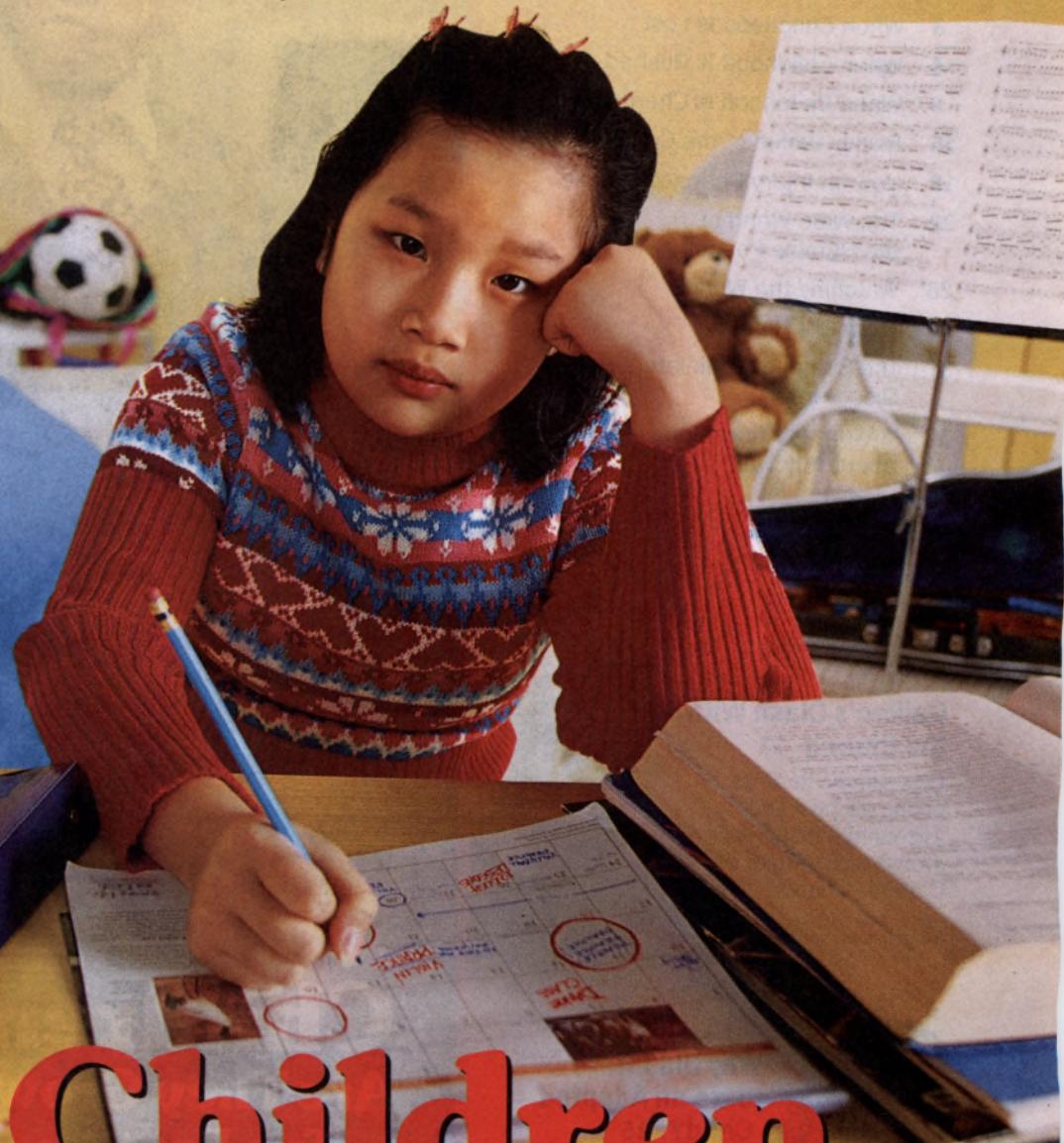


Awake!

APRIL 22, 2003



Children
**ARE THEY GROWING UP
TOO FAST?**

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 22,755,000
PUBLISHED IN 86 LANGUAGES

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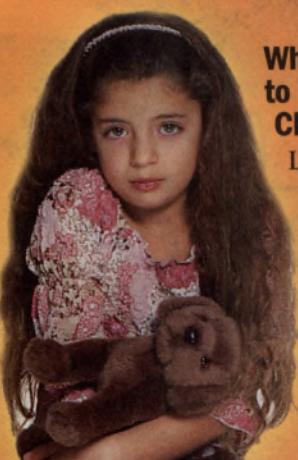
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Children Are They Growing Up Too Fast? 3-10

Childhood is often a casualty of our modern world. Many children lose it abruptly; many are simply rushed through it. Why? And what can parents do to cherish childhood?

When Childhood Is Lost

"Childhood is the most basic human right of children." — "The Hurried Child."

YOU would likely agree that all children should be able to enjoy a relatively carefree and innocent childhood. Nonetheless, it is a sad fact of life that for many young boys and girls, such a childhood is out of reach. Just think of the thousands, perhaps millions, of childhood dreams that are shattered when children become victims of war. Imagine, too, all those children whose lives are blighted by slavery or abuse.

For most of us, it is difficult to imagine how a child feels when forced to live on the streets because of feeling safer there than at home. Just when they need all the love and protection they can get, such children have to learn to be streetwise enough to fend off predators eager to exploit them. Again and again, childhood itself is a casualty of our troubled times.

"I Wish I Could Have My Childhood Back"

Carmen, aged 22, struggled through her childhood years.* She and her sister were forced to live on the streets in order to escape their father's abuse and their mother's neglect. Despite the dangers of living this way, both girls managed to dodge some of the pitfalls that engulf so many young runaways.

Still, Carmen grieves for her childhood, for she really cannot recall having one. "I went from infancy to 22 years of age with nothing in between," she laments. "Now I am married and have a child of my own, but I crave to do the things little girls do, like playing with dolls. I want to be loved and hugged by parents. I wish I could have my childhood back."

* Name has been changed.



There are large numbers of children who suffer as Carmen and her sister did. They live on the streets, essentially robbed of their childhood. Many of these engage in crime in order to survive. News reports and statistics show that children are getting involved in crime at startlingly early ages. Exacerbating that problem is another one: Many girls become parents while still in their teens—really, children themselves.

A Hidden Social Crisis

Not surprisingly, increasing numbers of children wind up in foster care. An editorial printed in the *Weekend Australian* newspaper reported: "A crisis in foster care has crept up on us. More children from broken homes and fractured families are falling through the cracks." The newspaper also noted: "Some foster children go for months, even years, without any contact from caseworkers, while

others are moved from carer to carer, never finding a permanent home."

One reported case involved a 13-year-old girl who was placed in 97 foster homes in a period of three years—some placements lasting just one night. She recalls now the intense feelings of rejection and insecurity that afflicted her. For many foster children like her, childhood has been lost.

Little wonder, then, that experts today speak of the growing tragedy of lost childhood. If you are a parent, you may look at these grim facts and count yourself fortunate to be able to provide your children with a home and the necessities of life. But there is another danger. In today's world childhood is not always lost altogether. Sometimes it is merely *rushed*. How so, and with what effects?

When Childhood Is Rushed

UNDER a brooding sky, the motor of the single-engine airplane roared as the small craft gathered speed and lifted off the runway. It had been a media event, with news coverage, cameras pointing, and reporters asking admiring questions and gushing with compliments. Who was attracting all this attention? Not the only licensed pilot aboard the plane and not the lone passenger—an adult male—but, rather, the passenger's daughter. She was seven years old.

The little girl was to fly the plane. There was a record of some kind to be broken and a tight schedule to be met. The media would be waiting at the next stop. So despite the gloomy weather, the three climbed aboard, with the

child sitting on a cushion so that she could see over the instrument panel and using extenders so that her feet could reach the floor pedals.

The flight was all too brief. Facing a sudden storm, the plane veered, stalled, and crashed, killing all three aboard. The media suddenly trumpeted grief instead of praise. A few reporters and editors wondered whether the media had played a role in the tragedy. Many people began to insist that no child should fly a plane. In the United States, laws were enacted to that effect. But behind the sensationalism and simple solutions lurked deeper issues.

That tragedy made some people think seriously about a trend of our times. Children today are being hurried through childhood,

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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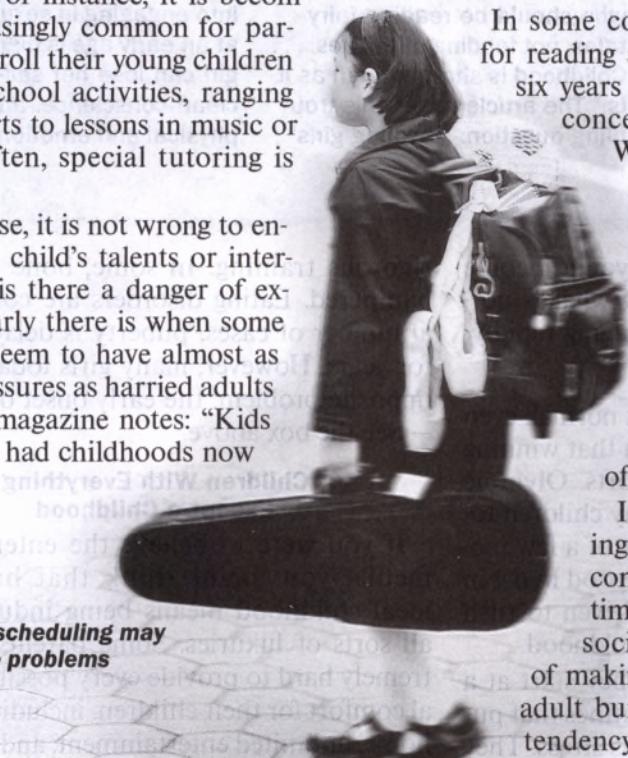
rushed into taking on adult tasks at a very early age. Granted, the effects are not always so dramatic or so tragic. But they can be profound and long lasting. Let us consider a few of the ways in which childhood can be rushed.

Educated in a Hurry

Parents are understandably eager to see their children succeed. But when that eagerness turns into anxiety, parents may overload their children, pushing them too hard, too soon. The process often starts innocently enough. For instance, it is becoming increasingly common for parents to enroll their young children in after-school activities, ranging from sports to lessons in music or ballet. Often, special tutoring is added.

Of course, it is not wrong to encourage a child's talents or interests. But is there a danger of excess? Clearly there is when some children seem to have almost as many pressures as harried adults do. *Time* magazine notes: "Kids who once had childhoods now

Excessive scheduling may cause problems



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have curriculums; kids who ought to move with the lunatic energy of youth now move with the high purpose of the worker bee."

Some parents hope that their young children might launch careers as athletic, musical, or acting prodigies. Before their children are born, parents are already enrolling them in preschool, hoping to improve their prospects of success. In addition, some mothers enroll in "prenatal universities" that offer music education for babies still in the womb. The aim is to stimulate their developing brains.

In some countries children are assessed for reading and math skills before they are six years old. Such practices have raised concerns about emotional damage.

What happens, for example, to a child who "fails" kindergarten?

David Elkind, author of the book *The Hurred Child*, notes that schools tend to label children too quickly and too early. They do so, Elkind argues, for management reasons rather than for reasons related to the effective teaching of children.

Is there a price for pressuring children to become, in effect, competent little adults before their time? Elkind is troubled by the way society has embraced the notion of making children competent to carry adult burdens. He says: "It reflects our tendency to accept the increasing and

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Would you welcome more information? Write Jehovah's Witnesses at the appropriate address: **America, United States of:** Wallkill, NY 12589. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4. **Ghana:** P. O. Box GP 760, Accra. **Jamaica:** P. O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **New Zealand:** P.O. Box 75-142, Manurewa. **Nigeria:** P.M.B. 1090, Benin City 300001, Edo State. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Zambia:** Box 33459, Lusaka 10101. **Zimbabwe:** Private Bag WG-5001, Westgate.

The Challenge of Early Puberty

Are girls reaching puberty at younger ages today? Among scientists, the question is controversial. Some say that in the middle of the 19th century, the average age for the onset of puberty in girls was 17, whereas it is under 13 today. According to a 1997 study of 17,000 girls, about 15 percent of white girls and 50 percent of African-American girls in the United States show early signs of puberty at the age of eight! However, some doctors dispute these findings and caution par-

ents against simply accepting extremely early development as "normal."

In any case, this situation presents a challenge both to parents and to children. *Time* magazine comments: "Even more troubling than the physical changes is the potential psychological effect of premature sexual development on children who should be reading fairy tales, not fending off wolves. . . . Childhood is short enough as it is." The article raises this troubling question: "If young girls'

bodies push them into adulthood before their hearts and minds are ready, what will be forever lost?"

Often, what is lost is innocence—through sexual exploitation. One mother states bluntly: "Girls who look more mature for their age are like honey [to a bee]. They attract older boys." The price of being pressured into engaging in sexual activity at an early age is high. A young girl can lose her self-respect, clean conscience, and even physical and emotional health.

unrelenting stresses on today's young people as 'normal.'" Indeed, notions of what is normal for children seem to be changing rapidly.

In a Hurry to Win

Many parents seem to think it normal, even advisable, to teach their children that winning is everything—especially in sports. Olympic medals are an incentive for many children today. In order to bask in the glory of a few moments of victory and to secure a good living in adulthood, some children are driven to rush through or even to forgo their childhood.

Consider female gymnasts. They start at a very young age with rigorous routines that put their tiny bodies under enormous stress. They spend years preparing mentally and physically for the Olympic competitions. Of course, only a few will be winners. Will the losers feel that the end results were worth the sacrifice of much of their youth? In the long run, even the winners may have doubts on that score.

Emotionally, these little girls may be rushed through childhood in a relentless drive to become superstar athletes. But physically their natural development may be hindered by such

rigorous training. In some, bone growth is hampered. Eating disorders are common. In a number of cases, puberty is delayed—even for years. However, many girls today face the opposite problem: the early onset of puberty. —See the box above.

Children With Everything Except a Childhood

If you were to believe the entertainment media, you might think that having the ideal childhood means being indulged with all sorts of luxuries. Some parents work extremely hard to provide every possible material comfort for their children, including a lavish home, unlimited entertainment, and expensive clothes.

Yet, more than a few children raised that way are involved in drinking, drugs, and sullen, rebellious behavior. Why? Many seethe with resentment because they feel neglected. Children need parents who are there to love and care for them. Parents who are too busy to do so may believe that they are working to ensure their children's happiness—but they may well be doing the opposite.

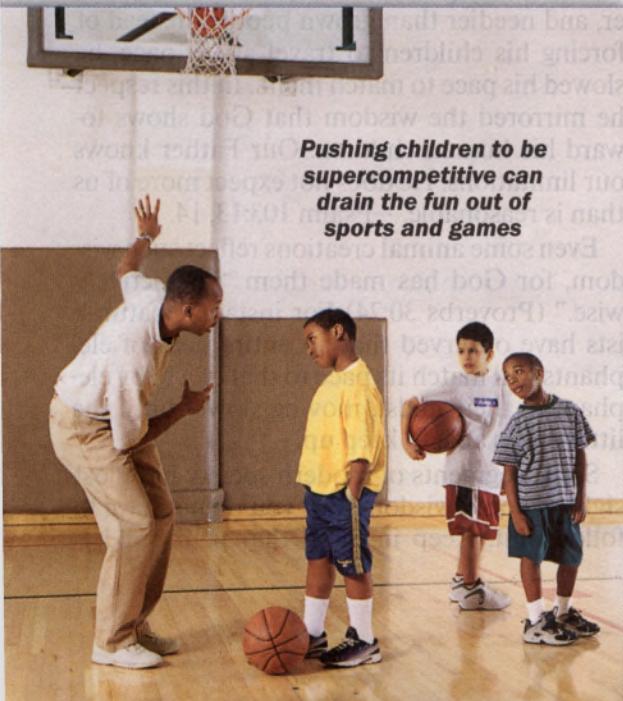
Dr. Judith Paphazy describes "parents who both work, from good socio-economic groups," and says that often they "indulge their children because they subconsciously realise their pursuit of things comes at the cost of the family." In her view parents in such cases try to "buy their way out of being parents."

The children often pay a high price. Although they may have many material luxuries, they lack the most essential ingredients of a good childhood: parental time and love. Without guidance, without discipline and direction, they face very adult questions too soon, with little or no preparation. 'Should I take drugs? Engage in sex? Get violent when I'm angry?' They will likely find their own answers, taking them from peers or TV or movie characters. The results often bring childhood to an abrupt, even tragic, end.

Being the Other "Adult"

When a two-parent family suddenly becomes a single-parent family, whether through death, separation, or divorce, children often suffer emotionally. Of course, many single-parent families manage well. But in some, the children are rushed through their childhood.

Pushing children to be supercompetitive can drain the fun out of sports and games



Material possessions are no substitute for good parenting

Understandably, a single parent may suffer from loneliness at times. As a result, though, some allow a child—often the eldest—to take on the role of the other "adult" in the family. The parent may, perhaps out of desperation, confide in a young son or daughter, burdening the child with problems that the child is not ready to bear. Emotionally, some single parents become overly dependent on a child.

Other parents abandon their responsibilities altogether, forcing a child to take on the role of the adult in the family. Carmen and her sister, mentioned earlier, left such a situation behind when they took to the streets. Still children themselves, they had been put in the position of parenting their younger siblings. The load was more than they could carry.

Without a doubt, rushing children through childhood is a dangerous practice, one to be avoided if at all possible. But there is good news: Adults *can* take positive steps to ensure that their offspring enjoy years of childhood happiness. What steps? Let us examine some time-tested answers.

When Childhood Is Cherished

A GOOD childhood depends largely on good parenting. But what does good parenting involve? You have likely heard advice on the subject. Commit time to your children. Listen to them. Give them sound guidance. Empathize with them, sharing their joys and sorrows. Be a true friend to them without relinquishing your authority as a parent. Of course, such oft-repeated principles will help parents to do their job well. But there is something more basic and more important that must come first.

Millions of parents around the world have found that following Bible principles is the key to good parenting. Why? Because the wise Author of the Bible, Jehovah God, is the one who originated the family arrangement. (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:18-24; Ephesians 3:15) Naturally, then, his inspired Word is the best place to look for guidance on child rearing. How, though, can a book as old as the Bi-

Instead of burdening your child with personal problems, confide in another adult

ble shed light on the modern tendency to rush children through childhood? Let us consider some Scriptural principles that apply.

"According to the Pace of the Children"

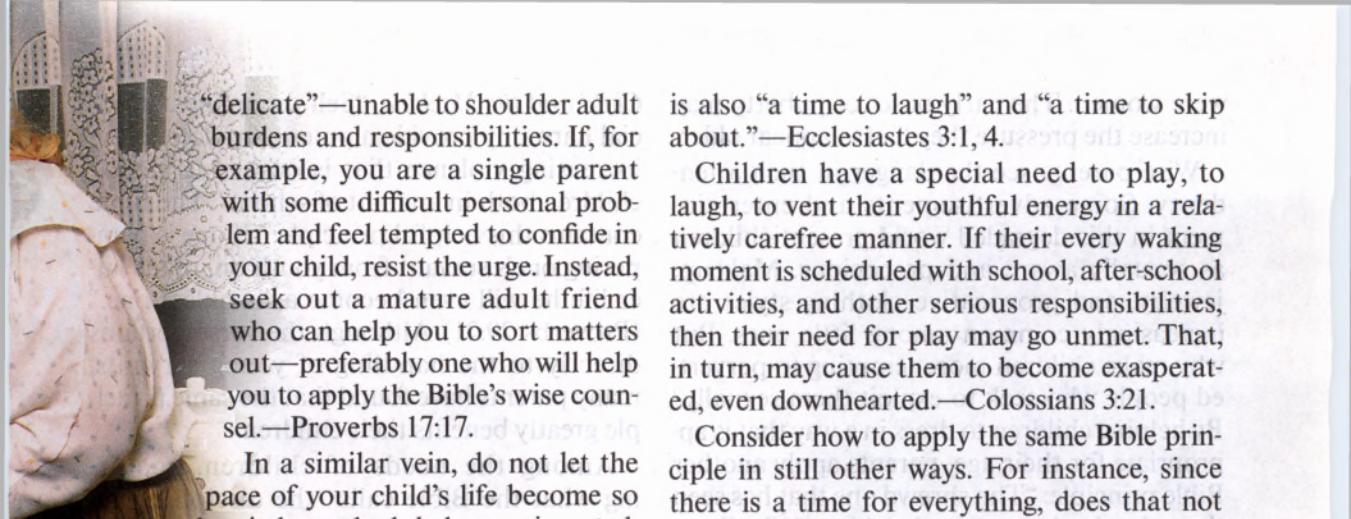
Jacob, the son of Isaac, was the father of more than a dozen children. The Bible records his wise words regarding a family journey: "The children are delicate . . . Let my lord [Esau, Jacob's elder brother], please, pass on ahead of his servant, but may I myself continue the journey at my leisure . . . according to the pace of the children."—Genesis 33:13, 14.

Jacob knew that his children were not little adults. They were "delicate"—smaller, frailler, and needier than grown people. Instead of forcing his children to travel at his pace, he slowed his pace to match theirs. In this respect he mirrored the wisdom that God shows toward his human children. Our Father knows our limitations. He does not expect more of us than is reasonable.—Psalm 103:13, 14.

Even some animal creations reflect such wisdom, for God has made them "instinctively wise." (Proverbs 30:24) For instance, naturalists have observed that an entire herd of elephants will match its pace to that of a baby elephant in their midst, moving slowly until the little one is able to keep up.

Some segments of modern society have lost sight of godly wisdom. But you do not have to follow suit. Keep in mind that your child is





"delicate"—unable to shoulder adult burdens and responsibilities. If, for example, you are a single parent with some difficult personal problem and feel tempted to confide in your child, resist the urge. Instead, seek out a mature adult friend who can help you to sort matters out—preferably one who will help you to apply the Bible's wise counsel.—Proverbs 17:17.

In a similar vein, do not let the pace of your child's life become so harried, so scheduled, so regimented, that all the youthful fun is squeezed out of life. Set a pace that is right for your child, not one that slavishly matches the pace of today's world. The Bible wisely counsels: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold."—Romans 12:2, Phillips.

"For Everything There Is an Appointed Time"

Another wise Bible principle states: "For everything there is an appointed time, even a time for every affair under the heavens." Of course, there is a time for work. Children have much work to do—including schoolwork, chores at home, and spiritual activities. However, the same Bible passage says that there

is also "a time to laugh" and "a time to skip about."—Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4.

Children have a special need to play, to laugh, to vent their youthful energy in a relatively carefree manner. If their every waking moment is scheduled with school, after-school activities, and other serious responsibilities, then their need for play may go unmet. That, in turn, may cause them to become exasperated, even downhearted.—Colossians 3:21.

Consider how to apply the same Bible principle in still other ways. For instance, since there is a time for everything, does that not suggest that childhood is the time to be a child? You will likely answer yes, but your children may not always agree. Very often, little boys and girls want to do what they see adults doing. For example, young girls may be tempted to dress and groom themselves as if they



**Children have
a need to play**



were women. The early onset of puberty may increase the pressure they feel to appear older.

Wise parents see the danger in such a tendency. Some advertisements and entertainment in this degraded world present children as sexually aware and precocious. Makeup, jewelry, and provocative clothing styles are increasingly common among little ones. But why make children more tempting to perverted people who seek to exploit them sexually? By helping children to dress in a way that is appropriate for their age, parents apply another Bible principle: "The shrewd one that has seen the calamity has concealed himself."—Proverbs 27:12.

Another example: Allowing sports to become a child's top priority can lead to an unbalanced life, one in which there is no longer an appointed time for everything. The Bible wisely admonishes: "Bodily training is beneficial for a little; but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Timothy 4:8.

Do not let your children buy into the "winning is everything" mentality. Many parents drain all the fun out of sports and games by driving their children to be supercompetitive, to win at all costs. Some children thus feel driven to cheat or even injure other players in order to win. Surely winning is never worth such a cost!

Learning Self-Control

Learning that there is a time for everything is often difficult for children. It is not easy for them to wait patiently when they want something. To make matters worse, human society seems bent on a quest for instant gratification. The entertainment media often convey the message, "Get what you want and get it now!"

Do not give in to such influences by pampering and spoiling your children. "The ability to delay gratification is an important aspect of emotional intelligence," says the book *The*

Child and the Machine. "Self-discipline and social harmony provide a potent antidote to the increasing violence that is occurring among children both in and out of school." The Bible contains this helpful principle: "If one is pampering one's servant from youth on, in his latter life he will even become a thankless one." (Proverbs 29:21) Although the verse pertains directly to the handling of young servants, many parents have found that the same principle greatly benefits their children.

Among the needs of children, acquiring what the Bible calls "the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah" ranks very high. (Ephesians 6:4) Loving discipline helps children to develop such qualities as self-control and patience. These traits will help them find happiness and fulfillment throughout life.

When All Threats to Childhood Will End

You may wonder, though, 'Did the wise, loving God who inspired these helpful principles really intend for our world to be the way it is? Did he mean for children to grow up in a world that is often more dangerous than nurturing?' You may be comforted to learn that Jehovah God and his Son, Christ Jesus, have tender love for mankind, including children of all ages. They will soon rid the earth of all the wicked.—Psalm 37:10, 11.

Would you like a preview of that peaceful, happy time? Just picture this scene, as described beautifully in the Bible: "The wolf will actually reside for a while with the male lamb, and with the kid the leopard itself will lie down, and the calf and the maned young lion and the well-fed animal all together; and a mere little boy will be leader over them." (Isaiah 11:6) In a world that so often cruelly destroys childhood or ruthlessly speeds it up, how comforting to know that God promises such a bright future for mankind on the earth! Clearly, the Creator intends that childhood should be neither lost nor rushed—only blessed and cherished.



GALILEO'S CLASH WITH THE CHURCH

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ITALY

IT IS June 22, 1633. An unsteady old man is on his knees before the court of the Roman Inquisition. He is a man of science, one of the best known of the day. His scientific convictions are based on long years of study and research. Yet, if he wants to save his life, he must renounce what he knows to be true.

His name was Galileo Galilei. The Galileo case, as many call it, has raised doubts, questions, and controversy that still echo today, some 370 years later. The case has left an indelible mark on the history of religion and science. Why so much fuss? Why has the Galileo case made news again in our modern era? Does it really symbolize a "fracture between science and religion," as one writer termed it?

Galileo is considered by many to be the "father of modern science." He was a mathematician, an astronomer, and a physicist. One of the very first men to study the skies by means of a telescope, Galileo interpreted what he saw as support for a notion that

was still hotly disputed in his day: The earth revolves around the sun and therefore our planet is not the center of the universe. No wonder that Galileo is sometimes seen as the founder of the modern experimental method!

What were some of Galileo's discoveries and inventions? As an astronomer, he discovered, among other things, that Jupiter has moons, that the Milky Way is composed of stars, that the moon has mountains, and that Venus has moonlike phases. As a physicist, he studied the laws governing both the pendulum and falling objects. He invented such instruments as the geometric compass, a kind of slide rule. Using information received from Holland, he made the telescope that opened the universe before him.

A prolonged confrontation with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, however, turned the career of this illustrious scientist into a drama—the Galileo case. How did it begin, and why?

Conflict With Rome

As early as the end of the 16th century, Galileo embraced the Copernican theory, which states that the earth revolves around the sun and not vice versa. This is also called the heliocentric (sun-centered) system. After using his telescope in 1610 to discover celestial bodies that had never before been observed, Galileo became convinced that he had found confirmation of the heliocentric system.

According to the *Grande Dizionario Encyclopedico UTET*, Galileo wanted to do more than just make such discoveries. He wanted to convince "the highest-ranking personages of the day (princes and cardinals)" that the Copernican theory was true. He cherished the hope that with the help of influential friends, he could overcome the church's objections and even win its support.

In 1611, Galileo traveled to Rome, where he met high-ranking clergymen. He used his telescope to show them his

Galileo's telescope, which helped him to confirm that the earth is not the center of the universe

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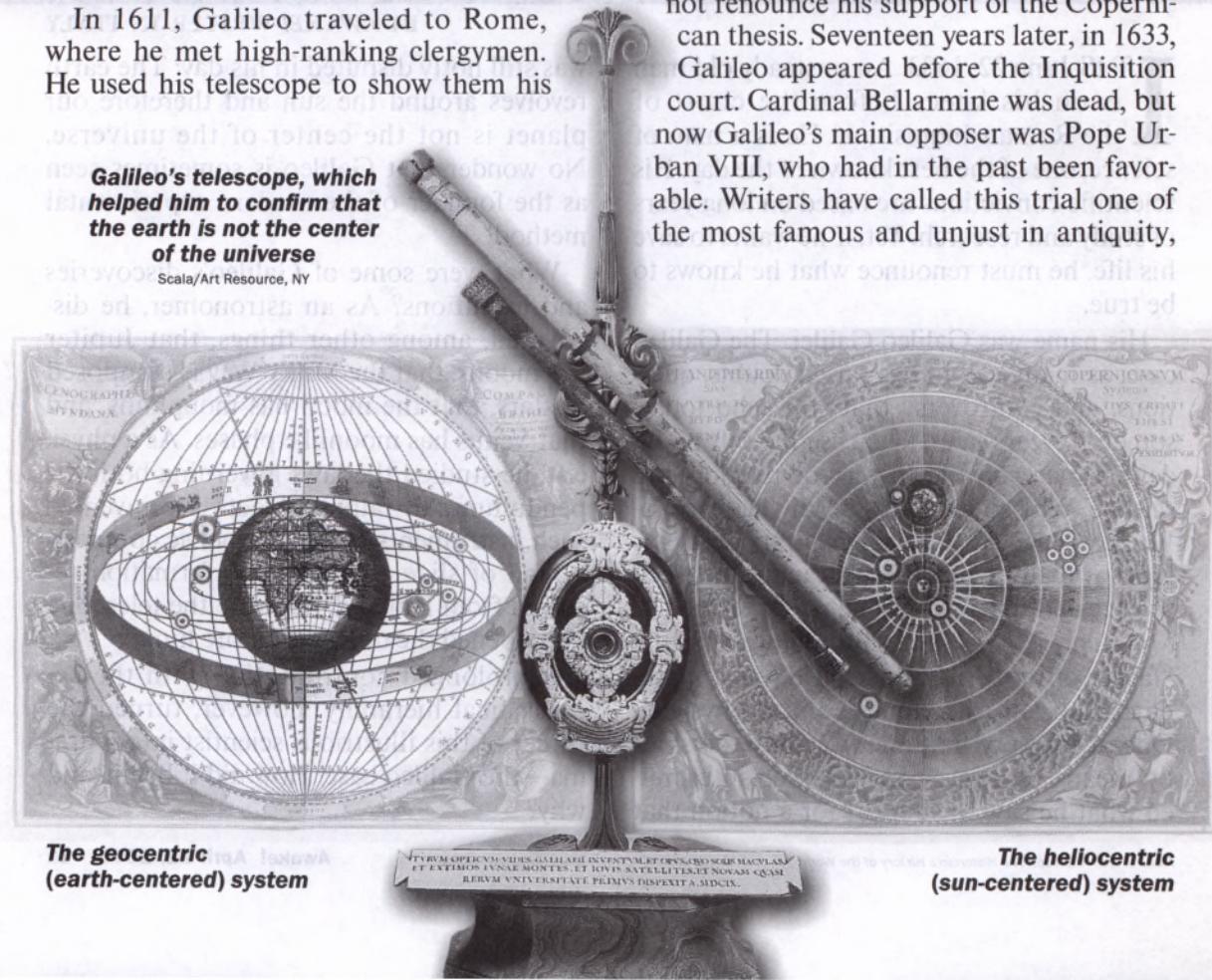
astronomical discoveries. But things did not turn out as he had hoped. By 1616, Galileo found himself under official scrutiny.

Theologians of the Roman Inquisition labeled the heliocentric thesis "philosophically foolish and absurd and formally heretical, since in many places it expressly contradicts the sentences of the Holy Scriptures according to their literal meaning, the common exposition, and the sense of the Holy Fathers and doctors of theology."

Galileo met with cardinal Robert Bellarmine, considered the greatest Catholic theologian of the day and labeled "the hammer of the heretics." Bellarmine formally admonished Galileo to stop promoting his opinions on the sun-centered system.

Facing the Inquisition Court

Galileo tried to act prudently, but he did not renounce his support of the Copernican thesis. Seventeen years later, in 1633, Galileo appeared before the Inquisition court. Cardinal Bellarmine was dead, but now Galileo's main opposer was Pope Urban VIII, who had in the past been favorable. Writers have called this trial one of the most famous and unjust in antiquity,



even ranking it along with the trials of Socrates and Jesus.

What provoked the trial? Galileo wrote a book entitled *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*. In effect, it advocated heliocentrism. The author was directed to present himself to the court in 1632, but Galileo delayed, being ill and almost 70 years old. He made the trip to Rome the following year, after being threatened with bonds and forced transportation. By order of the pope, he was interrogated and even threatened with torture.

Whether this sick old man was actually tortured is a matter of controversy. As recorded in his conviction sentence, Galileo was subjected to "rigorous examination." According to Italo Mereu, a historian of Italian law, that phrase was the technical expression of the day used to describe torture. A number of scholars agree with that interpretation.

At any rate, Galileo was sentenced in an austere hall before the members of the Inquisition on June 22, 1633. He was found guilty of "having held and believed false doctrine, contrary to the Holy and Divine Scriptures, that the Sun . . . does not move from east to west and that the Earth moves and is not the center of the world."

Galileo did not want to become a martyr, so he was forced to recant. After his sentence was read, the elderly scientist, kneeling and dressed as a penitent, solemnly pronounced: "I do abjure, curse, and detest the said errors and heresies [the Copernican theory] and in general all and any other error, heresy, or sect contrary to the Holy Church."

There is a popular tradition—unconfirmed by solid evidence—that after abjuring, Galileo stamped his foot and exclaimed in protest: "And yet it does move!" Commentators claim that the humiliation of renouncing his discoveries anguished the scientist until his death. He had been condemned to jail, but his sentence was commuted to per-

petual house arrest. As blindness descended upon him, he lived in near seclusion.

A Conflict Between Religion and Science?

Many have concluded that Galileo's example proves that science and religion are hopelessly incompatible. In effect, over the centuries the Galileo case has alienated people from religion. It has convinced many that religion is by nature a threat to scientific progress. Is that really so?

Pope Urban VIII and the theologians of the Roman Inquisition did in fact condemn the Copernican theory, claiming that it was contrary to the Bible. Galileo's adversaries referred to Joshua's statement, "Sun, stand thou still," which, according to their reading, was to be understood literally. (Joshua 10:12, *King James Version*) But does the Bible really contradict the Copernican theory? Not at all.

The contradiction lay between science and an obviously incorrect interpretation of Scripture. That was how Galileo saw the matter. He wrote to a pupil: "Even though Scripture cannot err, its interpreters and expositors can, in various ways. One of these, very serious and very frequent, would be when they always want to stop at the purely literal sense." Any serious student of the Bible would have to agree.*

Galileo went further. He claimed that two books, the Bible and the book of nature, were written by the same Author and could not contradict each other. He added, though, that a person could not "with certainty assert that all interpreters speak under divine inspiration." This implicit criticism of the church's official interpretation was likely considered a provocation, leading the

* An honest reader will readily admit that a statement about the sun standing still in the sky is not meant as a scientific analysis but as a simple observation about how things appeared from the standpoint of human eyewitnesses. Astronomers, too, often speak of the rising and setting of the sun, planets, and stars. They do not mean that these heavenly bodies literally revolve around the earth but, rather, that they appear to move across our sky.

Roman Inquisition to condemn the scientist. After all, how dare a mere layman interfere with ecclesiastical prerogatives?

Referring to the Galileo case, several scholars have raised doubts about the infallibility of both the church and the pope. Catholic theologian Hans Küng writes that "numerous and indisputable" errors of "the ecclesiastical teaching office," including "the condemnation of Galileo," have brought the dogma of infallibility into question.

Galileo Rehabilitated?

In November 1979, a year after his election, John Paul II hoped for a review of the position of Galileo, who, the pope admitted, "had to suffer a great deal . . . at the hands of men and organisms of the Church." Thirteen years later, in 1992, a commission appointed by the same pope acknowledged: "Certain theologians, Galileo's contemporaries, . . . failed to grasp the profound, non-literal meaning of the Scriptures when they describe the physical structure of the created universe."

The fact is, however, that the heliocentric theory was not criticized by theologians alone. Pope Urban VIII, who played a prominent role in the case, rigidly insisted that Galileo refrain from undermining the centuries-old church teaching that the earth is the center of the universe. That teaching came, not from the Bible, but from the Greek philosopher Aristotle.

After the modern-day commission made a laborious review of the case, the pope called the conviction of Galileo "a hasty and unfortunate decision." Was the scientist being rehabilitated? "To speak, as some do, of Galileo's rehabilitation is absurd," says one writer, "because history condemns, not Galileo, but the ecclesiastical court." Historian Luigi Firpo said: "It is not the place of persecutors to rehabilitate their victims."

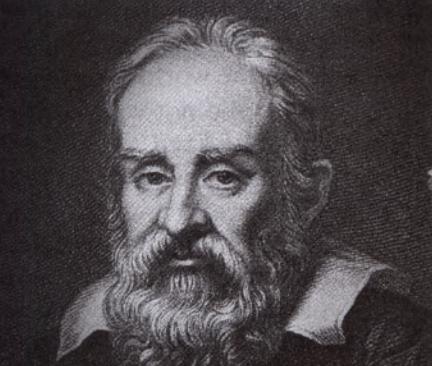
The Bible is "a lamp shining in a dark place." (2 Peter 1:19) Galileo defended it against a misinterpretation. But the church, by defending a man-made tradition at the Bible's expense, did the opposite.

THE LIFE OF GALILEO

Born in Pisa in 1564 of a Florentine father, Galileo studied medicine at the university there. Showing little interest in that discipline, he abandoned it for the study of physics and mathematics. In 1585 he returned to his family without obtaining any academic qualification. Yet, he gained the esteem of the greatest mathematicians of his day, winning the post of mathematics lecturer at the University of Pisa. After his father's death, economic difficulties forced Galileo to move to Padua, where he was appointed

to a more lucrative position, the chair of mathematics in that city's university.

During his 18 years in Padua, three children were born to Galileo by his mistress, a young Venetian woman. In 1610 he returned to Florence, where he obtained a better economic situation enabling him to dedicate more time to research—but at the expense of the freedom he had enjoyed in the territory of the Venetian Republic. The grand duke of Tuscany appointed him "first philosopher and



mathematician." Galileo died in Florence in 1642 while living under house arrest as a result of his condemnation by the Inquisition.

Prickly Urchin of the Countryside

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BRITAIN

AWHITE mist shrouded the Tyne valley in the north of England, and the cawing of rooks carried far in the still evening air. I was walking along a woodland path when a slight rustling among the fallen leaves—a blaze of reds, browns, and yellows—caught my attention. I glimpsed a pair of short, spindly hind legs just as they were vanishing into a crevice in the dry bank of the stream I was following.

Looking closer, I found a hedgehog carefully preparing its cold-weather quarters, a little burrow known as a hibernaculum. The ani-

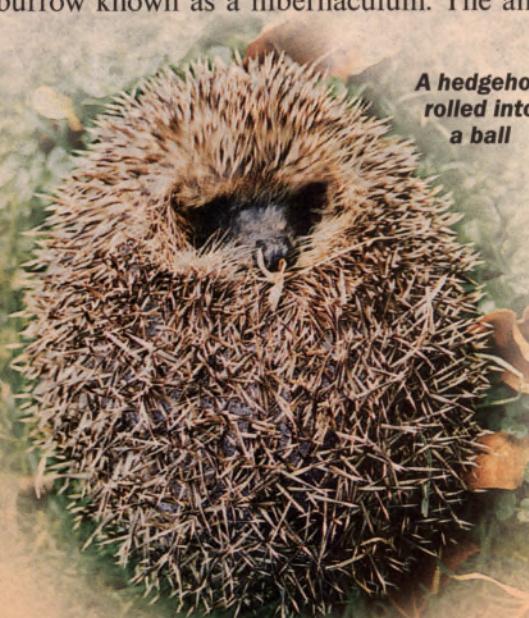


mal had already carried in leaves, dry grass, and ferns. It was making its bed in order to sleep away the cold winter days and nights.

There is no mistaking this appealing little urchin* of hill, field, and woodland. A hedgehog's head and neck are covered with a rough brownish-white hair, but its most outstanding feature is its protective coat of yellow-tipped spines. About three quarters of an inch in length and sharp to the touch, the spines emerge from coarse fur and are arranged in radiating groups to cover the trunk of its body. Each spine has between 22 and 24 longitudinal grooves and grows almost at right angles from a hemispheric base. Near its base, each spine has a narrow neck, sharply bent. This means that if a hedgehog falls from a height, it can survive because the spines are angled in such a way that they do not puncture its skin. What a wonder of design!

When alarmed, the hedgehog will take a defensive stance by curling up into a ball. Powerful muscles draw its spiny hide tight over the entire body, in at the sides and down at the margins, rather like the drawstring on a

A hedgehog rolled into a ball



* From *ericius*, the Latin word for "hedgehog."

soft leather bag. This protective coat covers the head, the tail, the legs, and the underparts with a mantle of prickly spines. The animal can hold this defensive position for a considerable time.

At dusk the hedgehog is usually ready to eat. Its evening meal of insects and worms may be supplemented by mice, frogs, rats, lizards and, at times, nuts and berries. The hedgehog's hearing is acute. So is its sense of smell, as you might guess from a glance at its pointed snout and wet nostrils.

Enemies—Natural and Unnatural

Hedgehogs have very few natural enemies apart from foxes and badgers. A badger can easily uncurl a hedgehog with its powerful foreclaws, being unaffected by the spines. A sight I have seen a number of times is a hedgehog skin—likely the only remains of a badger's evening meal. A fox, on the other hand, cannot contend with the spines but may try rolling the hedgehog into water, where it must either uncurl or drown. Being a good swimmer, the hedgehog has a fair chance of reaching cover, among rocks or in a hole in a bankside, before the fox can claim it as prey.

Gypsies and some other country folk eat hedgehogs baked in clay. When the clay cools and is broken off, the spines come away, leaving the cooked flesh—"a delectable dish," according to Jean-Paul Clébert's book *The Gypsies*. Today, it is sad to see large numbers of hedgehogs killed by road traffic. They seem



A common hedgehog, one week old



Hedgehog illustration
by Beatrix Potter
from her 1905 children's
storybook, "The Tale of
Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle"



particularly vulnerable just after they awake from hibernation and begin searching for food. But if a hedgehog can survive in spite of all these natural and unnatural enemies, it can live for six years or so and grow to a length of nine inches.

Breeding, Hibernating, and Foraging

The male, called a boar, and the female, a sow, breed between May and July, with a second mating later in the season. The gestation period is

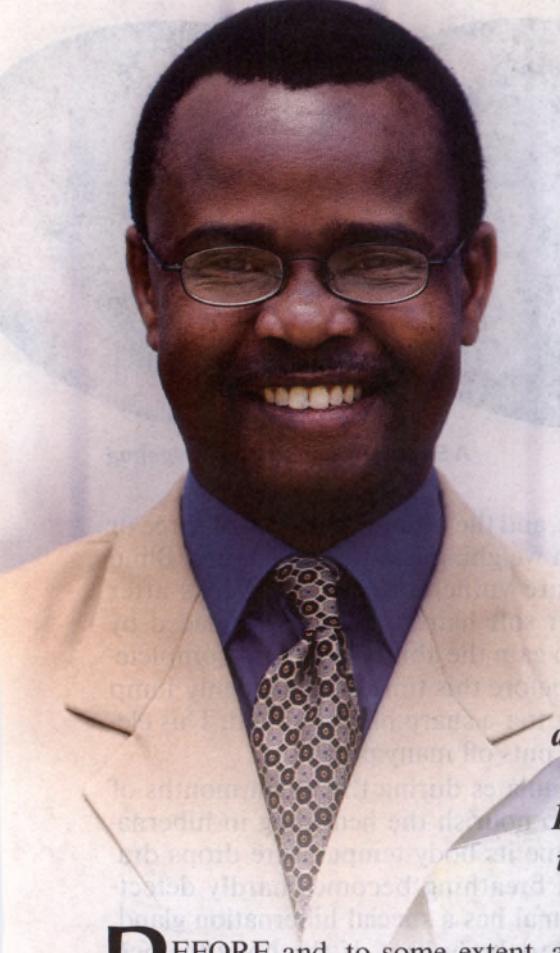


A South African pygmy hedgehog

four to six weeks, and the litter may consist of three or four young, each weighing less than an ounce. Blind and deaf, they are vulnerable for two weeks after birth. Then their soft hair is gradually replaced by spines. They also gain the ability to roll up completely. If disturbed before this time, they suddenly jump into the air and utter a sharp hissing sound. This element of surprise puts off many predators.

Fat that accumulates during the warm months of feeding serves to nourish the hedgehog in hibernation. At this time its body temperature drops dramatically and breathing becomes hardly detectable. The animal has a special hibernation gland, which monitors body heat. If the body temperature falls significantly during hibernation, the gland produces more heat, enough to alert the animal to find a warmer, more sheltered spot. During its winter sleep, the hedgehog is never completely out of touch with the outside world. Any sound close by it is detected, resulting in slight body movements.

If confined in a garden, a hedgehog will soon climb a wall, a fence, or even a drainpipe to get out, as it needs to forage far and wide for its food. For this reason, it remains a wild animal and will not readily make a domestic pet. That is just as well, as hedgehogs in the wild are generally flea-ridden. But the wanderings of these cute, appealing urchins across the British countryside add a captivating element of interest for which I am always grateful to our Creator, Jehovah God.



How an Injury Changed My Life

AS TOLD BY STANLEY OMBEVA

In 1982, I was hit by a speeding vehicle. I was treated and soon resumed my routine of daily activities, despite suffering periodic pain because of a slipped disk between my neck and chest. However, 15 years later, I came face-to-face with the most faith-challenging experience of my life.

BEFORE and, to some extent, after the accident, I was full of energy. I enjoyed a good routine of exercise that included jogging between six and eight miles on weekends, playing squash, and doing hard manual work. I assisted in the construction of Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses as well as of a large Assembly Hall in Nairobi, Kenya, where we live.

Then, in 1997, my chest pains became regular and more intense. A medical examination revealed that an intervertebral disk had moved out of place and was compressing my spinal cord. This could be traced back to the accident mentioned at the outset.

Before my health deteriorated, I had secured a job as a salesperson. Included was a family health-insurance plan. My prospects

in the business world appeared bright. But in mid-1998, I developed severe numbness from my chest to my feet. Day after day, my health declined.

Not long afterward, I lost my job, including all benefits. Our two daughters, Sylvia and Wilhelmina, were then aged 13 and 10 respectively. With my job gone, we had to rely on what my wife, Joyce, brought home at the end of the month. Confronted with the new circumstances, we adjusted our lives by cutting back on nonessentials. We managed to make ends meet.

Negative Feelings

I must admit that as the reality of my condition sank in, I became negative, self-centered, and irritable. At times, I was angry and bitter,

taking issue with every little thing. I was always on the verge of depression. Nobody in the family was spared the stress. My wife and our daughters were confronted with a unique situation they knew little about.

At the time, I thought my feelings were justified. My weight shot upward. I had serious problems with bowel movements and with controlling urination. Often, I was deeply embarrassed. It was not unusual to find me alone in a corner, with my eyes full of tears. There were times when I got so angry that it was almost comical. I knew I was not reacting well to my situation.

As an elder in the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, I had often counseled my fellow Christians about never blaming Jehovah for any form of suffering. Yet, I found myself asking—and not just once—'Why would Jehovah let such a thing happen to me?' Although I had used scriptures such as 1 Corinthians 10:13 to strengthen and encourage others, I felt that what I was going through was too much to bear!

A Medical Challenge

Getting good medical treatment proved challenging. I would visit a physiotherapist, a chiropractor, and an acupuncturist all in one day. The relief, if any, was very temporary. I consulted a number of doctors, including an orthopedic surgeon and a neurosurgeon. All agreed on one point: Surgery was necessary to ease the pain and remove the slipped disk. Because of my Bible-based beliefs, I clearly explained to these medical experts that no blood should be administered to me under any circumstances.—Acts 15:28, 29.

The first surgeon said that he would operate by opening my back. It was explained to me that the procedure might be quite risky. Yet, this surgeon could not guarantee that blood would not be used. I did not go back to him.

The second one said that he would access the spine through my neck. Such a procedure sounded horrible. Though he had no problem with my refusal of blood, he wanted the operation done immediately and offered few details. I dropped him too.

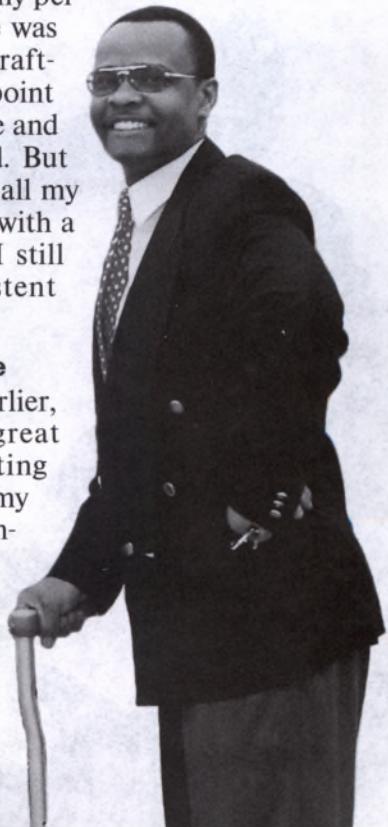
However, I was able to find a cooperative doctor with the help of Jehovah's Witnesses serving on our local Hospital Liaison Committee. The procedure recommended by the third surgeon was similar to that proposed by the second one; it involved making an incision through the neck. Risks, he explained, would be minimal.

The graphic demonstration of how the surgery was to be performed horrified me. Knowing that such an operation would have to be done around such delicate body organs as the heart and lungs scared me the most. Would I come out of it alive? Of course, such negative thoughts did little to quell my fears.

On November 25, 1998, I underwent a successful four-hour operation at a Nairobi hospital. The surgery also involved the removal of a piece of my pelvic bone. The piece was shaped and then grafted to the affected point with a metallic plate and screws. This helped. But it did not eliminate all my problems. I walked with a lot of discomfort. I still suffer from persistent numbness.

Positive Attitude

As mentioned earlier, I had spent a great deal of time fretting and brooding over my poor condition. Ironically, many of the medical personnel would commend me for my



calmness and optimism. Why did they feel that way? They could see that while I was in great pain, I still talked to them about my faith in God.

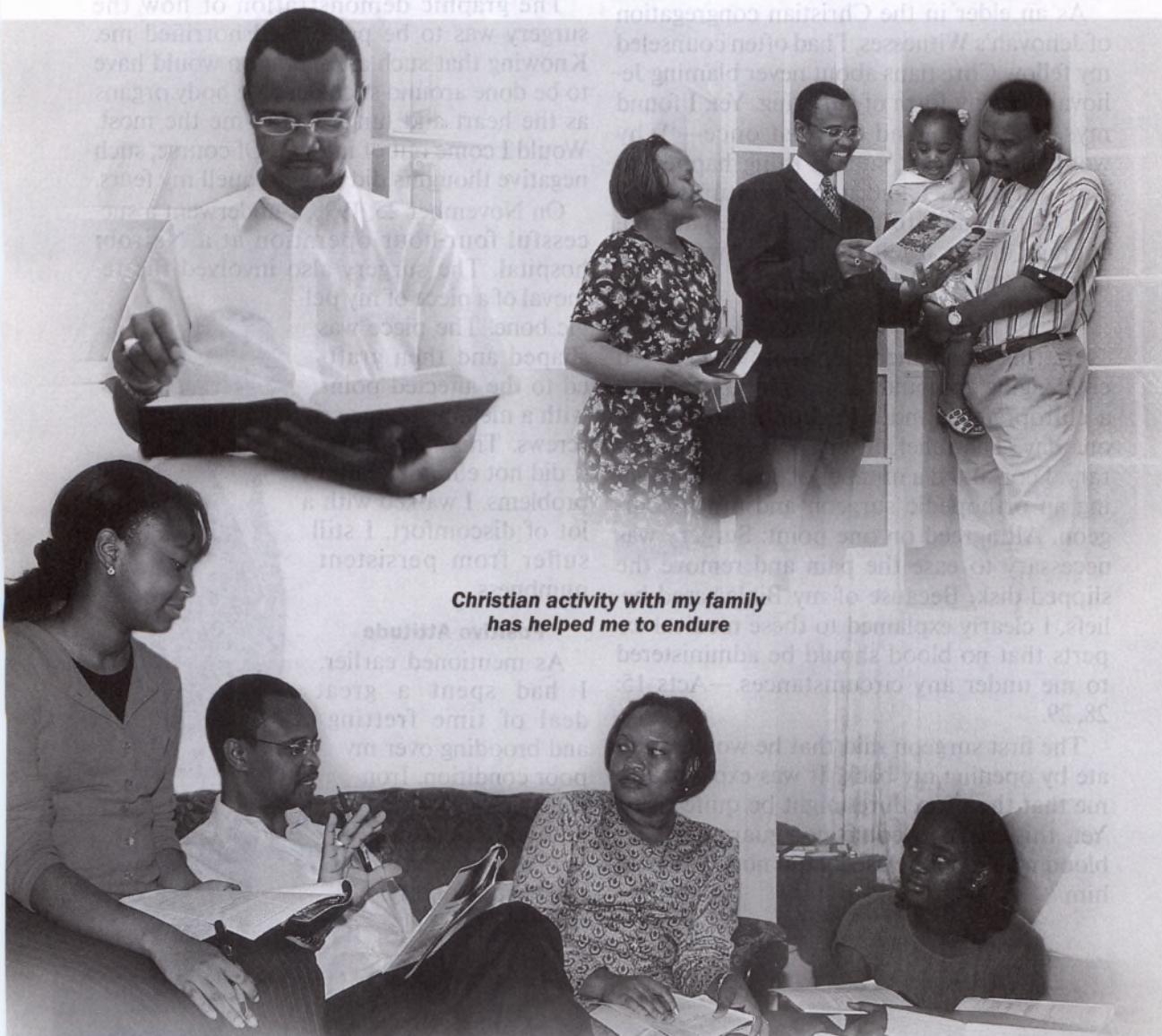
Although I was occasionally angry and bitter about what I was going through, I still relied upon Jehovah. He always supported me in all that I went through—so much so, that I was ashamed of myself at times. I made a strong resolve to read and meditate on scriptures I knew to be comforting in my situation. Some of these are:

Revelation 21:4: “[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more,

neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.” Reflecting on the Bible’s promise of a new world where tears and pain will be gone forever proved consoling indeed.

Hebrews 6:10: “*God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name.*” Although I had become physically limited, I knew that Jehovah would treasure my efforts in his service.

James 1:13: “*When under trial, let no one say: ‘I am being tried by God.’ For with evil things God cannot be tried nor does he himself try anyone.*” How true! Though Jehovah did allow my suffering, he was in no way the cause.



**Christian activity with my family
has helped me to endure**

Philippians 4:6, 7: “Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus.” Prayer helped me to gain much-needed peace of mind, enabling me to deal with my situation more sensibly.

I had used these scriptures to encourage others in distress—and they really helped! I came to realize, though, that then I did not fully appreciate their value. I had to be this sick to understand humility and to learn to put my full reliance on Jehovah.

Other Strengthening Aids

Many speak of the Christian brotherhood as a pillar and support in times of difficulty. Yet, how easy it is to take our Christian brothers and sisters for granted! True, they might be limited in what they can do to help, but they are always there for us. This was true in my case. It was not unusual to find them next to my hospital bed, sometimes very early in the morning. They even offered to contribute toward my medical bills. My heart goes out to all of those who were moved by my plight and came to help.

In our local congregation, the Witnesses know that I am now limited in what I can do. I currently serve as the presiding overseer and work with a very supportive body of Christian elders. I have never become irregular in the preaching work. During the height of my affliction, I helped two people come to the point of dedicating their lives to Jehovah. One is currently serving as a ministerial servant in a Nairobi congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

I still cannot find the words to thank my wife, who has seen me through the entire ordeal. She put up with my anger, my mood swings, my unreasonableness, and my frustrations. Whenever I was in tears and pain, she reassured and consoled me. Her strength and

resilience in the face of adversity continue to amaze me. She has proved to be “a true companion . . . all the time.”—Proverbs 17:17.

Our daughters have learned to cope with my situation. They do what they can to assist me. They understand my needs and respond quickly, ensuring my comfort when their mother is not around. Sylvia has been my “walking stick,” helping me move around the home whenever I feel weak.

What about Mina, the youngest? Well, I remember a time when I was unable to get up after a fall inside the house. She was the only one at home. Gathering all the strength she had, she lifted me up and slowly led me to my room. She still has no idea how she managed. That single act of courage is indelibly marked in my mind.

Coping with this injury is the hardest battle I have ever fought in my life. It is a battle I still fight. Nothing has challenged my life and faith to this extent. I have learned a lot about humility, reasonableness, and empathy. Full trust and confidence in Jehovah have seen me through this problem.

I have learned the truth of the words of the apostle Paul: “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the power beyond what is normal may be God’s and not that out of ourselves.” (2 Corinthians 4:7) I find enormous comfort in God’s promise of “new heavens and a new earth” to come. (2 Peter 3:13) I pray that Jehovah will continue to carry me toward that new world, for I am still frail and can accomplish little in my own strength.

In Our Next Issue

■ **Living With Diabetes**

■ **Behold the Mighty Hippo!**

■ **Does Christian Unity Require Uniformity?**

The Wide World of the Humble Peanut

Do you like peanuts? If so, you have a lot of company. Peanuts, also called groundnuts, are enjoyed by a huge portion of the human family. The two most populous nations on earth—China and India—together produce over 50 percent of the total world crop.

The United States harvests billions of pounds of peanuts annually, producing almost 10 percent of the world total. Argentina, Brazil, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Sudan are also major peanut-growing countries. How did the peanut become so popular? Is it ever wise to avoid eating peanuts?

A Long History

The peanut is thought to have originated in South America. One of the earliest known artifacts showing man's appreciation of peanuts is a pre-Columbian vase discovered in Peru. The vase is shaped like a peanut and is also decorated with peanut-shaped designs. Spanish explorers, who first encountered peanuts in South America, found them to be an excellent source of nutrition for their voyages. They then brought some back to Europe. The Europeans put the peanut to additional uses, even as a substitute for coffee beans.

Later the Portuguese introduced peanuts to Africa. There peanuts were quickly recognized as a valuable food source that would grow in soil too barren to sustain other crops. In fact, the peanut plants actually enriched the poor soil with much-needed nitrogen. The peanut eventually made its way from Africa to North America during the time of the slave trade.

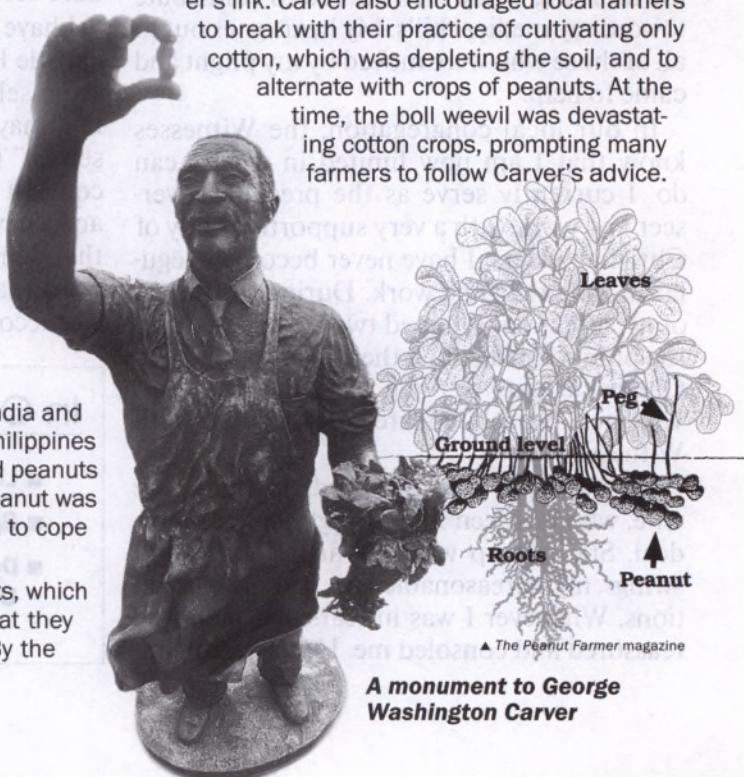
In the 1530's, the peanut traveled to India and Macao with the Portuguese and to the Philippines with the Spanish. Traders then introduced peanuts from these lands into China. There the peanut was seen as a crop that could help the nation to cope with the burden of famine.

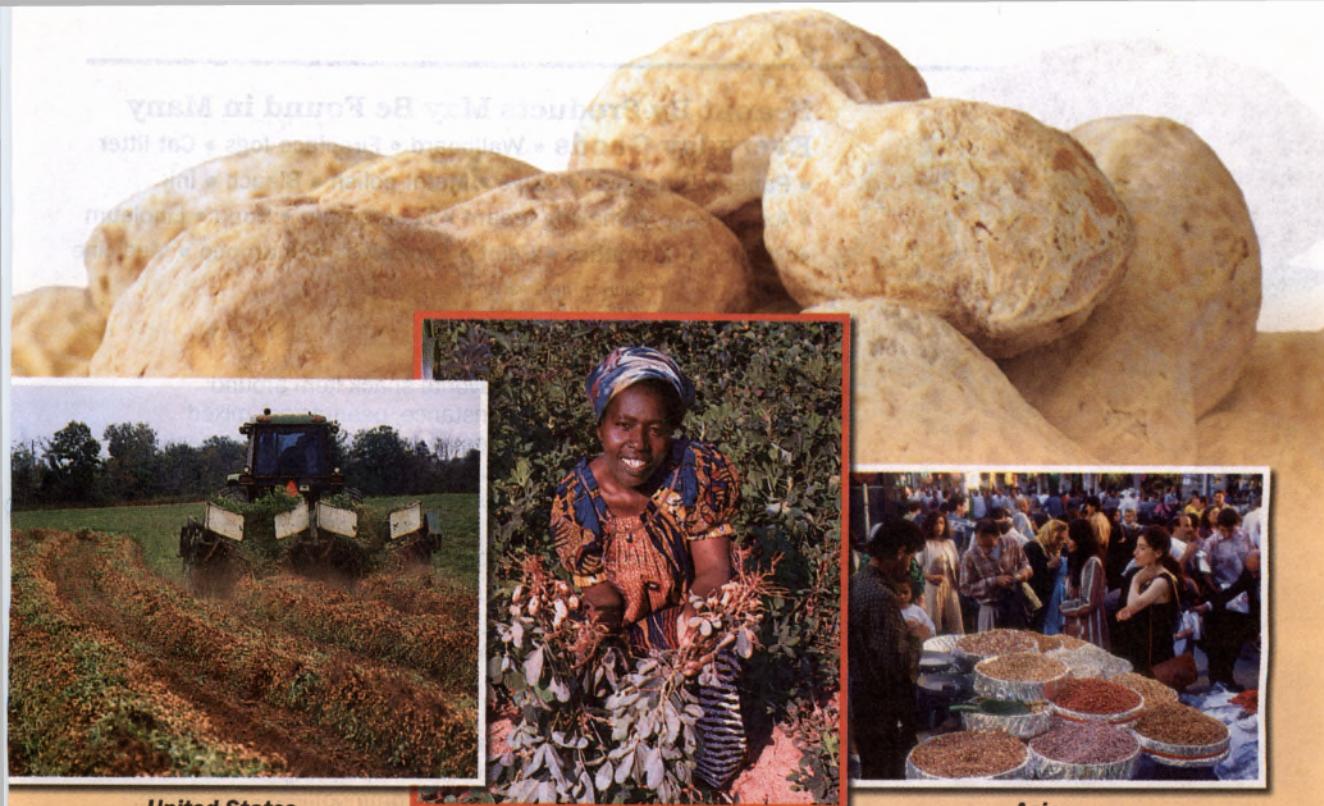
Botanists of the 1700's studied peanuts, which they called ground peas, and decided that they would make an excellent food for pigs. By the

early 1800's, peanuts were being grown commercially in South Carolina in the United States. During the American Civil War, which began in 1861, peanuts served as food for soldiers on both sides of the conflict.

At the time, however, many people thought of peanuts as food for the poor. This perception partly explains why American farmers of the day did not cultivate peanuts extensively for human consumption. Moreover, before the invention of mechanized equipment about the year 1900, cultivating peanuts was very labor-intensive.

But by 1903 pioneering American agricultural chemist George Washington Carver had begun research into new uses for the peanut plant. He eventually developed more than 300 products from it, including beverages, cosmetics, dyes, medicines, laundry soap, insecticide, and printer's ink. Carver also encouraged local farmers to break with their practice of cultivating only cotton, which was depleting the soil, and to alternate with crops of peanuts. At the time, the boll weevil was devastating cotton crops, prompting many farmers to follow Carver's advice.





United States

Africa

Asia

FAO photo/R. Faidutti

The result? Peanuts were so successful that they became a major cash crop in the southern United States. Today a monument to Carver stands in Dothan, Alabama. And the town of Enterprise, Alabama, has even erected a monument to the boll weevil, since that insect's ravages helped to motivate farmers to cultivate peanuts.

Growing Peanuts

Peanuts are not actually nuts but are really the seeds of the peanut plant. As the plant grows, it puts forth yellow flowers that pollinate themselves.

In the tip of a stalklike structure called a peg, the fertilized plant ovary, which contains the embryo, begins to penetrate the soil. In the soil the embryo runs parallel to the surface and begins to mature underground, taking on the well-known form of a peanut. Up to 40 peanuts may grow on a single plant.

Peanuts like warm, sunny climates with moderate rainfall. The time from planting to harvesting may vary from 120 to 160 days, depending on the variety of peanut and the weather conditions. To harvest

peanuts, growers must dig up the plants, vine and all, turn them upside down, and allow them to dry so that they can be stored without spoiling. Today many growers use modern farm equipment that enables them to dig up the vines, shake the dirt from them, and invert them, all in one operation.

The Many Uses of the Peanut

The food value of peanuts is impressive. Peanuts are high in fiber, and they contain 13 vitamins and 26 minerals, many of which are lacking in modern diets. "Pound for pound, peanuts have more protein, minerals, and vitamins than beef liver," says *The Encyclopædia Britannica*. But beware, weight watchers! Peanuts also have "more fat than heavy cream" and "more food energy (calories) than sugar."

Some varieties of peanut snacks





Peanuts feature in a wide array of national cuisines. And their unique taste is hard to miss. "The flavor of the peanut is so rich and unmistakable that any dish flavored with ground peanuts will have a similar flavor," notes culinary author Anya von Bremzen. "Therefore, there will be a continuity in taste between an Indonesian peanut sauce, a West African soup, Chinese noodles, Peruvian stew, and a peanut butter sandwich."

**Peanut butter is
a popular food
in some
lands**



Peanut By-Products May Be Found in Many Everyday Goods • Wallboard • Fireplace logs • Cat litter • Paper • Detergent • Salve • Metal polish • Bleach • Ink • Axle grease • Shaving cream • Face cream • Soap • Linoleum • Rubber • Cosmetics • Paint • Explosives • Shampoo • Medicine

Source: *The Great American Peanut*

Peanuts are also a favorite snack item around the world. In India, for instance, peanuts are mixed with other dried legumes and sold as a street snack. Interestingly, peanut butter, a sandwich spread popular in some countries, was reportedly "invented by a physician in St. Louis [U.S.A.] about 1890 as a health food for [the] elderly," according to the publication *The Great American Peanut*.

But peanuts have found many other uses besides serving directly as food. Throughout Asia, peanuts are an important source of cooking oil. Peanut oil can be used for cooking at very high temperatures, and it does not pick up the flavor of the items being cooked.

In Brazil, peanut meal, a by-product of peanut-oil production, is used as animal feed. And peanut products also find their way into many everyday commodities.—See above.

Caution—Peanut Allergy!

Peanuts can be stored for long periods without refrigeration. However, caution is in order. Peanuts that have become moldy contain aflatoxin, a potent cancer-causing agent. In addition, some people are allergic to peanuts. The allergic reaction "can produce symptoms ranging from runny noses and rashes to life-threatening anaphylactic shock," states the magazine *Prevention*. Several studies have indicated that it is becoming more common for young children to develop an allergy to peanuts.

If both of a child's parents have asthma, allergic rhinitis, or eczema, the child has an increased risk of developing a peanut allergy, reports *Prevention*.

The same is true of babies whose mothers have a history of allergies and babies who develop an allergy to milk during their first year. "It's a good idea for these families to keep peanut butter off the highchair and skip it until at least the third birthday," says Dr. Hugh Sampson, professor of pediatrics at Johns Hopkins University Medical Center, U.S.A.

Whether you are a peanut lover or not, perhaps this consideration of its many uses has given you greater appreciation for this humble yet widely popular seed.



Why Did I Have to Be an Adopted Child?

"It's like living with a permanent disability. It's an ailment of the heart that can't be fixed."—Robert.

THAT is how one man, who was given up for adoption at birth, describes his life. He continues: "Practically every day of your life, your heart yearns to know answers to questions like, Who is my real family? Where are they living? Why did they abandon me?"

Chantial, whose father was adopted, laments that she does not know who her biological grandparents are. She says: "I feel cheated because of not having the association of my uncles, aunts, and cousins." Not all adopted children feel this way. But some do. Why?

A Cause of Anger

Learning that one has been separated from one's biological family can send a child into an emotional tailspin. Catrina, who was adopted at an early age, says: "I had a problem with rage because I didn't understand why my birth mother gave me up. I felt that my mother was abandoning me because I was ugly and unlovable. If she would only give me a chance,



I knew I could make her proud of me. Every thought of my birth mother only increased my level of anger."

Catrina's relationship with her adoptive parents likewise came under great stress. "I felt that my adoptive parents took me away from my real mother," she says. "So I took my anger out on them." Yes, anger is sometimes a reaction to having been put up for adoption.

Such anger can be dangerous. Sometimes, as Catrina's case suggests, you might tend to vent your anger in the wrong ways or take



Your being adopted is evidence that someone loved you enough to take you in and care for you

it out on the wrong people. The Bible counsels: “Let anger alone and leave rage.” (Psalm 37:8) How is that possible? Well, God’s Word also says: “The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger.” (Proverbs 19:11) Insight into your own situation may help to ease your anger. How so?

Correcting False Assumptions

Insight can help you to examine the assumptions that fuel your anger. For example, if you were adopted, do you assume that your biological parents must have given you away because there was something wrong with you? That was how Catrina felt. But is that always the case? It may be impossible to determine what motivated your parents, but there are good reasons to avoid such a negative assumption. After all, why do parents usually give children up for adoption? Often, they feel that they have no other choice.

Consider the example of Moses. The Bible account in Exodus chapter 2 tells us that when the Egyptian Pharaoh decreed genocide against male Israelite babies, Jochebed kept her infant son, Moses, hidden for three months. Finally, hiding was no longer possible,

but she could not bear to see her child executed. So “when she was no longer able to conceal him, she then took for him an ark of papyrus and coated it with bitumen and pitch and put the child in it and put it among the reeds by the bank of the river Nile.”—Exodus 2:3.

Abandoning her child in this manner was no doubt a very difficult thing for her to do. But what choice did she have? Her love for her son prompted her to do what she thought was best for him. Interestingly, her daughter stood guard nearby and remained until she saw that her baby brother was safely picked up. She may well have done so at the request of her anxious mother.

Of course, not all cases of adoption are prompted by such clear-cut emergencies, but motives are often similar. Robert says: “I was conceived out of wedlock. Raising me would have put a heavy burden on my mother’s household, since there were other children in the family. She may have reasoned that it was in my best interests to give me up for adoption.”

Granted, there are many reasons why children are given to other families to raise. But

as these examples illustrate, it is not necessarily because the mother hates her baby or sees some defect in her child. In many cases, the mother sincerely believes that the child will be better off if raised by another family.

The Value of Being Loved

Gaining insight may help you further when you think about why you were adopted. Consider again Moses' example. In time, "the daughter of Pharaoh picked him up and brought him up as her own son." (Acts 7:21) What motivated Pharaoh's daughter to extend her protection to a child she knew to be one of the condemned Hebrews? "Here the boy was weeping," the Bible says. "At that she felt compassion for him." (Exodus 2:6) Yes, Moses' adoption was the result, not of his being hated or rejected, but of his being loved.

Many adopted children come to realize that their biological parents did not simply abandon them—although that happens all too often these days—but presented them to some agency that would ensure that they would be cared for properly. And their subsequent adoption occurred because someone loved them enough to undertake their care. Might something similar be said of you? Focusing on the love you have received and valuing it can help to ease any pain you may feel.

Furthermore, you may receive love from others besides your adoptive family. If you are part of the Christian congregation, you can enjoy the benefits of having many spiritual mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers who love you. (Mark 10:29-30) Christian elders can "prove to be like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land." (Isaiah 32:2) Do not hesitate to seek out mature fellow Christians and confide in them. Let them know what is on your mind and in your heart.

Robert feels that it is important to develop strong ties within the Christian congregation. "The emptiness I feel is still there," he

acknowledges. "However, the love of my spiritual family pushes it off into a little corner of my heart."

You Can Succeed

So resist false and negative thinking. That includes the notion that success in life might somehow elude you because you were adopted. Such negative thoughts can prove very discouraging! (Proverbs 24:10) Besides, they have no basis in fact.

Remember, Moses made the most of the opportunities afforded him. The Bible says: "Consequently Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. In fact, he was powerful in his words and deeds." (Acts 7:22) More important, Moses took in spiritual instruction—so much so that his heavenly Father, Jehovah, was entirely real to him. (Hebrews 11:27) Did he succeed in life?

Well, Moses later became leader of a mighty nation of perhaps three million or more. He became a prophet, judge, commander, historian, mediator of the Law covenant, and writer of the first five books of the Bible. In addition, he is generally credited with writing the book of Job and Psalm 90. Yes, Moses lived a very successful life. Many adopted children similarly succeed, and so can you.

Robert successfully raised two children and is currently serving as an elder in the Christian congregation. Looking back over his years as an adopted child, he says: "I have learned not to keep dwelling on what I can't fix but to be grateful for the blessings I have."

If you are presently living in a foster home or have been adopted into a family, negative thoughts might assail you at times. But try to replace them with positive ones. Philippians 4:8, 9 promises that "the God of peace will be with you" if you "continue considering" things that are pleasing to God. What, though, are some further practical steps you can take to succeed while living with your adoptive family? A future article in this series will address that question.

Watching the World

TV Shapes View of History

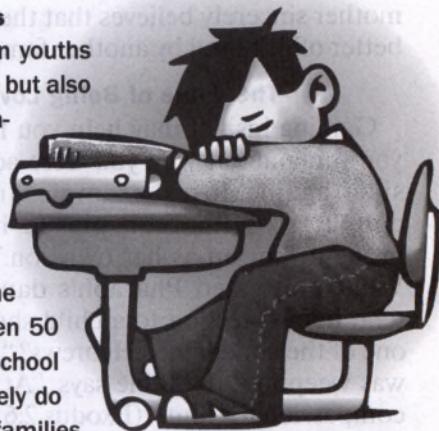
"Britons rate the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, as the most significant event in the nation's history over the past 100 years, ahead of the outbreak of the Second World War or the winning of women's suffrage," reports *The Times* of London. In a survey for the History Channel, over 1,000 people were asked to choose which of ten events was the most significant to them in British history during the past 100 years. The death of the princess was voted the most significant by 22 percent, the beginning of the second world war by 21 percent, and women's suffrage by 15 percent. When asked about world events, 41 percent chose the September 11 attacks, 19 percent the atom-bombing of Hiroshima, and 11 percent the fall of the Berlin Wall. *The Times* comments that for most people "history is largely a matter of what they have seen most recently on television."

A Link Between Divorce and Success in School?

A recent study by France's National Institute of Demographic Studies indicates that children of divorced parents achieve less academically than children whose parents stay together, reports the French daily *Le Monde*. Children whose parents separate before the children reach adulthood leave school on average six months to a year earlier than those whose parents remain married, regardless of their social and cultural background. Even in well-to-do families, where the vast majority of children pass their final

The Price of After-School Jobs

A growing number of German youths get jobs not only during vacation but also during the school year. "Nationwide, at least a third of the children 13 years of age and older work on average more than three hours a week," reports the magazine *Der Spiegel*. In the German state of Hesse, between 50 and 80 percent of senior high school students take on odd jobs. Rarely do these youths need to help their families make ends meet. Rather, they want such possessions as the latest mobile phones, designer clothes, and cars, as well as the sense of independence a job gives them. But there is a cost. "It is not exceptional for a student to snooze with his head on the desk because of working long hours the day before or even early in the morning," notes educator Thomas Müller. "They want luxury now instead of education for tomorrow." Fellow educator Knud Dittmann adds: "Once children have the consumer mentality ingrained in them, they accept low grades or even having to repeat a year as the price to pay."



high school exams, those from broken homes are twice as likely not to obtain a high school diploma. In France, 40 percent of marriages end in divorce.

Narcotics' Collateral Damage

In recent months, five people died in Peru as a direct result of drinking water from jungle sources that were contaminated by coca cultivation and cocaine processing, reports Lima's newspaper *El Comercio*. Among other toxic chemicals, kerosene, sulfuric acid, and ammonia are used to produce cocaine. "These deaths were caused by the consumption of water from springs or streams into which the drug

traffickers throw their highly toxic chemical wastes," says the report. Even antinarcotics police who confiscate and destroy the hidden drug laboratories have been adversely affected by contact with poisonous residues. Many other jungle residents are also "undergoing irreversible organic damage" as a result of consuming the polluted water. "The sad thing is that a large part of these settlers are unaware of the danger many of them are in," said Jonathan Jacobson of the U.S. Embassy's Office of Antinarcotic Affairs, in Lima. "No doubt they are even people who have nothing to do with coca cultivation or processing."

Soft Drinks In the Mexican Diet

Mexico is the second-largest consumer of bottled soft drinks in the world after the United States, and soft drinks are among the ten most common products in the Mexican diet, consumed by 60 percent of families, reports the newspaper *Reforma*. This concerns health experts who would like to see families spending money on milk, fruit, vegetables, and other foods that are essential to the growth and development of children. Instead, too much of the family budget goes toward a product that "does not provide any nutrient to the body but does have a large amount of carbohydrates, which in the long run contribute to the devel-

opment of obesity," reports *Reforma*. Other harmful effects of the high consumption of soft drinks, particularly colas, include tooth decay and osteoporosis, states the report.

When Pills Make Headaches Worse

"Neurologist Michael Anthony estimates up to 10 percent of headache sufferers are plagued by 'analgesic abuse' induced headaches," states *The Daily Telegraph* of Sydney, Australia. "Instead of a weekly headache, over-reliance on over-the-counter remedies can result in headaches every day." Professor Anthony, associated with the University of New South Wales, found that "patients who abuse headache tab-

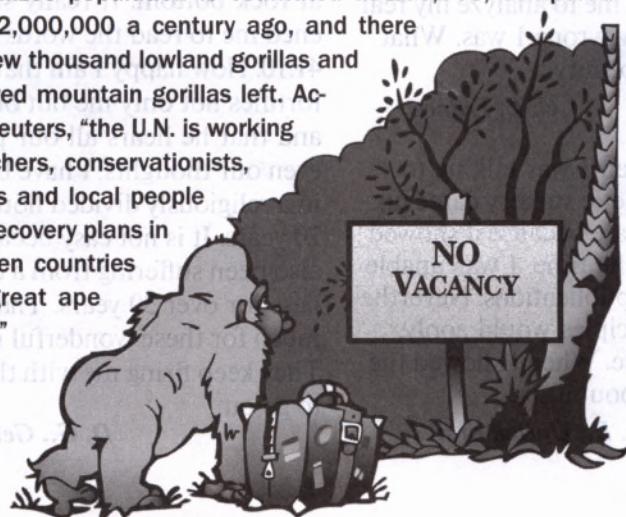
lets have a shortage of serotonin," a substance that restricts the expansion of blood vessels. "Low levels of serotonin cause the arteries to dilate, and that brings on headaches," he notes. Anthony recommends that migraine sufferers use specialized medicines prescribed by a doctor rather than over-the-counter pills, adding: "If [patients] take [painkiller] tablets more than three times a week, even one dose three times a week, then within a few months their headaches will get worse."

Easing Morning Sickness

"Between 70 and 80 per cent of pregnant women are thought to suffer from morning sickness," states the *Sun-Herald* newspaper of Australia. When they get up in the morning, these newly pregnant women suffer from nausea, often accompanied by vomiting. Among the suspected causes of this condition is a rise in the level of the hormone progesterone during pregnancy, which can produce excess stomach acids. Additionally, "an enhanced sense of smell can make pregnant women prone to queasiness." While there is no universal cure for morning sickness, the paper recommends avoiding warm places, since heat can induce nausea, taking naps and getting ample sleep, and smelling a cut lemon. "Try eating plain crackers or dry cereal before getting out of bed. Always get out of bed slowly," the paper continues. "Have frequent protein snacks." The newspaper says that "there is an upside to morning sickness. Recent studies suggest mothers who experience it have fewer miscarriages."

Great Apes in Peril

"The jungle homes of the great apes will all but disappear in 30 years unless humans take drastic action," reports Reuters news service. At the recent Earth Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, United Nations officials stated: "Less than 10 percent of the remaining habitat of the great apes of Africa will be left relatively undisturbed by 2030 if road building, mining camps and other infrastructure developments continue at current levels." This shrinking habitat has already caused a sharp decline in great ape populations. The current chimpanzee population is estimated at 200,000, compared with some 2,000,000 a century ago, and there are only a few thousand lowland gorillas and a few hundred mountain gorillas left. According to Reuters, "the U.N. is working with researchers, conservationists, governments and local people to draw up recovery plans in the two dozen countries that have great ape populations."



From Our Readers

Garbage Thank you so much for the timely cover series "Garbage—Will It Bury Us?" (August 22, 2002) When you live in a highly industrialized country, it's easy to get caught up in "a throwaway mentality." Your article made me stop and think about the dangers of this. I'm going to think twice about my reason for getting rid of things from now on!



J. B., United States

I really enjoyed the articles on the garbage problem. For a long time, I lived in a large apartment complex with several dumpsters on the property. One time I was walking outside and noticed that on top of the full dumpster, there was a shiny new coffeemaker. Previous to that, two teenage boys said that they had found a gold watch there. I was shocked at what we could find in those dumpsters. Now they have a sign stating, "No rummaging in dumpsters."

B. Q., United States

Cosmetic Surgery Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the article "Young People Ask . . . Should I Have Cosmetic Surgery?" (August 22, 2002) I am 14 years old, and at school some students make fun of a certain feature of my face. I was convinced that I had to change it. This article helped me to analyze my real motives and to understand how wrong I was. What counts to Jehovah is our inner beauty.

C. T., France

A couple of months ago, when I was talking to a coworker, the subject of cosmetic surgery came up. She felt that it was not appropriate because it showed disrespect for the Creator. At the time, I was unable to find anything specific in our publications. Nevertheless, I told her what Bible principles would apply, which later I found in this article. When I showed the article to her, she was excited about it.

M. R., United States

Color My decision to paint my home was easier after I read the article "Add a Splash of Color." (August 22, 2002) Not only do I thank you for the article but my budget thanks you as well!

R. M., United States

Attractiveness I am 21, and I wrestle with the feeling that I am not attractive. My experience is best described by Tyler in the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Make Myself More Attractive?" (July 22, 2002) The practical, Bible-based counsel in this article is just what I needed. Thank you for this and other publications that continue to offer help to youths who are facing so many challenges in this hideous world. All that remains on my part is to put the advice into action.

P. L., Zambia

Prayer Heartfelt thanks for the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Prayers That Are Heard By God." (September 8, 2002) The day I read it, I was at rock bottom. It really strengthened me to read the words of Isaiah 41:10. How happy I am that Jehovah fortifies not only me but others too and that he hears all our prayers, even our thoughts! I have been living in a religiously divided household for 20 years. It is not easy because I have also been suffering from a chronic illness for over 30 years. Thank you so much for these wonderful magazines. They keep firing me with the strength to go on.

D. G., Germany

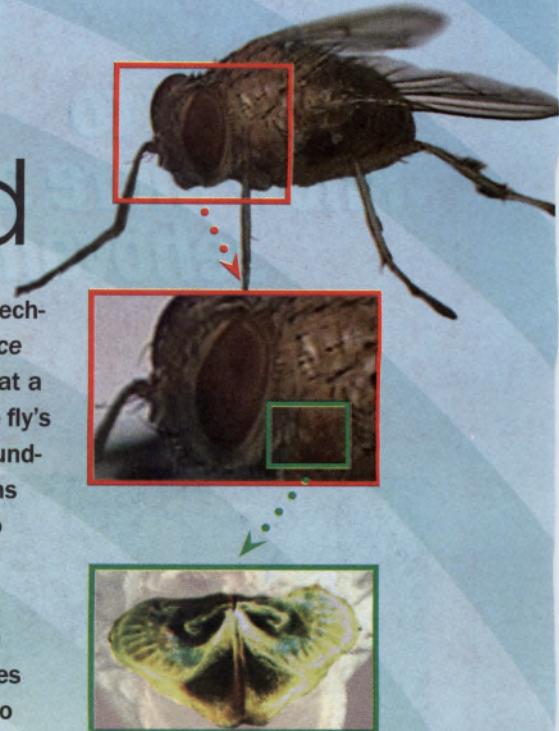
The Secret of a Miniature Ear Discovered

"In the past decade, biologists discovered a new mechanism by which animals locate sounds," says *Science News*. "The finding emerged from the observation that a parasitic fly stalks crickets by sound, even though the fly's head is too small for any of the previously known sound-localization mechanisms to work." Such mechanisms usually depend on a sizable distance separating two eardrums.

According to a recent study carried out at Cornell University, U.S.A., "female flies of the species *Ormia ochracea* pinpoint sounds to within 2 compass degrees—as precisely as an owl does," even though their two joined eardrums span only about a millimeter! The fly's owl-like acoustic precision can be credited to an ingenious hearing apparatus.

The insect's eardrums are joined by a bridge of material that allows the two membranes to swing back and forth as a single unit—you might think of a teeter-totter at a playground. When the sound emitted by a cricket reaches the fly, vibrations in the nearer eardrum are transferred almost instantaneously to the other, dampening the latter's response to the same incoming sound waves. Hence, the membrane nearer to the cricket vibrates more strongly. This enables the fly to locate and home in on a potential target.

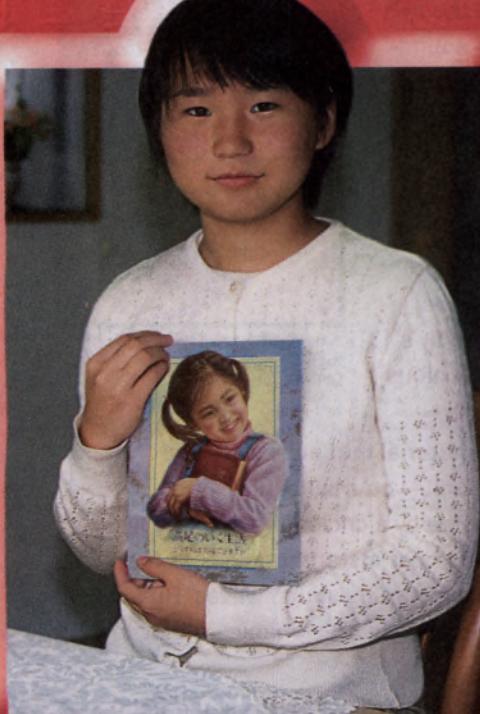
Of what practical use is this discovery? Researchers believe that it could help them improve the design of things like microphones and hearing aids. The latter, for instance, could be designed so that they "gather sound primarily from the direction the listener is facing," says the report. Yes, what wisdom is manifest in Jehovah's amazing creations!—Job 42:2.



R. Hoy/Cornell University
Top two photos: R. Wyettbach/
Cornell University



"I want to know more about Jehovah"



So wrote 12-year-old Miki in Japan who had just finished studying the brochure *A Satisfying Life—How to Attain It*. "When I first saw the words 'Satisfying Life,'" she said in a letter to the publishers, "I thought that it just contained advice on how to make life satisfying. But as I studied this brochure, I realized that it teaches us about God's greatness as well. I could grasp, in an enjoyable way, God's greatness and what to do to have a satisfying life. Now that I have finished studying it, the desire to know more about God and to realize a satisfying life fills me. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for making the brochure."

