

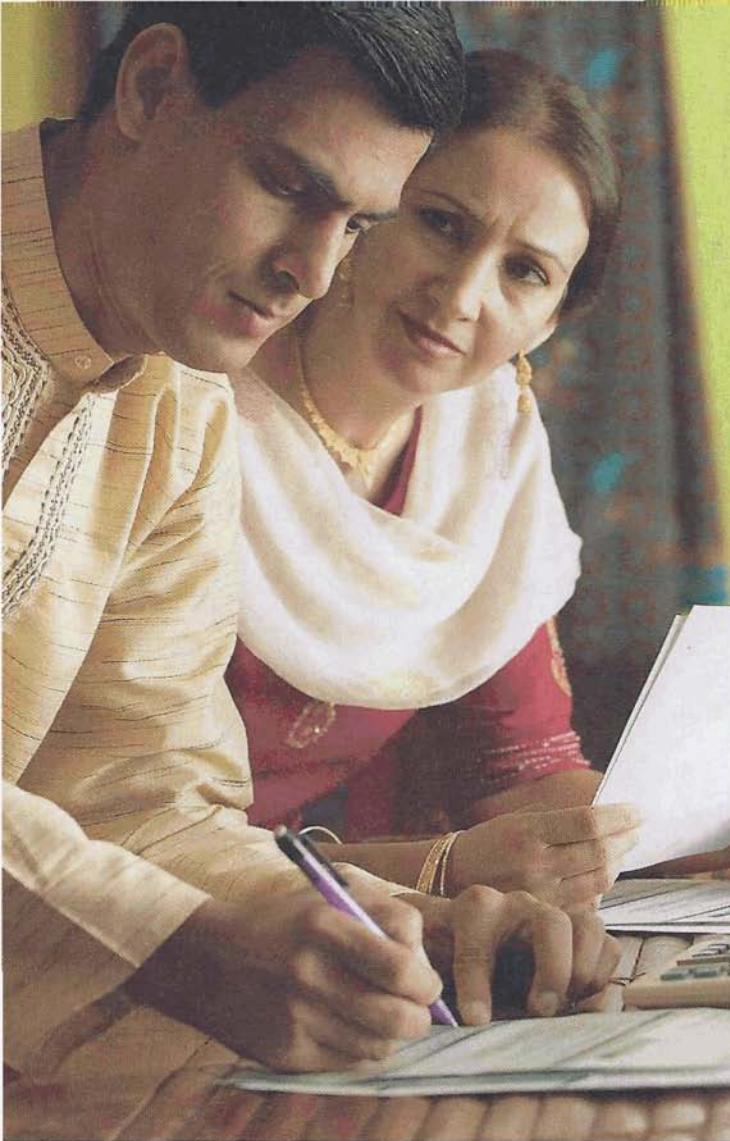
# Awake!

MARCH 2009



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# Is Money Your Master or Your Servant?

**D**O YOU suffer from money sickness syndrome? Reportedly, this condition afflicts a large percentage of the world's population. What is it?

Dr. Roger Henderson, a mental-health researcher in the United Kingdom, recently coined the term "money sickness syndrome" to designate the physical and psychological symptoms experienced by people who are stressed with money worries. The symptoms include shortness of breath, headaches, nausea, skin rashes, lack of appetite, unjustified anger, nervousness, and negative thinking. "Money worries are a significant cause of stress," reports Henderson.

It should come as no surprise that during recent months more and more people have fallen victim to the ill effects of money-related anxieties. The current financial crises in many lands have resulted in the loss of jobs, homes, and personal savings on a global scale. Large financial institutions have collapsed, and even the wealthiest nations have adopted emergency measures to prevent total financial ruin. In the developing world, the rising cost of food and other basic commodities has also caused much anxiety.

Money woes are also common in times of abundance. During recent years of financial prosperity, many people have been plagued by money worries. For instance, *The Witness*, a South African newspaper, reported that "a creeping social disease of over-consumption, commercialism and rampant materialism" was spreading in Africa. The newspaper listed some of the symptoms of this "disease," including "stress, debt, waste, overwork, feel-



ings of deprivation, envy and depression." Money was blamed for the ongoing deterioration of the quality of human life in Africa.

Prior to the recent financial crunch, India underwent a period of outstanding economic growth. *India Today International* reported that 2007 was a year when the country "fast forwarded to a new level of conspicuous consumption." Yet, at the time, officials there were afraid that India's prosperity would result in increased unrest and even violence.

During that same period too, a new generation of young adults in the United States were displaying a propensity for splurging on luxury items. However, their spending power was not bringing them happiness. Researchers stated that affluence was one of the principal causes of alcoholism, depression, and suicide there. One study revealed that despite the abundance and wealth, "fewer than one in three Americans" claimed to be "very happy."

## The Other Side of the Coin

On the other hand, in good times and bad times, many people—both rich and poor—are relatively free of anxieties about money and material possessions. Why the difference?

In a report entitled *The Meaning of Money*, the researchers observed that some people are "highly motivated by money and controlled by money. This may lead to stress and neuroticism." In contrast, they added: "Those who budget their money carefully tend to have internal locus of control and positive feelings toward themselves. They are the

masters of money and not slaves of money... We assert that those who budget their money carefully may also have lower stress, and, thereby, lower strain."

What is your attitude toward money? How does the volatile nature of the world's economy affect you? Is money your master or your

servant? Perhaps you do not experience the symptoms of the so-called money sickness syndrome. Still, whether wealthy or poor, we are all vulnerable to the ill effects of money worries. Consider how adjustments in the way you handle your finances may bring you more peace of mind and a happier life.

## Money may be your master if . . .

- You avoid discussing finances because of the anxiety it causes
- Money is often the subject of family squabbles
- You spend compulsively
- You worry constantly about bills
- You are not sure how much you earn
- You are not sure how much you spend
- You are not sure how much you owe
- Your bills are often bigger than what you expect
- You often pay your bills late
- You are able to make only the minimum payment on credit card bills
- You pay your bills with money earmarked for other things
- You take on extra work just to pay bills
- You have taken out new loans to pay off old ones
- You use savings to pay routine bills
- You find it nearly impossible to get to the end of the month without running out of money
- You feel pressure to accumulate large sums of money
- You suffer physical and/or psychological symptoms resulting from money-related stress

Source: *Money Sickness Syndrome*, by Dr. Roger Henderson



## Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

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# Manage Your Money Wisely

THE adage "Money is the root of all evil" has often been ascribed to the Bible. What the Bible really says is: "The love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:10, *King James Version*) Some people have indeed developed a fondness for money and have devoted themselves to the accumulation of riches. Some have become slaves of money and have reaped tragic consequences. When managed properly, however, money can be a useful tool. The Bible acknowledges that "money solves a lot of problems."—Ecclesiastes 10:19, *Holy Bible—Easy-to-Read Version*.

## Know what your income is, and spend less than you earn

Although the Bible does not claim to be a financial handbook, it does contain practical advice that can help you to manage money wisely. The following five steps are commonly recommended by financial advisers, and they are consistent with principles recorded in the Bible long ago.

**Save.** The Bible record shows that the ancient Israelites were taught the value of saving. They were told to set aside a tithe (or 10 percent) each year to be used exclusively for attending national festivals. (Deuteronomy 14:22-27) The apostle Paul likewise en-

couraged early Christians to set aside savings each week so that they could later contribute something to help their needy fellow believers. (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2) Most financial planners encourage saving. Make saving a priority. As soon as you get paid, deposit the amount you wish to save in a bank or other location for safekeeping. That will help you to fight any temptation to spend those funds.

**Budget.** This is the only practical way to monitor, control, or reduce your spending. A good budget can give you a sense of where your money goes, and it can help you to reach your financial goals. Know what your income is, and spend less than you earn. Learn the difference between needs and wants. Along these lines, Jesus wisely urged his listeners

## Learn the difference between needs and wants

to "calculate the expense" before undertaking any project. (Luke 14:28) The Bible advises us to avoid unnecessary debt.—Proverbs 22:7.

**Plan.** Carefully consider your future needs. For instance, if you plan to purchase a house

**Languages:** Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, <sup>①</sup> Danish, <sup>②</sup> Dutch, <sup>③</sup> English, <sup>④</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, <sup>⑤</sup> French, <sup>⑥</sup> Georgian, German, <sup>⑦</sup> Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, <sup>⑧</sup> Japanese, <sup>⑨</sup> Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, <sup>⑩</sup> Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, <sup>⑪</sup> Polish, <sup>⑫</sup> Portuguese, <sup>⑬</sup> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, <sup>⑭</sup> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, <sup>⑮</sup> Swahili, Swedish, <sup>⑯</sup> Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu  
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or an apartment, obtaining a mortgage at a reasonable rate may be a good decision. Similarly, a family man may feel the need to purchase life, health, disability, or other forms of insurance to protect his loved ones. Considering your needs for the future may also involve planning for retirement. Proverbs 21:5 reminds us that “the plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage.”

**Learn.** Invest in yourself by acquiring skills and taking care of your physical and emotional health. These are investments that will pay you back. Make learning a lifelong habit. The Bible puts a high value on “practical wisdom and thinking ability,” and it urges us to keep on developing them.—Proverbs 3:21, 22; Ecclesiastes 10:10.

**Balance.** Keep money in its place. Survey after survey shows that those who care more about people than they do about money are happier. Some allow greed to throw them off balance. How so? After adequately satisfying their basic needs, they embark on the pursuit of riches. Yet, beyond food, clothing, and

shelter, how much does a person really need? No wonder the Bible writer quoted at the beginning of this article also wrote: “Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things.” (1 Timothy 6:8) Cultivating contentment prevents us from developing

### Beyond food, clothing, and shelter, how much does a person really need?

the love of money and all the problems that come along with it.

The love of money is indeed the root of many evil things. Money will become your master if you let it. When managed properly, however, money can provide you with the freedom to pursue the more important things in life, such as a close bond with family, friends, and God. Still, in this world it seems impossible to be totally free of money worries. Will money always be such a source of anxiety? What hope is there for an end to poverty? The concluding article in this series will answer those questions.

## Blessings Greater Than Riches

JON had a very successful career as a consultant in the United States. Even as a young man, he traveled the world and made a lot of money. He and his wife had a beautiful home and a comfortable lifestyle. In the eyes of many, they were blessed.

Consider another case. Out of over 5,000 applicants, Kostas\* was one of only 80 selected to become an apprentice with a prominent European bank. Within just a few years, he was repeatedly promoted, eventually being made the head of a major department at another bank. By the time he left that job to

start his own company, he was making more money in one year than most people make in a lifetime. He felt blessed.

Yet, both these men are convinced that there are blessings greater than material riches. For instance, today Jon volunteers as a Bible teacher helping others get closer to God. “I have personally seen and experienced that material wealth does not lead to happiness,” says Jon. “The struggle to get it and keep it allows time for little else. On the other hand, living by Bible principles opens up so many blessings, such as a much happier marriage, peace of mind, and a good conscience.”

\* Name has been changed.

## TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO MANAGE MONEY

With so many adults in financial trouble today, experts are urging parents to teach their children about money—and to start early. Ask most children where money comes from, and they might say, “Daddy” or “the bank.” If you can teach your children the value of money—how to separate needs from wants, how to save, and how to invest—you may help them avoid the heartache of crushing debt and economic slavery. Here are a few suggestions.

- 1. Be a good example.** Your children will generally imitate what you do more than what you say.
- 2. Set spending limits.** Discuss how much you and they can spend. Learn to say no, and mean it.
- 3. Allow them to manage money.** If they receive an allowance or earn money from a job, give them some guidelines. Then allow them to make some decisions.
- 4. Teach them to share.** Encourage your children to share what they have with others as well as regularly to set something aside to honor God.

Kostas similarly observes: “God does not want us to live a life of opulence. I strongly feel that whatever he gives us that is beyond our daily needs puts us under obligation to use it according to his will.” Recently, Kostas and his family started to learn another language in order to teach more people Bible principles. He says, “We have learned that giving makes us happier than does receiving.” —Acts 20:35.

Indeed, Jon and Kostas have both learned that spiritual blessings are much more valuable than material riches. Daniel Gilbert, a professor at Harvard, notes that mental-health experts “have spent decades studying the relation between wealth and happiness, and they have generally concluded that wealth increases human happiness when it lifts people out of abject poverty and into the



middle class.” But then he adds, “It does little to increase happiness thereafter.”

### A Lesson Often Painfully Learned

“Once above the poverty line,” noted a thoughtful observer, “increases in income have surprisingly little relation to personal happiness.” Early in the last century, a reporter had that lesson impressed upon him when interviewing Andrew Carnegie, a pioneer of the steel industry, who was then one of the richest men in the world. “I am not to be envied,” Carnegie told him. “How can my wealth help me? I am sixty years old, and I cannot digest my food. I would give all my millions if I could have youth and health.”

The reporter then added: “Mr. Carnegie suddenly turned, and in hushed voice and with bitterness and depth of feeling quite

indescribable, said, ‘If I could make Faust’s bargain I would. I would gladly sell anything to have my life over again.’” Another multi-millionaire, oil magnate J. Paul Getty, later said in agreement: “Money doesn’t necessarily have any connection with happiness. Maybe with unhappiness.”

You may well agree with the Bible writer who requested: “Give me neither poverty nor riches. Let me devour the food prescribed for me, that I may not become satisfied and I actually deny you and say: ‘Who is Jehovah?’ and that I may not come to poverty and I actually steal and assail the name of my God.”—Proverbs 30:8, 9.

King Solomon of ancient Israel explained: “I became greater and increased more than anyone that happened to be before me in Jerusalem.” Yet, he added: “Everything was vanity and a striving after wind.” Solomon also stated: “The blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich, and he adds no pain with it.”—Ecclesiastes 2:9-11; 5:12, 13; Proverbs 10:22.

## The Way to Everlasting Blessings

Clearly, we can only find true and lasting happiness after we properly satisfy our spiritual needs. If we put God first, we will find that every aspect of our lives becomes richer and more rewarding.

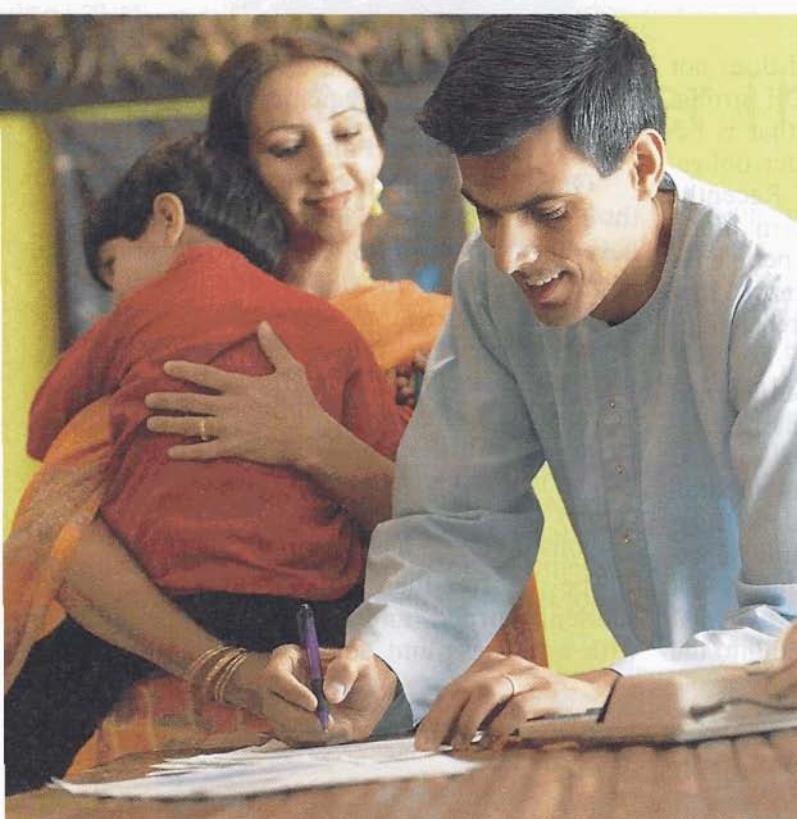
Thankfully, we can say that money will not always be a cause for concern. The Bible assures us of a future when greedy and exploitative commerce will be permanently removed. (1 John 2:15-17) God’s new system

### If we put God first, our lives can become more rewarding

of things that follows will be governed by his righteous principles. The earth will be transformed into a paradise as God originally purposed it to be when he put the first couple upon it. What a blessing it will be to see the entire earth filled with happiness, peace, and love!—Isaiah 2:2-4; 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 4:8-11.

Life at that time will not be austere or dull. Material blessings will accompany the spiritual as God fulfills his original purpose for humans to live forever in a paradise earth. We are assured that there will be more than enough food, shelter, and meaningful work for all. Poverty will be completely eradicated.—Psalm 72:16; Isaiah 65:21-23; Micah 4:4.

Everyone who sincerely exercises faith in Jehovah, the God of the Bible, will not be disappointed. (Romans 10:11-13) How wise, therefore, to pursue now the blessings that are greater than riches!—1 Timothy 6:6-10.



*Wise money management can make life more enjoyable*

WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Squid's Beak



■ The beak of the squid baffles scientists. They wonder: 'How can something that is so hard be attached to a body that has no bones? Should not the combination of materials cause abrasion and hurt the squid?'

**Consider:** The tip of the squid's beak is hard, whereas the base of the beak is soft. The composition of the beak—which is made up of chitin, water, and protein—changes in density so gradually from soft to hard that the squid can use its beak without causing any harmful abrasion.

Professor Frank Zok, at the University of California, says that studying the squid's beak could "revolutionize the way engineers think about attaching materials together in all sorts of applications." One potential application is in the making of prosthetic limbs. Ali Miserez, a researcher at the same university, imagines "creating a full prosthesis that mimics the chemistry of the beak, so that it matches the elasticity of cartilage on one side and, on the other side," is made of "a material which is very stiff and abrasion resistant."

**What do you think?** Did the squid's beak with its changing density from tip to base come about by chance? Or was it designed?



▲ © Bob Cranston/SeaPics.com  
▲ © Richard Herrmann/SeaPics.com

# Should You Object to Cremation?



*Some people feel that cremation—that is, the reduction of a corpse to ashes by burning—dishonors the body and the memory of the dead person. ‘It is of profane origin,’ they reason, ‘and thus should be shunned by those who profess to worship God.’ Others believe that cremation is a perfectly acceptable and dignified way of disposing of human remains. How do you feel about this matter?*

In Bible times it was customary for the dead to be buried. For example, Abraham buried his wife, Sarah, in a cave. Jesus’ body was laid in a tomb that had been carved out of rock. (Genesis 23:9; Matthew 27:60) Does the Bible stipulate that burial is the only acceptable way to dispose of human remains? Does it indicate that God’s ancient servants objected to cremation?

#### Indication of Divine Disapproval?

On the surface, a number of Bible passages may seem to indicate that cremation was the lot of some who died in God’s disfavor. For instance, the Mosaic Law stated that if the

daughter of one of Jehovah’s priests should become a prostitute, she was to be “burned in the fire” after being executed. (Leviticus 20:10; 21:9) Likewise, when the disobedience of Achan and his family resulted in Israel’s defeat at Ai, their fellow countrymen pelted them with stones and then “burned them with fire.” (Joshua 7:25) Some scholars have suggested that this was the treatment accorded those who died in disgrace and that cremation deprived evildoers of what was considered a decent burial.

Further, when King Josiah attempted to cleanse Judah of idolatry, he broke open the

burial places of the priests who had sacrificed to Baal and burned their bones upon their altars. (2 Chronicles 34:4, 5) Do such examples indicate that God's disapproval rests upon those whose remains are cremated? No, as shown by another Bible account.

When the Philistines defeated King Saul of Israel in battle, they irreverently fastened his dead body, as well as the bodies of his three sons, to the city wall at Beth-shan. However, the Israelite inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead, on hearing of this disrespectful treatment of the bodies, removed them and burned them, after which they buried the bones. (1 Samuel 31:2, 8-13) At first sight this account may seem to confirm the negative connotation of cremation. After all, Saul too was wicked; he fought against David, Jehovah's anointed, and died in divine disfavor.

Yet, notice who died alongside Saul. One of his sons, whose body received identical treatment, was Jonathan. He was not a bad person. On the contrary, Jonathan was David's close friend and ally. Of Jonathan, the Israelites recognized: "It was with God that he worked." (1 Samuel 14:45) When David learned of the actions of the men of Jabesh-gilead, he praised and thanked them for what they had done: "Blessed may you be of Jehovah, because you exercised this loving-kindness toward your lord, toward Saul." Evidently, the burning of Saul's and Jonathan's corpses did not disturb David.—2 Samuel 2:4-6.

### No Obstacle to Resurrection

The Bible clearly teaches that Jehovah God will bring back to life many who now sleep

in death. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; John 5:28, 29) Prophetically describing the time when the dead will return to life, the Bible book of Revelation, or Apocalypse, says: "The sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them." (Revelation 20:13) To accomplish this, it makes no difference

### The Bible gives no specific direction concerning what ought to be done with the bodies of the dead

to Almighty God whether a person's body is buried, burned, lost at sea, eaten by wild animals, or even vaporized by an atomic explosion.

The Bible gives no specific direction concerning what ought to be done with the bodies of the dead. Cremation is not condemned by Jehovah. Clearly, though, funeral arrangements should be dignified and respectful.

Something that might influence a person's decisions in making these arrangements, however, is the way that the local community views funeral customs. Those who abide by Bible principles would certainly not want to do anything that would cause unnecessary offense to their neighbors. It would also be inappropriate to engage in a practice that might seem to indicate belief in false religious teachings, such as the immortality of the soul. These concerns aside, whatever decision a person might make as to how his own body, or that of another, is to be disposed of is really a personal or family matter.

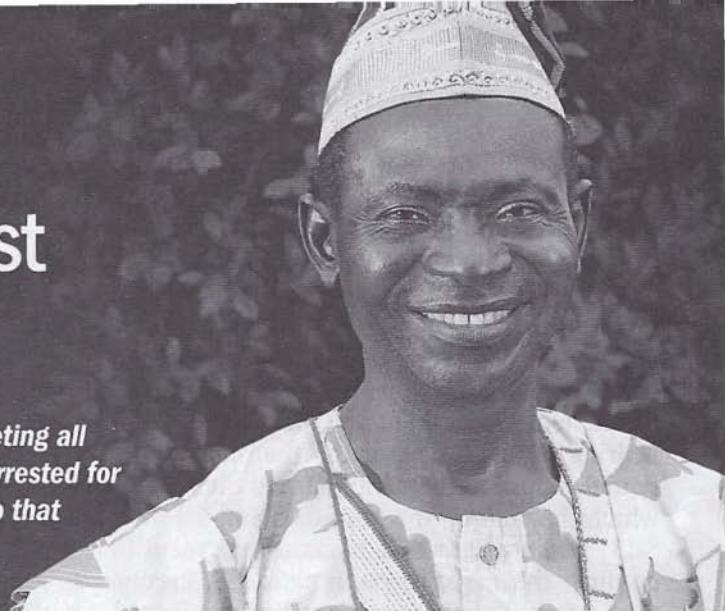
### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Which faithful worshipper mentioned in the Bible was cremated?—1 Samuel 31:2, 12.
- How did David treat the men who disposed of Saul's body?—2 Samuel 2:4-6.
- What shows that being cremated would not in itself disqualify one from being resurrected?—Revelation 20:13.

# Blessed by Putting God First

AS TOLD BY PIERRE WOROU

**"Bonjour!" I have used this French greeting all my life. But in November 1975, I was arrested for doing so. Let me tell you what led up to that event and what has happened since.**



I WAS born on January 1, 1944, in Malété, a suburb of Savé, in central Benin.\* My parents gave me a traditional Yoruba name, Abiola. While still young, I changed it to Pierre, which I thought was more modern and popular.

The townsfolk had nicknames for all the youngsters. They called me Pastor because at birth I resembled the local clergyman. I was more interested, however, in playing soccer than in attending catechism classes.

In 1959, I moved to Sakété, a city in the south of the country, to continue my schooling. I lived with my cousin Simon, a school-teacher, who had recently begun to study the Bible with two of Jehovah's Witnesses. At first, I was not interested in sitting in with them. Later I asked another cousin, Michel, if he would join with me in the study. He agreed, and it was then that I first heard God's name, Jehovah.

One Sunday, Simon, Michel, and I decided not to go to church but to attend the Witnesses' meeting. What a disappointment to see that there were only five present—the two Witnesses and we three cousins. Yet, we rec-

ognized the ring of Bible truth and continued to study. Michel was the first to be baptized in symbol of his dedication to God. Today he serves as a pioneer, as Jehovah's Witnesses call full-time ministers.

Simon moved north to the city of Kokoro, and I went along. An assembly of the Witnesses was planned at Ouansougon. Simon took a public taxi, but I rode my bicycle 135 miles to attend. We were both baptized there on September 15, 1961.

## Challenges in the Full-Time Ministry

I supported myself by painting and selling pictures as well as by cultivating a field that produced well. When a traveling overseer, Philippe Zannou, visited our congregation, he asked if I had ever considered the full-time pioneer ministry. After discussing the matter together, my friend Emmanuel Fatunbi and I said we could both begin the work in February 1966. In time, I began serving as a traveling overseer, visiting congregations where the Fon, Gun, Yoruba, and French languages were spoken.

Eventually I met Julienne, a charming young Christian sister who loved a simple life, as I did. She became my wife on August 12, 1971, and joined me in visiting congrega-

\* At that time Benin was known as Dahomey and was part of French West Africa.

gations. Our son Bola was born on August 18, 1972. When traveling between congregations, I pedaled the bicycle and Julienne sat behind me with Bola on her back. A local Witness usually transported our baggage on his bicycle. We visited congregations this way for four years.

One day Julienne fell sick and went through a terrible night of suffering. The next morning, I headed down the road looking for help. Suddenly, a public taxi appeared, something rare in that area. Moreover, it was empty—even more unusual! I explained the situation to the driver and asked if he would take us to Porto Novo, the capital, about 15 miles away. He agreed. Upon arrival, he smiled and said: “This is on me. It won’t cost you a thing.”

Julienne had to remain in bed at the home of a Witness for two weeks. The doctor kindly came by every day. He also brought along the needed medication. When he examined Julienne the last time, I apprehensively asked for the bill. I was astonished when he replied, “There is no bill.”

### Dramatic Changes

In 1975, Dahomey adopted a Marxist form of government. The country’s name was changed to the People’s Republic of Benin. Daily life also changed. A new greeting was enforced: *“Pour la révolution?”* (Are you ready for the revolution?) People were expected to answer: *“Prêt!”* (I’m ready!) Our Bible-trained consciences did not allow us to repeat such political slogans. This resulted in much hostility.

One Sunday toward the end of 1975, I was sharing in the house-to-house ministry near St. Michel, when I was arrested. As mentioned earlier, I had responded *“Bonjour!”* to a man who greeted me with *“Pour la révolution?”* I was taken to the police station, where I was beaten. But later that day three local Witnesses were able to procure my release.

I was the first Witness of Jehovah to be arrested. Soon many others throughout the

country were arrested too. The government seized Kingdom Halls, and missionaries were deported. The branch office was even closed, and many Witnesses had to flee the country, heading west to Togo or east to Nigeria.

### Our Family Increases in Nigeria

Our second son, Kola, was born on April 25, 1976. Two days later, a government decree, No. 111, banned the work of Jehovah’s Witnesses. We left for Nigeria, where we went to a Kingdom Hall jammed with refugees. The next day arrangements were made to assign us to neighboring congregations. As soon as the hall was emptied of one group of

### He smiled and said: “This is on me. It won’t cost you a thing”

refugees, another group arrived. Trucks were used to take the new arrivals to outlying congregations.

The Nigeria branch office of Jehovah’s Witnesses asked me to visit all of the Witnesses from Benin. Then I was appointed as a traveling overseer for a group of Yoruba-speaking congregations in Nigeria, and later for Gun-speaking congregations. We traveled by motorbike. Bola sat in front of me and Kola was sandwiched between Julienne and me.

In 1979 we realized that our daughter, Je-mima, was on the way, making it necessary for us to leave the traveling work. Julienne’s younger sister, whom we called Pépé, came from Benin to live with us. Our family continued to grow. Two boys were born: Caleb in 1983 and Silas in 1987. So we had become a family of eight. Julienne and I wanted to be good parents, but we wanted to remain in the full-time ministry if at all possible. How could we do it? We leased a field and raised manioc, maize, and cocoyam. Then we built a modest house in the village of Illogbo-Eremi.

After sending the children off to school, Julienne and I did our preaching in the morning. We were always home in time for the

family to eat together. Then, after siesta, we worked in the field. Julienne and Pépé also sold produce at the market. We all worked very hard. Thankfully, we were seldom sick during those years.

### Blessings Without Higher Education

We never encouraged the children to pursue higher secular education. We knew that putting Kingdom interests first, developing Christian qualities, and working hard were the keys to a successful life. We tried to inculcate these ideals in the hearts of our children. I studied with them, and what a joy it was to

### We never encouraged the children to pursue higher secular education

see them come to love Jehovah, dedicate their lives to serve him, and get baptized in symbol of their dedication!

Pépé was older than our children and the first to leave our home. Earlier, when she came to live with us, I taught her to read. Although she had little formal education, she focused on Bible study and other spiritual matters. After serving as a pioneer for some time, she married Monday Akinra, a traveling overseer, and accompanied him in his work. They now have a son, Timothy. Pépé and Monday have continued in the full-time ministry, and Monday enjoys many responsibilities at assemblies.

Bola became an apprentice to a cook in a large company. Soon one of the directors noted his good work habits, reliability, and other fine Christian qualities. In time, he was promoted to a position of responsibility in the company. More important, he is a good husband for his lovely wife, Jane, and a fine father for his three children, as well as a responsible elder in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lagos, Nigeria.

Kola became an apprentice to a tailor and also took up the pioneer ministry. Since he

had learned English while in Nigeria, in 1995 he was invited to serve in the Translation Department at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Benin. He has served there for the past 13 years.

### Our Ministry Back in Benin

We were excited to hear that a Benin government decree of January 23, 1990, proclaimed that the earlier decree banning our work was null and void. Many refugees returned. Also, new missionaries arrived in Benin, and the branch office was reopened. In 1994 our family moved back to Benin, but Pépé, Bola, and their families stayed in Nigeria.

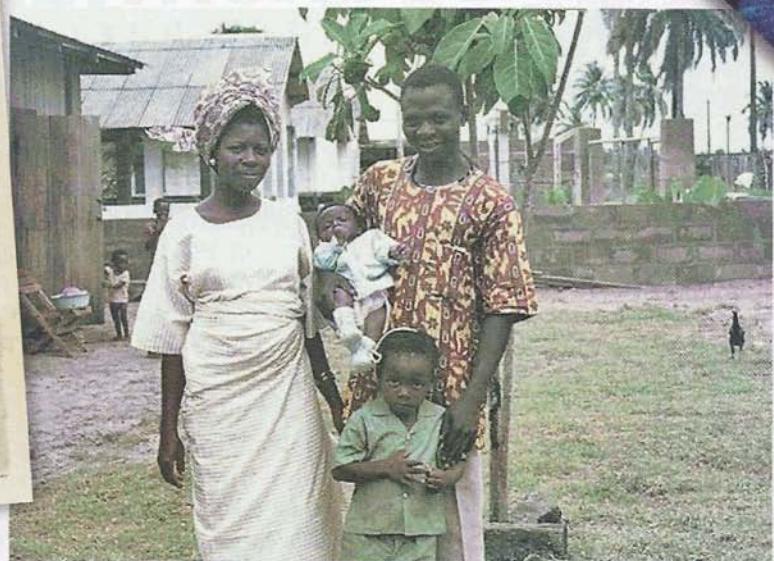
I was able to find part-time work. With the modest rent from our house in Nigeria and Bola's generous assistance, we were able to construct a house for the five of us not far from the branch office. Jemima served as a pioneer for over six years, supporting herself by working as a seamstress. Then she married Kokou Ahoumenou, and they now work at the nearby branch. Caleb and Silas are finishing their schooling. With God's help and the cooperation of our family, Julienne and I have remained in the full-time service for over 40 years.

God has richly blessed the preaching work in Benin. When I was baptized in 1961, there were 871 of Jehovah's Witnesses preaching the Kingdom message in the country. The year I was arrested, the number had climbed to 2,381. By the time we returned to Benin in 1994, the number had risen to 3,858, despite the 14-year ban. Today there are more than twice that many—over 9,000—and attendance at the Memorial of Christ's death in 2008 was 35,752.

Sometimes I go to the spot where I was arrested over 30 years ago and reflect on all that has happened. I especially thank God that he has blessed my family. We have lacked nothing. And I still greet everyone with "Bonjour!"

*Serving as a traveling overseer, 1970*

*With our first two sons, Bola and Kola, in 1976*



*Today, surrounded by my family—my wife, five children, daughter-in-law, and three grandchildren, as well as Pépé's family*

# A LAST FRONTIER FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SPAIN

PLANTS and animals face growing threats all over the world. Some scientists calculate that thousands of species become extinct every year. Fortunately, mountain ranges provide a vital refuge for plants and animals that used to flourish over wider areas. Even in these bastions, though, pollution and human encroachment pose a threat. Perhaps nowhere else is this more evident than in Europe, one of the most densely populated parts of the planet.

In the Pyrenees, a mountain range dividing France from Spain, several national parks serve to provide refuge for the local flora and fauna. In these protected areas, visitors get a chance to see what has become a last frontier for many endangered species. Let us look briefly at what these parks offer.

## Species Fighting for Survival

**Flowers.** Some of the most beautiful wildflowers grow at altitudes above 5,000 feet. Snow gentians and **trumpet gentians (1)**, with their vivid-blue petals, carpet slopes well above the tree line. Farther down the slopes, nestled among beech trees, a grove of endangered **lady's-slipper orchids (2)** still flourishes. Hundreds of nature lovers visit this grove every year, so local forestry wardens mount guard 14 hours a day to ensure that these precious flowers are not damaged or uprooted.

**Butterflies.** Unspoiled alpine meadows with abundant wildflowers provide a refuge for colorful butterflies. The large **Apollo butterfly (3)**, with its vivid-red wing spots, flutters among the thistles. Smaller flowers receive constant visits from blue butterflies and **copper butterflies (4)** of the Lycaenidae family. Painted-lady and tortoiseshell butterflies briskly patrol the higher slopes.

**Animals.** Many of the larger mammals of Europe once roamed over vast tracts of the continent. But some have been hunted almost to extinction. Wolves, bears, **lynx (5)**, bison, chamois, and **mountain goats (6)** now survive in just a few mountain ranges or in the far north. The majestic animals in these Pyrenean reserves offer a vivid reminder of the wildlife that once abounded in these mountains. Some thoughtful visitors wonder what the future holds for the few that remain.

We have reason to be confident that the Creator, Jehovah, the One "to whom the peaks of the mountains belong," cares about the wildlife of the mountains. (Psalm 95:4) In one of the psalms, God says: "To me belongs every wild animal of the forest, the beasts upon a thousand mountains. I well know every winged creature of the mountains." (Psalm 50:10, 11) Jehovah's concern for the earth and its creatures gives us every reason to believe that he will never allow the beasts of the mountains to disappear.



La Cuniacha ▲

# Do I need better friends?



*"If I'm angry, I need someone to vent to. If I'm sad, I want someone to tell me it's going to get better. If I'm happy, I want to share that with someone. To me, friends are a necessity."*—Brittany.

IT'S been said that little children need playmates, whereas adolescents need friends. What's the difference?

A *playmate* is someone who keeps you company.

A *friend* is someone who also shares your values.

Furthermore, the Bible states that "a true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress." (Proverbs 17:17) That's probably describing a deeper kind of friendship than you found at the playground!

**Fact:** As you progress toward adulthood, you need friends who

- (1) Have admirable qualities.
- (2) Live by praiseworthy standards.
- (3) Have a positive influence on you.

**Question:** How can you tell if your friends fit that profile? Let's examine one factor at a time.

*When you conform to others' standards just to fit in, you can become like a pawn on a chessboard, to be moved around at their whim*

## Friendship Factor #1 Admirable Qualities

**What you should know.** Not everyone who claims to be a friend has what it takes to live up to the title. The Bible even says that "there exist companions disposed to break one another to pieces." (Proverbs 18:24) That might sound extreme. But consider: Have you ever had a "friend" who took advantage of you? What about one who talked behind your back or spread false rumors about you? Such an experience can shatter your trust.\* Always re-

\* Of course, everyone makes mistakes. (Romans 3:23) So when a friend hurts you but then expresses genuine remorse, remember that "love covers a multitude of sins."—1 Peter 4:8.



member that when it comes to friends, quality is more important than quantity!

**What you can do.** Choose as friends those who have qualities that are worthy of imitation.

*"Everyone has such a positive view of my friend Fiona. I want to be spoken of in a good way too. I want the same reputation she has. To me, that's admirable."—Yvette, 17.*

**Try this exercise.**

1. Read Galatians 5:22, 23.
2. Ask yourself, 'Do my friends reflect qualities that make up "the fruitage of the spirit"?'.
3. List below the names of your closest friends. Next to each name, write the trait that best describes the person.

Name	Trait

**Hint:** If only negative traits come to mind, it might be time to look for better friends!

### Friendship Factor #2 Praiseworthy Standards

**What you should know.** The more desperate you are for friends, the more likely you are to settle for the wrong kind. The Bible says: "He that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Proverbs 13:20) The term "stupid ones" does not refer to people who lack intelligence. Rather, it describes those who turn their back on sound reasoning and instead follow a morally insensible course—the kind of friends you can do without!

**What you can do.** Instead of befriending just anyone who'll accept you, be discriminating. (Psalm 26:4) No, that's not to say you should be prejudiced. In this context, being discriminating means that you're perceptive enough to "see the distinction between a righteous one and a wicked one, between one serving God and one who has not served him."—Malachi 3:18.

### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

*"When my parents steered me away from a certain group of friends, I told myself that these were the only ones I wanted to associate with. My parents' advice was good, though, and once I took off my blinders, I realized that there were plenty of better friends available."*

—Cole.

*"Engaging in the Christian ministry is the best way for me to get to know people in the congregation. That's where I get to mix with a variety of people, both young and old. And I'm spending time with people who love Jehovah."—Yvette.*

*"I prayed for friends, but then I realized that I wasn't doing anything to find them. So I began to take the initiative and talk to others at Christian meetings. Soon I had many new friends. I almost never feel lonely anymore."—Sam.*



God is not partial, but he discriminates when it comes to the matter of whom he will accept as 'a guest in his tent.' (Psalm 15:1-5) You can do the same. Live by upright standards, and others who are striving to do the same are more likely to find you. In the end, they will make the best kind of friends!

*"I'm thankful that my parents helped me to find friends—people my age who are doing well spiritually."—Christopher, 13.*

## TRY THESE SUGGESTIONS

**Talk to your parents about friendships.** Ask them about the kind of friends they had when they were your age. Do they have regrets about their choice of companions? If so, why? Ask them how you can avoid some of the problems they encountered.

**Introduce your friends to your parents.** If you're hesitant to do so, ask yourself, '*Why is this the case?*' Is there something about your friends that you know your parents won't approve of? If so, you may need to be more selective when it comes to choosing your friends.

### Try this exercise.

Answer the following questions:

- When with my friends, am I often nervous that they might try to pressure me into doing something I know is wrong?  Yes  No
- Am I reluctant to introduce my friends to my parents, fearing that my parents might not approve of them?  Yes  No

**Hint:** If you answered yes to the above questions, look for friends who have higher standards. Why not start with those who are a little older than you and who set a good example in Christian living?

### Friendship Factor #3 Positive Influence

**What you should know.** The Bible states: "Bad companions ruin good character." (1 Corinthians 15:33, *Today's English Version*) A youth named Lauren says: "My schoolmates accepted me as long as I did just what they told me to do. I was lonely, so I decided to act like them just so I'd fit in." Lauren found out that when you conform to others' standards, you can become like a pawn on a chessboard, and they move you around at their whim. You deserve better than that!

### THREE WAYS TO KEEP GOOD FRIENDS

- **Be a good listener.** Show interest in your friends' welfare and concerns.  
—Philippians 2:4.
- **Be forgiving.** Don't expect perfection. "We all stumble many times."  
—James 3:2.
- **Give them space.** There's no need to be clingy. Genuine friends will be there when you need them.  
—Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10.

**What you can do.** Cut off ties with those who insist that you change to conform to their lifestyle. If you take this step, you'll feel better about yourself and you'll open the door to better friendships—the kind that will influence you in a positive way.—Romans 12:2.

"My close friend Clint is levelheaded and empathetic, and as a result, he's been the greatest encouragement to me."—Jason, 21.

### Try this exercise.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I change the way I dress, speak, or act to please my friends?  Yes  No
- Do I find myself going to morally questionable places that I would not frequent if it were not for my friends?  Yes  No

**Hint:** If you answered yes to the above questions, go to your parents or to another mature adult for advice. If you're one of Jehovah's Witnesses, you could also approach a Christian elder and let him know that you'd like assistance in choosing friends who will have a better influence on you.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site  
[www.watchtower.org/ype](http://www.watchtower.org/ype)

### TO THINK ABOUT

- What qualities would you most value in a friend, and why?
- What qualities do you need to work on to be a better friend?

# A Teacher Changes Her View

■ A few years ago, a teacher in Batumi, in the country of Georgia, asked her students to list the Ten Commandments. To the amazement of the teacher, one of her students, Anna, recited them correctly. She also answered other Bible questions in an impressive way. The teacher, intrigued, asked her how she

knew so much. When Anna replied that she studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, the teacher cut her off, saying that she considered them fanatics.

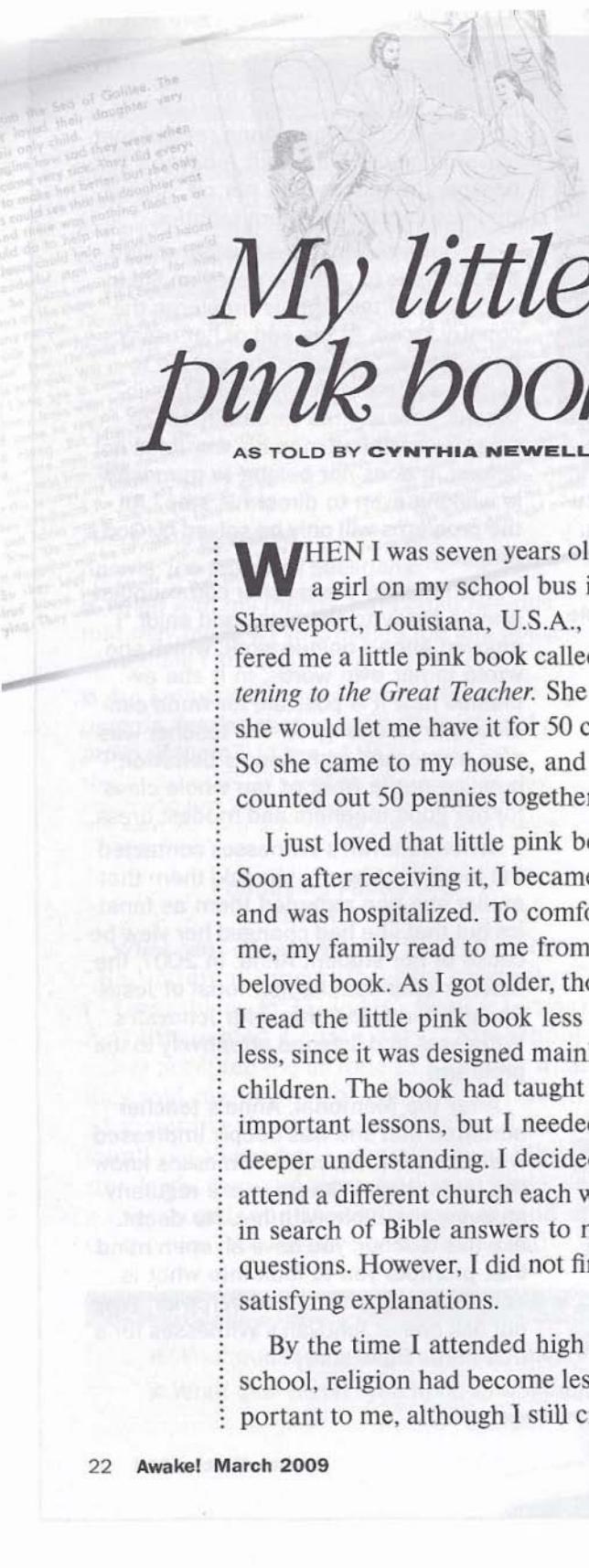
On one occasion, the teacher asked the students to write an essay on life in Georgia and the various problems the country faced. At the end of her essay, Anna wrote: "Any effort by people to correct society radically will be unsuccessful because, as Jeremiah 10:23 says: 'To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.' All the problems will only be solved by God's Kingdom."

The next day the teacher commended Anna's essay to the class and said: "I enjoyed Anna's unique work, which she wrote in her own words. In it she explained how it is possible for world conditions to be changed." The teacher was also impressed with Anna's behavior, praising her in front of the whole class for her good manners and modest dress.

When Jehovah's Witnesses contacted the teacher at home, she told them that earlier she had regarded them as fanatics but that she had changed her view because of her student Anna. In 2007, the teacher attended the Memorial of Jesus Christ's death together with Jehovah's Witnesses and listened attentively to the program.

After the Memorial, Anna's teacher admitted that she was deeply impressed with how well Jehovah's Witnesses know the Bible. Now Witnesses are regularly studying the Bible with her. No doubt, like this teacher, you have an open mind that prompts you to look into what is behind others' beliefs and behavior. Why not ask one of Jehovah's Witnesses for a free home Bible study?

Anna writing her essay



# My little pink book

AS TOLD BY CYNTHIA NEWELL

**W**HEN I was seven years old, a girl on my school bus in Shreveport, Louisiana, U.S.A., offered me a little pink book called *Listening to the Great Teacher*. She said she would let me have it for 50 cents. So she came to my house, and we counted out 50 pennies together.

I just loved that little pink book. Soon after receiving it, I became sick and was hospitalized. To comfort me, my family read to me from my beloved book. As I got older, though, I read the little pink book less and less, since it was designed mainly for children. The book had taught me important lessons, but I needed deeper understanding. I decided to attend a different church each week in search of Bible answers to my questions. However, I did not find satisfying explanations.

By the time I attended high school, religion had become less important to me, although I still craved

Bible knowledge and read my Bible regularly. One day I noticed that a classmate didn't take part in the pledge of allegiance. I asked her about it, and she said, "I have already given my allegiance to Jehovah, so how can I give it to both God and the flag at the same time?" How logical! 'But who is Jehovah?' I wondered.

For every question I asked, my classmate provided a Biblical answer. I wondered: 'How did she learn all this? We are the same age; yet, she knows all about the Bible!' She explained, "I learn about the Bible at the Kingdom Hall." I eagerly accepted her invitation to attend a meeting on Sunday. I had been to every church in town, but somehow I had missed the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. That Sunday I knew that I had found a place that teaches Bible truth.

After the meeting, I went to the literature counter, and there on the top shelf was my little pink book! Ten years had passed since I received the book from the girl on the bus, so I had forgotten who gave it to me. But now I remembered—it was Nancy, the same girl who had invited me to this meeting!

Thereafter, I began a weekly Bible study and progressed quickly. I had learned so much from my little pink book that the knowledge I acquired from the Bible study immediately made sense. I soon dedicated my life to Jehovah and was baptized



Cynthia



Nancy

in 1985 at the age of 18. Meanwhile, Nancy had moved to Florida, and we lost contact.

After a few years, I married. In 1991 my husband, Drew, and I began to serve in the full-time ministry as pioneers in a small town in east Texas. But whatever happened to Nancy? I had no idea. Then one night while reading the December 1, 1992, *Watchtower*, I cried out: "I found Nancy! I found Nancy!" There she was in the photo of the latest Gilead graduation. She and her husband, Nick Simonelli, had been assigned to Ecuador, South America.

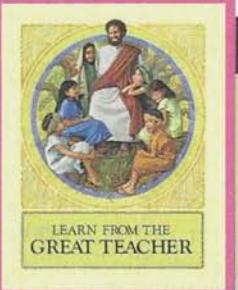
**Insets: When we knew each other as children  
Background: Years later, at the Ecuador branch**

In 2006 my husband and I applied as volunteers for international construction projects of Jehovah's Witnesses. How thrilled we were to learn that our first assignment would be the Ecuador branch expansion project! My first day at the Ecuador branch, Nancy came walking in! She just happened to be visiting the branch that day. We saw each other and embraced—together again, 32 years after I received my little pink book! How grateful I am to Jehovah for that book and for the little girl who offered it to me!

#### THEY HAVE AFFECTED THE LIVES OF MILLIONS

In 2003, after *Listening to the Great Teacher* had been in print for 32 years, a revised edition was published. It is entitled *Learn From the Great Teacher*. To this date, a combined total of over 65 million copies of these books about Jesus' teachings have been printed in more than 100 languages. You may obtain a copy of *Learn From the Great Teacher* from one of Jehovah's Witnesses in your area.

*Listening  
to the  
Great Teacher*



LEARN FROM THE  
GREAT TEACHER



## A GREAT SCIENTIFIC MYSTERY UNRAVELED

WHEN divers explored a shipwreck off the Greek island of Antikythera in 1901, they found treasure. The wreck proved to be an ancient Roman merchant vessel carrying, among other things, marble and bronze statues and silver coins from Pergamum. The coins enabled researchers to estimate that the ship, probably heading for Rome, went down between 85 and 60 B.C.E.

Since the discovery, the artifacts have been preserved in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece. Neither the statues nor the coins, however, were what drew researchers to the museum in 2005. Their interest was focused on a bronze device that had originally been housed in a wooden case about the size of a shoe box. This artifact, known as the Antikythera Mechanism, challenges assumptions about the scientific achievements of early civilizations. The device has been called “the most sophisticated mechanism known from the ancient world.”

Just what is it? And why is it so important?

### A Mystery Object

When the case was pulled from the seabed, it was badly corroded and encrusted. After nearly 2,000 years, it resembled greenish rock. Since all the excitement of the find con-

centrated on the statues, this mystery object initially received scant attention.

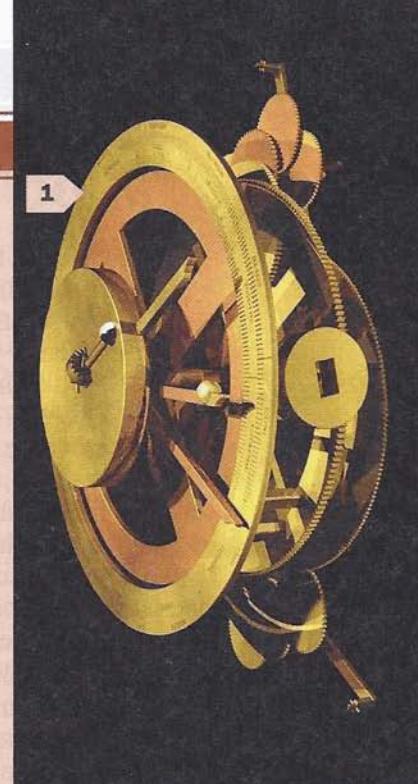
When a Greek archaeologist examined the artifact in 1902, the mechanism was in several pieces. There were gearwheels of different sizes, with accurately cut triangular teeth. The device looked like a clock, but because clockwork was not believed to have been widely used until about 700 years ago, this did not seem likely.

An article on the Antikythera Mechanism explains that “historians do not generally credit [Greeks of some 2,000 years ago] with possessing scientifically precise gears—gears cut from metal and arranged into complex ‘gear trains’ capable of carrying motion from one driveshaft to another.” Nevertheless, the device was thought to be some kind of astrolabe, an instrument once commonly used to determine latitude by the positions of celestial bodies.

Still, many argued that the gears were simply too complex for the object to be 2,000 years old. So they concluded that it must not have been part of the ancient wreck. On the other hand, one scholar suggested that the object might be the legendary Sphere of Archimedes. This device was described by Cicero in the first century B.C.E. as a kind of planetarium—a mechanical model capable of

## **Reconstruction of the inner workings of the Antikythera Mechanism**

- 1. The front dial indicated lunar phases and positions of the sun and the moon. It also showed the day and month according to the solar calendar and movement of the sun (and the visible planets) in relation to the constellations of the zodiac**
- 2. The upper back dial indicated the relation between lunar months, solar years, and the times of the Panhellenic Games**
- 3. The lower back dial predicted solar and lunar eclipses**



**Front view**



**Back view**

replicating in miniature the movements of the sun, the moon, and the five planets visible to the naked eye. In the absence of any clear evidence to the contrary, however, the astrolabe theory prevailed.

### **Examined More Closely**

In 1958 the mechanism was studied by Derek de Solla Price, who trained as a physicist but then switched fields and became a professor of history. He came to believe that the device was capable of calculating past or future astronomical events, such as the next full moon. He realized that the inscriptions on the dial referred to calendar divisions—days, months, and signs of the zodiac. It must once have had rotating pointers, he assumed, that indicated the positions of heavenly bodies at different times.

Price deduced that the largest gearwheel was tied to the movement of the sun and that one rotation corresponded to a solar year. If

another gear, connected to the first, represented the movement of the moon, then the ratio of the number of teeth on the two wheels ought to reflect ancient Greek ideas about the moon's orbits.

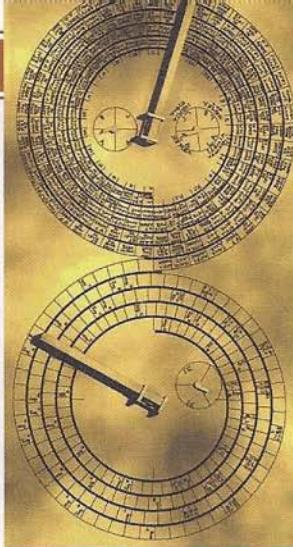
In 1971, Price X-rayed the mechanism. The results confirmed his theories. The device was a complex astronomical calculator. Price produced a drawing of the mechanism's hypothetical workings and published his findings in 1974. He wrote: "Nothing like this instrument is preserved elsewhere. . . . From all that we know of science and technology in the Hellenistic Age we should have felt that such a device could not exist." At the time, Price's work did not receive the acclaim it merited. Others, however, continued his research.

### **Fresh Insight**

In 2005, the team of researchers mentioned in the introduction examined the mechanism using a state-of-the-art CAT-scan machine

to produce high-resolution, three-dimensional X-ray images. These studies offered fresh insight into how the mechanism worked. As the user turned a knob, at least 30 interlocking gearwheels activated three dials on the front and the back of the box. This allowed the user to predict astronomical cycles, including eclipses, in relation to the four-year cycle of the Olympic and other Panhellenic games. These games were commonly used as a basis for chronology.

Why was such information so important? There are several reasons. Astronomy was important to ancient peoples because the sun and the moon were the basis for calendars that would tell farmers when to sow seed. Sailors used the stars to navigate. Greek social institutions were tied to astronomical phenomena. And there is yet another reason such information was valued.



How the back outer plate might have looked

"For the ancient Babylonians, predicting eclipses was very important, as they were thought to be bad omens," writes Martin Allen, of the Antikythera Mechanism Research Project. "Indeed the mechanism could be thought of as being a political tool, allowing the ruling authorities to have dominion over their subjects. It has even been proposed that one reason we know so little of these mechanisms, is that they were bound by military or political secrecy."

Whatever else it tells us, the mechanism is evidence that ancient Greek astronomy and mathematics, much of which was based on the long tradition of the Babylonians, were much more advanced than we might imagine. *Nature* magazine puts it this way: "The ancient Antikythera Mechanism doesn't just challenge our assumptions about technology transfer over the ages—it gives us fresh insights into history itself."

## WHO MADE IT?

The Antikythera Mechanism could not have been the only device of its kind. "There is no evidence of any mistakes," writes Martin Allen. "All the mechanical features have a purpose. There are no extra holes, or bits of metalwork to suggest that the manufacturer modified his design as he built the mechanism. This leads to the conclusion that he must have built a number of predecessors." So who made it? And what became of his other productions?

The most recent research on the mechanism has revealed the names of the months on the dial that predicted eclipses. The names are of Corinthian origin. This leads investigators to deduce that the device was made and used in a specific cultural context. The scientific magazine *Nature* states: "The Corinthian colonies of northwestern Greece or Syracuse in Sicily are leading contenders—the latter suggesting a heritage going back to Archimedes."

Why have no similar devices survived? "Bronze is a valuable and highly recyclable commodity," writes Allen. "Consequently, bronze finds from antiquity are remarkably rare. In fact many of the significant historical bronze finds have been made underwater, where they were inaccessible to those who might have reworked them." "We only have this [example]," says one researcher, "because it was out of reach of the scrap-metal man."

# Childhood Obesity

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

**O**BESITY among children has reached epidemic proportions in many countries. The World Health Organization says that worldwide an estimated 22 million children under the age of five are overweight.

A national survey in Spain revealed that 1 out of every 3 children is either overweight or obese. In just ten years (1985-1995), childhood obesity tripled in Australia. In the last three decades, obesity in children aged 6 to 11 has more than tripled in the United States.

Childhood obesity is also extending to developing countries. According to the International Obesity Task Force, in some parts of Africa, more children are affected by obesity than by malnutrition. In 2007, Mexico occupied second place in the world, behind the United States, for childhood obesity. It is said that in Mexico City alone, 70 percent of the children and adolescents are either overweight or obese. Pediatric surgeon Dr. Francisco González warns that this may be "the first generation to die before their parents from the complications of obesity."

What are the complications? Three are diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. These are health problems formerly considered characteristic mostly of adults. According to the U.S. Institute of Medicine, 30 percent of the boys and 40 percent of the girls born in the United States in the year 2000 have a lifetime risk of being diagnosed with obesity-related type 2 diabetes.

Surveys show an alarming trend among children. Climbing rates of obesity are leading to climbing rates of high blood pressure. "Unless this upward trend in high blood pressure is reversed, we could be facing an explosion of new cardiovascular disease cases in young adults and adults," warns Dr. Rebec-



ca Din-Dzietham of the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia.

### Contributing Factors

What is behind this global epidemic of childhood obesity? While genetics can be a predisposing factor, the alarming increase in obesity in recent decades appears to indicate that genes are not the only cause. Stephen O'Rahilly, professor of clinical biochemistry and medicine at Cambridge University in England, declares: "Nothing genetic explains the rise in obesity. We can't change our genes over 30 years."

Commenting on the causes, the Mayo Clinic, in the United States, says: "Although there are some genetic and hormonal causes of childhood obesity, most excess weight is caused by kids eating too much and exercising too little." Two examples illustrate the changing trend in eating habits today.

First, as working parents have less time and energy to prepare meals, fast food has increasingly become the norm. Fast-food

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Under Pressure In School and Out
- How Can I Make Bible Reading Enjoyable?
- Marital Fidelity—What Does It Really Mean?



## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- 1** Buy and serve more fruits and vegetables than convenience foods.
- 2** Limit soft drinks, sweetened beverages, and high-fat sugary snack foods. Instead, offer water or low-fat milk and healthful snacks.
- 3** Use cooking methods that are lower in fat, such as baking, broiling, and steaming, instead of frying.
- 4** Serve smaller portions.
- 5** Avoid using food as a reward or as a bribe.
- 6** Do not allow children to skip breakfast. Skipping it may lead to overeating later.
- 7** Sit at the table to eat. Eating in front of a TV or a computer screen promotes consumption and lessens awareness of feeling full.
- 8** Encourage physical activity, such as bike riding, playing ball, and jumping rope.
- 9** Limit time spent on watching television, using the computer, and playing video games.
- 10** Plan active family outings, such as visiting the zoo, going swimming, or playing in the park.
- 11** Assign active chores to your children.
- 12** Set the example in healthful eating and exercise.

Sources: The National Institutes of Health and the Mayo Clinic

restaurants have sprung up all over the world. One study reported that nearly a third of all children in the United States aged 4 to 19 eat fast food every day. Such foods are typically high in sugar and fats and are offered in temptingly large sizes.

Second, soft drinks have replaced milk and water as the beverage of choice. For example, Mexicans spend more each year on soft drinks, particularly colas, than on the ten most basic foods put together. According to the book *Overcoming Childhood Obesity*, just one 20-ounce soft drink a day can result in a gain of 25 pounds in a year!

As to the lack of physical activity, a study carried out by the University of Glasgow in Scotland found that the average three-year-old engages in "moderate to vigorous activity" for only 20 minutes a day. Commenting on that study, Dr. James Hill, professor of pediatrics and medicine at the University of Colorado, said: "The increasingly sedentary nature of U.K. [United Kingdom] children is not unique and is being seen in most countries around the world."

## What Is the Solution?

Nutritionists do not recommend putting children on a restrictive diet, as this may compromise their growth and health. Rather, the Mayo Clinic states: "One of the best strategies to combat excess weight in your children is to improve the diet and exercise levels of your entire family."—See the accompanying box.

Make healthful habits a family commitment. If you do, they will become a way of life for your children, carrying over into adulthood.

1. In Lydia of Asia Minor. ■ His father was Greek.  
His mother was Jewish. ■ Eunicie. ■ "The holy  
writings," meaning the Hebrew Scriptures of the Bible,  
because she wanted him to be a worshipper of the true  
God, Jehovah. 2. Nineveh. —Jonah 1:1, 2, 3. God's  
judgment against the city. The people, including the  
king, repented.—Jonah 1:2; 3:2-9.

## Conflict Between Lions and Humans

As the human population in Africa increases, wildlife habitat decreases, resulting in "frequent and often violent contact," says the Cape Town journal *Africa Geographic*. Lions, in particular, "appear to have identified humans as prey." In Tanzania, for example, lions have killed at least 70 people each year since 1990. In some cases, reports the journal, lion prides are even "specialising in humans, seizing people from the front porches of huts and tearing through thatched roofs and loose mud walls."

## Ancient Egyptian Granaries Unearthed

University of Chicago archaeologists working in southern Egypt have unearthed seven ancient grain bins, the largest known in that land. Artifacts found nearby enabled archaeologists to date the silos to between 1630 and 1520 B.C.E. If the dating is accurate, the bins existed in the days of Moses. The circular, mud-brick bins, 18 to 21 feet in diameter and probably at least 25 feet tall, were part of a local administrative center. The university's report on the find says that such centers "functioned as places where the agricultural wealth of the Nile valley was mobilized for the state. Grain as currency provided the sinews of power for the phar[ao]hs." The re-

■ A comprehensive study of the health of reef-forming coral species indicates that 32.8 percent of those classified are at "elevated risk of extinction" as a result of climate change or local human interference.—SCIENCE, U.S.A.

■ Of the more than 2,000 children with breathing problems examined at a hospital pediatric unit in Athens, Greece, some "65 percent were found to have been exposed to [tobacco] smoke by one or both of their parents."—KATHIMERINI  
—ENGLISH EDITION, GREECE.

■ "The soaring price of oil, the increasing cost of living, . . . the shadow of economic recession . . . , and the recurrent natural disasters that highlight our vulnerability: we obviously have no appropriate short- or long-term responses to any of these serious issues."—LLUÍS MARIA DE PUIG, PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE.

■ In Poland, 17 percent of the boys and 18 percent of the girls have tried drugs by age 15.—ŻYCIE WARSZAWY, POLAND.

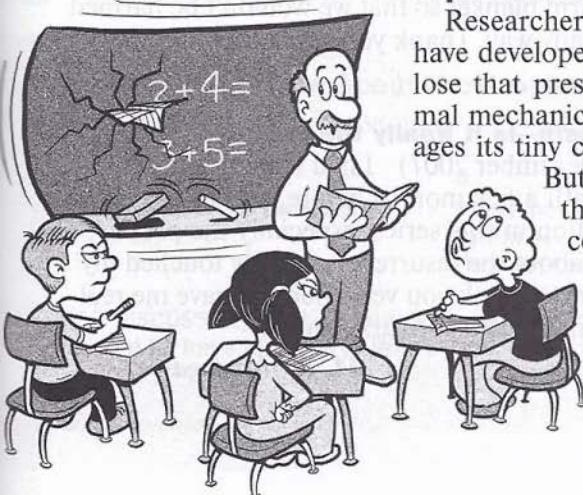
port added that "because grain was a form of currency, the silos functioned as a bank and a food source."

## Paper as Strong as Iron

Researchers at the Swedish Royal Institute of Technology have developed a method of producing paper from wood cellulose that preserves the natural strength of its fibers. The normal mechanical processing of wood pulp in papermaking damages its tiny cellulose fibers and greatly reduces their strength.

But the Swedish team succeeded in breaking down the pulp with enzymes and then gently separating its cellulose fibers in water, using a mechanical beater.

When the undamaged fibers are drained, they bond into networks, producing sheets of paper with a yield strength greater than cast iron and almost as great as structural steel.



**Ancient Manuscripts—How Are They Dated?** (February 2008)

This article upset me. It is my understanding that C.E. stands for "Common Era" and B.C.E. stands for "Before the Common Era." In all of my 70 years, I have seen the terms B.C. and A.D. used as a time reference, referring to before and after the birth of Jesus. It seems to me that using B.C.E. or C.E. somehow denies the birth of Jesus.

*R. W., United States*

**"Awake!" responds:** Although A.D. (*Anno Domini*, meaning "in the year of our Lord") and B.C. (before Christ) are used in lands where professed Christianity predominates, we have chosen to use the terms C.E. (Common Era) and B.C.E. (Before the Common Era).

Why? First, there is considerable evidence pointing to the year 2 B.C.E. as the date of Jesus' birth. Second, the literature printed by Jehovah's Witnesses is widely distributed in languages read by many non-Christians. Third, the title "Christ" means "Anointed One." Jesus became the Messiah, or Christ, when he was anointed with God's spirit at the time he was baptized in 29 C.E. (Matthew 3:13-17) Thus, Jesus was not born Christ; he became Christ the year of his baptism. Significantly, the descriptions C.E. and B.C.E. are growing in usage, and they appear in almost all modern dictionaries and in many scholarly works. Please be assured that Jehovah's Witnesses consider Jesus and his sacrifice indispensable to the outworking of God's purposes and our personal salvation.

**Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope**

**if I'm Not Well?** (February 2008) I cannot tell you how much I appreciate receiving this article at just the right time! I fell sick and had to be hospitalized for three weeks. I had just come out of the hospital when I received the magazine. I could relate in many ways to the young ones mentioned in the article. Thank you for the examples provided and for the counsel given.

*K. P., Canada*

My heart was touched by the fact that Jehovah God gives comfort, even to those who are disabled like me. When I was very little, I was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. Although I can't walk, I am auxiliary pioneering. I look forward to the time when, in the coming Paradise earth, all those living

with disabilities "will climb up just as a stag does."—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

*J. J., Republic of Korea*

I read this article again and again. I couldn't help but cry, feeling Jehovah's warm thoughts. It was as if he wrapped us up in a warm blanket so that we wouldn't be harmed in any way. Thank you very much.

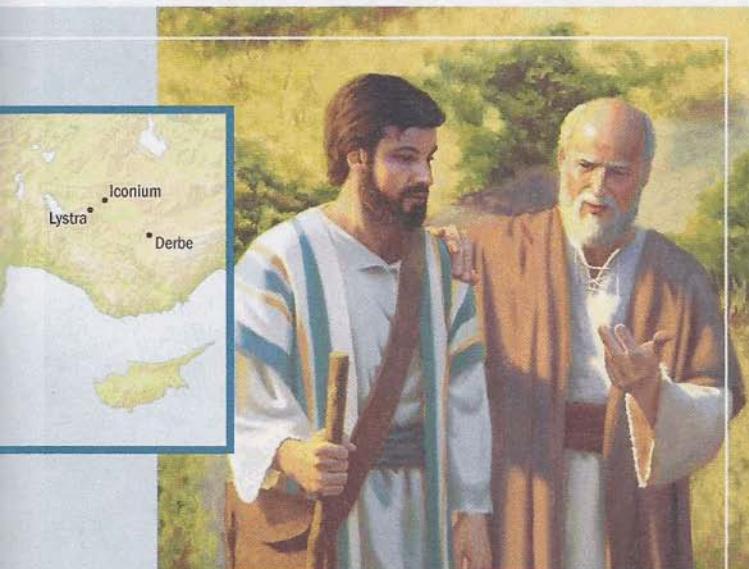
*M. T., Japan*

**Death—Is It Really the End?**

(December 2007) I had lost my mother in death a few months before, and the explanation in this series, especially the promises about the resurrection, really touched my heart. Thank you very much. It gave me real comfort and encouragement.

*M. R., Madagascar*





### Where Did It Happen?

**1. In which town did Paul meet Timothy?**

CLUE: Read Acts 16:1-3. Circle your answer on the map.

■ **What was Timothy's father's nationality? His mother's?**

■ **What was Timothy's mother's name?**

CLUE: Read 2 Timothy 1:5.

■ **What did Timothy's mother teach him, and why?**

CLUE: Read 2 Timothy 3:15.

**FOR DISCUSSION: How can you be like Timothy?**

### What Do You Know About the Prophets?

Read the book of Jonah. Then answer the following questions.

**2**

**God sent Jonah to what city?**

**3**

**What message did Jonah deliver to the people of that city?  
How did they respond?**

**FOR DISCUSSION: Why did Jonah become angry?**

**Should he have felt angry? Why or why not?**

### From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

**PAGE 5 It is good to do what with some of your money?**

1 Corinthians 16:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 5 If you borrow money, what do you become?**

Proverbs 22:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 11 How did King Josiah stop false worship in Judah?**

2 Chronicles 34:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 19 Why should you not befriend everyone?**

Psalm 26:\_\_\_\_\_



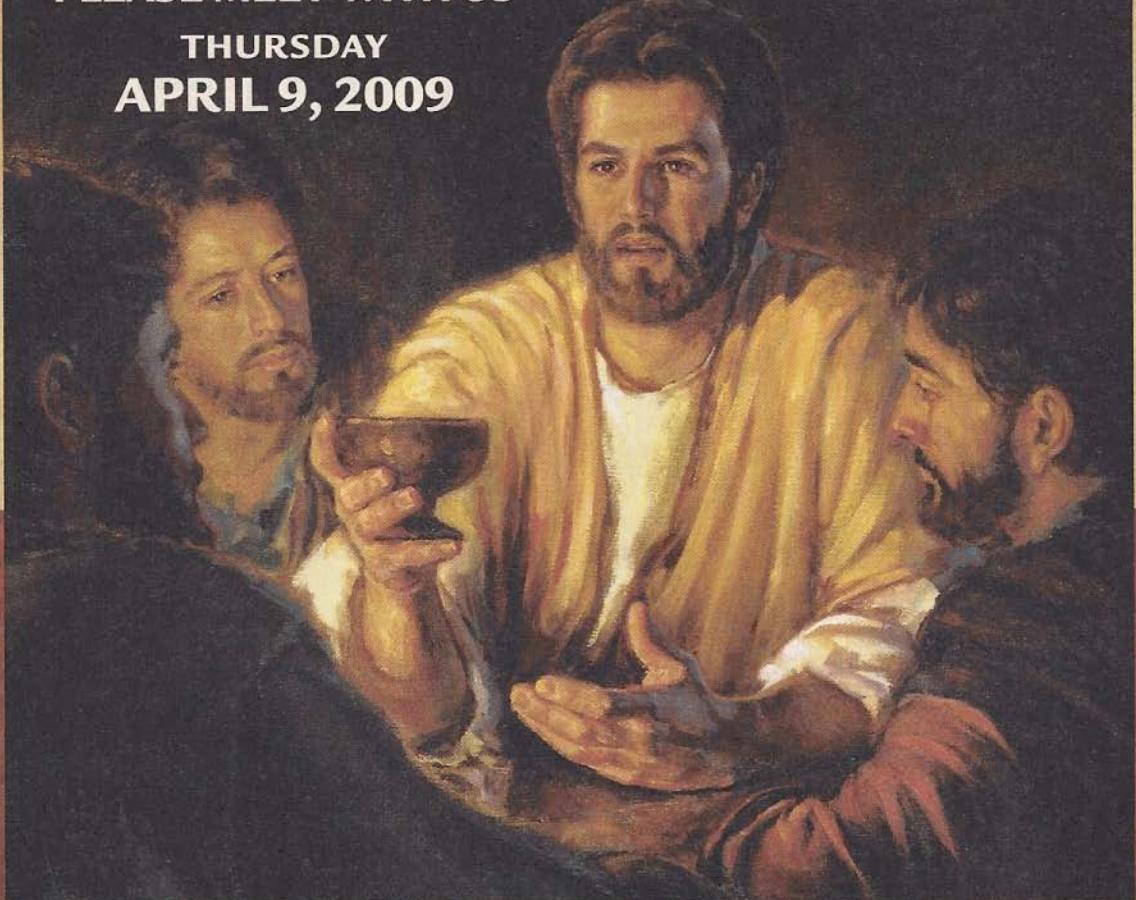
### Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.



**PLEASE MEET WITH US**

**THURSDAY  
APRIL 9, 2009**



## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

On the night before he died, Jesus Christ instituted the Memorial of his death, using wine and unleavened bread as symbols. Jesus commanded: “Keep doing this in remembrance of me.”—Luke 22:19.

Jehovah’s Witnesses warmly invite you to assemble with them in obeying Jesus by observing this annual event. Please check with them locally for the exact time and place.