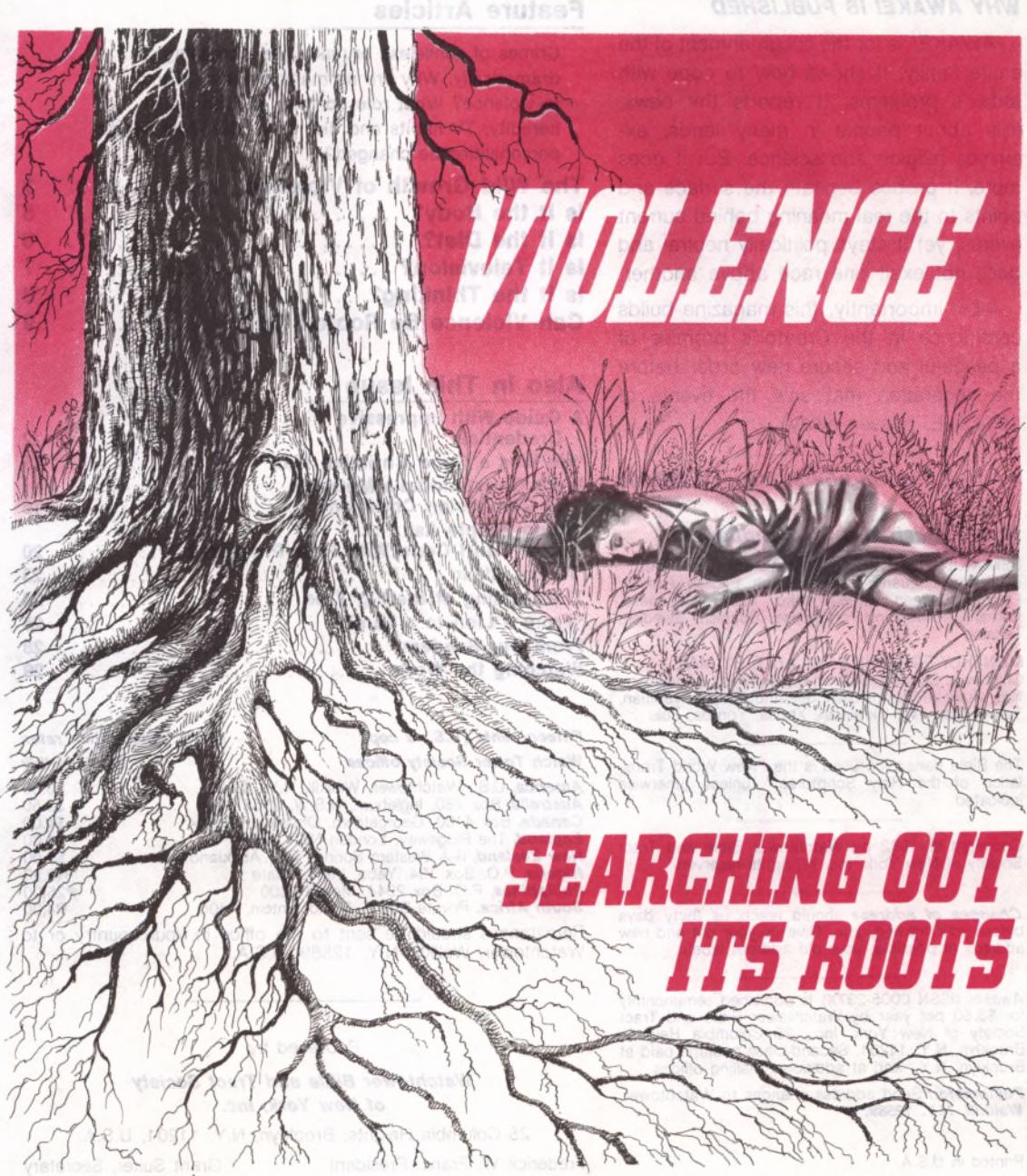


Awake!

JULY 22, 1982



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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 stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new order before the generation that saw the events of 1914 C.E. passes away.

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Feature Articles

Crimes of senseless brutality are increasing dramatically. Why are so many persons prone to violence? What role do their environment, heredity, TV habits and diet play? Can such violent personalities be changed?

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The Wild Growth of Violence

- Four teenage boys went on a sixteen-day rampage. They beat several elderly men—one to death—horsewhipped two teenage girls, tied gasoline-soaked cotton around a man's legs and set it on fire, dragged another man seven blocks and threw him into the river where he drowned. "It was a supreme adventure," said one of the boys. "I did it for sheer enjoyment," added another. All were from good homes, had good school records and had been counselors for younger children.
- Sixty-three-year-old Joseph, father of eight, could not sleep. He got up and went to his garage, grabbed two guns and marched across the street in his quiet neighborhood and opened fire on a neighbor's pool-side swimming party. He killed two and critically wounded two others. He then fired a fatal bullet into his own temple. Police knew of no motive for the massacre.
- Marjorie was irritated when water from her electric dishwasher in her luxurious home flooded out onto her kitchen floor. She dashed for the mop. Just then her six-year-old son came whining into the room and, being ignored, emptied the trash basket into the growing puddle of water. Marjorie hit him across the face as hard as she could. He screamed in terror and pain. She then grabbed a leather belt and hit him across the backside again and again and again. She could not stop.
- For some time a bad feeling had been growing in the family of twenty-five-year-old Lee. He resented his mother and his sister. His mother ordered him out of the house, accusing him of stealing from her. A short time later the brewing aggression surfaced when Lee demanded money from his mother—at gunpoint. "You won't shoot your own mother," she cried out. He fired and she fell to the floor dying. He then shot his sister twice, critically wounding her, and fled.

The accounts are endless. Violence, the product of uncontrolled aggression, rules in many streets and homes. These could have been your neighbors, relatives or friends. Wanton aggression knows no age, racial, economic, social or ethnic boundaries.

It is likely that violence may touch your life or someone you love, for there has been a dramatic increase worldwide in the number of violent crimes. In Great Britain, between 1970 and 1980, there was a 50-



percent increase in murder. The Federal Republic of Germany, South Africa, Italy and Canada all report alarming increases of violent crime. "There's absolutely no doubt that more and more of our young people are turning to violence," said Toronto's deputy Crown Attorney.

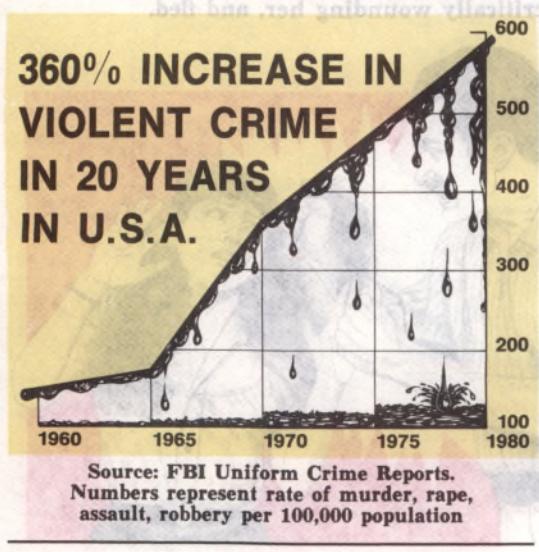
The violence that reaches police reports is only the tip of the iceberg. Hidden in the privacy of homes are countless aggressive acts. Research has shown that the person most likely to kill you is not a robber on the street but a friend, an acquaintance or a family member. A team of American sociologists found that "violence between brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, parents and children occurs more often than between any other individuals or in any other setting except for wars and riots."

Certainly today's situation is a fulfillment of the prophetic description given in the Bible two thousand years ago: "But know this, that in the last days critical

times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, . . . having no natural affection, . . . without self-control, fierce."—2 Timothy 3:1-4.

But what is it that makes persons so fierce or aggressive, often causing them to unleash ferocious rage on innocent victims? For instance, one young man got into a minor argument with his girl friend's father. In a violent outburst he bludgeoned the man to death, raped and stabbed the girl friend's younger sister, fatally stabbed her younger brother and knifed a two-year-old baby sleeping in its crib. Later, while in prison, the young man could not remember the actual murders. "I guess a whole lot of things I just kept inside of me," he said, "jumped out all at once." Then shaking his head in disbelief he added, 'I sat there wondering, Is this me in here? Did I do all this?'

Was it possible for this young man to have controlled the aggression that built up inside of him? What were the roots of such aggression? Were previous circumstances in his life, including his parental care, responsible? Was it his environment? Was something physically wrong? Was it the product of his own faulty thinking? But even beyond all of this, What can you do to keep violence out of your home? The following articles will probe these questions.



There are a number of current theories as to what are the roots of aggression. To enable you to understand what some authorities feel are the causes and answers, an *Awake!* staff writer interviewed four researchers in this field. The following four pages are the results of those interviews containing their opinions as to the roots of violence.

Is It the Body?

- In the interview Professor Kenneth E. Moyer of Carnegie-Mellon University, Pennsylvania (USA), stated that certain conditions in our body can stimulate systems in our brain that can create a strong tendency to fight.

Do you feel that a person can become violent for no apparent reason?

There is much debate over this. However, there have been many cases like the one where a man gradually became more hostile toward his family. He attempted to stab his wife and daughter and was taken to the hospital in a mad rage. A brain tumor was discovered and when this was removed his aggression ended. Not all brain tumors cause such behavior. Yet experiments have shown that direct electrical stimulation in certain parts of the brain has caused some patients to feel angry and behave violently.

What has your research revealed to be contributors to violence?

There is some evidence that an excess of male sex hormones, low blood sugar and allergies may make some more inclined to be hostile.

Are these automatic triggers?

No, for our behavior is a result of more than our internal feelings. Even with strong feelings of hostility, a person, because of his learning experiences or environment, may not become violent.

But are you saying it is harder for some to avoid becoming violent?

I believe it is, though not necessarily impossible. For instance, a man, out of concern for his violent tendencies, came to one of my colleagues. Tests revealed a brain disturbance and efforts to locate it were made with electrodes inserted in his brain. At one point he got up to leave,

saying: "I'm going to kill my wife!" Upon the pleas of the doctor, this man agreed to have his brain electrically stimulated one more time. Now the doctor stimulated a center of the brain known to be a suppressor of violence. Immediately the man became friendly, and said: "I really appreciate what you did. I certainly would have killed my wife."

Is controlling brain function and body chemistry the answer?

For certain individuals it probably is. However, I do not think that it is the answer. Really to get control you have to care for the environmental factors that create frustration, and you have to make sure that nothing is wrong in the body.

Are antiaggression drugs helpful?

Drugs that regulate the balance of certain hormones have helped. A number of drugs can be quite useful in getting some people through a certain period in life. When these drugs are carefully administered by a doctor they do not make the patient a zombie, but treat a specific problem in the brain.

Why do you say in the long run we must depend on learning to stop aggression?

The use of brain stimulation or drugs is very limited. They are useless when someone is violent yet has no personal animosity against the victim, such as a hired killer or wartime bomber pilot. But instruction is needed also to provide positive examples of nonviolent persons.

Is It the Diet?

● An interview with chief probation officer Barbara Reed of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio (USA), reveals that for over ten years she has been treating offenders of minor crimes, including domestic violence, by adjusting their diet.

How successful is your work?

We did a five-year statistical work-up with about 1,000 cases that our department handled. After checking with four courts and our own, we found that 89 percent had not been back in trouble.

What is different about your approach?

In addition to regular counseling, we probe into an offender's diet and exercise habits and make recommendations.

What do you usually find wrong?

Most do not eat breakfast. Usually they consume from 30 to 150 teaspoons of sugar a day through doughnuts, sweet rolls, candy, ice cream and soda pop. They average three to sixteen sixteen-ounce (.50 L) bottles of soda a day. They rarely eat vegetables. At times there are allergies to milk or certain foods.

How are diet and crime connected?

Criminal acts are not caused by one factor. But a constant diet containing refined sugar, caffeine or alcohol causes a stressful reaction in the body. The adrenal glands, which respond with a surge of adrenaline, in time become nearly exhausted. But when a person is committing a crime or is fighting, the adrenaline flows. I feel that some turn to criminal or hostile activity to get this surge of energy. Also, a bad diet can make one irritable and more prone to violence.

Can a violent person blame his diet?

We are responsible for keeping our minds clear. If a person knows that cer-

tain foods will cause problems and yet he still eats them, he is just as responsible as an alcoholic who takes a drink. He knows what will happen. Of course, most persons are ignorant of the problem.

Why do some on the same diet not become criminals?

We are all different. Some can drink alcohol for years and not become alcoholic. Some are more sensitive to sugar or caffeine. There may be inherited dependency. The parents or grandparents of 50 of 150 of our cases were diagnosed as diabetic or hypoglycemic.

Will a better diet lessen home violence?

Definitely. We have never had a case of domestic violence where a terrible diet was not a primary problem. Of course, this includes alcohol abuse, but there have been many cases where they consumed enormous amounts of "junk food." One couple who regularly fought practically lived on coffee, soda pop and ice cream. I got them on a healthful diet of fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, whole-grain breads and cereals, six glasses of water daily and encouraged them to take walks together. Matters improved in two weeks. Good diet and exercise are excellent tools for handling stress.

To what extent is your approach used in the field of rehabilitation?

The vast majority do not know about it. However, those who try it know it works. At present there are similar programs in at least seven other states.

Is It Television?

● Dr. Leonard Eron has observed the long-term effects of TV violence on children. This research professor of the social sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle stated in the interview that violent behavior is learned, and that TV plays a big role.

Why was your research study unique?

We studied the same youngsters over a twenty-one-year period to see what contributed toward some becoming highly aggressive. In 1960 we began with 875 eight-year-olds. Ten years later we reinterviewed 475 of them and their peers. We just finished a twenty-year follow-up with over 400.

What were your results?

We found that the greater a child's preference for violent TV at age eight, the greater his hostility both then and ten years later. Our study has been duplicated in five countries. We have the results from Finland and Poland. They confirm our findings.

Do you feel that TV violence causes the aggression, or do violent children simply like to watch violence?

To our surprise, we found that eight-year-olds who were not aggressive but watched much violent TV were significantly more violent by age nineteen than were those youngsters who, when eight years old, were highly aggressive but saw little TV violence.

How does watching TV violence cause aggression?

It teaches a way of solving problems. It rehearses these solutions over and over. They see the main character of a program or cartoon use violent tactics successfully, and they may try the same.

Is TV violence the only cause?

No. A child's rearing has a great effect. We found that when parents fought each other, rejected the child or used harsh punishment, the children became more aggressive. However, our study showed that a child who felt his parents cared about him when he was punished for aggression became less aggressive and the punishment worked. But caring parents are usually not harsh punishers.

Which has a greater influence—violent TV or violent parents?

It is hard to say. But we found that in determining how violent an eight-year-old could become at age nineteen, his TV habits were a more accurate predictor than anything else, including parental disharmony and social status. In our recent three-year Chicago study we corrected the attitude of some children who watched much TV violence. They became less aggressive, though other aspects of their life were unchanged.

What do you believe parents can do about the problem?

They should control what their children watch. Also, explain to the children that what they see on TV is not reality, that you do not solve problems by beating someone up. Our small efforts to explain how unrealistic TV is had significant results. How much more so if parents would do the same.

Is It the Thinking?

● "Crime is a product of the way a criminal thinks," said Dr. Stanton Samenow, a clinical psychologist and consultant in Alexandria, Virginia, in the interview. He was part of a team that spent seventeen years probing the criminal mind through countless interviews and efforts to rehabilitate hardened, often violent, criminals.

Why do you feel that environment and upbringing are not critical?

Most poor people are not criminals. Many well-to-do are. Most minorities are not criminals, and many who are majorities are. Over half of the criminals we dealt with came from stable homes. Usually they had brothers or sisters or neighbors living under the same conditions who did not take a path of crime.

Are you saying that changing the environment is not enough?

Yes. Crime does not stop if you clear the slums. Crime resides in the minds of men, not in the slums. Changing the environment does not change the inner person. Even the Bible says, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (Proverbs 23:7, Authorized Version) A criminal's pattern of thinking must be changed.

What did you find were the most consistent thinking errors?

Of course the criminal did not consider them as such. But in *The Criminal Personality* we listed fifty-two faulty thinking patterns. Among the most consistent were (1) The view that the world is theirs to take whatever they want, whenever they want it. (2) The ability to cut off fear. They are superoptimistic. Fear of injury, getting caught or even a nagging conscience is simply cut off for the moment. (3) No sense of teamwork. If nine criminals were on a baseball team, each would think he is the captain. (4) They

think in extremes—either they are Number One or Zero.

How do you change the thinking?

The individual has to want to change. You try to approach him when he is at a low. Perhaps he has been locked up or is about to lose his family. Instead of asking about his upbringing, making him feel as if he were a helpless victim of circumstances, we respectfully tell him how rotten his life is. We try to enhance his self-disgust.

What positive ideals do you teach?

The need of total commitment. Do not blame others. As one criminal who was making some progress said, 'I used to think that if my parents had given me more love, I wouldn't be a criminal, but now I wonder if being the kind of son I was made them that way.' 'I can't' was replaced with 'I must.' We taught empathy for others.

What prevents a return to crime?

We taught them to become their own critics—to take stock continually of whether their thinking is morally right. This continual moral inventory is the most important deterrent.

How successful have your efforts been?

After developing and refining our procedures, we worked closely with thirty hard-core criminals between 1970 and 1976. Of these, thirteen changed completely and are law-abiding citizens.

Can Violence Be Rooted Out?

THE origins of violence are complex. In addition to the factors in the foregoing interviews, many would add alcoholism, frustration, mental illness, heredity and even a chemical imbalance in the brain. However, the real challenge is not in identifying its roots, but in eliminating violence.

For instance, a newspaper editor whose native state has the highest violent crime death rate in that North American country said: "It's in our blood. I, for example, am educated and certainly should know better." Yet he admitted that he, too, if aroused, would kill.

So more than secular education is needed to root out violence. But why? Because, according to Jesus Christ, "out of the *heart* come wicked reasonings, murders." (Matthew 15:19) For violence to be eliminated the heart must be changed. But what is powerful enough to do this?

The Power of the Word of God

The apostle Paul wrote: "The word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword . . . and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) The message from God as contained in the Holy Scriptures is penetrating. Its power to reach the heart was especially evident during the first century. Despite

a fierce environment, those who became Christians changed their personality, replacing fits of rage with tender affections.—Colossians 3:7-11; Romans 1:29.

"We, then, alone are without crime," boasted Tertullian, a professed Christian writer of the second century. He challenged the non-Christians to find on their long list of violent criminals the name of a single Christian!

However, it was not by merely learning the message from God; others who knew these things failed to benefit because they did not obey the message. So obedience from the heart, coupled with the help of God's holy spirit, produced the changes. The accompanying box con-



For violence to be eliminated the heart must be reached and changed

What Is the Bible's Advice?

- **CONTROL YOUR SPIRIT**—"He that is slow to anger and controlling his spirit is better than a mighty man."—Proverbs 16:32.
- **THINK BEFORE YOU ACT**—"The insight of a man slows down his anger and he passes over a transgression."—Proverbs 19:11.
- **RESTRAIN YOUR WORDS**—"Be agitated, but do not sin. Have your say in your heart and keep silent."—Psalm 4:4.
- **BE CAREFUL HOW YOU TALK TO OTHERS**—"An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up."—Proverbs 15:1.
- **AVOID VIOLENT ASSOCIATES**—"Do not have companionship with anyone given to rage that you may not get familiar with his ways."—Proverbs 22:24, 25.

tains some of God's practical counsel.—Hebrews 4:6-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

Does It Work Today?

Having the "reputation as one of the best-behaved groups in the world," is how the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* praised Jehovah's Witnesses. Civil officials have likewise lauded the general absence of crime and violence among Witnesses, who are presently helping nearly one and a half million households to learn and apply the Bible. The following experiences show the results.

Al was in and out of penal institutions from the time he was thirteen. While in prison, with a thirty-year sentence for

attempted murder, robbery, kidnapping and arson, he began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses who came to the prison once a week. In time, he not only changed his personality but helped others in the prison to do so till his release in 1981. His full story, "From a Lion to a Lamb" is on page 25.

Another example is Bill, a tall, powerfully built man, who would fight at a moment's notice. He lost more than one job because of his temper. He finally secured a job as a trolley conductor. However, after two violent encounters while on the job—attacking a man with a piece of iron and spitting in the face of another who insulted him—he was again fired. In time he began attending the meetings of the Witnesses. "I learned to appreciate fully Jehovah's standards and I never wanted to violate them. If I had not found these standards, I would be dead by now. Learning the truth from the Bible helped me to stop and think before I would act," said Bill, now a mild-tempered congregation overseer.

Stella's profanity could be heard a block away. She cursed passersby, the mail carriers, her children, her husband—even an armed sheriff. She almost killed her husband with a hatchet that narrowly missed. Anything would set her off. One day, some of the grease from a pan of frying chicken burned her. In a rage she hurled the whole pan out of the door, only to realize that this was all she had for supper! She had to clean off the pieces and finish frying them.

"I told the Witness who called that because of my temper I could never be a Christian," confessed Stella. "Yet I was deeply impressed by the calmness of the

lady who offered to help me study the Bible. I wanted so much to be like her." After Stella learned that "fits of anger" were serious sins against God, she tried to control her temper.—Galatians 5:19-21.

Even after becoming one of the Witnesses she had to work constantly at guarding her spirit. Her adulterous husband ran with other women. She explained: "Oh, how at times I wanted to kill him! But I would pray and beg for God to give me the strength not to become violent. He always answered my prayers. In time, relief came when my husband left us for good." With God's help she has managed to control her violent ways, even helping one of her daughters to overcome a hot temper and helping her to become a Christian disciple.

But what can you do when you are personally provoked? How can you keep your own home free of violence?

Keeping Violence out of Your Home

- ***Ask yourself: Why am I angry? Try to identify what has got you upset.***
- ***Work on the source of the problem.*** Rather than blow off steam, turn down the fire. For instance, does your pride or selfishness make you quickly offended? Work to think less of yourself. Also, analyze your priorities in life. Is gaining material things more important than peace?
- ***Can you walk away from a quarrel?*** "Before the quarrel has burst forth, take your leave." (Proverbs 17:14) By getting away at least temporarily, you can meditate on Bible principles and calm down.
- ***Teach your children that violence is displeasing to God.*** (Psalm 11:5) Carefully control what they watch on TV or at the movies. Do not fool yourself into thinking that TV does not influence your child's behavior. Advertisers spend billions of dollars in

the proved knowledge that TV is one of the most potent influences on human behavior yet devised. Discipline your children in love, not irritating them with senseless brutality. Let them know how much you care for them. Help them to see in your example the mild, kind way of solving problems.—Ephesians 6:4.

However, some persons will resist any attempt to help them change—no matter what. So, then, what is the full answer to rooting out today's violence?

The Complete Answer

"When the wicked ones sprout as the vegetation and all the practitioners of what is hurtful blossom forth, it is that they may be annihilated forever." (Psalm 92:7) The Bible promises that God will soon destroy those who violently injure others. He will use his heavenly government, or kingdom, to clear our earth of violence. The Bible says of his King Jesus Christ: "He will deliver the poor one crying for help. . . . From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul, and their blood will be precious in his eyes."—Psalm 72:12, 14.

And the results? "In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more. And he will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."—Psalm 72:7, 8.

What an inviting picture! Peace-loving subjects filling the earth. Would you not enjoy living under such conditions? The present violent conditions are evidence that we are deep into the "last days," and that within our lifetime Jehovah God will bring this change. Yes, a world without violence is near at hand.—2 Timothy 3:1-4; Matthew 24:3, 10-14, 34.

A Guide With Impressive Credentials



Will you make him your guide?

THE sun that warms our earth is just one of the billions of suns in our Milky Way. Our Milky Way is just one of the billions of galaxies in the universe. All these trillions of stars are hurtling through space, but each in its assigned orbit and each on a schedule of split-second timing. Can men guide them? No. This fact Jehovah God called to Job's notice, asking: "Can you bring forth the Mazzaroth constellation in its appointed time? And as for the Ash constellation alongside its sons, can you conduct them?"—Job 38:32.

Birds migrate for thousands of miles, flying day and night, without map or compass, on a journey they have never made before, yet they arrive at their destination safely and on time. Can man guide the birds on their migratory flights? No. Again, God queried Job: "Is it owing to your understanding that the falcon soars up, that it spreads its wings to the south wind?"—Job 39:26.

Jehovah guides the stars by his laws of motion and gravitation. Man can't guide them. Jehovah guides migrating birds by giving them instinctive wisdom. (Proverbs 30:24) Man can't guide them. Man can't even guide himself. One look at the state of this world's affairs proves that. "It does not belong to man who

is walking," the prophet Jeremiah said, "even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) The stars heed God's laws. Migrating birds follow his guidance. But people do not accept as guides the precepts he provides for them. As God's Word says: "The stork in the sky knows the time to migrate, the dove and the swift and the wryneck know the season of return; but my people do not know the ordinances of the LORD."—Jeremiah 8:7, *The New English Bible*.

God, capable of guiding the stars by natural law and birds by instinct, has impressive credentials as a guide for man by his Word. As the inspired psalmist says: "Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway."—Psalm 119:105.

It is a sound guide in matters of marriage. Moral cleanliness is commanded: "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers." (Hebrews 13:4) The relationship is to be loving and respectful: "Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband." (Ephesians 5:33) The kind of love here meant is defined at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: "Love

is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." Neither will a marriage based on this kind of love fail.

It is a sound guide in family matters. "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous. . . . And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:1-4) It recommends keeping open at all times the lines of communication between parent and child, especially in the teaching of godliness: "You must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up."—Deuteronomy 6:7.

It is a guide for those who rule over others. For example, the king in Israel was to have a copy of God's law and "it must continue with him, and he must read in it all the days of his life, in order that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God so as to keep all the words of this law and these regulations by doing them; that his heart may not exalt itself above his brothers and that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right or to the left." No special privileges for rulers. No bribes, either: "You must not be partial or accept a bribe, for the bribe blinds the eyes of wise ones and distorts the words of righteous ones. Justice—justice you should pursue." (Deuteronomy 17:19, 20; 16:19, 20) The condition of the ruled reflects the

quality of the rulers. "When the righteous are in power the people rejoice, but they groan when the wicked hold office."—Proverbs 29:2, NE.

There are many other fields in which the Bible offers guidance. It guides in eating, not so much in what we eat as in how much, forbidding gluttony. It guides in drinking, not so much in what we drink as in how much, forbidding drunkenness. It would reduce quarreling, advising that a soft answer turns away rage. It would halt much evil at the outset, telling us not to return evil for evil but to conquer the evil with the good. It forbids that great troublemaker in human relations, the gossip and talebearer. It would eliminate class distinctions and the racial prejudice that now disgraces mankind, advising that we all came from one man, that with God there is no partiality, and that in his kingdom "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free-man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one person in union with Christ Jesus."—Galatians 3:28; Proverbs 15:1; 23:21; Romans 12:17, 21; 1 Timothy 5:13; James 2:4; Acts 10:34; 17:26.

The guiding principles in God's Word



**Birds migrate thousands of miles,
flying day and night, without
map or compass, yet reach their
destination. Can men guide them? No**

were summed up simply by Christ Jesus: " 'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' " And in the

Trillions of stars hurtle through space, each in its own orbit and on split-second timing. Can men guide them? No

Sermon on the Mount he gave what has become known as the golden rule: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean."—Matthew 22: 37-39; 7:12.

Are these principles practical guidelines? Certainly following an opposite course has not proved practical. It is true that imperfect humans cannot apply these divine guidelines perfectly at all times, but through sincere effort the bulk of mankind's troubles could be eliminated. It has happened for many today just as it did for the early Christians: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom. And yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean." (1 Corinthians 6: 9-11) Then in the paradise new earth under God's kingdom all those living will attain perfection in their application of these divine guidelines.

That kingdom will be a government of

God, by God, and for the worshipers of God, and it will not perish from the face of the earth but will continue as long as the sun shines and will give an abundance of peace as long as the moon endures. The King, Christ Jesus, will have previously judged among many people and rebuked strong nations, and swords will have been beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, and nations will no more be lifting up sword against nation, neither will they be learning war anymore. That kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion will endure throughout all generations. He will then open his hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing, because then every living, breathing thing will be praising Jehovah God the Creator. He will bring in health and cure for the people, and wipe every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. Nothing will hurt or destroy in all that blessed new order, because the former things of this present old world will have passed away and have been forgotten, for by then Jehovah will have made all things new.—Psalm 72:7; 145: 13; 150:6; Isaiah 2:4; 11:6-9; Revelation 21:3-5.

Would you like to be guided into ever-

Man can't even guide himself. One look at the state of this world's affairs proves that

lasting life in that paradise earth of God's making, just as surely as the stars are guided in their orbits? Then make their guide your guide. Would you like to be guided as surely as the birds are guid-

Would you like to be guided into everlasting life in a paradise earth, just as surely as the stars are guided in their orbits and the birds in their migrations? Then make their guide your guide

ed in their migrations? That's possible. Make their guide your guide. Would you like to be guided in your preparations to pass through the symbolical winter of Armageddon just as surely as birds and animals and insects are guided in their preparations to pass through literal win-

ters? It's simple. Make their guide your guide. Their guide has impressive credentials, amazing successes. Be among these successes. Make Jehovah God and his Word, the Bible, your guide during these troublous last days of this old system of things.

"He Was a Good Christian Man"

ONE of Jehovah's Witnesses went to the superintendent of schools for Hardin and McNairy counties, in Tennessee, with the September 22, 1981, *Awake!* on evolution. The superintendent made the statement that Adamsville high school would not be operating if it were not for "that Kingdom Hall." The Witness had heard that before and had always wondered what it meant. He asked the superintendent.

It seems that at one time the county wanted to close that school and bus the students fifteen miles away to McNairy central high school in Selmer. The residents of Adamsville opposed that decision, but the officials had a plan. They would appoint Chis, the athletic coach, as principal of the school. Since he was a hopeless alcoholic, he would soon be fired and that would be used as an excuse to close Adamsville high. Chis was well liked in spite of his alcoholism, and while he was coach the school never lost a game.

Soon after he became principal, Chis began studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. He quit drinking, and that blew their plan to fire him for alcoholism and close down the school. Chis became an elder in the Adamsville congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, proved to be an outstanding principal and gained the respect of both teachers and students.

Some two years ago Chis died of a heart attack—six months after he had retired. His wife, a Presbyterian, wanted both a Witness and her minister to speak at the funeral. However, the Witness declined because of the conflict of viewpoints that would result. "Besides," he explained, "Chis never even liked this minister. How would he feel if he knew?" She agreed, and the service would be held minus the minister.

A large crowd was anticipated, so they chose the school gym for the service. The stores closed and the merchants were present, as well as many of the town's residents and civic leaders. Floral arrangements lined one end and the length of the gym. Both classical music and Kingdom songs were played as hundreds filed in. The Presbyterian minister also came.

One by one faculty members spoke. Then the Witness who had previously talked to the superintendent of schools gave his discourse. He explained how death had come about, the condition of the dead, the hope of resurrection and the blessings to come under Christ's kingdom.

Later Adamsville built a new school and dedicated the gym to T. E. Chism. On a huge bronze plaque in the gym his accomplishments are listed. The last one is, "He was a good Christian man."

Were Christendom's Methods of Conversion Christian?

WHAT is wrong with Christendom? Why is it divided into countless sects? Why have so many people deserted its churches? Why have "Christian" countries fought one another so often? The true religion of Christ was not like that. So what went wrong? Were Christendom's methods of making converts perhaps at fault? Is its foundation sand or rock?—Matthew 7:24-27.

Conversion means a turning around from one course of life to another. For example, in 50 CE, the apostle Paul made many converts to Christianity in Corinth. That city had a bad name for immorality to the extent that "to Corinthianize" meant to "practice whoredom." Paul later wrote to his Corinthian brothers: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, . . . nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom. And yet that is what *some of you were*." —1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

How did the original, pure religion of Christ degenerate into the system of Christendom today? Various factors were involved. The apostle Peter foretold the demoralizing effect of "false teachers" guilty of "loose conduct" and "counterfeit words." (2 Peter 2:1-3) Jesus said to his disciples: "You are no part of the world." (John 15:19) But during the second and third centuries pagan philosophy and worldly trends perverted

Christianity. Methods of conversion also degenerated.

The Conversion of Constantine

In the fourth century there occurred one of the outstanding "conversions" of all history, that of Roman Emperor Constantine. It is said that before a battle he saw the sign of the cross in the sky with the words: "By this conquer."

Did Constantine become a real Christian? Christian conversion is symbolized by baptism, total immersion in water. Constantine postponed this vital step until his deathbed. Constantine was not "a Christian character," contends historian H. Fisher in his *History of Europe*, and adds: "He . . . put to death his wife and his son. . . . He believed in Christ, but also in the unconquered sun. [Constantine initiated the observance of Sunday] He . . . retained the office of Pontifex Maximus [high priest]."

Due to Constantine's support, "Christianity" (of a degenerate kind) became the official religion of the empire. This resulted in a sudden increase in conversions and set the pattern for multitudes of future conversions. Historian E. Gibbon explains: "As the lower ranks of society are governed by imitation, the conversion of those who possessed any eminence of birth, of power, or of riches, were soon followed by dependent multitudes."

The Conversion of Pagan Tribes

In the fifth century the decadent Roman Empire began to shrink and crumble. Warlike Germanic tribes burst through the frontiers of the empire and flooded southward. The famous *Pax Romana* collapsed and Europe became a theater of war. In time, Clovis I, a Frankish king, subdued his rivals and became master of a large part of western Europe. The Franks were not Christians, but Clovis I married a Catholic princess named Clotilda.

According to some accounts, Clovis I had an experience similar to that of Constantine. Hard pressed in a battle with the Alamanni tribe, he appealed to Christ for victory. He won. On returning from his campaign he was baptized in 496. Charles Oman's book *The Dark Ages* states: "3000 of his warriors followed him to the font [of baptism]."

Did they become real Christians? Answers Oman: "It cannot be said that the king's conversion made any favourable change in his character or his conduct. . . . The Franks . . . hastened to follow him to the fold of the Church . . . But, as with king so with people, the change was almost entirely superficial."

Early Conversions in Britain

Britain in the sixth century was mainly non-Christian. Under the empire it had been "Christianized" somewhat, but Saxons had invaded and driven the British "Christians" west. The latter had no ties with the papacy in Rome. So in 596 Pope Gregory I sent a monk called Augustine who landed near Ramsgate, Kent. He soon converted the local king, Ethelbert, followed by the men of Kent. Similar mass conversions took place in other parts of England. Fisher writes: "Here, as elsewhere, the conversion of

the pagan is to be attributed not to any penitential movement of the heart, but to the pressure of the monarchy upon a submissive population. . . . The creed of the king became the creed of the people."

But Augustine's main assignment from the pope was to convert the independent British "Christians" to Rome. Two meetings held by Augustine with the local bishops failed completely. "If," the "saint" exclaimed, "you will not have peace from your friends you shall have war from your foes." This belligerent attitude echoed the policy of Pope Gregory I who, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "sometimes advocated a war of aggression against heathens in order to christianize them."

Conversions in Saxony and Other Countries

War certainly played a major role in the conversion of non-Christian Europe. Concerning Charlemagne, king of the Franks from 768 to 813, H. G. Wells says: "He made his wars of aggression definitely religious wars. . . . Whole nations were converted to Christianity by



Hundreds who refused conversion were burned at the stake

Charlemagne threatened to kill those who refused baptism



the sword." In 782 at Verden he massacred in cold blood 4,500 prisoners who had led a revolt and turned back from "Christianity." Concerning the conquest of Saxony the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states: "The violent methods by which this missionary task was carried out had been unknown to the earlier Middle Ages."

Cowed, no doubt, by Charlemagne's cruel reputation, the Slavs of eastern Europe were easily subdued and converted. In 988 Vladimir, the Russian ruler, maneuvered his marriage to a Byzantine princess, an Eastern Orthodox Catholic, and agreed, as part of the political contract, to become a "Christian." He then "commanded the collective baptism of his subjects."

"The conversion of Europe to Christianity," wrote historian Fisher, "was, after the first heroic age of poverty and enthusiasm, mainly the result of material calculation or political pressure. The Goths, the Franks, the Saxons, the Scandinavians went over to Christianity, not as individuals directed by an inner light, but as peoples subject to mass suggestion and under the direction of political chiefs."

Many of the clergy had become wealthy, politically powerful and immoral. This caused the growth of "heretical" sects. By the twelfth century, Languedoc, or Southern France, had become a hotbed of heresy. Let us now consider how the Church attempted—

The Conversion of Heretics in Southern France

There were two groups of heretics in Languedoc—the Cathars, or Albigenses, and the Waldensians. The former were the most numerous and their beliefs had elements of Christianity and Oriental ideas. The Waldensians were more orthodox and very zealous in preaching the Bible among the common people.

Peaceful methods of conversion were tried first. When this failed, Pope Alexander III declared at a Lateran Council: "The Church . . . must . . . invoke the aid of princes, that fear of temporal punishment may force men to seek a spiritual cure for their shortcomings."

However, Pope Innocent III tried another preaching campaign. Prominent in this was a Spanish priest, Domingo de Guzman. But in spite of his zeal conversions of heretics were few. A Dominican writer credits him with saying: "Where a blessing fails, a good thick stick will succeed." What was this "good thick stick"?

In July 1209, a powerful army of knights, men-at-arms and mercenaries set off from Lyons to Languedoc. They were soldiers of the Cross. They had mustered at the bidding of Pope Innocent III to conduct a Crusade against the heretics. Their leader was a papal legate. On July 21 this force camped near the city of Béziers in southeastern France. A suggestion that a group of heretics

should be given up to the Crusaders was rejected by the citizens.

The next day the Crusaders attacked and soon overwhelmed the small body of defenders. The mercenaries, vicious desperados, and the knights, all eager for plunder, were ruthless. Many people fled to the churches for safety. Historian Oldenbourg, in the book *The Massacre at Montségur*, describes the outcome: "The doors of the churches were forced open . . . All inside were slaughtered wholesale —women, invalids, babies, and priests. . . . In a few short hours the wealthy city of Béziers was a city of bleeding mutilated corpses, and nothing else." And this shocking display of brutality was done

Whole nations were converted to Christianity by the sword

by men led by the papal legate, who triumphantly wrote to the pope: "Nearly twenty thousand of the citizens were put to the sword, regardless of age and sex."

Did this "thick stick" get results? Hundreds of Cathars and Waldensians were burned at the stake, but by 1229, after twenty years of war and misery, the heretical groups were still well supported in Languedoc.

In 1233 two Dominicans were given special powers as Inquisitors. Their method was to announce a "period of grace" during which heretics or sympathizers could come and confess. But to prove their "conversion" they had to denounce others. This crafty scheme, backed by the fear of torture or the stake, caused many to collaborate. Denunciations snowballed and set off a reign of terror. In just one place, Moissac, 210 heretics were burned

alive in a monstrous holocaust. The Holy Inquisition succeeded in suppressing the Cathars. The Waldensians still survive.

A few centuries later the fair country of France was convulsed with the struggle between the Church and the Reformation. In England, when King Henry VIII proclaimed himself head of the Church of England in 1534, those Catholics who refused to be converted to his new politico-religious system were in great danger. "The creed of the king" still had to be "the creed of the people."

Protestantism made progress during the reign of his son, Edward VI, but the pendulum swung the other way during the following reign of Catholic Queen Mary. Sir Winston Churchill commented, in his "History of the English Speaking Peoples": "Here were the . . . living beings who composed the nation, ordered in the name of King Edward VI to march along one path to salvation, and under Queen Mary to march back again in the opposite direction; and all who would not move on the first order or turn about on the second must prove their convictions, if necessary, at the gibbet or the stake."

Can you imagine Jesus Christ or any true Christian condemning people to the gibbet or the stake for their beliefs?

In Our Next Issue

- "Surviving" the First Year of Marriage
 - A Book for All People
 - Making Wise Health Decisions
 - Do They Come Back the Same?
-

Young People Ask...

How Can I Cope With Peer Pressure?

AT FOURTEEN years of age Karen was already a heavy drug user and regularly engaged in sex. At fifteen Michelle was arrested for vandalism and theft and charged with possession of drugs. By the time he was seventeen Jim had become an alcoholic and was living an immoral life. However, all three admitted that they did not really like the life they were living nor the things they were doing.

"My conscience bothered me constantly," confessed Michelle. Then why did she and the others act as they did? "Ev-



eryone I was with was into these things and that had a big effect on me," related Karen. Jim agreed, saying, "I didn't want to lose my friends by being different."

The powerful common denominator that pushed them toward alcohol, drugs, crime and sex was peer pressure. However, is all peer pressure bad? Can it be good? What is it that causes many individuals to submit to it?

Who or What Determines Peer Standards?

As youths get older they become more aware of their peers and their standards. The desire to be popular and accepted by those in their own age group becomes a powerful influence in their lives; so is the fear of rejection. With the declining influence of parents over the course that young people take, these young ones become especially vulnerable to molding from their peers. Also rapidly filling up any vacuum that may be left are mov-

ies, television, music and advertising. These promote the idea that sexual activity is necessary for a person to be accepted and loved. Some US studies reveal that by the time youths reach nineteen, 90 percent have already had sex.

Yet Dr. Corinne Devlin, head of the McMaster University Medical Centre Reproductive Regulation Clinic, candidly states that what many young



people really want is not sex. In a report in the *Toronto Star*, she said: "When teens do have sex it's often for non-sexual reasons—to be thought 'normal' or to have some basic adolescent questions answered, such as 'Do you like me, or do you want to hang around with me?' There's a very clear message going around: If you care for someone, the way you show it is not by honor, respect, companionship. You show it by having intercourse."

That message is drummed into teens wherever they turn.

It's the same message in music and top-selling records aimed at youths. That, along with the conduct of popular musicians, contributes to establishing peer standards. "The group I associated with had its own music and idols," relates Karen, who is now a single parent, "and so I would listen to records that were accepted by my friends. I didn't realize, though, how much I was influenced by music, not only in using drugs and engaging in sex but also in developing a

feeling of resentment against my parents and anyone with authority."

Further contributing to peer standards is the vulnerability of youths to the influences of sensuality and emotion. With the onset of puberty teens ride the crest of a wave of new experiences, realizations and feelings that they have never had to deal with before. And with the growing rejection of earlier moral standards, many find themselves going along with conduct they don't personally like.

How to Cope With Peer Pressure

Young people are looking for direction and feel the need to talk with someone. Discerning parents encourage open-minded discussions from an early age and take time to listen to the problems and temptations teenagers are facing. Most youths readily respond to love and attention; they need assurance that they are wanted and understood. When it is not found at home, a youth will search for it elsewhere. That can make him vulnerable to peer pressure.



Often young people give in to peer pressure because of a lack of confidence in themselves or due to feelings of insecurity. So if your parents encourage you to develop your talents, abilities and skills, recognize the value of it. "Adolescents who are good at something feel important in their own right," says Beth Winship, a US teen adviser. "They don't have to depend on peer approval for good self-image."

And if your parents try to teach you proper moral values along with adult skills such as decisiveness and self-control, don't fight it. One young girl said: "My parents were firm with me. I didn't like

"Adolescents who are good at something feel important in their own right," says Winship, a US teen adviser. "They don't have to depend on peer approval for good self-image"

it at times, but I'm glad they put their foot down and limited my associations." Because of that parental help, she did not give in to pressure to engage in drug use and sex.

Since your associates are going to influence you and your morals, it is important to be selective as to your friends. Associating with those who have good values and standards can assist as a protection from wrongdoing. Thus, this peer pressure can serve for good.

However, being selective may also mean fewer associates. How can a person cope with this problem and deal with feelings of isolation? One teenager expressed herself this way: "When I didn't go along with others in school,

with their ideas on drugs and sex, they soon left me alone. Although this lifted a lot of pressure off me to conform, it did make me feel a little lonesome. But then I looked around until I found another girl who was serious about studying, who had similar values to mine and with whom I could associate during school hours. This helped a lot."

Some wise youths who have no parents they can talk to have made friends with older, more experienced individuals who could give them sound advice. As the Bible says: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise."—Proverbs 13:20.

To stand firm against peer pressure to do unwise things, you need to have strong personal convictions and sufficient motivation to follow through. How can you get these? Well, who knows more about life than mankind's Creator? In the Bible he has had recorded the guidelines for a life that is truly satisfying.—Psalm 119:9-11, 105.

Getting to know Jehovah as a friend, as someone who can be approached for help anytime day or night through personal, heartfelt prayer has given many the courage to be different and the strength to resist when the world tried to 'squeeze them into its mold.' (Romans 12:2, Phillips) "The greatest help I found in coping with peer pressure and in resisting a life of immorality, drugs and alcohol was in developing a close relationship with Jehovah God," reflected Michelle.

As many youths among Jehovah's Witnesses have learned, they are generally respected and admired for standing up for right principles. They know that, as expressed at Proverbs 29:25, "trembling at men is what lays a snare, but he that is trusting in Jehovah will be protected."

'To the Clean . . .'

BEIEVERS in the Bible were doubtless startled to read a headline in a recent US newspaper: "Ban the Bible? It celebrates oral sex, love." The writer, a priest, was not seriously suggesting that the Bible be banned, but he did claim that it condones what Christians would view as immorality.

The part of the Bible he had in mind was the Song of Solomon. Here is how he describes it: "The Song of Solomon . . . describes such [oral] sex with words which are surely far more tantalizing than any *Penthouse* can manage." He goes on: "There is no indication that the lovers are married; the woman is naked through most of the story (she protests at one point that if her lover doesn't take her to her chamber she will have to put on her gown again) . . .".

Have you ever read the book? If so, did you notice such things in it?

The Song of Solomon describes the constancy of the love of a young Shulammite girl for a local shepherd boy. It contains some warm descriptions of their feelings for each other. But oral sex? Read it through as often as you like, and you will find no reference to any such thing. In fact, the young couple committed no form of immorality. The Shulammite girl is called "the pure one." At the end of the song, her virtue is viewed as proved. The young shepherd himself says about her: "A garden barred in is my sister, my bride, a garden barred in, a spring sealed up." (Song of Solomon 6:9; 4:12; 8:9, 10) No, the conduct of this couple was blameless.

Is it true that "there is no indication that the lovers are married"? Probably they were not, but notice that the shepherd calls the Shulammite his "bride." What does he mean? In this context,

the Hebrew word *cal·lah'* means either a bride just before marriage, or a new wife. (*The New Brown, Driver, Briggs Gesenius*) Since the young shepherd calls her his *cal·lah'* several times, the couple are evidently planning on marriage. Hence, their passionate feelings are not out of place.

Is it true that the woman is "naked through most of the story"? Well, the text does not describe her clothes, but does that mean she has none? On one occasion, the shepherd says to her: "Your eyes are those of doves, behind your veil." (Song of Solomon 4:1) If she is veiled, that sounds as if she is modest, does it not?

What about the statement, "she protests at one point that if her lover doesn't take her to her chamber she will have to put on her gown again"? The only part of the book that mentions her gown, or robe, is chapter five. Here, the Shulammite is describing a dream. She says: "I am asleep, but my heart is awake." Then she relates how, in her dream, her shepherd knocks at the door of her chamber. She refuses to open to him. Why? "I have put off my robe. How can I put it back on? I have washed my feet. How can I soil them?" Surely this episode shows that the Shulammite has a sense of decency!

—Song of Solomon 5:2-6.

The apostle Paul said: "All things are clean to clean persons. But to persons defiled and faithless nothing is clean, but both their minds and their consciences are defiled." (Titus 1:15) If looked at by people with minds tainted by this world's immoral thinking, even something as clean and wholesome as the love of the Shulammite for her shepherd can be made to look sordid.

The Cursing of the Fig Tree

A Twofold Lesson on Faith

ONE of the more puzzling passages in the Bible is the account of Jesus and the barren fig tree. According to Mark 11:12-14, 20-24, when Jesus saw a certain fig tree with leaves but no fruit, he cursed it and, as a result, the tree withered. Yet, as Mark plainly says, it wasn't the season for figs. Why, then, did Jesus curse this fig tree? And why did Mark, under inspiration, record this incident? While some of Christendom's commentators have been embarrassed by this account, not only do the facts justify Jesus' actions, but they also reveal that Jesus was teaching a two-fold lesson on faith!

For example, while figs don't usually mature until June, fruit buds usually appear on the branches of fig trees as early as February. In fact, this occurs two months before leaves appear on the branches in late April or early May. So by the time a fig tree has its leaves, it should surely have figs. This helps us to appreciate that when Jesus saw this particular fig tree in late March, while it wasn't the season for fig trees to have mature figs, it also wasn't the season for fig trees to have leaves.

The fact that this tree did have leaves shows that it was unseasonably mature. Surely it would not have been unreasonable for Jesus to expect that such a tree would also be unseasonably early with its fruit. Yet, this tree was unproductive. Indeed, as Mark states, the tree had "nothing but leaves," that is, no fruit. Certainly the leaves gave that tree a deceptive appearance.

But why did Jesus curse this unproductive fig tree? Jesus' words on the occasion, as recorded in Mark 11:22-25, provide a clue to the answer. As Jesus explained, this was a lesson for them to "have faith in God." What did the withering of this fig tree have to do with faith? First of

all, it was Jesus' faith that made the curse effective. Evidently, Jesus was using this occasion to provide an object lesson on the power of faith. As Jesus stated: "All the things you pray and ask for have faith that you have practically received, and you will have them."—Mark 11:24.

But there also seems to be another connection between the withering of this fig tree and the quality of faith. Just three months prior to this incident Jesus uttered a parable about an unfruitful fig tree that needed to be cut down. (Luke 13:6-9) And what was pictured by the fig tree of this parable? This unfruitful fig tree was a symbol of the ancient Jewish nation.—Compare Matthew 21:43.

So it is reasonable to believe that the barren fig tree that Jesus cursed was also a symbol of the unfruitful ancient Jewish nation. Although this nation had been in a covenant relationship with God, the appearance was deceptive, for the nation proved barren of good fruitage, even rejecting God's own Son. And what was the cause of this unfruitfulness? The lack of faith, the very quality Jesus was using the occasion to highlight. (Romans 9:31, 32) By causing the fig tree to wither, Jesus was graphically demonstrating what the end result would be for that fruitless, faithless nation.

So not only do the horticultural facts justify Jesus' actions in cursing the fig tree, but the context reveals that Jesus was thereby teaching a twofold lesson on faith. While the absence of faith can make us fruitless and will only lead to our rejection by God, our possessing an active faith will enable us to "move mountains," as Jehovah will surely answer our prayers.—Matthew 17:20.

cause of, no one is to know, yet
the world will be shocked when
we learn of the terrible
consequences of this
new fight I new

"From a Lion to a Lamb"

AFTER robbing and terrorizing a store clerk, my brothers and I fled in our car. Little did I realize how that day—April 14, 1972—would show what a vicious "animal" I had become.

We pulled up near a police roadblock, when suddenly a hail of bullets ripped through our car. My brother Larry fell dead into my lap—his face blown off. I was covered with his blood. We sped off, but not far because the car caught on fire from the bullets. We jumped out in search of another car.

Nearby an old man was asleep in his car. I went berserk after seeing Larry die. So in a rage I grabbed the man and could not stop beating him. His skull was broken and he nearly died. After a high-speed auto chase by the police during which I was hit twice by gunfire, I blacked out and the car crashed.

"Get out of that car and throw your hands up!" were the next words I remembered. I was surrounded by police, yet this still did not fully stop me. A shotgun blast at short range opened a gaping wound in my stomach. Still I wrestled with a 270-pound policeman who finally flung me facedown into a puddle of muddy swamp water, sat on my back and taunted: "Nigger, you're going to die!"

When I was later taken to the hospital I had but one desire: kill anything that moves! You see, after my little brother's death, I did not see any purpose in living. I had no hope of ever becoming anything in life. For me, it was kill and

be killed. No wonder two guards armed with shotguns sat by my hospital bed!

But what had created such a lionlike personality?

A Violent Childhood

Somebody was always fighting in our family. Dad was blind in one eye because of a fight. At times he would menace whole crowds by standing in the entrance doorway of a crowded dance hall shouting, "Nobody in and nobody out!" Not a soul would challenge him. They knew how bad he was! We followed dad's violent example. One of my brothers almost cut off my foot with a large knife simply because I said, "I'm not going to move it!" Though my mom showed some tenderness, I thought, "With sixteen of us kids it must be awfully hard to show all of us love."

Our family was poor, yet we had the necessities. But I wanted more. Soon I was burglarizing homes. This led to my being sent at age thirteen to a boys' penal home, and to more violence. In one fight with a boy who tried to take advantage of me, I beat him till he dropped dazed and his face was covered with blood.

After my release from the boys' home, my whole life was simply myself, and that's all. I could not have cared less about the next person. The violent acts grew in intensity till that day in April 1972. When my brother Cy and I were finally hauled into court they 'threw the book at us'—thirty years in the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, Louisiana!



We arrived in prison as "two fighting fools." Though I was small, weighing only 135 pounds, I had studied the martial arts and was into weight lifting. I could easily lift over twice my weight above my head! Word got around: "Don't mess with Al, he'll go all the way. He'll kill you."

'Knocked Off My Feet'

Jehovah's Witnesses were having weekly meetings in the prison. I went out of curiosity. "You don't know what you are talking about!" I challenged one of the patient, well-spoken ministers. "How do you know it is like that?" As a convict I had learned to be skeptical. We were experts at using "sweet" speech to manipulate others. So the Witnesses' inviting words did not mean much at first.

Then I felt something from them that I had never been shown in my whole life: genuine unselfish concern. First, they had to travel nearly an hour each way to get to the prison. They did this week after week without any material compensation. Also, they took time, even when

they were not at the prison, to discuss our problems and questions with other congregational elders, and the following week they would give us this further information. They really wanted to help us. I could sense it.

The truth from the Bible that I was learning was both logical and practical. Little by little I applied it. Gradually I began to shed my lionlike old personality and to clothe myself with the new, which included compassion, kindness and lowliness of mind. I felt good inside. The Bible really worked! Then came the first assembly of Witnesses to be held inside the prison grounds.*—Colossians 3:9-12.

The free-flowing love of over 300 Witnesses just 'knocked me off my feet!' There was not a hint of prejudice because of our race or prison status. It is just as Jesus said, by this self-sacrificing love "all will know" his true disciples. Previously, I believed in religion—but in my way. My motto had always been, "Do unto others before they do unto you." The Witnesses' unselfish love deeply moved me. In fact, at this assembly—October 5, 1974—I was baptized.—John 13:34, 35.

Deepening My Relationship With God

The Witnesses taught me to dig into the Bible. I came to sense Jehovah's tender interest in my life. His mercy just overwhelmed me. When I reflected on my past, I almost had a nervous breakdown. I kept "seeing" the terrified faces of those I had held up or beaten. But then to sense Jehovah's complete forgiveness made me want to do all I could to please him. I also applied Romans 13:1 for the first time in my life and subjected myself to the "superior authorities" as represented by the prison officials.—Isaiah 1:18, 19.

* For details, see *Awake!*, May 8, 1977.

To avoid reverting to my former personality I had to safeguard my thoughts and heart. I would force my mind to dwell on scriptures and Bible examples rather than on violent acts as before. I constantly strove—every day—to reach Jehovah's standards in a fuller way. This attitude is crucial when you are locked up with thousands of thoroughly corrupted men. Sadly, some who became Witnesses while in Angola allowed the anxieties and pleasures of life to choke the message of truth sown in their hearts. A desire by some to get out of prison or to get married overshadowed spiritual things and these became sad examples. They even ruined the lives of Witnesses who married them without knowing their true spiritual condition.—Luke 8: 11-15.

To avoid any such problem I busied myself in helping other prisoners to have the same hope and goal I now had. For several years I devoted over a hundred hours each month to this work. At one point I had twenty weekly Bible studies! Eight of these inmates became dedicated Witnesses. One of these, with a violent temper, had been jailed for killing his wife. How satisfying to see another "lion" become one of God's "sheep"!

Life on the Outside

After serving nine years I was released in 1981. What a joy to be able to associate freely with the congregation! However, there were some who gave me the impression that because of my background I had to "prove" myself first. I knew that pleasing Jehovah was primary and that in time others would see my spiritual progress. Now my life faced another challenge—caring for a wife along with her five children.—Compare Acts 9:26.

I was fortunate to find a wife like

Barbara who was wholly devoted to Jehovah. Her submissive support has been vital. To keep Jehovah foremost in our family, we study together every week —no matter what—and teach others the Bible *as a family*. Naturally, like any couple, we have our little differences. But when I get angry, I'll walk into the next room, pick up a Bible or Bible study aid and start reading. In an hour or so we'll make up.

After reading of how so many criminals return to their former ways, you wonder at times if a "lion" truly can become a "lamb." Can the inviting picture described in Isaiah 11:6-9 of the lamb and the lion dwelling together in peace become a reality among God's people today? Something happened that I feel provides a partial answer. I will let Barbara tell it.

"Al and I were returning from the preaching work. A man came out of a barroom, stared at us and shouted, 'Look at that pretty woman! I just have to kiss her!' Then he came over and started to put his arm around me," explained Barbara. "I looked at Al and saw his jaw tighten up. But Al didn't do a thing. I backed away from the man who then reached over and shook Al's hand. He said to my husband, 'I'm sorry, Mister, but with a beauty like that I just got carried away.' He walked off. I'll never forget what Al then said. 'Baby, if he only knew what I could have done to him.' I told Al, 'Jehovah's spirit was certainly with you.'"

Yes, really when I look back at the changes I've made it was not simply Al that did this. It was Jehovah's spirit, his guidance and accurate knowledge from his Word that changed this "lion" into a "lamb" in the Good Shepherd's flock.
—Contributed.

From Our Readers

Women

Your articles on women ["The 20th Century Woman"] were not well done and were also unwholesome. It seems strange that while listing the greater strengths of men there is no mention made that men commit the murders on earth; or when speaking of women's emotions, it omits noting that violence and murders are usually the consequence of lack of emotional control in men.

S. M., New York

We acknowledge that through history man has dominated his fellowman to his injury, and we have frequently exposed the crimes and violence perpetrated by selfish men. (Ecclesiastes 8:9) In the articles mentioned we tried to present a balanced view of the entire question of men and women and their differences. After mentioning the emotional tendency of many women, the article also stated: "And how many men are always cool, logical and self-controlled?" Men bear a heavy responsibility for the oppression of women, as well as of men, and neither men nor women will ever be able to remove this oppression. There is only one hope for the removal of all oppression, and that is God's kingdom through his Son, Christ Jesus.—ED.

I can't hold back any longer. When I read the articles on "The 20th Century Woman" I knew I just had to write. The way the material deals with men and women, their differences and, most of all, how the woman is viewed by Jehovah and how she should be treated by the man, is very touching. I've been the victim of oppression and abuse, and it made me feel very good to know that the public will receive this fine material.

I hope that most men will read and appreciate it as well.

S. V., Louisiana

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the articles on "The 20th Century Woman." As I read I often stopped with a lump in my throat in thankfulness for the wonderful counsel and comfort. All my life I painfully watched and personally felt the agonies of being an "inferior" human creature. Coming to know Jehovah and that he does not consent to the oppression of women by men has been a great relief. I am sure many men who read these articles will see that headship doesn't mean a harsh macho man. When my husband was an inconsiderate dictator it was difficult to find any love for him. Now it is easy to have deep love and respect for him when, after work, instead of the easy chair it's the kitchen to give me a hand. Then together we can relax and recount the day's activities with our boys.

E. S., Connecticut

Hang Gliding

I have been interested in motorless flight since I was ten, and would like to comment on the article "Is It Worth the Risk?" which included thoughts about aerial sports. Due to unpredictable atmospheric conditions, hang gliding is, as the article correctly points out, a sport that entails great risk. Of course, the greatest risk factor in any kind of sport is man himself.

M. S., Germany

Watching the World



Bible Translation Valuable

● *The Globe and Mail*, of Toronto, Canada, recently commented on the many new English-language Bible translations published in the last twenty years: "Each new version—including such ones as the Jehovah's Witnesses' New World Translation—attempt to clarify the message of the Bible by updating language, and incorporating scholarly findings from the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic . . . and Greek texts."

Crime Soars in Europe

● "Crime throughout Europe is rising, with France showing the largest increase of eleven countries surveyed," reports *The Daily Telegraph* of London. "England and Wales are in second place." West Germany had the biggest rise in crime in ten years—an 8-percent increase for 1980 over the previous year—with theft up 23 percent and murders up 6 percent. Holland reported a 13-percent increase over a five-year period ending in 1980. Crimes of violence in Brussels rose 17 percent in 1980 over the previous year. Murders and other violent assaults rose in Spain, with muggings commit-

ted by youths showing the biggest rise. Scandinavia, too, reported a marked increase in crimes committed by youths.

Banks at Brink?

● "More and more bankers, members of a most conservative profession given to cautious understatement, are talking openly about the possibility that Third World bankruptcies might bring the collapse of the Western banking system," reports *World Press Review* magazine. "Third World debt grew by a massive 30 per cent in the past twelve months, rising from \$416 billion at the end of 1980 to around \$540 billion. The problem is not so much that the debt is large as that it is out of control." In 1981 eight countries postponed their repayment of debts. The results: "All of this has put the world banking and financial system nearer to the edge of a precipice than the banking world has previously wanted to admit." More defaults and reschedulings this year, warned the article, could set off "a chain reaction to collapse."

Patient's Rights Ignored

● After being seriously injured in an auto accident, South Af-

rican William Dyson, 51, twice refused a blood transfusion on religious grounds. His family agreed. Yet a court-ordered blood transfusion was forced on him. However, not all medical authorities agreed with the court or the hospital's action. Dr. D. J. L. van Rooy, medical superintendent of Vereeniging Hospital, stated: "A person of sound mind is within his rights to refuse any medical treatment to which he does not agree . . . The hospital must always respect a patient's feelings and conditions." *The Rand Daily Mail* of Johannesburg agreed. Under the headline "Doctors Violated Patient's Rights," the article affirmed: "Saving lives and relieving pain may be what doctors are all about, but that does not give them the right to destroy the values a man lives by, and is prepared to die by, in the process." Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusions because they believe God's law to 'abstain from blood' means just that. They will accept alternate medical treatment.—Acts 15:29.

TV-Violence Link Affirmed

● After ten years of research, a report by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health concludes that there is "overwhelming" scientific evidence that "excessive" violence on television leads directly to aggression and violent behavior among children and teenagers. "In magnitude, television violence is as strongly correlated with aggressive behavior as any other behavioral variable that has been measured," says the report. And it calls television "a formidable educator whose effects are both pervasive and cumulative." Television's potential for good, by improving family relationships and aiding education, has for

the most part gone unrealized, the report noted.

"River Blindness" Vaccine Sought

● The effects of "river blindness" can be devastating. In the savanna zone of West Africa alone over one hundred thousand are blind due to this parasitic disease. In addition, tens of millions in tropical Africa, Yemen, and in Central and South America are afflicted with its symptoms. This has prompted research institutes of industrial and developing nations to fight against this malady. The Abidjan, Ivory Coast, newspaper *Fraternité Matin* observed: "The perfection of a vaccine against onchocerciasis, or 'river blindness,' is the object of a close cooperation between British researchers and their Sudanese counterparts." The relation of living near rivers and contracting the disease has caused the local population to abandon the fertile river valleys for the less fertile areas. "This sickness, therefore, represents the main obstacle to habitation and consequently to the economic development of the fertile valleys that rest uninhabited and unproductive," says *Fraternité Matin*.

Does Headgear Make Hairless?

● Though some may think so, wearing a hard hat on the job does not lead to baldness, according to Dr. Willard D. Steck, a dermatologist at Ohio's Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Writing in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* he explained: "Male pattern alopecia (baldness) is a hereditary type of hair loss that usually has a sudden onset in early adult life and progresses rapidly until the genetically determined pattern of baldness has been established." Since the scalp is

thick and well supplied with blood vessels, Dr. Steck does not feel that wearing a hard hat will diminish scalp circulation to the extent that it would cause baldness. And he has found no scientific studies linking the wearing of headgear with the acceleration of baldness or the cause of it.

Greece to Curtail Church

● The Orthodox Church's recognition by the Greek constitution as the state church with rights to financial aid and involvement in administrative affairs may soon end, according to the government of Prime Minister Papandreu. The government's ultimate objective is said to be confinement of the Church to a spiritual role and to transfer some of the Church's three hundred thousand acres of land to farmers and agricultural cooperatives. A constitutional amendment making all religions equal in the eyes of the State also is planned.

Beware of "Bumper-Rapists"

● Women who drive vehicles alone should be aware of a new method used by rapists—auto accidents. "A 'bumper-rapist' is a man who spots a woman driving alone and bumps his vehicle . . . into hers," explains *Parade* magazine. "When the frightened woman emerges from her car to inspect the damage and exchange licenses, he threatens her with a knife or gun. He forces her into his car, drives off, rapes and robs her." Jacqueline Connor, the deputy district attorney in Los Angeles, California, warns women: "Never stop your car in a dark area. If you do, never roll down your window to converse with the man whose vehicle has hit yours. If your car can move, drive to a police station, a fill-

ing station, or some lighted area where there are people. Don't get out of your car on a highway. Put on your emergency lights if your car is stalled."

Ignored Best-Seller

● A recent study made by the Evangelical Church in Germany reveals how seldom German Protestants read the Bible. Although the majority of church members have a Bible in their home, only 5 percent said that they read it "frequently." Thirteen percent answered "now and then" and 25 percent said "rarely." And more than one half (55 percent) responded that they "never" read the Bible. Most church members prefer Martin Luther's translation of the Bible, and only 7 percent use a modern translation. One-quarter of the Evangelicals do not have any Bible in their home, according to the survey.

An Impossible Dream?

● Usually newlyweds look forward to owning their own property and house. But in Japan "to own a house has become an impossible dream," states *Mainichi Daily News*. In Tokyo one square meter of land (eleven square feet) costs 150,000 yen (\$650, US). "The situation is absolutely abnormal" comments the editorial, "in that even a well-paid white-collar worker cannot buy one *tsubo* (3.3 square meters) of land with his monthly pay." At the above rate a fifty by one hundred foot lot would cost over a quarter of a million dollars. "No wonder the 'my house' concept is often compared to reaching for the moon," observes the article.

Who Lives Longest?

● Women who are born and live in Iceland, Norway or Japan have the longest average life span in the world. Girls born

in Iceland can expect to live an average 79.3 years. Close behind is Norway with a 79-year average for women. And Japanese females have a 78-year average life span, reports the *Asahi Evening News*. What about male longevity? Icelandic and Japanese men now lead the world with an average life span of 73 years, followed by Norwegian males at 72.4 years. According to *Verdens Gang* of Oslo, researchers have found no proof that heredity alone determines how long one lives. After studying longevity patterns of two thousand old people for seventeen years they conclude: "The aged among us are those who have shown moderation, are tranquil, and have an interest in people and the future."

Charity Pressures Opposed

● The pressure that some companies apply on employees to contribute to charities is resented by many workers, *The Wall Street Journal* observed. It cited the case of a bank teller who was fired for refusing to donate. "Pressure is the name of the game," says Robert Bothwell, director of a group that monitors charities. Of workers surveyed, 15 percent felt that they had been coerced into giving. They complained of such practices "as the holding of group meetings, encouragement of 100% participation, suggestions of fair contribution levels and offers of financial rewards to those who give," the *Journal* said.

Ginger Snaps Seasickness

● The British medical journal *The Lancet* reports that two capsules of powdered ginger root (940 milligrams total) were twice as effective as the commonly used drug Dramamine (100 milligrams) in preventing motion sickness. The study, conducted by two psychologists, involved spinning thirty-six college students in a motorized chair for six minutes. About half of the students who took the ginger lasted the whole time while none who took the Dramamine did. Dr. Mowrey, one of the two psychologists, claims that ginger can counter diarrhea and vomiting from gastrointestinal flu. However, excessive doses may irritate the upper digestive tract, he warned.

