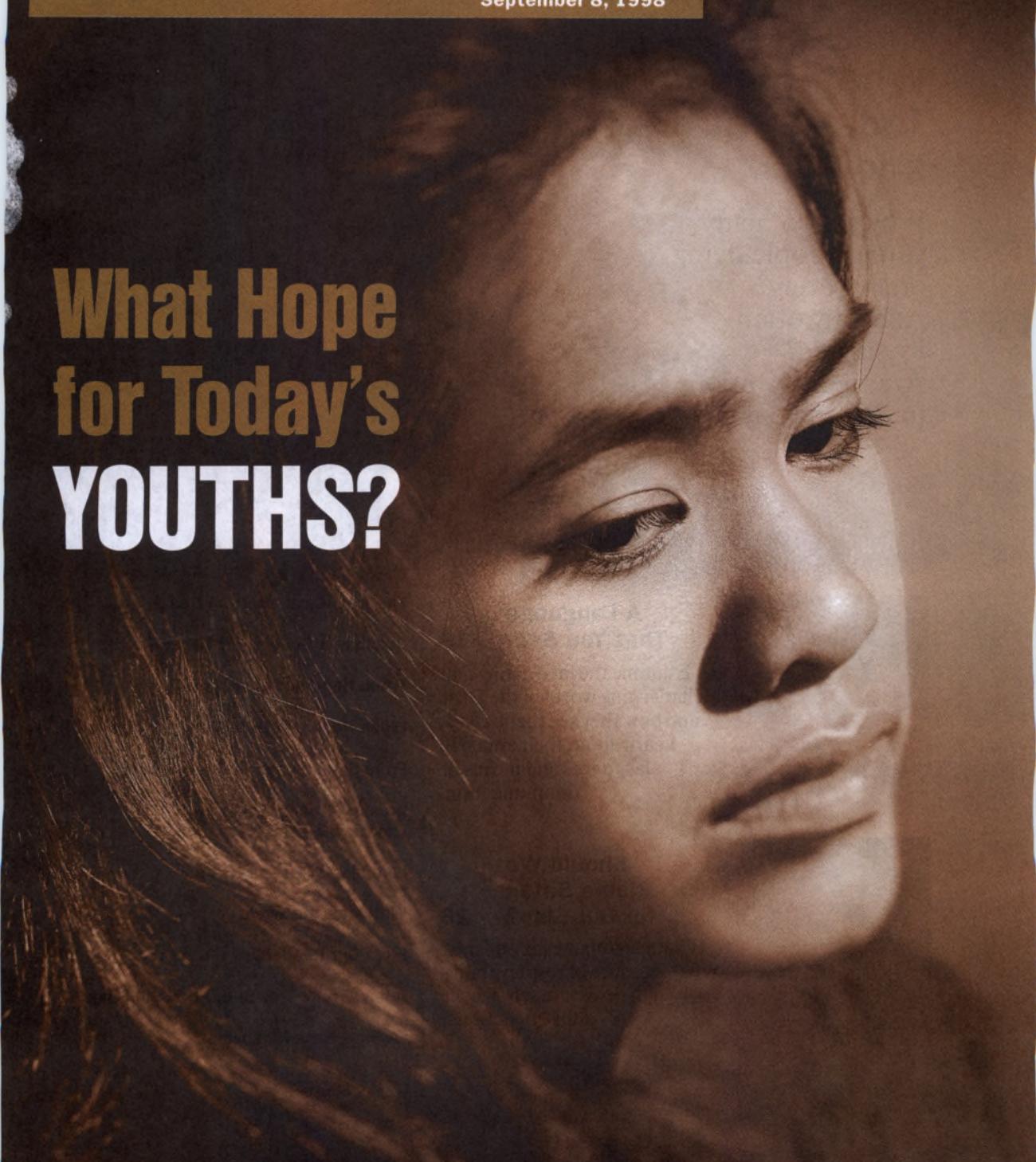


Awake!

September 8, 1998

What Hope for Today's YOUTHS?



Average Printing 19,617,000
Published in 81 Languages

What Hope for Today's Youths?

3-10

Why are so many young people dying prematurely?
And why often by suicide?
Are there solutions to this tragedy?



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Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

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THE TRAGEDY OF YOUTHFUL DEATHS

"I just have this feeling that our generation is dying away."

—Johanna P., 18-year-old university freshman, Connecticut, U.S.A.

A GRISLY sight met the eyes of police officers on a farm just outside Hobart, capital city of Tasmania, Australia's island state. Inside the house were four girls ranging in age from 10 to 18. All were dead, killed by their father, who lay nearby, with a mortal rifle-shot wound to his head. He had severed his right hand with an ax. This murder-suicide rocked the entire population of Tasmania. And it left a puzzling question in people's minds—Why? Why those four innocent girls?

Belgium is still reeling in the aftermath of the sexual abuse of six girls and the murder of four of them by a rapist who was out on parole. And the same question—Why? In Argentina some mothers believe that 30,000 people, many of them their sons and daughters, disappeared in what is now known as the dirty war.* Some of these unfortunates were tortured, drugged, and then flown out to sea and dumped into the ocean from a plane. Many of them were thrown out while still alive. Why did they have to die? Their mothers are still waiting for answers.

In 1955 the World Congress of Mothers denounced the futility of war and declared

that the congress is "above all a great cry, a cry of warning from all women struggling to protect their children, big and small, from the evils brought by war and the preparations for war." Ironically, the number of youths who have died in bloody conflicts since that congress continues to mount up worldwide—a huge loss from mankind's genetic pool.

Long History of Youthful Deaths

The pages of history are saturated with the blood of young people. Even in our so-called enlightened 20th century, racial and tribal conflicts have made youths a prime target for slaughter. It seems that youths have to pay with their lives for the mistakes and ambitions of their elders.

In one African country, a band of religious teenage soldiers calling themselves the Lord's Resistance Army have been indoctrinated to believe that they are impervious to bullets, reports the journal *The New Republic*. No wonder the article is entitled "Teenage Wasteland"! Families bereft of sons and daughters—who were not bullet-proof after all—therefore rightly ask: Why did our youths have to die? What was the point of it all?

Added to all this misery and suffering is the suicide death toll among youths.

* The so-called dirty war took place during the rule of a military junta (1976-83) in which thousands of people suspected of subversion were killed. Other estimates of the number of victims give figures between 10,000 and 15,000.

SUICIDE —A SCOURGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

AS IF war, murder, and atrocities were not enough to devastate our youths, there is self-destruction in the form of youth suicide. Drug and alcohol abuse ravage the minds and bodies of youths, causing many deaths among young people. An increasingly familiar epitaph is that the victim OD'd—died of a drug overdose, either deliberately or accidentally.

The *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* of April 28, 1995, said that "suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents aged 15-19 years in the United States." Dr. J. J. Mann writes in *The Decade of the Brain*: "More than 30,000 [in 1995 the figure was 31,284] Americans commit suicide each year. Tragically, youth are commonly the victims . . . Ten times more than those 30,000 people attempt suicide, but survive. . . . Identifying patients who are at risk for suicide is a major clinical challenge because clinicians cannot easily distinguish between patients with major depression who will attempt suicide and those who will not."

Simon Sobo, chief of psychiatry at New Milford Hospital, Connecticut, U.S.A., observed: "There have been more suicide attempts this spring [1995] than I have seen in the 13 years I have been here." In the Unit-

ed States, thousands of teenagers attempt suicide each year. Every attempt is a cry for help and attention. Who will be there to lend support before it is too late?

A Worldwide Problem

The picture is not much different in many other parts of the world. In India, according to *India Today*, some 30,000 youths committed suicide during 1990. In Canada, Finland, France, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, and Thailand, suicide rates among young people have increased. A 1996 report from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) states that the highest youth suicide rates are in Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, Russia, and Slovenia.

Australia also has one of the world's highest youth suicide rates. In this country in 1995, 25 percent of all deaths among young males and 17 percent among young females were suicides, according to a report in *The Canberra Times* newspaper. The rate of "successful" suicides among Australian boys is some five times greater than among girls. A similar ratio is found in most countries.

Does this mean that boys are more likely to attempt suicide than girls? Not neces-

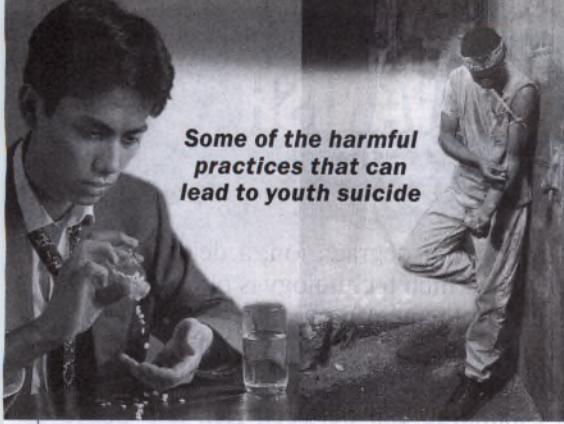
Awake!

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

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

Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, **Wallkill, NY 12589**. Printed in U.S.A.



Some of the harmful practices that can lead to youth suicide

sarily. Available data shows little difference between the sexes in occurrence of suicide attempts. However, "about four times as many young males as females commit suicide in the industrialized nations according to the latest figures from WHO [World Health Organization]."
—*The Progress of Nations*, published by UNICEF.

But even these horrific statistics may not tell the full extent of the problem. Statistics on youth suicide, couched in clinical and analytic terms, are surprisingly easy to read. However, often not appreciated or seen behind each cold statistic are the shattered families and the heartache, misery, pain, and despair of those left behind as they search for reasons.

So, can such tragedies as youth suicide be prevented? Some key factors have been identified and could prove helpful in avoiding this sad situation.

Motivations for Suicide

There are many theories about the motivations for suicide. "Suicide results from a person's reaction to a perceived overwhelming problem, such as social isolation, death of a loved one (especially a spouse), a broken home in childhood, serious physical illness, growing old, unemployment, financial problems, and drug abuse."—*The American Medical Association Encyclopedia of Medicine*.

According to sociologist Emile Durkheim, there are four basic types of suicide:

1. Egoistic suicide—This "is thought to stem from an individual's lack of integration into society. Largely left to themselves, victims of egoistic suicide are neither connected with, nor dependent on, their community." They tend to be loners.

2. Altruistic suicide—"The individual is overly integrated into a group so that he or she feels no sacrifice is too great." Examples given are Japanese kamikaze pilots in World War II and religious extremists who blow themselves up while killing their supposed enemies. Other examples would be those who have died by self-immolation in order to draw attention to a cause.

3. Anomic suicide—"The victim of anomic suicide is not capable of dealing with a crisis in a rational manner and chooses suicide as the solution to a problem. [This] occurs when the individual's accustomed relationship with society is suddenly and shockingly altered."

4. Fatalistic suicide—This is "thought to be caused by excessive societal regulation that fundamentally restricts an individual's freedom." Such victims "feel that they have no viable future."
—*Adolescent Suicide: Assessment and Intervention*, by Alan L. Berman and David A. Jobes.

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WHEN HOPE AND LOVE VANISH

A 17-YEAR-OLD Canadian girl wrote down her reasons for wanting to die. Among others, she listed: 'Feeling lonely and scared about my future; feeling really inferior to fellow workers; nuclear war; the ozone layer; I am really ugly, so I'll never get a husband and I'll end up being alone; I don't think there's really too much out there, so why wait around to discover it; it'll take the burden off everybody else; I'll never get hurt by anyone again.'

Could these be some of the reasons why young people are killing themselves? In Canada, "except for motor-vehicle accidents, suicide is now the most common cause of deaths among them."—*The Globe and Mail*.

Professor Riaz Hassan, of Flinders University of South Australia, states in his paper "Unlived Lives: Trends in Youth Suicide": "There are several sociological reasons which bear on the question and appear to have significantly influenced the increase in adolescent suicide. These are the high youth unemployment rate; changes in the Australian family; increasing drug use and abuse; increasing youth violence; mental health; and an increasing disjunction between 'theoretical freedom' and experiential autonomy." The paper further states that the results of several surveys have revealed a sense of pessimism about the future and suggest that "a large proportion of young people regard their future and that of the world with fear and trepidation. They see a world devastated by nuclear war and ravaged by pollution and

"A large proportion of young people regard their future and that of the world with fear and trepidation"

environmental degradation, a dehumanized society in which technology is out of control and unemployment rampant."

According to a Gallup poll of 16- to 24-year-olds, additional causes of suicide are the expanding gap between rich and poor, increasing numbers of single-parent households, the growing gun culture, child abuse, and a general "lack of faith in tomorrow."

Newsweek reports that in the United States, "the presence of firearms may be the most pivotal factor [in teenage suicide]. A study comparing adolescent suicide victims who had no apparent mental disorders with kids

Some Indicators of Suicide

- Problems sleeping, loss of appetite
- Isolation and withdrawal, accident proneness
- Running away from home
- Dramatic changes in appearance
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Agitation and aggression
- Talk about death; written messages of self-destruction; artwork depicting violence, especially against self
- Guilt feelings
- Hopelessness, anxiety, depression, crying spells
- Giving away personal possessions
- Shortened attention span
- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Self-criticism
- Sexual promiscuity
- Sudden drop in school performance, school attendance problems
- Cult or gang membership
- Euphoria after depression

Based on *Teens in Crisis* (American Association of School Administrators) and *Depression and Suicide in Children and Adolescents*, by Philip G. Patros and Tonia K. Shamoo

who didn't commit suicide found only one difference: a loaded gun in the house. So much for the idea that guns don't kill people." And millions of homes have loaded guns!

Fear and an uncaring society can quickly push vulnerable youths to the edge of suicide. Consider: The rate of violent crimes committed against 12- to 19-year-olds is more than double that of crimes against the population in general. Studies found that "young women from 14 to 24 are most likely to be assaulted," reported *Maclean's* magazine. "Women are most often attacked and murdered by the people who say they love them." The result? These and other fears "erode the confidence and sense of security of these girls." In one study, almost one third of rape survivors interviewed had considered suicide.

A New Zealand report offers another perspective on young suicide, stating: "The prevailing materialistic, worldly values that equate individual success with wealth, good looks, and power make many young people feel quite worthless and cast out by society." In addition, *The Futurist* says this: "[Youths] have a strong propensity for instant gratification, wanting it all and wanting it fast. Their favorite TV programs are soap operas. They would like their world to be filled with the same good-looking people, dressed in the latest fashions, with lots of money and prestige, and without having to work too hard." The sheer volume of such unrealistic, unfulfillable expectations appears to cause a measure of despair and may lead to suicide.

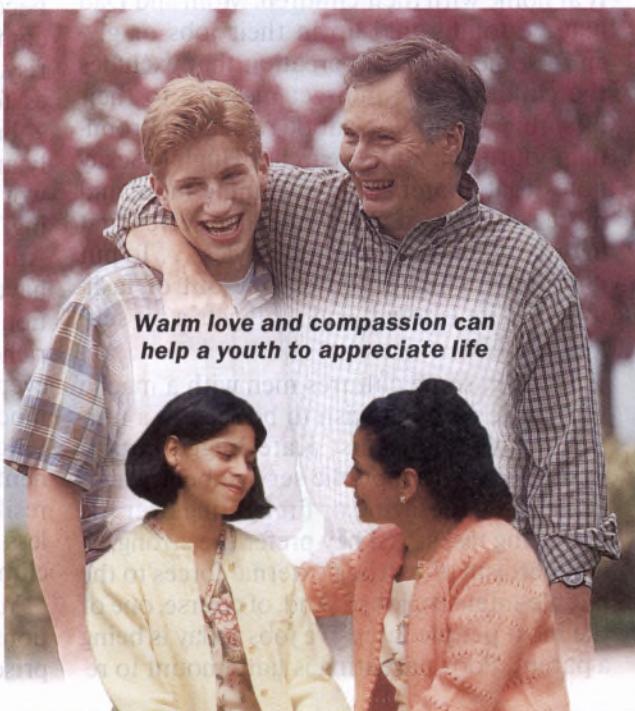
A Life-Saving Quality?

Shakespeare wrote: "Love comforteth like sunshine after rain." The Bible says: "Love never fails." (1 Cor-

"The opportunity to talk to a sympathetic, understanding listener is sometimes enough to prevent the despairing act"

Rinthians 13:8) In that quality there is a key to the problem of young people prone to suicide—their yearning for love and communication. *The American Medical Association Encyclopedia of Medicine* states: "Suicidal people usually feel desperately lonely, and the opportunity to talk to a sympathetic, understanding listener is sometimes enough to prevent the despairing act."

Youths often have an overwhelming need for love and a feeling of belonging. Satisfying this becomes harder as each day passes in a loveless and destructive world—a world in which they have little or no say. Parental rejection because of family breakup and divorce can be a contributing factor



Warm love and compassion can help a youth to appreciate life

Qualified Help Needed

The American Medical Association Encyclopedia of Medicine says that "more than 90 percent of suicides occur as the result of psychiatric illness." It lists such illnesses as severe depression (about 15 percent), schizophrenia (about 10 percent), alcohol dependence (about 7 percent), antisocial personality disorder (about 5 percent), and some form of neurosis (less than 5 percent). It counsels: "All suicide attempts should be treated seriously. Twenty to 30 percent of people who attempt suicide repeat their attempt within a year." Dr. Jan Fawcett writes: "More than 50 percent of suicides [in the United States] occur in individuals who have had no contact with a mental health professional." And another source says: "The most important aspect of treatment is for the person to see a psychiatrist as soon as possible to help resolve the underlying depression."

in adolescent suicide. And this rejection has many faces.

Consider the case of parents who are rarely at home with their children. Mom and Dad may be totally tied up in their jobs or given to some form of recreation that excludes the children. The indirect message to their offspring is a not-too-subtle rejection. Prominent journalist and researcher Hugh Mackay notes that "parents are becoming more and more self-centred. They put themselves first in order to preserve their lifestyles.... To put it brutally, children have gone out of fashion.... Life is tough and it all gets a bit self-absorbed."

Then, in some cultures men with a macho self-image may not wish to be seen in a nurturing role. Journalist Kate Legge puts it well: "Men with a public service bent generally choose lifesaving or firefighting over the nurturing tasks... They prefer the strong, silent heroism of battling external forces to the people-intensive jobs." And, of course, one of the most people-intensive jobs today is being a parent. Poor parenting is tantamount to re-

jection of the child. As a result, your son or daughter may develop a negative self-image and poor social skills. *The Education Digest* notes: "Without a positive image of themselves, kids don't have the basis to make decisions in their own best interests."

Hopelessness Can Result

Researchers believe that hopelessness is a major contributor to suicide. Gail Mason, a writer on youth suicide in Australia, observed: "Hopelessness is considered to correlate more highly with suicidal thoughts than depression. Hopelessness is sometimes defined as one symptom of depression.... It commonly takes the form of a general sense of despair and despondency concerning young people's futures, and in particular their economic future: and to a lesser degree a feeling of hopelessness regarding the global situation."

Poor examples of honesty by civic leaders do not inspire youths to raise their own levels of ethics and morals. The attitude then becomes, "Why bother?" *Harper's Magazine* comments on youths' ability to detect hypocrisy, saying: "The young, with their keen noses for hypocrisy, are in fact adept readers—but not of books. What they read so acutely are the social signals emanating from the world in which they will have to make a living." And what do those signals spell out? Author Stephanie Dowrick observes: "We have never been more deluged with information about how to live. We have never been richer or better educated, yet there is despair everywhere." And there are so few good role models in the upper echelons of political and religious society. Dowrick asks a few pertinent questions: "How do we salvage wisdom, resilience and even meaning out of meaningless suffering? How do we cultivate love in a climate of selfishness, petulance and greed?"

You will find the answers to these questions in our next article, and they may surprise you.

WHEN HOPE AND LOVE RETURN

PARENTS, teachers, and others who deal with adolescents realize that neither they nor youths nor any other person can change the world. There are forces at work that are like tidal waves, which no one can halt. Yet, there is much that we can all do to contribute to youths' being happier, healthier, and well adjusted.

Since prevention is better than cure, parents should think carefully about how their life-style and priorities may shape the attitudes and behavior of their children. Providing a loving and caring environment in the home gives the security that can best prevent self-destructive behavior. One of the most desperate needs of youths is having someone who will listen to them. If parents won't listen, perhaps less-desirable people will.

What does that mean for parents today? Make time for your children when they need it—when they are young. For many families this is not easy. They struggle to make ends meet, with both parents having no choice but to work. Those who have been willing and able to make sacrifices in order to have more time with their children have often reaped the reward of seeing their sons and daughters make a better success of life. However, as noted earlier, sometimes even with the best of efforts on the part of parents, serious problems with their children can develop.

Friends and Other Adults Can Help

Wars, rape, and abuse of youths call for extraordinary efforts in damage control on the part of adults who truly care for them. Youths traumatized by such negative experiences may not react well even to efforts to help them. It may mean a great investment of your time and effort. Certainly it is not wise or loving to belittle them or reject them. Can



we dig a little deeper into our own emotional resourcefulness and show the needed kindness and love to reach out to those at risk?

Not only parents but friends and even siblings need to be especially vigilant to note tendencies in young ones that may indicate a fragile and possibly unbalanced emotional state. (See the box "Qualified Help Needed," page 8.) If signs are there, be quick to lend a hearing ear. If possible, try to draw troubled youths out with kind questions to assure them of your genuine friendship. Trusted friends and relatives may be able to support parents in handling difficult situations; but, of course, they should be careful not to take over the role of parents. Very often youths' suicidal tendencies are a desperate plea for attention—parental attention.

One of the best gifts anyone can give to youths is a solid hope for a happy future, an incentive for living. Many youths have come to recognize the truthfulness of Bible promises of a better world system soon to come.

Rescued From Would-Be Suicide

From Japan, a young woman who often contemplated suicide has this to say: "How many times I have longed to take that road. When I was a toddler, I was sexually abused by someone I trusted. . . . In the past, I have written so many notes saying 'I want to die' that I have lost count. I have since become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and I now serve as a full-time evangelizer, but this urge still comes over me from time to time. . . . But Jehovah has allowed me to stay alive, and he seems to be telling me gently, 'Keep on living.'"

A 15-year-old girl from Russia explained: "When I was eight years old, I started feeling that nobody needed me. My parents did not have time to speak with me, and I tried to solve my problems by myself. I withdrew into myself. I quarreled constantly with my relatives. Then the thought of suicide came into my mind. How happy I was to meet Jehovah's Witnesses!"

And from Australia come these encouraging comments from Cathy, now in her early 30's, which show that despair can really turn to hope: "I constantly dreamed about different methods of ending my life and finally attempted suicide. I wanted to escape this world, which is full of hurt, anger, and emptiness. Depression made it difficult for me to get out of the 'spiderweb' I felt I was trapped in. Therefore, suicide seemed to be the answer at the time.

"When I first heard about the possibility of the earth's becoming a paradise, with a peaceful, happy life for all, I really yearned for it. But it seemed just an impossible dream. However, I gradually began to un-

derstand Jehovah's view of life and how precious each one of us is in his eyes. I began to feel confident that there is hope for the future. At last, I found a way out of that 'spiderweb.' To get out of it, however, proved to be difficult. At times depression would overcome me, and I would feel terribly confused. Yet, making Jehovah God my focal point allowed me to draw very close to him and to feel secure. I thank Jehovah for all that he has done for me."

No More Youthful Deaths

By studying the Bible, a young person can come to realize that there is something better to look forward to—what the Christian apostle Paul calls "the real life." He counseled the young man Timothy: "Give orders to those who are rich . . . to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment; to work at good, to be rich in fine works, . . . safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life."—1 Timothy 6:17-19.

Paul's counsel, in effect, means that we should get involved with other people, helping them to have a solid hope for the future. "The real life" is what Jehovah has promised in his new world of "new heavens and a new earth."—2 Peter 3:13.

Many youths who were once at risk have come to understand that drug abuse and immoral life-styles are nothing but a long and winding road to death, to which suicide is but a shortcut. They have come to realize that this world, with its wars, hatred, abusive behavior, and loveless ways, will soon pass away. They have learned that this world system is beyond redemption. They have taken to heart that God's Kingdom is the only real hope, for it will usher in a new world where not only youths but all obedient mankind will never have to die—no, nor even want to die anymore.—Revelation 21:1-4.

From Small Island to Busy Airport

By Awake! correspondent in Hong Kong

WE MUST be knocking television antennas off the roofs!" exclaimed the startled passenger when she looked out the window of her plane as it came in for a landing at Hong Kong's Kai Tak International Airport. On the ground, a woman hanging washing on the roof of her building in nearby Kowloon City cringed, enduring another assault on her eardrums as the plane roared over her head.

"The problem is the mountains," says John, a pilot who had maneuvered that treacherous landing many times. "If we land from the northwest, it means a nasty turn just short of the runway. The mountains also contribute to dangerous downdrafts, which we call wind shear."

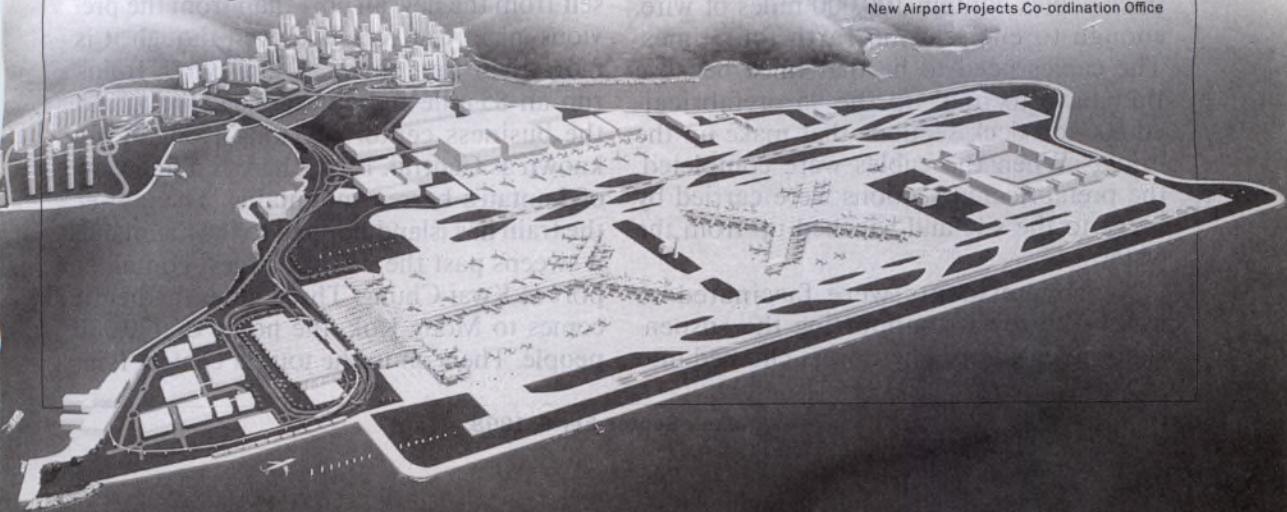
For the nervous passengers, the pilots, and especially the people of Kowloon City, the day when Kai Tak received its last flight couldn't come soon enough. And that day came, for in July 1998, Hong Kong started to use a new airport.

An Airport on an Island

In the 1980's, Kai Tak airport was reaching its capacity. As there was no possibility of further expansion, a site for a new airport was sought. But Hong Kong had no available flat land large enough for an airport. Besides, people did not want a noisy airport in their backyard. The solution? Chek Lap Kok, a small island lying off the remote side of Lantau, a large, yet mostly undeveloped, island. It was a civil engineer's dream come true.

To build the airport required leveling the small island and a smaller neighboring island and reclaiming some three and a half square miles of land from the sea. To link the airport to the city of Hong Kong, a 21-mile railway and an expressway were built, both leaping over islands and channels, coursing through the city of Kowloon, and crossing Victoria Harbor. This, in turn, meant constructing bridges, tunnels, and viaducts. It all added up to one of the biggest building projects ever undertaken.

New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office





Unique Bridges for Island-Hopping

Thousands of people go to Hong Kong's New Territories to view what has become a world-famous landmark, the Lantau Link, which joins Lantau Island with the mainland. It is made up of a cable-stayed bridge linking Lantau Island with the small Ma Wan Island, a viaduct over Ma Wan, and a suspension bridge with a main span of 4,520 feet, linking Ma Wan Island with a third island, Tsing Yi. These double-deck bridges are among the longest of their kind in the world, carrying road traffic on the top deck and a railway and two traffic lanes on the enclosed lower deck.

The cables holding up the suspension bridge look rather spindly at a distance. One wonders if the engineers got their equations right or if the bridge will end up in the water. A closer look, however, shows that the cables are certainly not flimsy. The 3.5-foot-thick cables contain 100,000 miles of wire, enough to encircle the earth four times. The cables need to be that thick because they have to hold up the 95 prefabricated 500-ton deck sections that make up the bridge. When the cables were completed, the prefabricated sections were carried by barge to the site and winched up from the water.

Nearby residents were fascinated to watch the towers supporting the suspension cables go up. The towers climbed into

the sky with none of the scaffolding normally associated with building projects. The builders used a process called slipforming. With this method the forms, or shutters, into which the concrete is poured are moved steadily upward without any need to dismantle and reerect them at every stage. Using this innovation, builders erected one 600-foot bridge tower in just three months.

Hong Kong is in the typhoon belt. How will strong winds affect the crossing? In 1940 the original Tacoma Narrows Bridge, Washington, U.S.A., was destroyed when a 42-mile-an-hour wind twisted it as if it were made of bamboo. Bridge design has come a long way since then. These new bridges have been modeled and tested to withstand gusts of 200 miles an hour.

From Airport to City in 23 Minutes!

It is quicker to get to Hong Kong Island itself from the new airport than from the previous airport at Kai Tak, even though it is more than four times as far. Why? Trains run an 85-mile-an-hour service through to the business center of Hong Kong, aptly known as Central. First, there is a fine view of Lantau's barren mountains. Then, after the train has island-hopped to the mainland, it sweeps past the world's largest container port in Kwai Chung. Three miles farther, it comes to Mong Kok, the home of 170,000 people. Then, on to the tourist center, Tsim

Sha Tsui, and to a tunnel under the harbor, bringing the train to the terminus in Central just 23 minutes after leaving the airport!

An Airport for the Future

In December 1992, Chek Lap Kok was a one-square-mile rocky island. By June 1995, it was a 4.8-square-mile platform for the new airport, and Hong Kong's land area was almost 1 percent larger. While the original island was being leveled with 44,000 tons of high explosives, a large dredging fleet deposited at the site sand brought up from the seabed. During the peak construction period, five acres a day were being reclaimed. On the average, ten tons of landfill material were moved every second for the entire 31 months. As soon as the land-formation contractors started to leave, others got to work on constructing the airport itself.

Steve, who worked closely with the project, provides some highlights: "Present-day jumbo jets can damage a badly made runway. Hence, massive rollers were used to compact the sand before laying the asphalt surface. It is estimated that by the time these rollers had completed the first runway and hardstand areas, they had covered a distance of 119,000 miles, equivalent to five times the distance around the world.

"Our company had a contract for the terminal; we built and erected the steel roof-trusses. These weigh up to 150 tons each. We used a giant crane to hoist them onto multiwheel trailers that carried them at 1.25 miles an hour to the terminal."

This terminal is not a concrete box. Rather, the emphasis was on creating a light and airy environment that would be pleasant for airport workers and passengers alike. Besides that, the airport was designed to whisk passengers on their way with minimum delay. Passengers can be seated on the plane 30 minutes after arriving at a check-in counter. To streamline movement, a driverless train

is available to transport passengers from one end of the terminal to the other end. In addition, 1.75 miles of moving walkways make life a lot easier for tired limbs.

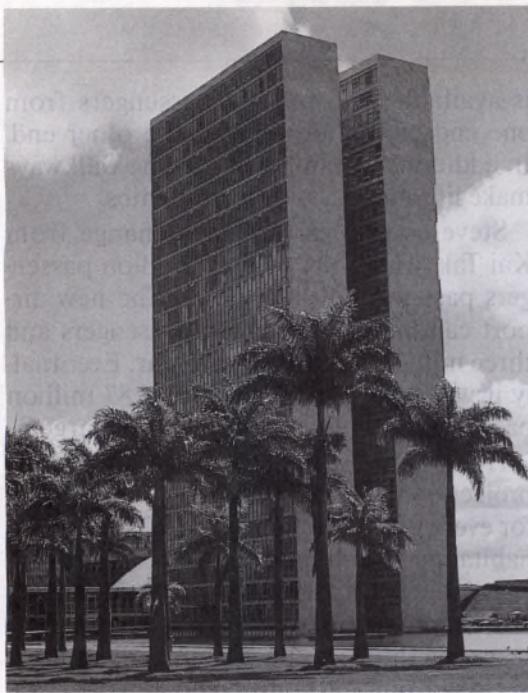
Steve continues: "What a change from Kai Tak, which saw over 27 million passengers pass through it in 1995! The new airport can handle 35 million passengers and three million tons of cargo a year. Eventually it will be able to take care of 87 million passengers and nine million tons of cargo!"

Hong Kong is investing heavily in this project—some \$20 billion, or about \$3,300 for every one of Hong Kong's 6.3 million inhabitants. It is hoped that Chek Lap Kok airport will help Hong Kong maintain its present prosperity. While that remains to be seen, one thing can be guaranteed: Landing in Hong Kong will continue to be a memorable experience.

Building the Tsing Ma Bridge

New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office





Brasília Young, Different, and Growing Up Fast

By *Awake!* correspondent in Brazil

after Brazil's independence in 1822, Brazilian statesman José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva suggested naming this future capital Brasília, a name that 17th-century mapmakers had already used to designate the entire country.

In 1891, the country's new constitution spelled out that 5,400 square miles of savannas should be staked out on the Central Highland Plain. There, some 600 miles from the coast, the new capital was to be constructed. Politicians reasoned that moving the capital inland from Rio de Janeiro would spur the development of the country's huge interior. Yet, another 50 years passed without a move. Finally, in 1955, Brasília's prolonged prologue ended, and an action-packed opening chapter was about to begin.

A Contest and a Plan

That year, presidential candidate Juscelino Kubitschek vowed that if he was elected, the new capital would be a fact before his five-year term as president was over. In April 1956, Kubitschek was elected.

Some months earlier, the government had announced a contest: Architects, engineers, and city planners in Brazil were invited to design a plan for the layout of the new cap-

WHERE in the world could you telephone the designer who drew the original plans for your country's capital city? Where could you meet the architect who designed and supervised the construction of the capital's first government buildings? And where can you walk through the capital and know for sure that anyone you see who is over 40 years old was not born there? In Brasília, the capital of Brazil—a young, unique city that deserves a closer look.*

Prolonged Prologue

It takes about an hour and a half to fly from São Paulo to Brasília. Comfortable buses make the trip in some 12 hours. I opted for the bus trip. It gave me plenty of time to read up on the city's history.

Ever since the time of the first organized rebellion against Portuguese rule at the end of the 18th century, there existed the desire to construct a new capital in Brazil. Shortly

* The designer, Lúcio Costa, died at 96, June 1998, shortly after this article was prepared.

Parade of the “candangos”

ital. Within a few months, 26 candidates sent in their version of the ideal capital. In March 1957, an international jury announced the winner: urban planner Lúcio Costa.

Unlike the other candidates' entries, Costa's consisted of a few sketches and a handful of pages with text scribbled in longhand—an entire city in a manila envelope! He apologized to the jury for the scant outline but added: "If it is not valid, then it will be easy to eliminate, and I shall not have wasted mine or anybody else's time." The jury, though, liked his plan and judged it to be "clear, direct and fundamentally simple." What did his plan propose, and how did it turn into a city of concrete?

An “Airplane” in the Dust

A good way to find out is to visit the Museu Vivo da Memória Candanga (Live Museum of Candango Memory). Since the museum is housed in what served as the cap-



Arquivo Público do Distrito Federal

ital's first hospital, this building is literally the cradle of Brasília. The first babies born in Brasília 40 years ago began their life right here. Today, though, the former hospital tells the story of Brasília's birth and childhood. It is a story, reads one museum display, of "Dust, Canvas and Concrete."

Laureti Machado, a museum staff member, first walks me through the "dust" period. She pauses in front of a picture, taken in 1957, of two dirt roads that cut through a savanna, forming an intersection in the middle of nowhere. "This photo," she says, "captures the very first step in the city's construction." Then, looking at Costa's sketches, we see how the urbanist bent one of those roads so that when workers, called *candangos*,* later carved this arc in the savanna, the shape of an airplane emerged from the dust.

That singular shape remains Brasília's layout: An airplane with its cockpit pointing toward the east and its arched wings stretching north and south. The buildings housing the three branches of government occupy the cockpit, the business district makes up the body, and the residential areas form the wings.

* A word of Angolan origin (formerly used by Africans to describe the Portuguese) that became the affectionate name for Brasília's construction workers.



A story of “Dust, Canvas and Concrete”

From Canvas to Concrete

The museum's "canvas" and "concrete" sections relate how workers all over Brazil sold their belongings to make the journey to the construction site. 'My father bought a truck, packed up our whole family—more than 20 people—and drove 19 days to get here,' recalls a worker who arrived in August 1957. Others traveled by bus or oxcart or hitchhiked. In all, 60,000 workers arrived.

This construction army, living in canvas shelters, was badly needed because the city's inauguration date had been set for April 21, 1960. That meant that the engineers, technicians, and construction workers had to deliver a capital city in 1,000 days—an epic task! Yet, when inauguration day came around, the workers had beaten the calendar. The world's youngest capital had risen from the dust of the savanna.

First and Only

Admiration for the city and its builders is still very much alive in the office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Brasília. "There exists no other example

of a city plan carried out as faithfully as Costa's plan," UNESCO's cultural attaché, Dr. Briane E. Bicca, tells me. "That is one reason why Brasilia is the world's first and only 20th-century city on UNESCO's World Heritage List."*

Brasilia is also the only city on that list that is still under construction. This poses a challenge, says Dr. Bicca. "How can we preserve the original city plan while the city is changing?" While alive, architect Lúcio Costa, though in his 90's, still confronted that challenge. He kept an eye on new constructions, making sure they did not desecrate his layout. When Costa learned, for instance, of plans to construct an urban railroad in Brasilia, he insisted that the trains run underground.

Panoramic View

It is time for a city tour. Even if you are a first-time visitor, you will have few problems finding your way around. There are two main avenues, and the city's bus station is lo-

* This list, compiled by UNESCO, mentions 552 sites throughout the world that have "unique natural or cultural importance."



cated at the point where these avenues cross. One avenue runs from west to east (from the "airplane's" tail to the cockpit) and gives you access to hotels, theaters, banks, and stores. The other one runs from north to south (from one wingtip to the other) and takes you through the residential areas.

The best location to see what Brasília looks like is from the Television Tower, a 730-foot-high structure situated in the body of the airplane just behind the wings. The free elevator ride raises you 250 feet above-ground and gives you a panoramic view of the city's center, called Plano Piloto. As you gaze at the city's sweeping lawns, so wide and empty that the sky can touch them, you are struck by Brasília's spaciousness. In fact, landscape designer Roberto Burle-Marx has laid out Brasília's parks and lawns with such generosity that the city claims to have more green space per inhabitant than any other capital in the world.

Panoramic view of Brasília

- 1. Ministries**
- 2. Congressional office buildings**
- 3. Supreme Court**
- 4. Plaza of the Three Powers**
- 5. Executive offices**

Toward the east stretches a wide, grassy mall bordered by a road on either side. Along the roads stand 17 identical buildings. Each of these box-shaped structures houses a different government department. At the end of the mall rises Brasília's signature: two identical domes, one upright and one inverted, sitting at the feet of two 28-story buildings that are home to the National Congress, Brazil's legislature.

The shape of the National Congress may remind you a bit of the United Nations headquarters in New York—and not without reason. One of the architects who had a hand in planning the UN buildings was Oscar Niemeyer—the same Brazilian architect who designed this National Congress and nearly all of Brasília's other main buildings. Some of his finest designs, such as the Foreign Ministry (Palacio Itamaraty) and the Ministry of Justice (Palacio da Justiça), stand near the twin towers of the National Congress.

Why You Can't Get Lost

Brasília is, however, more than an architectural park. It is also a well-arranged

Secretaria de Turismo, Brasília



home to thousands of people. As we drive through the city's residential section, Paulo, a lawyer living in Brasília, comments: "Most people who moved to Brasília find this orderliness a welcome respite from the urban chaos they were used to in other cities."

Brasília's residents live in apartment buildings. A group of such buildings arrayed around a courtyard form a superblock. Rows of superblocks fill the city's north and south wings. Home addresses are easily located. "N-102-L," for instance, is found in the city's north wing, superblock 102, residential building L. And if you remember that block numbers increase (from 102-116) as you drive toward the wingtips, you can hardly go wrong.

To combine order with coziness, residential buildings are no taller than six stories. That way, said Senhor Costa, a child playing in the courtyard is within earshot when mother calls from her apartment window: "*Manoel, vem cá!*" (Manuel, come here!)

Growing Pains

Though Brasília prides itself on being a city built according to plan, the city's blueprint overlooked the workers who cemented Brasília together. It was assumed that after the capital's inauguration, the workers would pick up their hammers and trowels and return to their places of origin. But returning to a region without hospitals, schools, or employment obviously did not appeal to the workers. They preferred to stay in Brasília—but where?

They could not afford the high-rent apartments that they had built, so they settled around Brasília's greenbelt. Before long, several cities bigger than Brasília had sprung up. Today, only 400,000 people live in the planned city, and

numerous apartments remain unoccupied; but nearly 2 million residents have settled in the unplanned satellite towns. Despite the city plan's egalitarian intentions, differences in income have zoned the population into completely separate cities.

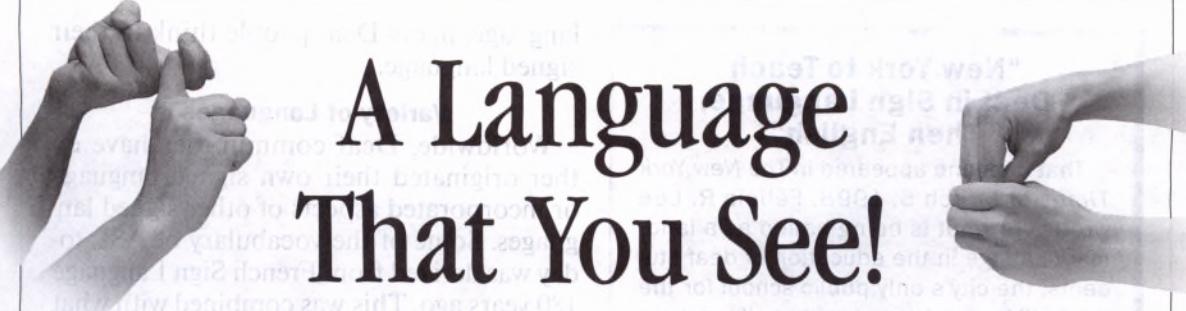
Unforeseen explosive population growth and class barriers are, in turn, fostering crime and other socio-economic problems common to any city. Brazil's young capital is suffering growing pains. Well-arranged streets and innovative architecture are clearly not enough to change people's hearts and behavior.

"The Heart of Brazil"?

Billboards lining Brasília's beltway remind incoming travelers that they are about to enter "The Heart of Brazil." The slogan has a point: Though not located in the country's geographic center, Brasília sits at an almost equal distance from all major cities in the country. What, though, about the deeper meaning of that slogan? Is Brasília really Brazilian at heart? Opinions vary. Only a visit to this unique city can answer that question for you. Keep in mind, though, that you should not judge Brasília in a hurry. Give the city some time to reveal itself because, as one resident remarked, "*Brasília seduz gradualmente.*" (Brasília seduces gradually.)

Green-space champion among world capitals





A Language That You See!

HOW did you learn your native tongue? Probably by hearing family and friends talking when you were an infant. For most people, language is acquired by means of hearing and is expressed by speaking. When formulating concepts and ideas, people who can hear spontaneously rehearse spoken words and phrases in their mind prior to speaking them. However, when a child is born deaf, can the mind formulate thoughts in another way? Is there a language that can transfer ideas, abstract and concrete, from one mind to another without a sound ever being made?

Seen but Not Heard

One of the wonders of the human mind is our capacity for language and our ability to adapt it. However, without hearing, learning a language usually becomes a function of the eyes, not the ears. Happily, the desire to communicate burns deep within the human soul, enabling us to overcome any apparent obstacle. This need has led Deaf people to develop many signed languages worldwide. As they have come in contact with one another, having been born into Deaf families or brought together at specialized schools and in the community, the result has been the development of a sophisticated language that is custom-made for the eyes—a signed language.*

* In these articles, the terms "Deaf" and "Hearing" are used not only to identify those with or without a hearing impairment but also to indicate the different cultures and life experiences of the two communities.

For Carl, from the United States, this language was a gift from his Deaf parents.* Although deaf from birth, he was able to label items, string signs together, and express abstract thoughts in American Sign Language (ASL) at a very young age. Most Deaf babies of signing Deaf parents begin to produce their first signs by the age of 10 to 12 months. In the book *A Journey Into the Deaf-World*, it is explained that "linguists now recognize that the capacity to acquire a language naturally and to pass it on to one's children is rooted deeply in the brain. Whether the capacity surfaces in a signed language or a spoken language is quite immaterial."

Sveta was born in Russia into a third-generation Deaf family. Along with her Deaf brother, she acquired Russian Sign Language. By the time she was enrolled in a preschool for Deaf children at the age of three, her natural signed-language skills were well developed. Sveta admits: "The other Deaf children did not know signed language and would learn from me." Many Deaf children have had Hearing parents who did not sign. Signed language was often passed down at school from older Deaf children to younger ones, enabling them to communicate easily.

* It is estimated that there are a million deaf people in the United States alone, who possess "a unique language and culture." These have usually been born deaf. In addition, there are an estimated 20 million people who are hearing impaired but who communicate primarily in their native spoken language.—*A Journey Into the Deaf-World*, by Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister, and Ben Baham.

"New York to Teach Deaf in Sign Language, Then English"

That headline appeared in *The New York Times* of March 5, 1998. Felicia R. Lee wrote: "In what is being hailed as a landmark change in the education of deaf students, the city's only public school for the deaf will be overhauled so that all teachers will teach primarily in a sign language based on symbols and gestures." She explains that many educators "say that research shows that the primary language of deaf people is visual, not verbal, and that schools using their preferred method, called American Sign Language, educate students better than other schools do."

"They say deaf students should be treated like bilingual students, not disabled ones."

Professor Harlan Lane, of Northeastern University, Boston, said: "I think [the New York school] is in the vanguard of a movement." He told *Awake!* that the ultimate aim is to teach English as a second, reading language.

Today more and more Hearing parents are learning to sign with their children. As a result, these Deaf youngsters are able to communicate effectively prior to attending school. In Canada, this was true of Andrew, whose parents can hear. They learned signed language and used it with him at an early age, providing him with a language foundation on which he could build in the years to come. Now the whole family can communicate with one another on any topic in signed language.

Deaf people are able to formulate thoughts, abstract and concrete, without needing to think in a spoken tongue. Just as each of us formulates thoughts in our own

language, many Deaf people think in their signed language.

Variety of Languages

Worldwide, Deaf communities have either originated their own signed language or incorporated aspects of other signed languages. Some of the vocabulary of ASL today was derived from French Sign Language 180 years ago. This was combined with what was then already used indigenously in the United States, and it has become what is now ASL. Signed languages develop over many years and experience refinements with each successive generation.

Normally, signed languages do not follow the socio-geographic movements of spoken languages. In Puerto Rico, for example, ASL is used, though Spanish is spoken. Although English is spoken in both England and the United States, the former uses British Sign Language, which differs greatly from ASL. Also, Mexican Sign Language differs from the many signed languages of Latin America.

When studying a signed language, one is impressed by the subtle complexities and the richness of expression. Most topics, thoughts, or ideas can be expressed with signed language. Happily, there is a growing trend to produce literature for Deaf people on videocassettes, using natural signed language to tell stories, express poetry, give historical accounts, and teach Bible truth. In many countries signed-language literacy is on the rise.

Reading What Has Never Been Heard

When reading, Hearing people generally refer to auditory memory as they recall the sounds of words. So much of what they read is understood because they have heard it before. In most languages the written words do not depict or resemble the ideas they represent. Many Hearing people learn this arbitrary system or written code by pairing it

"Make" in ASL



"To need" in RLS



It Is a Language!

Some Hearing people have mistakenly concluded that signed language is a complex form of pantomime. It has even been described as a picture language. Though signed language employs the face, body, hands, and surrounding space effectively, the majority of signs bear little or no resemblance to the thoughts

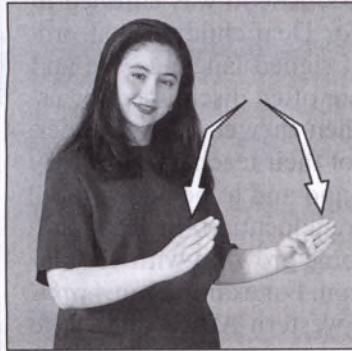
they convey. In American Sign Language (ASL), for example, the sign conveying the idea of "make" uses both hands in a fist shape, with one fist on top of the other with a twisting motion. Though common, this sign does not clearly depict its meaning to a nonsigner. In Russian Sign Language (RLS), the sign representing the concept of "to need" is conveyed by using two hands, with each thumb touching the third finger and moving in a parallel circular motion. (See the photos on this page.) With many abstract concepts, it is not possible to have a pictorial resemblance. Exceptions to this would be those signs for concrete objects that may be descriptive, such as the signs representing "house" or "baby." —See the photos on this page.

Many educational centers for Deaf children around the world have discovered the benefits of using signed language early in the child's development of language. (See boxes on pages 20 and 22.)

Another criterion of a language would be the use of a structured vocabulary accepted by a community. Signed languages exhibit such grammatical structure. For instance, the topic of an ASL sentence is generally stated first, followed by a comment about it. Also, ordering things as they occur in time is a basic feature of many signed languages.

Many facial expressions also serve such grammatical functions as helping to distinguish a question from a command, a conditional phrase, or a simple statement. The visual nature of signed language has allowed it to develop these and many other unique features.

"House" in ASL



"Baby" in ASL



True Languages

"Contrary to popular misconceptions, sign languages are not pantomimes and gestures, inventions of educators, or ciphers of the spoken language of the surrounding community. They are found wherever there is a community of deaf people, and each one is a distinct, full language, using the same kinds of grammatical machinery found worldwide in spoken languages."

In Nicaragua "the schools focused on drilling the [deaf] children in lip reading and speech, and as in every case where that is tried, the results were dismal. But it did not matter. On the playgrounds and schoolbuses the children were inventing their own sign system . . . Before long the system congealed into what is now called the Lenguaje de Signos Nicaragüense." A younger generation of deaf children has now developed a more fluent language that came to be called *Idioma de Signos Nicaragüense*.—*The Language Instinct*, by Steven Pinker.

Such have found that exposing the young Deaf child to a natural signed language and developing a linguistic base will lay the basis for greater achievement academically and socially as well as for the later acquisition of a written language.

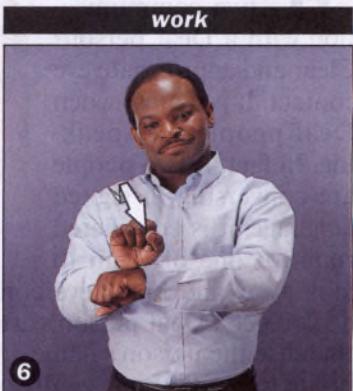
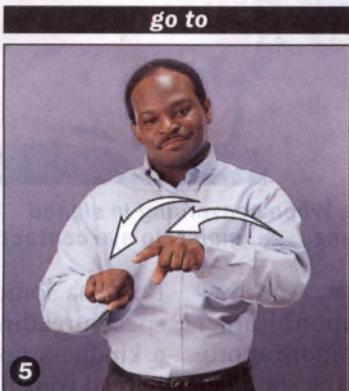
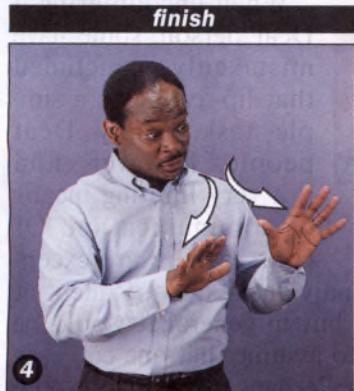
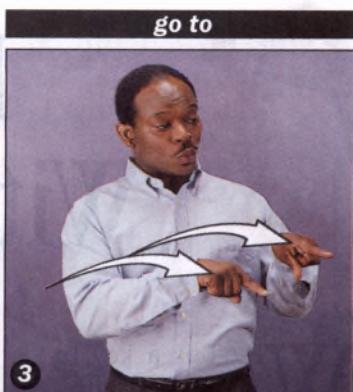
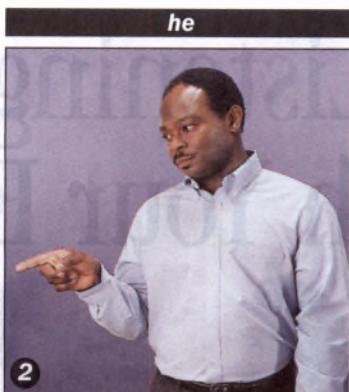
A United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization commission on Deaf education stated: "It is no longer acceptable to neglect sign language, or to avoid taking an active part in its development in educational programmes for the deaf." It must be said, though, that whatever educational choice parents make for their Deaf child, the full participation of both parents in their child's development is of critical importance.—See the article "To Reach My Child, I Learned Another Language," in the *Awake!* of November 8, 1996.

Understanding the Deaf World

When Deaf children become Deaf adults, they often confess that what they wanted most from their parents was communication. When his aged mother was dying, Jack, a Deaf man, attempted to communicate with her. She struggled to tell him something but wasn't able to write it and didn't know signed language. She then fell into a coma and later died. Jack felt haunted by those final frustrating moments. This experience moved him to advise parents of Deaf children: "If you want fluent communication and a meaningful exchange of ideas, emotions, thoughts and love with your deaf child, *sign it* . . . It's too late for me. Is it too late for you?"

For years many have misunderstood the experience of Deaf people. Some have held the view that the deaf know almost nothing because they hear nothing. Parents have been overly protective of their Deaf children or fearful of letting them into the outside world. In some cultures Deaf people have been mistakenly described as "dumb" or "mute," although Deaf people are usually not *vocally* impaired. *They simply cannot hear*. Others have viewed signed language as primitive or inferior to spoken language. It's no wonder that with such ignorance, some Deaf people have felt oppressed and misunderstood.

As a young child growing up in the United States in the 1930's, Joseph was enrolled in a special school for Deaf children that prohibited the use of signed language. He and his classmates were often disciplined for using signs, even when they could not understand the speech of their teachers. How they longed to understand and to be understood! In countries where education for Deaf children is limited, some grow up with very little formal education. For example, an *Awake!* correspondent in western Africa said: "Life



In ASL, this is one way to sign "After he had gone to the store, he went to work"

for the majority of the Deaf in Africa is tough and miserable. Of all the disabled, the Deaf are probably the most neglected and least understood."

All of us share a need to be understood. Sadly, when some see a Deaf person, they only see someone who "can't." Perceived inability can blur out the true abilities of a Deaf person. In contrast, many Deaf people see themselves as a people who "can." They are able to communicate fluently with one another, develop self-respect, and achieve academically, socially, and spiritually. Unfortunately, the mistreatment that many Deaf people have experienced has led some to mistrust Hearing people. However, when Hearing ones show a sincere interest in understanding Deaf culture and natural signed

language and see Deaf ones as a people who "can," all are benefited.

If you would like to learn a signed language, remember that languages represent how we think and process ideas. To learn a signed language well, one needs to think in that language. This is why simply learning signs from a signed-language dictionary would not be helpful in truly functioning in that language. Why not learn from those who use signed language in their daily lives—Deaf people? Acquiring a second language from native users helps you to think and process ideas in a different, yet natural, way.

All over the world, Deaf people are expanding their horizons by using a rich signed language. Come and see their language of signs for yourself.

Listening With Your Eyes

WHAT is a key to success for effective communication with a Deaf person? Clear and appropriate eye contact. It is a must when Deaf people are speaking. In fact, if two people are conversing in signed language, it is considered rude for one of them to look away and break eye contact. And how do you get a Deaf person's attention? Rather than use the person's name, it is more appropriate to tap that one gently on the shoulder or arm, wave in his or her peripheral vision or, if distant, motion to another to get the person's attention. Depending on the situation, you could tap on the floor or flick the lights on and off. These and other appropriate attention-getting methods complement the experience of Deaf people and are a part of Deaf culture.



When conversing in signed language, maintain eye contact

The Uniting Bond of Language

When encountering a Deaf person, some have mistakenly concluded that lip-reading is a simple task. Many Deaf people, however, find it a very limiting means of communication. Of course, there are exceptions,

as some individuals are very adept at speech-reading, but in general it would be a kindness not to assume that one can easily read your lips. Perhaps using an interpreter or writing on paper what you want to say would allow for a degree of meaningful communication to take place.

However, if you regularly encounter Deaf individuals, would it not be considerate to learn some signed language? What a wonderful bond this would engender, especially among those who share the same faith! It is similar to learning the basics of the other language in a bilingual culture. Jehovah's Witnesses have long been interested in making information about Jehovah God accessible to all. When we realize that Deaf people cannot learn to have normal hearing, how much better it is if we adapt to them by using signed language!—1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

Antonino states that when he began attending Christian meetings in Italy, initially



Deaf people joyfully serve as full-time ministers



Delivering a convention discourse in Korean Sign Language

"there was not a real and active exchange of encouragement in conversations with the brothers who could hear. Because we could not understand each other, I felt very left out." Many congregation members responded by learning Italian Sign Language (LIS). Interested Deaf ones started studying the Bible, and meetings were conducted in LIS. Antonino was encouraged and now desires "to talk to all of my Deaf friends about our meetings and the warm love that exists among Jehovah's people."

Around the world Jehovah's Witnesses are forming sign-language congregations, where Deaf people are able to enjoy warm and loving fellowship with one another. In Spain, sign-language groups for the Deaf have existed for over 20 years. In the United States, there are presently 19 active congregations for the Deaf and 47 smaller groups.

Signing Kingdom songs in Spain

Deaf people are able to serve as full-time ministers (pioneers), ministerial servants, and elders as well as to give talks at conventions, teach Pioneer Service Schools, and take the lead in a variety of ways. In this environment there are no limitations, only opportunities to praise Jehovah with one's abilities.

Our inherent need for companionship and communication is expressed through the many cultures and languages around the world. Instead of seeing Deaf people as lacking or deficient, how much better it is when we see the achievements, abilities, and attributes that make all of us human! By our respect for others and our willingness to adapt, we all contribute to a diversified but unified human family.

Bible-based publications presented in sign language on video



Should We Blame Satan for Our Sins?

THE first human sin was blamed on Satan. "The serpent—it deceived me and so I ate," said Eve. (Genesis 3:13) Since then, "the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan" has continued on the rampage against humankind, 'blinding the minds' of people and "misleading the entire inhabited earth." (Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4) No human can escape his pressure, but does this mean that we cannot resist his influence? And when we sin, is it always his fault?

The Bible explains that Satan did, in fact, deceive Eve. (1 Timothy 2:14) She was deceived into thinking that by violating God's command, she could attain godlike insight and independence. (Genesis 3:4, 5) Under that assumption, she sinned. Still, God held *her* responsible and sentenced her to die. Why? Because although Satan lied, she remained fully aware of God's command. She was never forced to disobey; rather, she remained in control of her actions, fully capable of resisting Satan's influence.

Resist the Devil

It is possible for us humans to resist the Devil. At Ephesians 6:12, we are told that "we have a wrestling" against "wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." Evidently, then, God expects us to fight Satan's influence. But how

can a human be a match for the superhuman power of Satan and his demons? Are we being asked to fight an unequal battle, one that we are sure to lose? No, because God is not telling us to combat the Devil in our own strength. Jehovah gives us various means by which we can resist the Devil's enticements and come out victorious. The Bible tells us who the Devil is, how he operates, and how we can protect ourselves.—John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14.

How to "Oppose the Devil"

The Scriptures recommend a two-step approach to resisting the Devil. We are admonished: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) The first step in subjecting ourselves to God involves obedience to his commands. Our being constantly aware of God's existence, his goodness, his awesome power and authority, and his lofty principles will give us strength to oppose Satan. Persistent prayer to God is also vital.

—Ephesians 6:18.

Consider the occasion when Jesus was tempted by the Devil. Calling to mind and quoting various commands from God surely helped Jesus to resist. Failing to entice Jesus into sin, Satan left him. After that ordeal, Jehovah, by



Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

means of his angels, further strengthened Jesus. (Matthew 4:1-11) Thus, Jesus could confidently encourage his disciples to ask God to 'deliver them from the wicked one.'—Matthew 6:13.

God's delivering us does not mean that he puts a protective shield around us. Instead, he tells us to pursue godly qualities, such as truth, righteousness, peace, and faith. These qualities act as a "suit of armor," enabling us to "stand firm against the machinations of the Devil." (Ephesians 6:11, 13-18) So with God's help it is possible to thwart the Devil's temptations.

The second step recommended at James 4:7 is to "oppose the Devil." This involves assertive action, fleeing from his harmful influence. One must avoid exposure to his deceitful power and reject the materialistic and immoral philosophies that are so prevalent in the world today. Such opposition to the Devil in combination with a life dedicated to pleasing God is invaluable in our fight against Satan. But are all sins a direct result of the Devil's influence?

Our Fight From Within

The Bible writer James explains: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin." (James 1:14, 15) Unfortunately, we cannot entirely overcome inherent weakness and imperfection. (Romans 5:12) "There is no man righteous in the earth that keeps doing good and does not sin," says the Bible.—Ecclesiastes 7:20.

This does not mean that all sins are totally beyond our control. In some instances, by our wrong choices, we bring temptations upon ourselves. So although a wrong desire may be due to our own imperfection or Satan's influence, whether we nurture or reject it is totally up to us. Appropriately, the apostle Paul wrote: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap."—Galatians 6:7.

Accept Responsibility

Often it is difficult for humans to acknowledge their own weaknesses, failures, shortcomings—yes, sins. (Psalm 36:2) One thing that can help us to accept responsibility for our sins is the knowledge that God does not now require that we be perfect. "He has not done to us even according to our sins; nor according to our errors has he brought upon us what we deserve," declared the psalmist David. (Psalm 103:10) While God is forgiving, he still expects us to fight hard, to discipline ourselves, against the Devil's enticements and our own inclinations to sin.—1 Corinthians 9:27.

We must understand that while God acknowledges that the Devil can sway our actions and bears a large measure of responsibility for mankind's sinful condition, this does not relieve us of our own personal accountability. Thus, Romans 14:12 says: "Each of us will render an account for himself to God."

However, if we "abhor what is wicked" and "cling to what is good," we can achieve victory over evil. (Romans 12:9, 21) The first woman, Eve, failed to do that and was punished for her disobedience; she could have resisted and obeyed God. (Genesis 3:16) However, God did not ignore the role the Devil played in deceiving her. The Devil was cursed and condemned to eventual annihilation. (Genesis 3:14, 15; Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14) Soon we will no longer have to contend with his evil influence.—Revelation 20:1-3, 10.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

East Africa's "Lunatic Express"

The Cock-of-the-Rock —An Amazonian Jungle Beauty

Gold—The Mystique of It

WATCHING THE WORLD

World Health Woes

"As we enter the 21st century, we still see infectious diseases accounting for 33% of the mortality throughout the world," says Dr. David Heymann of the World Health Organization. A number of factors have contributed to the problem. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* says that population increase, failed vaccination programs, overcrowding, environmental changes, and the deterioration of the public health system worldwide have all played a part. Other factors include forced migration, refugees, and the increase in global travel—all of which help to spread infectious diseases. "There's really no reason for this," says Dr. Heymann. "The tools to combat or eliminate these diseases are available."

Mormons and Politics

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) has encouraged its members in the United States to become more politically active, reports the *Christian Century* magazine. The highest LDS council, the First Presidency, recently released a letter urging members to be "willing to serve on school boards, city and county councils and commissions, state legislatures, and other high offices of either election or appointment, including involvement in the political party of their choice." The letter stated that the church does not endorse candidates or any particular political party. The magazine noted that in the early years of the denomination, "Mormons

avoided mainstream political involvement and sought to establish their own theocracy in what is now Utah."

Stress Increases Car Accidents

A person's attitude toward his work has a great influence on his behavior when driving, states a study by the Professional Association for Health Service and Social Welfare, in Germany. Those who are stressed by their work run a higher-than-normal risk of causing a road accident, reported the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. "Pent-up frustration about the boss or about colleagues could lead to lack of concentration when driving,"



notes the report. In the study, 75 percent of people who had caused a road accident on the way to or from work blamed it on a "lack of concentration, too much rushing around, pressure for time, or stress." Although men were said to be the most likely to have an accident when under negative stress, the study also found mothers of young children to be at special risk. The newspaper observes: "They were often under great pressure, since they had to collect their children from kindergarten on time or cook during the midday break."

Children's Nightmares Common

Frightening dreams plague almost all children. According to a study by the Central Institute for Mental Health in Mannheim, Germany, 9 out of 10 children remember being awakened by dreams. Common nightmares include dreams in which they are being chased, are falling great distances, or are affected by a war or natural disaster. In most cases, such dreams are a mixture of elements of fantasy and the real world. Boys usually forget what they dream. Girls, on the other hand, often talk or write about their dreams. To relieve any anxiety caused by nightmares, experts suggest, children should talk about the dream's contents, draw a picture of it, or act out a scene from it, reports the *Berliner Zeitung*. If these suggestions are followed, the dreams will usually become less frequent within a few weeks and will no longer be frightening.

Doctors Hooked on Drugs

According to medical authorities in Britain, "one doctor in 15 is suffering from dependence on alcohol or drugs," reports *The Medical Post* of Canada. In an effort to combat the problem, leading British medical organizations would like to introduce random drug tests to identify doctors who are abusing drugs or alcohol. It is estimated that more than 9,000 doctors in Britain, including both males and females, may be misusing alcohol or other drugs. Surprisingly, some doctors "do not seek help because they don't know what services are available to them," says the magazine.

Reheating Food Does Not Destroy Toxins

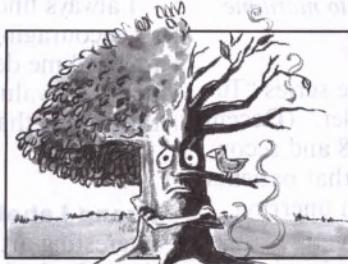
Meat that has been left unrefrigerated for more than two hours after cooking should not be eaten, states *Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter*. But would not cooking it again kill any harmful bacteria? "Reheating meat that has been left out might kill the bacteria that grew on its surface, but it wouldn't destroy illness-causing toxins produced by certain bacterial strains," notes the *Nutrition Letter*. A toxin produced by the common bacterium staphylococcus can cause stomach pain, diarrhea, nausea, chills, fever, and headache. "And even making foods piping hot won't destroy that toxin."

Carnival in Brazil

"Carnival may have made Rio de Janeiro famous, but more and more Brazilians are just not interested," reports *Nando.net*. Many people from around the world have the impression that Brazilians live for the annual festival. However, a study by Brazil's Institute for Social Research paints a far different picture. It found that 63 percent of Brazilians do not take part in the festivities, 44 percent said they were "not the slightest bit interested," and 19 percent said they "hated carnival." The newspaper *Jornal do Brasil* reported that the main national TV network did not even broadcast the samba parade competitions this year. Nevertheless, thousands of tourists flock to Brazil to see the festival. And since Brazil has one of the world's highest incidences of AIDS, the health ministry gave out millions of condoms during carnival.

"Lucky Lottery Tree"

Angry villagers near Bangkok, Thailand, have threatened to harm professional bookmakers whom they suspect of trying to burn down their "lucky lottery tree," reports the *South China Morning Post*. The "fortune tree" had gained a national reputation for picking winning lotteries, so local villagers were quite upset when they learned that the tree had been scorched by an arsonist. "I am really angry," said Dongmalee. "I personally won money with that tree and I



made money offering advice to others how to read it." It is said, however, that since the attack, the tree's spirit is upset, and villagers claim that the spirit has not been dispensing lottery advice. The report said that villagers are planning to bring in Buddhist monks to persuade the tree's spirit to get back to dispensing lottery advice.

More TV, Less Reading

According to a survey by the Audiovisual Media Institute of Greece, there are 3.8 million TV sets for the 3.5 million households in that country; 1 in 3 households also has a videocassette recorder. The Athens newspaper *To Vima* reported that the average daily TV-viewing time for Greeks was almost four hours in 1996, compared with less than two and a half hours in 1990. Not surprisingly, reading suffered a sharp decline. The survey revealed that the av-

erage Greek read 42.2 newspapers in 1989, but in 1995 that figure dropped to 28.3. Similarly, magazine reading decreased by 10 percent during the same time period.

Undernourished Elderly

"The elderly often do not eat enough and are therefore more prone to sickness," reports the *Nassauische Neue Presse*, of Frankfurt, Germany. This conclusion was reached after more than 2,500 men and women over the age of 70 were surveyed in ten European countries. Many think elderly ones need less food, but too few calories weaken the resistance. Moreover, the meals of the elderly are often not very nutritious because they cook quantities of food ahead of time and keep it for a long time. In addition, many eat too little fresh fruit and vegetables, especially when they are not in season. The study concluded that physicians should remind elderly patients to "eat well and regularly." It also recommended that the elderly be offered more exercise training, since physical exertion enhances the appetite.

Bible Available in 2,197 Languages

"Parts of the Bible were translated into 30 additional languages last year, bringing to 2197 the total number of languages in which Scriptures are available," reports the *ENI Bulletin*, of Geneva, Switzerland. The entire Bible is now available in 363 languages, including constructed languages such as Esperanto. The United Bible Societies (UBS) keeps a tally of languages in which at least one book of the Bible has been published. Fergus Macdonald, UBS general secretary, said that the goal is to make "God's Word available in people's heart language."

FROM OUR READERS

Morse Code Near Death? The item "Morse Code Near Death at 150 Years," which appeared in "Watching the World," could give a wrong impression. (August 8, 1997) Morse code is still used in radio navigation beacons for aircraft and in short wave radio transmissions.

H. K., Netherlands

Thank you for pointing this out. As our reader correctly observes, the "death" of Morse code that we reported on referred specifically to maritime operations.—ED.

Tuberculosis I appreciated the series "Tuberculosis—The Return of a Killer." (December 22, 1997) I caught TB in 1988 and recovered. You are right to point out that patients must take their medication "with unerring regularity."

Y. L., France

My mother-in-law, who is not religiously inclined, saw the article on my table and read it. She asked if she could take it home. I was able to place two other issues of *Awake!* with her. Thank you for all the hard work you do to produce each magazine.

L. N., United States

I contracted TB 11 years ago. The information presented was very accurate. At times, reading it was like reliving my own experience. I thank Jehovah for the gift of life and the regular counsel we receive in *Awake!* to safeguard our health.

G. B., Italy

I contracted this disease and was under medication for six months. Your article helped me to learn more about this killer disease. More important, it has helped build my faith that the Kingdom of God will bring a global solution to this problem.

P. P., Indonesia

Life Story The article "The Customer Is Always Right" touched my heart deeply. (December 22, 1997) Wei Tung Chin had six children; so did I. Tears flowed from my eyes as she told her story. I know she is proud of her children and their families. Four of my own children have not as yet accepted Christianity as their way of life. Perhaps one day I may experience her kind of joy.

E. H., United States

I always find the life stories in *Awake!* to be so encouraging. The story of Wei Tung Chin touched me deeply. How happy we can be that such valuable individuals are a part of the people that Jehovah is gathering.

I. T., Germany

Wrong Label! I want to thank you for the interesting article "The Beauty of Alpine National Parks." (November 22, 1997) Since I love mountains and photography, I have had the pleasure of seeing and photographing all the animals described in this article. I believe, however, that there is an error in the photo caption at the top of page 15. I think that the animals shown are, not chamois, but female ibex.

M. D. M., Italy

We'd like to thank our reader for catching this error.—ED.

Moscow Thanks for the article "Moscow—Its 850th Anniversary." (December 22, 1997) Russian hospitality and friendliness are overwhelming. I got to experience this myself in 1989, when 3,000 Russians came for a Christian convention in Poland. The last page of that issue, showing a Russian sister preaching in the Russian countryside, was also moving. May Jehovah see to it that many more Russian-speaking people become his worshipers!

I. L., Germany

Jenny Wren

Tiny Bird, Powerful Song



BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN BRITAIN

PRIMROSES studded the bankside as sunlight streamed through the trees, bejeweling the rain-soaked vegetation after the passing shower. I relaxed on a fallen tree, watching two small birds quickly go back and forth to a patch of dead bracken that overhung a rock face above the stream.

Curiosity got the better of me, and I rose to investigate. I found what I had suspected—a wren's nest, beautifully constructed of woven moss and neatly tucked away among the hanging strands of bracken. The perky wren measures just three and three quarters inches from the tip of its beak to its tail and is commonly viewed as one of Britain's smallest birds.* For this reason, in 1937 its likeness was first embossed on the farthing, which was Britain's smallest coin at that time.

Jenny wren, or kitty wren—names given to both sexes by English country folk—is well-known in Europe, Eurasia, and the United States. In Britain it is the most widely distributed and the most numerous of all breeding birds. Its beautiful, trilling song has been likened to that of the nightingale and is so powerful that it can be heard over half a mile away! But harsh winters take their toll and have been known to kill up to 75 percent of the wren population. At such times wrens often choose to roost together to keep warm. Over 60 wrens were once found in a nest box, huddled together in a feathery bundle.

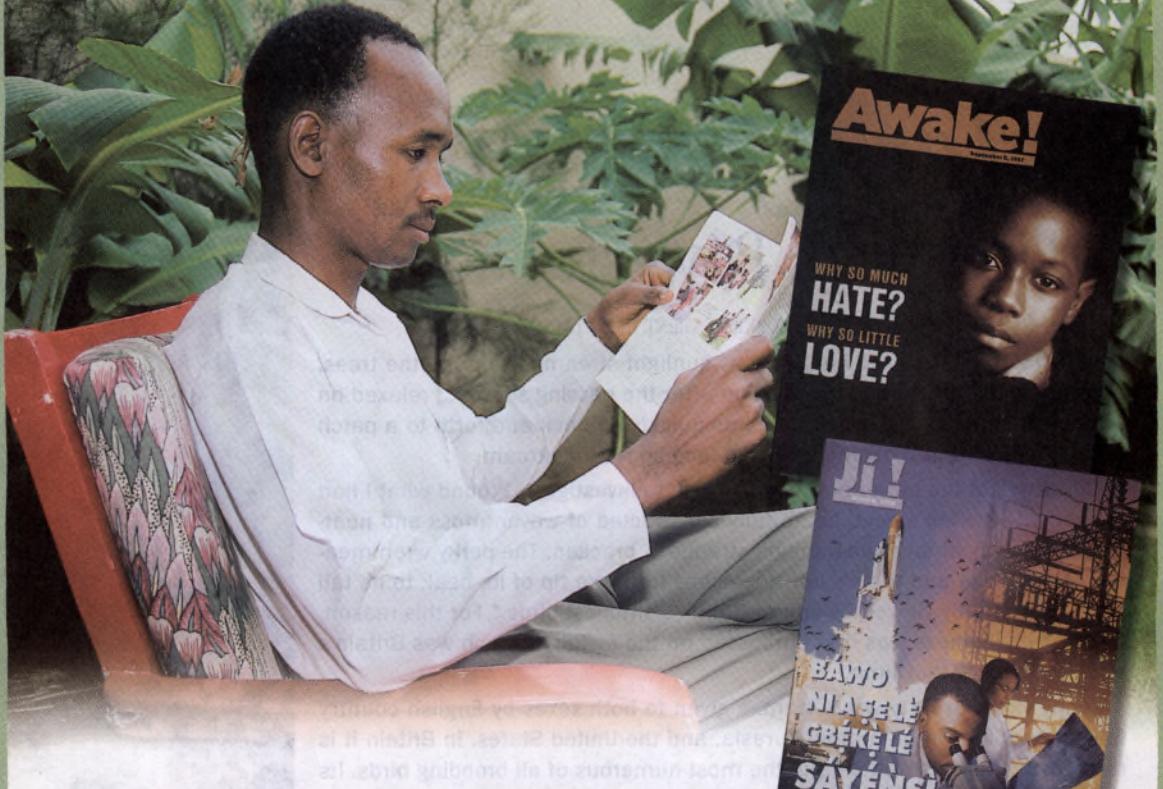
In April the male builds a variety of skillfully camouflaged dome-shaped nests. After completing the nests, the male will introduce his mate to all of them. She will then select one and line it with feathers. By the end of April, she will have laid five or six white eggs with red-brown spots. The female will incubate the eggs on her own for 14 days, and the fledglings will leave the nest after at least two more weeks.

Two broods are normal during the summer, and while the female incubates her second clutch of eggs, the male will take care of the youngsters from the first hatching, sometimes taking the young birds to one of his other nests. If the summer is a good one, with an abundance of insects available as food, the male will take a second mate and set her up in yet another of his homes.

Sitting on the fallen tree, I could feel the warmth of the May sunshine as I watched both wrens flying to and fro. I noted their red-brown plumage and barred wings when they settled on a twig close to where I sat. But then, when they discovered me in their domain, their little tails cocked up, and they started their churring alarm call. That was my cue to quietly take my leave.

* Europe's smallest birds, the resident goldcrest, commonly called the golden-crested kinglet, and the winter-visiting firecrest are a quarter of an inch shorter but are rarely seen.



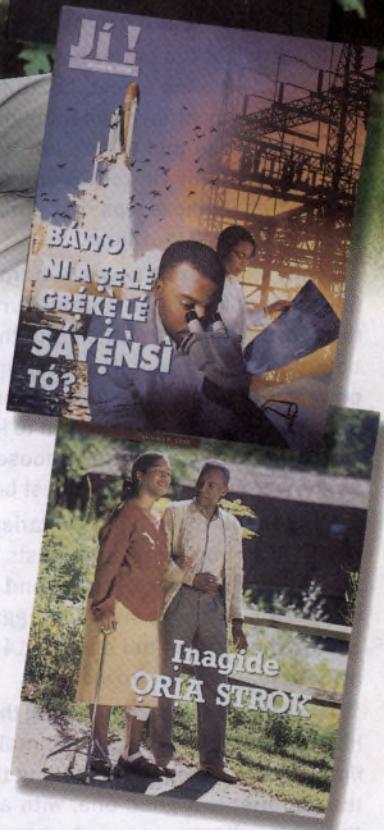


"A First-Rate Magazine"

Have you read the *Awake!* magazine before? How would you rate the copy that you hold in your hand? Do you find the articles informative, well-researched, and pleasantly illustrated?

A free-lance writer from Nigeria, Africa, wrote: "I am a regular reader of *Awake!*, although I am not one of Jehovah's Witnesses. *Awake!* is a first-rate magazine. It is a wellspring of creative ideas for me. Its covers are eye-catching and create in an un-

prejudiced reader a great urge to open its pages. Each issue evidences remarkable creativity; each page, journalistic excellence. With timely and finely crafted articles, each issue is a delicious serving of valuable and invaluable information."



Inagide
ORIA STROK