

# Awake!

JUNE 2010

**Relief  
From Stress  
How?**



# Awake!

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Stress has been called the number one threat to our health and well-being. Learn what stress does to us and how we can keep it under control.

# STRESS

## A SERIOUS HEALTH THREAT

"I work long, unregulated hours day and night. I am often involved in an operation at one hospital and then have only a few minutes to get through heavy traffic to the next one."

—Dr. Peter Stuart, South Africa.

**Y**OU probably have some idea of how Dr. Stuart feels, even if completely different situations are responsible for the stress you face. Whatever causes you stress—whether driving in heavy traffic, strained relationships at home or at work, or something else—stress is not new to humans.

More than 30 centuries ago, a battle-hardened soldier frankly admitted: "Trembling itself enters into me, and shuddering covers me." (Psalm 55:5) This man knew stress. As a shepherd boy, he had faced up to a lion, a bear, and an intimidating warrior intent on killing him.—1 Samuel 17:4-10, 23, 24, 34-36, 41-51.

True, in itself stress is not bad. It can gear us up to meet a challenge. In life-threatening situations, stress has enabled people to perform feats they would never have believed they were capable of. When you had an important assignment, stress may have generated a surge of adrenaline that enabled you to carry out the task on time.\*

Problems result, however, when stress becomes unrelenting and our bodies fail to relax. "Stress," states one researcher, "is the number one threat to our health and well-being." If you feel you are at a snapping point or if you want to avoid getting to that state, you might ask, "Is there anything I can do to relieve stress?"

Happily, there is! The relief that has helped many to cope is available to all. It comes from a source that you might not have expected—God's Word, the Bible. Although not a medical self-help book, the Bible provides practical wisdom that can help us. It explains why there is so much stress now and identifies factors that cause or contribute to stress. It also contains practical suggestions that can help us reduce and manage stress.

\* Adrenaline is a hormone released by your adrenal glands that helps you cope with emergencies.



# STRESS

## WHAT IT DOES TO US

What happens when you dash for a bus or a train? You can no doubt feel how your body responds by increasing your blood pressure and making your heart beat faster. Even if you miss your ride, your heart rate and breathing generally return to normal.

If YOU are dealing with a long-term stressful situation, though, it may be different. Anxiety, muscle tension, increased blood pressure, and disturbed digestion may take longer to return to normal. More and more people find that the tension never goes away. For instance, many feel trapped in a dead-end job. How does stress affect your body and your health?

### Your Body's Reaction to Stress

Dr. Arien van der Merwe, an expert on the subject, explains how your body reacts to stress. It instantly kicks into action, and a complex "stress cascade of neurochemicals and hormones rushes through your entire body, preparing every organ and system for the Red Alert stress response."

You are immediately ready to take out-of-the-ordinary action. All your senses—includ-

ing sight, hearing, and touch—are involved. Your brain quickly reacts, and your adrenal glands instantly release powerful hormones, revving up your muscles as well as your heart, lungs, and other organs for whatever might be needed to handle the stressful situation.

Thus in an emergency your body's stress response may save your life, such as when it makes you leap out of the way of an oncoming car. It is a completely different matter, however, when stress is unrelenting.

### When Stress Becomes an Enemy

What if your body is constantly revved up? Your muscles remain tense, your pulse rate and blood pressure stay high, and elevated levels of cholesterol, fats, sugars, hormones, and other chemicals linger in the blood. Prolonged elevated levels of such chemicals—meant for short, intense, and infrequent

**Awake!**<sup>®</sup>

**THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED** for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

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Headaches

Neck pain

Tooth grinding

Back pain

Heart disease

Ulcers

Muscle spasm

BAD EFFECTS  
OF PROLONGED  
STRESS ON THE  
BODY

bursts of activity—eventually damage important body organs. With what consequences?

You may begin experiencing backaches, headaches, muscle spasms of the neck, and muscle tension. According to doctors, those symptoms are often related to chronic stress. Ongoing stress can hamper creativity and productivity, as well as erode enthusiasm and damage interpersonal relationships. It can also lead to irritable bowel syndrome,

## "WONDERFULLY MADE" BY A WISE, LOVING CREATOR

Contrary to popular theory, our body's reaction to stress is not a residue of prehistoric man's response to the threat of mammoths and saber-toothed tigers. Rather, our intricate physiological systems have been skillfully shaped by a masterful Creator. For example, the blood's complex clotting mechanism—its sophisticated capacity to fight infection and heal wounds—and the body's elaborate stress response all bear testimony to a wise and loving Designer.

Those bodily systems confirm that "in a fear-inspiring way [we are] wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:13-16) God's loving spiritual and physical provisions, as well as the marvelous way he created humans to enjoy life, ensure that nothing will cause pain, mourning, or death in the coming earthly Paradise.

—Revelation 21:3-5.

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

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diarrhea, and esophageal spasms. The consequences of chronic stress may even be more serious. Stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, cardiovascular problems, and diabetes may be caused by or made worse by prolonged stress.

"Because of the secretion of cortisol in long-term stress," writes Van der Merwe, "fat tends to accumulate around the abdomen and back." Skin disorders, such as eczema and psoriasis, are associated with—or aggravated by—stress. Severe stress has also been linked to depression, increased aggression, and burnout. Memory and concentration too can be permanently impaired by constant stress. An immune system seriously compromised by long-term stress can make a person vulnerable to anything from the common cold to cancer and autoimmune diseases.

Stress has a huge impact on all aspects of our well-being—mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual—so we need to know how to control it. Yet, we do not want to eliminate the body's stress response altogether. Why not?

We might liken stress to a spirited horse. It can give us an enjoyable and exhilarating ride. However, if it goes wildly out of control, it can endanger our life. Similarly, stress in manageable doses can make life enjoyable and exhilarating, providing us with the stimulus to be creative, productive, enthusiastic, and healthy.

How, though, can we keep stress at manageable levels so that we can get the most out of our life? The following article discusses effective ways to control stress and our response to it.

## KEEPING STRESS UNDER CONTROL

**A**S YOU are well aware, it is easier to put out a small fire than to extinguish a raging inferno. Similarly, small doses of stress are easier to control than large amounts of stress that have built up over a period of time. One medical doctor says that "it is crucial that we make the daily practice of stress management a priority in our busy lives."<sup>\*</sup>

The aim of making a *daily practice of stress management* is twofold. First, it helps us to re-

duce the stressful triggers in life that can be reduced. And second, it helps us to control our response to the stresses that are unavoidable.

Does the Bible provide guidance that can help us to deal with stress?

### Bible Truths Are Vital

By absorbing truths from within the pages of the Bible, we can gain access to the refreshing, sustaining thoughts of our Creator. God's Word is a source of valuable guidance. Indeed, it is a vast reservoir of stress-

\* When you experience stress that is prolonged or severe enough to cause health problems, it may be advisable to consult a health-care professional for medical treatment.

**Making time to communicate is vital for reducing stress**



relieving spiritual truths! These can help us to avoid ‘suffering shock or being terrified’ and to cope successfully with daily stresses.—Joshua 1:7-9.

The Bible helps us to reduce stress in a wonderful way by reassuring us that our heavenly Father, Jehovah, “is very tender in affection and merciful.” (James 5:11) “The one thing that has helped me a lot,” explains Patricia, who worked as a professor at a university in California, “is thinking about God’s will and the wonderful things he is accomplishing.”

### Cultivating godly qualities helps reduce stress

Think of how the tender words and dealings of Jesus Christ long ago refreshed his oppressed and stressed listeners. “Come to me, all of you who are overworked and overburdened,” he appealed, “and I will give you rest [i.e., spiritual refreshment].”—Matthew 11:28-30, *The New Testament—An Understandable Version*; brackets theirs.

True to his words, Jesus was not harsh. Rather, he showed consideration for the emotional and physical needs of his disciples, even making arrangements for them to get rest from their busy routine of preaching. (Mark 6:30-32) We can be confident that Jesus, now a heavenly King, has tender empathy for us when we experience debilitating stress. He mercifully comes to our aid by providing “help at the right time.”—Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:16.

### The Role of Good Communication

Good communication is one of the most essential tools for effective stress management. The Bible teaches: “There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment.” (Proverbs 15:22) Thus, many find that talking to their marriage mate, a friend, or a colleague does much to reduce stress.

A most important, useful, and accessible form of “confidential talk” is prayer to God. Using this provision regularly can help you to avoid being “anxious over anything.” Many have found that by depending on prayer, they have been helped to realize “the peace of God that excels all thought.” In keeping with the Bible’s promise, ‘the hearts and mental powers’ of such ones have been protected.—Philippians 4:6, 7; Proverbs 14:30.

One reference work on stress says that “people with social support networks tend to cope better with stress and have better mental health than those who try to do everything by themselves.” There is no better support group than that enjoyed by those who worship the true God, Jehovah. In keeping with Bible admonition, they regularly meet together and encourage one another. (Hebrews 10:

24, 25) “Sometimes I work long hours, and I’m under a lot of stress,” said one such meeting attender. “Yet, when I go to the meeting, I find that by the final prayer, the stress is gone and I feel refreshed.”

Not to be overlooked is the value of a sense of humor in dealing with stress. Ecclesiastes 3:4 states that there is “a time to weep and a time to laugh.” Laughing is both refreshing and healthful because, as one doctor explains, “the body produces endorphins and suppresses the production of adrenaline when we laugh.” One wife noted: “My husband comes up with something funny in the most stressful situations, and that really helps.”

### **Qualities That Reduce Stress**

The Bible encourages qualities that reduce stress. These include “love, joy, peace, long-



suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, [and] self-control," which are called "the fruitage of [God's] spirit." Moreover, the Bible urges us to avoid "malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech." Then it adds: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another."—Galatians 5:22, 23; Ephesians 4:31, 32.

A doctor explains the value of applying such Bible teachings, especially in today's world. "Dealing respectfully with people," he says, "is a big stress reliever." The Bible also helps us to cultivate modesty, which means having a moderate estimate of our abilities. —Micah 6:8.

God expects us humbly to acknowledge that we have physical, mental, and emotional

limits and that we cannot do everything we would like to do. As difficult as this can be, we may need to learn when and how to say no to demands that exceed what we realistically can handle.

This is not to say that if all the Bible-based advice provided above was applied, you would be free of all stress. The fact is, Satan the Devil has made those who worship God the focus of his efforts to prove that they will abandon true worship when they are put under enough stress. (Revelation 12:17) Yet, as we have seen, there are many ways that God provides timely resources to help us reduce and cope with stress.\*

\* For additional ways to cope with stress, please see the series "Relief From Stress!" in the February 8, 2005, issue of *Awake!* and "Coping With Today's Hectic Pace," in the issue of February 8, 2001.



## SOME WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

- Don't expect perfection of yourself or others.  
—Ecclesiastes 7:16.
- Set appropriate priorities.  
—Philippians 1:10, 11.
- Get regular exercise.  
—1 Timothy 4:8.
- Enjoy Jehovah's creation.  
—Psalm 92:4, 5.
- Make some quiet time regularly.—Matthew 14:23.
- Get sufficient relaxation and sleep.—Ecclesiastes 4:6.

# The Northern Bald Ibis

## A Grounded Migrator



**A**FAMILY of five is ready to embark on a long journey, and well-wishers have turned out to say good-bye. The family take one last look at the place that has been their home for a long time and then set out. While the onlookers watch, the five go off into the distance and disappear from view over the horizon.

We are at the Bald Ibis Breeding Station in Birecik, Turkey, a town next to the Euphrates River. The family that has just departed is a group of northern bald ibis, an endangered species. Each bird has a satellite tracker attached to its ankle. The well-wishers—the staff at the station and the visitors—anxiously watch as the birds fly off into the unknown, worried that the family might not return home.

What kind of bird is the northern bald ibis? Where does it go when it migrates? And why is there so much interest in its migration?

### Meet Our Feathered Friend

When the northern bald ibis first hatches, there are feathers on its head. As it matures, however, those feathers are lost, accounting for its name. On the rest of its body, the bald ibis has black feathers that turn shades of bronze-green and violet in the sunlight. Except for the very top of its head, its skin and beak are red. The bald ibis also has long plumage down the back of its neck.

An ibis matures after three or four years. Its normal life span is between 25 and 30 years. It eats insects, lizards, and even small mammals. Females can produce one to three eggs a year and will incubate them for about four weeks. The birds have a striking characteristic—they mate for life. When one dies, its mate mourns the loss. In fact, the surviving mate has often been ob-

served starving itself to death or even plunging to its death from a high rock face.

The local people of Birecik will tell you that up until about the turn of the 20th century, the return of the bald ibis from its migratory journey was a cause for celebration. It was viewed as a harbinger of spring. During the celebration, held in the middle of February, boats would be dragged onto dry land from the Euphrates River, accompanied by drum-beating and festivities.

In those early years, flocks of bald ibis were so numerous that they resembled a giant black cloud in the sky. However, in the last century—and particularly in the past 50 years—their numbers have plummeted. There were once 500 to 600 breeding pairs at the Birecik colony, but the population was dealt a heavy blow when agricultural pesticides were introduced in the 1950's. Today there are very few of these birds left in the world.

### Conservation Efforts in Turkey

The Bald Ibis Breeding Station was established in Birecik in 1977. The birds were allowed to migrate every year—that is, until 1990, when only one returned. After that, they were prevented from migrating. At the time the birds would normally begin migration, between July and August, the staff would take them into aviaries. The birds would be released in February or March of the following year, when they would have been returning.

In 1997 it was decided to attempt a migration. Unfortunately, none of the 25 birds released were ever seen again. From 1998 onward, all the birds continued to be taken

into aviaries to prevent them from migrating. Still, the colony thrives. At present the breeding station has a population of almost a hundred.

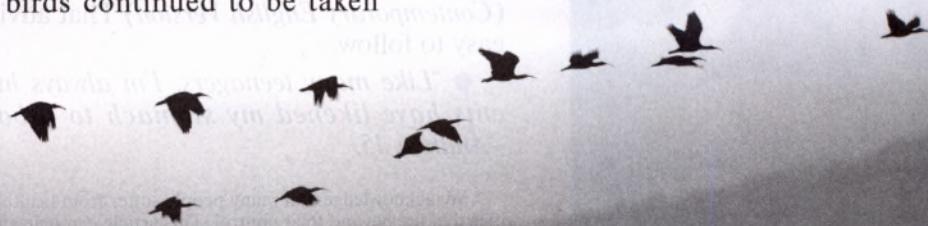
### The Future of the Northern Bald Ibis

Sadly, only two of the family of five mentioned at the beginning of this article returned. Then, in 2008, another group of birds was allowed to migrate. Tragically, they too did not make it home. Authorities report that the birds reached as far south as the country of Jordan but died of poisoning. This means that in spite of the increase in population at the breeding station, along with all the efforts of scientists and government authorities, the fate of the northern bald ibis still hangs in the balance.

These recent attempts have shown that despite being grounded for their own safety, the bald ibis have not forgotten their migratory instincts. This confirms the words of the Bible found at Jeremiah 8:7: “The stork in the heavens—it well knows its appointed times; and the turtledove and the swift and the bulbul—they observe well the time of each one’s coming in.”

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

1. Jerusalem. 2. Stephen is accused of blasphemy.  
3. Forgives his attackers. 4. King Ahaz. 5. In zeal for true worship, there was no other king like him.



## YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

# Why care about my health?

Put a ✓ next to each goal you would like to reach.

- Lose weight
- Reduce anxiety
- Improve complexion
- Control temper
- Have more energy
- Feel more confident
- Be more alert

**T**HREE are some things in life that you as a young person don't get to choose—your parents, your siblings, and where you live, to name just a few. Your *health*, however, is a different story. Whether you're in shape or not can depend on hereditary factors as well as the lifestyle you choose.\*

'But I'm too young to worry about my health!' you might say. Do you really think so? Look at the list of goals above. How many did you check off? Believe it or not, good health is a vital key to reaching each one of those goals.

Granted, your feelings might be similar to those of 17-year-old Amber,\* who says, "No way could I stick to eating whole wheat and low-fat, sugar-free food all the time!" If that's how you feel, don't worry—you don't have to be a fitness fanatic, give up sweets, or jog outrageous distances every week.

Really, it may take only a few simple adjustments for you to start looking better, feeling great, and performing at your best. Let's see how some of your peers have done it.

### Eat Right—Look Better!

The Bible recommends moderation in our habits. "Don't . . . stuff yourself with food," says Proverbs 23:20. (*Contemporary English Version*) That advice isn't always easy to follow.

● "Like many teenagers, I'm always hungry. My parents have likened my stomach to a bottomless pit!"  
—Andrew, 15.

\* We acknowledge that many people suffer from health problems or disabilities that are beyond their control. This article can help such ones achieve better health within their limitations.

<sup>a</sup> Some names in this article have been changed.



● “Because I can’t actually see how some foods are harming me now, they don’t seem that bad.”—Danielle, 19.

Do you need more self-control when it comes to your diet? Here’s what some of your peers say works for them.

**Listen to your stomach.** “I used to count calories,” says 19-year-old Julia, “but now I just stop eating when I’m full.”

**Avoid unwholesome foods.** “By cutting out soda,” says Peter, 21, “I lost ten pounds in just a month!”

**Adjust bad eating habits.** “I try not to go back for seconds,” says 19-year-old Erin.

**Secret to Success:** Don’t skip meals! If you do, you’ll feel starved and tend to overeat.

#### Exercise More—Feel Great!

The Bible says: “Bodily training is beneficial.” (1 Timothy 4:8) Yet, many young ones don’t seem too eager to exercise.

● “You wouldn’t believe how many kids failed gym when I was in high school. It was the easiest class, next to lunch!”—Richard, 21.

● “Some think, ‘Why run around outside in the hot sun until you’re sweaty and tired when you can play a video game that allows you to pretend you’re someone else doing that?’”—Ruth, 22.

Does the very word “exercise” tire you out? If so, here are three solid payoffs from getting into a good exercise routine.

**Payoff #1. Exercise boosts your immune system.** “My father always said, ‘If you can’t find time to exercise, you’d better find time to be sick,’” says 19-year-old Rachel.

**Payoff #2. Exercise releases brain chemicals that calm you.** “Running is a good release when I have a lot on my mind,” says Emily, 16. “Physically I feel refreshed, and emotionally it’s a great relief.”

**Payoff #3. Exercise can increase your fun.** “I love the outdoors,” says Ruth, 22, “so my exercise includes hiking, swimming, snowboarding, and biking.”

#### WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY



Ethan

“The human body is like a car—it’s up to the owner to maintain it. That’s one reason I like to work out.”



Briana

“Having a partner to exercise with gives you incentive because you don’t want to disappoint the other person.”



Emily

“I like the way I feel when I exercise. And when I start to look better because of it, that’s a great confidence boost!”

**Secret to Success:** Devote at least 20 minutes three times a week to a vigorous physical activity that you enjoy.

#### Sleep Better—Perform at Your Best!

The Bible says: “Better is a handful of rest than a double handful of hard work and striving after the wind.” (Ecclesiastes 4:6) Without proper sleep, your performance will nose-dive!

## "I MADE A LIFESTYLE CHANGE"

"By the time I was six years old, I was slightly chubby. Then, gradually, what started out as having a treat here and there turned into snacking all the time! And I never did anything active—I never liked to. Before I knew it, I was an overweight teenager, which was something I never wanted to be. I was so unhappy with the way I looked and felt! From time to time, I tried to lose weight with some special diet, but I always gained it back. So when I was 15, I decided enough was enough. I wanted to lose weight the right way—a way that I could maintain for the rest of my life. I bought a book that discussed basic nutrition and exercise principles, and I incorporated what I read into my life. I was determined that even if I 'fell off the wagon' or got discouraged, I would not give up. Guess what? It worked! Over the course of one year, I lost 60 pounds. I've maintained my weight for two years. I never thought it would happen! I think the reason I was successful is that I didn't merely diet—I made a lifestyle change. Once I embraced the fact that this was going to touch every aspect of my life, I was ready and willing to make the necessary adjustments."—Catherine, 18.

● "If I don't get enough sleep, I'm out of it. I have trouble focusing on anything!"  
—Rachel, 19.

● "At about 2:00 p.m. I get so tired that I could almost fall asleep in the middle of a conversation!"—Kristine, 19.

Do you need more sleep? Here's what some of your peers have done.

**Avoid late nights.** "I've been making an effort to get to bed at a decent hour," says 18-year-old Catherine.

**Cut out the chatter.** "Sometimes friends would call or text me really late," says Rich-



Your health is like a car—if you don't maintain it properly, it will break down

ard, 21, "but I've recently learned to end the conversation and just go to sleep."

**Aim for consistency.** "Lately," says 20-year-old Jennifer, "I'm trying to go to bed and get up at the same time every day."

**Secret to Success:** Strive to get between eight and ten hours of sleep each night.

Which of the three areas discussed in this article need attention in *your* life?

diet       exercise       sleep

Below, write a goal you could set to help you improve in that area.



You have everything to gain by taking just a few simple steps to take care of yourself. Remember, having good health will help you to look better, feel great, and perform at your best. And unlike certain things in life, your physical condition is something over which you *do* have a degree of control. "In the end," says 19-year-old Erin, "your health depends on only one person—you."

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

### TO THINK ABOUT

- How can taking care of your health affect your self-confidence?
- How can you display reasonableness when it comes to your health?  
—Philippians 4:5.

## WAS IT DESIGNED?

# The Cold Light of the Firefly



### LIGHT EFFICIENCY

10%



Incandescent bulb

90%



Fluorescent bulb

96%



Firefly

- In tropical and temperate regions, the firefly is recognized by the flashing light it uses to attract a mate. Interestingly, the firefly's light is superior to the incandescent and fluorescent light produced by man. In fact, the next time you look at your electric bill, think of what this small insect can do.

**Consider:** An incandescent lightbulb emits only 10 percent of its energy as light; the rest is basically wasted, discharged as heat. A fluorescent bulb performs much better, emitting 90 percent of its energy as light. But neither of these is a match for the firefly. With very few ultraviolet or infrared rays, the light emitted by this insect is nearly 100 percent energy efficient!

The firefly's secret lies in the chemical reactions of the substance luciferin, the enzyme luciferase, and oxygen. Special cells called photocytes use luciferase to trigger this process, with oxygen as fuel. The result is cold light—so named because it produces virtually no heat. Horticultural and environmental educator Sandra Mason aptly remarked that lightbulb inventor Thomas Edison “must have been envious of fireflies.”

**What do you think?** Did the cold light of the firefly come about by chance? Or was it designed?

Firefly on leaf: © E. R. Degginger/Photo Researchers, Inc.; firefly in flight: © Darwin Dale/Photo Researchers, Inc.



# AN “IRON RIBBON”

## From Sea to Sea

**A**BOUT 150 years ago, much of Canada, the world's second-largest country in area, was an unexplored wilderness. Historian Pierre Berton explains: “Three-quarters of the population lived in comparative isolation on farms,” and the condition of roads “made extended travel nearly impossible.” Travel on lakes and rivers was limited too, since these would be frozen for up to five months of the year.

Faced with those challenges, in 1871 the prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, proposed a railway to connect Canada's Atlantic Coast with its Pacific Coast. Such a railway had been completed in the United States in 1869, but Canada had less money, a greater distance to cover, and a population equal to only about 10 percent of that of the United States. A Canadian political leader called the proposed project “one of the most foolish things that could be imagined.” Another mocked that the next thing the prime minister would be talking about was a railway to the moon.

### An Expensive Proposal

The government, however, promised to complete the railway in ten years. Sand-

ford Fleming, a Scottish railway engineer, estimated that the railway would cost about \$100 million, a huge sum in those days. Although laying some of the track through the United States would have shortened and simplified the route, Macdonald insisted on an all-Canadian route to protect Canada's interests in the event of war.

Many investors were unwilling to embark on such an expensive, risky venture. However, in 1875 the work began when the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) turned the first shovel of dirt for the construction of its main line. Ten years later the project was in danger of coming to a complete stop. On July 10, a debt of \$400,000—which the CPR was unable to pay—was due at 3:00 p.m. But at 2:00 p.m. that very day, the Canadian Parliament finally agreed to lend more money, saving the project.



Sir John A. Macdonald

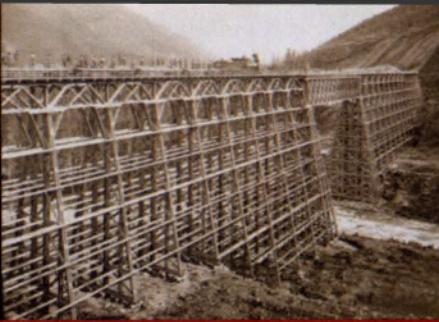
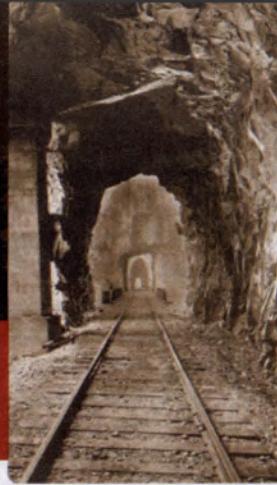
### Challenging Construction Problems

While laying track in northern Ontario, workers discovered solid rock within a foot of the ground's surface. So soil had to be hauled in over long distances. In central Canada, winter temperatures plummeted to 52 degrees below zero Fahrenheit, resulting in

Top: Canadian Pacific Railway (A1756); middle: Library and Archives Canada/C-006513



Railway building was difficult work



Numerous bridges and tunnels had to be built through the mountains

many construction problems. In addition to that, annual snowfall averaged hundreds of inches. The Rocky Mountains section of the track in the west was dubbed "where death comes without a warning." Many tunnels and bridges needed to be built. Ten-hour workdays were the norm, despite rain, mud, or snow.

Finally, on November 7, 1885, without much fanfare, the last spike was driven at Eagle Pass in British Columbia in the west. The station was named Craigellachie, after a rallying place in Scotland that had become a symbol of bold defiance when times were difficult. Called upon to make a speech, the

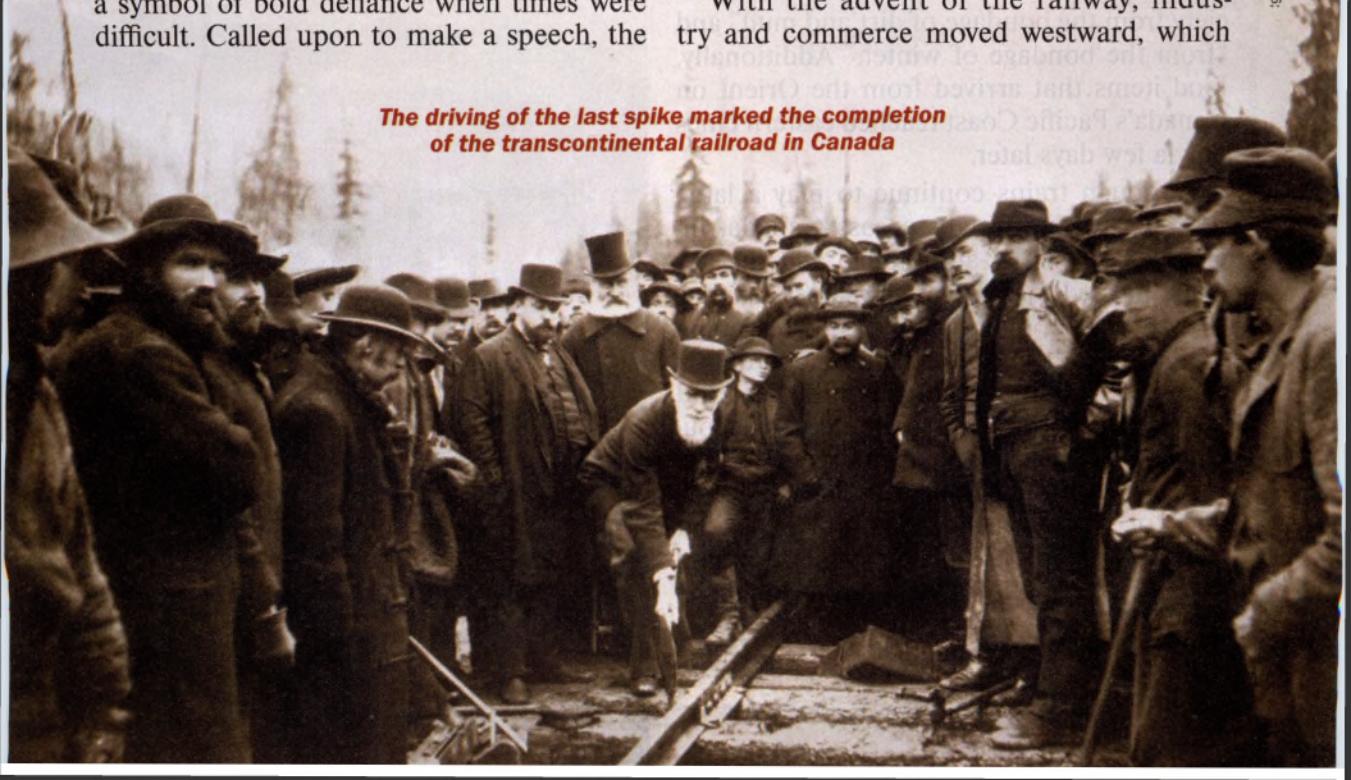
general manager of the CPR said simply: "All I can say is that the work has been well done in every way."

#### Its Effect on People

Thousands of Chinese laborers brought into the country for the project were assured of steady employment on the railway. The work was often dangerous, especially in the Rocky Mountains. Not until several years after the last spike was driven were many of those workers able to raise enough money to return home.

With the advent of the railway, industry and commerce moved westward, which

The driving of the last spike marked the completion of the transcontinental railroad in Canada



Top, left to right: Canadian Pacific Railway (NS-3561-2); Canadian Pacific Railway (NS-7765); Library and Archives Canada/PA-066576; bottom: Canadian Pacific Railway (NS-1960)

## SHARING OUR HOPE ON THE “IRON RIBBON”



The railroad remains the primary mode of travel to some Canadian communities, so Jehovah’s Witnesses use it to reach isolated regions with the Bible’s message about God’s Kingdom government. (Isaiah 9:6, 7; Matthew 6:9, 10) “It is easy to talk about the Bible on the train,” the Witnesses explain, “since people are curious about where we are going and why.”

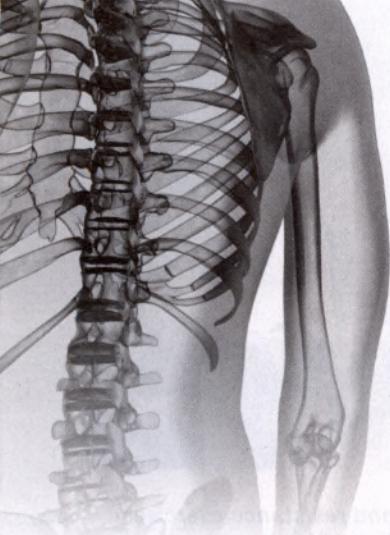
Regarding a train trip to an Ojibwa reserve near Lake Nipigon in northern Ontario, one Witness comments: “Although the scenery and wildlife were stunning, our best memories are of the people we met. Since they receive few visitors, our arrival generated a real buzz. Some lent us their canoes, and we were allowed to use their schoolroom at no cost. After we preached all day, members of the community assembled to watch a video about our worldwide preaching work.”

adversely affected traditional ways of life. Towns and cities were established, and native peoples were moved to reservations. Along former trade routes, small businesses, such as roadside taverns, shut down. On the positive side, the train is said to have “released society from the bondage of dirt and mud” and “from the bondage of winter.” Additionally, food items that arrived from the Orient on Canada’s Pacific Coast reached eastern cities only a few days later.

Although trains continue to play a large role in carrying freight across Canada, increased use of the automobile and the airplane has led to a decline in passenger travel by rail. Still, many people enjoy escaping the bustle of 21st-century life by boarding a comfortable train and taking in the beautiful scenery all the way from Toronto to Vancouver. Rather than speed up the pace of life, as it once did, the train thus makes it possible for passengers to relax and reflect on the railway’s colorful history while traveling from sea to sea on Canada’s “iron ribbon.”

*Riding the “iron ribbon” today*





# OSTEOPOROSIS A SILENT DISEASE

*Anna, 19 years of age, was recovering well from the eating disorder anorexia nervosa when suddenly she collapsed with excruciating back pain. She had fractured two lumbar vertebrae and had lost two inches in height. Osteoporosis was responsible.*

**O**STEOPOROSIS" literally means "porous bone." It is called a silent disease because there are often no symptoms of bone loss until the bones become so weak that a sudden strain, bump, or fall causes a fracture. Such fractures are typically of the hip, ribs, vertebrae, or wrist. People tend to associate osteoporosis with frail, elderly women. However, as Anna's case illustrates, osteoporosis can also strike the young.

### A Serious Health Threat

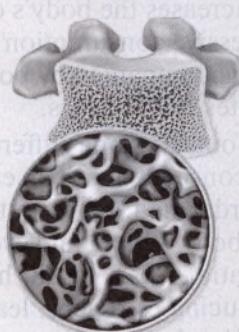
The International Osteoporosis Foundation reports that "in the European Union,

someone has a fracture as a result of osteoporosis every 30 seconds." In the United States, 10 million people have osteoporosis, and another 34 million are at risk because of low bone mass. Furthermore, the U.S. National Institutes of Health reports that "one out of every two women and one in four men age 50 and over will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in their lifetime." And the outlook is not improving.

The *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* states that the number of fractures resulting from osteoporosis is expected to double worldwide over the next 50 years. This

**Osteoporosis is a bone condition characterized by low bone density and deterioration of bone strength, leading to bone fragility and susceptibility to fracture. It can be diagnosed by means of a low radiation scan, which measures bone mineral density.**

**Healthy bone**



**Osteoporosis**



projection is likely based on the expected increase in the elderly population. Still, the consequences are frightening. Osteoporosis has a high rate of disability, even mortality. Almost 25 percent of patients aged 50 or older who suffer hip fractures die as a result of medical complications within the year following the fracture.

### **Are You at Risk?**

Recent studies reveal that heredity is a significant risk factor. When parents have a history of hip fracture, the risk of this type of fracture occurring in their children may even double. Another risk factor is malnutrition of a fetus, which results in lower bone density in childhood. Then there is the age factor. The older people get, the more fragile their bones generally become. Certain medical conditions, such as Cushing's disease, diabetes, and hyperthyroidism, can also contribute to the development of osteoporosis.

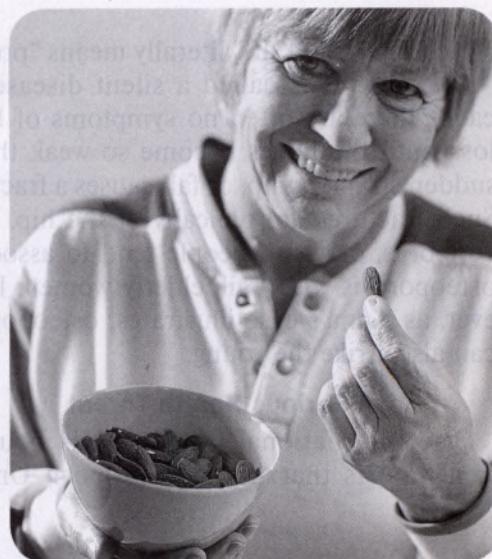
Menopause in women results in a reduction of estrogens that protect bone mass. This is the reason why nearly four times more women suffer from osteoporosis than men. Estrogen deficiency brought on by the surgical removal of a woman's ovaries can result in early menopause.

Risk factors for osteoporosis that an individual can change include eating habits and lifestyle. A diet low in calcium and vitamin D is a contributing factor to bone deterioration. An excessive consumption of salt may increase risk, since it increases the body's excretion of calcium. Excessive consumption of alcohol, which is often accompanied by poor nutrition, also contributes to bone loss.

As mentioned at the outset, Anna suffered from osteoporosis as a consequence of an eating disorder. That disorder had led to nutritional deficiencies, low body weight, and even an absence of menstruation. As a result, her body had stopped producing estrogens, leading to the weakening of her bones.



*Weight-bearing and resistance exercises help to prevent loss of bone mass*



*Almonds and dairy products are excellent sources of calcium*



An additional factor for developing osteoporosis is a lifestyle of limited physical activity. Smoking too is a significant risk factor, since it can decrease bone mineral density. According to the World Health Organization, about 1 in 8 hip fractures is attributable to smoking. However, studies reveal that when a person stops smoking, bone loss and the risk of suffering a fracture decrease.

### **Prevention of Osteoporosis**

The foundation for preventing osteoporosis is laid in childhood and adolescence. That is when 90 percent of a person's total bone mass is reached. Calcium, an essential nutrient for a strong skeletal structure, is stored primarily in the bones. Some of the principal sources of calcium are milk and dairy products, such as yogurt and cheese; canned sardines and salmon (eaten with the bones);

**Prevention may include adjusting one's diet and lifestyle to preserve bone mass and increase bone strength**

almonds; oatmeal; sesame seeds; tofu; and dark-green leafy vegetables.

In order for calcium to be absorbed by the body, vitamin D is essential. This vitamin is synthesized in the skin by exposure to sunlight. Manuel Mirassou Ortega, a doctor of internal medicine and member of the Mexican Bone and Mineral Metabolism Association, explained: "Sunbathing for ten minutes a day contributes to preventing the development of osteoporosis, as it provides some 600 units of vitamin D." This vitamin can also be found in such foods as egg yolks, saltwater fish, and liver.

The importance of exercise in preventing osteoporosis can hardly be overemphasized. During childhood and adolescence, exercise helps to increase bone mass, and in old age it helps to prevent loss of bone mass. Weight-bearing and resistance exercises—those in which muscles work against gravity or other forces without overstressing the bones and joints—are recommended the most. Walking, climbing stairs, and even dancing are simple but effective weight-bearing exercises.\*

Prevention can certainly do much to combat this silent disease. As we have seen, this may include adjusting one's diet and lifestyle to preserve bone mass and to increase bone strength. It is true that for most people who



have fallen into a sedentary lifestyle, such a way of life may be very difficult to change. But what benefits come to those who make the effort to do so! Among other things, they may avoid being one of the many millions worldwide who suffer from osteoporosis.

\* Extreme exercise, to the point of cessation of menstrual periods in women, can lead to brittle bones from estrogen deficiency. It is recommended that women over 65 have bone-density testing to determine the presence and severity of bone loss. If bone loss is severe, medicines may be available to prevent and treat osteoporosis. However, both risks and benefits should be considered before treatment is begun.

# Should You Be Charged for Religious Services?

**I**N MANY lands, leaders of professed Christian religions and non-Christian religions charge a fee for religious services. These services may include baptisms, weddings, or funerals. The charge can run into hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars.

Some clergy are on government payrolls for performing ceremonial and pastoral duties and for opening daily legislative sessions with prayer. Such functions may be appreciated, and churches have operating expenses to meet. But does the Bible support such customs of charging for religious services or even of making people feel obligated to pay?



## "A House of Merchandise"?

When Jesus Christ was on earth, Jewish religious officials and others used religious occasions as opportunities for profit, particularly during Passover. Did Jesus view this practice favorably? No! In fact, the Bible tells us that "he poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables." He said: "Stop making the house of my Father a house of merchandise!"—John 2:14-16.

A similar situation occurred in the time of the prophet Micah, who lived during the eighth century B.C.E. Israel's religious leaders, the Bible reports, 'detested justice,' and the priests 'instructed just for a price.' Yet, at the same time, they professed divine backing, saying: "Is not Jehovah in the midst of us?" (Micah 3:9, 11) But Jehovah God was not in their midst as a supporter. Instead, he detested their conduct and made that abundantly clear through his prophet.

Today many religious leaders resort to the same greedy tactics, thus making their places of worship 'houses of merchandise.' In fact, religious organizations as a whole engage in commerce, often doing a booming trade selling icons and countless other forms of religious paraphernalia.\*—1 John 5:21.

## "You Received Free, Give Free"

When commissioning his apostles to preach the good news, cure the sick, and even raise up the dead, Jesus stated: "You received

\* See the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Should God Be Worshipped Through Images?" in the August 2008 issue of *Awake!*

free, give free.” (Matthew 10:7, 8) Yes, his true followers were not to charge for their services. Moreover, Jesus himself set the example by ministering to others for no financial return.

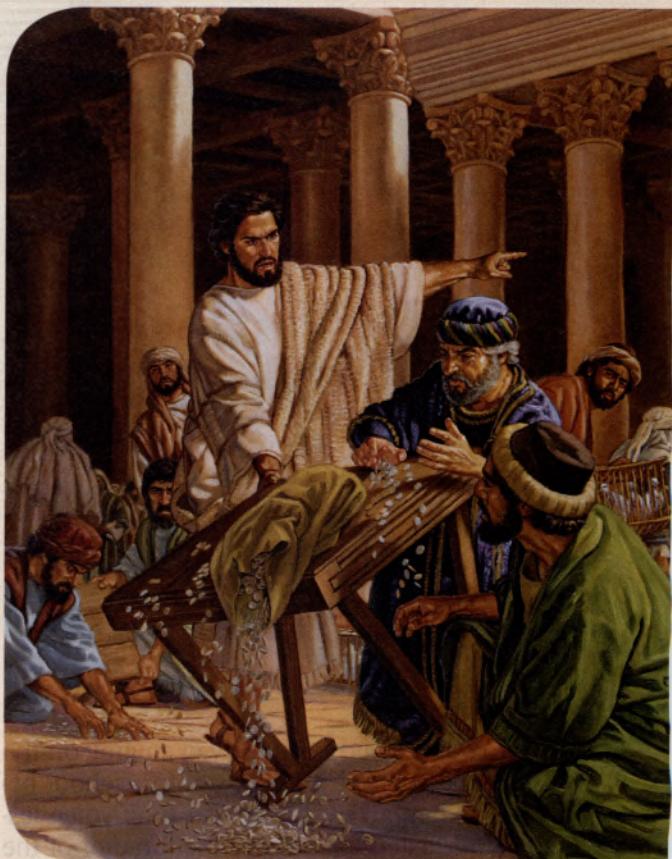
**“Stop making the house of my Father a house of merchandise!”—John 2:14-16**

Following the pattern set by Jesus, the apostle Paul performed his ministry “without cost.” (1 Corinthians 9:18) When he needed funds, he did secular work as a tentmaker. (Acts 18:1-3) Hence, he could say of himself and his missionary companions: “We are not peddlers of the word of God as many men are.” (2 Corinthians 2:17) But what about obtaining funds for congregation use, perhaps for purchasing or renting a place of worship?

**“God Loves a Cheerful Giver”**

Jehovah’s Witnesses obtain needed funds through voluntary donations. They apply the principle: “Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7) Accordingly, the Witnesses do not charge for their literature or religious services, such as for performing baptisms, weddings, or funerals. Nor do they tithe or pass a collection plate at their meetings. Anyone who wants to contribute toward their international preaching work can do so by means of discreetly placed contribution boxes in their places of worship.

Worldwide, Jehovah’s Witnesses fund their Kingdom Halls, Assembly Halls, branch offices, and printeries, as well as their relief efforts, by means of voluntary contributions. Some, like the needy widow whom Jesus commended, can give only a little. (Luke 21:2) Others can give much. Whatever the case,



those who adhere to the principles set down in the Bible and give according to their means enjoy inner contentment, God’s rich blessing, and genuine happiness.—Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 8:12.

**HAVE YOU WONDERED?**

- What did Jesus say to those who were doing business in the temple?—John 2:14-16.
- Did the Christian apostle Paul accept payment for religious services?—2 Corinthians 2:17.
- What kind of giving pleases Jehovah?—2 Corinthians 9:7.



# Why I Gave Up a Lucrative Career

AS TOLD BY MARTHA TERESA MÁRQUEZ

In time, I achieved a certain amount of fame and was earning good money—enough to be able to enjoy such luxuries as jewels, mink coats, and penthouse living. I apparently had it all, but I was unhappy. I felt empty. Although raised Roman Catholic, I was ashamed to go to church. I felt too dirty because of my immoral lifestyle.

## How I Came to Love Jehovah

While rehearsing for my first record, I confided my feelings to a friend, a *ranchera* singer named Lorena Wong. I told her I would like to be a nun and help the less fortunate. "A nun? You're crazy!" she exclaimed.

Then she asked: "Do you know God's name?"

"The Lord Jesus Christ," I answered.

"No, his name is Jehovah," she said. "Jesus is his Son."

"Jehovah?" I asked. The name was completely foreign to me. Lorena gave me a Bible and promised to send her teacher, who was one of Jehovah's Witnesses, to visit me.\*

Every time I saw Lorena, I asked, "When are you going to send your teacher?" I was spiritually hungry.

Meanwhile, I began to read the Bible on my own and saw that God's name was indeed Jehovah. (Psalm 83:18) I was surprised. I also

\* Lorena Wong later became one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

came across the Ten Commandments and was struck by the one that said: "You must not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14) At the time, I was living with a married man, who was the father of my eight-month-old baby boy. The boy was my second child. I already had a young son by another man, to whom I was also never married.

One day while I was rehearsing a song for a new show, there was a knock at my penthouse door. It was Lorena's teacher, Mauricio Linares, and his wife. They showed me what God's purpose for mankind is and left me the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*.<sup>\*</sup> I read it through in just one night, despite struggling with the more difficult words. That is when I began to love Jehovah.

### Changing My Lifestyle

As the Witnesses helped me both to study the Bible and to improve my reading ability, I realized that I had to make changes in my life in order to please Jehovah. I began to get rid of my images, medals, and good-luck charms, even though they were made of gold.

I found it especially hard to give up smoking and drinking to excess. When I passed a liquor store, my mouth would water. I had to cut off associating with all my friends, because they offered me drinks and invited me to wine and dine in fancy restaurants.

I knew that this would inevitably lead to alcohol abuse.

It was also hard for me to stop going to parties of the rich and famous. When invited to the birthday party of a well-known Cuban boxer, I prayed: "Just this last one, Jehovah. I'll never go again to such an affair or engage in conduct that you don't approve of." And I never did.

I terminated my relationship with my second son's father. I did this in spite of all his riches and all

that he promised he would give me if I did not leave him. It was a very difficult thing for me to do because I was in love with him, and he knew it. Arrogantly, he asserted: "I am your God! I am your Christ!"

"You may have been," I responded, "but now Jehovah is my God." He threatened to take away my son whom he had fathered and to do me bodily harm.

At the time, some people told me that singing was just a career like any other—that I could be a Witness and sing too. Yet, others reminded me, "You are not going to have a fence around you to protect you from smoking, drinking, and the immoral suggestions of your fans." I realized the wisdom of this latter statement.

When I was a popular singer, people tried to buy favors from me. I was determined not to expose myself to such temptations any longer. So in 1975, I broke my contract to tour China, and six months later I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

### The Challenges and Joys

How would I support myself and my family? I had practically no schooling and did not really know how to do anything but sing. My older sister, Irma, and her three children, as well as my own two young boys, depended on

***With my sons, their wives, and my older sister, with whom I continue to pioneer***



\* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but now out of print.

me. We had to move from my expensive suite into two small rooms. The drastic change from a life of luxury to one of deprivation was a real challenge. For a time my sister and the children reproached me and pressured me to continue as a singer, but I remained determined to do what I needed to do to serve Jehovah.

I began selling my valuables—my jewels, my furs, my car—and we lived on the proceeds. In time, that money was gone. In order to escape being harassed by the father of my second son, we moved in 1981 to a city on the other side of the country, where he couldn't find us.

In this place the Witnesses taught me how to make tamales, doughnuts, and other food to sell. Later I obtained a job in a factory and worked nights. But this job was affecting my attendance at Christian meetings and my service to God. So eventually I resigned and began making tamales at home. I would then take them in baskets and sell them on the street. In this way I have been able to support myself in the full-time ministry.

### A Choice I Have Never Regretted

When people ask me how I feel about having left my promising career as a singer, I tell

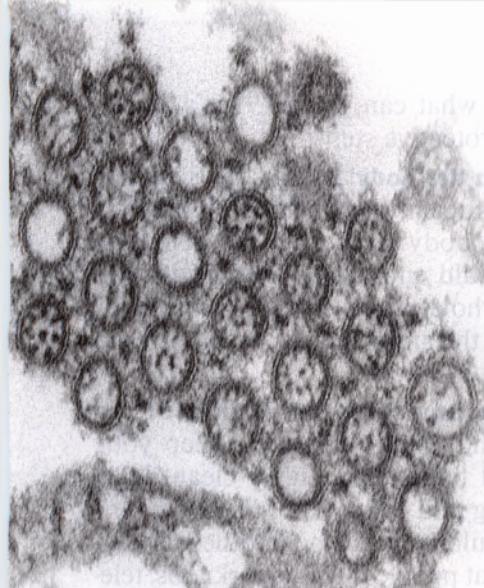
them that I would not exchange my knowledge of Jehovah and an understanding of his wonderful purposes for anything. It has been a joy to see my sons progress in Bible knowledge, dedicate their lives to Jehovah, and then marry fellow believers. Both of my sons, with the cooperation of their wives, are rearing their children to serve our God, Jehovah.

I have been a pioneer, as Jehovah's Witnesses call those in the full-time preaching work, for nearly three decades. With God's help I have been able to assist scores of people, including Irma and her daughter, to learn Bible truths and dedicate their lives to God. It is a great joy to meet up with such "spiritual children" and find them still walking in the truth—many also serving as pioneers. (3 John 4) Today, at the age of 64, I am conducting 18 Bible studies with others.

The spiritual void I felt as a young singer has been filled, and the desire to help others has been satisfied by obeying Jesus' command to 'go and make disciples.' (Matthew 28:19, 20) How grateful I am that Jehovah has sustained me all these years and continues to do so! I have truly 'tasted and seen that he is good.'—Psalm 34:8.

I have continued to make tamales and sell them on the street to support myself in the full-time ministry





Magnified view of the H1N1 influenza virus

CDC/Cynthia Goldsmith

**T**HE flu is caused by a virus, which is a microscopic agent that infiltrates living cells and commandeers their machinery to reproduce more viruses. The flu virus, which attacks the respiratory system, is passed from one person to another primarily in droplets of bodily fluids expelled when the infected person sneezes, coughs, or even talks. A pandemic occurs when an outbreak affects many people over a wide area.

Viruses affect not only humans but also animals and birds. Flu viruses are categorized as types A, B, or C. Type A is the most common cause of influenza. Virus strains are classified mainly according to two proteins found on the surface of the virus: hemagglutinin (H) and neuraminidase (N).

The biggest concerns regarding flu viruses are that they may reproduce very rapidly with constantly changing variations and that different strains can combine and produce a new strain. If a strain is sufficiently unique, the human immune system may have no defenses against it.

The flu is usually more common during the colder months. Recent research indicates

# Protecting Your Family From THE FLU

In Jesus' prophecy concerning the end of the present system of things, he foretold "outbreaks of disease in many places." (Luke 21:11, *The New Testament in Plain English*) The flu, or influenza, has proved to be one such disease.

that at cool temperatures the outer membrane of a virus becomes a protective gel that prolongs the survival of the virus in the air but then melts in the higher temperatures of the human respiratory tract, causing infection. Cold air does not cause viral infections, but it can create the setting that helps them to spread.

## Measures of Protection

Recognizing the need to be prepared, many governments have action plans already

## A SEVERE FORM OF FLU

The flu that was first identified in Mexico in 2009 is of the H1N1 variety, similar to the Spanish flu of 1918, which killed tens of millions. However, it also contains elements found in the viruses that affect pigs and birds.

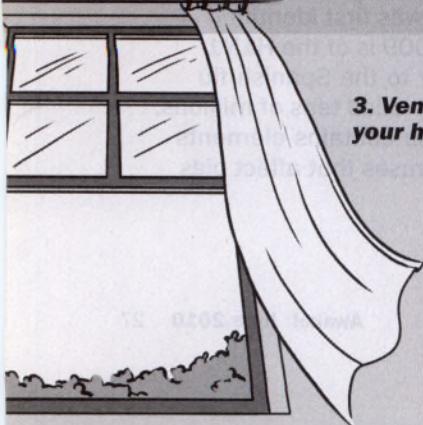
# 6 WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS



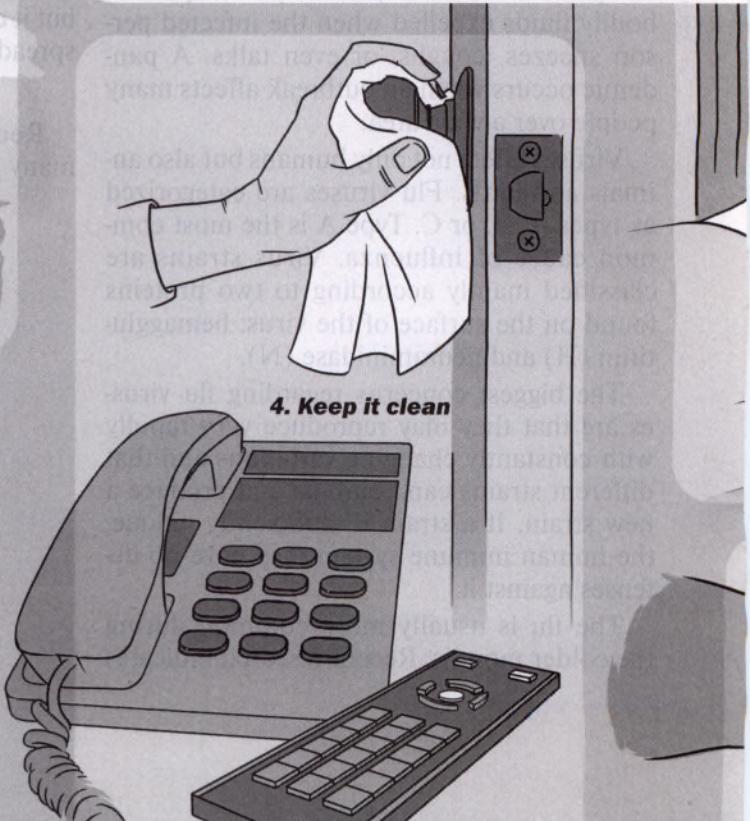
**1. Cover that cough**



**2. Wash hands**



**3. Ventilate your home**



**4. Keep it clean**

in place. But what can you do? Let's review three basic protective steps:

**Strengthen the body:** Make sure that your family gets sufficient sleep and eats foods that will help the body strengthen its defenses. Your diet should emphasize fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, which supply the amino acids needed to build up the immune system.

**Create an environment unfriendly to germs:** To the extent possible, keep your counters and tables thoroughly clean daily. Wash cooking and eating utensils after every use, and regularly wash bedclothes. Disinfect things that people touch: doorknobs, telephones, remote controls. Maintain good ventilation, if possible.

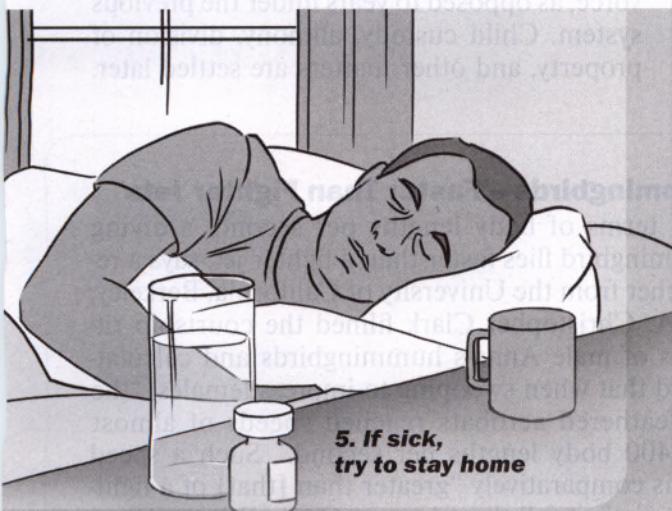
**Practice good habits of personal cleanliness:** Wash your hands diligently with soap and water or with an alcohol-based hand cleaner. (If practical, carry a small bottle of hand sanitizer with you.) Try not to share tow-

els with anyone for drying hands or face, not even with other family members.

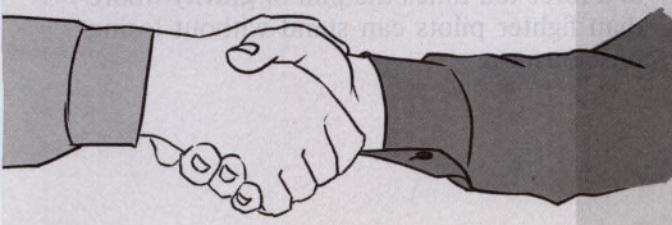
Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands. If possible, use disposable tissues to cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and throw them away immediately. Avoid sharing devices that can readily spread germs, such as telephones. Children need to be thoroughly trained in these practices. Such habits are good all the time but especially so during the flu season.

#### Show Consideration for Others

It is possible to start infecting others a day before you show any symptoms and up to five days after getting sick. Symptoms are similar to the common cold but much more intense. They include fever (usually high), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, and muscle aches. Runny nose and stomach symptoms—such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea—are more common in children than in adults. If



#### 6. Avoid personal contact



you have symptoms, stay home if possible and avoid infecting others.

Get plenty of rest and drink lots of fluids. Antiviral drugs can be helpful but only if taken soon after the onset of symptoms. Aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) should not be given to children who have the flu. Seek emergency medical care if you show pneumonialike symptoms, such as trouble breathing, chest pain, or severe persisting headache.

Having the flu can be an unnerving event. Being prepared may help you get through it better. But more than that, you can look forward to the time when, as the Bible promises, "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'"—Isaiah 33:24.

#### WHEN A HEALTH EMERGENCY OCCURS



First, follow instructions of health officials. Do not panic or overreact. Reinforce the good habits discussed here. If possible, avoid crowds of people. If you are sick, an appropriate face mask may be helpful. Clean your hands frequently. Have about two weeks' worth of nonperishable food items on hand as well as health and hygiene products in case you cannot get to the store.

When at work, places of worship, or any place where you are around a lot of people, follow the suggestions provided. Also, try to keep your surroundings well ventilated.

## Scientists Scan Baby Mammoth

Russian scientists have obtained detailed images of a mammoth's internal organs. The animal—three to four months old when it died—was found intact in the ice of the Yamalo-Nenets region of Arctic Russia. "This is the best preserved specimen not only of the mammoth but of any prehistoric animal," said Alexei Tikhonov, deputy director of the Russian Academy of Science's Zoological Institute. Computer tomography, similar to that used to scan human patients, showed no injuries. That the mammoth's airways and digestive system were "clogged" with what appears to be silt leads scientists to the conclusion that the animal "must have drowned."

## Express Divorce

It has recently become much easier to divorce in Mexico City, reports the newspaper *El Universal*. In 2008 the 21 reasons for obtaining a divorce—infidelity, violence, and so on—were eliminated from the statute books. Now all a person has to do is deposit

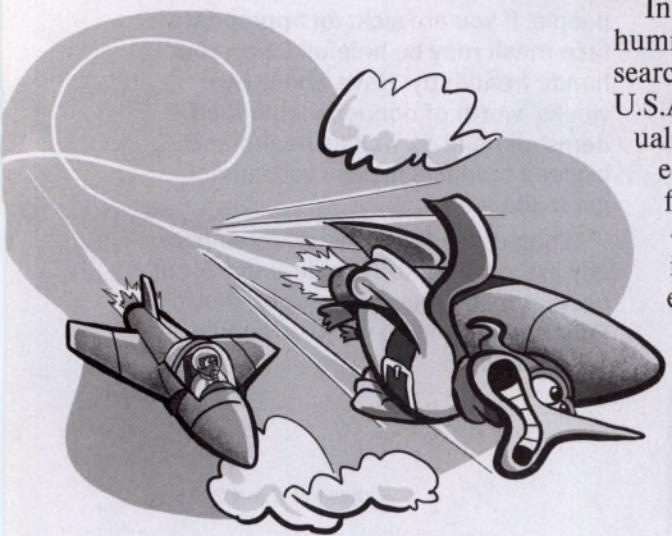
**"In January 2009, eight states possessed a total of more than 23 300 nuclear weapons."**—STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, SWEDEN.

**In Africa, tens of thousands of boreholes, wells, and pumps—many recently built with foreign aid—have fallen into disrepair**

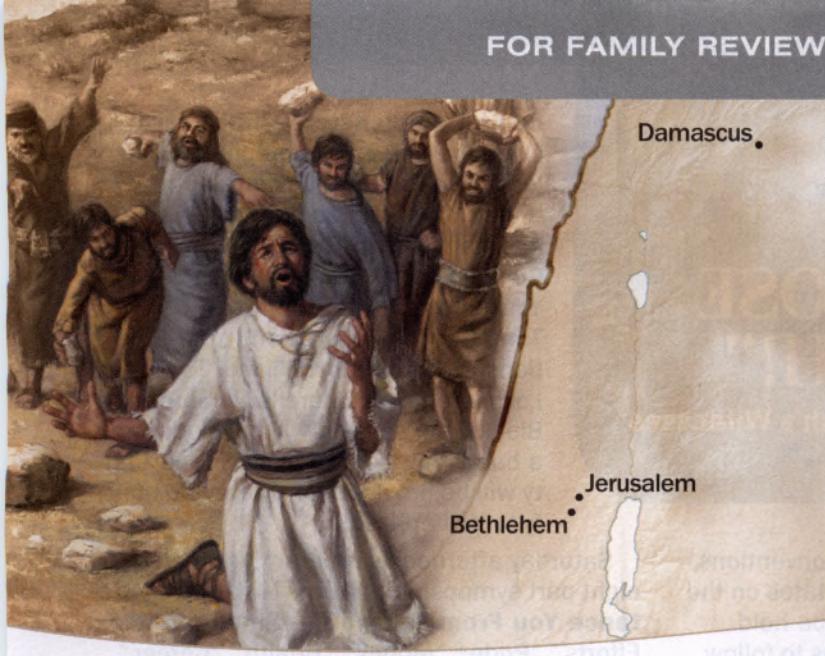
"for a simple and avoidable reason: lack of maintenance."—INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, BRITAIN.

about \$400 (U.S.) with a law office's bank and send the court a signed application, obtained through the Internet, stating that he or she no longer loves the other person. Nothing has to be proved before a judge. It takes only from two to four months to obtain a divorce, as opposed to years under the previous system. Child custody, alimony, division of property, and other matters are settled later.

## Hummingbirds—'Faster Than Fighter Jets'



In terms of body lengths per second, a diving hummingbird flies faster than a fighter jet, says a researcher from the University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A. Christopher Clark filmed the courtship rituals of male Anna's hummingbirds and calculated that when swooping to impress females, "the feathered acrobats reached speeds of almost 400 body lengths per second." Such a speed is comparatively "greater than [that] of a fighter jet" at full throttle, says Clark. When pulling up at the end of its dive, the bird is subject to a force ten times the pull of gravity—more than fighter pilots can stand without losing consciousness.



## Where Did It Happen?

**1. Near which city did this event take place?**

CLUE: Read Acts 6:7-9; 7:54-60. Circle your answer on the map.

**2. Why is Stephen being attacked?**

**3. What does Stephen ask God to do to his attackers?**

### FOR DISCUSSION:

How do you feel about the way Stephen reacted to his attackers? If you were in Stephen's position, how would you have reacted, and why?

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT KING HEZEKIAH?

**4. Who was Hezekiah's father?**

CLUE: Read 2 Kings 18:1.

**5. Even though Hezekiah's father was very bad, what reputation did Hezekiah earn for himself?**

CLUE: Read 2 Kings 18:5.

### FOR DISCUSSION:

What helped Hezekiah to remain strong?

CLUE: Read 2 Kings 18:6.

If someone in your family stops serving God, how can you imitate Hezekiah?

● Answers on page 11



## CHILDREN'S PICTURE SEARCH

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

## FROM THIS ISSUE

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

**PAGE 5** What do our bodily systems confirm?

Psalm 139:\_\_\_\_\_

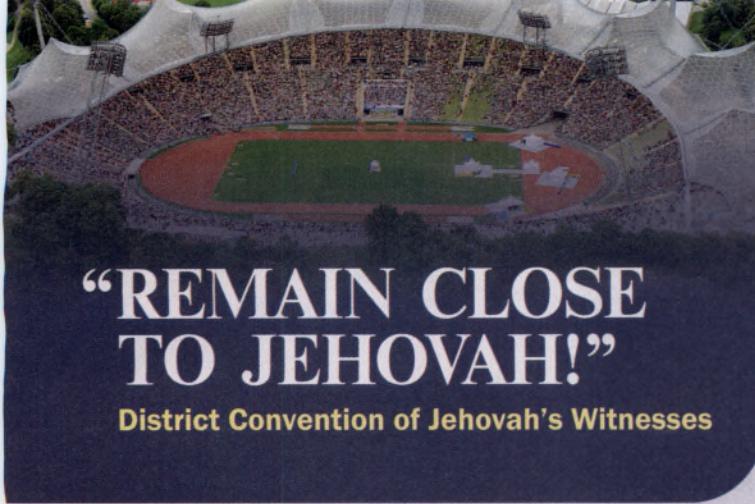
**PAGE 8** What can the peace of God do?

Philippians 4:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 13** A handful of rest is better than what?

Ecclesiastes 4:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 23** Whom does God love? 2 Corinthians 9:\_\_\_\_\_



# “REMAIN CLOSE TO JEHOVAH!”

District Convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses

● Thousands of these three-day conventions, scheduled to begin in the United States on the weekend of May 21-23, will also be held throughout the world in the months to follow. In the United States, sessions will begin each day with a musical program at 9:20 a.m. Friday’s theme, based on Psalm 73:28, is “**The Drawing Near to God Is Good for Me.**” The chairman’s address will be followed by the talks “Conventions Help Us to Stay Close to Jehovah” and “The Son Is Willing to Reveal Him.” Then the symposium “**Imitate Those Who Maintained Intimacy With Jehovah**” will consider how Abraham, Ruth, Hezekiah, and Mary did so. The morning program will end with the keynote address, “How Jehovah Draws Close to Us.”

The first part on Friday afternoon is “Answers to Questions About Jehovah,” followed by the talks “Let Jehovah’s Discipline Mold You” and “Never Become ‘Enraged Against Jehovah.’” Next will be the five-part symposium “**Communication Helps Families Stay Close to Jehovah.**” These parts are entitled: “Jehovah, the Great Communicator,” “Husbands, Communicate With Your Wives!,” “Wives, Communicate With Your Husbands!,” “Parents, Communicate With Your Children!,” and “Children, Communicate With Your Parents!” The afternoon session will end with the feature “Creation Reveals ‘the Living God’!”

Saturday’s theme is “**His Intimacy Is With the Upright Ones,**” based on Proverbs 3:32. The five-part symposium “**Help People ‘Be-**

**come Reconciled to God’**” will include the parts “Alienated and Hopeless,” “He Put the Question to Them,” “Fulfill Your Role as an Evangelizing Assistant,” “Win Them Over by Fine Conduct,” and “Zealously Persevere in Your Efforts.” After the talks “Full-Time Service Strengthens Your Relationship With Jehovah” and “For Those Loving Jehovah, There Is No Stumbling Block,” the session will conclude with a baptism talk, after which opportunity will be provided for those who qualify to be baptized.

Saturday afternoon’s program will feature an eight-part symposium, “**Allow Nothing to Distance You From Jehovah**”—“Satan’s Subtle Efforts,” “Pride,” “Money,” “Health,” “Career,” “Recreation,” “Family,” and “Technology.” A special sound drama entitled “**Do Not Give Out When Corrected by Jehovah!**” will follow. The day’s session will end with the talk “Stay Close to Jehovah, as Jeremiah Did.”

Sunday’s theme, based on Joshua 23:8, is “**To Jehovah . . . You Should Cleave.**” After the morning song and prayer, the symposium “**Appreciating Jehovah’s Endearing Personality**” will review eight of these qualities—“Approachable,” “Empathetic,” “Appreciative,” “Generous,” “Impartial,” “Forgiving,” “Reasonable,” and “Loyal.” The public talk “**How Can You Draw Close to God?**” will follow. The morning session will end with a summary of the weekly Watchtower Study.

A special feature Sunday afternoon is a full-costume drama set in the first century. It is about the flight of Christians from Jerusalem and is entitled “**Walk by Faith and Not by Sight.**” After the drama, the convention will conclude with the talk “Remain ‘in the Secret Place of the Most High.’”

Make plans now to attend. To find the location nearest you, contact the local Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses or write the publishers of this magazine. The March 1 issue of *The Watchtower*, our companion magazine, and the Web site [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org) list convention locations in the United States.