

Awake!

MARCH 2008



IS THERE ONE TRUE RELIGION?

ALSO: IS
SUPERSTITION
COMPATIBLE
WITH BIBLE
TEACHING?
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It has often been said that there is truth in all religions. But are they all approved by God? Can the truth be found in a number of religions? What did Jesus teach on the matter?

Awake!

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IS THERE ONE TRUE RELIGION?

Some people find that question offensive. Given the sheer multitude of religious beliefs worldwide, they reason that anyone who claims to have a monopoly on truth must be narrow-minded, even arrogant. Surely, it would seem, some good is to be found in all religions or at least most of them. Is that how you feel?

THERE are, of course, situations in which it is prudent to allow for a variety of opinions. For example, a person might believe that a certain diet will make him healthier. But should he impose that diet on everyone else, as if it were the *only* way to healthy living? Certainly, it would be wise and modest on his part to allow for the possibility that someone else's choice of food might be as good or even better, at least for that other person.

Is it the same with religion? Are there a variety of acceptable alternatives from which to choose, depending on one's upbringing and way of perceiving things? Or is there one body of religious truth that applies to all mankind? Let us see what the Bible has to say. First, we will consider whether truth is even attainable. After all, if it is not, then there is little point in searching for one true religion.

Is Religious Truth Attainable?

Shortly before he was killed, Jesus Christ told his interrogator, Roman Governor Pontius Pilate: "Everyone that is on the side of the truth listens to my voice." Pilate may well have been responding cynically when he said: "What is truth?" (John 18:37, 38) Jesus, on the other hand, spoke unashamedly of truth. He did not doubt its existence. Consider, for example, the following four statements that Jesus made to various people.

"For this I have been born, and for this I

have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the *truth*."—John 18:37.

"I am the way and the *truth* and the life."—John 14:6.

"God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and *truth*."—John 4:23, 24.

"If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, and you will know the *truth*, and the *truth* will set you free."—John 8:31, 32.

Since Jesus spoke so confidently of truth and of coming to know it, shouldn't we at least examine the possibility that religious truth exists and that it can be found?

Does Absolute Truth Really Exist?

No doubt you will agree that there are some things of which you can be absolutely certain. You are sure of your own existence and that the objects that surround you are real. The trees, the mountains, the clouds, the sun, and the moon—the material world—are not figments of your imagination. Of course, there may be a few people who argue in a philosophical way that even those things are questionable. But it is unlikely that you agree with such an extreme notion.

Then there are natural laws. Of these too, you can be absolutely certain. For example, if you jump off a cliff, you will fall; if you refuse to eat, you will feel hungry; and if you go without food for a long time, you will die.

You do not wonder if such natural laws hold true for some but not for others. They apply to all mankind and are therefore said to be universal.

The Bible alludes to one such universal law when it asks: “Can a man rake together fire into his bosom and yet his very garments not be burned?” Indeed, when that was written, it was universally true that clothing would burn if brought into contact with fire. However, in stating this fact, the above Bible proverb is really making a bigger point, namely, that “anyone having [sexual] relations with the wife of his fellowman” will suffer adverse consequences.—Proverbs 6:27, 29.

Is that statement an absolute truth of which we can be certain? Some would say no. They claim that morals are personal, that they depend on one’s upbringing, beliefs, and circumstances. But consider a few of God’s moral laws as found in the Bible. Are these not universal truths?

The Bible condemns adultery. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) Some people do not accept this Bible precept as truth, and they practice adultery. Still, even they generally reap bitter consequences, which often include a troubled conscience, divorce, and deep emotional scars for all concerned.

Drunkenness is also condemned by God. (Proverbs 23:20; Ephesians 5:18) What happens when people practice it? In many cas-

es they lose their job, their health, and their family, who also suffer emotionally. (Proverbs 23:29-35) Such consequences come even to those who do not believe that drunkenness is wrong. Does the truthfulness of these moral laws appear to be relative to the beliefs or perceptions of each individual?

Then there are the Bible’s positive moral commands—such as the commands to love one’s wife, to respect one’s husband, and to do good to others. (Matthew 7:12; Ephesians 5:

33) Observing these commands brings beneficial results. Would you argue that such moral counsel is good for some but not for others?

Whether the moral laws of the Bible are followed or not brings consequences to people. This fact argues that such laws are not just alternative points of view. Rather, they are truths. Evidence reveals that good consequences are realized when the Bible’s moral laws are followed, but bad ones when they are not.

So think: If the Bible’s moral laws hold true for all mankind, what about the standards in God’s Word regarding worship? What about its comments on what happens when we die and the hope we have for an everlasting future? It logically follows that these Bible teachings are also *truths*, provided for all mankind. Their benefits and consequences are not limited to only the people who believe them.

Truth can be found. Jesus said that God’s

How is the consequence of embracing fire related to disobedience to God’s laws?

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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Word, the Bible, is truth. (John 17:17) Yet, truth may still seem unattainable. Why? Because so many different religions claim to teach what the Bible says. Which religion is

teaching the truth from God's Word? Must we limit the answer to just one religion? Could not the truth, or at least parts of it, be found in a number of religions?

WHO SHOULD DETERMINE TRUE RELIGION?

JESUS made it clear that some forms of worship are not acceptable to God. He spoke of "false prophets," comparing them to a tree that produces worthless fruit and "gets cut down and thrown into the fire." He also said: "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens."—Matthew 7:15-22.

Jesus, in fact, said regarding some who would claim to follow him: "I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness." (Matthew 7:23) Further, when speaking to the religious leaders of his day, Jesus applied to them God's words to apostate Israel: "It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach as doctrines commands of men."—Mark 7:6, 7.

Clearly, not all worship is approved by God or his Son. Thus, not all worship is true worship. Does this mean that only one religion teaches the truth? Could not God be working through a number of religions, while rejecting certain others? Or, for that matter, might God be accepting and rejecting the worship of *individuals* scattered about in a number of religions despite what their organizations teach?

The apostle Paul wrote under divine inspiration: "Now I exhort you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you

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[†] Audiocassettes also available.

[‡] CD also available.

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should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” (1 Corinthians 1:10) The Bible also exhorts Christians to be “of the same mind and have the same love, being joined together in soul, holding the one thought in mind.”—Philippians 2:2.

Where such unity exists, the result is, in fact, *one religion*. Accordingly, the Bible says that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”—Ephesians 4:4, 5.

What the Bible Record Shows

That the above conclusion has solid Scriptural support is clear from the Bible record. By searching this record, you will find that God dealt with his people through one system of worship. Early in mankind’s history, God used patriarchs, or family heads, as his representatives. Prominent among them were Noah, Abram (Abraham), Isaac, and Jacob.—Genesis 8:18-20; 12:1-3; 26:1-4; 28:10-15.

The people who descended from Jacob came to be enslaved in Egypt. While there, they were cruelly oppressed yet grew to number into the millions. God delivered them from captivity, miraculously bringing them through the Red Sea. Then he adopted them as his people, providing them laws by means of the mediator Moses. They became the ancient nation of Israel, God’s nation.—Exodus 14:21-28; 19:1-6; 20:1-17.

Significantly, God did not approve of the forms of worship practiced by people in the nations surrounding Israel. In fact, he punished his people when they deviated from his laws and adopted such forms of worship.—Leviticus 18:21-30; Deuteronomy 18:9-12.

What about individuals from other nations who wanted to worship the true God? They needed first to abandon their former false worship and then join Israel in the worship of Jehovah God. Many of them gained

God’s approval and became his loyal servants. These included women, such as Rahab the Canaanite and Ruth the Moabit; men, such as Uriah the Hittite and Ebed-melech the Ethiopian; and groups of people, such as the Gibeonites. Israel’s King Solomon offered a heartfelt prayer in behalf of all who, like them, joined in true worship with God’s people.*—2 Chronicles 6:32, 33.

After Jesus Came to Earth

Later, after Jesus was sent to earth, the way of true worship was established on the basis of his teachings, and God’s purposes were illuminated in a grand way. In time, true worshippers came to be called “Christians.” (Acts 11:26) Thus, Jews who wanted God’s approval had to leave their former way of worship. They did not have the option of choosing between two systems of worship or of worshipping as isolated individuals. As we have seen in God’s Word, true worshippers were united in “one faith.”—Ephesians 4:4, 5.

Today the idea that God deals with mankind through only one religion may seem extreme and unpalatable to some. Yet, it is the conclusion to which the Bible points. In the past, many individuals who had worshipped in their own way came to grips with this fact. They joined themselves to the true worshippers of Jehovah, and any initial misgivings gave way to great blessings and joy. For example, the Bible says that after one Ethiopian man accepted Christianity and was baptized, “he kept going on his way rejoicing.”—Acts 8:39.

Anyone today who accepts and practices the true religion will realize similar blessings. But with so many religions to choose from, how can you identify the one true religion?

* You may read about these people in the following Bible accounts: Joshua 2:1-7; 6:22-25; Ruth 1:4, 14-17; 2 Samuel 11:3-11; Jeremiah 38:7-13; and Joshua 9:3-9, 16-21.

HOW TO FIND THE TRUE RELIGION

'If truth from God exists, why must I search to find it?' some ask. 'If God has an important message for all mankind, would he not convey it clearly enough so that people would grasp it immediately, without the need for investigation?'

SURELY God has the ability to do such a thing. But is that the way he has chosen to communicate truth?

How God Conveys Truth

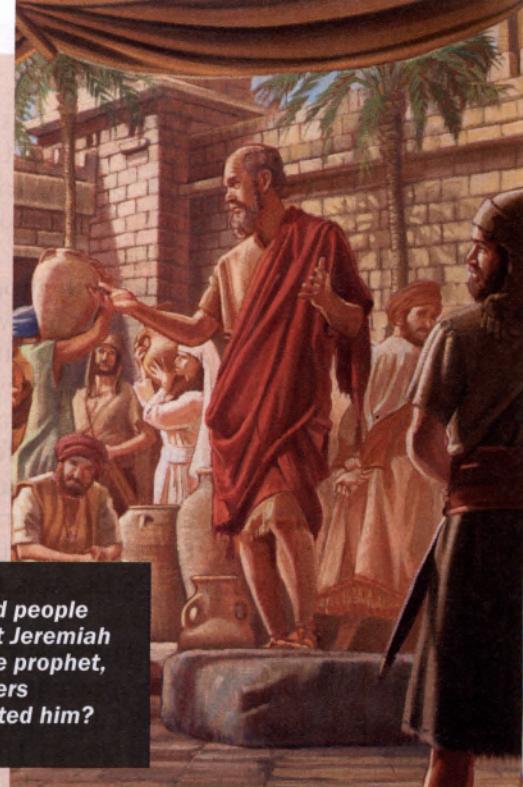
Actually, God conveys his messages in a way that allows sincere seekers of truth to search them out. (Psalm 14:2) Consider the message that God delivered through his prophet Jeremiah centuries ago. It was given to God's wayward people regarding the coming destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.—Jeremiah 25:8-11; 52:12-14.

Yet, at the same time, other prophets claimed to speak for God. Hananiah foretold peace for Jerusalem. That was a very different message from the one that Jeremiah delivered. So whom was a person at that time to believe—Jeremiah or those who contradicted him?—Jeremiah 23:16, 17; 28:1, 2, 10-17.

To know who was right, sincere Jews needed to know Jehovah as a person. They needed to understand his laws and principles, as well as his attitude toward wrongdoing. Doing so, they would have agreed with God's words spoken through Jeremiah that "there was not a man repenting over his badness." (Jeremiah 8:5-7) Furthermore, they would have discerned that this sad situation did not bode well for Jerusalem and its inhabitants.—Deuteronomy 28:15-68; Jeremiah 52:4-14.

TO GOD'S MESSAGERS
SOME ASK: 'IF GOD EXISTED,
WHY MUST I SEARCH TO FIND
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THE NEED FOR INVESTIGATION?'

How could people know that Jeremiah was a true prophet, when others contradicted him?



Jeremiah's prophecies about Jerusalem came true. The city was razed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E.

Although the consequences of disobedience were foretold long in advance, effort was needed to recognize that the time had arrived for God to take action.

What About Christian Truth?

What of the truth proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Did everyone recognize it as a message from God? No. Even though Jesus was right there in the midst of the people of Israel teaching them and performing miracles, most of his listeners did not discern that he was the foretold Messiah—the Christ, or Anointed One.

To the Pharisees who asked when God's Kingdom was coming, Jesus himself said: "The kingdom of God is not coming with striking observableness." He added: "The kingdom of God is in your midst." (Luke 17: 20, 21) God's appointed Ruler, Jesus, was

among them! But those Pharisees refused to open their eyes to the evidence that he was fulfilling the Messianic prophecies and to accept him as “the Christ, the Son of the living God.”—Matthew 16:16.

The response to the truth proclaimed by Christ’s first-century disciples was similar. While miracles helped to demonstrate that God was supporting the disciples, the truth was still not plain to most. (Acts 8:1-8; 9:32-41) Jesus commissioned his followers to “make disciples of people” by teaching them. As a result of listening and learning Scriptural truths, sincere seekers of truth became believers.—Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:42; 17:2-4, 32-34.

It is the same today. The “good news of the kingdom” is being “preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations.” (Matthew 24:14) This is not necessarily being done “with striking observableness”—in so obvious a way that every individual on earth will recognize it as a message from God. Yet, God’s truth is recognizable and strikes a responsive chord in honesthearted individuals who want to worship God in the way approved by him.—John 10:4, 27.

The fact that you are reading a Bible journal shows that you are likely a sincere seeker of truth. How can you determine which religion is teaching it?

An Approach That Works

Some first-century residents of Beroea were commended by the apostle Paul for the way they responded when he taught them. They did not immediately accept what Paul said as truth; still, they listened respectfully. We can learn from what the Beroeans did after hearing the message.

Note that the Bible explains: “Now the [Beroeans] were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word

with the greatest eagerness of mind, *carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so*. Therefore many of them became believers.” (Acts 17:10-12) So their search was not superficial. They did not expect conclusive results in just one or two brief discussions with Paul.

Observe also that the Beroeans “*received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind*.” This tells us something about the attitude with which they approached their study of the Scriptures. They were not gullible, but neither were they cynical. They did not have a critical attitude toward what was explained by Paul, who was one of God’s human representatives.



The first-century Beroeans listened to Paul but then examined the Scriptures to make sure that what he said was true

Consider this too: The Beroeans were hearing about Christianity for the first time. It sounded good, perhaps too good to be true. But rather than dismiss it, they carefully examined the Scriptures, checking to see ‘whether the things Paul was saying were so.’ Note, too, that those in both Beroea and Thessalonica who made such a diligent search became believers. (Acts 17:4, 12) They did not give up and conclude that truth cannot be found. They identified the true religion.

How the Truth Affects People

When one finds the truth, as did the Beroeans, he is moved to share it enthusiastically. Others may disapprove, holding that it is more humble to feel that other religions could be equally correct. However, the Bible’s truth—once found—instills conviction. It does not leave one wondering if truth is attainable or if all religions might lead to salvation. Finding the truth, however, begins with an earnest examination, which does indeed require humility.

Jehovah’s Witnesses have made such an examination. That is why they believe that they have found the true religion. And they invite you to make a search of the Scriptures so as to identify who is practicing true religion today. While there is much more involved than any simple checklist could provide, the material about first-century Christians in the accompanying box on this page may help you to get started.

By accepting a home Bible study with Jehovah’s Witnesses at no cost, you can make an in-depth search of what the Bible really teaches. Learning this will put you in position to identify the true religion.

Features of True Religion

Consider the practices and teachings of first-century Christians:

- They looked to God’s Word as their guide.—2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21.
- They taught that Jesus was God’s Son, distinct from God himself and subordinate to Him.—1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Peter 1:3.
- They taught that the dead will return to life by means of a future resurrection.
—Acts 24:15.
- They were known overall for the love that prevailed among themselves.
—John 13:34, 35.
- They did not worship merely as individuals but were organized into congregations and were united under overseers and a central body of elders that looked to Jesus as Head.—Acts 14:21-23; 15:1-31; Ephesians 1:22; 1 Timothy 3:1-13.
- They were zealous preachers of God’s Kingdom as mankind’s only hope.—Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8.



A careful study of the Bible can help you identify religious truth



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

Is Superstition Compatible With Bible Teaching?

A JOURNALIST refrained from flying for a year because a fortune-teller had predicted that he would die in a plane accident. People from all walks of life, including politicians, businessmen, actors, athletes, and college students, resort to superstitious practices. In times of uncertainty, stress, or anxiety, they feel that such practices protect them against dangers or help them reach their goals.

Many forms of superstition are seen as quaint or as an inoffensive source of psychological support. The late anthropologist Margaret Mead observed: "Superstitions reflect the keenness of our wish to have something come true or to prevent something bad

from happening. The half acceptance and half denial accorded superstitions give us the best of both worlds." Still, those determined to please God should ask themselves, 'Is superstition compatible with Christianity?'

The Source of Superstition

Mankind in general has been plagued by fears—fear of death, of the unknown, and of what is called the Hereafter, to mention just a few. Satan, the rebel opposer of God, is determined to enslave people, and he has been feeding such fears with malicious lies. (John 8:44; Revelation 12:9) Satan is not alone in his efforts to lure people away from God. In the Bible, Satan is called "the ruler of the

demons.” (Matthew 12:24-27) Who are the demons? In Noah’s time a number of angels joined Satan in his rebellion against God and made themselves demons. Since then, they have been trying to influence people’s minds. Superstition has been one of their devices.—Genesis 6:1, 2; Luke 8:2, 30; Jude 6.

One of Satan’s lies has provided a base for superstition. It is the belief that an invisible entity survives the death of a person’s body and can come back to affect the living. But the Bible says: “As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all.” It further states that “there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom” after one dies.—Ecclesiastes 9: 5, 10.

“Something Detestable to Jehovah”

Many individuals have chosen to believe Satan’s lies. Yet, years ago, God gave his people the Israelites clear direction on the matter. “There should not be found in you anyone,” his Word says, “who employs divination, a practitioner of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah.”—Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

Sadly, the Israelites did not always heed this warning. For example, in the days of the prophet Isaiah, some believed that a good crop depended on appeasing “the god of Good Luck”—a superstitious belief that re-

sulted in dire consequences. They lost Jehovah’s favor and blessing.—Isaiah 65:11, 12.

Jehovah’s attitude toward superstition did not change with the coming of Christianity. The apostle Paul urged superstitious people in the city of Lystra “to turn from these vain things [“vanities,” or “superstitions,” *The Emphatic Diaglott*] to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them.”—Acts 14:15.

Breaking Free From Superstition

There are countless superstitious practices, and all of them have something in common—the lack of a logical explanation. Superstitions can, among other things, lead people into blaming their misfortunes on bad luck rather than accepting responsibility for their deeds.

Happily, many have broken free from superstition. Jesus said: “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8: 32) Clementina, a Brazilian fortune-teller for 25 years, said: “Fortune-telling was my only means of making a living. But Bible truth freed me from superstition.” In reality, regular Bible study and heartfelt prayer to Jehovah God can help us develop inner strength. This can stabilize and balance our thinking, which can lead to sound decisions that prevent calamity and alleviate anxiety.—Philippians 4:6, 7, 13.

The Bible asks: “What sharing does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial [Satan]?” Hence, true Christians must keep away from superstition.—2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Instead of trusting in God, in whom did the superstitious Israelites trust in Isaiah’s day?—Isaiah 65:11, 12.
- What did the apostle Paul urge superstitious people in Lystra to do?—Acts 14:15.
- Is superstition compatible with true Christianity?—2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

Sharing the Good News in Faraway Places

AS TOLD BY HELEN JONES

I was walking through a crowded market in Bangalore, India, in the early 1970's. Suddenly, a water buffalo picked me up by its horns and flung me to the ground. It was about to crush me when an Indian woman came to my rescue. What was I doing in India?



I WAS born in 1931 and grew up in the beautiful city of Vancouver, Canada. My parents were moral people but did not attend church. However, I had strong spiritual yearnings, so as a youth I attended Sunday school and summer Bible classes.

In 1950, at the age of 19, I married Frank Schiller, who had four children from a previous marriage. Two years later we had a son. We wanted to have religion in our lives; but Frank had been divorced, and no church we consulted would accept us. Frank was disgusted, so he refused to talk about religion.

Learning Bible Truths

In 1954 my brother excitedly told me what he had been shown in the Bible by a fellow worker, one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Although I had a lot of questions and knew where the Witnesses held their meetings, I did not attend because of what Frank thought about religion. In time, two Witnesses called at our door. I wanted to know what their religion taught about divorce, and they referred me to the Bible, showing me the Scriptural grounds for divorce. (Matthew 19:3-9) They assured me that through a regular Bible study, my Bible questions could be answered.

Frank was furious, wanting nothing to do with the Witnesses. In 1955, I attended

the Memorial of Christ's death, and when I got home, I excitedly began telling him what I had learned from the Bible. "That's not possible!" he yelled. "If you can prove that to me from the Bible, I'll even go to one of your dumb meetings!"

I handed the Bible to him, and he took it gently with obvious reverence. We looked up the texts I had written down, and I said very little, just letting the Bible speak for itself. Frank did not argue and seemed pensive the rest of the evening.

In time, I reminded him of his promise to attend a meeting. He reluctantly replied, "Well, I'll go just once to see what is going on." The Bible discourse addressed the matter of wives being in subjection to their husbands. (Ephesians 5:22, 23, 33) The information really impressed him. About the same time, Frank attended a *Watchtower* Study based on the article "Be Satisfied by Work." Being a hardworking man, Frank just loved that information. After that study, he never missed a meeting. Soon Frank was zealous in the ministry, and I was holding Bible studies with people who progressed to baptism. Frank and I, along with my mother and my brother, were baptized in symbol of our dedication to God that same year.

A Desire to Do More

At our district convention in 1957 in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A., there was a talk on serving where the need for Kingdom proclaimers was greater. 'Oh, Jehovah, I want to go too,' I prayed. 'Please help us to go someplace where we are needed.' But Frank was concerned about his responsibility to feed and support our family.—1 Timothy 5:8.

The following year our family attended the convention in New York City held simultaneously in Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds. Over 253,000 were in attendance for the featured public talk! Frank was moved by what he saw and heard. So on returning home, we selected Kenya, Africa, to be our new home, since English was spoken there and we would also be able to find good schools for the children.

In 1959 we sold our house, loaded up our belongings, and drove to Montreal, Canada. From there we went by ship to London, England, and from England on another ship, we sailed through the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean. Finally, we arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, on the east coast of Africa. The next day we caught a train to Nairobi, the country's capital city.

Blessings in Africa

At that time the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Kenya was banned, so we preached with caution. Several couples from other countries were also living in Kenya, and we foreigners were allowed to stay. The number in attendance at our meetings had to be kept to less than ten. This meant that our families, including the children, had a full share in them.

Shortly after arriving in Kenya, we found a place to live and Frank found a job. The first woman I met in the house-to-house ministry accepted a Bible study and eventually became a pioneer, as full-time ministers of Jehovah's

Witnesses are called. Another study I conducted was with a teenage Sikh girl we called Goody. She remained firm despite pressure from her family and the Sikh community. After Goody Lull was expelled from home, she moved in with a Witness family, dedicated her life to Jehovah, became a pioneer, and later graduated from the Gilead missionary school.

Our family had some trials. Our oldest boy became ill with rheumatic fever, and Frank was seriously burned while working on a car and lost his job. In time, he obtained employment some 700 miles away in Dar es Salaam, capital of Tanganyika (now Tanzania). So we loaded our things in a vehicle and made the long trip there. Dar es Salaam then had a small congregation, which welcomed us.

Although the preaching work was then under ban in Tanzania, the ban was not rigidly enforced. In 1963, Milton Henschel, a representative from the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States, visited us. During one of his talks at Karimjee Hall, the finest auditorium in the country, an elderly man dressed as a poor person sat down beside me. I greeted him and shared my Bible and songbook. As the program ended, I invited him to come again. When he left, the local Witnesses rushed up to me.

"Do you know who that was?" they asked. "That was the mayor of Dar es Salaam!" Earlier he had threatened to have our assembly shut down. He apparently planned to use the attitude that he assumed I would have toward him as a pretense to do so. But he was so impressed by the kindness and personal interest shown that he allowed the rest of the assembly to continue without interference. There were 274 in attendance, and 16 were baptized!

While we were in Tanzania, the country gained independence. After that, local people were favored for employment over aliens.

Most foreigners had to leave the country, but Frank's persistence in seeking employment finally paid off when he was told there was a need for a master mechanic to keep some diesel locomotives going. That allowed us to stay for four more years. When Frank's contract terminated, we returned to Canada, where we remained until the last of our children grew up and married. We still felt young and were anxious to do more.

On to India

In 1970, at the recommendation of the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Bombay (now Mumbai), we moved to Bangalore, a city of about 1.6 million at the time. It was there that I had the narrow escape from the horns of the water buffalo. There was then an English-speaking congregation of 40 and an isolated group that spoke Tamil. Frank studied with several men who progressed in knowledge of the Bible and later became Christian elders. I also studied with families who came to serve Jehovah.

One lady named Gloria lived in a very poor section of town. When I first called on her, she invited me in. Since there was no furniture, we sat on the floor. I left a copy of *The Watchtower*, and from this she cut out a Bible quotation from Revelation 4:11 and pasted it on the wall where she could see it every day. It included the words: "You are worthy, Jehovah," which was such a beautiful phrase to her. A year later she was baptized.

Frank was invited to work for a year at the branch in Bombay and to oversee the construction of the first Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in India. The Assembly Hall was made simply by adding an upper floor to the existing branch building. There were then only a little over 3,000 Witnesses in all of India, and fewer than 10 served at the branch. In 1975, when our funds were depleted, we were sad to leave the friends we had come to love so dearly.

To Africa Again

Ten years passed, and Frank was now eligible for his retirement pension. So we made ourselves available for an international program to construct branch offices. A letter arrived asking us to go to Igieduma, Nigeria, as construction was in progress there. While in Igieduma, Frank studied the Bible with a man in a nearby village who made progress and later became a member of the Nigeria branch of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Next, we went to Zaire to work on branch construction. Soon afterward, the preaching work was banned and our passports were confiscated. Frank suffered a heart attack on the job but was able to rest during the ban. Later, all construction workers had to leave, and we were sent to nearby Liberia. There, at the Monrovia branch office, Frank was asked to repair the generator. When our visas ran out in 1986, we again had to return to Canada.

Finally to Ecuador

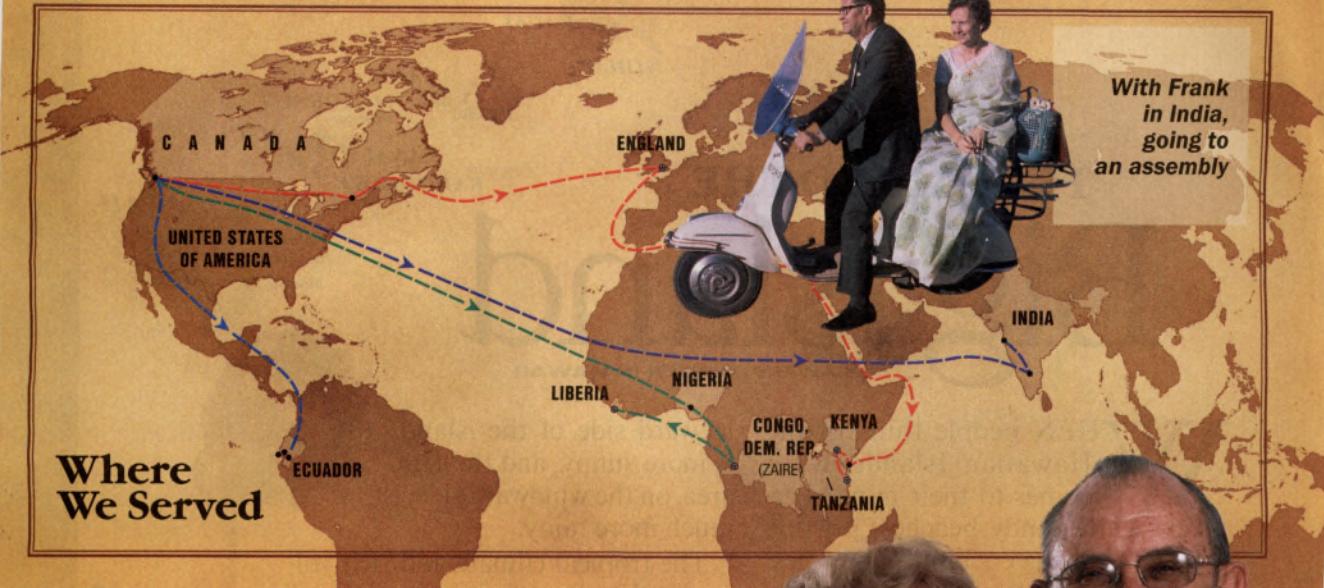
Shortly afterward, we heard that our good friend Andy Kidd had moved to Ecuador and was enjoying the preaching work there. Andy was the only elder in his local congregation, so he often had to care for most of the meeting parts. At his invitation, we visited the Ecuador branch in 1988 and were made to feel welcome.

We found a comfortable home in which to live; but we had to learn Spanish, and Frank was 71. During the next two years, even with limited Spanish, we were able to assist 12 people to baptism. Frank was asked to work on the Ecuador branch construction project. He also studied the Bible with the husband of one of the first Witnesses in Guayaquil. This man, who had been opposed for 46 years, became our friend and spiritual brother.

A Huge Loss

We settled near the small town of Ancón, by the Pacific Ocean, where we were able to help with the construction of a new King-

Where We Served



dom Hall. Sadly, on November 4, 1998, after giving the final talk at the Service Meeting, Frank suffered a heart attack, and he died that night. Our spiritual brothers and sisters were so supportive! The next day Frank was buried in the cemetery across the road from the Kingdom Hall. No words can describe the pain of losing a loved one in death.

Yet again, I had to return to Canada, this time alone, to care for family and legal matters. Despite my sorrow, Jehovah did not forget me. I received a letter from the Ecuador branch letting me know that I was welcome back. So I returned and obtained a small apartment near the branch office. Keeping busy at the branch, as well as in the ministry, helped me to cope with the pain of losing Frank, but I still felt very much alone.

Pressing On in the Work

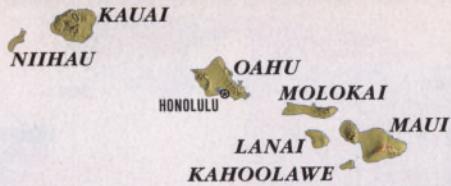
In time, I became acquainted with Junior Jones. He had come to Ecuador from the United States in 1997 to pioneer. We shared the same goals and enjoyed the same things. We were married in October 2000. Junior had experience in construction, so we were invited to work on finishing up the Assembly Hall in Cuenca, a city high up in the Andes Moun-



With my husband Junior Jones

tains. Then, on April 30, 2006, Geoffrey Jackson of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses came from New York and gave the dedication talk, with 6,554 in attendance.

Who could have imagined that in faraway places—Africa, India, and South America—the Kingdom-preaching work would have grown so wonderfully? Now, Junior and I have no thoughts of retiring. My more than 50 years in Jehovah's service has passed so fast that it seems just like yesterday that I started. And I know that when the new world arrives, the time in which we are now living will seem to have passed just as quickly.
—Revelation 21:3-5; 22:20.



WHY IT'S CALLED THE Big Island

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN HAWAII

WHEN people think of the Hawaiian Islands, what comes to their mind? Perhaps white sandy beaches, pristine waters, swaying coconut palm trees, and warm nights on lanais lit by romantic tiki torches. Throw in a Polynesian luau replete with fresh pineapple, poi, lomilomi salmon and, of course, kalua pig, and the picture is nearly complete. Who could want more?

Well, on Hawaii many enjoy more than that, much more! To begin with, the island of Hawaii is called the Big Island because you could take the other major islands of the Hawaiian Islands—Oahu, Maui, and Kauai—and easily fit them all into the Big Island! This amazing island covers over 4,028 square miles and is still growing. But more about that later.

Location and Climate

Since it is the most southerly island, the Big Island enjoys a mild climate. The average daytime temperatures in the coastal resort areas vary from the mid-80's in the summer (May to October) to the low 70's in the winter (November to April), and nighttime lows of between 59 and 64 degrees Fahrenheit are the norm. Usually, the Kona district, on the

leeward side of the island, is more sunny, and the Hilo area, on the windward side, is much more rainy.

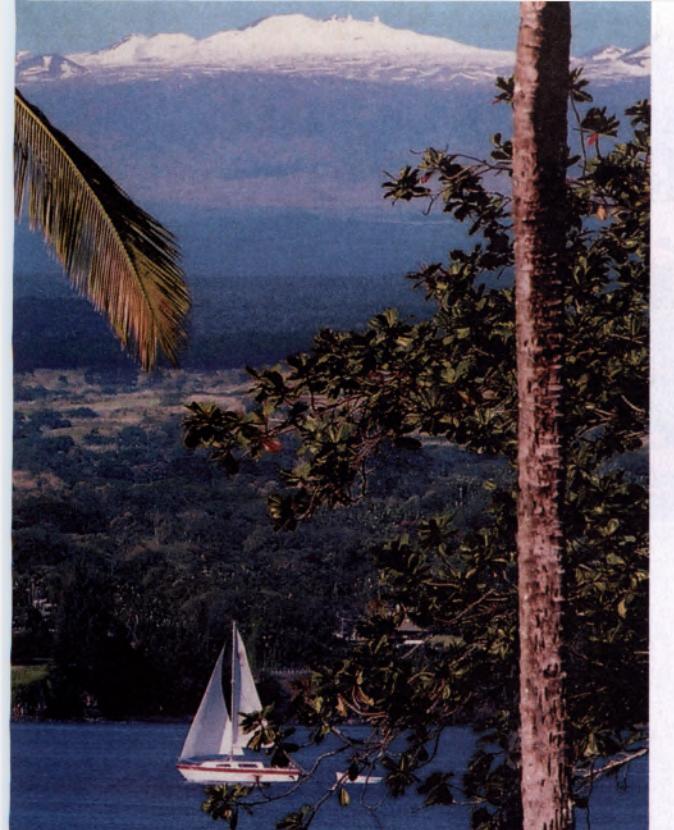
The tropical climate and rich volcanic soil allow for the growth of an abundance of fruits and vegetables. Delicious mangoes, papayas, lychees, and other exotic fruits abound, along with beautiful orchids and anthuriums. Macadamia nut trees and coffee plants flourish. Kona coffee is world famous. Coffee distributors from all over flock to the annual Kona Coffee Festival to taste it and to place orders.

The Big Island has a wide variety of climatic zones, including rain forest, desert, and tundra. The rain forests are located on the eastern, rainy part of the island. Many exotic birds are found there, along with tree ferns and various species of wild orchids. Rainfall averages from about 10 inches annually in the Kona-Kohala district to more than 100 inches annually in the Hilo area.

Kilauea—An Active yet Tame Volcano

There are five distinct volcanoes on the island—Mauna Loa, Mauna Kea, Kilauea, Kohala, and Hualalai. The name Kilauea lit-





erally means "Much Spewing." In 1979, Kilauea reawakened in a spectacular eruption. Since 1983 its red-hot lava flow has been almost continuous. It has devastated three coastal towns but has created hundreds of acres of new land.

When the lava reaches the ocean with a mighty roar and hiss, it creates huge plumes of steam and smoke as well as

U.S. Geological Survey/
Photo by T.J. Takahashi ▲

◀ Mauna Kea in the background

clouds and new black-sand beaches. Kilauea can usually be viewed close-up with safety, so it has sometimes been referred to as the world's only "drive-in volcano."

The dormant volcano Mauna Kea, at 13,796 feet, is the island's tallest mountain, just topping Mauna Loa, which rises 13,679 feet. However, if measured from its base on the seabed, Mauna Kea is the tallest mountain in the world, rising over 30,000 feet from the ocean floor. On the other hand, Mauna Loa enjoys the distinction of being the most massive mountain in the world, with a mass of some 10,000 cubic miles!

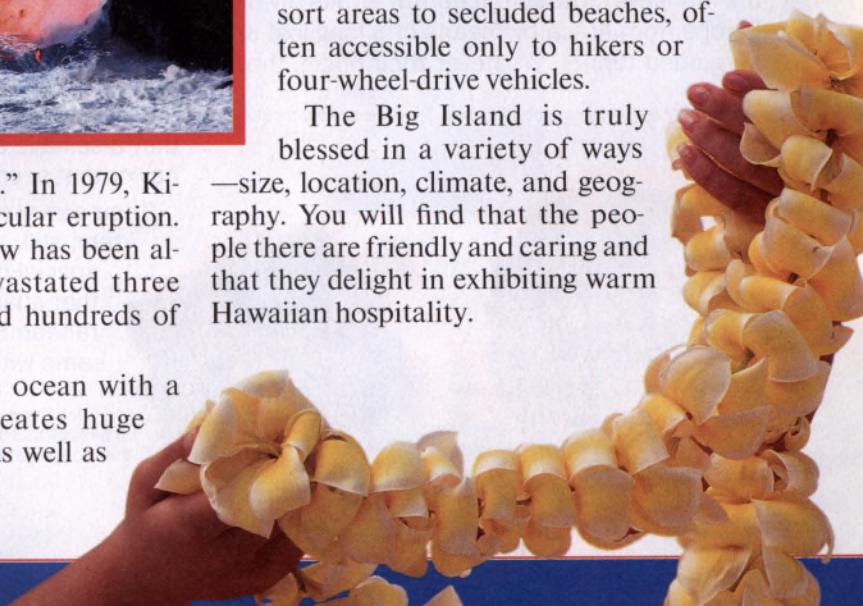
A Variety of Attractions

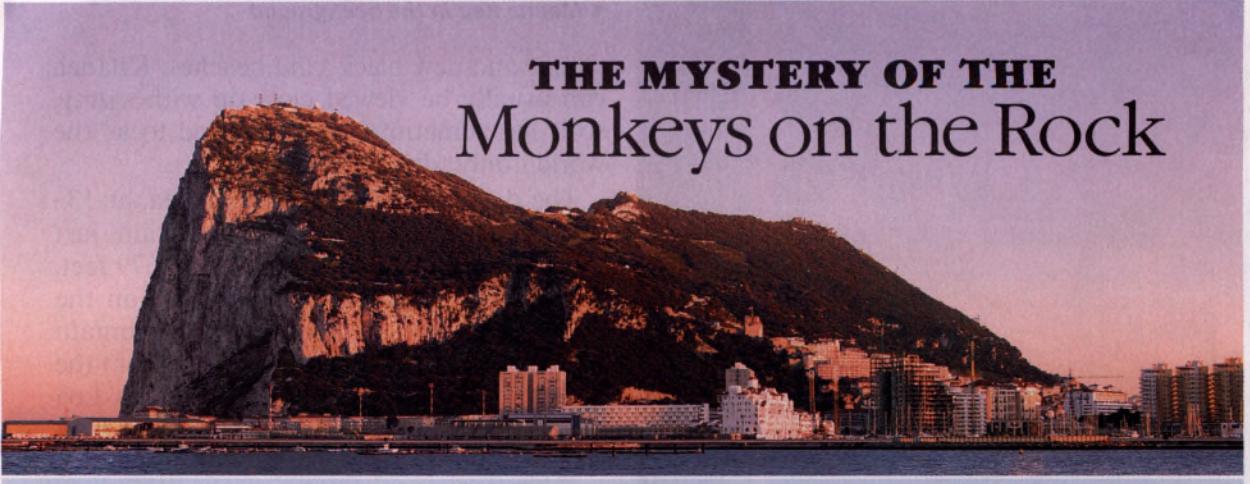
During winter, snow often falls on Mauna Kea, so it lives up to its nickname the White Mountain. Some residents ski there, although the rocky slopes make that activity precarious. At present, 13 of the most powerful telescopes in the world, representing some

11 different countries, are clustered at the summit in the Mauna Kea Science Reserve.

Along the coastal areas of the Big Island, recreational activities abound. Water sports can be enjoyed all year long because the air and ocean temperatures remain warm. The beaches range from the highly rated white sands of resort areas to secluded beaches, often accessible only to hikers or four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The Big Island is truly blessed in a variety of ways—size, location, climate, and geography. You will find that the people there are friendly and caring and that they delight in exhibiting warm Hawaiian hospitality.





THE MYSTERY OF THE Monkeys on the Rock

WHEN you think of monkeys, you probably think of the Tropics. Few species of monkeys venture into temperate lands. Nevertheless, there are one or two notable exceptions.

In the high Atlas Mountains of North Africa, where snowfall is common during the winter, small groups of Barbary apes roam through forests of cedar and oak.* One isolated group of these monkeys can be found 200 miles to the north, marooned on the Rock of Gibraltar, at the southernmost tip of Europe.

How do naturalists explain this mystery? Some believe that the monkeys colonized other areas of Europe in the distant past and that those of Gibraltar are the only surviving group. Others think that Arabic or British colonizers brought them to the Rock. Legend has it that the monkeys crossed the narrow straits dividing Europe from Africa by means of a long-lost underground tunnel. Whatever their origin, they

are now the only free-range monkeys found in Europe.

The Barbary apes inhabit the pine woods that cover the upper part of the Rock. Although they number only a hundred or so, they have become "the peninsula's most famous residents," according to the International Primate Protection League.*

Since seven million tourists visit Gibraltar every year, the mischievous monkeys have an ample food supply. Although they forage for wild plants, they have become adept at begging—and occasionally stealing—food from visitors. Local authorities also provide the monkeys with fruit and vegetables.

Apart from feeding, the monkeys spend 20 percent of their day grooming each other. Both male and female monkeys care for and play with the young ones. They live in close-knit groups, where stress sometimes leads to confrontation. While the older monkeys use threats and screams to chase away the younger ones, they also have an unusual tooth-chattering behavior that seems to calm them down.

Their arrival on Gibraltar may remain a mystery; still, these sociable monkeys add a special charm to the limestone headland that guards the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea. Gibraltar would not be the same without them.

* Barbary apes are not actually apes. They are tailless monkeys.



* Japanese macaques, their cousins, have also become a famous tourist attraction at the hot springs in Japan where they congregate in winter.

What's so bad about swearing?

"I wanted to blend in with my schoolmates. I think that's why I picked up the habit of swearing."

—Melanie.*

"I didn't think swearing was such a big deal. I was around it all the time—both at school and at home." —David.

WHY is it often viewed as normal when adults swear, or use profanity, but when young people do it, it's considered shocking? Does a person's age determine whether it's okay to curse? Since so many people use foul language—and there seems to be a double standard when it comes to age—you might well ask, "What's so bad about swearing?"

Bad-Language Brainwash

There's no doubt that swearing is widespread. In fact, some youths would say that if they could have a dollar for every vulgar word they heard at school, they'd never have to work and their parents could retire. "In casual conversation," says 15-year-old Eve, "my schoolmates seem to swear several times in each sentence. When you hear that kind of



talk all day, it's hard to keep from joining the crowd."

Are you, like Eve, surrounded by swearing? Have you picked up the habit yourself?* If so, take a moment to examine just what motivates you to swear. Once you identify that, you'll be in a better position to eliminate the habit.

With this in mind, try answering the following questions.

In most cases, why do you swear?

- To express anger or frustration
- To get attention
- To fit in with peers
- To appear tough
- To challenge authority
- Other

* Christians have strong reason to avoid foul language, for the Bible says: "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth." "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt."—Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6.

* Names in this article have been changed.

In what circumstance are you most inclined to swear?

- At school
- At work
- In e-mails, instant messages, or text messages
- When by myself

How do you excuse your swearing?

- Peers do it
- Parents do it
- Teachers do it
- Entertainment is saturated with it
- It's no big deal—they're just words
- I only swear around people who aren't bothered by it
- Other

Why conquer this habit at all? Is swearing *really* that bad? Consider the following.

They're not just words. Jesus said: "Your words show what is in your heart." (Luke 6:45, *Contemporary English Version*) Note that what we say doesn't simply reflect the type of person *we would like to be*—it reflects the type of person *we already are*. Even if you use bad language simply because others do it, copying their example reveals that you "follow after the crowd" and that you're not your own person.—Exodus 23:2.

But that's not all. Language expert James V. O'Connor says: "People who swear often tend to be disagreeable, critical, cynical, angry, argumentative, and unhappy complainers." For example, those who curse whenever some-

You wouldn't abuse a valued gift. Why abuse the gift of speech?



thing goes wrong reflect the belief that everything must always go right. It's as if they just can't handle mistakes. On the other hand, O'Connor notes, those who don't swear "are often calm, . . . mature people who [can] deal with daily annoyances." Which type of person would *you* rather be?

Swearing hurts your reputation. Like most youths, you probably care about your appearance. You want to make a good impression. But did you know that how you speak can have a greater impact on others than how you look? The fact is, your speech can determine such things as

- Whom you will attract as friends.
- Whether you will be hired for a particular job or not.
- The amount of respect you will receive.

It's true—often the initial impression people form of us based on our appearance quickly fades when we start talking. Says O'Connor: "You have no way of knowing how many opportunities to make a new friend you might have squelched, or how often you alienated someone or lost a degree of respect through your lackadaisical use of foul language." The lesson? If your speech is vulgar, you're only hurting yourself.

Swearing shows disrespect for the Creator of speech. Suppose you gave your friend—as a gift—a shirt or a blouse. How would you feel if you saw your friend using that garment as a rag or a doormat? Think of how our Creator feels, then, when we misuse the gift of speech. Little wonder that God's Word states: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness."—Ephesians 4:31.

As you can see, there's good reason to stop swearing. If it's become a deeply ingrained habit, though, how can you overcome it?

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1
Week 2
Week 3
Week 4

First: See the need to change. You likely won't stop swearing until you understand how you will benefit from altering your speech. Which factors below would motivate *you* to stop swearing?

- Pleasing the Creator of speech
- Gaining greater respect from others
- Expanding my vocabulary
- Bettering myself as a person

Second: Figure out what's behind the swearing. Melanie says: "Swearing made me feel tougher in a way. I didn't want people pushing me around. I wanted to have the upper hand, to tell people off the way all my friends did."

What about you? Understanding why you swear is a key to determining how you will address the problem. For example, if you swear just because everyone else does it, you need to learn to build confidence in your *own* strengths. Taking proper pride in being your own person is a vital part of growing up—and a big help in eliminating the habit of swearing.

Third: Find alternate ways of expressing yourself. It's not just a matter of biting your tongue. Conquering the bad-language habit involves putting on "the new personality."

(Ephesians 4:22-24) This will help you to gain greater self-control and self-respect—as well as respect for others.

The following scriptures will help you to put on—and *keep* on—the new personality.

Colossians 3:2: "*Keep your minds fixed on the things above.*"

Application: Train your mind to value things that are upright. Your thoughts influence the way you speak.

Proverbs 13:20: "*He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly.*"

Application: The language used by your associates can rub off on you.

Psalm 19:14: "*Let the sayings of my mouth and the meditation of my heart become pleasurable before you, O Jehovah.*"

Application: Jehovah notices how we use the gift of speech.

Still need help? Why not use the chart above to track your progress by noting how many times you used a bad word? You may be surprised at how quickly you improve your vocabulary!

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site
www.watchtower.org/ype

TO THINK ABOUT

How can swearing affect

- the kind of friends you will attract?
- whether you will be hired for a job?
- the way you will be viewed by others?



Ancient Customs

IN TODAY'S MEXICO

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN MEXICO

EARLY religious customs and beliefs persist alongside the use of cell phones and the Internet in today's Mexico. Over the centuries some customs of the Indians were mixed with Roman Catholicism. In fact, those customs still characterize the worship of Mexican Catholics.

Every year, for example, many people in Mexico go to cemeteries on November 2 to commemorate All Souls' Day, also called the Day of the Dead. Flowers, food, and alcoholic beverages may be left there for deceased loved ones. Some even arrange for musical groups to play the songs their loved one enjoyed listening to. Many Catholics also build an altar in their home and may place a photograph of the dead loved one on it.

The *Enciclopedia de México* notes that certain practices in connection with the celebration of the dead seem "to preserve elements of the Indian ceremonies of the months *ochpaniztli* and *teotleco*, during which *cempasúchil* flowers and corn tamales were offered to the

manes [souls of the dead] at a time of the year in which the harvest had just been gathered—at the end of October and the beginning of November." As the encyclopedia notes, some of the customs reflect similar festivities held during pre-Hispanic times, which included a certain carnivallike spirit.

Religious Veneration

December 12 is a holiday for Mexican Catholics. On that date thousands of pilgrims from other states in Mexico converge on the church of the Virgin of Guadalupe located on the side of Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City. Many walk for days, praying along the way to the Virgin. Upon arrival they customarily enter the church on their knees (above) and offer up roses.

Images of the Virgin of Guadalupe are also found today in homes and apartment buildings as well as in bus stations and other public areas. The Virgin of Guadalupe has been given the titles "Mother of God" and "Little Dark-Skinned One of Tepeyac." Since the 16th century, believers have often attributed acts of healing and other miracles to her.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Are We Living in the Last Days?
- Air Traffic Control
—How Does It Keep You Safe?
- Why Don't My Parents Trust Me?

Roots of the Devotion

The veneration of the feminine divinity, as well as other features of this holiday, date back to the worship of the Aztec god-mother Cihuacóatl, also called Tonantzin, meaning "Our Little Mother." The work *Méjico a*

Pilgrims arriving at the church of the Virgin of Guadalupe



braided hair and wore a completely white dress. Her temple had an entrance so low that it was possible to enter only on one's knees. Once inside, the worshipper would see her image surrounded by idols, making her appear to be "the mother . . . of the gods."

The festival to Cihuacóatl included human sacrifices, dancing, and a parade of warriors decked out "with roses in their hands, around their necks, and on their heads." These gifts were left at the top of the temple as offerings to Huitzilopochtli. Some Indians, including many from Guatemala, would walk over a thousand miles to the festival of Cihuacóatl.

Do Roots Matter?

The worship of the Catholic image of the Virgin of Guadalupe clearly has its roots in the rites of people who did not worship the true God of the Bible. (Psalm 83:18) Should this make any difference? Do the origins of a form of worship really matter?

The apostle Paul gave wise counsel in this regard, saying: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. . . . What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?" Paul also said: "Make sure of all things; hold fast to what is fine."—2 Corinthians 6:14, 15; 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

Such encouragement is also appropriate today. We should reflect on our worship of God and ask ourselves: 'Does my form of worship closely adhere to the teachings of God's Word, the Bible? Or are aspects of it rooted in a form of worship carried on by those who serve false gods?' A person who desires to please Jehovah, the true God, will wisely seek the answers to such questions.



Musicians at the graves on November 2

través de los siglos (Mexico Throughout the Centuries) says that this deity, as well as her son Huitzilopochtli, was brought by the early Aztecs to Tenochtitlán—formerly the capital of the Aztec Empire, now Mexico City.

The temple to Cihuacóatl, located on Tepeyac Hill, was destroyed by the Spaniards. Here, according to tradition, less than 40 years after Columbus set foot on the continent, the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to a native Indian, Juan Diego. She reputedly asked that a sanctuary be built for her on the site.

Cihuacóatl was held in great veneration by the Aztecs. Reportedly, she had long, un-

IN THE LAND OF Thermal Baths

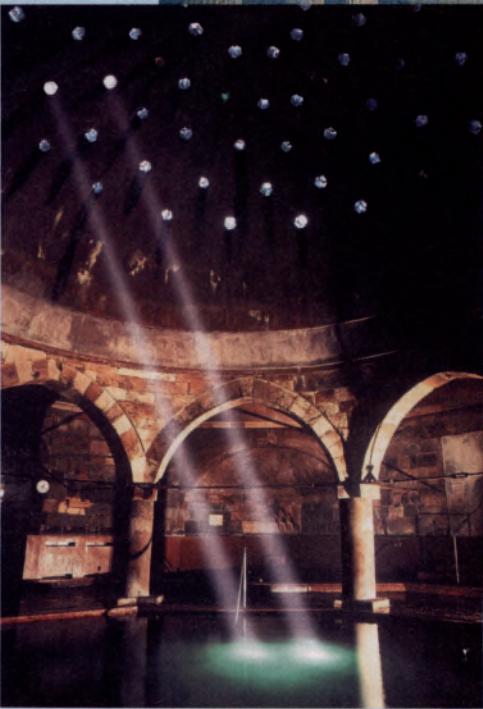
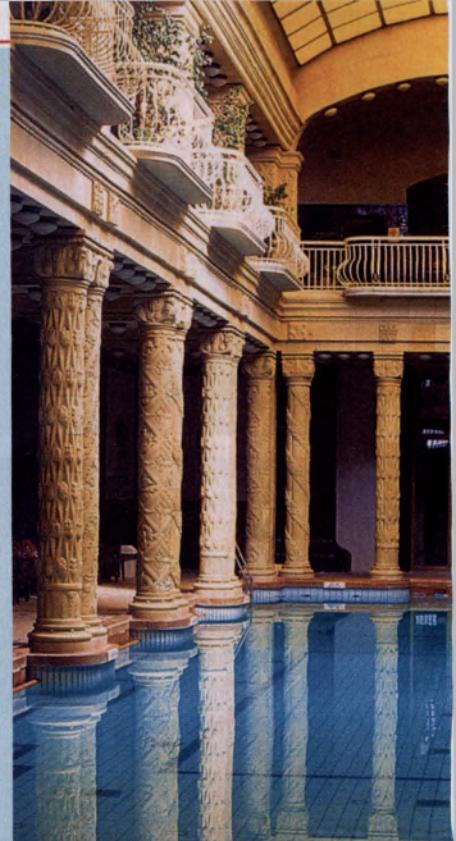
MORE than 2,000 years ago, the Celts founded a settlement in the vicinity of several mineral springs and gave it the name Ak-Ink, meaning "Ample Water." Today, Ak-Ink is known as Budapest—Hungary's capital and one of the oldest cities in Europe. Early settlers enjoyed occasional dips in the warm-water springs, which were refreshing and eased aches and pains.

In the first century C.E., this part of Europe came under Roman rule. The Romans enlarged the settlement and built a military camp there, which they called Aquincum. The name is believed to derive either from the Celtic word for water or from the Latin expression *aqua quinque*, meaning "five waters." The Romans built aqueducts, sewage systems, and baths, both private and public. So Budapest's baths have a long history.

It was centuries after the Roman Empire went into decline that the baths began to flourish again. In the 15th century, contemporary writers praised the thermal baths close to Hungary's capital, thus boosting the city's popularity. King Matthias Corvinus, who ruled Hungary from 1458 to 1490, is said to have connected his favorite spa, the Rácz Bath, to the royal castle by a covered passage. The spa was thus accessible whatever the weather.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Turks occupied much of Hungary, including its capital. They built steam baths and hot-water baths, both of which play an important role in Islamic ceremonial bathing and are an essential part of Turkish social life. The Turks' magnificent baths were dome-covered pools surrounded by steps. The water was about shoulder high. Tubs and resting places surrounded the pools and were used alternately by men and women. Some of those baths are still in use.

All photos: Courtesy of Tourism Office of Budapest



The Rudas Baths, built by the Turks





◀ A thermal bath in the Gellért Hotel

In 1673 a travelogue described baths in the area now known as Budapest as being among Europe's finest because of "their abundant thermal springs and curative powers, as well as the size of the buildings for bathing and their beauty." In the 19th century, spa culture was enriched when the Finnish steam bath, or sauna, became better known. In time, saunas, steam rooms, and cold-water pools were added to Budapest's baths.

The Area's Geology

Some 18 million gallons of water a day gushes from Budapest's 123 hot springs and 400 bitter-water springs. What explains this abundance? The answer lies in the area's geology.

The Danube River, which flows through Budapest, separates the hills of Buda, located on its west bank, from the flat, low plains of Pest, located on its east bank. At some time in the distant past, the sea covered this area and left deposits of limestone and dolomite. These rocks were covered by layers of clay, marlstone, sand, and coal.

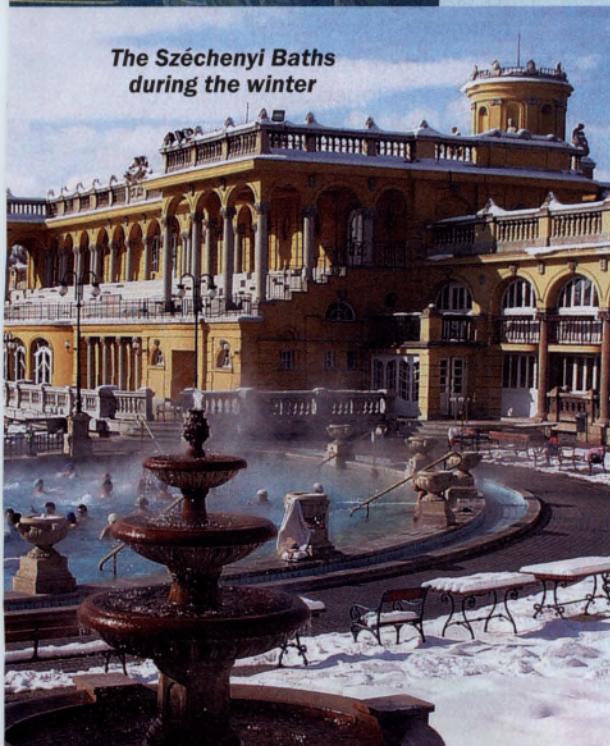
Cracks in the earth's surface allow precipitation to penetrate deep into the ground, where hot mineral-rich rocks heat the waters. Steaming and under pressure, the waters then gush back to the surface, either along cracks or through wells.

This geological situation is found not only in Budapest but also throughout Hungary. Hence, many localities in the country boast mineral-rich waters and beautiful baths, which some believe have medicinal and healing properties.*

Hot springs have long been appreciated in many parts of the world. Their discovery in the wilderness of Seir, between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, was even remarked on in the times of Bible patriarchs.—Genesis 36:24.

Man still has much to learn about the complexities of the planet on which we live. Just how did God lay the foundations of the earth and make all the wondrous things in it? Pondering such questions moves God-fearing people to stand in awe at the Creator's unfathomable wisdom.—Job 38:4-6; Romans 1:20.

* Awake! does not endorse any particular form of medical treatment.



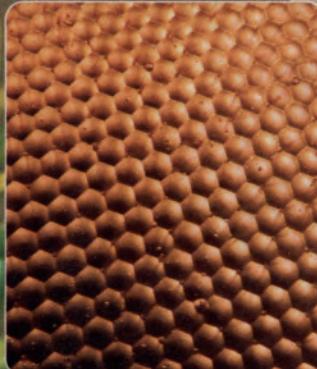
A large, semi-transparent background image of a bee flying towards the viewer, set against a dark brown background. The bee is positioned centrally, with its wings partially spread. In the upper left corner, there are yellow and pink flowers, and in the lower right corner, there are green pine needles.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

The Compound Eye



Background: © Stephen Dalton/Photo Researchers, Inc.; close-up: © Raul Gonzalez Perez/Photo Researchers, Inc.



Magnified view of a section of a honeybee's compound eye

■ "Layer upon layer of perfectly ordered structures." That is how Professor Luke Lee of the University of California, U.S.A., describes the compound eye of many insects.

Consider: The compound eye of certain insects, such as the honeybee and the dragonfly, is made up of multiple optical units, each of which points in a different direction. The images produced by the individual lenses combine to create a wide mosaic view that is superb at detecting movement.

Scientists are exploring ways to mimic the compound eye of insects in order to make high-speed motion detectors and ultrathin multi-directional cameras. These could have a variety of applications. One use would be medical—for example, to peer inside the stomach. This proposed medical device is described as a "tiny system" that can be swallowed by the patient. Once inside the stomach, the device would gather information through its compound eye and then communicate it wirelessly.

A team of bioengineers has already developed an artificial compound eye with more than 8,500 lenses that fit into a space no larger than a pinhead. This technology, however, pales in significance when compared with the compound eye found in the insect world. The dragonfly, for instance, has about 30,000 optical units in each eye!

Ask yourself: 'Did this optical marvel, the multifaceted eye of insects, come about by chance? Or was it designed?'

Headaches for 64 Years

A Chinese woman finally discovered the cause of the “relentless headaches” that had plagued her for more than 60 years, when doctors removed a three-centimeter-long bullet from her head. During the Japanese invasion of a village in Xinyi County in September 1943, the woman, who was then 13, sustained a head injury. No one imagined the cause of her problem. When the headaches became more frequent, an X-ray revealed the bullet, says the Xinhua News Agency. The woman, now 77, is reported to be “in good condition.”

Long-Lived Whale

When indigenous Alaskan hunters killed a bowhead whale in 2007, they found lodged in it the point and fragments of an old harpoon. These were identified as “parts of an exploding lance made in New Bedford [Massachusetts, U.S.A.] in the late 1800s,” says *The Boston Globe*. This type of lance soon became obsolete, which led historians at the New Bedford Whaling Museum to surmise that the whale was harpooned “sometime between 1885 and 1895.” It must thus have been at least 115 years old when it died. This find, says the *Globe*, provides “more evidence for [the] long-held belief that the bowhead whale is one of the longest living mammals on earth, surviving for up to 150 years.”

■ In a survey in the United States, “twenty-nine percent of men reported having 15 or more female sexual partners in a lifetime compared with 9% of women who reported having 15 or more male sexual partners in a lifetime.”

—CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, U.S.A.

■ In Greece, “62 percent of children up to 16 years of age admit that they have downloaded pornographic material on their mobile phones.”—*ELEFTHEROTYPIA*, GREECE.

■ In Britain, 82 percent of the people polled see “religion as a cause of division and tension.”—*THE GUARDIAN*, BRITAIN.

Fossilized Rain Forest

Geologists have identified an enormous underground fossilized rain forest made up of a spectacular mix of extinct plants, some of which grew to a height of more than 130 feet. The unique forest is located in the passageways of a coal mine in Illinois, U.S.A. Scientists believe that the forest was plunged below the earth’s surface by a catastrophic earthquake. “It’s pretty wild,” says Bill DiMichele, lead researcher of the team that reported the find. “We can reconstruct the forest more or less as if we were walking through it.”

Digging for Vintage Wine

An increasing number of visitors are traveling to Macedonia, a former republic of Yugoslavia, “to dig up vintage wine left behind . . . by allied troops during World War I,” reports the newspaper *Kathimerini—English Edition*. Equipped with maps, the visitors, mostly from France, excavate abandoned military storage sites. By now, any wine still there is at least 90 years old, and according to the newspaper, “a well-conserved bottle could fetch . . . up to 2,000 euros (2,675 dollars).” Locals who have unearthed wine and cognac say that “they have never tasted anything better.”



"When Night Fell During the Day"

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BENIN

The total eclipse
of March 29,
2006

WOw! Millions Stunned by Solar Eclipse," proclaimed Ghana's *Daily Graphic* headlines the day after the total solar eclipse on March 29, 2006. The eclipse, first sighted on the eastern tip of Brazil, swept across the Atlantic at approximately 1,000 miles an hour, reaching the coastal countries of Ghana, Togo, and Benin beginning at about 8:00 a.m. What could West Africa expect?

The last total eclipse over Ghana was in 1947. Theodore, then 27 years of age, recalls: "Many at that time had never experienced an eclipse, so they did not know exactly what was happening. Because of this, people described the event as 'when night fell during the day.'"

Public-Awareness Campaigns

Authorities initiated extensive public-awareness campaigns to warn of the dangers involved in gazing at the sun during the

Special protective glasses permitted observers to view the eclipse firsthand

eclipse. Flashy posters in Togo admonished: "Be careful of your eyes! You are at risk of losing your eyesight!"

Government officials stressed two options. First, stay indoors and watch the spectacle on television. Second, if outdoors, wear specially made protective glasses. Millions were glued to television and computer screens to witness the impressive images. However, monitors could never capture the excitement-sparked atmosphere generated by curiosity and commotion just prior to and during the eclipse. Let us relive it.

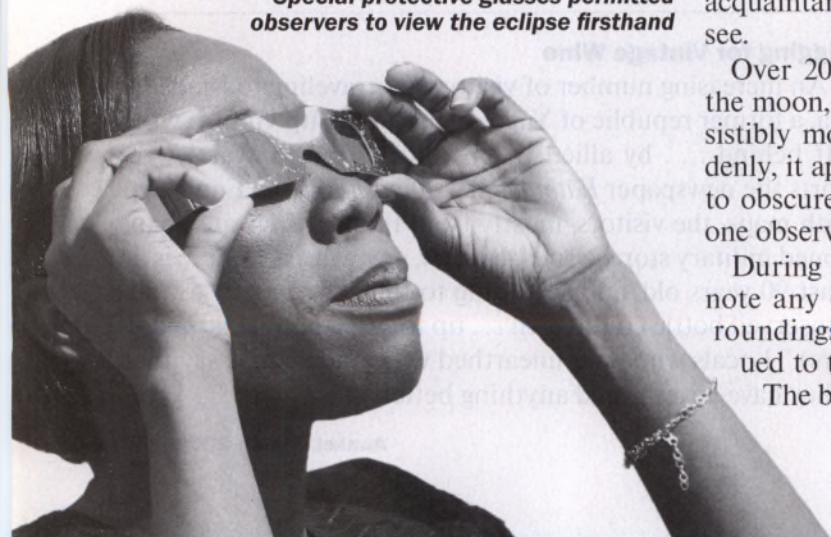
Anticipation Mounts

From all appearances it seemed like just another typical West African morning—bright sun and clear skies. Was the eclipse really going to happen? As their watches ticked toward the announced debut, the observers outdoors donned their glasses and gazed skyward. Some were on their cell phones, asking acquaintances in other areas what they could see.

Over 200,000 miles above the observers, the moon, although unseen at first, was irresistibly moving toward its rendezvous. Suddenly, it appeared as a dark sliver, beginning to obscure the sun. Excitement mounted as one observer after another spotted it.

During the first hour, observers did not note any changes in their immediate surroundings. However, as the moon continued to triumph, the atmosphere changed.

The blue sky began to fade. The temper-



A F R I C A

GHANA
TOGO
BENIN

The path of the eclipse

ature sank. Light-sensitive street and security lights brightened as the morning darkened. Streets emptied. Shops closed. Birds ceased chirping, and animals sought shelter and bedded down. Darkness was taking complete control. Then totality was reached, and silence prevailed.

Totality Was Unforgettable

Stars began to twinkle. The sun's glorious corona (the outer part of the sun's atmosphere) appeared as a pearl-white halo around the black moon. Gleaming points of light, called Baily's Beads,* blazed on the moon's perimeter as the sun peeked through valleys and irregularities on the lunar surface. The diamond-ring effect glowed. A spectacle of pink and rose colors flashed into the chromosphere (a layer beneath the corona). "This was the most stupendous spectacle I have ever seen—a marvel of beauty," exclaimed one observer.

Totality lasted approximately three minutes. Then the sun began to make its comeback. Many spectators cheered it on. The sky brightened, and the stars disappeared. The eerie atmosphere lifted like a morning mist.

The moon is "a faithful witness in the skies." Thus, eclipses can be calculated centuries in advance. (Psalm 89:37) West Africa had to wait almost 60 years to see this one. The next one visible from West Africa is due during the year 2081. Perhaps you will have the opportunity to observe an unforgettable eclipse in your area much sooner.

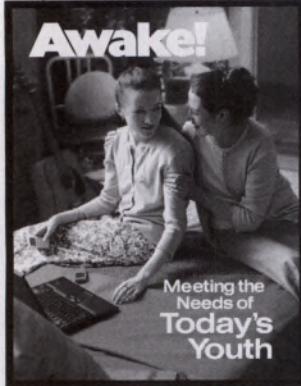
A Solar Eclipse at the Time of Jesus' Death?

Mark 15:33 states: "When it became the sixth hour a darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour." This three-hour darkness, from about noon until 3:00 p.m., was miraculous. It could not have been a solar eclipse. First, the longest possible solar eclipse at any one point on the earth lasts about seven and a half minutes. Second, Jesus died on the 14th day of the lunar month of Nisan. The first day of Nisan is fixed by the appearance of the new moon, at which time the moon is located between the earth and the sun and can cause an eclipse. By the time the 14th day of Nisan arrives, the moon has already completed half of its orbit. The earth is then situated between the sun and the moon, which, rather than blocking the light from the sun, reflects it fully. Thus, we see a full moon, a perfect setting to observe the Memorial of Jesus' death.

Nisan 14 always occurs on or near the full moon



* Named for British astronomer Francis Baily, who first recorded their appearance during an eclipse in 1836.



Helping Youths Meet the Challenge (March 2007) As an 18-year-old, I was able to relate to many of the points made regarding cell-phone and Internet usage. I engaged in meeting strangers online in social networks. I soon fell into the trap that those bad associates helped to set. My spirituality began to weaken almost immediately. I even agreed to meet several of the individuals in person. Tragically, this led to immoral conduct. I pray that this article will help others to avoid the pain and anguish that I live with. The sleepless nights and recurring images make each day difficult, but I am taking a firm stand against Satan.

B. R., United States

Why Do I Faint? (April 2007) It was encouraging to learn that I am not the only one suffering from fainting. This article made me feel as if Jehovah were speaking directly to me, telling me, "I see what is happening to you, so here I'm giving you some encouragement."

I. R., Madagascar

Something More Lasting Than Art

(April 2007) I cannot express how thankful I am for this article. For six years I managed two successful portrait studios. I loved my job and the creative outlet it provided. I came to realize, though, that as my success and reputation at work grew, my service to Jehovah seemed to shrink. I was pouring so much of myself into my art that it left little time for anything else. I knew something needed to change. So I left my job and became more involved in my worship. The feeling of fulfillment and joy I got from creating beautiful portraits simply does not compare with the joy I receive in the Christian ministry.

A. P., United States

Young People Ask . . . Is This Person

Right for Me? (May 2007) I recently found myself developing feelings for someone who I thought would make a good match for

me. However, after reading the article, I discovered that the qualities I liked about him were not qualities that are truly important. The article helped me to realize that spiritual qualities and the way a potential mate treats others are of primary importance. I thank Jehovah for articles like this one, which give protection and guidance to us young ones.

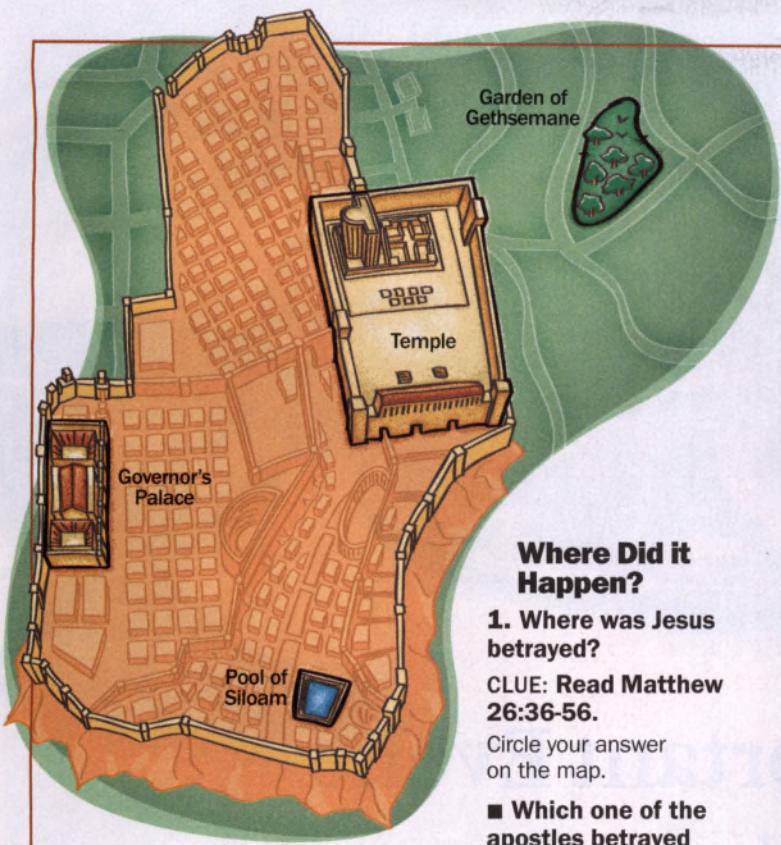
E. P., United States

Meet the People of East Timor

(May 2007) I read this article with great interest. I first heard of this country when the news reported on riots there. Since then I had been concerned as to how the people of East Timor were getting on and how the witnessing activity of Jehovah's Witnesses there was affected. I was surprised by the spirit of these people, who don't give in to cruel circumstances but vigorously continue on with life. I am going to remember the indomitable spirit of the people of East Timor and the big smiles of Jacob and his family.

Y. M., Japan

- 1. The Garden of Gethsemane. ■ Judas. ■ Peter.
- 2. Noah.—Luke 3:36. 3. Shem.—Luke 3:36. 4. Peleg.—Luke 3:35.



FOR DISCUSSION:
How did Jesus respond to his follower's attempt to defend him with a weapon? What lesson do you learn from what Jesus said to his disciples?

Who Is Part of Jesus' Family Tree?

Consider the clues. Look up the scriptures. Then write the correct names in the spaces provided.

- 2
CLUE: I was known as "a preacher of righteousness."
Read 2 Peter 2:5.



■ Answers on page 30

From This Issue

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

- PAGE 3** What did Jesus say he was born to do?
John 18:_____

- PAGES 5-6** What did Paul say we should be united in?
1 Corinthians 1:_____

- PAGE 11** When people know the truth about superstitions, what can happen?
John 8:_____

- PAGE 20** What do your words show? Luke 6:_____



Children's Picture Search

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

- 3
CLUE: I am the son of Noah who is always listed first.
Read Genesis 6:10.

- 4
CLUE: In my day "the earth was divided."
Read Genesis 10:25.



The Most Important Event in History

The event was the death of Jesus Christ. Why so?

It served to vindicate God's righteousness, proving that a human could keep perfect integrity to God.

It opened to mankind the prospect of attaining everlasting life in an earthly Paradise.

Jesus himself instituted the memorial of his death on the night before he died. It was a simple ceremony. During it, Jesus told his disciples: "Keep do-

ing this in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19, 20.

Will you remember?

Jehovah's Witnesses invite you to join them in observing this most important event in history. This year the date is **Saturday, March 22**, after sundown. Please check at your local Kingdom Hall for the exact time and place. No collections will be taken, and visitors are welcomed to listen to an instructive talk and observe the simple proceedings.