

# Awake!

FEBRUARY 2008



**WILL WE  
EVER BE FREE OF  
CRIME?**

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ALSO: DOES  
GOD FORGIVE  
SERIOUS SINS?  
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# Awake!

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Petrels: By courtesy of John R. Reiniger



## WILL WE EVER BE FREE OF CRIME? 3-9

Fear of crime haunts the lives of millions. Is there a solution to the growing problem of lawlessness, or should we just give up in despair? Read the Bible's comforting answers.



# IS CRIME OUT OF CONTROL?

- A DERANGED STUDENT, ARMED TO THE TEETH, SLAUGHTERS FELLOW STUDENTS AND TEACHERS AT HIS SCHOOL.
- A LITTLE GIRL IS ABDUCTED, CAUSING HER PARENTS UNTOLD ANGUISH.
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- USING THE INTERNET, A SEXUAL PREDATOR EXCHANGES TIPS WITH OTHER PEDOPHILES ON HOW TO SEDUCE CHILDREN.

THESE are just some of the shocking crimes making the news nowadays. Do you feel safe in your neighborhood, especially at night? Have you or your family been affected by crime? Millions of people worldwide—even in countries once considered relatively safe—admit to having a haunting fear of crime and violence. Consider the following snapshots from various lands.

**JAPAN:** *Asia Times* reports: “Once Japan was among the safest countries in the world . . . Now, however, the once-cherished sense of personal safety appears antiquated, and national security has been supplanted by deep anxiety about crime and global terrorism.”

**LATIN AMERICA:** Prominent figures in Brazil are predicting urban guerrilla war in São Paulo, says a 2006 news report. Because of weeks of sporadic violence, the country’s president urged an immediate deployment of the army onto the city’s streets. In Central America and Mexico, “the presence of at least 50,000 juvenile gang members has the

authorities of the region on the alert,” says a report in the newspaper *Tiempos del Mundo*. “In the year 2005 alone,” the paper adds, “about 15,000 people died at the hands of juvenile gangs in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.”

**CANADA:** “Crime experts point to an alarming increase in gangs,” said *USA Today* in 2006. “Police . . . identified 73 street gangs operating in Toronto.” According to the same source, the Toronto police chief admitted that there is no simple solution to the growing culture of urban gangsterism.

**SOUTH AFRICA:** Patrick Burton, a crime researcher, states in the *Financial Mail*: “Fear of crime permeates every aspect of young South Africans’ lives.” This includes “violent crimes such as aggravated robberies, hijacking and bank heists,” says the paper.

**FRANCE:** Many residents of housing estates, or housing developments, endure daily terror as “they climb staircases that have been vandalised, enter car parks that have become no-go areas,

and use public transport that is dangerous after dark."—*Guardian Weekly*.

**UNITED STATES:** Organized gangs are adding to the crime wave. According to a report in *The New York Times*, in one particular state, a police survey reported that nearly 17,000 youths, male and female, belong to one of some 700 gangs. This is an increase of about 10,000 members in just four years.

**BRITAIN:** In regard to a UNICEF report about the state of children and crime, *The Times* of London noted: "Increasing numbers of young Britons are dying at the point of a gun.... Victims and perpetrators of gun crime are getting younger and younger." The prison popu-

lation in England and Wales has ballooned to almost 80,000.

**KENYA:** A mother and daughter who did not exit their vehicle fast enough were shot by carjackers alongside a busy highway, says a news report. Kenya's capital, Nairobi, has become notorious for all kinds of crime, including carjackings, muggings, and violent home invasions.

Is crime racing out of control? What is the underlying cause of crime? And is there a basis for hope that one day people will be able to live in true peace and security? The following articles will examine these questions.

# CAN THE PROBLEM OF CRIME BE SOLVED?

**"STUDIES SHOW THAT MOST REPEAT OFFENDERS EVEN AFTER PRISON WILL CONTINUE TO PREY UPON THE COMMUNITY, AND THE COSTS, NOT MEASURABLE IN DOLLARS ALONE, WILL CONTINUE TO BE ASTRONOMICAL."**

—INSIDE THE CRIMINAL MIND, BY DR. STANTON E. SAMENOW.

**N**O MATTER where you live in the world, every day seems to bring in another crop of lurid crimes. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask: Are present deterrents—stiff penalties, prison terms, and so on—working? Does prison reform criminals? More important, Is society addressing the root cause of crime?



## 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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Concerning present deterrents, Dr. Stanton E. Samenow writes: "After a taste of prison, [the criminal] may become shrewdier and more cautious, but he continues his exploitative way of life and commits crimes. Recidivism [relapse into criminal behavior] statistics indicate only whether he has been careless enough to be caught [again]." In effect, then, prisons often become finishing schools for criminals, inadvertently helping them to hone their antisocial skills.—See the box "Schools for Crime?" on page 7.

What is more, many crimes go unpunished, leading felons to conclude that crime does pay. This belief can make them bolder and more set in their ways. A wise ruler once wrote: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad."—Ecclesiastes 8:11.

### Criminals by Necessity or Choice?

Is crime the only choice that some people have in order to survive? "I saw crime as being almost a normal, if not excusable, reaction to the grinding poverty, instability, and despair that pervaded [the criminals'] lives," admits Samenow. After extensive research, however, he changed his mind. "Criminals choose to commit crimes," he concluded. "Crime . . . is 'caused' by the way [the person] thinks, not by his environment." Samenow adds: "Behavior is largely a product of thinking. Everything we do is preceded, accompanied, and followed by thinking." So rather than regard

**Languages:** Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Cibemba, Croatian, Czech,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Danish,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Dutch,<sup>+</sup> English,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,<sup>o</sup> French,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Georgian, German,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Greek, Gujarati, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Japanese,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian,<sup>+</sup> Polish,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Portuguese,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Swahili, Swedish,<sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

<sup>#</sup> Audiocassettes also available.

<sup>+</sup> CD also available.

<sup>o</sup> MP3 CD-ROM also available.

criminals as victims, he came to the conclusion that "they were victimizers who had freely chosen their way of life."<sup>\*</sup>

The key word is "chosen." In fact, a recent headline in a British newspaper stated: "Crime Is Career of Choice for Young Urban Men Aspiring to Better Things." Humans have free will and can choose the course they want to take, even under difficult circumstances. To be sure, millions

struggle daily against social injustice and poverty, or they may live in dysfunctional families; but they do not become felons. "Criminals cause crime," says Samenow, "not bad neighborhoods, inadequate parents, . . . or unemployment. Crime resides within the minds of human beings and is not caused by social conditions."

### MILLIONS WHO ENDURE POVERTY DO NOT RESORT TO CRIME

### Crime Begins Within

The Bible puts the focus on the inner person, not on his circumstances. Says James 1: 14, 15: "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." When a person thinks bad thoughts, he nurtures wrong desires. These, in turn, may lead

\* Mental illness may be a factor in some crimes, especially in lands where disturbed people are left to wander the streets and have access to weapons. This complex subject, however, is not the focus of this article.

**Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study?** Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see [www.watchtower.org/address](http://www.watchtower.org/address). **America, United States of:** 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Bahamas:** Box N-1247, Nassau, N.P. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** P.O. Box 4100, Georgetown ON L7G 4Y4. **Germany:** Niederselters, Am Steinfeil, D-65618 Selters. **Guam 96913:** 143 Jehovah St., Barrigada. **Guyana:** 352-360 Tyrell St., Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. **Hawaii 96819:** 2055 Kam IV Rd., Honolulu. **Jamaica:** P.O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **Japan:** 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref., 243-0496. **Puerto Rico 00970:** P.O. Box 3980, Guaynabo. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

to harmful acts. For example, a casual interest in pornography may develop into an obsession with sex that impels a person eventually to act on his fantasies, perhaps in a criminal way.

Another factor to take into account is the world's focus on self, money, pleasures, and instant gratification. Concerning our time the Bible foretold: "In the last days . . . , men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . fierce, without love of goodness, [and] lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Sadly, by way of movies, video games, literature, and bad role models, the world promotes such traits, which only foster more crime.\* Individually, though, people need not succumb to these influences. In fact, some who at one time did succumb have completely changed in their outlook and way of life.

### **People Can Change!**

Once a criminal does not mean always a criminal. The book *Inside the Criminal Mind* states that just as a person may have chosen a life of crime, so he or she "can make choices in a new direction and learn to lead a responsible life."

Experience has shown that people with all kinds of backgrounds can change.<sup>†</sup> What is required is a willingness to adjust one's attitudes, motivations, and thinking patterns so that these conform, not to the shifting values of humans, but to the stable standards of our Creator. After all, who knows us better than he does? Moreover, does not God have the right to decide for the human family what is

\* For additional information on the subject of crime, see *Awake!* of February 22, 1998, pages 3-9, "A World Without Crime—When?" and August 8, 1985, pages 3-12, under the title "Will Our Streets Ever Be Free of Crime?"

† This magazine and its companion, *The Watchtower*, have often reported on individuals who were moved by Bible truth to abandon a life of crime. See *Awake!* of July 2006, pages 11-13, and October 8, 2005, pages 20-1, as well as *The Watchtower* of January 1, 2000, pages 4-5; October 15, 1998, pages 27-9; and February 15, 1997, pages 21-4.

## **"BACK IN JAIL WITHIN TWO YEARS"**

Under that headline, *The Times* newspaper of London, England, reported that in Britain over 70 percent of those sentenced for burglary and theft are reconvicted within two years. Many crimes are committed by drug addicts desperate for money to pay for their costly, self-destructive habit.

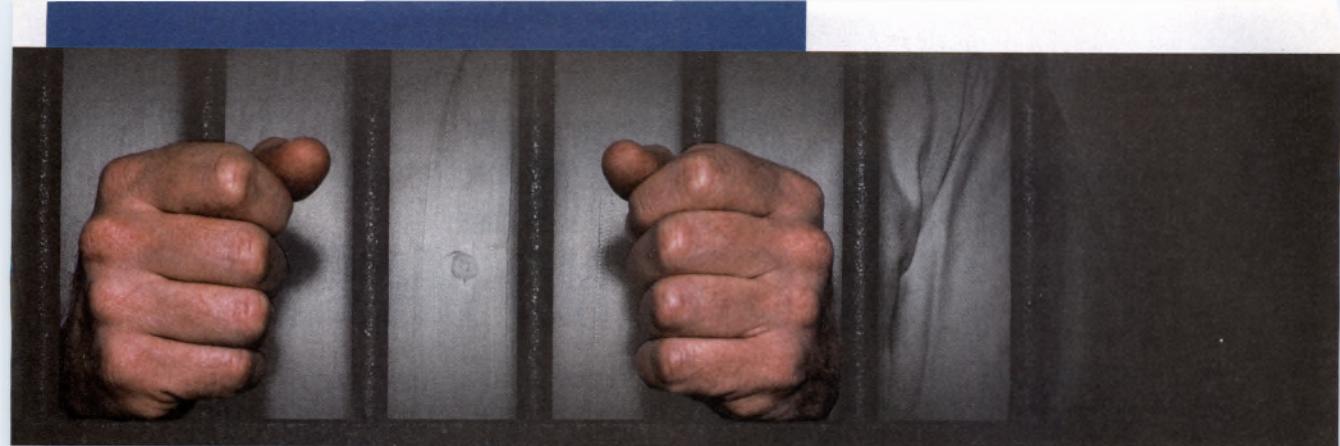
good and bad? To that end, he inspired approximately 40 God-fearing humans to pen what we today know as the Holy Bible—an amazing volume that could rightly be called mankind's manual for happy and purposeful living.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

It may not be easy to make the changes needed to please God, for we have to resist the tug of our sinful tendencies. In fact, one Bible writer described his inner conflict as a 'war'! (Romans 7:21-25) He won the struggle because he did not trust in his own strength but in that of God, whose inspired Word is "alive and exerts power."—Hebrews 4:12.

### **The Power of a Good "Diet"**

For the physical body to become healthy, it needs good food. Also, that food must be chewed well and digested, which takes time and effort. Likewise, for us to become spiritually sound, we need to "chew" on God's utterances so that these can be assimilated into our mind and heart. (Matthew 4:4) The Bible says: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, *continue considering* these things . . . , and the God of peace will be with you."—Philippians 4:8, 9.

Note that we must "*continue considering*" God's thoughts if we want old personality traits to give way to new ones. Patience is need-



## "SCHOOLS FOR CRIME"?

"Prisons are schools for crime," writes Professor John Braithwaite in the *UCLA Law Review*. In his book *Inside the Criminal Mind*, Dr. Stanton E. Samenow says that "most criminals do learn from experience," but not what society wants them to learn. "In prison," he writes, "a person has ample time and opportunity to learn how to be a better criminal. . . . Some in fact do become more successful criminals, immersing themselves heavily in crime but being slick enough to avoid apprehension."

In a later chapter, Samenow states: "Imprisonment does not alter a criminal's basic personality. Whether he is on the streets or in prison, he develops contacts, learns new tricks of the trade, and passes on a few tips of his own to others." One young criminal said: "Incarceration has given me the credits to become a teacher of crime."

ed, for spiritual growth does not occur overnight.—Colossians 1:9, 10; 3:8-10.

Consider the example of a woman who was molested as a child; took up drugs, alcohol, and tobacco; and is now serving a life sentence for a number of crimes. While in prison, she began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses and took to heart the truths she learned. The result? Gradually, her old self gave way to a Christlike new personality. Now she is no longer a slave to destructive thinking and vices. One of her favorite Bible texts is 2 Corinthians 3:17, which states: "Now Jehovah is the Spirit; and where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom." Yes, even though in-

carcerated, she enjoys a freedom that she had never known before.

### God Is Merciful

In Jehovah God's eyes, no one is automatically a lost cause.\* God's Son, Jesus Christ, said: "I have come to call, not righteous persons, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:32) True, adjusting to living by Bible standards may be a challenge. But success comes to those who are patient and who take advantage of the help God provides, including the loving support of spiritually-minded Christians. (Luke 11:9-13; Galatians 5:22, 23) To this end, Jehovah's Witnesses regular-

ly visit prisons worldwide to conduct free Bible studies with sincere men and women who have committed crimes of all kinds.<sup>#</sup> In a number of prisons, the Witnesses also hold weekly Christian meetings.—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

Even though some former evildoers have abandoned their ways and have become true Christians, the Bible frankly speaks of an "increasing of lawlessness." (Matthew 24:12) As we shall see in the following article, that prediction is part of a larger prophecy that contains some very good news.

\* See the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Does God Forgive Serious Sins?" on page 10.

<sup>#</sup> See the box "Spiritual Help for Inmates," on page 9.

# SOON CRIME “WILL BE NO MORE”

OUR Creator, Jehovah God, is profoundly interested in his human creation; he is not aloof, as some believe. (Psalm 11:4, 5) What is more, he sees every crime and every injustice, including those that escape human notice. “The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the bad ones and the good ones.” (Proverbs 15:3) So rest assured, the wicked are truly “on slippery ground.”—Psalm 73:12, 18.

However, the blameless and morally upright, even though they may be materially poor and even downtrodden, have a wonderful prospect. “Watch the blameless one and keep the upright one in sight,” wrote the psalmist David, “for the future of that man will be peaceful.” (Psalm 37:37) Those words can be of special comfort to us today, for we have the hope of seeing them fulfilled worldwide in the not-too-distant future.

## We Are Living in the Last Days

Some 2,000 years ago, disciples of Jesus Christ asked him a far-reaching question. “Tell us,” they said, “what will be the sign of . . . the conclusion of the system of things?” (Matthew 24:3) Jesus’ answer is spelled out in detail in the Bible in chapter 24 of Matthew, chapter 13 of Mark, and chapter 21 of Luke. These complementary Gospel accounts describe the last days of the present world as being characterized by wars, famines,

**“JUST A LITTLE WHILE  
LONGER, AND THE WICKED  
ONE WILL BE NO MORE.”**

—PSALM 37:10.





diseases, great earthquakes, and a significant increase in lawlessness.

The critical conditions that Jesus foretold began in 1914. As historian Eric Hobsbawm states in his book *Age of Extremes*, the 20th century “was without doubt the most murderous century of which we have record.”

Concerning the present proliferation of evil, the Bible states: “When the wicked ones sprout as the vegetation and all the practitioners of what is hurtful blossom forth, it is that they may be annihilated forever.” (Psalm 92:7) Yes, the evidence is clear: Today’s bumper crop of lawlessness—like the sprouting of vegetation in season—is, in reality, an indication that the annihilation of the wicked is imminent! Is that not good news?—2 Peter 3:7.

#### **“The Righteous . . . Will Possess the Earth”**

“The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it,” says Psalm 37:29. Every form of crime and injustice will then be a thing of the past. Therefore, everything related to crime will be gone: security alarms, locks, courts, lawyers, police, and prisons. “The former things,” the Bible promises, “will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart.”—Isaiah 65:17.

Yes, the earth and human society will experience a transformation the likes of which has never occurred before. (Isaiah 11:9; 2 Peter 3:13) That is the valid hope Jehovah’s Witnesses have, and they invite you to see for yourself that it will soon be a reality. Remember, the One who inspired the Holy Scriptures “cannot lie.”—Titus 1:2.



## **SPIRITUAL HELP FOR INMATES**

Over the years, Jehovah’s Witnesses in the United States have received correspondence from inmates in 4,169 correctional institutions, hospitals, and drug-rehabilitation facilities. Some inmates ask for Bible literature; others request a free Bible study. Qualified Witnesses follow up on these requests. Worldwide, in fact, the Witnesses regularly visit prisons to conduct Bible studies with inmates, male and female, who have sought spiritual help. A number of these have made remarkable changes in their personality, have been baptized as Christians, and have gone on to lead law-abiding lives.



# Does God Forgive Serious Sins?

**M**ERCY is one of God's foremost qualities. (Psalm 86:15) How extensive is his mercy? A psalmist wrote: "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand? For there is the true forgiveness with you, in order that you may be feared." (Psalm 130:3, 4) Another passage reads: "As far off as the sunrise is from the sunset, so far off from us he has put our transgressions. As a father shows mercy to his sons, Jehovah has shown mercy to those fearing him. For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust."—Psalm 103:12-14.

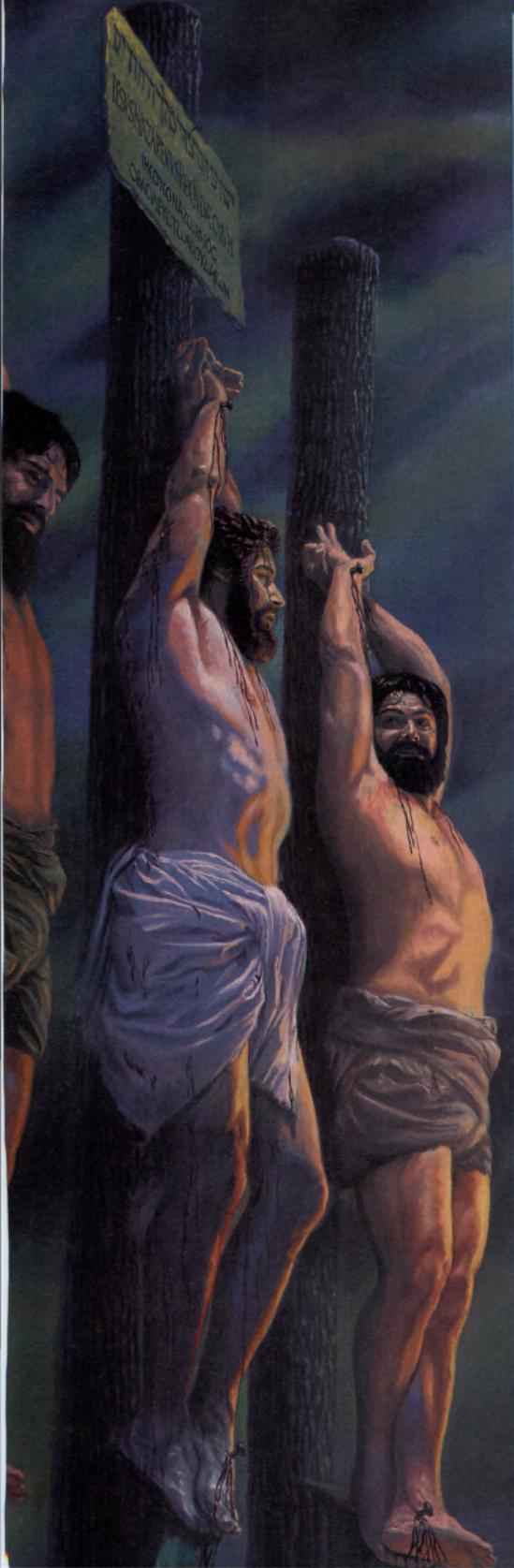
Clearly, Jehovah's mercy is complete and unstinting, and it takes into account our limitations and imperfections—that we are "dust." Consider some Bible examples that reveal the extent of God's mercy.

The apostle Peter denied Christ three times. (Mark 14:66-72) While an unbeliever, the apostle Paul persecuted Christ's followers. When certain ones of these were to be executed, Paul voted against them. He even approved of the murder of one of them. (Acts 8: 1, 3; 9:1, 2, 11; 26:10, 11; Galatians 1:13) Before becoming Christians, certain members of the congregation in Corinth had been drunkards, extortioners, and thieves. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11) Yet, all these came to enjoy divine favor. Why did God forgive them?

### Three Steps to Gaining God's Mercy

"I was shown mercy, because I was ignorant and acted with a lack of faith," wrote Paul. (1 Timothy 1:13) His frank expression brings us to the *first step* required for gaining God's forgiveness—lifting the veil of ignorance by getting an accurate knowledge of Jehovah and his standards as outlined in the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) To be sure, we cannot please our

◀ Jesus showed that serious sins can be forgiven



Creator if we do not know him well. "This means everlasting life," said Jesus in prayer to his Father, "their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

When honesthearted ones gain that knowledge, they deeply regret their past wrongs and are moved to express heartfelt repentance. That is the *second step* toward gaining God's forgiveness. Says Acts 3:19: "Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out."

That verse also mentions the *third step*—turning around. To turn around means to abandon one's old ways and attitudes and to adopt God's standards and viewpoints. (Acts 26:20) Simply put, a person shows by his new way of life that he really means it when he says to God, "I am sorry."

### God Is Not All-Forgiving

There are some people whose sins God does not forgive. Wrote Paul: "If we practice sin willfully after having received the accurate knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins left, but there is a certain fearful expectation of [condemnatory] judgment." (Hebrews 10:26, 27) The words "*practice sin willfully*" suggest deeply ingrained badness, a truly wicked heart.

Judas Iscariot developed such a heart. "It would have been finer for him if that man had not been born," said Jesus. (Matthew 26:24, 25) And concerning certain religious leaders of his day, Jesus said: "You are from your father the Devil . . . When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie."

(John 8:44) Like Satan, those men were bad to the core. They were not sorry for what they had done but became even more hardened in their wicked ways.\* True, because of imperfection and weakness, even genuine Christians sin, sometimes seriously. But their failings do not reflect an entrenched evil disposition.—Galatians 6:1.

### Merciful to the Last

It is not only the sin but also the attitude of the sinner that Jehovah notes. (Isaiah 1:16-19) Reflect for a moment on the two evildoers impaled alongside Jesus. Both had evidently committed serious crimes, for one of the men admitted: "We are receiving in full what we deserve for things we did; but this man [Jesus] did nothing out of the way." The evildoer's words indicate that he knew something about Jesus. And that knowledge likely contributed to a wholesome change in his attitude. This is indicated by what he said next, this time imploring Jesus: "Remember me when you get into your kingdom." How did Christ respond to that heartfelt entreaty? "Truly I tell you today," he said, "You will be with me in Paradise."—Luke 23:41-43.

Think about that: Jesus' final statements as a human included an expression of mercy toward a man who had admitted to deserving the death penalty. How encouraging that is! We can be sure, then, that both Jesus Christ and his Father, Jehovah, will show compassion toward all who manifest true repentance, regardless of their past deeds.—Romans 4:7.

\* See the article "Have You Sinned Against the Holy Spirit?" on pages 16-20 of the July 15, 2007, issue of *The Watchtower*.

### HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- How would you describe God's mercy?—Psalm 103:12-14; 130:3, 4.
- What steps must one take to gain God's favor?—John 17:3; Acts 3:19.
- What did Jesus promise an impaled evildoer?—Luke 23:43.

# From Military Commander to “Soldier of Christ”

AS TOLD BY MARK LEWIS

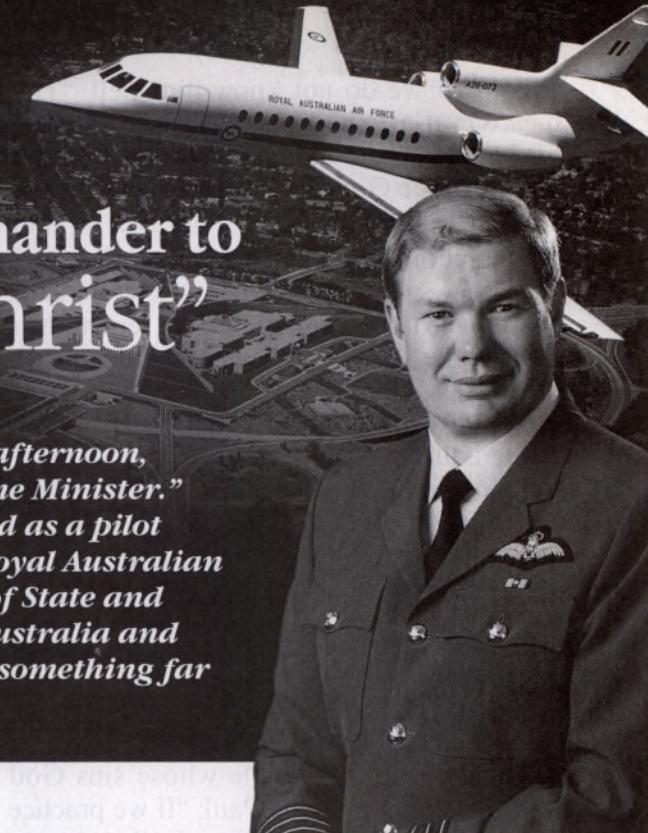
***“Good morning, Your Majesty.” “Good afternoon, Your Excellency.” “Good evening, Prime Minister.” These were some of the greetings I used as a pilot and the Commanding Officer of the Royal Australian Air Force VIP squadron. I flew heads of State and government dignitaries throughout Australia and around the world. Now, however, I do something far more rewarding. Let me explain.***

I WAS born in Perth, Western Australia, in 1951 and was raised in a military family. At 15 years of age, I joined a gliding club. So began a lifelong love of flying.

Soon afterward, my parents separated, and our family disintegrated. The commanding officer of an Air Force jet fighter squadron and his family kindly took me in while I finished high school. His influence prompted me to become an officer cadet at the Royal Australian Air Force Academy.

## I Received My “Wings”

Some six years later, I graduated as an Air Force officer with a science degree and my pilot's wings. My first job involved flying military transport aircraft throughout Australia, the South Pacific, and Southeast Asia. We often flew through high mountain passes and into deep valleys where we landed on grass airstrips. It was dangerous work. Our squadron lost several planes and some good people in those years. Yet, our missions helped those who lived in isolated regions. We flew in ma-



terials for bridges, small bulldozers for use in building roads, emergency food aid, and medical teams. We also flew on medical evacuations.

In 1978, I qualified as a flying instructor and returned to the Air Force Academy to join the teaching staff. Here I renewed my acquaintance with Diane, a young widow with a three-year-old daughter. Diane's husband had been an Academy classmate of mine but later died in a flying accident. When I asked her to marry me, she asked for time to think about it. She wasn't sure that she wanted another pilot for a husband.

In the meantime, I accepted a 12-month posting as an Aide-de-Camp to the Governor-General of Australia. Life at Government House, in Canberra, gave me insight into the workings of political life and involved close association with civil, military, and religious authorities. When my tenure there ended, I

resumed work as a flying instructor. Diane and I married soon afterward, in 1980.

In 1982, I accepted a two-year exchange assignment with the United States Air Force as a flying-safety officer and an aircraft-accident investigator. The work took me throughout the United States and as far afield as Northern Ireland. It involved investigating aircraft accidents and evaluating aircraft design and flying operations with a view to improving safety.

### Back to Australia

After I returned to Australia, our family grew to four when our daughter Kerry was born. Because of my workload, Diane was mother and father to our girls, and our family life suffered. Three years later, I received my first command—the Air Force VIP squadron, mentioned earlier. When the Persian Gulf War broke out in 1991, my squadron supported that UN operation and then others in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Africa, and Israel.

In 1992, I became Staff Officer to the Chief of the Defence Force. Serving as a personal assistant to the most senior military commander in Australia gave me a close-up view of the relationship between the military, politics, and the UN. I concluded that the UN was flawed in many ways. Yet, it seemed to be our only hope for a better world. Then developments at home made me reevaluate my views.

### Diane's Questions Answered

After her first husband died, Diane, a Roman Catholic, had searched for answers to her questions, but in vain. Matters became more serious, however, when our older daughter, Renee, developed an interest in the occult. While at a friend's house, Diane noticed an issue of *Awake!* announcing an upcoming article on Satanism.\* She had nev-

er seen *Awake!* before. All the way home, she thought, 'How can I get hold of that issue?'

Three days later Jehovah's Witnesses came to our door, and Diane got her magazine. Later she accepted a Bible study and then began attending Christian meetings. I was happy for her to study and even accompanied her to some meetings, but I didn't feel the need to get involved. I did not consider myself to be religious. I believed in God but had seen too much hypocrisy to take religion seriously. I could not understand, for example, why military chaplains preached love and peace but supported war.

Diane discreetly left copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* around for me to read. I read some of them and carefully returned them to their original position. I didn't want her to think I might be interested. As my Bible knowledge grew, two scripture references troubled me. One was Revelation 19:17, 18, which spoke of birds eating the fleshy parts of "military commanders." The other was Revelation 17:3, which mentioned "a scarlet-colored wild beast." The Witnesses saw this beast as a symbol of the UN, a view that challenged my ideas about that world body.\* But I pushed any questions to the back of my mind.

In 1993, Diane invited me to attend her baptism. Her request caught me off guard. I asked her, "If you had to choose, would you choose Jehovah or me?" She answered: "Jehovah. But it doesn't have to be a choice. I want you both in my life." I realized then that I

\* See pages 240-3 of the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Is There One True Religion?
- Is Superstition Compatible With True Christianity?
- What's So Bad About Swearing?

\* Published in the October 22, 1989, issue, pages 2-10.

needed to learn more about this other person in her life. A local Christian elder offered to study the Bible with me, and I accepted.

I became very interested in Bible prophecy, particularly as it relates to military and political history. For example, during my Air Force training, I had studied the military exploits of the ancient Greeks. I now learned that much of that history had been recorded centuries in advance in Daniel chapter 8. This prophecy, and others, gradually convinced me that the Bible is inspired of God.

I also took a fresh look at the UN. I knew that the military could not solve mankind's problems, that real peace could not come

***While many in the military may be willing to die for their country and friends, true Christians are called upon to love even their enemies***

from the threat of war, and that the UN could not resolve the political, religious, and ethnic divisions that foment war. I began to see that only God could solve mankind's problems. Indeed, it appeared that he was already doing so among the global brotherhood of Jehovah's Witnesses. (Psalm 133:1; Isaiah 2:2-4) 'But could I leave my military career to serve God?' I wondered.

**Taking a Stand for Bible Truth**

Matters came to a head in 1994 when I attended a district convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sydney. The program featured a full-costume Bible drama that highlighted the choice the ancient nation of Israel had to make between serving Jehovah or Baal, a Canaanite god. Jehovah's prophet Elijah challenged the Israelites: "How long will you be limping upon two different opinions? If Jehovah is the true God, go following him; but

if Baal is, go following him." (1 Kings 18:21) Those words cut deeply into my heart. Like the Israelites, I was sitting on the fence. I needed to make a choice: Would I serve Jehovah or continue my military career?

Driving home that night, I told Diane I was going to leave the Air Force to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses. She was surprised by the suddenness of my decision but was fully supportive. Several days later my decision still hadn't changed, so I handed in my resignation.

At that time, I was the Commanding Officer of the Corps of Officer Cadets at the Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra, the national capital. I oversaw the military and academic training of some 1,300 Army, Navy, and Air Force officer cadets and staff. On the last day of the academic year, I told an assembly of 400 senior cadets and staff that I was leaving the military to go from house to house teaching people the Bible as a volunteer Christian minister. That announcement led to some interesting discussions.

**Becoming a Full-Time Minister**

I started in the preaching work the day after my resignation took effect. Three months later, in April 1995, I was baptized. Then, at the earliest opportunity, I enrolled as a regular pioneer minister, which meant spending my full time in the public ministry.

My transformation from military commander to "soldier of Christ" meant making numerous adjustments. (2 Timothy 2:3) One of my first assignments was handling microphones during Christian meetings. Instead of giving orders, I had to learn to ask for things to be done. Consideration and love became more important than efficiency, although I still struggled to balance these qualities. And because of my reduced income, our family had to simplify our lifestyle.

I really enjoyed the preaching work and still do. Once when witnessing with our then nine-

year-old daughter Kerry, I asked her to observe the reactions of the householders. We soon saw that many people were not interested but that some were nice and even interested. It was encouraging for both of us. Our other daughter studied the Bible for a while but has chosen not to serve Jehovah at this time.

Diane and I encouraged Kerry to reach out for the full-time ministry. Recently, I had the thrill of attending the Pioneer Service School with her. It was her first time and my second. What a joy it is to see her and other young ones progressing spiritually and pursuing the Christian ministry!—Psalm 110:3.

### Blessings in Abundance

Looking back, I see parallels and contrasts between serving in the military and being a soldier of Christ. Both roles require loyalty, obedience, integrity, self-discipline, and self-sacrifice. But while many in the military may be willing to die for their country and friends, true Christians are called upon to love even their enemies. (Matthew 5:43-48) And whereas military heroes can be decorated for a single act of courage, true Christians gain God's approval by enduring in faithful service—which may mean showing courage in the face of opposition, ridicule, and other trials year after year. (Hebrews 10:36-39) Fellow Christians are the finest people I know.

In contrast with the greetings mentioned at the start of this story, my greetings nowadays are “Good morning, Sister,” or “Good evening, Brother.” What a joy it is to serve in the Christian ministry with people who truly love God! The greatest honor, though, is to serve the Most High, Jehovah, himself! I could not think of a more rewarding way to spend *my life*.

**Bible drama, 1994 district convention in Sydney, Australia**



**With Kerry at the Pioneer Service School**



**With Diane and Kerry today**



# Snug in the Snow

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN FINLAND

**W**ITHOUT adequate clothing and footwear, humans would suffer greatly and even perish in the frigid winters of the Far North. Yet, for countless animals life goes on, no matter the season. Besides benefiting from a snug winter coat of feathers or fur, animals also make good use of the amazing insulating power of snow.

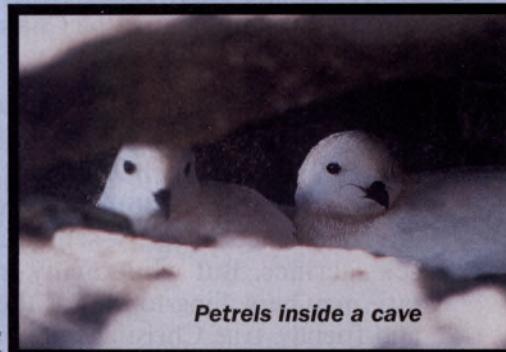
Snow consists of crystals of ice formed directly from water vapor—ten inches of snow is equal to about an inch of water. Snow, therefore, contains a lot of air, which is captured between the crystals. This amazing design makes snow a good insulator against extreme cold, protecting seeds and plants until the spring thaw. Then, like a huge reservoir of congealed water molded to the terrain, the snow melts, watering the soil and feeding the streams.

## Life Under the “Blanket”

Darting about through networks of tunnels just beneath the snow may be any number of tiny, furry animals going about their dai-

ly business, a large part of which is often a frenetic search for food. They include lemmings, voles, and shrews—small, chiefly nocturnal insectivores related to moles. Mice, on the other hand, can often be seen scurrying about on the surface of the snow in search of berries, nuts, seeds, and the soft outer bark of young trees.

How do smaller mammals maintain the right body temperature? Many have not only a warm winter coat but also a built-in furnace in the form of a rapid metabolism. As you can imagine, these living heaters need lots of fuel. Shrews, for instance, eat close to their own weight in insects, larvae, and pupas each day. Proportionately, the smallest species—the pygmy shrew—eats even more! There-



Petrels inside a cave



**Swans**

**Hare**



fore, practically every waking moment is filled with a relentless search for food.

The many tiny mammals, in turn, are high on the menu of predators, including the owl and two members of the weasel family, the ermine and the least weasel. Slender and agile, weasels are well equipped to negotiate snowy, hidden labyrinths in their quest for food. Weasels even hunt rabbits, which exceed them in size.

The owls are also on the prowl. The great gray owl has such acute hearing that it can detect and track a vole moving about beneath the snow—providing that the snow is not too deep. Once the owl locates a target, it plunges into the snow, grasps its hapless prey in its viselike talons, and carries the victim away. Deep snow, however, may spell hunger and even starvation for many predators and overpopulation for prey species.

So that they do not starve during the lean winter season, many animals tap into fat reserves accumulated during the warmer months. Some food, though, is usually available. For example, moose nibble the young branches of trees, especially pines. Squirrels dine on nutritious seeds hidden in their larders, and hares gnaw on young bark, twigs, and shoots. Certain species of birds enjoy frozen berries and pine sprigs.

#### Diving Into Snow From on the Wing!

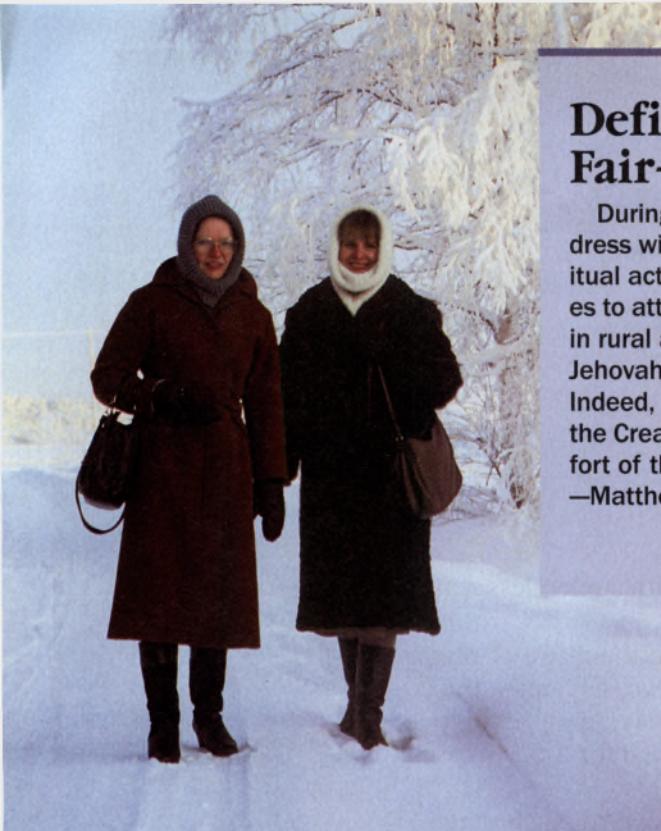
A number of birds exploit the insulating power of snow to keep warm while resting during the day or sleeping at night. They include the hazel hen, the black grouse, and the ptarmigan, as well as smaller birds such as the linnet, the bullfinch, and the sparrow. If the snow is deep and soft, some birds simply dive straight in on the wing, like a seabird plunging into water. This clever strategy leaves no trail of footprints for predators to see or smell.



**Arctic fox**

**Ermine**

Mikko Pöllänen/Kuvaliiteri



## Definitely Not Fair-Weather Christians!

During the winter months, Jehovah's Witnesses in Finland dress with the weather in mind and continue with their spiritual activities. Some Witnesses happily travel long distances to attend Christian meetings. In fact, meeting attendance in rural areas does not suffer during the long, cold months. Jehovah's Witnesses also keep busy in the public ministry. Indeed, they consider it such a privilege to bear witness to the Creator, Jehovah God, that they willingly leave the comfort of their homes to share in proclaiming his Kingdom.

—Matthew 24:14.

Once inside a bank of snow, the birds excavate a horizontal hollow up to three feet long, called a *kieppi* in Finnish. Overnight winds erase from the surface any signs of the life below. When people out for a trek trudge a little too close to one of these avian dens, the crunch of snow alerts the birds. The resulting explosion of snow and wildly beating wings just feet away can give a good jolt to the heart of any unsuspecting trekker!

### Donning the Winter Wardrobe

As the seasons change, some arctic animals camouflage themselves by exchanging summer fur or feathers for a winter coat that blends in with the snowy environment. In Finland, arctic foxes, blue hare, and several species of weasels grow thick, white or near-white fur in the autumn.\*

\* Common names may vary. Blue hare, for example, have many names, including mountain hare, tundra hare, and variable hare.

Similarly, the mottled summer plumage of the ptarmigan gives way to a brilliant white. And their toes, sparsely feathered during the warmer months, become heavily feathered, forming efficient "snowshoes." Even while changing costumes, certain prey species enjoy protection because their variegated tones blend in with the dappled look of ground that is partially covered in snow.

Have you ever wondered why birds, many of which walk about in snow or on ice bare-legged, do not suffer harm or, at the least, extreme discomfort? They possess a superbly engineered heat exchanger in their legs. This amazing design causes warm arterial blood from the heart to travel down the legs and to heat the cool blood returning from the feet.

Yes, from the icy poles to the sweltering Tropics, life does not simply endure our planet's extremes. Instead, it thrives on them. The men and women who discover and film such life usually receive high praise for their efforts—and rightly so! How much more, then, should we praise the Creator of earth's living wonders! Says Revelation 4:11: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created."

# Ancient Manuscripts

## How Are They Dated?



In 1844, Bible scholar Konstantin von Tischendorf visited St. Catherine's monastery, located at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt. Combing through its libraries, he came upon some notable parchments. Being a student of paleography,\* Tischendorf recognized the parchments as leaves from the *Sep-tuagint*, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, or "Old Testament." "I had seen nothing that could be judged as of greater antiquity than these Sinaitic pages," he wrote.

Forming part of what later became known as the Sinaitic Manuscript (Codex Sinaiticus), the parchments have been dated to the fourth century C.E. The Sinaitic is just one of thousands of ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures that make up a truly vast reservoir for scholars to study.

### The Development of Greek Paleography

A Benedictine monk, Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741), laid the foundation for the systematic study of Greek manuscripts. Later, other scholars added their contributions. Tischendorf took up the enormous task of compiling a list of the oldest Greek manuscripts of the Bible in the libraries of Europe. He also made several trips to the Mid-

**Top:**  
*Konstantin von  
Tischendorf*

**Right:**  
*Bernard de  
Montfaucon*



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Musées Nationaux/  
Art Resource, NY

dle East, studied hundreds of documents, and published his findings.

In the 20th century, additional tools became available to paleographers. One is the Marcel Richard list of some 900 catalogs that describe 55,000 Greek manuscripts, Biblical and non-Biblical, belonging to 820 libraries or private owners. This vast amount of information assists translators and also helps paleographers to date manuscripts more accurately.

### How Manuscripts Are Dated

Imagine that you are cleaning the attic of an old house and find a handwritten, undated letter yellowed by time. 'How old is it?' you wonder? Then you spot another old letter. The general style, handwriting, punctuation, and other features resemble that of the first letter. But much to your delight, the second letter has a date on it. Although you are

\* "Paleography . . . is the study of ancient and medieval handwriting. It deals mainly with writing on perishable materials, such as papyrus, parchment, or paper."—*The World Book Encyclopedia*.

400      200      B.C.E.      C.E.      100

## Important Manuscripts

### Dating the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah

The first Dead Sea Scroll of the Bible book of Isaiah, discovered in 1947, was written on leather in a pre-Masoretic Hebrew script. It has been dated to the end of the second century B.C.E. How did scholars arrive at that date? They compared the writing with other Hebrew texts and inscriptions and assigned it a paleographic date between 125 B.C.E. and 100 B.C.E. Carbon-14 dating of the scroll provided additional evidence.

Amazingly, a comparison of the Dead Sea Scrolls with the Masoretic text, prepared



John Rylands  
Papyrus 457  
125 C.E.

#### Dead Sea Scroll Latter 2nd century B.C.E.

many centuries later by scribes called Masoretes, shows no doctrinal change.\* Many of the differences simply involve spelling and grammar. Also noteworthy, the Tetragrammaton—the four Hebrew consonants making up the divine name Jehovah—appears consistently in the Isaiah scroll.

\* The Masoretes, who were meticulous Jewish copyists, lived during the second half of the first millennium C.E.

unable to determine the year that the first letter was written, you may now have a useful clue for estimating the general time period of the undated one.

Most ancient scribes did not mark their copies of Bible manuscripts with the date of completion. To determine an approximate date, scholars compare the texts with other works, including ancient non-Biblical documents for which dates are known, drawing inferences from handwriting, punctuation, abbreviations, and so on. However, several hundred dated manuscripts have been identi-

fied. Handwritten in Greek, they range from about 510 C.E. to 1593 C.E.

#### Clues From Handwriting

Paleographers divide ancient Greek handwriting into two basic categories—*book hand*, which is elegant and formal, and *cursive*, a form of running, or flowing, writing used in nonliterary documents. Greek scribes also used various styles of letters, which can be categorized as *capitals*, *uncials* (a form of capitals), *cursive*, and *minuscules*. One form of book hand, uncial writing, was used from

From the 4th century B.C.E. to the 8th or 9th century C.E.

### Minuscule

From the 8th or 9th century C.E. to the 15th century C.E.

300 400 500 700 800

ΚΑΙ ΣΙΑΝ' ΚΛΙΟΤΑΝΑΙ  
ΓΝΩΣΟΥΝΤΑΙ ΡΥΜΙΝ. ΛΙΘ.  
Η ΣΑΓΕΙΝΑ ΚΛΙΕΝΤΙΙ  
ΟΛΙΚΕΦΩΝΕΚΚΑΝΣΙΑ  
ΝΑΙ ΓΝΩΣΟΝΤΑΙ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ  
ΑΛΛΟΙ ΚΙΑΣΤΝΑΚΛΙΥτ

Vatican Manuscript  
No. 1209  
Early 4th century

ΚΛΙΟΜΟΛΟΓΟΥΜε  
ΝΩΣΜΕΤΑΞΤΙΝ  
ΤΟΤΗΣΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΔ  
ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝΟΣΕ  
ΦΛΕΡΦΩΗΝεαρ

Sinaitic Manuscript  
The 4th century

ΤΑΝΟΤΙΣΟΣΑΒ  
ΑΚΚΑΙΑΚΟΣ ΚΑΙ  
ΤΤΡΟΦΗΤΑΣΕΝΤΗΙ  
ΥΜΑΣΔΕΚΒΑΛΛΟΜ  
ΚΑΠΗΣΟΥΣΙΝΑΤΤΟΑ  
ΚΑΛΥΩΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΒΟ

Alexandrine Manuscript  
Early 5th century

the fourth century B.C.E. till the eighth or ninth century C.E. Minuscule writing, a small form of book hand, was employed from the 8th or 9th century C.E. till the middle of the 15th century, when printing by means of movable type began in Europe. Minuscule script could be written more rapidly and compactly, which saved both time and parchment.

Paleographers have their preferred methods of dating manuscripts. Generally speaking, they first take an overall look at the script—a wide-angle view, as it were—and then they examine it more closely, analyzing individual letters. Because it usually took a long time for significant changes to occur in the general style of handwriting, a close examination of the script, while useful, provides only a broad indication of the time of writing.

Thankfully, there are other ways to narrow down the date. These include identifying and dating the introduction of certain handwriting practices. For instance, in Greek texts after the year 900 C.E., scribes began to increase the use of ligatures (two or more char-

*By carefully examining dated manuscripts, paleographers are able to assign dates to undated works*

acters joined together). Scribes also began to use infralinear writing (the writing of certain Greek letters below the line) as well as pronunciation aids called breathing marks.

A person's handwriting tends to remain constant throughout his life. Therefore, texts often cannot be dated to within 50 years. What is more, scribes sometimes used earlier manuscripts as models, making the copy seem older than it is. Despite the many challenges, however, dates have been assigned to a number of important Bible manuscripts.

### Dating Key Greek Bible Manuscripts

The Alexandrine Manuscript (Codex Alexandrinus), now held in the British Library, was the first of the major Bible manuscripts made available to scholars. It contains most of the Bible and is written in Greek uncials on

vellum, a fine grade of parchment. This codex has been dated to the early fifth century C.E., largely because of the changes that occurred in uncial writing between the fifth and sixth centuries, as exemplified in a dated document called the *Dioscorides of Vienna*.<sup>\*</sup>

A second major manuscript made available to scholars is the *Sinaitic Manuscript* (*Codex Sinaiticus*), acquired by Tischendorf at St. Catherine's monastery. Penned in Greek uncials on parchment, it contains part of the Hebrew Scriptures from the Greek Septuagint version as well as all of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Of this codex, 43 leaves are held in Leipzig, Germany; 347 leaves at the British Library in London; and portions of 3 leaves in St. Petersburg, Russia. The manuscript has been dated to the latter part of the fourth century C.E. This date is supported by marginal tables in the Gospels known to have been devised by fourth-century historian Eusebius of Caesarea.<sup>#</sup>

A third important work is the *Vatican Manuscript No. 1209* (*Codex Vaticanus*), which originally contained the entire Bible in Greek. This codex appeared in the *Vatican Library catalog* for the first time in 1475. Written in Greek uncials on 759 leaves of fine parchment, or vellum, the codex contains much of the Bible, with the exception of most of Genesis, part of the Psalms, and portions of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

\* The *Dioscorides of Vienna* was written for a certain Juliana Anicia, who died in either 527 or 528 C.E. The document "is the earliest example of uncial writing on vellum to which an approximate date can be given."—*An Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography*, by E. M. Thompson.

# The so-called Eusebian canons are a set of tables, or a cross-reference system, "for showing which passages in each Gospel are similar to passages in other Gospels."—*Manuscripts of the Greek Bible*, by Bruce M. Metzger.

Scholars have assigned the manuscript to the early fourth century C.E. How did they arrive at this date? The writing is similar to that of the *Sinaitic Manuscript*, also of the fourth century. The *Vaticanus*, though, is generally regarded as being a little older. Among other things, for example, it lacks the cross-references of the Eusebian canons.

### Treasure From a Rubbish Heap

In 1920 the John Rylands Library of Manchester, England, acquired a pile of papyruses newly unearthed in an ancient Egyptian rubbish heap. While examining the items, which included letters, receipts, and census documents, scholar Colin Roberts saw a fragment inscribed with text he recognized—a few verses from John chapter 18. It was the earliest Christian Greek text identified up to that time.

The fragment came to be known as the *John Rylands Papyrus 457*, internationally designated as P<sup>52</sup>. Penned in Greek uncials, it has been dated to the early second century—within just a few decades of the original writing of the Gospel of John! Significantly, the text agrees almost exactly with that found in much later manuscripts.

### Ancient but Accurate!

In his book *The Bible and Archaeology*, British textual critic Sir Frederic Kenyon wrote concerning the Christian Greek Scriptures: "Both the *authenticity* and the *general integrity* of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established." Similarly, regarding the integrity of the Hebrew Scriptures, scholar William H. Green stated: "It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted."

Those observations call to mind the words of the apostle Peter: "All flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like a blossom of grass; the grass becomes withered, and the flower falls off, but the saying of Jehovah endures forever."—1 Peter 1:24, 25.

1. Jesus washed the feet, not the hands. 2. No other disciples helped Jesus. 3. Jesus also dried the disciples' feet. 4. Enoch.—Luke 3:37. 5. Methuselah.—Luke 3:37. 6. Lamech.—Luke 3:36.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

**O**N February 3, 2004, a train almost three quarters of a mile long eased into Darwin Railway Station in Australia's sparsely populated Northern Territory. Thousands of people were on hand to celebrate its arrival. Dubbed *The Ghan*, the train had just completed its inaugural 1,850-mile, two-day south-to-north crossing of the continent.—See the box “The Legend Behind the Name,” on page 25.

More than 2,000 camera-laden spectators had gathered along the rail line, so the train had to slow down as it approached the city of Darwin. As a result, it arrived about 30 minutes late. But no one complained. The nation had been waiting for over a century already. Traversing one of the driest, hottest, and loneliest regions on earth, the line from Adelaide to Darwin had taken 126 years to complete.

### The Need for a Railway

In the late 1870's, the tiny colony of Adelaide, at the eastern end of a wide bay called the Great Australian Bight, had dreams of opening up economic development in the region and establishing a better trade route to the far north. The United States had completed its transcontinental railroad in 1869. Thinking on a similar scale, Adelaide's citizens hoped to build a railway linking their colony to Port Darwin, as Darwin was then called. This steel highway would not only open up the interior but also dramatically cut travel time to Asia and Europe.

The concept appeared simple, but the railway would need to cross a brutal mosaic of rocky hills and mountain ranges, dense scrub, and sandy and stony deserts—parts of which turned into quagmire or raging torrents after rain. Explorer John Stuart had finally crossed *this harsh* terrain on his third attempt in

# Over 120 Years to Cross a Continent

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRALIA



1862. But along the way, both he and his party nearly died from lack of food and water.

### Blistering Heat, Sandstorms, and Flash Floods

Despite the obstacles, the citizens of Adelaide were undeterred. In 1878 they started work on the line at Port Augusta. Using only hand tools, horses, and camels, 900 railway workers pushed the line north along Aboriginal trails through the Flinders Ranges. This route took advantage of the only water holes in the region, for steam trains need water to operate.

The first 60 miles of track took two and a half years to lay. Summer temperatures sometimes climbed to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. In this dry heat, fingernails cracked, ink dried on pen nibs before it could be put to paper, and rail lines buckled. Train derailments were common. After sandstorms, workers had to clear sand drifts from miles of track, some drifts being up to six feet deep. Often, the

▲ Northern Territory Archives Service, Joe DAVIS, NTRS 573

workers stood helpless as more storms undid their work.

Then came the rains. Within minutes, bleached riverbeds became raging torrents that twisted rail lines, swept away months of work, and stranded trains with their passengers. One engine driver shot wild goats in order to feed the travelers. Many years later, food was dropped to a stranded train by parachute.

Following the rains, desert plants sprang to life and beckoned waves of locusts. During one plague, the tracks became so greasy with squashed insects that an additional locomotive was needed to push from the rear. Plagues of rats presented yet another problem. The rodents devoured anything they considered edible—camp supplies, canvas, animal harnesses, and even boots. A lonely cemetery lies alongside the track—a reminder of a typhoid outbreak and testimony to the unsanitary conditions of camp life in the early stages of the project.

For entertainment, train crews were not averse to the odd practical joke. Once when the Alice Springs area was experiencing a rabbit plague, crew members smuggled rabbits aboard *The Ghan*. The next morning when passengers opened their cabin doors to go to breakfast, they stepped into corridors that were “alive with bewildered bunnies,” says the book *The Ghan—From Adelaide to Alice*. On another trip, someone let a joey, a young kangaroo, loose in the sleeping cars.

Aborigines who lived in remote areas sometimes approached the line as the train passed. From a safe distance, they saw people inside. Understandably, the Aborigines were at first wary, if not afraid. In fact, some thought that “a giant devil-snake” had swallowed the passengers alive!

### A Long Pause

After 13 years of backbreaking labor, when the railhead was about 290 miles from Alice



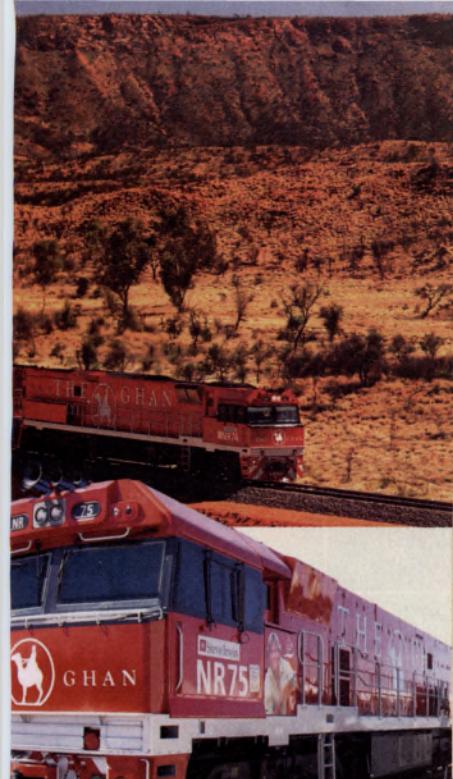
Springs, funds ran out. “The sheer scale of such an undertaking . . . simply overwhelmed the colony,” says *Australian Geographic*. In 1911 the federal government took control of the project and extended the railway to Alice Springs. However, plans to complete the line to Darwin, 880 miles farther to the north, were shelved.

When *The Ghan* first arrived in Alice Springs in 1929, the whole town—some 200 people at the time—turned out to celebrate. The locals marveled at the dining car, but the feature that stirred the most interest was the elegant bathroom. In those days, to have a bathtub on a train was both a novelty and a luxury. Alice Springs remained the railway’s northern terminus until 1997. In that year the state and federal governments agreed to complete the long-awaited Alice Springs-to-Darwin rail extension. Work commenced in 2001.

Huge automated machines laid the \$1.3 billion (about \$1 billion, U.S.) track at a rate of a mile a day, crossing at least 90 new flood-proof bridges along the way. Billed as “the biggest infrastructure project in Australia,” the 880-mile line was completed under budget and ahead of schedule in October 2003.

### Allure of the Outback

Today the modern city of Adelaide remains the afternoon departure point for *The Ghan*’s continental crossing. Leaving behind subur-



## The Legend Behind the Name



*The Ghan* is an abbreviation for the nickname *The Afghan Express*. How the train came to be named after the Afghan camelmen is uncertain. Nevertheless, the designation calls to mind those hardy immigrants who helped open up the Australian outback. Collectively called Afghans, many in fact came from such diverse places as Baluchistan, Egypt, Northern India, Pakistan, Persia, and Turkey.

Their camels became the vehicles of the outback, obediently kneeling or rising to the command "Hooshta!" Camel trains of up to 70 beasts hauled people and freight at a steady pace of about four miles an hour. When rail and road transport made camel trains obsolete, the Afghans turned their animals loose. Today, the descendants of those camels—numbering into the hundreds of thousands—roam wild in central Australia.—See *Awake!* of April 8, 2001, pages 16-17.

◀ Train photos: Great Southern Railway

bria, the twin locomotives and some 40 carriages wind their way through rolling wheat fields to Port Augusta, nearly 190 miles to the north. Here the scenery changes dramatically into a hostile landscape of sand, saltbush, and scrub that stretches to the horizon.

Beyond Port Augusta, *The Ghan* travels on a new, all-weather track that lies up to 150 miles or so west of the old flood-prone line. Night settles over the desert, and the passengers sleep as the train glides past salt lakes that are bone dry for much of the year but shimmer in the moonlight after rain. Countless stars fill the clear night sky. Absent, however, is the clickety-clack of yesterday, for the rails are seamless, welded into one continuous length in order to reduce maintenance.

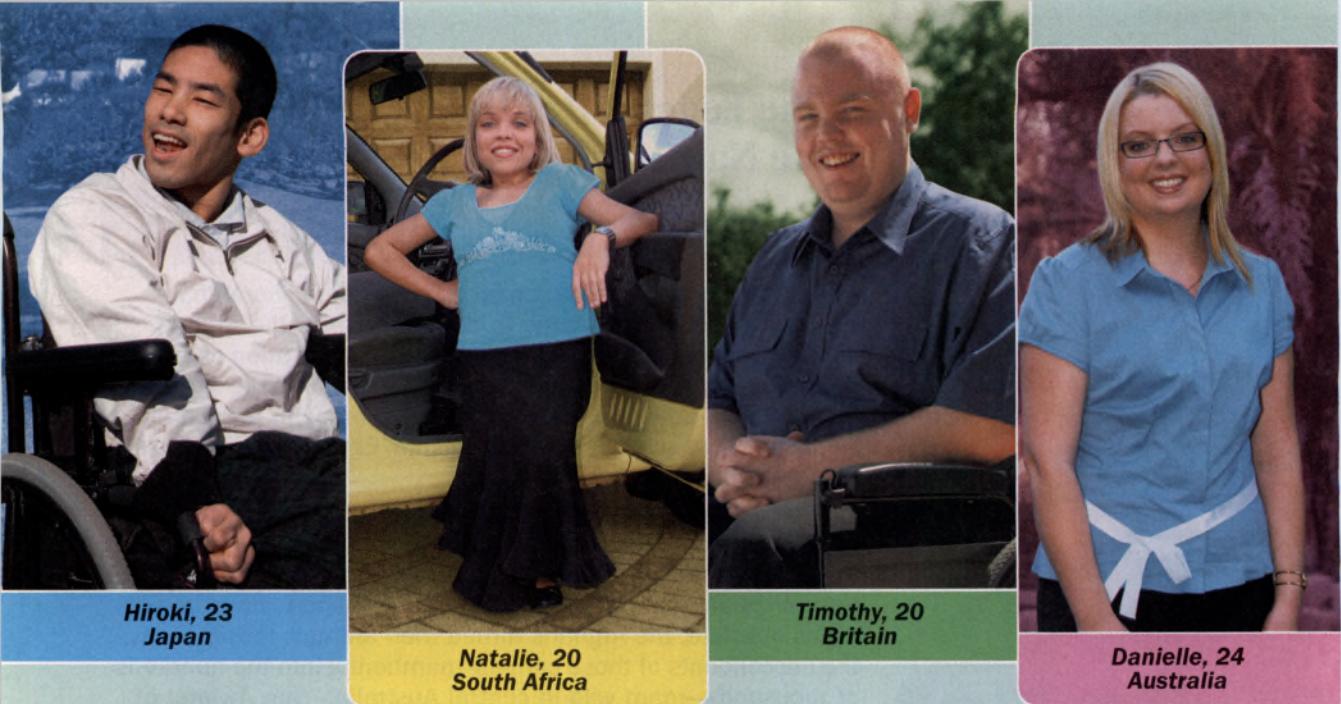
At dawn, the desert near Alice Springs glows red and gold under the rising sun. "The scene is awe-inspiring," said one passenger. "Even in the train I could sense the power of the sun. It burst over an endless, rolling des-

ert landscape so broad, so colorful, so dreadful in its emptiness that it was overwhelming. This is a humbling place."

### From Outback to Tropics

Following an afternoon stopover in Alice Springs, *The Ghan* continues on to the town of Katherine and then to its northern terminus, tropical Darwin. Cocooned inside air-conditioned carriages, "passengers on *The Ghan* enjoy luxury on wheels," says Larry Ierace, train manager for *The Ghan*'s inaugural crossing. Looking out their windows, they can only imagine the perils and hardships experienced by the early pioneers.

Besides fostering trade and providing one of the great railway journeys of the world, *The Ghan* has brought another serving of the modern world into the heart of the outback. A 19-year-old Aboriginal girl who witnessed the train's inaugural journey in February 2004 said: "I've never seen a train before in my life. It's beautiful."



## YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

# How can I cope if I'm not well?

**T**HE glory of the young is their strength,” says Proverbs 20:29. (*The Jerusalem Bible*) If you’re sick or disabled, you might feel as if that scripture could never apply to you. But it can! The fact is, many youths with disabilities and chronic illnesses have overcome the most daunting of obstacles. *Awake!* interviewed four such youths.

*Hiroki*, in Japan, has suffered with cerebral palsy from birth. “My neck muscles aren’t able to hold my head up straight, and my hands do just the opposite of what I want them to,” he says. “I’m completely dependent on others for help.”

*Natalie* and her brother, James, in South Africa, were born with a rare form of dwarfism. Natalie also has scoliosis, a deformity of the spine. “I have undergone four spinal sur-

geries,” she says, “and because of the curvature of my spine, I have weak lungs.”

*Timothy*, in Britain, was diagnosed at the age of 17 with chronic fatigue syndrome. “In less than two months,” he says, “I went from being healthy and active to being so weak that my legs would not support me.”

*Danielle*, in Australia, was diagnosed with diabetes at 19 years of age. “Since diabetes isn’t visible,” she says, “some people don’t realize how serious it is. The fact is, diabetes could kill me.”

If you suffer from some form of illness or disability, no doubt you’ll find the comments of Hiroki, Natalie, Timothy, and Danielle to be encouraging. If you enjoy good health, their comments may help you to be more understanding of those who struggle with disability or illness.

## **Awake!: What is most challenging about your condition?**

*Natalie:* For me, it's dealing with how people react when they see me. I never feel at ease. I feel as if I'm constantly being looked at.

*Danielle:* With diabetes, the main challenge is knowing what to eat, how much to eat, and which foods I need to limit. An imbalance in my diet could lead to hypoglycemia, which could put me in a coma.

*Hiroki:* I have a special wheelchair that's adapted to my physique, and I spend about 15 hours a day in one position. Also, I don't sleep well. The slightest noise wakes me up.

*Timothy:* At first, my biggest challenge was just accepting the fact that I was sick. I was embarrassed by my condition.

## **Awake!: What other difficulties do you face?**

*Danielle:* Diabetes causes me to be very tired. I need more sleep than others my age do. Also, diabetes is a chronic illness for which there is no cure.

*Natalie:* Obviously, the height issue comes into play for me. Doing ordinary things—like reaching for items on the shelf at a store—is a challenge. When I shop alone, it takes a lot of effort.

*Timothy:* I've had to cope with continuous pain, along with bouts of depression. Before I got sick, I was very active. I had a job and a driver's license. I'd play sports, such as football and squash. Now I'm confined to a wheelchair.

*Hiroki:* I have a speech disability. This discourages me and holds me back from starting conversations. Sometimes, involuntary hand movements cause me to hit someone accidentally. When this happens, I can't even say "I'm sorry," on account of my speech problem.

## **Awake!: What has helped you to cope with your situation?**

*Danielle:* I try to focus on the good things

## Comfort From the Bible

- Jesus has genuine compassion for those who are ailing.—Mark 1:41.
- By "curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity," Jesus demonstrated the healing that will take place under God's Kingdom.—Matthew 4:23.
- In God's new world, "no resident will say: 'I am sick,'" and pain will be no more.—Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:1-4.
- Even death will be "brought to nothing." —1 Corinthians 15:25, 26.

in my life. I have a wonderful family, I have loving friends in the congregation and, most of all, I have Jehovah God as my support. I also try to keep up-to-date with information on diabetes management. I take responsibility for my health and do my best to look after myself.

*Natalie:* Prayer is a source of strength. I try to deal with my problems one at a time. Keeping busy helps me not to dwell on negative thoughts. And I have two wonderful parents in whom I can confide.

*Timothy:* I do something spiritual each day, even if it's just for a short time. For example, I start each day with a consideration of the daily text. Personal Bible study and prayer are very important to me, especially when I'm at an emotional low.

*Hiroki:* I try not to worry about things that I can't do anything about. That's a waste of time. On the other hand, I do all I can to build myself up spiritually, and I don't use my condition as an excuse not to study the Bible. When I can't sleep, I view it as an opportunity to pray.—See Romans 12:12.

## **Awake!: How have others encouraged you?**

*Hiroki:* The elders always commend me for the little that I can do. The brothers and sisters in the congregation also take me with

them on their return visits and Bible studies.—See Romans 12:10.

*Danielle:* Probably the thing that touches me most is when the brothers and sisters in the congregation sincerely commend me. That makes me feel appreciated, and it encourages me to continue.

*Timothy:* There's an elderly sister who always makes a special effort to talk to me at the meetings. Elders and their wives have also given me encouragement and practical advice. One elder, who is 84 years old, has helped me to set reachable goals. A ministerial servant invited me to work with him in the ministry, and he arranged for us to work in an area that was flat and therefore accessible to my wheelchair.—See Psalm 55:22.

*Natalie:* As soon as I walk into the Kingdom Hall, my spiritual brothers and sisters greet me with warm smiles. The older ones always have an encouraging thought to share, despite their own hardships.—See 2 Corinthians 4:16, 17.

#### **Awake! What helps you to keep a positive attitude?**

*Hiroki:* As one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I as-

sociate with an organization of people who have a bright hope. Realizing what I'm part of helps me to be positive.—See 2 Chronicles 15:7.

*Danielle:* I think about the privilege I have of understanding God's purpose. There are people who are in good health, yet they aren't as satisfied with their life as I am with mine.—See Proverbs 15:15.

*Natalie:* I find it important to surround myself with people who are positive. It's also encouraging to read experiences of others who are serving Jehovah despite trials. And when I go to the Kingdom Hall, I always know I'll be strengthened and reminded of what a privilege it is to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses.—See Hebrews 10:24, 25.

*Timothy:* According to 1 Corinthians 10:13, Jehovah won't let us go through more than we can bear. I reason that if my Creator is confident that I can cope with this trial, who am I to argue?

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

#### **TO THINK ABOUT**

- Hiroki and Timothy are both confined to wheelchairs. If you are in a similar situation, how can their comments help you to maintain a positive attitude?
  - Danielle notes that "since diabetes isn't visible, some people don't realize how serious it is." Do you too suffer from an "invisible" illness? If so, what lessons can you learn from Danielle's expressions?
  - Natalie says that one of the biggest challenges she faces is dealing with how people react when they see her. How would you put someone like Natalie at ease? If you have an illness or a disability that makes you feel the way Natalie does, how can you imitate her positive attitude?
  - List below the names of people you know of who suffer from a disability or a chronic illness.
  
  - What can you do to be supportive of each one of them?
-

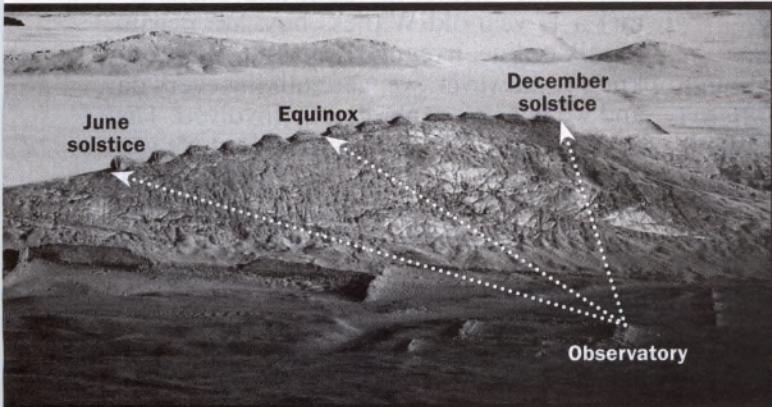
## Freedom of Religion Reaffirmed in Georgia

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled against the government of the country of Georgia for its toleration of religious violence toward Jehovah's Witnesses. The court reaffirmed the right of the Witnesses, as a known Christian religion, to meet for worship and Bible study and ordered that the victims be compensated for legal costs and suffering. Between October 1999 and November 2002, 138 violent attacks were made on Jehovah's Witnesses and 784 complaints were lodged with the Georgian authorities. However, no serious investigation of the complaints was made. The police even refused to intervene promptly and protect the victims. The violence has largely abated since November 2003.

## ▼ Ancient Solar Observatory in Peru

Archaeologists have now suggested that an enigmatic, 2,300-year-old ruin in Peru was, in part, a solar observatory. The site, called Chankillo, includes a line of 13 towers atop a ridge, forming a smoothly curved, "toothed" horizon. Viewing points were "positioned so that on the winter and summer solstices the sun rises and sets over the towers on the opposite [ends] of the line, establishing the beginning and midpoint of the solar year," explains *Science* magazine. The intermediate

REUTERS/Ivan Ghezzi/Handout



■ "Whether because of global warming or some other cause, the number of climate-related catastrophes tripled between the 1970s and the 1990s."—THE ECONOMIST, BRITAIN

■ A 10-month-old boy has a legal gun permit for the state of Illinois, U.S.A. The permit, requested by his father, gives the baby's height, two feet three inches, and weight, 20 pounds. There are no restrictions there on the age of applicants.

—CABLE NEWS NETWORK, U.S.A.

■ Scientists have turned water that is under extreme compression into ice "hotter than the boiling point of water." In addition to "ordinary" ice, there are "at least 11 other known forms of ice occurring at a variety of temperatures and pressures."

—SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES, U.S.A.

towers mark the positions of sunrise and sunset at certain other points. In this arid environment, knowing when to plant crops was vital, so "people [needed] to know the date with some precision."

## Pictures That Make Women Feel Bad

"The rail-thin blonde bombshell on the cover of a magazine makes all women feel badly about their own bodies despite the size, shape, height or age of the viewers." So says a report from the University of Missouri-Columbia, United States. According to Laurie Mintz, associate professor of education, school, and counseling psychology, "it had been thought that women who are heavier feel worse than a thinner woman after viewing pictures of the thin ideal in the mass media." However, "we found that weight was not a factor. Viewing these pictures was just bad for everyone," says Mintz.



**Noah's Ark and Naval Architecture** (January 2007) I always knew that the ark was wonderfully made, but I didn't understand just how well it was made. This article explained in an easy-to-understand way how the length, width, and height made it very seaworthy. I decided to make a model of the ark with the young people in our congregation, using the diagram provided. We made origami (paper model) animals and put them in the ark and drew pictures of Noah and his family. We got to know more about this Bible event by experiencing a part of it ourselves. Thank you very much.

T. A., Japan

My six-year-old son loves to build models. He and I were both thrilled when at the end of the *Awake!* article, we discovered the instructions on how to build a scale model of Noah's ark. What a great afternoon we had together, thanks to your wonderful article! With the busy world we live in and the pressures our little ones face every week at school, it is truly a blessing to be given a tool like *Awake!* to assist parents in rearing their young ones in Jehovah's ways.

M. F., United States

**Young People Ask . . . How Can I Conquer This Habit?** (November 2006) My heart was touched when I read the article and realized how Jehovah cares for us and helps us solve our problems. Even though we experience relapses, Jehovah is "ready to forgive." (Psalm 86:5) Being aware of this helps us young ones to "flee from the desires incidental to youth."—2 Timothy 2:22.

V.F.F., Brazil

**Young People Ask . . . Why So Many Rules?** (December 2006) I have been studying the Bible for six years now. Though my parents are very strict with us children, I know that they really care about me. When I read this article, it helped me to understand the concerns my parents have and helped me to appreciate Jehovah's personal care for me.

But there was a time in my life when I wanted to live another way. Like Meros Sunday, I experienced many ups and downs, and after three years of being away from Jehovah, I began asking him for help. Now I am "home" again! Thank you for your work.

D. K., Ukraine

**Young People Ask . . . When Can I Start Dating?** (January 2007) I am 15 years old. While visiting my aunt and uncle, I met a 17-year-old Witness boy. We began to talk online, irregularly at first. Before we knew it, however, we were talking every day, and we became romantically involved. Then I read this article and realized that we were actually dating. With the help of my parents and the *Awake!* article, I made the best decision—to discontinue the relationship with the boy. We remain friends, but I put my re-





## What Is Wrong With This Picture?

Identify three things in this picture that do not match the Bible account at John 13:2-14.

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....

**FOR DISCUSSION:**  
**What qualities did Jesus demonstrate in this account?**  
**How can you imitate Jesus when dealing with your family?**

Third circle: Northern Territory Archives Service, Joe DAVIS, NTRS 573

## From This Issue

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

**PAGE 5 What is one reason why ‘the heart of some becomes fully set in them to do bad?’ Ecclesiastes 8:\_\_\_\_\_**

**PAGE 8 How secure is the standing of the wicked?**

Psalm 73:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 10 How far off does God put our transgressions?**

Psalm 103:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 27 What did Jesus do that gives hope to youths and others who are not well? Matthew 4:\_\_\_\_\_**



## Children's Picture Search

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

## Who Is Part of Jesus' Family Tree?

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

4 .....

**CLUE: I was “transferred so as not to see death.”**

Read Hebrews 11:5.



5 .....

**CLUE: I lived the longest of any human recorded in the Bible.**

Read Genesis 5:27.

6 .....

**CLUE: My son built the ark.**

Read Genesis 5:28, 29 and Hebrews 11:7.

# A Book for All People

What book, do you think, really lives up to the above description? A woman in Colorado, U.S.A., received the brochure entitled *A Book for All People*, which describes what the Bible contains and why it is an important book for everyone to read today. In a brief note expressing thanks for the brochure, she wrote:

"Simply enjoyed it. Read it to the finish. Just could not stop reading it. It brings out all the highlights of God's Word, providing a beautiful understanding of how the Bible and science agree. The brochure tells how the Bible was translated so all people could read it and also how it has survived."

Indeed, the Bible is the most remarkable book ever written, having a greater circulation than any other book in history. Even though the Bible was completed some 2,000 years ago, it is scientifically accurate and its teachings are a practical guide for modern-day living.

