

Awake!

September 22, 1995



Gambling
A GROWING ADDICTION

Gambling —A Growing Addiction 3-11

Worldwide, reports indicate that the gambling pandemic is going global. By plane, train, bus, ship, and car, they come to slake their thirst for gambling. Compulsive gambling has been called "the hidden disease, the addiction of the '90s."

M. Gibson/H. Armstrong Roberts

Photo: Caja Salamanca y Soria



Probing the Mysteries of Migration 15

In the Northern Hemisphere, countryfolk have always greeted swallows as the harbingers of spring. Some wondered where the swallows had been.



The African School —What Did It Teach? 24

It concentrated on skills designed to benefit the family and the tribal community.

Gambling —The Addiction of the '90's	3
Compulsive Gamblers —Always Losers	6
Gambling's New Recruits—Youths!	8
Young People Ask . . . Should I Learn Self-Defense?	12
My Long, Hard Fight to Find True Faith	19
Watching the World	28
From Our Readers	30
The Ocean Pharmacy	31
Where Hospitality Is Shown to Strangers	32

GAMBLING

The Addiction of the '90's

ACAMERA loaded with color film captures the sight. The picture covers a full two-page spread in a Sunday newspaper—almost as far as the eye can see, a giant warehouse converted into a bingo parlor, thousands of square feet of it, is alive with gaming patrons of all ages and colors. See their weary faces and bloodshot eyes, signs of hours of endless play? They anxiously await the call of the next number that, hopefully, could see them finally winning in what may have been a winless night.

Turn the pages of the newspaper. See the concerned faces of people with fists full of playing cards, fearful of holding a losing hand? In many cases thousands of dollars are won and lost at the draw of the next card. Go beyond the pictures. Can you see the sweaty palms of a nervous hand? Can you hear the rapid heartbeat, the silent prayer asking for a better hand the next time and a losing one for the other players?

Step inside the luxurious casinos in



swank hotels and riverboats. Are you lost in a labyrinth of gaily colored slot machines? Are you deafened by the sound of their handles being pulled and the whirring noise of spinning reels?

Win or lose, it is the sound of music to the ears of players.

"The action for them is the thrill of what's going to happen in the next pull of that slot-machine handle," said the head of one casino.

Wend your way through the jungle of people to the crowded roulette tables. You can be hypnotized by the spin of the wheel with its red and black compartments whirling before your eyes. The sound of the tumbling ball adds to the spell. Around and around it goes, and where it stops means the difference between winning and losing. Thousands of dollars are often lost on a single spin of the wheel.

Multiply the pictures and scenarios by the tens of thousands, the players by countless millions, and the locations by the thousands worldwide. They come by plane, train,

bus, ship, and car to all parts of the world to satisfy their lust for gambling. It has been called "the hidden disease, the addiction of the '90s: Compulsive gambling." "I predict the 1990s will mark the historic heyday of legalized gambling throughout the world," said researcher Durand Jacobs, a national authority on gambling behavior.

Once a sinful activity —now a "savior"

In the United States, for example, in 1993 more Americans went to casinos than to major-league baseball parks—92 million visits. The building of new gambling establishments seems endless. Hotel operators on the East Coast are euphoric. "There are not nearly enough existing rooms to accommodate the estimated 50,000 casino visitors a day."

In 1994, in many of the southern states, where only a short time ago gambling was considered a sinful activity, it is now welcomed with open arms and considered a savior. "Today, the Bible Belt might as well be renamed the Blackjack Belt, with floating and land-based casinos throughout Mississippi and Louisiana and plans for more in

Florida, Texas, Alabama and Arkansas," observed the *U.S. News & World Report*. Some religious leaders are now doing a 180-degree turn in their thinking about gambling being sinful. For example, when city officials of New Orleans, Louisiana, christened its first floating casino on the Mississippi River in 1994, one clergyman offered a prayer, thanking God for "the ability to play: a virtue with which," he said "you have blessed the city."

By the year 2000, it is expected that 95 percent of all Americans will live within a 3- or 4-hour drive of a gambling casino. American Indians have also come in for a giant slice of the gambling pie. The U.S. government has thus far sanctioned their operation of 225 casinos and high-stakes bingo halls nationwide, reported *U.S. News & World Report*.

When cardrooms, sports wagering, horse and dog racing, church bingo, and the like are added to the mix, it becomes clear how Americans legally wagered \$394 billion in 1993, a 17.1-percent increase over the previous year. Those opposed to gambling are perplexed. "The biggest things we have to help people are churches and temples and the government," said the executive director of one Council on Compulsive Gambling. "And now they're all in the gambling business." One American newspaper called the United States a "Gambling Nation" and said that gambling is "America's real national pastime."

Awake!

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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

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

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, **Wallkill, NY 12569**. Printed in U.S.A.

England has started its first lottery since 1826, and sales are said to be brisk. It is also experiencing a tremendous bingo boom, reported *The New York Times Magazine*. "Moscow is now honeycombed with busy casinos. And Lebanese gamblers are literally risking their lives to patronize West Beirut gaming houses that draw equal fire from militiamen and religious fundamentalists," the *Times* reported. "Big winners are escorted home by casino guards armed with machine guns."

"Canadians don't realize they are a nation of gamblers," said a Canadian provincial gaming regulator. "There is probably, in some regards, a higher level of gaming in Canada than there is in the U.S." he added. "Canadians spent more than \$10-billion on legal wagers and bets last year—almost 30 times as much as they spent on going to movies," reported the newspaper *The Globe and Mail*. "The bingo industry in Canada is much more highly developed than it is or ever was in the U.S. The lottery business is much more highly developed in Canada. That's true, too, of horse racing," the paper said.

"No-one knows how many gambling addicts there are in South Africa," wrote a South African newspaper, "but there are 'thousands' at least." The government of Spain, however, is well aware of its problem and of the growing number of gamblers. Official figures show that many of its 38 million inhabitants gambled away \$25 billion in one year, giving Spain one of the world's

highest gambling rates. "Spaniards are inveterate gamblers," said one man who set up an association to help gamblers. "They always have been. . . . They gamble on horses, on soccer, on lotteries and, of course, on roulette, on poker, on bingo and on those infernal money-gobbling machines." Only in recent years has compulsive gambling been recognized in Spain as a psychological affliction.

Available evidence suggests that Italy too has been swept along by the gambling fever. Billions are being poured into lotteries and sports but also into newspaper contests and gaming tables. "Gambling has penetrated daily life in every aspect," said a report issued by a government-financed research group. Today "the level of gambling has reached once-unimaginable heights," wrote *The New York Times*, "and from Government officials to parish priests the race is on to find ways to cash in."

The gambling pandemic is going global

How true! In many cases gambling affects every aspect of the lives of people, as the following articles will show.

Semimonthly Languages Available by Mail:

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English,* Finnish, French, German,* Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malayalam, Norwegian, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Tamil, Yoruba, Zulu

Monthly Languages Available by Mail:

Chichewa, Cibemba, Ewe, Gujarati, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Indonesian, Kannada, New Guinea Pidgin, Polish, Russian, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Tahitian, Telugu, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Xhosa

* Audiocassettes also available.

© 1995 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Offices of the Watch Tower Society in selected countries

America, United States of, Wallkill, NY 12589	New Zealand, P.O. Box 142, Manurewa
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	Nigeria, P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, Edo State
Canada, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4	South Africa, Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740
England, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	Zambia, Box 33459, Lusaka 10101
Ghana, Box 760, Accra	Zimbabwe, 35 Fife Avenue, Harare
Jamaica, Box 180, Kingston 10	

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS

Always Losers

COMPULSIVE gambling is an illness in the same way that alcoholism and drug addiction are illnesses," declared Professor Jean Ades, from France. "It's an addiction without a drug," he said, and "more and more people are discovering they are addicted." Even after the compulsive gamblers lose large sums of money, they are often obsessed with the need to make up their losses by gambling even more. "Most losers quickly get over their disappointment. But for some, the urge to gamble is so uncontrollable it can blight their lives," wrote one newsman in France. "They keep on promising themselves they are going to kick the habit, yet it always gets the better of them. They are gambling addicts."

Confessed one South African gambler: "If you're a gambling addict, and you sit down at the roulette wheel or the blackjack table, nothing else matters. Adrenalin thunders through your veins, and you will bet every cent you have on just one more spin of the wheel, or fall of the card. . . . Drawing on my adrenalin reserves, I could stay awake for several days and nights at a stretch, watching the cards and numbers, and waiting for that eternally elusive super payout." Then he concluded: "There are many others like me who can't stop at a few hundred rands or even a few thousand. We will continue gambling until all we have is gone, and our family relationships are smashed beyond repair."

Henry R. Lesieur, professor of sociology at St. John's University, New York, wrote

that the desire to gamble, win or lose, is so intense "that many gamblers will go for days without sleep, without eating, and even without going to the bathroom. Being in action pushes out all other concerns. During the period of anticipation, there is also a 'rush,' usually characterized by sweaty palms, rapid heart beat, and nausea."

One former gambling addict admits that winning was not the driving force for his prolonged habit, but rather it was the "rush," the thrill of gambling itself. "Gambling procures extraordinarily violent emotions," he said. "When the roulette wheel is turning, when you're waiting for Chance to give its answer, there's a moment when the mind reels and you almost faint." French gambler André agrees: "When you've got FF10,000 on a horse and there are 100 metres to go, someone could tell you your wife or your mother had died and you wouldn't give a fig."

Pawnshops flourish —and so does crime

André describes how he was able to continue gambling even after heavy losses. He borrowed from banks, friends, and loan sharks with exorbitant interest rates. He stole checks and falsified post office savings books. He seduced lonely women during his visits to casinos and then vanished with their credit cards. "By then," wrote a French

newsman, André, "no longer even cared whether he would ever be able to put his disastrous finances in order. His wanderings were prompted solely by his obsession." He turned to crime and was sent to prison. His marriage was wrecked.

In many cases compulsive gamblers, like drug addicts and alcoholics, keep on gambling, though it costs them their job, their business, their health, and, finally, their family.

Many cities in France have recently opened their doors to gambling. Where other businesses have failed, pawnshops are doing a flourishing business. Owners say gamblers frequently lose all the money they have and trade rings, watches, clothing, and other valuable items for gas money home. In some coastal towns in the United States, new pawnshops have opened; in some cases three or four or more can be found in a row.

Some have even turned to a life of crime in order to support their gambling habit. Studies conducted to date, according to Professor Lesieur, "uncovered a wide variety of illegal behaviors among compulsive gamblers . . . check forgery, embezzlement, theft, larceny, armed robbery, bookmaking, hustling, running con games, and fencing stolen goods." Added to these are the white-collar crimes where gamblers steal from their employers. According to Gerry T. Fulcher, director of the Institute for the Education and Treatment of Compulsive Gamblers, 85 percent of the thousands of identified compulsive gamblers admitted to stealing from their employers. "In fact, from a purely financial point of view, compulsive gambling is potentially

worse than alcoholism and drug abuse combined," he said.

Further studies have concluded that approximately two-thirds of nonincarcerated compulsive gamblers and 97 percent of those incarcerated admit to engaging in illegal behavior to finance gambling or pay gambling-related debts. In 1993 in Gulf Coast towns in the United States, where legalized gambling is rampant, there were 16 bank robberies, a fourfold increase over the previous year. One man robbed a total of eight banks of the sum of \$89,000 to continue his gambling habit. Other banks have been robbed at gunpoint by gamblers forced to pay off large sums to creditors.

"When compulsive gamblers try to kick the habit, they go through withdrawal, much like smokers or drug addicts," says *The New York Times*. Gamblers admit, however, that breaking the gambling habit can be harder than breaking other habits. "Some of us have had the experience of alcoholism and drug abuse as well," said one, "and we all agree that compulsive gambling is far worse than any of the other addictions." Dr. Howard Shaffer, of the Center for Addiction Studies at Harvard University, said that at least 30 percent of compulsive gamblers who try to stop "show signs of irritability or experience stomach distress, sleep disorders, higher-than-normal blood pressure and pulse."

Even if they keep on betting, said Dr. Valerie Lorenz, director of the National Center for



Pathological Gambling in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., compulsive "gamblers face medical problems: chronic headaches, migraines, breathing difficulties, angina pains, heart arrhythmias and numbness in their arms and legs."

Then there are suicides. What could be worse than what is commonly known as a "nonfatal addiction" causing death? In one American county, for example, where gambling casinos have recently opened, "the sui-

cide rate has inexplicably doubled," reported *The New York Times Magazine*, "though no health care official was willing to tie the increase to gambling." In South Africa, three gamblers committed suicide in one week. The number of actual suicides because of gambling and debts accrued by this means, legally or illegally, is not known.

Suicide is a tragic way to end the viselike grip of gambling. In the next article, consider how some have found a better way out.

Gambling's New Recruits YOUTHS!

DO YOU shake your head in disbelief at the depth to which the adult population, both men and women, are mired in gambling addiction? Does it boggle your mind to read of adult gamblers giving up their life's work and accomplishments—jobs, businesses, family, and, for some, their life—for the sake of gambling? Can you comprehend the rationale of a mature, educated adult, who, after winning \$1.5 million gambling, continued playing until he lost \$7 million the same night? In many cases it is greed, a chasing after the elusive dollar. All too often, however, it is the thrill of the gambling itself.

If you are parents with young children, do you take comfort in the thought that gambling is a mature adult's game? Then think again. Consider the new young recruits waiting in the wings—or already on the playing field. The facts may astound you.

The following caption texts of articles ap-

peared in recent newspapers and magazines: "Odds Are Good Gambling May Be Teen Vice of '90s." "More Youth Hooked by Gambling." "'Crack of the '90s': Gambling Hooks Kids." "My Son Couldn't Stop Gambling."

Now, read below the headlines. "Authorities blame the crisis largely on the proliferation of state- and church-sponsored gambling," wrote one newspaper. "Today, betting is more accessible than ever to vulnerable young people. And specialists warn that more than 90 percent of compulsive adult gamblers take up the habit before they are 14," the paper said. "It used to be most compulsives started gambling around age 14. Now we are seeing it drop to age 9 or 10," said another researcher. "Why? Because the opportunity is there," she added. "Kids . . . are bombarded with gambling advertising everywhere. It's socially acceptable excitement." "It's getting worse fast," said a

spokesman for a group called Gamblers Anonymous. "The kids are starting at younger and younger ages, and more of them are getting caught up in it than ever before."

According to a study of teenage gamblers in one American state, about 3.5 percent were potentially compulsive gamblers; another 9 percent were likely to become "high-risk" gamblers. "Typically, the numbers have shown that there are higher rates of gambling among youth than there are in the general adult population," said William C. Phillips, coordinator of counseling services at one American college. "We will face in the next decade or so more problems with youth gambling than we'll face with drug use—particularly illicit drug use," said another addiction counselor. Professor Henry Le sieur conducted a study of junior and senior high school students. *The Los Angeles Times* reported that "his findings are strikingly similar to the study of college students: The percentages of teen-agers ranking as 'pathological' or 'compulsive' gamblers—people who have lost control of their gambling activity—average about 5% of the teen-age population nationwide."

Gambling therapists agree that it is not the numbers of youthful gamblers that concern them but rather the "attitude of kids, parents and even educators about teen gambling. . . . Many kids and their parents consider gambling a 'harmless diversion,' with consequences much less serious than those from involvement with drugs and alcohol or violence or promiscuity." But behaviorist counselor Durand Jacobs warned that gambling can expose youngsters to crime, truancy, and a desire for easy money.



Gambling leads to bad associations

Consider, for example, one high school student who began gambling at an early age. While in school he spent many of his class hours gambling with other students. When he lost and his allowance was gone, he stole money from funds that students had contributed for food baskets for needy families. By gambling the stolen money, he hoped to buy back his own family's television set and an onyx ring that he had pawned to pay off earlier gambling debts. By the time he was in the ninth grade, he had already spent 20 days in a juvenile home for stealing \$1,500

Soon there will be more problems with youths gambling than with drugs

and was heavily into dollar-ante poker and \$5-a-rack pool. "As I got older, the amounts got higher," he said. Soon he was stealing

from his neighbors to pay his gambling debts. His mother was in despair. By age 18 he had become a compulsive gambler.

In England, sociologists say, soft gambling laws allow children to play slot machines. In airports and arcades, large numbers of children support their addiction by stealing from their parents and by shoplifting.

"Among youth, the most popular and fastest-growing form of gambling on junior high, high school and college campuses is sports betting among [the students] themselves, sometimes backed by local bookies," said Jacobs. "I would predict that there are very few high school and college campuses that don't have well-organized and high-stakes sports pools." Added to this are the card games, lotteries, and casinos that many teens are allowed into because of looking older than their years.

"One of the points that has to be made," said Jacobs, "is that most of the people went on to be compulsive gamblers because when they started as teen-agers, they were

winners." "The 'overwhelming majority' of young people, he said, were introduced to gambling by their parents or relatives who condoned it as fun and games," continued *The Los Angeles Times*. Another substance-abuse counselor added his voice: "Parents have got to look at the same old issue they've had to deal with in alcohol and drugs. I just think the more you expand gambling, the more new recruits to the compulsive gambling club occur." Specialists who treat compulsive gamblers say that just as with drugs and alcohol, when hooked on gambling more and more juveniles are supporting their addiction by stealing, peddling drugs, and prostituting themselves. Parents may consider gambling "fun and games," but police officials do not.

"Kids who became hooked on slot machines . . . displayed all the destructive traits of adult compulsive gamblers. Young-



Gambling Chips Welcome at Las Vegas Catholic Shrine

Visitors to the Shrine of the Most Holy Redeemer often ask the priest: "Father, will you pray for me to win?"

Millions of people visit Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.A., every year from all parts of the world to test the whims of Lady Luck. In the warmly lit sanctuary of this Roman Catholic Church, where statues of the Nativity, the Last Supper, and the Crucifixion appear along the walls, gambling proceeds are put to use in the pews: Worshipers put casino chips into the collection plate.

"Now and then we'll find a \$500 chip in one of the plates," Father Leary of the shrine said in a soft Irish brogue.

A Roman Catholic church farther up the Las Vegas Strip served the worshipers for decades, but when four of the world's largest hotel-casinos—the MGM Grand, the Luxor, the Excalibur, and the Tropicana—were built at the south end of the Strip, the new Shrine of the Most Holy Redeemer was built just one block away.

When the priest was asked why this was done, he said: "Why not? That's where the people are."

It's also where the money is. So why not?

sters who got addicted to these slot machines might have started at the age of 9 or 10. They ran through their pocket money, school dinner money, and loose change around the house. A year or two on and boys began stealing things. Everything would be sold from the child's own room, bats, books, even treasures like record players: other children would find their own toys gone too. Nothing in the house was safe. Moody heard of desperate mothers piling up their possessions in one room so as to sit guard over them, or having to hide their handbags under the bedclothes when they went to sleep. Frantic, such mothers could no more comprehend what was happening to their offspring than nesting birds robbed by a cuckoo. The kids still managed to steal from somewhere. By the age of 16, the police would be knocking on the door."—*Easy Money: Inside the Gambler's Mind*, by David Spanier.

As it has been pointed out in these articles, many adults and young people have been introduced to gambling through their churches—bingo, lotteries, and so forth. Should religious institutions and their leaders who claim to be followers of Christ encourage, promote, and abet gambling in any form? Hardly! Gambling in all its aspects appeals to one of the worst qualities in humans, the desire to get something for nothing, or, more bluntly put, greed. Those who promote it encourage people to believe it is right to profit from the losses of others. Would Jesus promote such activity when it brings family breakup, shame, ill health, and the destruction of one's life? Never! Rather, God's inspired Word makes clear that greedy persons will not inherit God's Kingdom.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

Parents must teach their children at an early age that gambling in any form is wrong. Do not view it as fun and games but

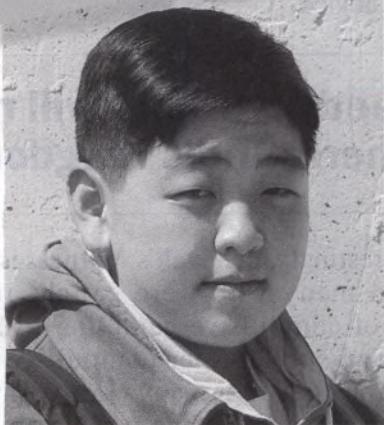
rather as the beginning of laziness, lying, cheating, and dishonesty. In many cities assistance programs, such as Gamblers Anonymous, have been set up. More important, if you have a problem, seek out the inspired counsel contained in God's Word, the Bible. Some who have contemplated suicide say they owe their lives to heeding such inspired advice.

Greedy persons will not inherit God's Kingdom

Interestingly, Jehovah's Witnesses have helped many who were caught in the snare of compulsive gambling to break free. One such former compulsive gambler wrote that after many years of involvement in vices, including heavy gambling, "immediate and dramatic changes of conduct began to occur as my girlfriend and I studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Gambling was an addictive force, and it proved to be most difficult to manage. With Jehovah's help and the support of my girlfriend—along with study, prayer, and meditation, especially on God's view of greed—this gambling addiction came under control, and my girlfriend, who has now been my wife for 38 years, and I both dedicated our lives to Jehovah. Though we have served where the need is greater and in full-time service for years and I have served as a traveling representative of the Watchtower Society, my addiction is still present and is controlled only with Jehovah's help and guidance."

If gambling is a problem for you, can you be set free of the addiction? Yes, if you continue to avail yourself of God's help and offer it to others who may be in need of it.

**Young
People
Ask...**



Should I Learn Self-Defense?

"There's this really bad gang in school," says Jesse. "If they see you in the hallway and want your sneakers, jacket, or even your pants, they take them. If you report it, they'll get you again."

COPING with violence has become a way of life for many youths. Said the magazine *USA Today*: "About one of every five high school students carries a firearm, knife, razor, club, or other weapon on a regular basis. Many carry them to school." A teenage boy named Jairo knows this firsthand. "Our school was the first [in New York City] to have metal detectors," he says, "but that doesn't stop the kids from having

knives and guns. I don't know how they get them in, but they do."

Understandably, the threat of being assaulted has many youths thinking about how they can protect themselves. Young Lola observes: "After a girl from my school was stabbed to death for her earrings, they began teaching self-defense courses in school. Almost everyone signed up." Other youths have resorted to carrying chemical sprays and other weapons. The question is, Do self-defense methods really protect you?

The Martial Arts

They show it on TV all the time—martial arts experts flipping through the air, kicking and punching with the grace of a dancer. Within seconds the bad guys lie motionless on the ground. Amazing! The martial arts seem like the ultimate protection. In reality, though, life isn't like the movies. A man with years of experience in karate said: "It takes just a bullet. If a person at a distance has a gun, you don't stand a chance. If you're too closed in without any room for movement, it's not really that great either."

Realize, too, that to become proficient in the martial arts, one must spend a lot of money and undergo years of vigorous training. And unless you stay in training, your ability to perform those fancy moves can get dangerously rusty in no time at all. The same can be said about other forms of self-defense, such as boxing. Besides, having a reputation for knowing how to fight is likely to attract unwanted attention. Troublemakers may decide to take you on as a challenge.

There is a greater danger, however, in learning the martial arts. *The Economist* magazine recently reported: "Most, if not all, of the martial arts are inextricably linked to the three main East Asian religions, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism." Another source adds: "Everything done in karate—every movement, every feel-

ing—can be traced to some principle of Zen.” Zen is a sect of Buddhism that emphasizes religious meditation. These religious roots pose a serious problem for Christians in view of the Bible’s words at 2 Corinthians 6:17: “Therefore get out from among [false worshipers], and separate yourselves,’ says Jehovah, ‘and quit touching the unclean thing.’”

Use of Weapons

What, though, about packing a gun or a knife? Doing so may indeed make you feel confident. But that confidence could prove fatal if you started taking unnecessary risks or courting trouble. Warns the Bible: “As for the one searching for bad, it will come upon him.” (Proverbs 11:27) And if uninvited trouble comes your way, pulling out a weapon is sure to escalate the conflict. You could get killed—or end up killing someone else. How would God, the Source of life, view your actions if you could have avoided using violence?—Psalm 11:5; 36:9.

True, some do not really intend to use lethal force. They may say they carry a weapon just to scare off harassers. But says *Health* magazine: “Firearms instructors agree: Don’t get a gun if you aren’t prepared to use it. Waving a firearm around as a bluff can scare off some assailants, but will only enrage others.”

What about “safer” weapons, such as chemical sprays? Besides the fact that they are illegal in some places, these weapons have serious drawbacks. Instead of immobilizing a drug-crazed attacker, they may only succeed in infuriating him. It is even possible that the wind might blow the chemical into *your* face rather than the attacker’s—assuming you get the spray out in the first



Martial arts are not the answer for Christians

place. Seeing you rummaging through your pockets or purse, the assailant may assume you are reaching for a gun and decide to take some aggressive action of his own. One police detective thus comments: “There is no guarantee that mace [a chemical spray], or any other weapon, will work. Or that you will have it out in time. Weapons never help a situation. People put too much faith in them.”

Weapons—The Godly View

The threat of violence was real back in Jesus’ day. One of his most famous parables, commonly called the parable of the Good Samaritan, related an incident involving violent robbery. (Luke 10:30-35) When Jesus asked his disciples to equip themselves with swords, it was not for protection. In fact, it led to his stating the principle: “All those who take the sword will perish by the sword.”—Matthew 26:51, 52; Luke 22:36-38.

True Christians, therefore, do not arm themselves so as to harm their fellowman. (Compare Isaiah 2:4.) They follow the Bible's advice at Romans 12:18: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." Does this mean being defenseless? Not at all!

Wisdom—Better Than Weapons

In an age when there seems to be a gadget for everything, it may surprise you to know that you can have at your disposal a means of defense that is far more effective than any man-made device. At Ecclesiastes 9:18, we read: "Wisdom is better than implements for fighting." This wisdom is more than what some call "street smarts." It is the application of Bible principles, and it can often help you to avoid violent situations in the first place.

Jairo, for example, who earlier described his violent school, steers clear of trouble by applying the Bible's words at 1 Thessalonians 4:11: "Make it your aim to live quietly and to mind your own business." Says Jairo: "If you know there's going to be a fight, you have to mind your own business and go home. Some hang around, and that's when they get into trouble."

"Letting everyone know I'm one of Jehovah's Witnesses is my best protection," states young Lola. "People leave me alone since they know I'm not going to be a threat to them." "It's more than just saying you're a Witness," adds Eliu. "They should see that you're different." Christians must be "no part of the world." (John 15:19) But be careful not to project a superior attitude. (Proverbs 11:2) One youth put it this way: "Don't walk down the hallways as if you own the place." This could trigger resentment. Relates a Christian youth named Luchy: "I'm friendly, and I talk to my classmates; but I simply don't act like them."

How you dress is also important. "I'm

careful not to wear things that attract attention," says one youth. "I figure I don't have to wear the most expensive brands to look good." Following the Bible's counsel to dress modestly may help you to keep a low profile and avoid trouble.—1 Timothy 2:9.

If You Are Confronted With Violence

What, though, if in spite of your efforts to stay out of harm's way, you are threatened with violence? First, try to apply the principle at Proverbs 15:1: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up." Young Eliu did so when he was in school. He says: "Sometimes it's just a matter of not taking aggressive statements so seriously. In a lot of cases, it's how you respond that causes the trouble." By refusing to "return evil for evil," you may be able to keep a situation from getting out of hand.—Romans 12:17.

When diplomacy fails, however, you must take steps to protect yourself. If a group of youths demand that you give them your sneakers or some prized possessions, *give them up!* Your life is far more precious than the things you possess. (Luke 12:15) If violence seems imminent, walk away—better yet, *run away!* "Before the quarrel has burst forth, take your leave," says Proverbs 17:14. (Compare Luke 4:29, 30; John 8:59.) If escape is impossible, you may have no choice but to ward off violence as best you can. Afterward, be sure to let your parents know what happened. Perhaps they can help out in some way.

Just as the Bible prophesied, we live in violent times. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) But toting a gun or learning karate kicks will not make you any safer. Be cautious. Use godly wisdom when faced with trouble. And above all, have faith and trust in Jehovah. Like the psalmist, you can confidently pray: "From the man of violence you will deliver me." —Psalm 18:48.

Probing the Mysteries of Migration

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN SPAIN



THERE is an old song that tells of the swallows' return to the old Mission San Juan Capistrano in San Juan Capistrano, California, U.S.A. It is said that without fail, on March 19th every year, they return to their nests there.

European swallows follow a similar timetable. A Spanish saying predicts that by March 15th the song of the swallow will be heard once more.

In the Northern Hemisphere, countryfolk have always greeted the return of the swallow, a traditional harbinger of spring. But some curious ones also wondered where they had been during their winter absence. Some thought they had hibernated. Others suggested that they had gone to the moon —someone calculated that they could fly there in two months. A 16th-century Swedish archbishop claimed that swallows spent the winter underwater, huddled together at the bottom of lakes and marshes. His treatise even contained an illustration that depicted fishermen hauling in a net full of swallows. Odd as these ideas now seem, the truth turned out to be nearly as strange as fiction.

During this century ornithologists have ringed thousands of swallows. A small, but significant, percentage of these ringed birds were located in their winter quarters. Incredible though it seems, swal-

lows from Britain and Russia were found wintering together thousands of miles away from home—in the extreme southeastern tip of Africa. Some of their North American counterparts fly as far south as Argentina or Chile. And swallows are not the only birds to make such epic journeys. Hundreds of millions of birds from the Northern Hemisphere winter in the Southern Hemisphere.

Ornithologists were amazed to discover that a bird as small as a swallow could make a round-trip of 14,000 miles before returning to the same nest the following spring. Knowing where the swallows had gone only raised more perplexing questions.

"Swallow, Why Do You Leave Your Nest?"

What makes a bird journey to the other end of the globe? Or, as a Spanish saying puts it, "Swallow, why do you leave your nest?" Because of the cold or in order to find food? Doubtless, their need for a reliable food supply is the answer rather than the onset of wintry weather, since many small birds that have difficulty surviving cold winters do not migrate. But bird migration is not just a wandering in search of food. Unlike human migrants, birds do not wait until times are bad before moving on.

Scientists have discovered that it is the shorter day that triggers the migratory urge.

Photo: Caja Salamanca y Soria

**The stork punctually returns
each year to its nest**



In the autumn captive birds get restless when the daylight hours decrease. This is so even when the effect is produced artificially and when the birds have been reared by investigators. The caged bird even faces in the direction it instinctively knows it should take during its migratory flight. Evidently, the urge to migrate at a specific time of the year and in a certain direction is inborn.

How do birds navigate successfully over large distances? Many migrate over featureless oceans and deserts, and they do so both by day and by night. In some species the young birds travel on their own without the help of experienced adults. Somehow they stick to their route despite storms or side winds.

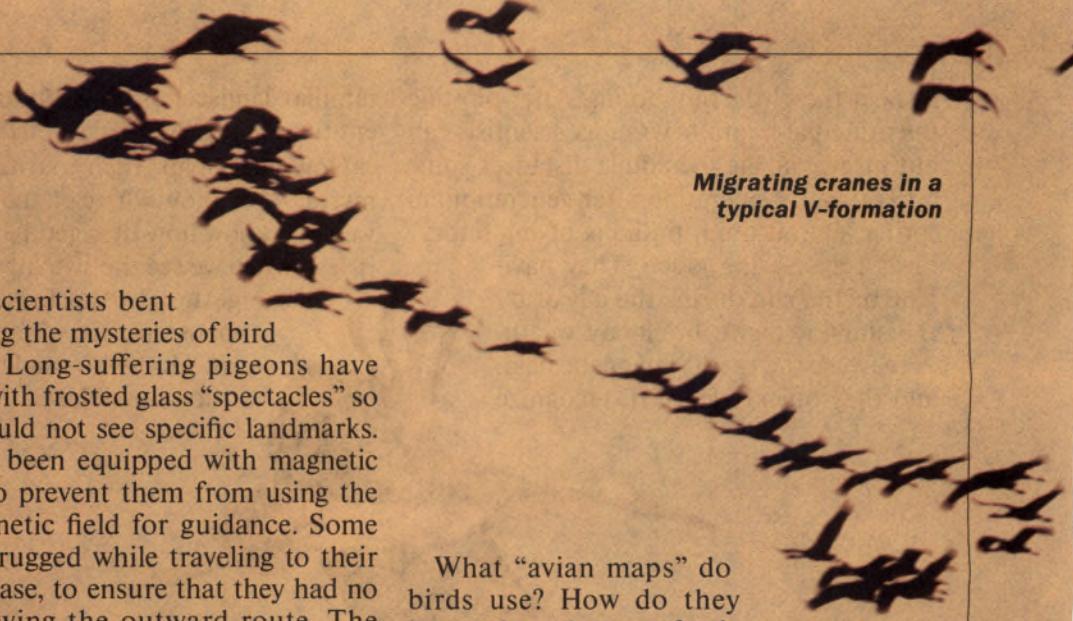
Navigation—especially across vast oceans or deserts—is by no means easy. It took man thousands of years to master it. Doubtless, Christopher Columbus would never have ventured so far across the ocean without navigational aids such as the astrolabe and the magnetic compass.* Even so, toward the end of his first voyage, it was the birds that showed him the way to the Bahamas. Following the custom of ancient mariners, he changed his course to the southwest when he spotted migrating land birds flying in that direction.

Successful navigation requires a system for maintaining a steady course and also a means of determining position. Simply put, you need to know where you are in relation to your destination and what direction to take in order to get there. We humans are not equipped to handle such a task without tools—but birds evidently are. Patiently, scientists have pieced together data that throws light on how birds determine the right direction in which to fly.

Some of the Answers

Homing pigeons are the “guinea pigs” of

* The astrolabe was used for calculating latitude.



Migrating cranes in a typical V-formation

choice for scientists bent on unraveling the mysteries of bird navigation. Long-suffering pigeons have been fitted with frosted glass "spectacles" so that they could not see specific landmarks. Others have been equipped with magnetic backpacks to prevent them from using the earth's magnetic field for guidance. Some were even drugged while traveling to their point of release, to ensure that they had no way of knowing the outward route. The resourceful pigeons overcame each handicap separately, although a combination of certain obstacles did prevent them from homing successfully. Clearly, birds are not dependent on just one navigation system. What methods do they use?

Experiments using artificial suns or night skies demonstrate that birds can navigate by the sun during the day and by the stars at night. What if the sky is overcast? Birds can also fix a route using the earth's magnetic field, as if they had a built-in compass. In order to return to the same nest or loft, they must also be able to recognize familiar landmarks. Furthermore, researchers have found that birds are much more sensitive than humans to sounds and smells—although they don't know to what extent this ability is used for navigation.

The Mystery of the "Avian Map"

Although all this research has gone a long way toward establishing how birds can fly in a fixed direction, a baffling problem still remains. It is one thing to have a reliable compass, but to get home, you also need a map—first to determine where you are and then to plot the best route.

What "avian maps" do birds use? How do they know where they are after being taken to an unknown place hundreds of miles from home? How do they calculate the best route, when to all outward appearances they have no maps or signposts to guide them?

Biologist James L. Gould says that a bird's "map sense seems likely to retain its status as the most elusive and intriguing mystery in animal behavior."

The Mind Behind the Mystery

What is abundantly clear is that migration is instinctive behavior. Many species of birds are genetically programmed to migrate at certain times of the year, and they are born with the skills and senses needed to navigate successfully. Where did that instinctive ability come from?

Reasonably, this instinctive wisdom could come only from a wise Creator, who could "program" the birds' genetic code. God pointedly asked the patriarch Job: "Does a hawk learn from you how to fly when it spreads its wings toward the south?"—Job 39:26, *Today's English Version*.

After a hundred years of intense research on bird migration, scientists have come to

respect the birds' tiny brains. After plotting the principal migratory routes, scientists can but marvel at the incredible distances some birds travel. Generation after generation, in spring and autumn, millions of migratory birds traverse the globe. They navigate by the sun during the day or by the stars at night. In cloudy weather they use the earth's magnetic field, and they quickly learn to recognize

familiar landscapes. Possibly they even orient themselves by smell or infrasonic waves.

How they "map" their journeys remains a mystery. We know where all the swallows go; we don't know how they get there. Nevertheless, when we see the swallows flocking together in the fall, we can but pause to marvel at the wisdom of God who made their migration possible.



World Champion Migrants

Distance. In the northern summer of 1966, an arctic tern was ringed in North Wales, Great Britain. In December of that same year, it turned up—appropriately enough—in New South Wales, Australia. It had flown more than 11,000 miles in six months. Such a feat is probably quite normal for arctic terns. In the course of a year, some of these birds regularly circumnavigate the globe.

Speed. American golden plovers are perhaps the fastest migrants. Some of these birds have crossed the 2,000 miles of ocean separating Hawaii from the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, in just 35 hours—at an average speed of 57 miles per hour!

Endurance. Blackpoll warblers of North America, which weigh only three quarters of an ounce, are the greatest marathon fliers. On their journey to South America, they fly 2,300 miles nonstop across the Atlantic in just three and a half days. This extraordinary endur-

ance test has been compared to a man running 1,200 four-minute miles without stopping. The flight is also a weight-watcher's dream—the warbler burns up nearly half its body weight.

Punctuality. Apart from the swallow, the stork (shown above) also has a reputation for punctuality. The prophet Jeremiah described the stork as a bird that "well knows its appointed times" and its time for "coming in." (Jeremiah 8:7) Nearly half a million storks still pass through Israel every spring.

Navigation skills. For Manx shearwaters there is no place like home. A female bird taken from her nest in Great Britain was released some 3,000 miles away in Boston, U.S.A. She crossed the Atlantic in 12 1/2 days and arrived home before the airmail letter that gave details of her release. The achievement was all the more amazing because these birds never traverse the North Atlantic in their migratory journeys.

My Long, Hard Fight to Find True Faith

I always feared I would go to hell, I knew I wasn't good enough to go to heaven. I felt I'd be fortunate to make it to purgatory, so I prayed fervently and lighted candles to escape landing in hell.

AS MY car's tires slipped and slid on the icy roads of a mountain pass in Oregon, U.S.A., I wondered what I had got myself into. This was my first experience driving in snow, and here I was in the middle of a blizzard on unfamiliar roads, with plunging ravines off to each side, barely able to see past the hood. I knew it was all over, so I prayed to God to spare my passenger and me and that I would repay him by returning to church.

Well, we did make it, and I lived up to my vow of returning to church. I found a local church in Seattle by looking in the yellow pages and went the next Sunday. It gave me the same empty feeling that I had experienced before. The church stressed the same thing as my former church, *money*. The basket was passed three times! I can remember telling God that I was going to have to find another way to worship him.

As a child, I was raised a strict Catholic in a military home. I attended a Catholic school. I can remember being in catechism class and asking the nun: "Why don't we ever use the Bible?" I was told that I was weak in faith, and more than once my parents were informed of my weakness.

I was raised with an ever-present fear of God. I had an unclear concept of him. He was a God who deserved to be worshiped but tormented you if you didn't worship him correctly. By the time I was 17, I told

my parents that I would not go to church anymore. I felt closer to God anywhere other than in church. I used to walk on the beach, and if something was bothering me, I would talk to God about it. I apologized to him for talking to him without the use of a priest, informing him that I just had to tell him what was on my mind. I also became disillusioned because of everything I saw happening in the world. It was the hippie era, and my friends were involved with anything-goes sex and drugs. I saw the sad consequences of unwanted pregnancies, abortions, drug overdose—I wanted no part of that!

The Search Begins

Becky, a close friend, and I decided to leave college in search of something better. There had to be something better! We decided to visit her mother in Washington State. I told my parents that I needed to get away, to try to clear my mind of the problems that were bothering me. That's when we drove into the snowstorm in Oregon. After leaving the church in disgust that Sunday in Seattle, I went home and spoke to Becky's mother, Edna, about my feelings. She told me that she knew someone who could answer my questions. She called Jehovah's Witnesses at the Kingdom Hall.

I remember waiting for them to come. It took three days. But when they came, I thought they were the most Christian

looking people I had ever seen in my life. It was Clarence and Edith Meunier. Clarence was a graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and was obviously well-versed in the Scriptures. I was immediately impressed when they explained that God had a name—Jehovah. I felt as though a light had switched on in my head. The first study lasted three hours, and they came back two days later for another one.

I was so excited. I soon telephoned my parents and told them I had found the truth. I told them that God had a name, Jehovah, and that Jehovah's Witnesses were teaching the truth of the Bible. I knew that they had never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses and would be just as excited to learn what I had learned. However, they had heard of Jehovah's Witnesses and were quite upset. They came to take me back to California.

When I got home, I knew that I needed to get in touch with the congregation right away. I located the Kingdom Hall and went to the next meeting and sat down. A sister looked over at me and smiled, so I asked her if she would study with me. She almost fell off her chair and quickly accepted. I was so glad to get back with the congregation because I had started feeling cut off. I needed association.—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

PERSECUTION FROM FAMILY BEGINS

My parents were still very opposed to my new religion and sent me to a psychiatrist. When my parents asked for a report, he told them I was rebelling. I told them I wasn't rebelling. It was the first time in my life that I had found something that gave me answers, that gave me a reason for living.

After this, when I went to the Kingdom Hall, my parents were very angry. They told me that I could go to any college I wanted, pursue any field I wanted, and they would pay for it, but I was to have nothing to do with Jehovah's Witnesses. What made this

especially difficult to endure was the love I had for my family. One particularly unpleasant day my mother told me that she would rather see me a prostitute than one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I could be anything, but not one of Jehovah's Witnesses. My parents told me that I had to leave home. Psalm 27:10 came to mind: "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up." A sister in the congregation had a home that was empty, and she turned it over to me.

I met a sister in the Kingdom Hall who, like me, was brand new. Her name was Chris Kemp, and we became very good friends and started rooming together. We were baptized on July 18, 1969, at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.

At the congregation meetings, we would watch a full-time pioneer sister, Dana Wolff. She was very spiritual. We found out that she needed a place to live, so we gained a wonderful roommate.

I remember my first part on the meeting. I had a demonstration, and I had gone over it repeatedly. It was a demonstration on presenting a book, and I knew it by heart. However, at the last minute, I wrote it out and put it in my pocket. I got on stage and went blank. I said: "Hello . . . Hello . . . Hello." I said hello about five times. I couldn't remember anything. So then I looked at the audience and said: "I don't usually do this at doors." I then pulled out my crumpled notebook paper and read word-for-word what I was supposed to say. When I was through, I went to my seat and cried.

The brother who had asked me to give the part asked the audience: "What did we learn from this presentation?" The hall was quiet. I then stood up, faced the audience, and said: "How could they learn anything? I was terrible! Of course they didn't learn anything!" and I sat back down and resumed my

crying. I know my parts are a little better now—they couldn't be any worse.

Not long after that, Dana started talking about wanting to find someone who would move where the need was greater and pioneer with her. That night Chris and I went in our room and talked about it. We came back the next day and asked Dana: "What about us?" Dana about fell over. We were new; we weren't baptized long enough to be regular pioneers yet! We were not at all what she had in mind for partners. But she wrote the Watchtower Society anyway, and they assigned all three of us to Middlesborough, Kentucky.

My Family's Opposition Fails

We were packing our things to leave when my parents called to tell me I would not be able to take my car out of the state of California. They were cosigners of my car and told me they would call the police if I tried to take the car out of state. We then decided to take the bus. At a going-away party for us, a brother I had met one time came up and said: "I understand that you owe \$3,000 on your car." I said yes. He said he wanted to pay it. I said I couldn't allow him to do that. He made arrangements for me to meet with the brothers in our congregation. They said: "If he wants to, let him do it. Don't fight Jehovah's spirit." So the car was paid off. My parents were very upset yet amazed that someone would do that. We left for Kentucky the next day.

When we got to Middlesborough, we were given an apartment to live in that was in the back of an old Kingdom Hall. There was no insulation. It got very cold in the winter. It was even cold in the summer, but we were glad to have it because we couldn't afford rent. We had only one little space heater. In the winter we dressed in layers, even to go to bed. In the morning sometimes there would be a sheet of ice across the entire floor, and

our socks would stick to it. In the bathroom we always had a hammer to break the ice on the toilet water because it would freeze over at night.

Chris and I had only been full-time ministers for five months, but we were already conducting a lot of good Bible studies, and it was exciting to be there. We were so happy that we all averaged well over 150 hours a month during those first few months of pioneering. Dana wanted to be a temporary special pioneer for the summer so she decided to go to the Witnesses' headquarters in New York. We had never been there, so we decided to make the trip with her. While we were there, Dana went to the Service Department, and we went with her. To our surprise they assigned all three of us to be special full-time pioneers.

My Father Breaks His Word, Misapplies Scripture

The very month I started special pioneering, Satan increased his efforts to wear me down. I received an itemized bill from the bank stating that I had to start paying \$32.80 a month for my college education. This came out of the blue, for my parents had always told me that they would pay for my college education if I maintained an *A* average, which I had done. I wrote my father and asked him not to view me as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in this but to view me as

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

One-Parent Families —How Successful Can They Be?

Are God's Standards Too Difficult to Reach?

A Delightful International Fruit

his daughter. I reminded him in a loving way of the agreement that we had made regarding my education, that if I maintained the grades he demanded, he would always pay for my education. I asked that he please not put this burden on me because it would be very difficult for me to maintain these payments, since I was only making \$50 a month, which is what I lived on. Paying \$32.80 a month would leave me with only \$17.20 to live on.

My father replied with a scripture in a letter. He wrote: "Since you are always using the Bible, what about this scripture: 'Him that doesn't work, neither let him eat.' You're not using your education for anything beneficial, so you are to make these payments to the bank."—2 Thessalonians 3:10.

When I received the short, curt message, it hurt me very much. I got in my car, went somewhere by myself, and cried because I did not know what to do. Then I stopped crying and got angry. I recognized that it wasn't my parents against me but Satan. I shouted out to Satan to get away from me, that he was not going to win, that he was not going to succeed in making me quit pioneering.

Many Hardships, Many Blessings

I got a part-time job working 20 hours a week—11 hours one day and 9 the next—and I continued special pioneering. I learned quickly how to take advantage of thrift shops. My winter wardrobe was four skirts for a dollar. My winter coat was \$1.50. I worked scrubbing floors to be able to buy a pair of \$20 boots. All of us had to struggle. To try to save money, I opened a savings account. Sometimes I would deposit 25 cents and then withdraw it for gas. I think the bank tellers hated to see me come in. They eventually closed my account—it always had so little money in it. I would pull into a full-service gas station and get 25 cents

worth of gas. After a while I think the attendants let out a heavy sigh whenever I pulled in. There were times we didn't have any money for gas. Many times we would get in the car, knowing that we were low on fuel but knowing also that we had a Bible study to get to. Sometimes when we would go to the post office, in our mail we would find a dollar from someone—just enough to help us get by. Through all the troubles, we could see Jehovah's hand in our life. It was so touching.

I can remember collecting discarded bottles just to put stamps on letters. I saved three months for a pair of \$8 shoes. Then the most personal thing happened to me. I was literally down to two pairs of underwear. I prayed to Jehovah and told him that I felt this wasn't something really appropriate to pray for but that I didn't know what I was going to do. Two weeks later, I received a package with 17 pairs of panties, a slip, a blouse, and other items! All from someone I hadn't heard from for a year.

One of the main problems in the area was bootlegging. Because of their illegal practices, people in certain territories were very clannish and suspicious of strangers. Nevertheless, I had many studies, and I ended up working in field service approximately 25 hours a week by myself. I never felt closer to Jehovah than I did at that time because I had to rely totally upon him. You learn that it is not the things you have but your relationship with Jehovah that counts. You learn that material things do not make you happy; it's Jehovah who makes you happy.
—Luke 12:15.

I Gain a New Loving Family

The very month that I finished paying off my bill for my college education was the month that I met my future husband and best friend, Jeff Malone. He was at Bethel,



Karen with her husband and two children

and one year later we were married. When I married Jeff, I not only married him but gained his mom, sister, and uncle, whom I love very much. Our common love for Jehovah unites us more than any other tie. Jeff and I were given an assignment in Union City, Tennessee, as special pioneers. We were only there four months when we applied for Bethel and were accepted.

We left Bethel in 1980, and our daughter, Megan, was born later that year. Our son, J. T., was born in 1983. Jeff and I are both currently serving as regular pioneers with the Forest Hill Congregation in Fort Worth, Texas.

We decided that we would do everything possible to raise our children to love Jehovah. Even though Jeff serves as an elder, he has always put our family's spiritual interests first. We have followed the Society's suggestions about regularly attending meetings, reading to the children, participating in field service, discussing the daily text, and

going to Kingdom Hall construction projects. Both of us would often spend over an hour putting the children to bed—singing songs to them, reading Bible stories to them, saying prayers with each one separately. Our family goal is for all of us to be in the full-time service together. One thing we have always felt very strongly about through the years—sticking together as a family, doing things as a family, both in work and in play.

Looking back, I can confirm that David had it right when he said: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me?" (Psalm 116:12) There is nothing that Satan has been able to do that Jehovah hasn't been able to undo. I have a close, loving family with Jeff and Megan and J. T., all united in serving Jehovah; and in addition to that, I have gained a wonderful worldwide family because of being part of Jehovah's organization. It is something for which I'll be forever grateful.—*As told by Karen Malone*

The African School

What Did It Teach?

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN GHANA

THE African school? Some Westerners may be surprised to know that such an arrangement actually existed in times past. Sad to say, the Hollywood image of the African as a menacing savage clutching a spear has been slow to vanish from the minds of people. Many simply cannot imagine how the African of days gone by could in any way have been considered educated.

It is indeed true that Africans raised in traditional societies did not receive book learning and formal classroom training. However, long before the European brand of formal education was brought to this continent, many African societies had effective educational systems that helped children become well equipped to function and thrive in their local culture. Consider, for example, the schooling of the Akan, the Twi-speaking people of Ghana.

Home Schooling

Among the Akan, the home served as the primary classroom. The child's education began as he learned speech from his parents. At the same time, he also received his first lessons in proper manners. For instance, when a visitor to the house would say a greeting to a child, the child would be taught the proper, polite response. Later, when the child was sent out on errands, he would be told the polite way to deliver any messages being conveyed.

The educational philosophy of the Akan was thus not unlike that expressed in the Bible at Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a boy accord-

ing to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." Parents, especially the father, took an interest in child-rearing. Said an Akan proverb: "If a child does not take after his mother, he takes after his father."

As the child grew, so did the depth of his education. Lessons about life were conveyed, not through books, but through imaginative stories, such as those about the mythical spider called Kwaku Ananse. How children loved these tales! In the early evening breeze, or on a moonlit chilly night, they would sit around a fire and heartily enjoy these stories of triumph and failure.

One famous story tells that Ananse traveled the length and breadth of the earth to put all the world's wisdom in a pot. His mission seemingly accomplished, he decided to hang the pot high up in a tree, so that no one else could access this wisdom. He began the difficult climb up the tree, the wisdom-laden pot attached to a string and dangling from his belly. As he struggled, his firstborn son, Ntikuma, appeared and called out to Ananse: "Ah, bah, Father! Whoever climbs a tree with a pot on his belly? Why not put it on your back and have room to operate?" Ananse looked down at his son and shouted: "How dare you teach me?"

But now it was apparent that some wisdom still remained outside his pot! Angered by this realization, Ananse hurled down the pot, shattering it and scattering all the wisdom about. Those who were the first to get



"... Among the Akan, the child was made to recognize his responsibility to the community."



Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses provide literacy classes

there became the wisest ones. The lesson: No one has a monopoly on wisdom. The Akan would thus say: "One head does not constitute a council."—Compare Proverbs 15:22; 24:6.

Life Skills

Akan education also included training in life skills. Most boys took up their father's occupation—usually farming. But there were other skills to be learned, such as hunting, palm wine tapping, and crafts such as basket weaving. For more elaborate ventures, such as wood carving or weaving, boys were apprenticed to master craftsmen. And the girls? Their training mainly focused on homemaking skills such as extracting vegetable oil, making soap and pottery, spinning cotton, and the like.

Science was not left out of the traditional school's "curriculum." Knowledge of medicinal herbs, their preparation and dispensation, was passed from father to son or from grandparent to grandchild. A child also learned to calculate numbers, using his

fingers as well as marbles, stones, and marks on sticks. Games like oware and draughts sharpened counting skills.

By attending open court sessions, the young Akan would also gain insight into the political and judicial systems. Funerals as well as festive occasions were opportunities to assimilate the local dirges, poetry, history, music, drumming, and dancing.

Community Responsibility

Among the Akan, the child was not a social island. Early in life he was made to recognize his responsibility to the community. He learned his first lessons in this regard as he joined his peers for play. In later years he would engage in cooperative activities like community labor. When he misbehaved, punishment would be administered, not only by his parents but by any adult member of the community. Indeed, it was considered an adult's moral obligation to discipline any misbehaving child.

Such discipline was well received because children were taught to have a high regard

for adults. In fact, the Akan used to say: "An old lady is not grandmother to only one person." Respect for and service to the elderly was thus an obligation. And any child who, without proper excuse, refused to render service to an adult would be reported to his parents.

Religious Education

The Akan were very religious, having a reverent attitude toward nature and the unknown universe. True, they were polytheists, believing in many gods. Even so, the Akan believed in the existence of one Supreme Being. (Romans 1:20) The Akan word for "God," any god, is *onyame*. However, to the Akan that word seemed inadequate to describe the Creator. So, they called him *Onyankopon*, meaning "the God Who Alone Is the Great One."

Lesser gods were worshiped in the belief that it was the arrangement of the One Great God. In their minds this was little different from the way the paramount chief was served through lesser divisional chiefs. At any rate, every Akan child was taught this religion.

Traditional Education Today

In recent years millions of Africans have migrated to big cities where formal classroom instruction has all but replaced the traditional ways of schooling. Nevertheless, the traditional African school continues to flourish in some communities, especially in the rurals. Why, some Africans have even had the benefit of both traditional *and* formal educations!

Consider, for example, a Christian minister in Ghana named Alfred. In spite of having enjoyed a formal education, he has a high regard for many aspects of the traditional way of life. Says Alfred: "Most of my unlettered kinsmen, though having only their traditional training, are very good teachers on

practical aspects of life. Working with fellow Christians among them has taught me many effective ways of presenting my message in simple, down-to-earth style. I can thus reach people of a traditional background as well as those with formal education. Quite often, I take a proverb or illustration used by these folks, polish it, and incorporate it in my Bible lectures. This often draws enthusiastic applause from the audience! Really, though, the credit must go to these traditionally trained men and women."

Clearly, then, the African school has many admirable aspects and is deserving of respect, not disdain. It may not have produced technological wonders, but it did produce a strong family structure, a sense of community, and a people of keen mind, appealing sense of humor, and generous, hospitable spirit. Not surprisingly, then, many city Africans endeavor to keep in touch with relatives who live in the rurals by making occasional visits. Such occasions are not without their awkward moments. City dwellers often falter when it comes to traditional norms. Often they do not know, for example, that when you shake hands with a group, the "proper" way is to go from right to left. Still, such visits can prove to be mutually refreshing.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that while the African traditional school taught reverence and devotion, it did not impart the life-giving knowledge of Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ. (John 17:3) Jehovah's Witnesses are privileged to work among the Akan and other African ethnic groups to provide this vital knowledge. They have taught thousands of Africans who lack formal schooling to read and write so that they can study God's Word firsthand. For those who are "conscious of their spiritual need," this is the most important education a person could possibly have.—Matthew 5:3.

WATCHING THE WORLD

Why Children Give In to Drugs

"How can we keep our children from getting involved with drugs and alcohol, and why is it that some kids find it easier than others to 'just say no'?" Those questions were raised recently in *Parents* magazine, which found some possible answers in a study undertaken by researchers at the University of Arizona, U.S.A. The study examined almost 1,200 children in the sixth and seventh grades and focused on ten different risk factors suspected of influencing children toward drug and alcohol abuse. The two leading predictors were "being susceptible to peer pressure, and having friends who used alcohol or drugs." On the other hand, the study found that academic achievement could play a preventive role—perhaps because it improves self-esteem and rarely promotes friendships with substance abusers.

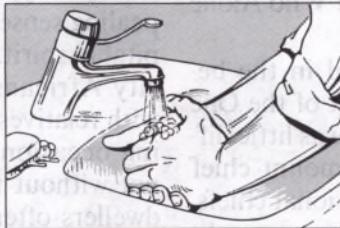
Fascination With Horror

"Teens are hooked on horror," reports *The Globe and Mail* of Canada. The paper states that "there are horror trading cards, comic books, artwork, movies and even music, all hot in adolescent circles." To satisfy such shocking taste in reading material, one book publisher increased production of horror books for teens from four a year to one a month. Others put out two horror books a month. Why such a fascination with horror? According to author Shawn Ryan, "from a historical perspective, horror has always done well when there's a malaise or unhappiness." According to *The*

Globe, Mr. Ryan said: "In the nineties, we are obviously dissatisfied with government, unhappy and fearful of crime. These are the times when horror does well."

Proper Hand Washing

Doctors say the simple act of regularly washing your hands "helps get rid of germs and viruses that cause colds, flu, strep throat, stomach disorders and more serious illnesses," reports *The Toronto Star*. The paper adds: "A . . . study by Montreal epidemiologist Dr. Julio Soto



shows that washing hands properly can dramatically reduce the spread of viral and bacterial infectious diseases—by as much as 54 per cent for upper respiratory diseases and 72 per cent for diarrhea cases." The Canadian Paediatric Society suggests that proper washing of hands should involve wetting hands under running water, scrubbing them with soap for a count of 30, rinsing them under running water for a count of 5, and, finally, drying them with a clean towel unused by others or a paper towel or a hands-free dryer. Food handlers in restaurants, hot dog stands, and food courts especially need to give careful attention to hand washing.

Plight of the Poor

The rural poor around the world are in dire straits, according to the World Summit for Social Development, a recent UN conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark. It was reported at the summit that more than one billion people live in abject poverty and that over half of these go hungry every day. Contributing to the problem is unemployment. Estimates on the total number of people who are jobless or underemployed range as high as 800 million. All told, some 30 percent of the world's employable labor force is not productively employed. From 1.1 billion to 1.3 billion people live on an income of less than a dollar (U.S.) per day. Illiteracy, which surely exacerbates the problem, now afflicts some 905 million people. Their numbers are not diminishing quickly; 130 million children do not go to school although eligible, and their numbers are expected to swell to 144 million by the year 2000.

Paying the Price for Campus Drunkenness

Binge drinking on the part of college students is exacting a high price these days—even among those who do not binge, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. Summarizing the results of a study of 140 college campuses, published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, the magazine reported that 44 percent of the college students surveyed were binge drinkers—that is, sometime during the previous two weeks, the men had consumed

five drinks in a row and the women had consumed four. Nineteen percent were frequent bingers; they had binged at least three times during the same period. High percentages of the bingers suffered the effects one might expect—they had hangovers, engaged in unplanned sex, missed classes, suffered injuries, damaged property, and so forth. But other students suffered too. At schools with heavy bingeing, 9 out of 10 students had to deal with some of the problems caused by the drinking of others, such as unwanted sexual advances, property damage, interrupted sleep, and humiliating insults.

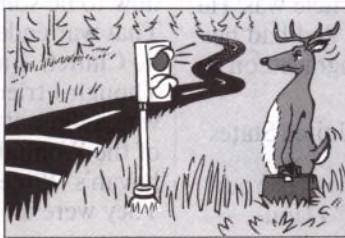
Poisoned Land in Britain

Recently, Britain's Ministry of Defence admitted that it owns a number of tracts of land that are so contaminated with weapon-related pollution that the properties can never be sold, reported *New Scientist* magazine. The Ministry owns 3,400 sites in Britain, covering 598,000 acres. Two thirds of the sites are used for training grounds and firing ranges. Because of cutbacks in the military budget, the Ministry is forced to sell some of this land but evidently does not know how many of the properties are too polluted for human habitation. At least eight of the sites are thought to be contaminated with radioactivity from luminous paint that was once used in military compasses and instrument panels. Many firing ranges are littered with dangerous unexploded munitions. And at least one tract of land is believed to be contaminated by World War I munitions containing mustard gas

that were improperly disposed of back in 1918.

Traffic Lights for Animals?

Animal crossings have long been a potential danger both for motorists and for animals. The French nature magazine *Terre Sauvage* reports that in view of the numerous accidents caused by animals crossing forest roads at night, technicians from the French National Office of Forests have come up with a surprising discovery. Animals stop for red lights! Experiments have



shown that the frequency of red light has the effect of temporarily paralyzing animals. Along forest roads in France, red reflectors that capture the light from the headlights of oncoming vehicles have now been installed, but instead of reflecting the light back toward the motorists, it is reflected into the forest. Before leaping onto the roadway, the animals now wait until the light has disappeared.

Romanian AIDS Orphans

In Romania, 93 percent of all cases of HIV infection leading to AIDS are among children under 12 years old, writes reporter Roxana Dascalu for Reuters news service. She notes that the highest concentration of HIV-positive children in Europe is in the port city of Constanta, where there have been 1,200 of such children, 420 of

whom have already died. Half of these children were reportedly infected through blood transfusions and nonsterile syringes before the old regime fell in 1989. Much of the AIDS-tainted blood was sold by impoverished sailors and went directly to hospitals and orphanages. In hospices where the HIV-infected children are cared for, the report notes that success "is not measured by survival rates but how the children spend their final days and how they face death." Says one hospice worker: "We do not let children die alone in their bed. A nurse takes them in her arms, sits down in this rocking chair and rocks them."

New Hope for Infertile Couples?

A new medical technique is helping infertile couples to overcome their sterility, reports the French news agency France-Presse. The technique, which was pioneered in Denmark, involves using an extremely fine glass needle to place a single male sperm upon an ovum within the woman. Although the technique is meticulous and requires great skill (a sperm measures just two thousandths of a millimeter; an ovum, one tenth of a millimeter), the method has proved successful. It has the added advantage of taking place inside the woman's body and using her husband's sperm rather than that of an anonymous donor—thus avoiding sensitive moral and religious questions. Because poor-quality sperm is the cause of sterility for a third of all infertile couples, a doctor using the technique feels that many couples may now have renewed hopes of starting a family.

FROM OUR READERS

Soldier Turned Christian My eyes were filled with tears when I read the article "Trained to Kill, Now I Offer Life." (September 8, 1994) A Palestinian calling a Jew "brother"—only in Jehovah's organization can such unity be found!

K. T. O., Malaysia

Your Chop Thank you for the interesting article "Your Chop—Your Signature." (May 22, 1994) My husband and I are studying the Bible with a Buddhist monk from Taiwan. He remarked on how accurate the article was! He then wrote his mother in Taiwan and had her send us a chop with our name engraved on it. We were thrilled!

K. J., United States

Boredom I've just read the series "Is Your Life Boring? You Can Change It!" (January 22, 1995), and I have to tell you how much it helped me. I had never thought of myself as being bored, but I was very dissatisfied with my life because of my monotonous routine. The article made me look at things in a whole new light.

S. V., United States

Canary Islands After reading the November 22, 1994, article "The Canary Islands—Benign Climate, Seductive Scenery," I want to express my appreciation for it and for similar articles in *Awake!* They heighten our awareness of and appreciation for our beautiful earth and Jehovah's varied creations. Thank you for taking us on these exciting "trips."

D. G., United States

Missionaries I very much appreciated your excellent series "Missionaries—Agents of Light or of Darkness?", especially part six, "Making True Disciples Today." (December 22, 1994) Our congregation has benefited a lot from working with a Gilead-trained missionary couple. Their wise counsel and zeal

have influenced me to make the full-time ministry my career.

J. K., Botswana

Resisting Nazism I was moved by the article "We Did Not Support Hitler's War." (October 22, 1994) It contained a picture of the "Solemn Declaration" of six Austrian bishops to support Nazism. One of those bishops was the very one who confirmed me in 1928 when I was a Jesuit student. I laugh at such "confirmation" coming from one who did not know how to be solid in the Christian faith himself! That war ended my affiliation with the Catholic Church. I also left my home country. Though I tried to resist the war in my own way, I did not have the strength of character of the Wohlfahrts. I still remember two of Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to bear arms. They were instantly eliminated. I admire such ones.

P. K., Chile

Young People Ask Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Improve My Wardrobe?" (January 22, 1995) It made me get up and organize my bulging closet. Every day I was having a problem finding something to wear, despite having tons of clothing. But thanks to your helpful tips, doing so is now much easier.

T. B., Hawaii

Thank you for the excellent thoughts contained in the articles "Fads—What Is Their Appeal?" and "Fads—Should I Jump on the Bandwagon?" (November 22 and December 8, 1994) As a Christian elder, I confess that it is not always easy to avoid forcing my standards on others. But your phrases like "considering the feelings and attitudes of others" and "avoiding styles of dress and behavior that others may view as extreme" do reach hearts.

D. Č., Croatia

The Ocean Pharmacy

By Awake! correspondent in Canada

FROM where are natural drugs derived? No doubt plants and herbs most readily come to mind. However, Dr. Michael Allen, writing in *The Medical Post*, describes drugs that are obtained from a most unusual source—the ocean.

Of course, this is not new; for centuries the Chinese have used fish extracts to treat disease. And cod-liver oil has been around for a long time, as many older ones can attest. Yet, little is known about the curative powers of marine life when compared with what is known about those of plants and herbs.

Nevertheless, what has been discovered is fascinating. For example, a chemical produced by the puffer fish can be used to treat asthma. The presence of nucleosides in sponges led to the development of vidarabine, an antiviral drug. A brown alga has yielded stypoldione, a cell-division inhibitor that may be used to treat cancer. And this is just a beginning.

The ultimate cure for illness, however, is not to be found in the ocean pharmacy. Rather, only God's Kingdom can fulfill the stirring prophecy: "No resident will say: 'I am sick.'"—Isaiah 33:24.



Where Hospitality Is Shown to Strangers

In September 1994, a man from Michigan, U.S.A., wrote to the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lebanon, Tennessee. He explained:

"Back on Sunday, June 6, 1993, I attended your public talk and Watchtower Study. It was the first time I had ever entered a Kingdom Hall, and I was really impressed by all the smiling faces and the sincere love I was shown. I arrived a few minutes late, and when admitted, I seated myself alone. A young couple in the same row lent me a Bible and eventually a copy of the Watchtower magazine for the study.

"After the meetings most of you talked with me, shook hands, and made my stay a very pleasant experience. When I finally left your

Kingdom Hall, I took three books with me—the Bible, *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*, and *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. That night I read most of the *Live Forever* book, and I learned a new name for my God, Jehovah. . . .

"I want all of you to know how much I appreciated your wonderful hospitality to a total stranger and especially want you to know that . . . I was baptized on July 9, 1994, at the tender age of 70."