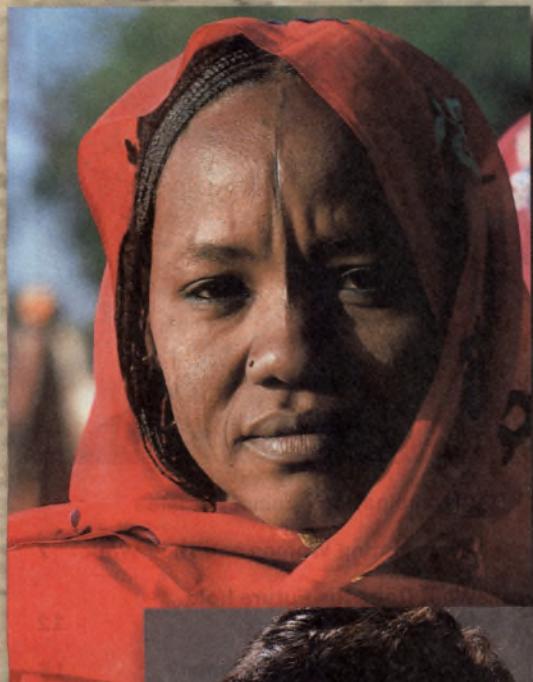


Awake!

April 8, 1998

Women



**What Does
the Future
Hold for Them?**



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WOMEN **What Does** **the Future** **Hold for** **Them? 3-14**

Women have often been victims of discrimination and violence. But there will soon be a dramatic change in their lives.



COVER PHOTOS: Upper left and lower right: Godo-Foto



Courtesy Dr. Tony Preen

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Discrimination Against Females

In West Africa a businessman buys a nine-year-old child. In Asia a newborn baby is buried alive in the desert sand. In an Oriental country, a toddler starves to death in an orphanage—unwanted and unattended. One common denominator linked these tragedies: All the victims were girls. Their being female meant that they were considered dispensable.

These are not isolated cases. In Africa thousands of girls and young women are sold into slavery, some for as little as \$15. And it is reported that each year hundreds of thousands of young girls are sold or forced into prostitution, mostly in Asia. Worse still, population figures for a number of countries indicate that as many as 100 million girls are "missing." This is evidently due to the abortion, infanticide, or sheer neglect of females.

For a long time—centuries—females have been viewed this way in many lands. And in some places they still are. Why? Because in such lands, a greater value is placed on boys. There, it is felt that a boy can continue the family line, inherit property, and take care of parents when they get old, as often these lands do not have any government pension for the aged. An Asian saying alleges that "raising a girl is like watering a plant in your neighbour's garden." When she grows up, she will leave to get married or may even be sold into prostitution and thus be of little or no help in caring for aged parents.



Smaller Share

In countries plagued by poverty, this attitude means less food, less health care, and less schooling for the girls of the family. Researchers in one Asian country found that 14 percent of the girls were malnourished, compared with only 5 percent of the boys. In some countries twice as many boys as girls are brought to health centers, explains a report from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). And over 40 percent of the young women in Africa as well as in southern and western Asia are illiterate. "There is a dreadful apartheid of gender going on in the developing world," lamented the late Audrey Hepburn, former UNICEF ambassador.

This "apartheid of gender" does not disappear when the girls reach adulthood. Poverty, violence, and unrelenting toil are all too often a woman's lot, precisely because she is a woman. The president of the World Bank explained: "Women do two-thirds of the world's work. . . . Yet they earn only one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one percent of the world's property. They are among the poorest of the world's poor."

According to a United Nations report, more than 70 percent of the 1.3 billion people of the world who live in dire poverty are women. "And it is getting worse," the report added. "The number of rural women living in absolute poverty rose by nearly 50% over

the past two decades. Increasingly, poverty has a woman's face."

Even more traumatic than the grinding poverty is the violence that wrecks the lives of so many women. An estimated one hundred million girls, mainly in Africa, have suffered genital mutilation. Rape is a widespread abuse that remains almost undocumented in some areas, although studies indicate that in some lands 1 woman in 6 is raped during her lifetime. Wars afflict men and women alike, but most of the refugees forced to flee from their homes are women and children.

Mothers and Providers

The burden of caring for the family often rests more heavily on the mother. She likely works longer hours and may well be the only provider. In some rural areas of Africa, nearly half the families are headed by women. In some localities in the Western world, a significant proportion of families are headed by the female.

Furthermore, especially in developing countries, women traditionally handle some of the most laborious jobs, such as fetching water and firewood. Deforestation and overgrazing have made these tasks much more difficult. In some drought-plagued countries, women spend three or more hours every day searching for firewood and four hours a day fetching water. Only when this drudgery is done can they begin to do the

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Girl Prostitutes—Who Is to Blame?

Every year an estimated one million children—mostly girls—are forced or sold into prostitution. Araya,* who comes from Southeast Asia, recalls what happened to some of her classmates. "Kulvadee became a prostitute when she was only 13. She was a nice girl, but her mother often got drunk and used to play poker, so she had no time to care for her daughter. Kulvadee's mother encouraged her to earn money by going out with men, and before long, she was working as a prostitute.

"Sivun, another pupil in my class, came from the north of the country. She was just 12 when her parents sent her to the capital to work as a prostitute. She had to work for two years to pay off the contract signed by her parents. Sivun

* Names have been changed.

and Kulvadee are not unusual—5 out of the 15 girls in my class became prostitutes."

There are millions of youngsters like Sivun and Kulvadee. "The sex industry is a huge market with its own momentum," laments Wassyla Tamzali, of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization). "Selling a 14-year-old girl has become so commonplace, it is banal." And once these girls are sold into sexual slavery, paying off their purchase price may prove almost impossible. Manju, whose father sold her when she was 12, still owed \$300 (U.S.) after seven years of prostitution. "There was nothing I could do—I was trapped," she explains.

Escaping AIDS may be nearly as difficult for the girls as escaping the pimps who enslave them. A survey conducted in



Each year about a million young girls are forced into prostitution

Southeast Asia indicated that 33 percent of these child prostitutes were infected with the AIDS virus. As long as the five-billion-dollar prostitution industry flourishes, it is likely that these girls will continue to suffer.

Who is to blame for this horrendous practice? Obviously, those who buy or sell girls into prostitution bear a huge part of the blame. But also to be condemned are the despicable men who use the girls to satisfy sexual lusts. For without such practitioners of immorality, the prostitution of these girls would not exist.

work that is expected of them in the home or on the land.

Obviously, both men and women suffer in countries where poverty, hunger, or strife is the daily fare. But women suffer dispropor-

tionately. Will this situation ever change? Are there any real prospects that one day women everywhere will be treated with respect and consideration? Is there anything women can do now to improve their lot?

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A Woman's Workday in Central Africa

The woman rises at six o'clock and prepares breakfast for the family and for herself, which they will eat at midmorning. After fetching water from the nearby river, she heads for her plot of land—it may be an hour's walk away.

Until about four o'clock in the afternoon, she tills, weeds, or waters the land, stopping only briefly to eat whatever food she has taken with her. The two remaining hours of daylight are used to cut firewood and to collect cassava or other veg-

etables for the family—all of which she carries home.

Usually, she arrives home as the sun is setting. Now there is work to be done preparing the supper, a task that may occupy two hours or more. Sundays are spent washing clothes in the local river and then ironing, once the clothes are dry.

Her husband rarely appreciates all this hard work or listens to her suggestions. He doesn't mind cutting down the trees or burning the forest underbrush so that she can pre-

pare the land for planting, but he does little more. Occasionally, he takes the children to the river to wash themselves, and he may do a little hunting and fishing. But much of his day is spent talking with other menfolk of the village.

If the husband can afford it, after a few years, he will bring home a new, younger wife, who will become the center of his affection. His first wife, however, will still be expected to keep working as always, until her health fails or she dies.

African women bear a heavy work load



Appreciating Women and Their Work

THREE thousand years ago, a man called Lemuel wrote a glowing description of a capable wife. This is recorded in the Bible in Proverbs chapter 31. The woman whose merits he extolled was certainly busy. She looked after her family, traded in the marketplace, bought and sold land, made clothes for her household, and worked in the fields.

This woman was not taken for granted. ‘Her children call her blessed, and her husband praises her.’ Such a wife is a treasure. The Bible says, “She is worth far more than rubies.”—Proverbs 31:10-28, *New International Version*.

Since Lemuel’s time, women’s work has become, if anything, more complicated. Their 20th-century role often requires them to be wives, mothers, nurses, teachers, breadwinners, and farmers—all at the same time. Countless women make heroic sacrifices just to ensure that their children have enough to eat. Do not all these women too deserve appreciation and praise?

Women as Breadwinners

Today more women than ever have to work outside the home to help support their family or are the sole support of their family. The book *Women and the World Economic Crisis* notes a report that stated: “Domestic work is not the only work women do.



There are relatively few women anywhere in the world who can claim to be ‘just a housewife.’ And women’s work is rarely glamorous. Although magazines or television soap operas may depict women as executives in plush offices, the reality is usually very different. The vast majority of the world’s women toil long hours for scant material reward.

Hundreds of millions of women work on the land, cultivating crops, tending small family plots, or caring for livestock. This labor—usually underpaid or unpaid—feeds half the world. “In Africa, 70 per cent of the food is grown by women, in Asia the figure is 50-60 per cent and in Latin America 30 per cent,” reports the book *Women and the Environment*.

When women do have paid employment, they usually earn less than male workers,



Many women in the Western world work in offices

simply because they are women. This discrimination is a particularly bitter pill to swallow for a mother who is the family's only breadwinner, a role that is becoming more and more common. A United Nations report estimates that between 30 and 50 percent of all households in Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America depend on a woman as their main provider. And even in the more developed lands, an increasing number of women have had to become the main provider.

Rural poverty throughout much of the developing world is accelerating this trend. A husband who finds it a constant struggle to feed his family may decide to move to a nearby city or even another country to obtain work. He leaves his wife behind to care for the family. If he is fortunate enough to find a job, he sends paychecks home. But despite his good intentions, this often does not continue. The family he has left behind may sink deeper into poverty, and their well-being now depends upon the mother.

This vicious circle, aptly described as the "feminization of poverty," throws an enormous burden on millions of women. "Households headed by women, estimat-

ed to be one-third of the total worldwide, are many times more likely to be poor than those headed by men, and the number of such households is increasing," explains the book *Women and Health*. But difficult as it is, putting food on the table is not the only challenge women face.

Mothers and Teachers

A mother also has to care for the emotional welfare of her children. She plays a vital role in helping a child learn about love and affection—lessons that may be just as important as satisfying his physical needs. In order to develop into a well-balanced adult, a child needs a warm, secure environment while growing up. Once again, a mother's role is crucial.

In the book *The Developing Child*, Helen Bee writes: "A warm parent cares about the child, expresses affection, frequently or regularly puts the child's needs first, shows enthusiasm for the child's activities, and responds sensitively and empathically to the child's feelings." Children who have re-

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ceived such warmth from a caring mother should certainly show her their appreciation.—Proverbs 23:22.

Through breast-feeding, many mothers provide a warm environment for their child right from birth. Especially in poor households a mother's own milk is an invaluable gift she can give to her newborn. (See box on pages 10-11.) Interestingly, the Bible tells us that the apostle Paul compared his warm affection for the Christians in Thessalonica to that of a "nursing mother" who "cherishes her own children."—1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8.

Besides feeding and cherishing her children, the mother is often their principal teacher. "Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother," counsels the Bible, alluding to the extensive part mothers play in educating their children. (Proverbs 1:8) It is mainly the mother or grandmother who patiently teaches the child to speak, to walk,

**Many women must work
In squalid conditions**



Mothers are teachers at home

and to do household chores and countless other things.

Compassion Sorely Needed

One of the greatest gifts that women can give their families is compassion. When a family member falls sick, the mother takes on the role of nurse, while still caring for all her other responsibilities. "Women do in fact provide most of the health care in the world," explains the book *Women and Health*.

A mother's compassion may even motivate her to eat less herself so that her children do not go without food. Researchers have found that some women view their food intake as sufficient even though they are malnourished. They are so accustomed to giving the larger share to their husbands and children that as long as they can still work, they consider themselves adequately fed.

Sometimes a woman's compassion expresses itself in her concern for the local environment. That environment matters to her, since she also suffers when drought, desertification, and deforestation impoverish the land. In one town in India, women were outraged when they learned that a lumber company was going to cut down about 2,500

Three Ways a Woman Can Improve Her Lot

Education. There are about 600 million illiterate women in the world—most of whom have never had the chance to go to school. You yourself may have had little schooling, but that doesn't mean that you cannot educate yourself. It isn't easy, but many women have succeeded. "Religious reasons can play an important role in motivating adults to acquire literacy skills," explains the book *Women and Literacy*. Your being able to read the Bible for yourself is a fine reward for learning to read. But there are many other advantages.

Not only does the literate mother have greater economic opportunities but she can also learn about good health practices. The Indian state of Kerala dramatically illustrates the benefits of literacy. Although this region is below average as far as income is concerned, 87 percent of its womenfolk are literate. Interestingly, in the same state, infant mortality is

five times lower than in the rest of India; on the average, women live 15 years longer; and all the girls attend school.

Naturally, the literate mother stimulates the learning process in her children—no mean feat. The education of girls is an excellent investment. Nothing else has such power to improve family health and to improve the lives of women themselves, notes the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) publication *The State of the World's Children 1991*. No doubt about it, reading and writing skills will help you to be a better mother and provider.*

Health. As a mother, you need to look after yourself, especially if you are pregnant or nursing. Can you improve your diet? Nearly two thirds of pregnant women in Africa as well as in southern and western Asia are clinically anemic. Apart from

* Jehovah's Witnesses organize free literacy classes as part of their extensive program of Bible education.

sapping your energy, anemia increases the risks associated with childbirth and makes a malarial attack more likely. Although meat or fish may be scarce or expensive, eggs and iron-rich fruits or vegetables might be available. Don't allow superstition to stop you from eating nutritious foods, and don't let local customs rob



trees in a nearby forest. The women needed those trees for food, fuel, and fodder. When the loggers arrived, the women were already in place, hands joined, protectively encircling the trees. 'You will have to cut off our heads if you want to cut down the trees,' the women told the loggers. The forest was saved.

"Give Her the Reward She Has Earned"

Whether in the role of breadwinner, mother, teacher, or wellspring of compassion, a woman is worthy of respect and recognition, as is her work. The wise man

Lemuel, who spoke so highly of a capable wife, valued both a woman's work and her counsel. In fact, the Bible explains that his message was largely derived from instruction his mother had given him. (Proverbs 31:1) Lemuel was convinced that a conscientious wife and mother should not be taken for granted. "Give her the reward she has earned," he wrote. "Her works bring her praise."—Proverbs 31:31, NIV.

However, when Lemuel recorded those views, they were not just a reflection of human thinking. They are recorded in the Bi-

you of your share of the family's food.*

Breast-feeding is good for you as well as for your child. Breast milk is cheaper, more hygienic, and more nourishing than any substitute. UNICEF calculates that a million child deaths each year could be avoided if mothers were to breast-feed babies for the first four to six months of their lives. Of course, if the mother has a contagious disease that is known to be passed on through breast milk, then a safe feeding alternative should be used.

Make sure that there is proper ventilation if you cook inside your home on an open fire. "Exposure to the smoke and toxic gases of cooking is probably the most serious occupational health hazard known today," cautions the book *Women and Health*.

* In some lands, superstition holds that women should not eat fish, eggs, or chicken during pregnancy, for fear of harming the unborn child. Sometimes custom requires the woman to eat what is left over, once the men and boys have finished eating.

Do not smoke tobacco, whatever the pressures. Pervasive cigarette advertising in the developing world is targeting women, trying to convince them that smoking is sophisticated. Nothing could be further from the truth. Smoking harms your children and can kill you. It is calculated that eventually a quarter of all smokers are killed by their tobacco addiction. Moreover, experts warn that the chances of a first-time cigarette smoker becoming addicted to tobacco are extremely high.

Hygiene. Your example and your advice regarding hygiene are crucial to the health of your family. The publication *Facts for Life* outlines the following basic steps for good hygiene:

- Wash your hands with soap and water after any contact with excrement and before handling food. Make sure your children wash their hands before eating.
- Use a latrine, and keep it clean and covered. If this is not possible, defecate as far

away from your house as possible, and bury the excrement immediately.—Compare Deuteronomy 23:12, 13.

- Endeavor to use clean water for your household. To this end, keep wells covered and use clean utensils for carrying water.

• If you have no access to safe drinking water, boil the water and then allow it to cool before drinking. Although unboiled water may look clean, it can still be contaminated.

• Remember that uncooked food is much more likely to transmit an infection. Foods that are to be eaten raw should be washed before eating and then consumed as soon as possible. Other foods should be cooked thoroughly, especially meat and poultry.

• Keep food clean and covered so that insects or animals cannot contaminate it.

• Burn or bury domestic waste.*

* See *Awake!* of April 8, 1995, pages 6-11, for more details.

ble, which is God's Word. "All Scripture is inspired of God." (2 Timothy 3:16) Those sentiments reflect Almighty God's view of women, since God inspired those passages in the Bible for our instruction.

Further, God's inspired Word states that husbands should be "assigning [their wives] honor." (1 Peter 3:7) And at Ephesians 5:33, the husband is told: "Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself." Indeed, Ephesians 5:25 says: "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and deliv-

ered up himself for it." Yes, Christ expressed such love for his followers that he was willing to die for them. What a fine, unselfish example he set for husbands! And the standards that Jesus taught and lived by reflected God's standards, which are recorded in the Bible for our benefit.

Yet, despite their hard work in so many areas, many women rarely get credit for what they do. How can they even now improve their lot in life? Also, is there any chance that attitudes toward them will change? What are the future prospects for women?

What Does the Future Hold for Women?

THE history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman." Thus read the Seneca Falls, New York, Declaration of Sentiments, penned in America 150 years ago as a protest against injustice toward women.

Progress has undoubtedly been made since then, but as the United Nations publication *The World's Women 1995* states, there is still a long way to go. "Too often, women and men live in different worlds," it reports, "worlds that differ in access to education and work opportunities, and in health, personal security and leisure time."

Increased awareness of this has led nations to pass laws to protect the rights of women. But laws cannot change hearts, where the roots of injustice and prejudice lie. For example, consider the plight of girl prostitutes. *Newsweek* said of this international disgrace: "Legislation aimed at stopping the sexual exploitation of children is well meaning but often ineffectual." Similarly, law itself does not prevent violence. "Evidence reveals violence against females to be a widespread global problem," states the *Human Development Report 1995*. "Most laws are inadequate for stopping such violence—unless present cultural and social values change."—Italics ours.

"Cultural and social values" are usually based on deep-seated tradition—a hard nut to crack. "Tradition makes men believe that women should be used rather than loved, worked rather than cared for," says a wom-

an from the Middle East. "As a result, a woman has no voice, no rights, and little chance to improve her situation."

Educating Husbands and Fathers

The Platform for Action proposed in Beijing, China, by a 1995 world conference on women declared that only "immediate and concerted action by all" can achieve a "peaceful, just and humane world" in which women will be respected.

Any action to make women's lives more 'peaceful, just, and humane' must begin at home, with husbands and fathers. In this regard, Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that Bible education is the key to success. They have seen that once men learn that God expects them to treat their wives and daughters with respect and consideration, they take it to heart and do it.

In Central Africa, Pedro, a married man with four children, is now attentive to the needs of his wife. He helps her look after the children, and he even serves the meal when guests eat with the family. Such a considerate attitude is most unusual in his country. What makes him appreciate his wife and cooperate with her?

"When I began to study the Bible, I learned two important principles regarding the role of the husband," Pedro explains. "They have had a big impact on the way I view my wife. The first, at 1 Peter 3:7, explains that a husband should give his wife honor as the "weaker vessel, the feminine one." The second, at Ephesians 5:28, 29, says

that a husband should treat his wife ‘as his own body.’ Since I have followed that advice, we have become much closer. So we men must attach greater value to God’s counsel than to local customs.”

Michael, from West Africa, admits that before he began studying the Bible with the Witnesses, he did not treat his wife properly. “I even used to hit her when I got angry,” he confesses. “But the Bible taught me that I should change my ways. I now try very hard to control my temper and to love my wife as my own body. And we are both much happier.” (Colossians 3:9, 10, 19) His wife, Comfort, concurs: “Now Michael treats me with more respect and affection than is the custom of most husbands in our community. We can talk about our problems and work together as a team.”

Pedro and Michael learned to respect and cherish their wives because they took to heart the instructions from God’s Word, which makes it clear that injustice to women deeply displeases our Creator.

God’s Concern for Women

God has always been concerned about women and their welfare. Although he told our first parents that because of their rebellion, imperfection would lead to women being ‘dominated,’ this was never God’s purpose. (Genesis 3:16) He had created Eve as “a complement” of Adam and as a companion for him. (Genesis 2:18) In the Mosaic Law, given to ancient Israel, Jehovah specifically condemned the mistreatment of widows and instructed the Israelites to treat them kindly and help them.—Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 14:28, 29; 24:17-22.

Jesus, in imitation of his heavenly Father, did not follow the widespread tradition of

Christian husbands follow Bible guidelines and respect and honor their wives

his day that denigrated women. He spoke kindly to women—even those who had a bad reputation. (Luke 7:44-50) Moreover, Jesus was pleased to help women who had health problems. (Luke 8:43-48) On one occasion, when he saw a widow mourning the recent death of her only son, he immediately went up to the funeral procession and resurrected the young man.—Luke 7:11-15.

Women were among Jesus’ early disciples and were the first to witness his resurrection. The Bible speaks highly of women such as Lydia, Dorcas, and Prisca as examples of hospitality, compassion, and courage. (Acts 9:36-41; 16:14, 15; Romans 16:3, 4) And early Christians were trained to show women respect. The apostle Paul told his fellow missionary Timothy to treat “older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness.”—1 Timothy 5:2.

Women Who Have Found Respect

If you are a Christian man, you will show that same respect toward women. You will never use tradition as an excuse for mistreating them. Respectful treatment of women, moreover, can give eloquent



testimony to your faith. (Matthew 5:16) Salima, a young woman from Africa, describes how she benefited from observing Christian principles in action.

"I grew up in an environment where women and girls were treated badly. My mother worked 16 hours a day, but all she got were complaints if something was left undone. Worse still, my father would hit her when he drank too much. Other women in our area suffered likewise. But I knew such treatment was wrong—that it was filling our lives with frustration and unhappiness. Nevertheless, there seemed to be no way to change this state of affairs."

"When I was a teenager, however, I began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. I was very impressed when I read the words of the apostle Peter, who said that women should be treated with honor. But I thought, 'It's most unlikely that people would apply this counsel, especially in view of our local tradition.'

"However, when I went to the Kingdom Hall, where the Witnesses held their meetings, men as well as women treated me kindly. Even more surprising, the husbands among them really cared for their wives. As I got to know the people there better, I realized that this was something that all the Witnesses were expected to do. Although some of the men had come from backgrounds like mine, they were now treating women with respect. I wanted to belong to this large family."

A Permanent Solution

The respect that Salima observed was not accidental. It was the result of a teaching program, based on God's Word, that helps people to value one another as God does. This is an indication of what can be done even now and of what will be done every-

where when God's Kingdom rules over all the earth. (Daniel 2:44; Matthew 6:10) This heavenly government will eliminate all injustice. The Bible assures us: "When there are judgments from you [Jehovah] for the earth, righteousness is what the inhabitants of the productive land will certainly learn."—Isaiah 26:9.

Even now, education in righteousness is changing the way millions of people think. When all living humans are subject to God's Kingdom, this education will continue earth wide and will end men's oppressive treatment of women, a consequence of Adam's sin. Jesus Christ, God's appointed King, will not allow injustice toward women to mar his rule. Describing that rule of Christ, the Bible says: "He will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. He will feel sorry for the lowly one and the poor one, and the souls of the poor ones he will save. From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul."—Psalm 72:12-14.

This series of articles has concentrated on the problems of women. However, it is recognized that many men have also been treated badly. Throughout history powerful and evil men have committed unspeakable horrors against males as well as females. And some women have done the same. For instance, the Bible mentions the shedding of innocent blood by wicked women such as Jezebel, Athaliah, and Herodias.—1 Kings 18:4, 13; 2 Chronicles 22:10-12; Matthew 14:1-11.

Thus, all mankind needs God's new world, under his Kingdom rule. Soon, when that day dawns, neither women nor men will ever again be discriminated against or treated badly. Instead, each day will be one of "exquisite delight" for everybody.—Psalm 37:11.

The Grave of Christ in Japan?

IN 1935, Koma Takeuchi, a Shinto priest, announced that he had discovered the grave of Jesus Christ on a hill in the village of Shingo, in northern Japan. He claimed that documents found in a family storehouse showed that Jesus had lived for a time in Shingo and died there. Searching for Jesus' burial place, he came upon a mound and concluded that it was the grave.

Then, a Hebrew document reportedly found at the Takeuchi family's shrine asserted that Jesus had visited Japan twice and had even studied mysticism with Japanese priests. The account alleges that Jesus, having been betrayed, fled from Judea to the Siberian wilderness, then traveled to Japan, married a local girl named Miyuko, fathered three daughters, and died at the age of 106. According to the tale, the man who was put to death in Jerusalem was not Jesus but his younger brother Isukiri.

What might the motivation be for such a story? According to the newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun*, the link between Jesus and Shingo "suggests eco-

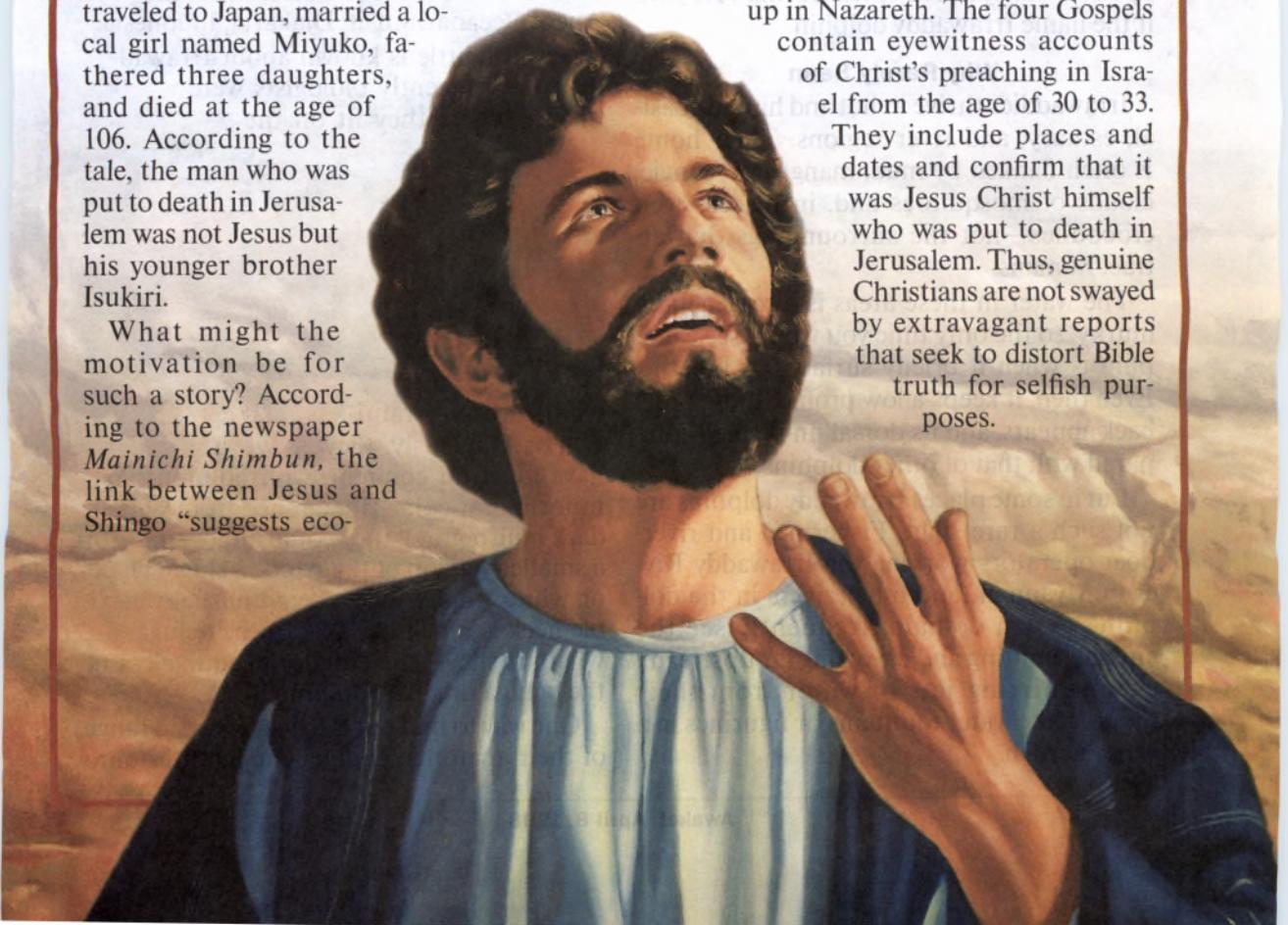
nomic possibilities to which the local authorities are far from blind." Thus, sightseeing is encouraged. Probing too deeply is not. "Supposing the grave was dug up and they found nothing but old cow bones," said one observer. "Imagine how disappointed everyone would be."

So each year on May 3, visitors dutifully assemble before the alleged grave of Jesus to celebrate the "Christ Festival." A Shinto priest presides over the occasion and exorcises evil spirits before the dancing begins.

Is there any truth to this tale? No. The Bible tells us that by the age of 30, Jesus was known, not as a world traveler, but

as a carpenter's son who had grown up in Nazareth. The four Gospels contain eyewitness accounts of Christ's preaching in Israel from the age of 30 to 33.

They include places and dates and confirm that it was Jesus Christ himself who was put to death in Jerusalem. Thus, genuine Christians are not swayed by extravagant reports that seek to distort Bible truth for selfish purposes.



The Dolphin at Our Doorstep

IT LOVES warm, shallow tropical waters, whether salty or fresh, murky or clear. Its range covers an area from India's Bay of Bengal through the Malay Archipelago to northern Australia.

Yet, few people—especially Australians, whose northern doorstep may hold the largest concentrations of this animal in the world—have ever seen or even heard of the Irrawaddy dolphin. Surprising? Yes and no.

In the 19th century, zoologist John Anderson saw schools of this bluish-gray dolphin, with its round, beakless head, in the Irrawaddy River in Myanmar (then Burma). He gave it the name Irrawaddy dolphin.

Why Rarely Seen

Irrawaddies thrive in hot and humid coastal, estuary, and river regions. Their home is often flanked by mud, mangroves, jungle, clouds of mosquitoes and, in places, even crocodiles—not the surroundings that attract humans.

The water in these areas is also generally murky, so the only time you would see a dolphin is when it briefly surfaces to breathe. Even then, it keeps a low profile. Little of its back appears, and its dorsal fin is small compared with that of other dolphins.

But in some places Irrawaddy dolphins are not such a rare sight. Fishermen and river-boat operators working the Irrawaddy River in Myanmar, and other rivers in the dolphin's Asian domain, frequently see the animals hunting and cavorting far upstream, even squirting jets of water from their mouths like water fountains or figurines in a water garden.

In Australian waters, the Irrawaddies range along the west coast, around the top of the continent, and down the east coast. They are usually seen in groups numbering fewer than 6 but occasionally up to 15. Unlike their Asian kin, the down-under clan have never been known to mimic water fountains.

Is It a Dolphin?

Irrawaddies live near land and are slow swimmers compared with their more sprightly blue-water cousins. Yet, scientists have had difficulty studying them. Their uninviting domain is a key factor. However, live Irrawaddies have been studied in the Jaya Ancol Oceanarium, in Djakarta, Indonesia.

Because little is known about Irrawaddies, until recently biologists were unsure where they fit on the



whale-dolphin family tree. Obviously, they have much in common with dolphins. Yet, in form, not color (they range from pale to dark bluish-gray), they could almost pass for a smaller version of the Arctic beluga whale, or white whale. Even their unusually flexible neck is much like that of the beluga. So, what are they—the equatorial equivalent of the beluga or a true dolphin?

One way to find out is to load a broad range of their anatomic and genetic features onto



the measuring scales, so to speak, and see which way the scales tilt. The weight of evidence, it turns out, falls on the dolphin side of the scales.

The Little We Do Know

At birth, Irrawaddies are some three feet long and weigh about 26 pounds.

Males grow to about nine feet, and females, just a little less. They may live 28 years.

Samples taken from the stomach of dead Irrawaddies reveal a diet of squid, shrimps, prawns, and fish—especially bottom-dwelling fish. Some scientists speculate that the Asian dolphins' curious practice of squirting water from their mouth may help them to hunt fish in murky waters.

Like other dolphins, Irrawaddies emit distinct clicks. Dr. Peter Arnold, of the Museum of Tropical Queensland, told *Awake!* that "according to research done at the Jaya Ancol Oceanarium, the Irrawaddy dolphin may

Photos: Courtesy Dr. Tony Preen

well use its clicks to echo-locate prey as other dolphins do."

Does It Have a Future?

Scientists have no idea how many Irrawaddies there are in the world. But there is growing concern that they are under threat. In some parts of Southeast Asia, their numbers are in decline, and in other parts, they can no longer be found at all.

This is often due to logging operations and the associated pollution and silting of rivers. In Australia, much of the Irrawaddy's territory remains relatively uninhabited by humans. But in the more attractive areas on the east coast, urbanization and tourism have taken their toll. Some Irrawaddies drown in fishing nets, and some, in shark nets set near beaches to protect swimmers. Overfishing of the Irrawaddies' food supply also affects their numbers.

The greatest potential threat, though, may be the swelling tide of pollutants that wash into rivers and estuaries. Among the worst are synthetic organic compounds, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), that tend to persist in the environment. PCBs have been used in electronic components, paints, lubricants, coatings for wood and metal, and other products.

On the positive side, the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, in their document *The Action Plan for Australian Cetaceans*, states: "Much of [the Irrawaddy dolphin's] range in Queensland is covered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; the possibilities for management in Queensland waters are therefore good."

As another step toward better management, the agency recommends that along with the humpback whale, the southern right whale, and the bottle-nosed dolphin, the Irrawaddy be made a primary species in public awareness programs. That will be good for the Irrawaddy dolphin—and for us.

Are Demons Real?

DURING the 17th and 18th centuries, a frenzied campaign of persecution against witches swept across most of Europe. Many alleged witches underwent terrible torture. Some who were falsely charged confessed to witchcraft merely to put an end to the torment. Untold numbers were executed on the basis of rumors or suspicion.

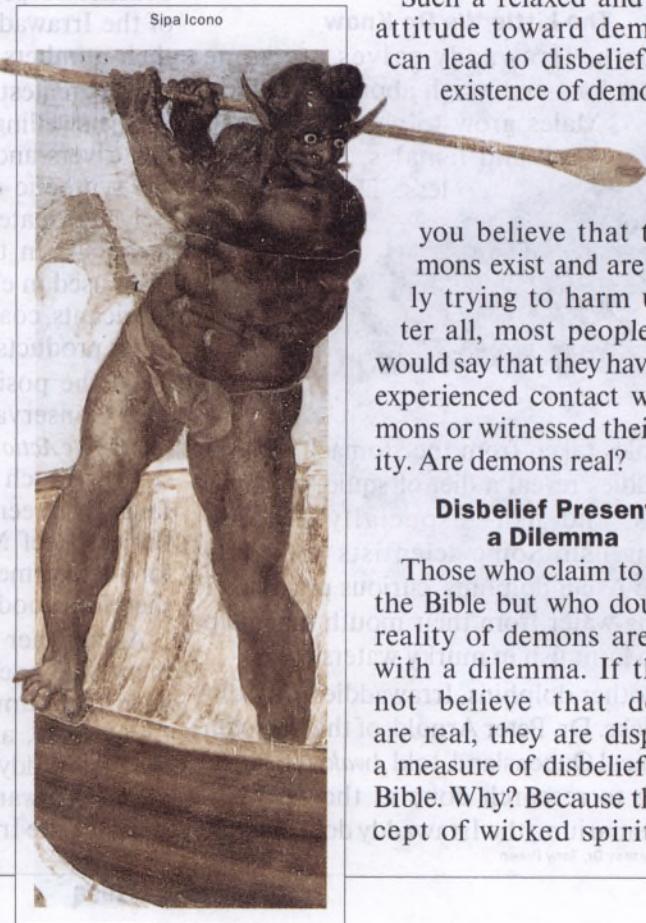
Although ostensibly based on the Scriptures, these actions against witchcraft, a form of demonism, were definitely fanatical. Christians have not been charged with the obligation to torture or execute witches or any other practitioners of spiritism. (Romans 12:19) What is the prevailing attitude today?

A Relaxed Attitude

Today most people in Christendom do not take such spiritistic practices seriously. Out of curiosity, some may dabble in astrology, magic, divination, and witchcraft, but they do not view these occult practices as demonism. At times, entertainers, sports personalities, and politicians openly admit to their involvement with

the occult. Some books and movies portray witches and sorcerers as "attractive, slightly unusual persons whose supernatural activities do harm to no one," says one encyclopedia. Material designed to entertain and educate children may promote occult themes.

Such a relaxed and casual attitude toward demonism can lead to disbelief in the existence of demons. Do



you believe that the demons exist and are actively trying to harm us? After all, most people today would say that they have never experienced contact with demons or witnessed their activity. Are demons real?

Disbelief Presents a Dilemma

Those who claim to accept the Bible but who doubt the reality of demons are faced with a dilemma. If they do not believe that demons are real, they are displaying a measure of disbelief in the Bible. Why? Because the concept of wicked spirit crea-

tures with superhuman powers is taught in God's Word, the Bible.

Its first book, Genesis, relates how an intelligent being used a serpent to deceive Eve and lead her into rebelling against God. (Genesis 3:1-5) The last book of the Bible, Revelation, identifies this wicked trickster, "the original serpent," as "the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth." (Revelation 12:9) Satan succeeded in enticing other angels into rebellion. (Jude 6) In the Bible these fallen angels are called demons. They operate in the vicinity of the earth and are very angry with God and with those who serve him. —Revelation 12:12.

Satan and the demons have the power to influence, harm, and communicate with humans. (Luke 8:27-33) They have studied human nature for thousands of years. They know how to play on human weaknesses. The Bible reports cases where they possessed, or took full control of, men, women, and children. (Matthew 15:22; Mark 5:2) They can cause disease or physical impairments like blindness. (Job 2:6, 7; Matthew 9:32, 33; 12:22; 17:14-18) They can also blind people's minds. (2 Corinthians 4:4) The demons are continually active, as is their leader, Satan, who is like "a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." (1 Peter 5:8) The Bible contains many accounts of the existence of demons. If you believe in the Bible, then you accept the reality of invisible wicked creatures.

Evil Deceivers

But how could powerful demons exist today without causing a constant state of terror in the world? Why is it that their presence and actions are not more obvious? The Bible answers: "Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14) The Devil is a deceiver. Demon activity is often disguised as

something harmless or even good. Hence, it is hard to recognize.

Satan and his demons continue to afflict people in various ways, as they did in Bible times. Some who are now genuine Christians were at one time involved with the occult; they can testify to the horrors of demon attacks. Today, perhaps on a greater scale than ever before, demons are using their superhuman powers to entice people into outright occult practices. Their power is not to be underestimated. However, they accomplish more by *luring* people away from God than by terrorizing them. Satan and the demons are "misleading the entire inhabited earth," says the Bible. (Revelation 12:9) They are intent on undermining spirituality in subtle, insidious ways.

The demons are real. How else could the insatiable thirst for blood and destruction so evident among people today be explained? Humans naturally want to live in peace and happiness. But the demons promote badness and have the power to influence and corrupt the human mind.

Yet, Jehovah is the almighty God—more powerful than the demons. He offers his strength and protection against "the machinations of the Devil." (Ephesians 6:11-18) We need not have a morbid fear of the demons, for God promises: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4:7.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Street Gangs
—A Growing World Plague**

**The Fascinating World
of Miniature Books**

Our Fight for the Right to Preach

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Clues Across

1. Paul advised Timothy to do this regarding his ministry [2 words] (2 Timothy 4:5)
6. One of two court officials who conspired against King Ahasuerus (Esther 2:21)
9. What Nimrod distinguished himself as (Genesis 10:9)
12. Concur (Acts 15:15)
13. To impart knowledge (Job 38:3)
14. Abraham's first son by his wife Keturah (Genesis 25:1, 2)
15. When a woman touched this garment worn by Jesus, she was healed (Mark 5:25-29)
16. Less difficult (Luke 18:25)
18. Legal guarantee used by God to give an added assurance to his promise (Hebrews 6:17)
20. This part of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image was composed of both iron and clay (Daniel 2:42)
23. Plant used by the Israelites to splash blood upon the doorposts so that God's angel would spare their firstborn (Exodus 12:22)
25. Animal used mainly in warfare in ancient times (Exodus 15:21)
26. An ambidextrous Benjaminite who joined David at Ziklag (1 Chronicles 12:1, 2, 5)
27. An ancestor of Jesus Christ (Luke 3:25)
28. Many times (Luke 13:34)
29. A son of the Edomite sheikh Dishon (Genesis 36:26)
32. Fit for plowing (Hosea 10:12)
34. An attribute of Jehovah (Isaiah 25:1)

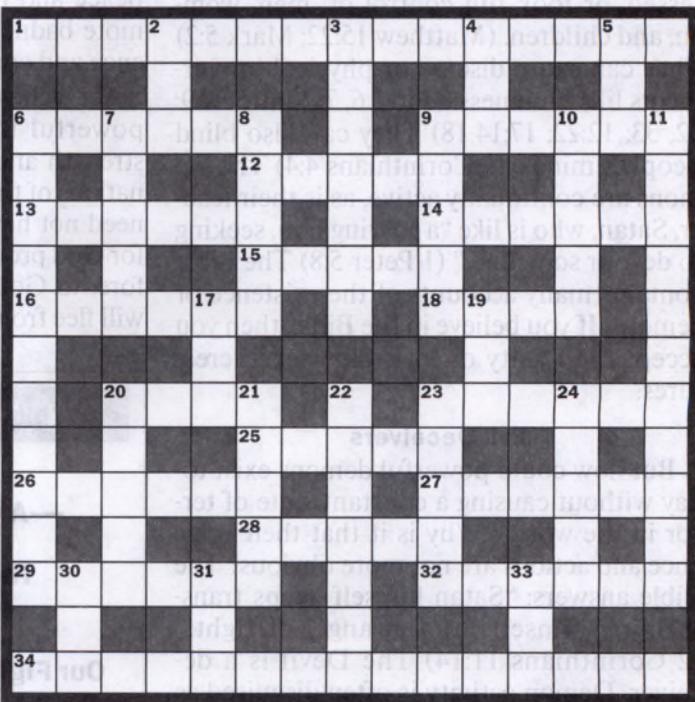
Clues Down

2. Something Jehovah cannot do (Hebrews 6:18)
3. The torrent valley where Jehovah instructed Elijah to hide and where Elijah was fed by the ravens (1 Kings 17:3)
4. The place in Edom where King Hadar had his royal residence (Genesis 36:39)

5. Perceive (Mark 8:23)
6. Those whom Jehovah assigned to carry the ark of the covenant [3 words] (Deuteronomy 10:8)
7. Paul spoke of him as "the chosen one in the Lord" (Romans 16:13)
8. Shechem's father, who was killed along with his son after the latter had violated Dinah (Genesis 34:26)
9. One of the mighty men of David's military forces (2 Samuel 23:35)
10. Abraham's father (Joshua 24:2)
11. What God required to be paid to compensate for the 273 firstborn of other tribes that were in excess of the Levites [2 words] (Numbers 3:46, 47)
17. An Israelite slave would be set free if this was ruined by his master (Exodus 21:26)
19. Every (Genesis 30:32)

20. What Jesus said would set one free (John 8:32)
21. A city of Issachar (Joshua 19:19)
22. Because of mutual interests as well as equality of rank and position, King Hiram called Solomon this (1 Kings 9:13)
23. A shrub, valued for its fragrance and as a cosmetic, that is mentioned only in The Song of Solomon (Song of Solomon 1:14)
24. In fulfillment of Joshua's curse, one of those who lost his life when his father rebuilt Jericho (1 Kings 16:34)
30. It made Noah's ark waterproof (Genesis 6:14)
31. Skill (Titus 1:9)
33. A place mentioned by Jehovah in setting out the eastern boundary of Israel (Numbers 34:11)

Crossword Solutions Page 27



Finding Comfort in “the Valley of Deep Shadow”

As told by Barbara Schweizer

Sometimes, when things have been going well, my life has been like pleasant “grassy pastures.” But I have also known what it is like to traverse a “valley of deep shadow.” I am convinced, however, that because Jehovah is our Shepherd, we can cope with whatever circumstances may arise.—Psalm 23:1-4.

IN 1993, when my husband and I were both nearly 70, we decided to embark on a new adventure—serving where the need for Bible teachers was greater in Ecuador. Although American by birth, we spoke Spanish and had no financial obligations. Since we knew that the ‘fishing for men’ was good in Ecuador, we planned to put down our nets in those productive waters.—Matthew 4:19.

After a few exciting days at the Ecuador branch office of the Watch Tower Society, we went to the bus station in Guayaquil, eager to travel to Machala—one of the cities where there was a particular need. While waiting for the bus, however, my husband, Fred, suddenly did not feel well, so we decided to delay our journey. I went to a phone booth to make arrangements to return to the branch while Fred sat down with our luggage. When I returned a few minutes later, my husband had disappeared!

I never saw Fred alive again. Right there in the bus station, during my brief absence, he had suffered massive heart failure. As I frantically looked for him, a bus station official came up and told me that Fred had been taken to the hospital. When I got to the hospital, I learned that he had already died.



Suddenly, I found myself alone in a strange country, with no home and no husband to lean on. I say “lean on” because Fred had always taken the lead and organized things for both of us. I don’t have a strong personality and was happy for him to do that. But now I had to make the decisions, organize my life and, at the same time, overcome my grief. It was a devastating feeling—as if I had been plunged into a “valley of deep shadow.” Would I ever learn to cope on my own?

Learning the Truth and Simplifying Our Lives

Both Fred and I had already been married and divorced when we first met each other. A good friendship blossomed into a close relationship, and we decided to get married. We were nominal churchgoers in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. But religion was not very important in our lives until Jamie, a delightful young pioneer (full-time evangelizer), called at our door. She was so pleasant that I accepted her offer to study the Bible with me.

As Fred also showed interest, Jamie’s parents took over the study, and a year later, in 1968, both of us were baptized. From the start, we were keen to put the interests of

God's Kingdom first in our lives. (Matthew 6:33) The couple who studied with us, Lorne and Rudi Knust, certainly set the example in this regard. Not long after our baptism, they moved to a town on the East Coast of the United States to serve where the need was greater. This sowed a seed in our hearts.

We had another reason for thinking about a move. Fred was manager of a large department store. His work was very absorbing, and he realized that a move elsewhere would enable him to simplify his life and give more attention to the truth and to our two children. I also had a daughter from my first marriage, who was now married, and both she and her husband had also accepted the truth, so our decision to leave Seattle was difficult. Still, they understood our motives and supported our decision.

Thus it was that in 1973 we moved to Spain, a country where, at that time, there was an enormous need for preachers of the good news and brothers to take the lead. Fred had calculated that if we lived frugally, our savings would be sufficient to pay our expenses in Spain, and we could devote most of our time to the ministry. And that is what we did. Before long, Fred was serving as an elder, and by 1983 we were both pioneers.

For 20 years we served in Spain, learning to speak the language and enjoying many fine experiences. Often Fred and I preached together and studied with married couples, several of whom are now baptized Witnesses. After some years in Spain, our two younger children, Heidi and Mike, also took up the pioneer service. Although we had little materially, this was the happiest time of my life. Our lives were simple. We could spend a lot of time together as a family, and like the widow's oil in the Bible account, our carefully administered savings never ran out.
—1 Kings 17:14-16.

Changing Countries Once Again

By 1992 we once again began thinking about a move. Our children had grown up, and the need in Spain was less than before. We knew a missionary who had served in Ecuador, and he told us about the pressing need for pioneers and elders in that country. Were we too old to think about starting again in a new country? We did not think so, since both of us had good health and loved the preaching work. So we got in touch with the Ecuador branch and began to make our plans. In fact, my daughter Heidi and her husband, Juan Manuel, who were serving in the north of Spain, were also keen to join us.

Finally, by February 1993, we had arranged all our affairs and had arrived in our new country. We were both thrilled with the prospect of pioneering in Ecuador, where so many people were eager to study the Bible. After a warm welcome at the branch, we planned to visit several cities that were recommended as places where there was a particular need. But then my husband died.

In "the Valley of Deep Shadow"

At first I felt shock, then sheer disbelief. Fred had hardly ever been ill before. What should I do? Where should I go? I just could not think.

During those worst moments of my life, I was blessed with the support of compassionate spiritual brothers and sisters, most of whom hardly even knew me. The brothers at the branch were very kind and took care of everything, including the funeral arrangements. I particularly remember the love shown to me by Brother and Sister Bonno. They made sure that I was never on my own, and Edith Bonno even slept at the foot of my bed for several nights so that I would not feel alone. In fact, the whole Bethel family showed such love and consideration that it was as if they had wrapped me up in a warm, protective blanket of love.