people still respect the person who displays Christian qualities. The apostle Paul exhorted Christians: "Clothe yourselves with the new personality, . . . with



the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering.”—Colossians 3:10, 12.

Fashion by its very nature is transient. At best, the latest style can only adorn us for a while. But any good impression we make will quickly be compromised if our personality does not complement our appearance. Remember, “the fruitage of the spirit”—including the qualities of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, and self-control—never goes out of fashion.—Galatians 5:22, 23; 1 Timothy 2:9, 10.

Admittedly, however, it is appropriate to give due attention to our clothing. Aline, from France, admits that it was a challenge to maintain balance in this regard. “As a teenager,” she says, “I took a real interest in clothes. I wanted to follow the latest fashion because

it gave me self-confidence. And if I could buy clothes with a designer label, so much the better.”

“But when I grew up,” Aline continues, “I had to learn to take care of myself financially, and I also began to spend much of my time in the Christian ministry. I realized that if I wanted to live within my means, I could no longer be a slave to fashion. I began to buy my clothes during the sales or at outlet stores. I found that I could still dress well—but at a quarter of the price. The secret lies in learning to buy clothes that suit you, that are practical, that combine well with what you already have, and that won’t quickly go out of fashion. Rather than allow fashion to dictate what I should buy, I now try to decide which style suits me. I wouldn’t say clothes don’t matter to me anymore. But my worth depends on much more than my appearance.”

In a society where image often counts for more than substance, Christians do well to keep in mind the Bible’s sober reminder: “Everything the world affords, all that panders to the appetites or entices the eyes, all the glamour of its life, springs not from the Father but from the godless world. And that world is passing away with all its allurements, but he who does God’s will stands for evermore.”—1 John 2:16, 17, *The New English Bible*.

Choose clothes that are practical and that work well with what you already have



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A Stick That Cleans Teeth

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ZAMBIA

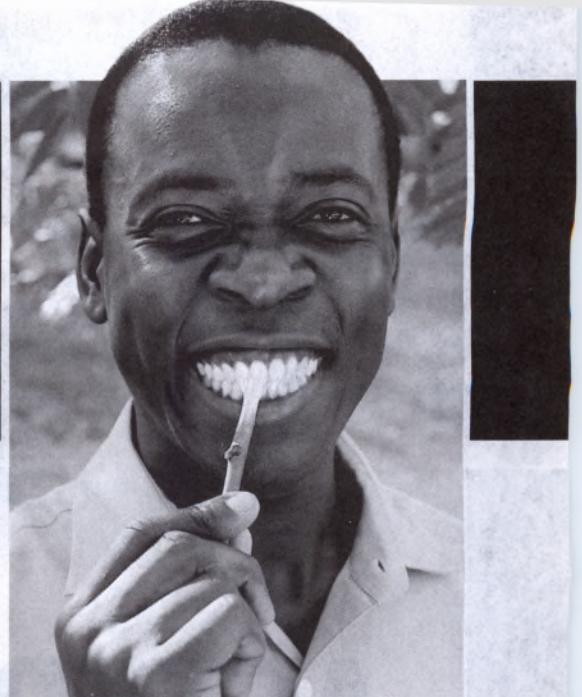
AFRICA—a continent of beautiful teeth yet few commercially manufactured toothbrushes! How can that be? For many, the secret behind a bright smile lies in a simple piece of wood—the chewing stick!

Chewing sticks were once used by the Babylonians and later by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. These small wood “toothbrushes” were also common in pre-Islamic Arabia. The chewing stick fell out of favor with Europeans about 300 years ago, yet it is still popular in parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

The most common source of the chewing stick in the Middle East is the saltbush, otherwise known as the toothbrush tree. In West Africa, lime and orange trees are used, while neems are a main source for chewing sticks in the Indian subcontinent. In East Africa nearly 300 different species of trees and shrubs are used to make chewing sticks. How does the stick clean teeth?

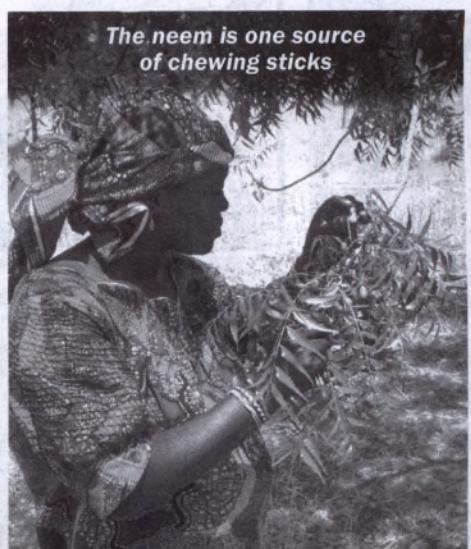
When the stick is chewed, the fibers at the end become loose, forming a rough “brush.” Continued chewing dislodges particles between the teeth and stimulates blood circulation in the gums. Chewing also increases saliva production, which acts as a natural mouthwash that rinses away bacteria and creates an inhospitable environment for them to flourish.*

But the chewing stick is more than a mere brush. Twigs and roots of some plant species contain chemical compounds that slow the formation of plaque. Extracts of some sticks have been shown to have antibacterial and antifungal properties. The twigs of the toothbrush tree, mentioned earlier, can even help prevent ulcers. In Namibia, sticks taken from a plant known as muthala inhibit the



growth of pathogens that cause decay, gum disease, and sore throats. This natural dental device can prevent cavities as well as strengthen roots and gums. Some companies now make toothpaste that contains fibers and resins extracted from such plants.

Some, of course, prefer to use a traditional toothbrush. Whether you choose to do so or to use a stick, as the ancients did, one thing is certain: Dental hygiene is an important part of personal health care.



The neem is one source of chewing sticks

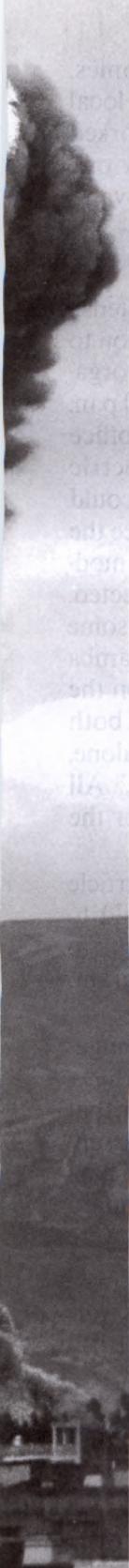
* Of course, diet is also important. Rural populations in Africa often eat more whole grains and vegetables than their urban counterparts. They also generally consume less sugar, refined foods, and soft drinks—known culprits in tooth decay.



AFTER THE EXPLOSIONS

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ECUADOR





NOVEMBER 20, 2002, was a lovely day in the Ecuadorian city of Riobamba. The sky was blue, and white fluffy clouds hovered above. The surrounding snowcapped volcanoes were postcard perfect. The 124,000 people who lived there, some 9,000 feet up in the Andes Mountains, were going about their normal routines, unaware that this serene scene was about to be violently disturbed. Suddenly, in the afternoon calm, there was a deafening explosion! Windows and floors began to vibrate. An ominous, rapidly expanding mushroom cloud began to form.

Within ten minutes a second explosion occurred, accompanied by a powerful shock wave that shattered windows and blew doors off their hinges. A swirling cloud of fire and smoke—one that dwarfed the first cloud—then appeared. A series of explosions and flashes followed.

José and his wife, Ana—both Jehovah's Witnesses—are a couple in their 60's who lived some 1,300 feet from ground zero. They were thrown to the floor by the force of the blast. Ana had been standing near the front door when it was ripped off its hinges and hurled against a back wall. As the terrified couple rushed toward the back of their home, the ceiling began falling in on them. Somehow they managed to exit into a small back patio, where they huddled together and began praying. Happily, 15 minutes later their son arrived with a car to take them to safety.

Not all fared so well. Panic followed the explosions. Masses of people fled on foot. Amid shouting and screaming, some slipped and fell on the broken glass strewn over the sidewalks. Cars, buses, and trucks drove out of the city at reck-

less speeds, some driving the wrong direction on one-way streets! Many who fled from their schools or jobs did not find out the fate or whereabouts of their family members for nearly 24 hours.

The cause of all this mayhem? A fire at an underground munitions depot at the nearby army base had triggered a massive chain reaction of exploding flares, hand grenades, and tank and mortar shells. As the explosions continued, police vehicles announced over loudspeakers that all should evacuate the city to a distance of at least nine miles.

Soon Riobamba was deserted. Thousands of local citizens lined the highway outside the city, huddled together in the cold night air—many without coats or jackets. After several hours the explosions finally began to diminish. Prodded by near-freezing temperatures, the residents cautiously began walking back toward the city. The next morning, in the light of day, many discovered that severe damage had been done to the windows, doors, roofs, ceilings, and walls of their homes. One family found dagger-shaped pieces of glass driven into a bedroom mattress. Others found shrapnel in and around their homes.

Initial reports listed at least 7 dead, 538 injured, and 18,000 homes damaged. Of the 950 Witnesses of Jehovah in the area, none lost their lives, though two were treated for severe cuts.

Aid for the Afflicted

The morning after the explosions, elders in local congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses began calling on their Christian brothers to see how they had fared. Later that day a traveling minister of Jehovah's Witnesses met with elders from 13 local and outlying congregations to

assess the damage and injuries. He encouraged the elders to care for the emotional and spiritual needs of the survivors. Attending Christian meetings, even under such difficult circumstances, was critical! (Hebrews 10:24, 25) Thus, the local congregations held their regularly scheduled meetings the evening after the disaster.

On Thursday and Friday, a detailed report of the damage to the homes of Witnesses was compiled and sent to the local branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Guayaquil. The report noted the urgent need to seal up hundreds of broken windows in order to protect the residents from the cold. Within hours, the branch office had purchased large rolls of clear plastic, spools of tape, and concrete nails, in order to make temporary repairs.

A supply truck from the branch office arrived at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. Teams of Witness men and women were already at work helping their fellow Witnesses clean up the broken glass in their homes so that installation of the plastic could begin. A local Kingdom Hall became the center of operations. Marks were made on the floor for quick measuring of the plastic. Using measurements obtained by relief crew members, appropriate lengths of plastic sheeting were cut and then delivered to the waiting installation teams.

José, mentioned earlier, relates: "When we arrived home the afternoon following the explosion, the brothers were already there clearing debris. On Saturday my next-door neighbor came over and remarked on the excellent work done installing plastic sheeting on my house, and he asked me, 'How much did all of this cost you?'" How surprised the neighbor was to learn that it had been done free of charge!

By Saturday evening, approximately 200 volunteers from local congregations had

sealed the windows of 91 Witness homes. Many non-Witnesses also benefited. A local newspaper carried a photo of a home worked on by the Witnesses, noting that only one of the eight occupants was one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Emotional Support Provided

The explosions naturally caused intense emotional distress. To provide consolation to local Witnesses, a special meeting was organized for Monday, November 25, at 5:00 p.m. Representatives of the local branch office were sent to conduct it. Because electric lighting was not available, the meeting could not be held any later in the evening. Since the hour seemed somewhat inconvenient, a modest attendance of about 600 was expected. Yet, a crowd of 1,421, which included some non-Witness neighbors, filled the Riobamba Assembly Hall! A key text considered on the program was Psalm 4:8: "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you yourself alone, O Jehovah, make me dwell in security." All present expressed great appreciation for the comforting spiritual program.

Hundreds of copies of the *Awake!* article "Natural Disasters—Helping Your Child to Cope" (June 22, 1996) were handed out to parents at the conclusion of the program. One paragraph of the article states:

"The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) notes that immediately after a disaster, children typically fear that (1) they will be left alone, (2) they will be separated from the family, (3) the event will happen again, and (4) someone will be injured or killed." Based on this article, parents were urged to:

1. Try to keep the family together.
2. Take time to explain the situation calmly.
3. Encourage the children to talk.
4. Include children in clean-up activities.

Some 200 Witnesses volunteered for the cleanup. New windows were measured, cut, and installed. Roofs were replaced

Extra copies of the *Awake!* article were later shared with neighbors and Bible students.

Three weeks after the explosion, materials were purchased to make more-permanent repairs, including the installation of new windows, ceilings, and roofs. Within another three weeks, these projects had been completed, along with the repair of two Kingdom Halls. Many were the expressions of gratitude for these loving provisions.

Disasters of different kinds are common during these "last days." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) However, the support Jehovah's Witnesses render to one another and to their neighbors bears testimony to the power of true Christianity. José put it well when he said: "Jehovah's organization does not delay in rendering aid to us when we are in need."



AN INTRIGUING ENCOUNTER WITH GRAY WHALES

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

The impression received upon approaching a sleeping whale is above all one of enormity. The whale's physical presence is overwhelming, overpowering. From time to time, one hears it breathing, and is perhaps sprinkled by its spout. At that moment, man realizes that he is approaching a life form beyond the scale of human reckoning; a mysterious presence, embodied in an incredible black cylinder.

—Jacques-Yves Cousteau, marine explorer.

THE above words well describe the feelings we had as our little motorboat drew near the gray whales in the sparkling waters of Magdalena Bay in Baja California, Mexico. We had long wanted to observe these majestic creatures, which migrate every year to the lagoons of Baja to mate and give birth.

Our guide shut off the motor and quietly rowed closer. The whales seemed oblivious of our approach. We watched their courtship ritual as they rolled, spouted, and sounded, showing off their flukes (tails). Some of them were "spyhopping"—pushing their heads up out of the water and observing their surroundings.



© Howard Hall/Seapics.com



FEEDING

Instead of teeth, the gray whale, a baleen whale, has cream-colored baleen plates (shown in the photo). These are two to ten inches in length and hang from each side of its upper jaw. The plates are made of keratin—the same material that makes up our fingernails. The gray whale is a bottom feeder—that is, it dredges the bottom of the sea, sucking up sediment and crustaceans. Then it filters out the water through the fringes of the baleen.

Courtesy Gray whales with Winston



Our guide told us that while regulations do not allow us to get closer to the whales than 100 feet, curious mother whales and their calves frequently approach skiffs and allow themselves to be touched!

A Struggle for Survival

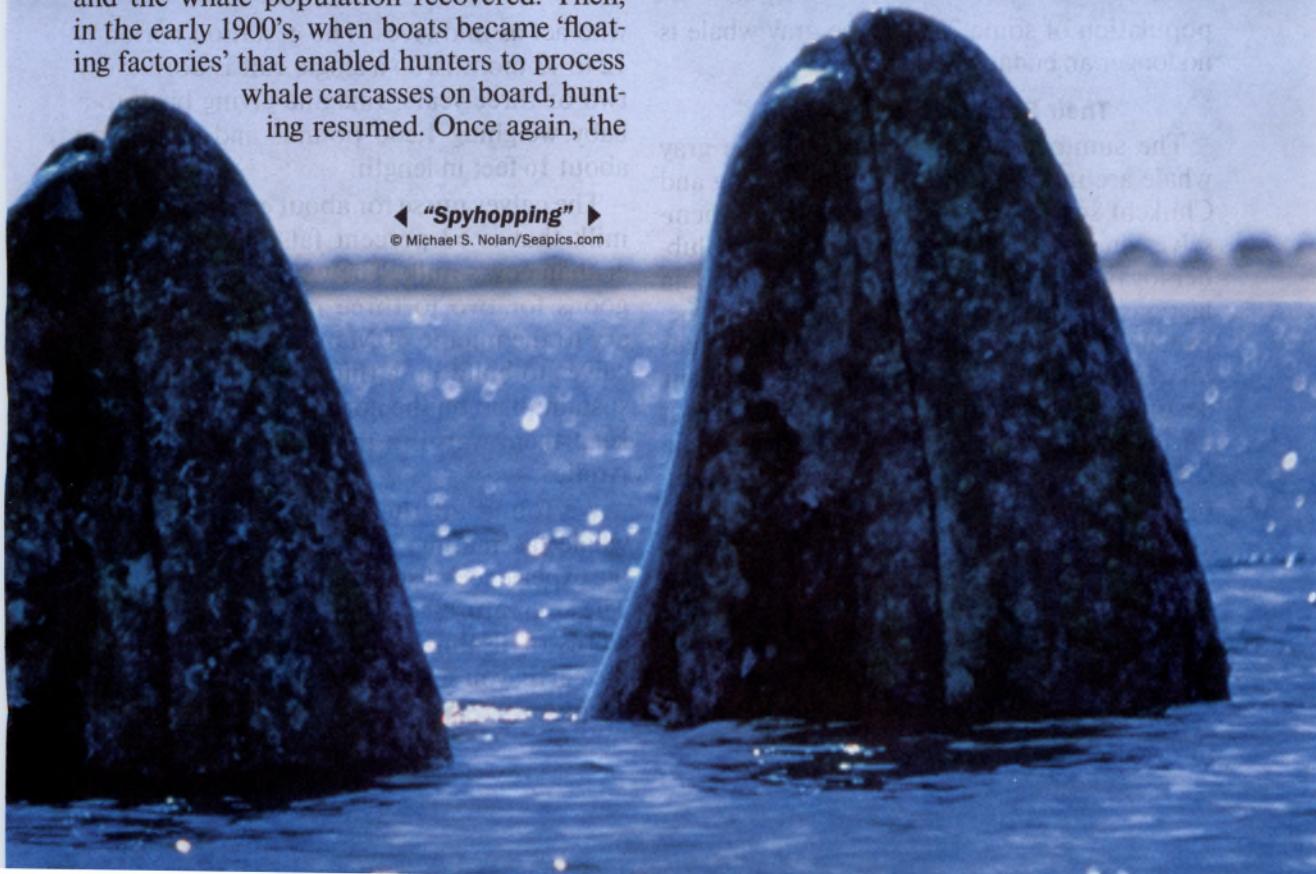
After our encounter we were moved to do some research. We learned that during the 19th century, eager hunters nearly decimated the eastern Pacific whale population. In time, the demand for whale oil and bone declined, and the whale population recovered. Then, in the early 1900's, when boats became 'floating factories' that enabled hunters to process whale carcasses on board, hunting resumed. Once again, the

gray whale of the eastern Pacific was brought near extinction.

In 1947 full protection was given to the gray whale by the International Whaling Commission. In recent years the Mexican government has even established whale sanctuaries and the Vizcaino Biosphere Reserve.* Now, with a

* The International Whaling Commission allows only subsistence hunting by the native peoples of Alaska and Siberia. These measures have had a positive effect on the gray whale, which is now considered friendly by the local population because of the behavior mentioned by our guide.

◀ "Spyhopping" ▶
© Michael S. Nolan/Seapics.com





PROFILE OF THE GRAY WHALE

- The gray whale has white patches on its skin—the result of barnacles and parasites.
- Males grow to 45 feet—longer than a city bus—and females are slightly larger.
- The gray whale has two to five creases on its ventral throat, which allow the throat to expand while feeding.
- The average weight of a gray whale is 16 tons, but some have reached weights of 30 to 40 tons.
- The gray whale surfaces every three to five minutes to breathe, but it can remain submerged for up to 15 minutes.

© Richard Herrmann/Seapics.com

population of some 26,000, the gray whale is no longer an endangered species.

Their Remarkable Migration

The summer feeding grounds of the gray whale are in the far north, in the Bering and Chukchi seas. There the whales gorge themselves on small crustaceans, building up blubber for their 10,000-mile trip south to the Baja lagoons and back. Traveling at a rate of between three and six miles per hour, the whales take from two to three months to reach their destination. Much of their body weight is lost during the migration and the months in Baja California, as the gray whales live almost entirely off their fat reserves.

Pregnant females are the first to arrive in the lagoons, where they give birth in the calm waters. The calves are born tail first and must be brought to the surface as quickly as possible in order for them to breathe. The birth is assisted by two other females, called aunties,

who act as midwives. The gestation period is 12 to 13 months, so a single calf is born every two or three years. Imagine giving birth to a baby weighing 1,500 pounds and measuring about 16 feet in length!

The calves nurse for about eight months on milk that is 53 percent fat—ten times richer than cow's milk. The whales stay in the lagoons for two to three months, from January to the middle of March, which allows the calves to build up a thick layer of blubber to sustain them on the northward journey and to keep them warm in the colder waters of the Arctic.

We found all these facts about the gray whale fascinating, adding to our unforgettable experience of seeing them in their habitat. These creatures caused us to reflect on the words of Psalm 148:7: "Praise Jehovah from the earth, you sea monsters and all you watery deeps."

Her Report Made a Real Impression

During her final year of school, Ginny, one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States, had a fine opportunity to speak up about her religion. "My teacher told the class that we needed to do a term paper in order to graduate," she says. "I told her that I wanted to write about Jehovah's Witnesses in Nazi concentration camps."

The teacher gave Ginny permission to pursue her topic. "I was nervous when it came time for me to submit my paper and give an oral presentation to the class," Ginny admits. "I didn't know what my classmates would say or if they would make fun of me."

Ginny began her presentation by asking: "Does anyone know who wore the Star of David in the Nazi concentration camps?" Everyone said, "The Jews." Then she asked if anyone knew who wore a purple triangle. No one responded. "I told them that Jehovah's Witnesses did," Ginny says.

The teacher and the class were impressed with Ginny's information. "They were awed by the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses could have gained their freedom simply by signing a piece of paper renouncing their faith," Ginny says. "Some of my classmates later told me that in the past they had made fun of Jehovah's Witnesses but that the next time one called at their home, they would listen."

Ginny received four A's for her report and presentation. "Not only did I get a good grade," she says, "but I also had a great opportunity to speak up about my faith!"

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses were offered freedom on the condition that they sign this document renouncing their faith

Courtesy of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



Konzentrationslager
Abteilung II

Eklärung.

Ich, - der - die
geboren am:

Gebe hiermit folgende Eklärung ab:

1. Ich habe erkannt, dass die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung eine irrtümliche verbreitet und unter dem Gesamtauslauf religiöser Bestätigung lediglich staatsfeindliche Ziele verfolgt.
Ich habe mich deshalb voll und ganz von dieser Organisation abgewandt, und mich auch innerlich von dieser Sache freigesetzt.
2. Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich mich als wieder für die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung bestätigen werde. Personen, die für die Irretheorie der Bibelforscher an mir vorwiegend herantreten und in anderer Weise ihre Bindung als Bibelforscher bekunden, werde ich unverzüglich zur Anzeige bringen. Sollten mir Bibelforscherverschärfen zugesetzt werden, so werde ich diese umgehend bei der nächsten Polizeidienststelle abgeben.
3. Ich will während die Gesetze des Staates achten, insbesondere im Falle eines Krieges mein Vaterland mit der Waffe in der Hand verteidigen und mich voll und ganz in die Volksgemeinschaft eingliedern.
4. Mir ist erlaubt worden, dass ich mit meiner erneuten Inschutzhaltung zu rechnen habe, wenn ich meiner heute abgegebenen Erklärung zuwiderhandle.

KL/1716.43 3000

Unterschrift:

A Book Against Books

WHY do many people feel prejudice against the Bible? The answer in some countries may be related to the history of a human instrument designed to control "heresy"—the Index of Forbidden Books. How could that be?

The Catholic Church welcomed the invention of printing with enthusiasm. A few popes even extolled what was called by some clergy a "divine art." Soon, though, the ecclesiastical hierarchy realized that printing was being used to spread ideas contrary to Catholicism. Therefore, limitations were established in a number of European dioceses at the end of the 15th century. The imprimatur (approval for printing) was introduced, and in 1515 the Fifth Lateran Council imparted directions to control printing. Transgressors could be excommunicated. Particularly after the onset of the Reformation, however, this did not prevent the circulation of printed matter and books that the church considered dangerous to faith and morals. Hence, toward the end of the 16th century, Vatican circles hoped



Pages from the Index of Forbidden Books

Su concessione del Ministero per
i Beni e le Attività Culturali

"that there be no more printing for many years."

To impede "the impetuous slimy flood of infected books"—as one Italian Jesuit put it as recently as 1951—the church wanted a list that would be valid for all Catholics. In 1542 the Roman Inquisition was instituted. Its first public act was apparently an edict against editorial freedom in the religious sphere. When the former inquisitor-general Gian Pietro Carafa became Pope Paul IV in 1555, he immediately ordered a commission to compile a list of forbidden books.

The first universal Index of Forbidden Books was thus printed in 1559.

What Kind of Books Forbidden?

The Index was divided into three "classes." The first listed authors, all of whose books were prohibited whatever the subject matter. The second listed the titles of single prohibited works by authors who otherwise were not condemned. And the third prohibited a long list of anonymous works. That Index contained 1,107 censures, affecting writers not only of religious subjects but also of other types of literature. An appendix listed prohibited editions of the Bible, specifying that all translations in common tongues were forbidden.

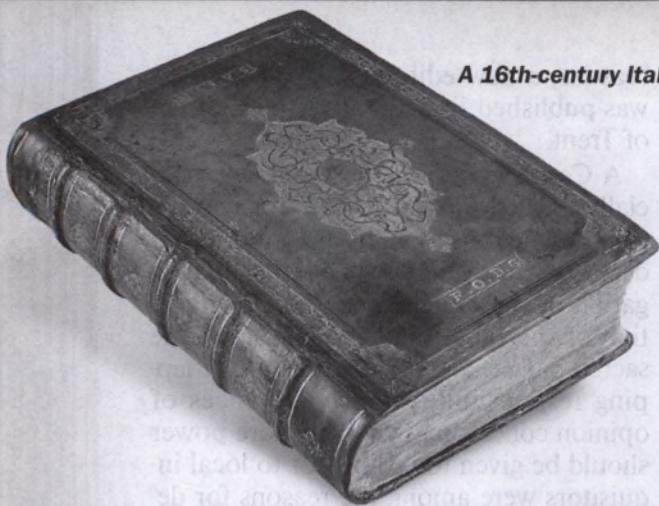
Although local bans had previously been in effect, "with these provisions affecting all of Catholicism, the church made its first official pronouncement against printing, reading, and possessing the Holy Book in the vernacular," according to Gigliola Fragnito, a teacher of modern history at the University of Parma, Italy. The Index was violently opposed as much by booksellers and editors as by governments, which benefited from printing. For these and other

reasons, a new edition was ordered and was published in 1564, after the Council of Trent.

A Congregation of the Index was specially created in 1571 to care for its revision. At one time as many as three entities decided which works to ban—the Congregation of the Holy Office, the Congregation of the Index, and the master of the sacred palace, a papal dignitary. Overlapping responsibilities and differences of opinion concerning whether more power should be given to bishops or to local inquisitors were among the reasons for delay in publication of the third catalog of forbidden books. Prepared by the Congregation of the Index and promulgated by Clement VIII in March 1596, the Index was blocked at the request of the Holy Office until such time as it was made more peremptory in banning all Bible reading in the tongues of common people.

With this edition the Index of Forbidden Books acquired a more or less stable form, despite continual updating throughout the centuries. Many Protestants, who saw their works included, defined the Index as "the best guide to identifying the most desirable books." It has to be said, however, that at the time, the ideas of Protestantism were much the same as those of Catholicism when it came to censorship of books.

The Index had a disastrous effect on culture, which in countries like Italy withdrew "into cramped isolation," says historian Antonio Rotondò. Another historian, Guido Dall'Olio, says that the Index was "one of the principal factors in the great cultural backwardness of Italy, in relation to most other parts of Europe." Ironically, some books survived because they ended up in a special place, the so-called inferno, a location created in many ecclesiastical libraries to keep prohibited literature under lock and key.



A 16th-century Italian Bible forbidden by the church

Gradually, though, the new role of public opinion in the age of enlightenment played its part in the demise of the "most imposing repressive apparatus ever fielded against editorial freedom." In 1766 an Italian editor wrote: "Rome's prohibitions do not decide the merit of books. The public decides." The Index was losing importance, and in 1917 the Congregation of the Index, which cared for it, was dissolved. Since 1966 the Index "no longer has the force of ecclesiastical law with its related censures."

The Bible in Common Languages

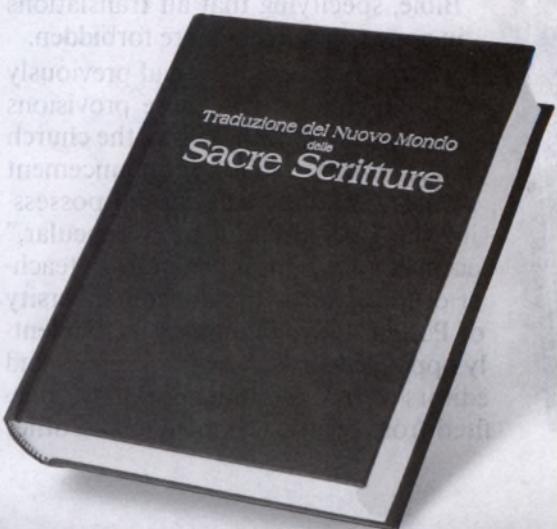
The history of the Index reveals that of all "infected books," one in particular worried ecclesiastical authorities—the Bible in the common tongue. In the 16th century, "approximately 210 editions of whole Bibles or New Testaments" were listed by the Indexes, explains specialist Jesús Martínez de Bujanda. During the 16th century, Italians were known as enthusiastic readers of the Bible. Yet, the Index, with its rigorous prohibition of the Scriptures in the vernacular, radically altered this nation's relationship with God's Word. "Forbidden and removed as

The "New World Translation" has awakened in many people a love for God's Word

a source of heresy, in the minds of Italians the Holy Scriptures ended up being confused with the writings of heretics," says Fragnito, who adds: "The way of salvation for Catholic populations of southern Europe was through the catechism," and "a childish people was preferred to a religiously mature people."

Only in 1757 did Pope Benedict XIV authorize the reading of 'vernacular translations of the Bible approved by the Apostolic See.' A new Italian version, based on the Latin Vulgate, could thus finally be prepared. In fact, Italian Catholics had to wait until 1958 to receive their first complete Bible translation based directly on the original languages.

Today, says Fragnito, particularly non-Catholics are busy "circulating the Scriptures everywhere." Among the most active are undoubtedly Jehovah's Witnesses, who have distributed more than four million copies of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in Italian. They have thus helped to rekindle a love for God's Word in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of people. (Psalm 119: 97) Why not become better acquainted with this extraordinary book?



Orchids IN ALL THEIR GLORY

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN COSTA RICA

"On the tiled wall, they proudly show off their beauty. They flirt with the breeze, shade, and sun, and now more than ever, they are as proud as can be."

SO BEGAN a newspaper article announcing the Annual National Orchid Exposition in San José, Costa Rica. The mere mention of orchids may conjure up images of some of the most exotic and beautiful flowers in the world. A visitor to the exposition was overheard saying: "How can anyone deny God's hand when seeing such intricacy and beauty?" Indeed, orchids are a tribute to Jehovah God, whose invisible qualities can be perceived by the things he created!—Romans 1:20.

Orchids have been valued for millenniums. Evidence suggests that the Chinese were growing them more than 4,000 years ago. On the other side of the world, Montezuma, who ruled what



is now Mexico from 1502 to 1520, reportedly cultivated several species of orchids. However, it was not until the 1800's that the quest for these plants increased dramatically.

In 1818 a man in England named William Cattley received a shipment of tropical plants from Brazil. In the packing material, he noticed plant parts that looked like roots. After planting them, he was delighted when they produced a beautiful purple bloom. This particular type of orchid is now known as the *Cattleya*.

During the 1800's, it was a fashion of the rich to collect unique orchids. New specimens in particular could command an exorbitant price. By the turn of the century, however, the orchid craze had diminished. Then it resumed decades later when inexpensive methods of artificially propagating orchids were discovered. Now anyone could enjoy these exotic flowers!

Annual National Orchid Exposition

The Costa Rican Orchid Society organized its first national exposition in 1971 to increase awareness of the need to conserve the orchid's wild habitat. The exposition started small, with only 147 plants being displayed on a few tables. In one recent year, however, more than 1,600 plants were shown. Upon arriving at the exposition, visitors are greeted by an explosion of color as they feast their eyes on orchids of every size and shape imaginable.





Lankester Gardens

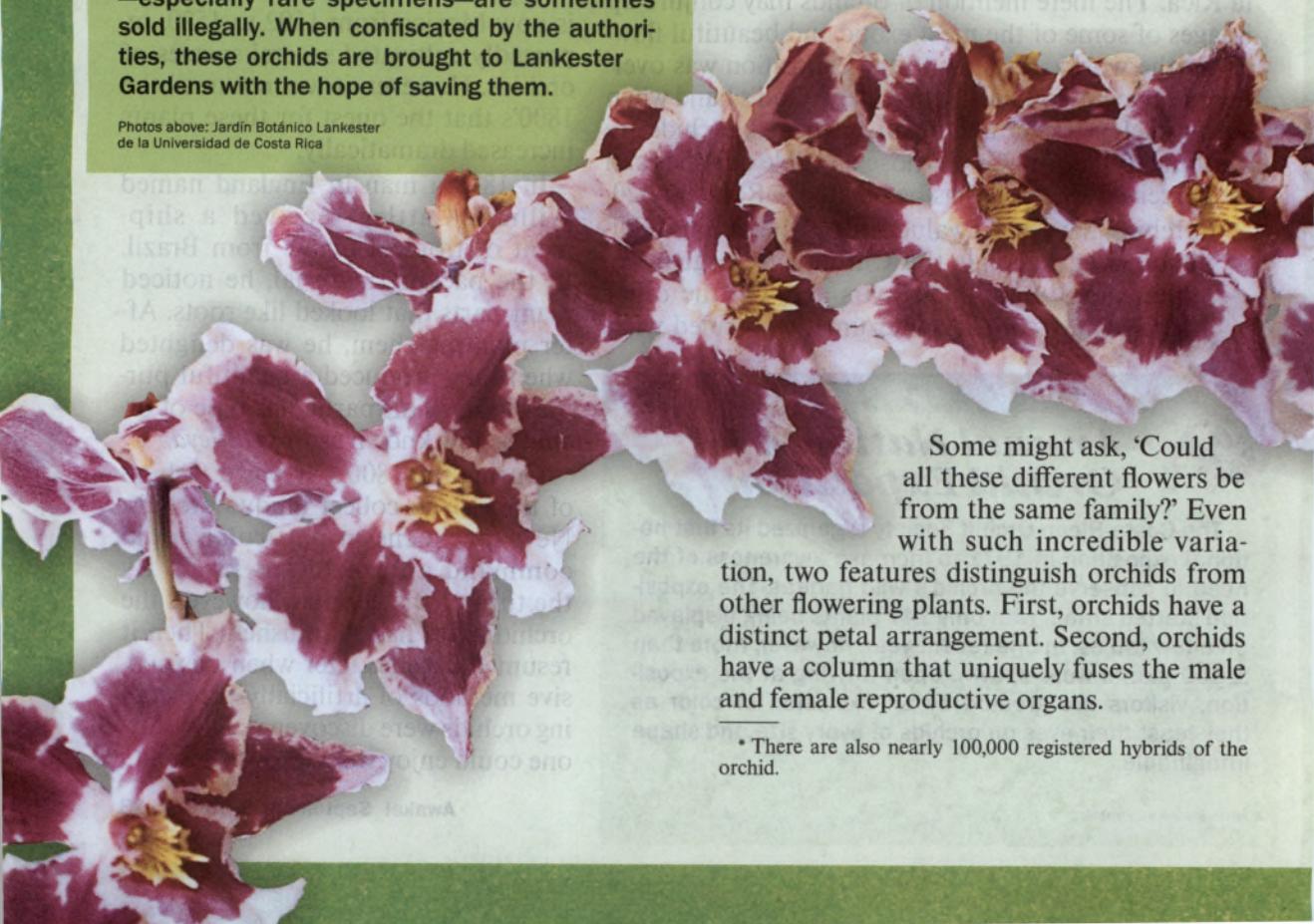
Founded in 1917 by British naturalist Charles Lankester Wells, this tranquil paradise is considered one of the most valuable botanical gardens in the Americas. Lankester Gardens boasts 800 native and exotic species of orchids growing in its 26 acres of forest and gardens. It also serves as a national rescue center. Wild orchids—especially rare specimens—are sometimes sold illegally. When confiscated by the authorities, these orchids are brought to Lankester Gardens with the hope of saving them.

Photos above: Jardín Botánico Lankester de la Universidad de Costa Rica

Incredible Variety

With as many as 20,000 species throughout the world, the orchid family may be the largest flowering plant family.* They are found practically everywhere, from the Arctic Circle to semi-desert regions. While some orchids are found in treetops at an altitude of 10,000 feet in the Andes Mountains, others—such as those in Australia—spend most of their plant life underground.

Orchids come in all sizes and colors and with all kinds of aromas. In Papua New Guinea, some measure many feet high and weigh up to two tons. Others, with flowers the size of the head of a needle, can easily fit inside a thimble. Some orchids grow rooted in the soil, while the majority (called epiphytes) grow on trees or other plants. There are orchids that perfume the air with the faint smell of coconuts or raspberries, while others smell like decaying meat.



Some might ask, 'Could all these different flowers be from the same family?' Even with such incredible variation, two features distinguish orchids from other flowering plants. First, orchids have a distinct petal arrangement. Second, orchids have a column that uniquely fuses the male and female reproductive organs.

* There are also nearly 100,000 registered hybrids of the orchid.



The tiger orchid can grow to more than 20 feet tall and weigh up to two tons

Noemi Figueira/Brooklyn Botanical Garden



The world's smallest orchids measure just one millimeter across

Orchids Native to Costa Rica

Despite its small land area, Costa Rica has one of the greatest densities of orchids in the world. Indeed, the country is home to approximately 1,400 different species, with more undoubtedly waiting to be discovered. With the moderating effects of the Caribbean Sea on the east and the Pacific Ocean on the west, Costa Rica is an area with varying degrees of humidity and is thus a habitat conducive to the growth of a number of diverse orchids. The country is also home to many humid mid-elevation environments (called cloud forests), where the majority of orchids thrive. In one cloud-forest environment, a tree was found that hosted 47 orchid species!

There are continued efforts to save many species of orchids whose existence is considered threatened.

Happily, though, other species still thrive in the forests of Costa Rica. Today, people from all walks of life have taken up the hobby of growing orchids.

They are not difficult to cultivate, but there is one problem.

Orchid growing can become addictive. One writer put it this way: "Trying to own one orchid is like trying to eat just one peanut!"



Growing Orchids at Home

■ Most orchids can grow in pots or baskets of pebbles or tree bark.

■ Although most orchids do not require soil, they do need regular fertilizing—especially when flowering.

■ The lighting required depends on the type of orchid. The bright light of a window facing south is suitable for *Vanda*, while bright light with west or shaded southern exposure is best for *Cattleya*. *Phalaenopsis* thrives with western exposure or shaded light in a window facing south.

■ Orchids should be watered until the excess begins to drain from the holes at the bottom of the pot. The plant should be slightly dry between waterings.

■ Orchids thrive in humidity. So if you live in a dry environment, place your plants on a tray of pebbles and add water to just below the top of the pebbles.

"Vanda"



"Cattleya"



The Bible's Viewpoint



DOES GOD BLESS US WITH RICHES?

"The blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich, and he adds no pain with it."—PROVERBS 10:22.

DOES the above-quoted Bible scripture mean that God blesses his servants with material riches? Some people believe so. Consider the claim of one Australian Pentecostal preacher and author: "In [my] book I am going to tell you *why* you need more money and secondly *how* you can get more money . . . If you can change your thinking and develop a healthy attitude to money, I believe you will walk in the blessing and prosperity of God and never have a problem with money again."

Such a claim, however, implies that poor people are not favored by God. Is material prosperity really a sign of God's blessing?

Blessed for a Purpose

The Bible record includes cases where God blessed faithful servants with riches. Jacob,

for instance, left his home with just his staff but returned 20 years later with enough sheep, cattle, and asses to form two camps. According to the Bible, Jacob's prosperity was a gift from God. (Genesis 32:10) Another example: Job lost all his possessions, yet Jehovah later blessed him with "fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels and a thousand spans of cattle and a thousand she-asses." (Job 42:12) Jehovah gave King Solomon wealth so great that its fame endures to modern times. —1 Kings 3:13.

On the other hand, the Bible contains numerous accounts of faithful, obedient worshipers of God who were poor. Surely, God was not punishing some with poverty while blessing others with prosperity. What, then,

was God's purpose in bestowing riches in some cases?

The answer is different in each case. Jacob's material blessings formed a foundation for building a nation, in preparation for the coming of the promised Seed. (Genesis 22:17, 18) Job's prosperity dispelled any doubt about who had brought calamity on Job, thus sanctifying Jehovah's name. (James 5:11) And Solomon used much of his divinely provided wealth to build a magnificent temple. (1 Kings 7:47-51) Interestingly, Jehovah also used Solomon to write from personal experience about the limited value of riches.—Ecclesiastes 2:3-11; 5:10; 7:12.

How God Blesses Us

Jesus taught his followers to have a healthy attitude toward money when he told them to "stop being anxious" about possessions. He reasoned with them that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed as well as the lilies of the field. Yet, Jesus said: "If, now, God thus clothes the vegetation of the field, . . . will he not much rather clothe you, you with little faith?" Jesus assured Christians that if his followers would seek first the Kingdom and God's righteousness, then food, clothing, and shelter would be added to them. (Matthew 6:25, 28-33) How is that promise fulfilled?

When followed, the Bible's counsel results especially in spiritual blessings. (Proverbs 10:22) However, it brings other benefits. For example, God's Word instructs Christians: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work." (Ephesians 4:28) It also states that "the one working with a slack hand will be of little means, but the hand of the diligent one is what will make one rich." (Proverbs 10:4) Honest, hardworking Christians who follow this advice are often preferred as employees. This can be a blessing.

The Bible also teaches Christians to avoid the greedy pastime of gambling, the defiling practice of smoking, and the debilitating habit

of drunkenness. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:5) Those who follow this advice find their expenditures reduced and their health improved.

More Valuable Than Silver or Gold

Still, material prosperity cannot be relied upon as a sole indicator of God's approval and blessing. For example, Jesus exposed the spiritually poor condition of some Christians in Laodicea when he told them: "You say: 'I am rich and have acquired riches and do not need anything at all,' but you do not know you are miserable and pitiable and poor and blind and naked." (Revelation 3:17) Conversely, to the materially poor but spiritually healthy Christians in Smyrna, Jesus said: "I know your tribulation and poverty—but you are rich." (Revelation 2:9) These Christians likely suffered financially at the hands of persecutors because of their faithfulness, yet they possessed riches far more valuable than silver or gold.—Proverbs 22:1; Hebrews 10:34.

Jehovah God blesses the efforts of those who strive to do his will. (Psalm 1:2, 3) He provides them with the strength and the resources to cope with trials, to provide for their families, and to seek first his Kingdom. (Psalm 37:25; Matthew 6:31-33; Philippians 4:12, 13) Hence, rather than viewing material things as God's main blessing, true Christians strive to be "rich in fine works." By developing a close relationship with the Creator, Christians are "safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future."—1 Timothy 6:17-19; Mark 12:42-44.

In Our Next Issue

■ Communication—Vital to Life

■ Science Was My Religion

■ Should I Get a Tattoo?

Watching the World

Aspirin and Bypass Patients

"Giving patients aspirin in the first 48 hours after heart bypass surgery can greatly reduce their risk of death and serious complications involving the heart, brain, kidneys and digestive tract." So says a study reported on in *The New York Times*. Those given aspirin had a death rate that was 67 percent lower than those not given it. The rate of strokes and heart attacks was reduced by half, the rate of kidney failure was 74 percent lower, and the rate of major intestinal-tract complications was cut by 62 percent. The study, though not a randomized controlled trial, examined 5,065 patients who were treated at 70 hospitals in 17 countries. In the past, surgeons generally did not allow patients to take aspirin for several days before surgery or right afterward, fearing that it would increase bleeding. However, the study showed that there were actually fewer incidents of bleeding in patients given the aspirin shortly after surgery and that small doses—as in

baby aspirin—were sufficient. It is estimated that applying these findings might save some 27,000 lives worldwide each year.

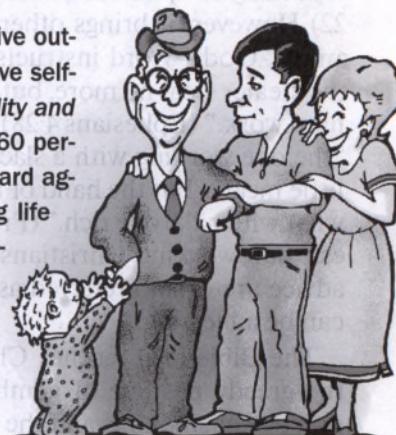
were tested 12 hours later, before going to sleep.

"No Longer Wishes to Belong to the Catholic Church"

In Italy a person baptized as a Catholic who "no longer intends to be considered a member of the Catholic Church" can now have that desire satisfied, reports the newspaper *Il Sole-24 Ore*. Previously, requests to have one's name removed from the register of baptisms were denied on the grounds that it "would amount to destruction of 'traces' of Church history." However, after appeals were made by a number of people who had asked to be removed from the church rolls, the guarantor for the Safeguard of Personal Information authorized that the parish register of baptisms be emended with the note: "No longer wishes to belong to the Catholic Church." Already the guarantor has asked parish priests to comply with ex-parishioners' requests in at least three cases.

Positive Outlook Promotes Longevity

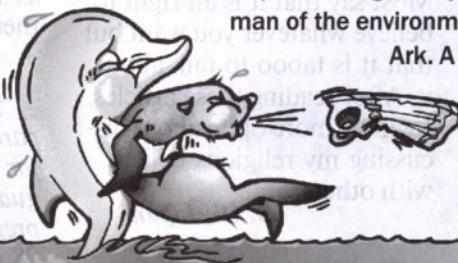
A recently concluded study found that older people with a more positive outlook on life and aging "lived 7.5 years longer than those with less positive self-perceptions of aging," says a paper published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. The study, conducted over a period of 23 years on 660 persons aged 50 and older, established two things: A negative attitude toward aging "can diminish life expectancy," and a positive outlook "can prolong life expectancy." Indeed, positive self-perceptions may contribute more to longevity than such things as low blood cholesterol and ideal blood pressure, suggests the report. It concludes by encouraging society in general to take a more positive view of the elderly by involving them in activities and to "deemphasize negative stereotypes of aging," which people tend to accept—even if unconsciously—to their detriment.



Deadly Shopping Bags

Worldwide, it is estimated that every year more than 100,000 mammals, birds, and fish die as a result of eating or being suffocated by discarded plastic bags. In Australia alone, shoppers use 6.9 billion plastic shopping bags annually, an average of 360 bags for each shopper. Of these, an estimated 25 million plastic bags end up as litter. Sydney's *Sunday Telegraph* reported late in 2002 that in order to reduce the carnage to animals, supermarkets in Australia would replace traditional

plastic shopping bags with a biodegradable substitute. Although the new bags look and feel like plastic, they are made from tapioca starch and will decompose within three months. "They're the first we've found here in Australia that are bio-degradable and whose cost is comparable to normal plastic bags," says Paul Shenston, chairman of the environmental lobby group Planet Ark. A recent survey found that "81 per cent of shoppers 'strongly agree' that bio-degradable bags should be used."



Fragmented Families Increase Housing

An international study led by Dr. Jianguo Liu of Michigan State University, U.S.A., found that even in countries whose populations are declining, the number of households is rising as families fragment and children set up homes on their own. As more homes are built to accommodate the same number of people, urban sprawl and habitat destruction increases. "A three-bedroom house, for example, uses the same amount of land and materials to build and the same amount of fuel to heat whether it is home to two people or four," reports *New Scientist*. The researchers predict that if the current trend continues, there will be an additional 233 million households by 2015.

Adolescent Mothers

In Mexico the percentage of females between the ages of 10 and 19 who get pregnant "has increased by 50 percent in the last three decades," states the magazine *Cambio* of Mexico City. This increase has occurred despite family planning

programs and sex education courses in the public schools. Studies by health authorities reveal that "adolescents who smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, or use some illegal drug are four times more prone to have sexual relations at an earlier age." Additionally, 30 percent of adolescent mothers have a second unplanned child within a year of giving birth to their first, and 50 percent bear a second child within two years. Adding to the problems associated with teen and preteen pregnancies, 60 percent of these young mothers have to raise their children without the support of the child's father.

Acid Attack

Nearly 65 percent of the books and documents published between 1875 and 1960 stored at the National Library in Paris are in danger of being destroyed, reports the newspaper *Le Monde*. This written heritage is slowly disintegrating because of the presence of sulfuric acid, which causes the pages to become brittle and crumble. About 20,000 books are deacid-

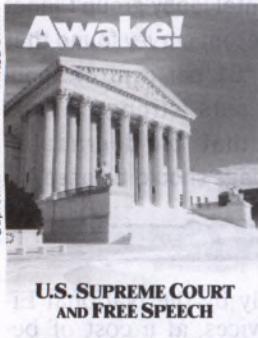
ified yearly by the National Library services, at a cost of between \$7 and \$8 per book. Since the 1980's, most books have been printed on acid-free paper.

Baptized Yes, Practicing No

"Spain is still a nation of baptized [Catholics], but each year it becomes less Catholic," reports the Spanish newspaper *El País*. During the dictatorship of General Franco, "the Catholic faith was the official State religion, and all others were banned and persecuted. Going to Mass every Sunday in rural areas was an obligation, and those who dared to break such an ecclesiastical rule risked fines or reprisals," says the paper. Nowadays the situation has drastically changed. According to a survey by the Center for Sociological Investigation (CIS in Spanish), only 18.5 percent of Spaniards attend Mass regularly. "The Catholic Church emerged alive from its self-serving complicity in the [civil] war and the Franco dictatorship, but the CIS survey shows that its gradual decline is now very difficult to reverse," notes *El País*.

From Our Readers

Photo by Josh Matthes, Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States



Supreme Court Thank you for the cover series "U.S. Supreme Court and Free Speech." (January 8, 2003) These articles showed how the prejudices of the majority can sometimes be viewed as unquestionably right.

Most say that it is all right to believe whatever you want but that it is taboo to talk about it. After reading these articles, I will be more open about discussing my religious beliefs with others.

S. O., Japan

The Stratton, Ohio, case was indeed a triumph for free speech. The favorable decision may have a persuasive effect in other parts of the world, such as here in the Philippines, where in some places Jehovah's Witnesses are hampered by secular authorities who require that a permit be obtained for preaching from house to house. We are grateful for this much-needed victory.

N. E., Philippines

Hatred Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the experience of José Gomez, related in the article "Freed From the Chains of Hate." (January 8, 2003) For many years, I too was subjected to harsh treatment. Now I do not hate anyone. José's words, "Where would I be today without Jehovah's mercy?" apply to me too. Thank you for this wonderful experience of how he overcame his hatred.

N. T., Japan

Safer Pregnancy I want to thank you for the article "Making Your Pregnancy Safer." (January 8, 2003) This article has given me a clear view of what pregnancy involves. I am 32 years old, and I really needed this article. Now I understand what I have to do to make pregnancy safer and show appreciation for this wonderful gift.

B. C., Italy

This article mentions that a woman may be tested for group B streptococcus at 26 to 28 weeks. The current recommended time for screening is between 35 and 37 weeks of gestation and not at 26 to 28 weeks.

Readers of this article will likely query their physicians as to why they are not being screened at 26 to 28 weeks. Their physicians may dismiss *Awake!* as a credible source of information for their patients.

L. S., United States

"Awake!" responds: Our issues are prepared months in advance to allow time for translation into more than 80 languages. At the time the article on safer pregnancy was written, between 26 and 28 weeks was accepted by many as a proper time for screening. In August 2002, however, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued updated information that was provided to them by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Currently, as this reader correctly mentions, the recommended screening time is at 35 to 37 weeks.

On page 13, a footnote states that iron and folic acid can be found in liver and nuts. However, liver contains a lot of vitamin A—which, as your article states, can be dangerous for the baby.

B. J., Britain

"Awake!" responds: Thank you for the caution.

Peer Pressure I am a 15-year-old girl who finds it hard to deal with peer pressure. I was very pleased to come across the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Deal With Peer Pressure?" (December 22, 2002) Reading about other youths who have had problems reassures me that I'm not the only one. We can overcome peer pressure with the help of the one and only Almighty God. Thank you so much for this information, which came at the right time.

K. R., Australia



VISITORS to modern-day Jerusalem can try to imagine what it must have looked like back in Bible times. However, one unique view of this ancient city can actually be enjoyed some 5,000 miles west of Jerusalem in a little town nestled on the St. Lawrence River in Canada. There, visitors are offered a sweeping panoramic view of Jerusalem and its surroundings. But how can that be? An explanation is in order.

Housed in a circular building in the town of Sainte Anne de Beaupré, Quebec, is one of the world's largest panoramic paintings, the Great Cyclorama of Jerusalem. This colossal work measures 45 feet in height and 360 feet in circumference. Although not all of its details are accurate, the painting is still of interest to Bible students, as it affords a strikingly realistic depiction of life in the Jerusalem of Bible times.

Viewing the painting from a platform in the center of the building, visitors gaze at the countryside surrounding first-century Jerusalem. As their eyes follow the full 360-degree panorama, the famed city itself bursts into view with its prominent walls, glorious temple, and luxurious palaces. Farther over, another scene comes to life depicting the last moments of Jesus' earthly existence. The illusion of this monumental work is so lifelike that viewers have the feel-

A VISIT TO JERUSALEM IN QUEBEC

ing of being in the scene, milling with the crowds in the streets of Jerusalem.

Surprisingly, this exciting three-dimensional-effect painting is no recent achievement. In fact, Paul Philippoteaux, a famous artist from Paris, worked on it from 1878 to 1882. Five other painters—two from the United States, two from France, and one from England—helped him to execute his masterpiece. The original idea for the painting, however, is credited to German painter Bruno Piglhein, who was determined to do something to correct public ignorance about daily life in Biblical times. After completion in Munich, Germany, the work was put on exhibition in the great capitals of Europe. Since 1895 it has been on permanent display in Canada.



A BOOK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



A student at a university in Arkhangelsk wrote to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. She explained that she had received a magazine published by the Witnesses from someone on the street. "It made me think about life and what I know about God and religion," she wrote. "Now I want to study the Bible. I want to learn more about the person who, not knowing any of us, gave his life for our sins and our salvation."

Her letter continued: "You are performing a much-needed work, especially by explaining to children the

difference between good and bad. After all, they are like sponges, absorbing everything around them and then changing to fit in." The student has a younger brother and a younger sister, and she requested a copy of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*. "I hope it will help them in school and in life in general," she said.