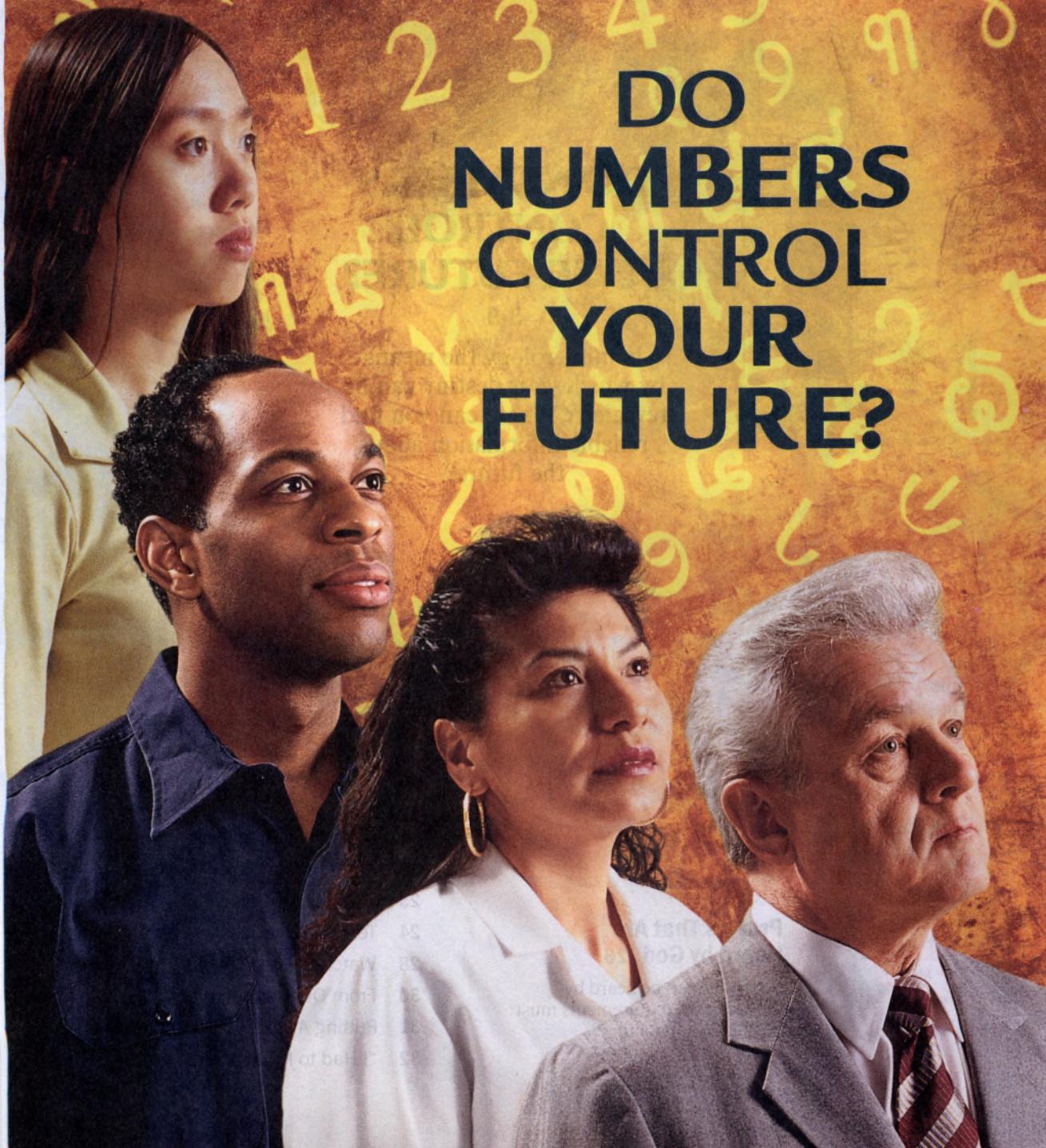


Awake!

SEPTEMBER 8, 2002

DO
NUMBERS
CONTROL
YOUR
FUTURE?



DO NUMBERS CONTROL YOUR FUTURE?

3-9

Is numerology the means by which your destiny can be revealed? Where can you find reliable information about the future?

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NUMBERS AND YOU

DO NUMBERS have hidden meaning? "Of course!" some exclaim, pointing to an intriguing example—the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

"The moment I heard the news," says one numerologist, "I noticed the date: 9-11-2001." The number 11 is generally considered to be one of the "master numbers" by numerologists. So numerology enthusiasts have compiled a list of various items related to the terrorist attack that point to the "master number" 11. This is just a portion of what they found:

- The tragedy occurred on the date 9/11. . . . $9 + 1 + 1 = 11$.
- September 11 was the 254th day of the year.
... $2 + 5 + 4 = 11$.
- The airplane that hit the north tower was **Flight 11**.
- That flight had 92 people on board. . . . $9 + 2 = 11$.
- The airplane that hit the south tower had 65 passengers.
... $6 + 5 = 11$.
- The Twin Towers resembled the number **11**.
- In English the expression "New York City" has **11** letters.

Numerology—in which special significance is attached to figures, their combinations, and numerical totals—has been a widespread practice in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Why the allure? According to one Web site, decoding the letters of the alphabet used in names—one popular aspect of numerology—"yields accurate information concerning personality, nature, qualities and shortcomings." According to this source, studying our "date of birth uncovers our life path, with its joys and trials."

Are these claims true? Or could there be hidden dangers in the metaphysical study of numbers?

THE ALLURE OF NUMBERS



IMAGINE a world without numbers. There would be no money. Trade would be restricted to face-to-face barter. And what about sports? Without numbers, not only would we be unable to keep score but we could not even define how many players should be on each team!

Besides their practical application, however, numbers carry an aura of mystery. This is because they are abstract. You cannot see, touch, or feel numbers. To illustrate: An apple has a distinct color, texture, size, shape, smell, and

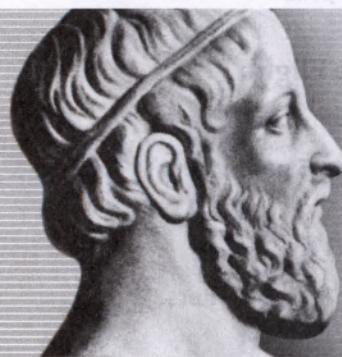
taste. You can check each of these properties to see whether a certain object is indeed an apple, a lemon, a ball, or something else. A number, however, is not like that. One collection of seven items may not share anything in common with another collection of seven items—other than their “sevenness.” Hence, to comprehend the meaning of numbers—for example, to discern the difference between six and seven—is to grasp something very abstract indeed. And this is where number mystics come into the picture.

From Pythagoras to Pseudoscience

Attributing special meaning to numbers was common in ancient societies. Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher and mathematician who lived during the sixth century B.C.E., taught that all things can be reduced to numerical patterns. He and his followers reasoned that the whole universe exemplifies order and proportion. Could it not be, then, that mathematical relationships are inherent in all material things?

**Pythagoras taught
that all things
possess numerical
patterns**

Courtesy National Library of Medicine



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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HIDDEN MESSAGES IN THE BIBLE?

In his book *The Bible Code*, journalist Michael Drosnin claims to have discovered hidden messages by means of computer analysis of the Hebrew Scriptures. According to Drosnin's claims, the "code" yielded the words "assassin that will assassinate" along with the name Yitzhak Rabin—and this was found a year before Israeli Prime Minister Rabin was killed.

As expected, *The Bible Code* created its share of controversy. Dave Thomas, a mathematician and physicist, demonstrated that computer analysis of any text will produce what appear to be cryptic messages. Analyzing Drosnin's own text, Thomas came up with the words "code," "silly," and "hoax." "Hidden messages can be found anywhere," Thomas says, "provided you're willing to invest time and effort to harvest the vast field of probability."

Since Pythagoras' day, numerical readings have been used for prediction and dream interpretation as well as for memory aids. They have been employed by Greeks, Muslims, and members of Christendom. Using a system of numerology called gematria, Jewish Cabalists assigned a numerical value to each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet and thereby claim to have found hidden meanings in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Modern-day numerology is similar. Often, your name and birth date will be the starting point. A numerical value is assigned to each letter in your name. By adding these—along with the numbers of your birth month and date—a numerologist



With its capability of making an unlimited number of calculations, a computer would likely find some combinations of letters that could be used as some sort of prediction. But this is merely a coincidence and does not prove that the Bible contains hidden messages.*

* For more information, see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 2000, pages 29-31.

establishes your key numbers. He then ascribes special meaning to these numbers, which he feels provide a complete description of you—including your personality, your unconscious desires, and your destiny.

Perhaps the real attraction of numerology lies in the seeming accuracy of its analysis. "Many people have come to believe in numerology through finding how closely the numbers fit those to whom they are applied," writes Edward Albertson in his book *Prophecy for the Millions*. Yet, numerology has also been labeled a pseudoscience. Why? Are there reasons for you to be suspicious of its claims?

Semimonthly Languages: Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebano, Croatian, Czech,[#] Danish,[#] Dutch, English,[#] Estonian, Finnish,[#] French, German,[#] Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,[#] Japanese,[#] Korean,[#] Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,[#] Swahili, Swedish,[#] Tagalog, Ukrainian
[#]Audiocassettes also available.

Monthly Languages: Albanian, Amharic, Bulgarian, Chicewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Ewe, Georgian, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Nepali, Papiamento (Aruba), Papiamento (Curaçao), Sepedi, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhala, Tamil, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

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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.

SHOULD YOU LOOK TO NUMBERS FOR GUIDANCE?

DOES numerology stand up under the scrutiny of science and reason? Are numbers the means by which our destiny can be revealed? Should you build your future around numerological findings and predictions?

One objection that numerologists have been unable to overcome is that different cultures use different calendars. For example, what if someone lives where the Chinese calendar is used? Consider the date mentioned in our opening article—September 11, 2001. According to the Chinese calendar, that was the 24th day of the 7th month of the 18th year of the 78th cycle. The Julian calendar would

THE VARIETY OF CALENDARS POSES A SERIOUS OBSTACLE TO NUMEROLOGY

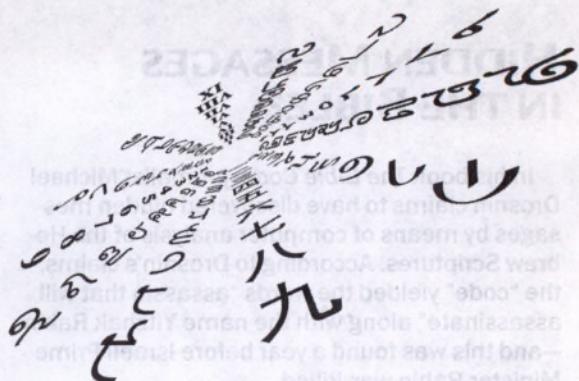
GREGORIAN September 11, 2001

CHINESE 24th day of the 7th
month of the 18th year
of the 78th cycle

JULIAN August 29, 2001

MUSLIM 22 Jumada II 1422

HEBREW 23 Elul 5761



express the same date as August 29, 2001. According to the Muslim calendar, it was 22 Jumada II 1422, while the Hebrew calendar had it as 23 Elul 5761. How could there be numerical significance to a date that is expressed in so many ways? Another factor: Languages often have unique spellings of names. For example, the letters contained in the English name John have a numerical value of 2, but the letters in the Spanish spelling of the same name—Juan—have a value of 1.

It is one thing to recognize that many aspects of the universe can be explained by mathematical formulas. These formulas can be tested and demonstrated. But it is quite another matter to claim that your name was preordained to coincide with your date of birth and to be linked with certain numbers so that you can ascertain your destiny.

The conclusion is clear: To believe that numerological interpretations are accurate, when they are based upon such widely variable factors as calendar and language, is to stretch the limits of credibility to an absurd degree.

“Time and Unforeseen Occurrence”

Some become interested in numerology because they desire to make their life predictable. However, the Bible makes it plain that the details of human life cannot be mapped out in advance. We read: “The swift do not

have the race, nor the mighty ones the battle, nor do the wise also have the food, nor do the understanding ones also have the riches, nor do even those having knowledge have the favor; because *time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all.*" (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Yes, many events take place unexpectedly. Such chance happenings defy efforts to predict outcomes based on birth date or numerical value of a name.

Consider another example: In encouraging generosity, the Bible states: "Send out your bread upon the surface of the waters, for in the course of many days you will find it again. Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for *you do not know what calamity will occur on the earth.*" (Ecclesiastes 11:1, 2) With few exceptions,

calamities are things that people do not—indeed, *cannot*—know in advance. Hence, mathematics professor Underwood Dudley writes regarding numerologists: "They fail to give chance sufficient credit. Amazing things can happen at random."

It is true that numerologists may make *some* predictions that come true. What accounts for this? In some instances, the outcome may be coincidental. Then, too, sometimes the language of numerologists is so ambiguous that it could apply to several outcomes. But there is something more serious to consider.

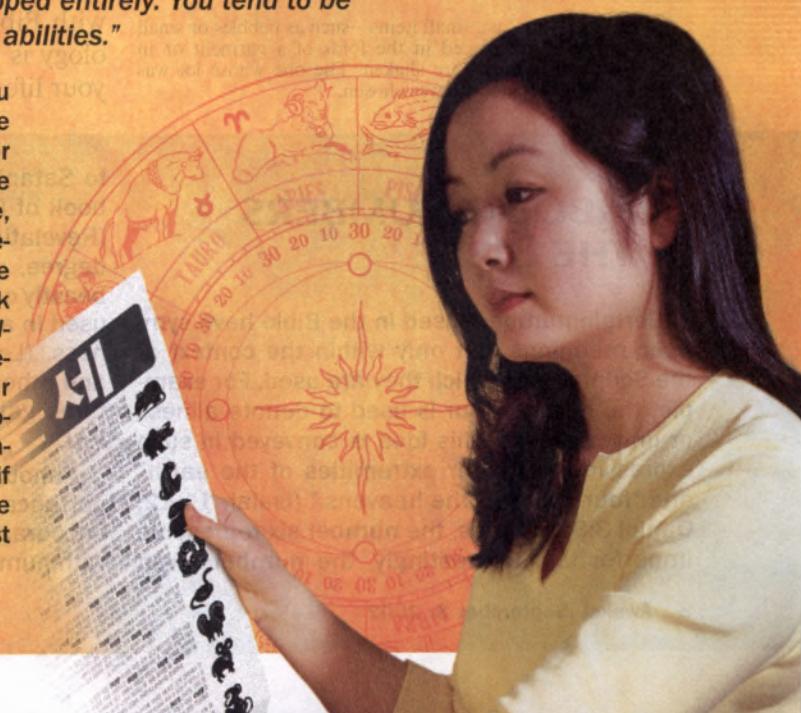
A Form of Divination?

The Bible does not mention numerology by name. But it does tell of Haman, an Amalekite

ARE HOROSCOPES RELIABLE?

"At times you are outgoing, but at other times you are reserved. You find it unwise to reveal too much about yourself to strangers. You are an independent thinker who needs proof of a matter before gullibly accepting it. You like variety in life, and you become unhappy when you are hemmed in by rules. You have great potential, which you have not tapped entirely. You tend to be critical of your performance and abilities."

Does that sound like you? If so, you may be putting more meaning into the description than it deserves. After all, most of the above statements are true for the majority of people. Hence, readers will tend to accept those statements that seem accurate and ignore those that do not. According to the book *Why Do Buses Come in Threes—The Hidden Mathematics of Everyday Life*, "researchers have found that if the star signs on a horoscope are removed, people are unable to identify which paragraph belongs to their own sign, but if the signs are included they will believe their own star reading to be the most accurate."





Haman used divination to select a date to carry out his genocidal plot

who plotted the extermination of the Jews living in Persia during the fifth century B.C.E. The account says: “Haman ordered the lots to be cast (‘purim,’ they were called) *to find out the right day and month* to carry out his plot. The thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar, was decided on.” (Italics ours.)—Esther 3:7, *Today’s English Version*.

In ancient times, casting lots was a legitimate way of settling a controversy.* (Proverbs 18:18) But Haman cast lots to practice divination—something that the Bible condemns.

* When lots were cast, small items—such as pebbles or small bits of wood—were placed in the folds of a garment or in a vase. After this, they were shaken. The one whose lot was drawn out was the one who was chosen.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 states that God detests “anyone who employs divination, a practitioner of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events . . . Everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah.”

The Bible links divination and uncanny power to spiritism. Wicked spirits can maneuver events to suit their purpose. Whether this is the case in a specific instance or not, one thing is certain: The practice of spiritism is condemned by God, and it can bring one under the control of wicked spirits.—1 Samuel 15:23; Ephesians 6:12.

Numerology is devoid of scientific basis, and it fares badly when examined under the light of reason. More important, because it is a form of divination, numerology conflicts with Bible teachings. In view of that, numerology is not a beneficial means of regulating your life or planning your future.

SYMBOLIC NUMBERS IN THE BIBLE

Certain numbers used in the Bible have symbolic meanings, but only within the context of the Scriptures in which they are used. For example, the number four is used to denote allness or universality. This idea is conveyed in such expressions as “four extremities of the earth” and “four winds of the heavens.” (Isaiah 11:12; Daniel 8:8) At times, the number six represents imperfection. Interestingly, the number given

to Satan’s earthly political organization by the book of Revelation is “a man’s number”—666. (Revelation 13:18) Here six is raised to the third degree, underscoring the imperfection of that beastly organization. When the number seven is used in a symbolic way, it represents completeness. (Leviticus 4:6; Hebrews 9:24-26) These and other symbolic numbers used in the Scriptures gain meaning from their prophetic context.

Although the Scriptures give a measure of importance to certain numbers, the Bible does not encourage us to link the letters of certain words with numbers to uncover mystical truths.

RELIABLE GUIDANCE FOR THE FUTURE

DOES the untrustworthiness of numerology and other forms of divination mean that we have no way to learn about our future? By no means!

Abstract numbers cannot tell mankind what the future holds. But the “living God,” who declares “from the beginning the finale,” has done so. This he does in his written Word, the Bible. (1 Timothy 4:10; Isaiah 46:10) It is also the word of the living God, not the word of numerologists, that “is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart” and so can help you to understand what motivates you and what will bring you real success.—Hebrews 4:12.

Our Creator, the Author of the Bible, is the only one who can accurately

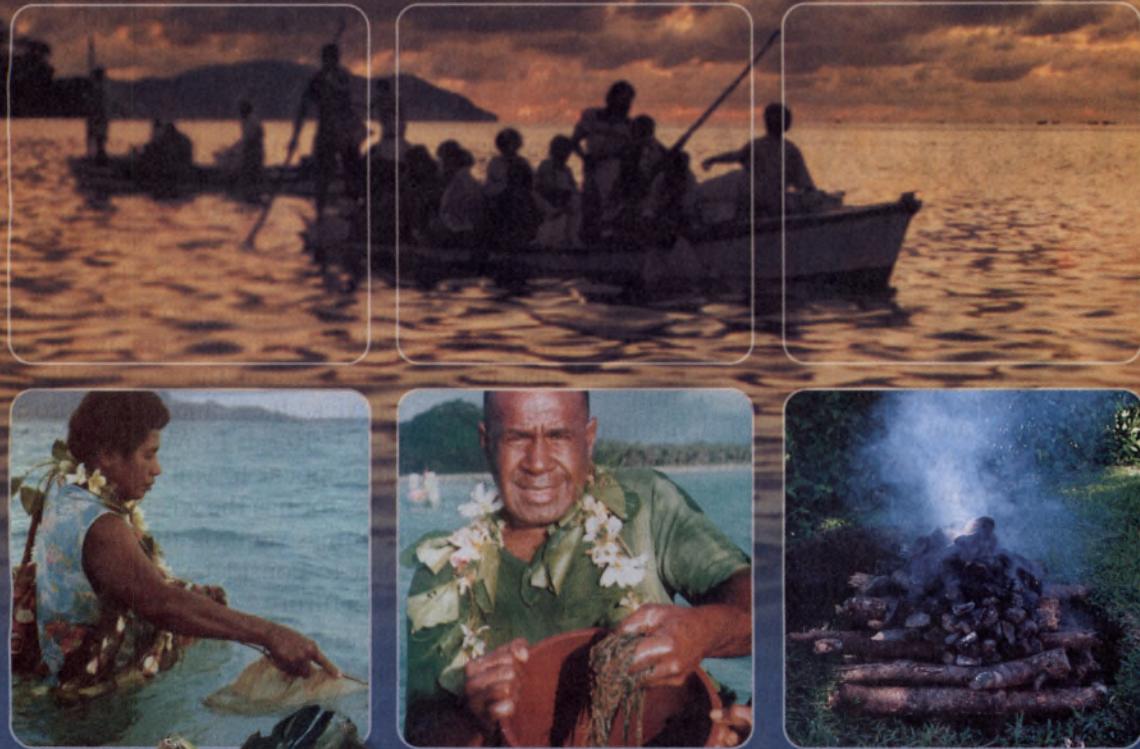
predict the future. This is because God is all-powerful, and he has always been true to his word. “I have even spoken it,” Jehovah God said. “I shall also do it.” (Isaiah 46:11) After leading the Israelites into the Promised Land, Joshua was able to say with confidence: “Not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; it all came true.”—Joshua 21:45; 23:14.

The Bible contains many prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled. Among them are those that foretell a time when the earth will be wiped clean of wickedness and made into a paradise. (Psalm 37:10, 11; Proverbs 2:21, 22) Does that future appeal to you? Do you believe that our Creator has the wisdom and the power to make things right on this planet? If so, you will want to consider what the Bible says about earth’s future.*

Therefore, spend your time wisely now—not by trying to read your future in the numbers but by striving to gain an accurate understanding of the Bible and its prophecies. Jehovah’s Witnesses are ready to help you to gain further knowledge about the future as revealed in God’s Word, the Bible.

* See chapters 1, 10, and 19 of the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.





Balolo “Caviar of the Pacific”

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN FIJI

DO YOU like seafood? If so, come with us to a village on one of the outer islands of tropical Fiji, where we are about to enjoy an exotic feast. As we listen to the gentle lapping of the waves against the outriggers, we note an underground oven, called a *lovo*, that has been dug close to the shore. A fire has been set to heat specially selected stones, over which the main course will be cooked.

But who is bringing the main course? No one!

Instead, we will simply wait for the main course to come to us. If you suspect that there is something unusual about this meal, you are right. Our highly anticipated feast will be a plate of wriggling, delectable worms! These reddish-brown (male) and bluish-green (female) sea worms have been dubbed the caviar of the Pacific. Here in the Fiji Islands, this curious culinary delight is called *balolo*.*

* Other languages, including English, use the Samoan name *palolo*.

Are They Really Eating Worms?

You may be both surprised and relieved to know that this unusual hunting expedition is not what it appears to be. Consider why.

The tail section of balolo worms alters drastically and rapidly grows into reproductive organs called epitokes. These contain sex cells called gametes. The tail segment, com-

plete with eyes and paddle-like limbs, separates from the worm and rises to the surface of the sea. If not snatched by a hungry human or an aquatic predator, the soluble casings explode, releasing eggs and sperm for a brilliantly contrived "chance" meeting. The tremendous numbers ensure that there will be sufficient fertiliza-



tion, despite the toll caused by human and animal intervention. Those that survive as free-swimming larvae find a suitable patch of coral, where they settle to begin their life cycle.

Hence, when we eat balolo, we are only consuming tail segments of worms that are still living on the reef.

Once or twice a year, for one to three nights during the third quarter of the moon, the balolo worms rise en masse to the surface of the sea.* The predictable timing of this spawning is not fully understood, but scientists believe it may be associated with rising sea temperatures, the moon and tides, or the length of daylight. Methods of prediction include observations of the weather, the flowering of certain plants, and various conditions of the sea. More recently, marine biologists have made balolo predictions based on lunar phases and the Metonic cycle.[#]

Back in the village, the sound of singing accompanied by ukuleles and guitars is interrupted by the announcement that the worms have started to rise. Let's join the men, women, and children moving out to the reef. Some wear a brightly colored *isulu* (a wraparound cloth worn by men and women) and a beautiful *salusalu* (a fragrant flower lei). These people are unusually well-dressed, considering that they are about to wade into the ocean.

Several opt to participate in this event from inside a canoe, but we decide to join the group wading from shore. Soon we are waist-deep in the warm tropical water. Suddenly, we become aware that rising to the surface all around us are thousands upon thousands of worms!

Now we are caught up in the excitement of what has been called "one of the most bizarre curios-

ties in the natural history of the South Pacific." Every imaginable means is used to catch the squirming creatures as they reach the surface—buckets, hand nets, mosquito nets, woven coconut-leaf baskets, and even bare hands. One visitor observed a Fijian man with bushy, curly hair ducking his head into the wriggling mass and shaking off into a boat those that had become entangled in his hair! Some eager participants are tasting the catch immediately, and they can be seen chewing vigorously as they continue gathering them.

It seems that as quickly as it began, this amazing spectacle is over—at least for another year. We decide to pass up the opportunity to eat the raw worms, but we join our friends onshore for our first taste of this "caviar of the Pacific" when it comes out of the underground oven. Rich in vitamins and minerals, balolo can be boiled, baked, or fried. Once cooked, it keeps for a week or more. We admit, though, that its fishy taste is not for everyone.

The time has come for us to depart, and we thank our village hosts for their warm island hospitality. As we reflect on the rising of the balolo worms, its predictable timing, and the interdependence of all living things on the reef, we marvel at the Creator of such diverse life cycles.—Revelation 4:11.

If you are planning to visit the Fiji Islands, you may want to sample a dish of these delicious polychaete worms. On the other hand, you might prefer to pack a lunch! Whichever you choose, you can be sure that at balolo time the islanders will be waiting for the rising of this fascinating "caviar of the Pacific."

* A similar event occurs at other locations in the southern and western regions of the Pacific, including the Cook Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu. In addition, mass risings of related polychaete worms are reported in other parts of the world, including the Malay Archipelago, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and Japan.

A Metonic cycle is a period of 19 years.



A RELIGIOUS DILEMMA IN COLONIAL BRAZIL

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BRAZIL

ON November 30, 1996, representatives from the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, organized by the World Council of Churches, gathered at a dockside in Salvador, Brazil. The location was significant. In past centuries at this very port, millions of Africans had been sold as slaves. "This sea gathered their tears," remarked one clergyman, referring to the captives' ill-fated journey. On this special day of remembrance, remorse was expressed for what one speaker called Christianity's scandalous participation in slavery. How was religion involved in the slave trade in colonial Brazil?

"Saving Lost Souls"

In 1441—nearly 60 years before the official discovery of Brazil—Portuguese navigator Antão Gonçalves captured and transported the first shipment of African tribesmen to Portugal. Few in medieval society questioned the morality of enslaving prisoners of war, especially those whom the church labeled as "infidels." Over the next two decades, however, the lucrative *peacetime* slave trade did require justification. Some claimed that by enslaving Africans, they would be "saving lost souls," as they were rescuing these foreigners from their pagan way of life.

The Romanus Pontifex bull, issued by Pope Nicholas V on January 8, 1455, gave formal support for the already thriving slave trade. Thus, the church was no bulwark against slavery. On the contrary, some of its clergymen were "stubborn advocates," observes Brazilian historian João Dornas Filho. The stage was

thus set for slavery to spread to Brazil when Portuguese colonists settled there.

"The Only Option"

In 1549, newly arrived Jesuit missionaries were alarmed to discover that much of Brazil's work force was made up of illegally captured slaves. Landowners had simply rounded them up to work on their farms and sugar plantations. "Most men have a troubled conscience because of the slaves they possess," wrote Jesuit superior Manuel de Nóbrega in 1550. Still, the landowners kept their enslaved labor force, even if it meant that they might not be granted absolution by the church.

But soon the Jesuits in Brazil faced a dilemma. Limited finances made it difficult for them to perform their charitable works. One solution was for them to farm land granted them by the government and use the profits from the produce to fund religious activities. But who would work on these farms? "The only option," says Portuguese historian Jorge Couto, "was Negro slave labor—a solution that raised scruples of a moral nature, which the Jesuit superior in Brazil decided to ignore."

The Jesuits added their voice to a growing lobby of landowners clamoring for African slaves. The Indian slaves seemed to have difficulty adapting to intensive farming, and often they rebelled or simply escaped into the forests.* Africans, on the other hand, had

* According to *The World Book Encyclopedia*, "large numbers of Indians died from European diseases. Many others fought the Portuguese and were killed."



Pope Nicholas V

Culver Pictures

been tried and tested on sugar plantations in Portugal's island colonies in the Atlantic. "They never ran away, nor did they have anywhere to run," claimed one writer at the time.

Thus, with clerical blessing the importation of African slaves steadily increased. Brazil became heavily dependent on the Atlantic slave trade. By 1768 the Jesuit-owned Santa Cruz farm had 1,205 slaves. The Benedictines and the Carmelites also acquired properties and large numbers of slaves. "The monasteries are full of slaves," cried 19th-century Brazilian abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco.

Since farming was a competitive business, slave owners on church properties often im-

posed a brutal work regimen. Professor of history Stuart Schwartz notes that even many of those clerics who protested the abuse of slaves had "a low regard for Africans" and "held that discipline, chastisement, and work were the only way to overcome the slaves' superstition, indolence, and lack of civility."

"Slavery Theology"

As the clergy strove to reconcile Christian values with a system that was powered by relentless exploitation, they created a moral support for slavery—what one theologian calls a slavery theology. Since the cramped, disease-ridden holds of slave vessels claimed the lives of a large proportion of their human cargo, the church insisted on baptizing Africans before they departed for the New World.* Of course, converts rarely received religious instruction prior to baptism.—See the box "Instant Christians?"

In any event, long working hours and a drastically reduced life span meant that slaves had little chance to practice their new faith. However, church doctrines regarding "the separation of the body and the soul" smoothed over this problem. 'True, Africans languished in brutal slavery, but their *souls* were free,' clerics reasoned. 'Slaves should therefore accept their humiliation with joy, as

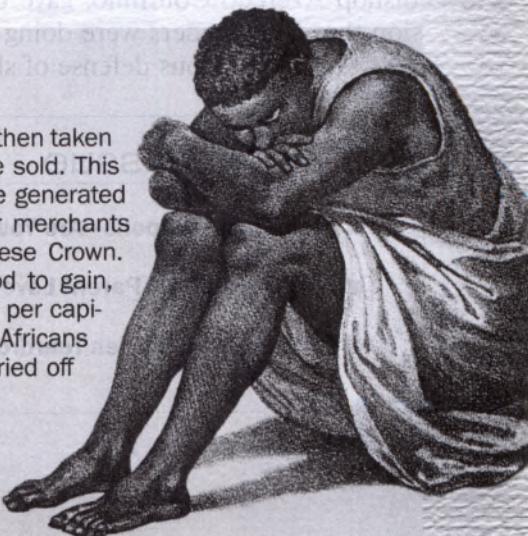
* Sometimes this ritual was repeated when the slaves reached Brazil.

FOR GOD OR FOR GAIN?

Fernão de Oliveira, a Portuguese scholar of the 16th century, asserted that greed—not evangelical fervor—motivated slave traders. Ships from Europe carrying manufactured goods bartered for captives at African ports.

These captives were then transported to the Americas and traded

for sugar, which was then taken back to Europe to be sold. This triangular trade route generated huge profits both for merchants and for the Portuguese Crown. Even the clergy stood to gain, for priests charged a per capita tax for baptizing Africans before they were carried off to the Americas.



INSTANT CHRISTIANS?

"In the early seventeenth century, it became customary for slaves in Africa to be baptized before their departure," writes historian Hugh Thomas in his book *The Slave Trade*. "The slaves had, as a rule, received no instruction whatever before this ceremony, and many, perhaps most, of them had had no previous indication that there was such a thing as a Christian

God. So the christening was perfunctory."

Professor Thomas notes that typically the captives were taken to a church, where a catechist—usually a slave himself—spoke to the slaves in their native tongue about their conversion. "Then a priest would pass among the bewildered ranks," adds Thomas, "giving to each one a Christian name, which had earlier been written on a piece

of paper. He would also sprinkle salt on the tongues of the slaves, and follow that with holy water. Finally, he might say, through an interpreter: 'Consider that you are now children of Christ. You are going to set off for Portuguese territory, where you will learn matters of the Faith. Never think any more of your place of origin. Do not eat dogs, nor rats, nor horses. Be content.'

part of the divine plan to prepare them for glory.'

Meanwhile, the church reminded slave owners of their moral duty to allow their charges to attend church, keep religious festivals, and marry. Priests criticized severe maltreatment, but they were also careful to stress the dangers of being too indulgent. "Let there be whippings, chains, and leg irons, all in their proper time and with due order and moderation, and you will see how the rebelliousness of servants is quickly contained," advised one Jesuit priest.

Few contemplated using less-painful means of converting Africans. Rather, outspoken supporters of slavery, including Brazilian Bishop Azeredo Coutinho, gave the impression that slave traders were doing Africans a favor! In his vigorous defense of slavery pub-

lished in 1796, Coutinho asked: "Would it be better and more fitting if Christianity were to allow [Africans] to die in paganism and idolatry than in our holy religion?" In a similar vein, leading Jesuit missionary António Vieira exhorted Africans: "Give infinite thanks to God for . . . bringing you to this [land], where, once instructed in the faith, you live as Christians and are saved."

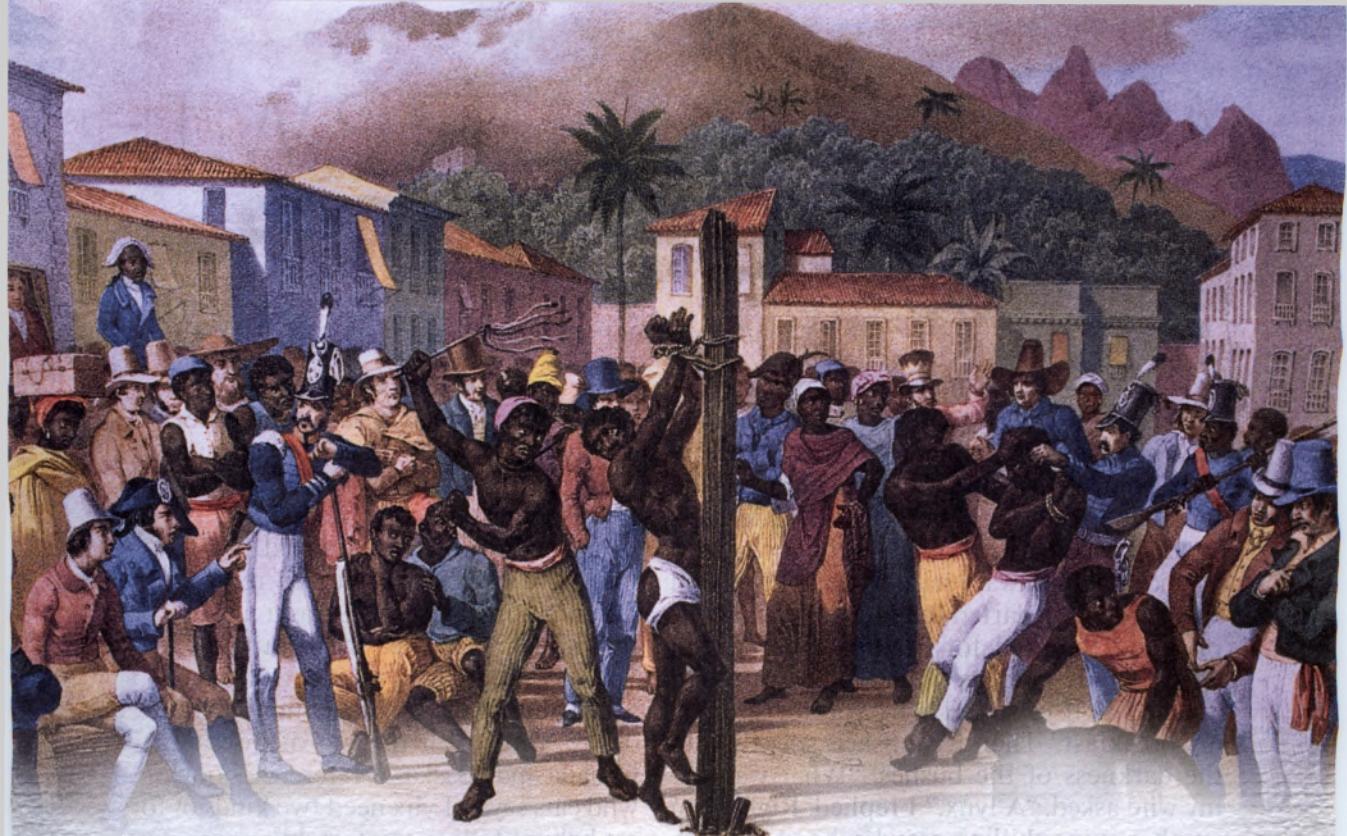
The Price of Slavery

By endorsing slavery, the church had hoped to "save lost souls." Ironically, it merely sowed seeds of division, for the Africans were highly resistant to abandoning their religious customs and beliefs. Thus, today a large number of Brazilians practice syncretism—a fusion of Catholicism and African tribal religion.

While the church's acceptance of economic imperatives in colonial Brazil seemed a good policy to some at the time, in the long term it proved disastrous. The death and suffering it caused raise questions about the church's ethics, and these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily. For one historian, the sanctioning of slavery was taking the attitude of those whom the prophet Isaiah denounced because they were saying: "Good is bad and bad is good."—Isaiah 5:20.

In Our Next Issue

- Biological Weapons—Are You at Risk?
- Why Doesn't My Parent Love Me?
- Captured in a Golden Teardrop



Public whipping, depicted by 19th-century eyewitness Johann Rugendas

Abusive Slavery Is Incompatible With the Bible

The Bible makes it clear that Jehovah God does not approve of ‘man dominating man to his injury,’ and this would include abusive slavery. (Ecclesiastes 8:9) For example, God’s Law to Israel stated that kidnapping and selling a human being was punishable by death. (Exodus 21:16) True, a system of servitude existed among God’s ancient people, but that did not

resemble the tyrannical form of bondage discussed in this article. Indeed, the fact that some Israelite slaves chose to remain with their master when they were eligible for release is clear indication that slavery among God’s people was not abusive. (Deuteronomy 15:12-17)

JEHOVAH GOD PROMISES THAT ALL FORMS OF SLAVERY WILL SOON DISAPPEAR

Hence, it would be a gross distortion of Scripture to claim that Israelite slavery provides justification for the inhumanity that has taken place throughout history.*

In his Word, the Holy Bible, Jehovah God promises that all forms of slavery will soon end. How happy we can be that in God’s new world, people will not live in fear under the tyrannical control of a harsh master. Instead, “they will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig

tree, and there will be no one making them tremble.”—Micah 4:4.

* Since slavery was part of the economic system of the Roman Empire, some Christians had slaves. Regardless of what Roman laws allowed, however, the Scriptures indicate that Christians did not abuse those in their employ. Rather, they were to treat each one as “a brother.”—Philemon 10-17.

A RARE ENCOUNTER WITH A STEALTHY HUNTER

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN CANADA

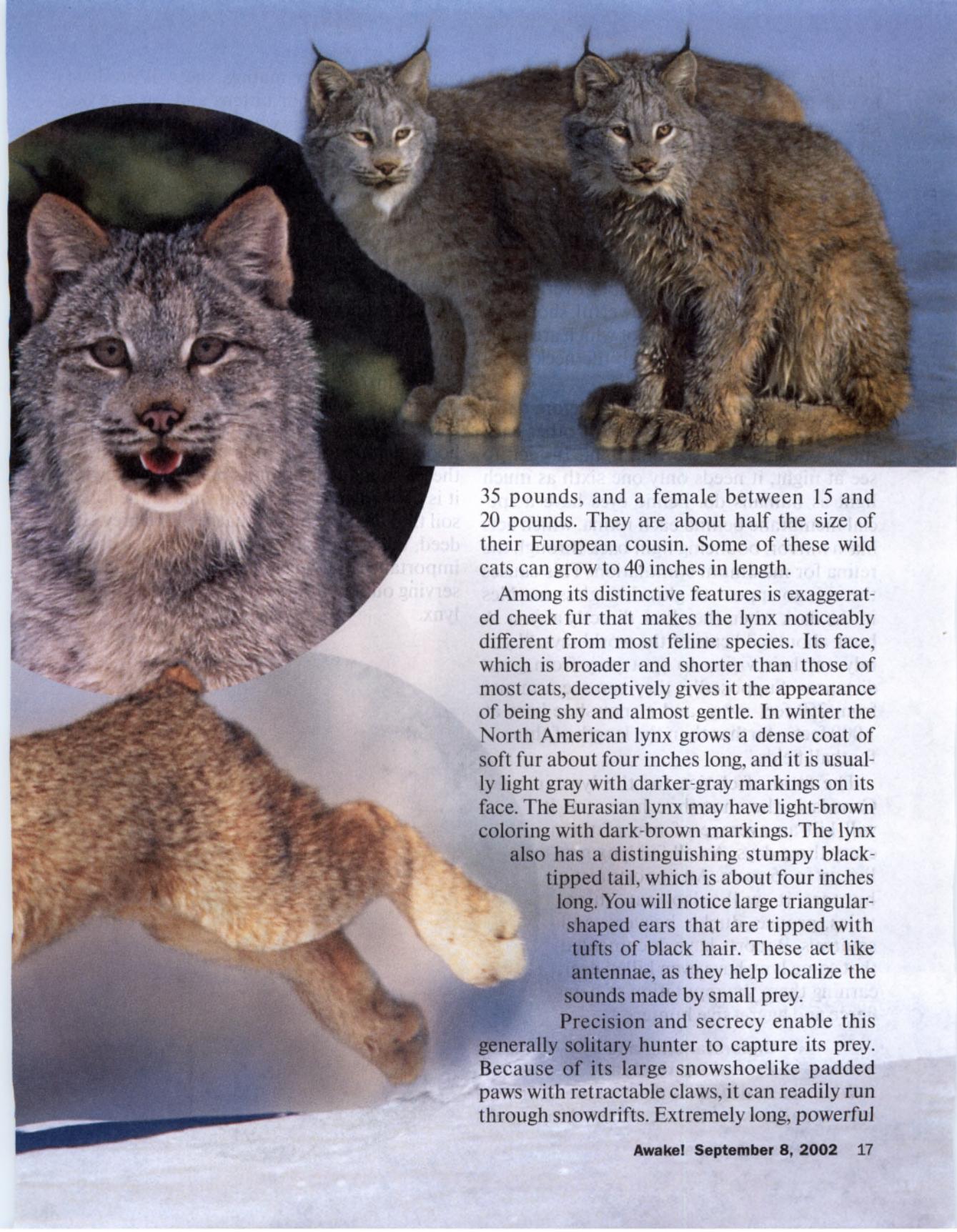
LOOK! Over there in the meadow," I whispered excitedly. My wife and I were canoeing along the majestic Nechako River in central British Columbia, enjoying the sights and sounds of the pristine wilderness. Suddenly, a creature bolted out of nowhere to pounce on an unwary hare. With split-second speed, the prey darted for safety. Sensing our presence, the predator froze momentarily in its tracks. It eyed us with a cold stare and growled as if to say, 'Thank you for spoiling my breakfast.' Then it vanished silently into the darkness of the bushes. "What was it?" my wife asked. "A lynx," I replied. Right then another spine-chilling growl echoed through the crisp morning air, this time longer and louder.

A Rare Sight

This was indeed a rare encounter. The lynx once roamed the forests and mountains of the entire Northern Hemisphere, but today it is found only in isolated regions of the world. Sightings have been confirmed in remote mountainous areas of Eurasia and as far south as the mountains of Spain. The greatest number, though, are found in Siberia and in the dense, unbroken forests of northern Canada and Alaska. A reference book on wild cats says: "Lynx need two kinds of forest habitat to live comfortably: dense patches of gnarly, tangled mature forest for shelter and birth-dens, and lush, juicy meadows and young woods where they can hunt for hares."

Some mature lynx are about six times the size of a large house cat and stand about thigh-high to an adult human. A North American male can weigh between 25 and





35 pounds, and a female between 15 and 20 pounds. They are about half the size of their European cousin. Some of these wild cats can grow to 40 inches in length.

Among its distinctive features is exaggerated cheek fur that makes the lynx noticeably different from most feline species. Its face, which is broader and shorter than those of most cats, deceptively gives it the appearance of being shy and almost gentle. In winter the North American lynx grows a dense coat of soft fur about four inches long, and it is usually light gray with darker-gray markings on its face. The Eurasian lynx may have light-brown coloring with dark-brown markings. The lynx

also has a distinguishing stumpy black-tipped tail, which is about four inches long. You will notice large triangular-shaped ears that are tipped with tufts of black hair. These act like antennae, as they help localize the sounds made by small prey.

Precision and secrecy enable this generally solitary hunter to capture its prey. Because of its large snowshoelike padded paws with retractable claws, it can readily run through snowdrifts. Extremely long, powerful

hind legs allow the lynx to accelerate instantly and propel itself six to ten feet in a single leap. It can also twist acrobatically in the air to change direction during a pursuit. Any chase, however, is usually of short duration. The lynx will retreat if it does not overtake its prey after about five bounds. In fact, it will often have to chase between three and ten hares before catching one. So a lost chance means an empty stomach. When it does overtake its prey, a lynx will use its powerful short jaw—equipped with 28 teeth, 4 of which are fangs that act like daggers—to stab the neck of its victim.

Hunting is primarily done just before dawn and just after dusk. As with most other cats, the lynx can see in the dim light. In fact, to see at night, it needs only one sixth as much light as humans do. Feline eyes have a special membrane behind each retina, which acts like a mirror, bouncing light back through the retina for maximum stimulation. This causes the eyes to appear to glow like glass marbles in the dark when they look directly at you. A book about wild cats of the world says: "Lynx rely on their vision to spot prey from great distances. Supposedly, they can see a mouse from 250 feet away, and a snowshoe hare at 1,000 feet—farther than the length of three football fields."

The food of choice for the lynx in Canada is the snowshoe hare, and it will kill an average of two of them every three days. A well-fed lynx may live up to 15 years. An opportunistic hunter, it will also eat mice, voles, grouse, ducks, beavers, and squirrels. Reports have documented that some lynx have even killed deer, earning them the reputation of being fierce and aggressive hunters.

Understanding and Preserving the Lynx

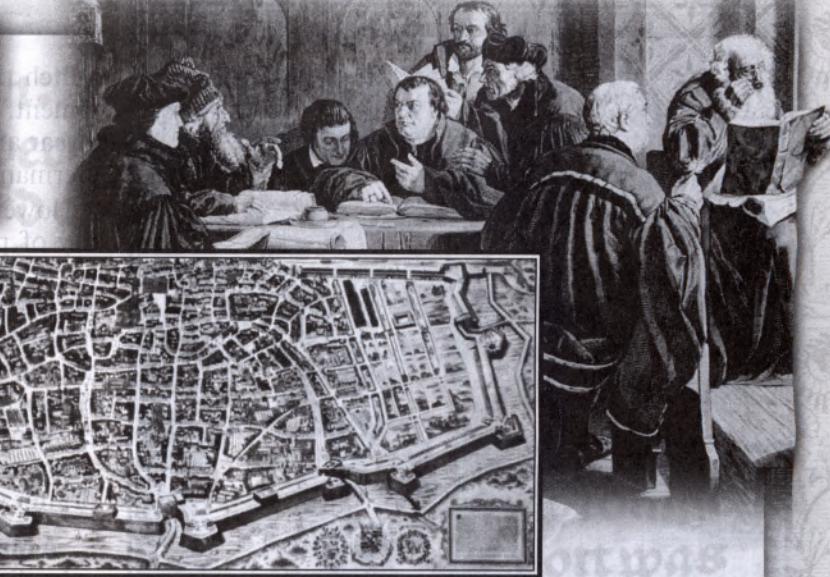
When a female lynx is ready to breed, she will signal this by her scent markings and

caterwauling. After mating, she will produce a litter of about four kittens and, on rare occasions, up to seven when the food supply is plentiful. Interestingly, when food is scarce, litters are smaller.

Elusive by nature, the lynx will avoid areas where there has been human activity. Conservation efforts have helped it to thrive in many areas of British Columbia. Also, modern selective logging techniques may aid it because the small openings left in the forest create a meadow where hares can feed. As the hare population increases, so does the lynx population.

This intriguing creature is an important part of a complex ecosystem. Like other predators, it is dependent on its prey. As a nature book summed it up, 'it is also dependent on the grass and twigs that its prey eats. Likewise, it is dependent on the organisms in the forest soil that feed the plants that feed the prey.' Indeed, the complexity of nature teaches us the importance of living in harmony with and preserving our environment for creatures like the lynx.





A REFUGE FOR **BIBLE PRINTING**

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BELGIUM

Nearly 500 years ago, early printed copies of the complete Bible were produced in Antwerp, Belgium. What attracted Bible printers to that city? What risks did they take by printing the Bible? To find out, we must go back to the early part of the 16th century.

ANTWERP lies at the mouth of the Scheldt River, 55 miles from the North Sea. In the 16th century, during its so-called golden age, Antwerp experienced unprecedented economic prosperity. In fact, the city expanded rapidly and became Europe's largest port and one of the few cities in Western Europe with over 100,000 inhabitants.

Antwerp's growth attracted merchants from all over Europe. This and increasing prosperity contributed to a more tolerant attitude on the part of the city authorities, allowing Antwerp to become a nursery for new ideas. The

relaxed climate attracted printers who felt that there it was safe to print and spread these new ideas. Before long, 16th-century Antwerp was the home of 271 printers, publishers, and booksellers. The magistrates back then proudly described their city as "a refuge and hothouse for all arts, sciences, nations and virtue."

Burning Books and Monks

Among the new ideas that were printed and circulated were those of Martin Luther (1483-1546). He was the leader of the Reformation, a religious movement that led to the birth of Protestantism. Only six months

Above: Setting type by hand; Martin Luther translating the Bible; ancient city map of Antwerp



Jacob van Liesveld's book stand

after the Reformation began, Luther's works were already appearing in Antwerp's bookshops. Not surprisingly, the Catholic Church was not pleased. In July 1521 the church encouraged the public burning in Antwerp of 400 so-called heretical books. Two years later, two Augustinian monks from Antwerp who sympathized with Luther's ideas were burned alive at the stake.

These attacks did not stop a group of bold printers in Antwerp. The courage of those printers played a vital role in making the Bible available to the common man. Who were some of those printers?

From Printer to Martyr

Adriaen van Berghen was a printer and a bookseller. In 1522 he was put in stocks for selling Lutheran books and was sentenced to prison shortly thereafter. He received a pardon but immediately returned to his work. He began printing again—this time a partial

Dutch translation of Luther's "New Testament." It was published in 1523, only a year after Luther's "New Testament" in German was first published.

However, in 1542 when a large quantity of proscribed books were found in his house in Delft, the Netherlands, Van Berghen was arrested again. First, a judge handed him a light sentence—two hours on the scaffold with "some of the forbidden books around his neck." But later, Van Berghen's sentence was changed to the death penalty, and the courageous printer was beheaded with a sword.

A Marginal Note Cost Him His Life

In those days the most prolific printer of Dutch-language Bibles was Jacob van Liesveld. He published a total of 18 Bible editions in Dutch. In 1526 he printed a complete Dutch Bible. That Bible appeared four years before the first complete printed Bible in French and nine years before the publication of the first complete printed Bible in English! Van Liesveld's Bible was mainly based on Luther's as-yet-unfinished German Bible.

Van Liesveld's final Dutch edition, of 1542, contained woodcuts and new marginal notes. For instance, next to Matthew 4:3, a woodcut pictured the Devil as a bearded monk with a rosary and goat's feet. However, it was the marginal notes in particular that aroused the ire of the Catholic Church. One note—which read "Salvation comes through Jesus Christ alone"—was used as a basis for condemning Van Liesveld to death. Although Van Liesveld argued that his Bible had been printed with the ecclesiastical imprimatur *Cum gratia et privilegio*, he was beheaded in Antwerp in 1545.

First Approved, Then Banned

Meanwhile, in France the well-known Catholic humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples was busy translating the Bible from Latin into French, although he also consulted the orig-



Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and the title page of his Bible edition of 1530, printed in Antwerp

inal Greek text. D'Étaples wanted to make the Bible available to the common man. He wrote: "The time is coming when Christ will be preached in a pure way and not mixed with human traditions, which is not yet the case." In 1523 he published a French translation of the "New Testament" in Paris. The theologians of the prestigious Sorbonne University disapproved of his translation because it was in the vernacular. In the face of their attack, D'Étaples fled Paris and went to Strasbourg in northeast France.

As a result of this opposition, printers in France no longer dared to print the Bible in French. Where, then, could D'Étaples print his Bible? Antwerp was the logical choice. D'Étaples' Bible edition of 1530, printed in Antwerp by Merten de Keyser, was the first French translation of the Bible in one volume. Interestingly, De Keyser printed this translation with the approval of the Catholic University of Lou-

vain, Belgium's oldest university, and the approval of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V himself! Nonetheless, in 1546 the translation of D'Étaples was added to a list of books banned for Catholic readers.

"The Bishop Had the Books . . . Tyndale Had the Money"

In England during this same period, ordained priest William Tyndale wanted to translate the Bible into English. However, the bishop of London, Cuthbert Tunstall, rebuffed him. When Tyndale realized that he could not translate the Bible in England, he fled to Germany. Finally, in February 1526, he succeeded in having his first complete English translation of the "New Testament" printed. Before a month passed, the first copies of this translation had already appeared in England.

Bishop Tunstall, though, was determined to prevent the common people from reading the Bible. Hence, he burned every copy of Tyndale's version he could find. Still, they kept circulating. So the bishop arranged, through a merchant named Packington, to buy Tyndale's entire stock of Bibles before they left the continent and reached England. Tyndale accepted the offer and used the earned funds to improve his translation and print a revised edition. "And so forward went the bargain," comments one source of the time. "The Bishop had the books, Packington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money." Thus, the bishop of London unwittingly financed Tyndale's work of translating the Bible!

Tyndale's Antwerp Connection

But even after all these copies had been bought and



Public burning of English Bibles in London



**William Tyndale,
a page from his
Bible, and Miles
Coverdale**



burned, Tyndale's "New Testament" continued to pour into England. How was that possible? Two daring printers in Antwerp, Hans and Christopher van Ruremond, had printed several clandestine editions of Tyndale's "New Testament." Although these Bibles contained numerous typographical errors, people in England were only too willing to buy them.

However, in 1528, Hans was imprisoned in London for printing 1,500 copies of Tyndale's "New Testament" and for bringing 500 copies into England. He probably died in an English prison. In 1531, Hans' brother Christopher was also imprisoned in England for selling the "New Testament." Christopher likely died as a prisoner too.

"Tyndale's Noblest Monument" —Printed in Antwerp

From 1529 through 1535, Tyndale spent most of his time in Antwerp, where the environment was more conducive to his work. There, in 1530, Merten de Keyser printed Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch, in which the name Jehovah appeared for the first time in English.

In May 1535, Tyndale was arrested in Antwerp. While he languished in prison, one of his pupils, Miles Coverdale, completed Tyndale's translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. On October 6, 1536, in Vilvoorde, Belgium, Tyndale was tied to a stake, strangled, and burned. His last words were: "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!"

Tyndale's Legacy

It was not long after Tyndale's execution that King Henry VIII of England licensed a Bible translation to be read in churches. It was printed by Matthias Crom, another Antwerp printer. This Bible, commonly known as Matthew's Bible (named after Thomas Matthew), consists essentially of Tyndale's translation.* How ironic that the bishops now used the translation that they had burned a few years earlier—the translation for which Tyndale was put to death!

Much of Tyndale's translation is preserved in the *King James Version*. Thus, many expressions from the *King James Version* that have left their imprint on the English language were coined by Tyndale and originally printed in Antwerp. Such well-known expressions as "the signs of the times" and "the powers that be" as well as "Am I my brother's keeper?" were all taken directly from Tyndale by the translators of the *King James Version*. (Genesis 4:9; Matthew 16:3; Romans 13:1) According to Professor Latré, Tyndale's influence on the English language is even greater than that of Shakespeare!

In the second half of the 16th century, Antwerp lost its climate of religious tolerance and its position as a refuge for Bible printing. This change was mainly caused by the persecution unleashed by the Counter Reformation of the Catholic Church. Even so, the courage and sacrifices of those early Bible printers in Antwerp have contributed greatly to making God's Word available to Bible readers around the world today.

* Thomas Matthew was probably an alias for John Rogers, a friend and fellow worker of Tyndale.



THE ELUSIVE COELACANTH

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN KENYA

IN April 2001, a female coelacanth (pronounced *see-la-kanth*) was caught off the coast of Kenya.* The fish was five feet long and weighed 170 pounds. The coelacanth is identified by its three-lobed tail and blue color with white dots.

It was once believed that the coelacanth had become extinct in the distant past. Then, in 1938, a coelacanth was caught off the South African coast. This discovery was one of the most amazing zoological finds of the 20th century. Until then, the fish was known only from

* The name coelacanth is derived from the Greek words *koiilos* (hollow) and *akantha* (spine), describing the fish's hollow fin spines.

fossil records. Since the first catch, other coelacanths have been sighted near Mozambique and Madagascar. Sizable populations have also been found in the Comoro Islands.

Female coelacanths do not lay eggs that hatch in water. Instead, they are ovoviparous—producing eggs that develop and hatch within the female's body or immediately after extrusion. Seventeen such eggs—each the size of a tennis ball—were retrieved from the female caught last year.

Sea creatures like the coelacanth magnify the diversity and wisdom of their Creator, Jehovah God.—Psalm 148:7.



TEN MILLION BOOKS IN A GLASS HOUSE

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN FRANCE

WALKING up the wooden steps onto the wind-swept esplanade, a visitor cannot help but feel impressed—even intimidated—by the four glass-covered towers that loom overhead. This is no ordinary complex. Situated on the banks of the Seine, this is the ultramodern National Library of France. In one sense it was centuries in the making.

Early Beginnings

In 1368, Charles V assembled nearly 1,000 manuscripts in a tower at the Louvre fortress in Paris. But it was really after the Hundred Years' War that the kings of France began to assemble a permanent collection. Gifts and legacies from those courting royal favor enriched the library, and so did books brought back from European countries and the Orient by voyagers and ambassadors or by soldiers as the spoils of war. Then, Francis I began the legal deposit system by enacting a law in the 16th century requiring that the King's Library be supplied with a copy of each book that was published.

After being housed in various royal residences in the provinces, the King's Library was transferred back to Paris, only to be plundered during the Wars of Religion (1562-98). The library found a more permanent home in 1721. In the wake of confiscation of religious and aristocratic collections during the French Revolution, the library received hundreds of thousands of books, manuscripts, and prints. While of inestimable worth, this acquisition also made painfully evident the chronic lack of space in the existing facilities.

Overwhelming Growth

In 1868 a reading room covered by nine glass domes was built and inaugurated. Designed by the architect Henri Labrouste, it accommodated 360 readers and was home to some 50,000 books. Shelves in the adjacent stacks had room for an additional one million volumes. But within six

decades, the number of books in this library passed three million!

Numerous refurbishments and extensions could not keep up with the additional one and a half miles of shelves that were needed each year for the books and magazines that came flooding in. Finally, in 1988, President François Mitterrand announced a project to build perhaps “the biggest and most modern library in the world.” Its objective was to



The 1868 reading room

© Cliché Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

“cover all fields of knowledge, be accessible to everyone, use the most modern data-transmission technologies, be consultable from a distance, and connect with other European libraries.”

To come up with a design for the new library, an international competition was held. Almost 250 ideas were submitted. Finally, the design of a little-known French architect named Dominique Perrault was accepted. His concept was a huge plinth with a tower at each corner in the shape of an upended open book. Critics scorned the idea of storing books in glass towers—solar ovens, they

called them—where the books would be exposed to sunlight and heat. As a compromise, it was decided that wooden screens would be installed behind the windows to protect the books and that the most precious documents would be stored in stacks in the plinth.

A Challenging Move

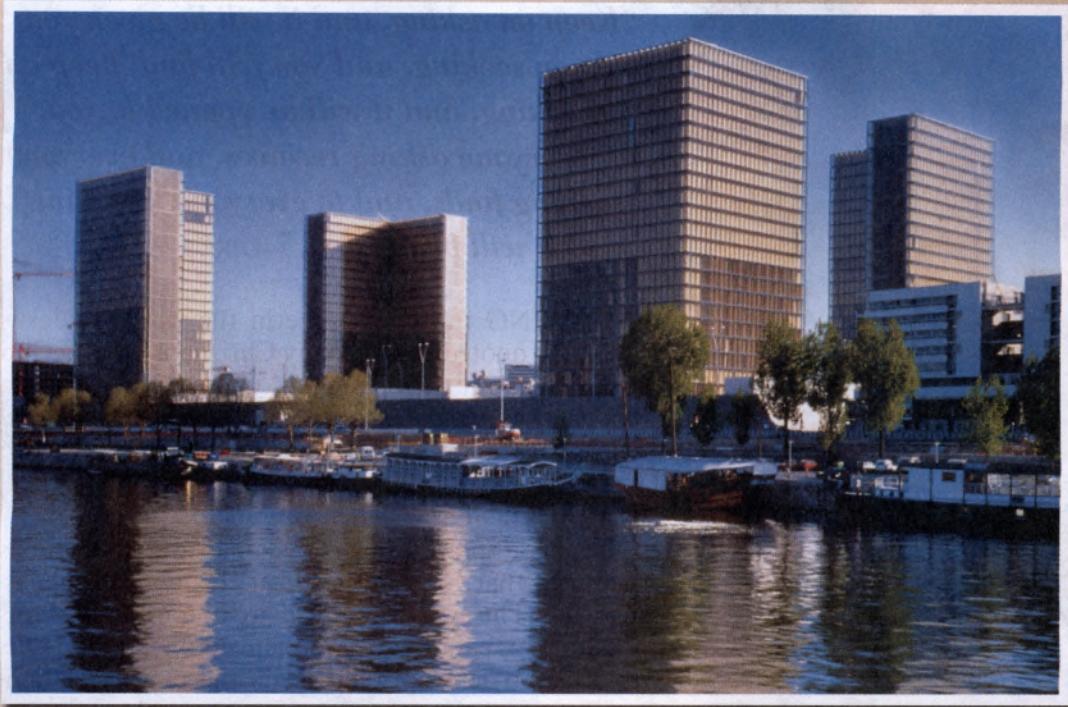
Another challenge was the prospect of moving over ten million books, many of which are very fragile and rare, such as

one year, ten trucks, unmarked as an additional security precaution, toiled through notorious Parisian traffic jams to take between 25,000 and 30,000 volumes to their new home each day.

A Treasure-House of Learning

The new library is divided into two levels. The *haut-de-jardin* (upper garden) has 1,600 seats for the general public and is designed to provide free access to some 350,000 books. The *rez-de-jardin* (lower garden) level has 2,000 seats, which are reserved for researchers.

©Alain Gouillard/BNF. Architect: Dominique Perrault. © 2002 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris



the library's two copies of Gutenberg's Bible. Previous moves had not been free of incident. According to one eyewitness of a move in 1821, many books fell off the carts into the mud in the street. This time, the transfer would be organized on more scientific lines.

In 1998 a team of professionals took on the gargantuan task of moving millions of books. To prevent any damage, theft, or loss, the books were transported in sealed water-resistant, fireproof, and shock-absorbent cabinets. For almost

The library is built around a miniature forest. The decor of red carpets and wooden wall panels and furnishings further contributes to creating a warm, relaxed atmosphere conducive to concentration and study. There is an audiovisual room where visitors can consult CD-ROMs, films, audio recordings, and thousands of digitized images and books.

The Library of France has enough shelving to accommodate new books for nearly 50 years. One cannot help but reflect on the painstaking effort required to build and preserve such a treasure-house of learning!

PRAYERS THAT ARE HEARD BY GOD

“Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you. For everyone asking receives, and everyone seeking finds, and to everyone knocking it will be opened.”—LUKE 11:9, 10.

SHOWING full confidence in the words of Jesus Christ quoted above, many Christians turn to God in prayer about their problems and anxieties, certain that he loves and cares for them. Some, however, experience frustration as they wait for their prayers to be answered. Do you feel that your prayers are ineffective? Does God listen when you pray?

Even if our prayers seem to go unanswered, this does not mean that God did not hear them. The Bible assures us: “The eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their supplication.” (1 Peter 3:12) So Jehovah God hears the prayers of righteous ones, whether they are spoken audibly or uttered in the heart. (Jeremiah 17:10) Jehovah also examines the thoughts and feelings behind each prayer, which even the one praying may neither fully understand nor be aware of.—Romans 8:26, 27.

However, prayers must meet certain requirements if they are to be acceptable to God. First, they must be directed exclusively to God—not to Jesus, to a “saint,” or to an idol. (Exodus 20:4, 5) Prayers must also be offered in the name of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. (John 14:6) Does this mean that our prayers are heard by Jesus first and that he relays the message to God? No. Rather, by praying to Jehovah in the name of Jesus, we

identify ourselves as Christ's disciples and we acknowledge that it is only because of his ransom that we are able to approach God.—Hebrews 4:14-16.

Prayers must be offered in faith. The apostle Paul pointed out: "Without faith it is impossible to please [God] well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) How does a person know if he has that kind of faith? The Bible writer James answers: "I shall show you my faith by my works." (James 2:18) Yes, faith produces actions, and they, in turn, show that we love God and are trying to please him.

Worshippers of God must also be persistent when praying. Jesus made this clear at Luke 11:9, 10, quoted at the outset. After all, if a person prays just once about a matter, does this not indicate that he or she is not really serious about the request?

What God Promises

No matter how frequently and earnestly we pray, we still live in "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) While it is true that Jesus said his followers would be happy, he did not say that their lives would be problem free. (Matthew 5:3-11) He did say, though, that his disciples could be happy *despite* mourning, hunger, thirst, or persecution.

The happiness that Jesus spoke of is not dependent on our having ideal circumstances. Rather, it is an inner contentment that we have because we serve God. Hence, we can attain a measure of happiness even amid turmoil.—2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

Dealing With Personal Problems

Is it futile, then, to pray to God regarding such personal matters as finding a suitable marriage mate or dealing with family, health, or employment problems? No, for although God does not promise to change the circumstances of our life miraculously, he will give us the wisdom to cope with them. James wrote in connection with trials: "If any one of you is lacking in

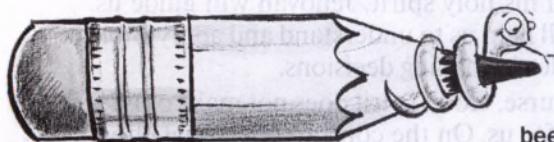
wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him." (James 1:5) So through his holy spirit, Jehovah will guide us. This will help us to understand and apply Bible principles in making decisions.

Of course, God's spirit does not make our decisions for us. On the contrary, personal effort is required. For example, if we have a problem, have we done research on it and investigated the various aspects and elements of the situation? This would be a work that shows God that we have faith. (James 2:18) Have we been persistent in trying to resolve our problem, continually asking for God's guidance? (Matthew 7:7, 8) Have we carefully examined Bible principles that apply to the situation? God's Word can make us "fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

While it is true that God is able to intervene in human affairs and remove all our problems, he has allowed us to express our free will. Regrettably, many use their free will to the detriment of others. Hence, some problems we pray about may continue until God's new world. (Acts 17:30, 31) It could be a situation that exists in the area in which we live, such as crime or outright warfare; or it might involve our bearing up under hardship brought on by opposers. (1 Peter 4:4) We must acknowledge that in this ungodly world, some situations will not change for the better.

Nevertheless, God loves his worshipers and wants to help them. When his Kingdom exercises uncontested rulership over the earth, he will fully eliminate the horrible problems of this world. (Revelation 21:3, 4) Until that time we should persistently ask for his guidance in dealing with the problems of life. If we do so, we can be sure that Jehovah will live up to the promise recorded in the Bible at Isaiah 41:10: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not gaze about, for I am your God. I will fortify you. I will really help you. I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness."

Watching the World



"The world's smallest lizard," only three quarters of an inch long, has been discovered in caves in the Dominican Republic's Jaragua National Park. "Its greatest hazard is drying out, because its surface area is so large compared with its mass," says *The Times* of London. "The creature is not only the smallest lizard, but also the smallest of the amniotes, a group that comprises all 23,000 species of reptile, bird and mammal." The only rival for size is a lizard that lives in the nearby British Virgin Islands. The newspaper adds: "The Caribbean also boasts the world's smallest bird, the Bee Hummingbird, which is 2in[ches] long, and the thinnest snake, the Lesser Antillean Threadsnake, which could wriggle its way through a pencil if the lead were removed."



"World's Smallest"

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Land-Mine Madness

"There are more than 110 [million] landmines buried around the world. Removing them will cost \$33 [billion] and will take 1,100 years at present de-mining rates," reports Britain's newspaper *The Guardian*. "Mines are being laid 25 times faster than they can be cleared," and since 1975, over a million people have been maimed or killed by them—including 300,000 children. Half of all adults and more than half of all children who step on a mine die before reaching a hospital. "Soldiers are notoriously unreliable in recording and maintaining records of where mines have been laid," the paper adds, and many "mines are simply washed out of the ground and deposited elsewhere, often on previous clear land." Although the

international trade in antipersonnel land mines has virtually ceased, between 230 million and 245 million are still stockpiled worldwide. According to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 15 governments and some 30 terrorist organizations and guerrilla groups still use them.

Monarch Butterfly Disaster

A severe winter rainstorm in January, followed by freezing temperatures, has devastated the two biggest colonies of monarch butterflies in Mexico. As reported in *The New York Times*, researchers estimated that "74 percent of the monarchs at the Sierra Chincua colony and 80 percent at the Rosario colony had been killed. Along with a few smaller colonies, . . . the butterflies in these major colonies make up the en-

tire breeding stock of monarchs for the eastern United States and Canada." Between 220 million and 270 million butterflies froze and fell from their tree roosts, covering the ground to a depth of more than a foot in some places. While it is felt that the species is not threatened by this loss, the researchers said that their reduced numbers left the butterflies vulnerable to future events of weather and disease. The monarchs are noted for their spectacular mass migrations northward from Mexico each spring. They lay eggs in the southern United States. These develop into more butterflies to continue the migration, which reaches as far as Canada by summertime.

"Accurate yet Poetic"

The Bible is "less fictitious and more factual than was thought," states the French nature magazine *Terre sauvage*. Naturalists working in Israel noted that the Bible, although a religious book, contains "precise and accurate zoological observations." Stating that "the Psalms and the Proverbs are precious sources of information" for naturalists, the article adds: "The book of Job . . . gives accurate yet poetic descriptions of the gestation of the ibex as well as the natural habitat of the wild ass and the hippopotamus."

The "Odd Couple"

"Any relationship between a lioness and an oryx calf might be expected to be both brief, and terminal for the latter," observes *The Economist*. Yet, the

photograph accompanying the article showed a lioness and a calf peacefully lying down side by side. The article went on to note: "This odd couple was spotted in the Samburu game reserve in Kenya on December 21st, and was tracked and filmed by . . . two wildlife photographers, until another lion killed the calf on January 6th." Was this a case of "imprinting," in which a surrogate mother accepts another animal as its own after recently giving birth? The evidence did not point to that, says *The Economist*. "What makes this case bizarre is that the oryx's mother was still alive and lactating, and that the lioness was young and showed no sign of ever having given birth." Further, "it was the lioness who followed the calf (for example when it went back to its mother to suckle), rather than the other way round." The article concludes: "Why she wanted to adopt something that ought to have pressed the button labelled 'lunch' is a mystery."

Abandoned Pets

"Per capita, Australians own more pets than any other society in the world," says Hugh Wirth, the national president of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Yet, the newspaper *The Australian* reports that "135,000 pets were abandoned in the 2000-01 financial year" and that "almost 60 per cent of those animals were put down." Why are so many animals abandoned? One reason is that people continue to choose inappropriate breeds of animals for their circumstances. Parents consistently make the mistake of buying working dogs—ones that need a lot of training, exer-

cise, and care—for their children. Yet, working dogs are responsible for a large number of incidents of dog bites. About selecting a pet, *The Australian* says: "Keep emotion out of the purchase. Consider your space, family circumstances and financial situation. Do not delay dog obedience classes. The longer you leave it the more ingrained naughty behaviour can become. Remember that an animal purchase is a long-term proposition."

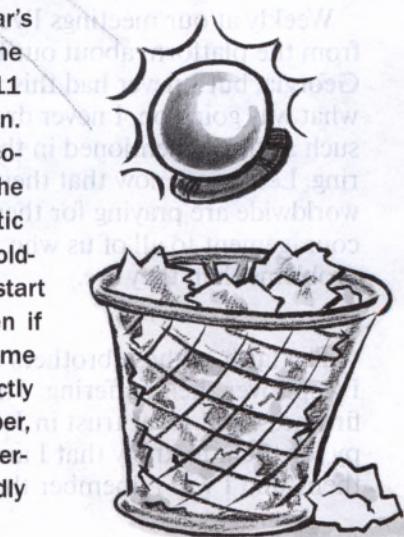
New-Car Syndrome

"Research . . . has found high levels of air toxic emissions in new motor vehicles for up to six months and longer after they leave the showroom," states Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). Some of the tox-

ic fumes filling the cabins of new cars include benzene, acetone, ethylbenzene, n-hexane, toluene, and xylene isomers—all of which can be dangerous to humans. Drivers inhaling these chemicals may suffer headaches, drowsiness, confusion, and irritation of eyes, nose, and throat. According to Dr. Steve Brown, head of CSIRO's air quality control research, "sitting in a car can expose you to levels of toxic emissions many times beyond goals established by Australia's National Health & Medical Research Council." To reduce potential hazards, Brown recommends that, as far as possible, new-car owners "should make sure there is plenty of outside air entering the vehicle while they drive, for at least six months after the vehicle has been purchased."

Predictions Failed Miserably

"For the fraternity of fortune-tellers, astrologers, and clairvoyants, the year 2001 was another big flop," states the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Experts of Germany's Forum for Parasciences came to this conclusion after evaluating the year's predictions. For one thing, none of the psychics foresaw the September 11 attacks or the war in Afghanistan. They also failed to predict the economic recession in Germany. On the contrary, they were quite optimistic about the future. One clairvoyant boldly prophesied that the world would start "a period of peace" in 2001. Even if in rare cases human predictions come true, nobody is able to foretell exactly which ones will, says the newspaper, adding: "There is, however, considerable evidence that erring is profoundly human."



From Our Readers



Religious Persecution

The article "Religious Persecution in Georgia—How Much Longer?" (January 22, 2002) alerted me to just how changeable this world is. I often reflect on articles like this one, asking myself,

'Where was I when this was happening? How strong was my relationship with Jehovah when my dear brothers and sisters were suffering so?' Please let our brothers and sisters know that we love them and that we are affected by their trials.

K. S., United States

When I read about the ill-treatment of Jehovah's Witnesses in Georgia, I just couldn't hold back my tears. I pray with all my heart that Jehovah will support and protect them and pour his abundant love upon them. I want to let my beloved brothers and sisters in Georgia know that I am praying for them. Even though I am in a different place, I am thankful from the heart for the privilege of being able to serve Jehovah shoulder to shoulder with them.

M. T., Japan

Weekly at our meetings I've heard brothers pray from the platform about our brothers and sisters in Georgia, but I never had this much information about what was going on. I never dreamed that atrocities such as those mentioned in this article were occurring. Let them know that their brothers and sisters worldwide are praying for them. They are a great encouragement to all of us who are facing much smaller problems than they are.

V. P., United States

The faith of these brothers touched me deeply, and I wept over their suffering. They have shown courage, firmness, and great trust in Jehovah. I would be happy for them to know that I am close to them, I love them, and I will remember them in my prayers.

F. F., Italy

Occult I am so thankful for the article "Young People Ask . . . Dabbling in the Occult—What's the Harm?" (January 22, 2002) This article gave me the courage to get rid of a questionable item once and for all. It really moved my heart to read more about the Bible example of those in Ephesus who burned their spiritistic books, even though they were worth 50,000 pieces of silver. (Acts 19:19) The value of the paper that I threw into the trash cannot be compared with the value of the things that Jehovah will give me. Thank you for publishing articles like this at just the right time.

A. N., Japan

I was baptized a month ago. Before learning about the Bible, I repeatedly had contact with spiritism through my mother, who is not one of Jehovah's Witnesses. The article came at the right time. I now know what I have to beware of, and I have put my full trust in Jehovah. After reading this article many times and speaking about it repeatedly with a Christian sister, my fears are diminishing.

A. P., Germany

From a Teacher As a primary school teacher, I would like to congratulate the editors of *Awake!* Your cultural magazine is an important contribution to a rounded-out education. My fellow teachers and I use the excellent articles as a basis for classroom discussions on moral values and social issues. *Awake!* is character-forming and improves our students' quality of life by helping them to make informed decisions.

F. C., Brazil



Putting Awake! to Good Use

AT AGE 16, Vanessa, one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States, had to write a report for school on the subject of anorexia. "I did some research," she says, "but I was able to find only little bits of information. I talked to my parents about it, and they suggested that I look up the subject in our publications."

By searching the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, Vanessa was able to find a wealth of information for her report. "But this was only part of the assignment," she says. "I also had to give an oral presentation in front of the teacher and 20 students!" How would Vanessa handle this challenge?

Like Jehovah's Witnesses in all parts of the world, Vanessa receives training for public speaking in the Theocratic Ministry School, which is conducted at the local Kingdom Hall. "By means of this school, we are well prepared to go out in the ministry and speak to others," Vanessa says. "We also receive counsel on what we need to work on so that people will understand us better." The result of Vanessa's hard work on her school report? "I received the highest grade," she says.

Vanessa is one of many youths who are putting Bible-based publications and other spiritual training to good use. Such young ones are to be commended, for they are following the admonition of Ecclesiastes 12:1: "Remember, now, your Grand Creator in the days of your young manhood."



"I HAD TO KNOW MORE"



LAST year a woman wrote:

Last year a woman wrote: "Yesterday I received the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* that I requested in the mail." She explained that earlier she had received two advertisements for the brochure. "I anxiously awaited its arrival because after reading the advertisements, I knew that I had to know more," she said. "Upon receiving the brochure, I began reading it as soon as I could. Everything in your brochure makes sense and is from the Bible."

She concluded: "I feel an urgency to do something with what I've read."

