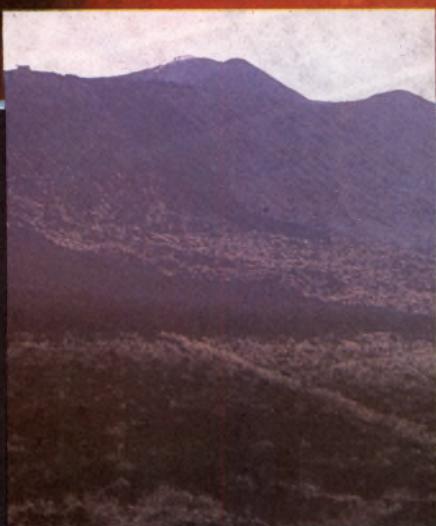


Awake!

July 8, 1987

**DO YOU HEED
WARNINGS?**





In November 1986, Mount Mihara on the island of Izu-Oshima, Japan, suddenly erupted, threatening the whole island along with its population of ten thousand islanders and tourists. When the announcement, "Evacuate now!" came, how did they react?

Read the following articles, and think about how you might have reacted under the various circumstances discussed.

Heeding a Warning May Save Your Life

A WARNING might be a traffic sign stating "Slow," "Caution," or "Yield"; or it might be a flashing yellow light. It might be found on a container of medicine or poison. Heeding such warnings is no great inconvenience, and it may save your life.

However, in some cases it may mean a disrupting of plans or a loss of material possessions. Storm and hurricane warnings may require fishermen to return to shore or to stay in port and not work that day. Warnings may mean not only a disrupting of plans but an abandoning of home and possessions, or the putting up with the inconvenience of temporary shelters. Sometimes such warnings go unheeded, with resultant loss of life.

For example, in the spring of the year 1902, all things were going well on the beautiful Caribbean island of Martinique. Then warnings of disaster began to appear as Mount Pelée, a volcanic mountain located about five miles (8 km) from St. Pierre, the island's principal city, became active. Eventually, as smoke, ash, and bits of rock belched forth along with acrid fumes, townspeople became apprehensive. Conditions continued to worsen, and it should have been evident that real danger was imminent.

Unheeded Warnings

Because the sugarcane harvest was approaching, St. Pierre's businessmen assured the people that there was no danger. The politicians, concerned with the upcoming election, did not want the people to be fleeing, so they spoke in a similar vein. The religious leaders cooperated by telling their parishioners that all was well. Then, on May 8, Mount Pelée exploded with a tremendous roar. Superheated black clouds raced toward St. Pierre, and some 30,000 people died.

For many generations Mount St. Helens, located in the state of Washington, U.S.A., was a picture of peace and serenity. The area was filled with a great variety of wildlife and was ideal for hiking and fishing. But then in March 1980, danger signals came in the form of numerous earthquakes and minor eruptions of steam. By early May the mountain was acting up with greater intensity. Local and state officials began to issue warnings of danger to those in the area of the volcano.

Still, a number of people remained in the area, while others ignored signs warning against crossing into the danger area. Suddenly, early Sunday morning, May 18, there was a tremendous explosion that blew off some 1,300 feet (400 m) of the mountaintop and rained down destruction on plants and animals, as well as on some 60 humans who had failed to heed the warnings given.

In contrast, in November 1986, Mount Mihara on the island of Izu-Oshima, Japan, suddenly erupted, threatening the whole island along with its population of ten thousand islanders and tourists. When the announcement, "Evacuate now!" came, they heeded the warning. The following articles from *Awake!* correspondent in Japan tell the story.

"Evacuate Now!"

Exodus of Ten Thousand People Overnight

By "Awake!" correspondent in Japan

EVACUATE now! Right away!" Elderly men and women in the Oshima Home for Senior Citizens were told to take refuge in an elementary school because of the eruption of Mount Mihara on November 21, 1986. Though the staff of the home had been prepared to evacuate since the volcano became active a few days earlier, the suddenness of the violent eruption that afternoon did not make it easy for them to flee.

"We could not even think about the stretchers we had prepared," explains Kazuko, a member of the home staff. "We took the elderly in our arms or carried them on our backs to the two buses that the town office had dispatched to the home. These were soon filled, and some people had to be taken by truck to a shelter."

In time the elderly arrived at the port and were put aboard a Maritime Safety Agency's boat in order to evacuate the island. They were among the first ones to leave. The evacuation of more than ten thousand islanders and tourists followed.

Earthquakes and Eruptions

Mount Mihara on the island of Izu-Oshima, usually called Oshima, is one of four active volcanoes under strict surveillance in Japan. It has been known for its mild activities. On November 15, 1986, however, the mountain erupted only two weeks after the Volcano Eruption Predicting Liaison Conference declared the mountain safe. The eruptions from crater number one kept increasing. (See map on page 6.) Lava flowed out of the inner rim of this crater into the volcano's caldera. Then, on the 21st, an unexpected eruption shocked the islanders. A new crater formed. This was followed by eruptions from cracks in the ground shooting up



"Firemen took me by force and made me leave"

fountains of fire more than 330 feet (100 m). New fire fountains shot up as cracks continued to open up on the side of the mountain.

Earthquakes shook people already terrified by the eruptions. Within an hour, altogether 80 earthquakes rocked the island. Overflowing lava from the outer rim of the crater snaked down the mountain and headed for the most populated area of Oshima, Motomachi. The flow toward Motomachi prompted Hidemasa Uemura, the mayor, to order the evacuation of the islanders from Motomachi. At this time, the southern part of the island, the Habu area, was considered safe.

'A Mushroom Cloud Like That of an Atom Bomb Explosion'

"We were having tea," recalls Jiro Nishimura, the only elder in the Izu-Oshima Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. "Then, a great explosion shook the air. When I went outside, there was a mushroom cloud above Mount Mihara just like that of an atom bomb explosion. I realized that this was no trivial eruption. I could hear something over the town office's loudspeaker, but since I couldn't hear the announcement clearly, I called the town office. They said that the inhabitants of the Motomachi area were not yet being advised to evacuate. I knew we had to have something to eat, so I asked my wife to cook rice and make rice balls. But even before I finished eating my first rice ball, the evacuation order was issued.

"Five of us, including my wife's mother, who is 90 years old, fled to the Motomachi Port parking lot. People were lined up to board the boat to evacuate the island. The line was long, but since my wife's mother was old and could not walk alone, we were allowed to board an earlier boat bound for Atami."

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For some, it was not easy to leave the island to which they have strong attachment. Kichijiro Okamura, 84 years old, an acupuncturist at the Oshima Home for Senior Citizens, has lived on Oshima for 40 years. Okamura relates his feelings: "The earthquakes were very bad, but I thought it was all right and wanted to see how things would go for a few days. I am used to eruptions and earthquakes. I did not worry too much because I knew it would eventually subside. But firemen took me by force and made me leave. I had to give in." He left with his wife Yoshie, their two daughters, and four grandchildren.

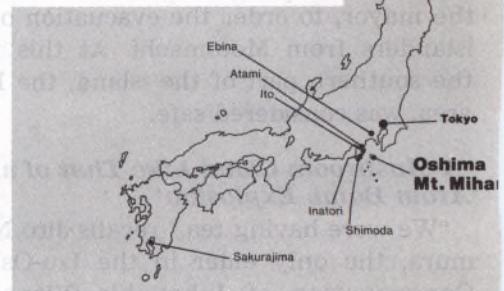
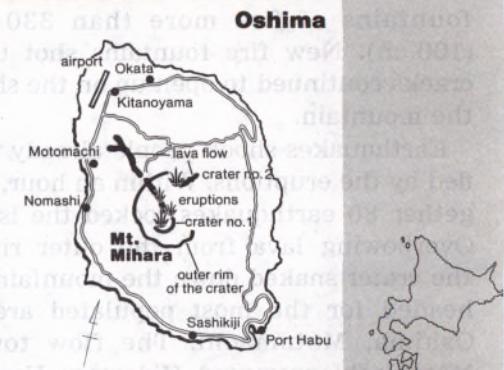
Evacuation Order for the Whole Island

At first, the lava flow threatened only the northern part of the island. Some who lived in the Motomachi area were transported to the Habu area. The inhabitants of the southern part of the island were merely advised to gather at gymnasiums or schools.

"I had but two blankets and this bag," says Kaoko Hirakawa, who took refuge in the Nomashi gymnasium at 5:00 p.m. "I thought it would only be overnight." Her husband Rinzo thought about his sick parents, who lived near the new crater. Worried, they got into a car to pick up his parents. "The earthquakes were tremendous," relates Rinzo. "It was just like being in a boat. As soon as we got my parents into the car, the ground only a few kilometers away from my parents' home erupted." They managed to reach the Nomashi gymnasium, but later they were told to move to Habu.

At 10:50 p.m. the town mayor ordered the whole island to be evacuated. "We took refuge at the Third Junior High School in Habu," Mrs. Tamaoki relates. "Then we were told to walk to the port. But Port Habu is too shallow for larger boats, so finally we had to take a bus to Motomachi, where we boarded a boat to Tokyo."

The exodus of more than ten thousand island-



ers and tourists was completed by 5:55 a.m., November 22, with the mayor and officials boarding the last boat for evacuees. The evacuation of Izu-Oshima was completed within five hours after the major eruption. It took place smoothly and orderly for the most part, to the credit of town officials, the shipping company that sent vessels to Oshima for the evacuation, and the willing cooperation of the islanders. With only rare exceptions, they obeyed the evacuation order promptly. Just a few hundred policemen, firemen, and other personnel stayed on the island, as well as a small number who refused to evacuate.

But where did the evacuees settle? Who would take care of them? How did Jehovah's Witnesses on the island fare?

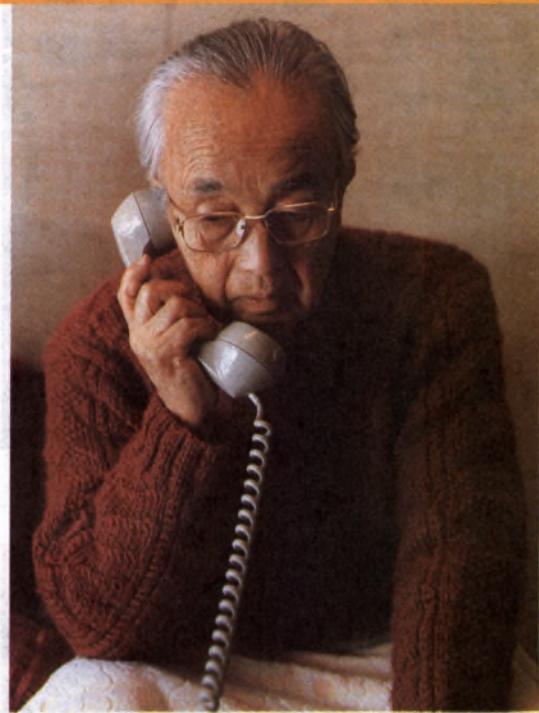
Homeless —But Alive!

By "Awake!" correspondent in Japan

THE first boats carrying evacuees arrived in ports along the Izu Peninsula during the night of November 21. Later it was decided that these people should be sent to Tokyo, since Oshima is under the jurisdiction of the Tokyo metropolitan government. The metropolitan government together with the national government took the initiative in organizing the relief work. Jehovah's Witnesses in both the Izu and the Tokyo areas as well as at the branch headquarters, located in Ebina City only about 50 miles (80 km) from Mount Mihara, also organized relief work.

As news reports of the event interrupted regular television programs, Jehovah's Witnesses living nearby became especially concerned about their spiritual brothers and sisters on the island. Nobumasa Obata of the Ito Congregation and others got in touch with Witnesses in the Izu area and organized activity for the receiving of evacuees. By 6:30 p.m. that day, the Witnesses were at each port on the Izu Peninsula and at Atami, ready to receive their brothers from Oshima.

When Jiro Nishimura and four others arrived at Atami about ten o'clock that evening, the Witnesses in Atami, with *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines in their hands, met them. Since the government authorities had not yet decided what to do, the evacuees were allowed to stay with anyone they wished. They headed for



Jiro Nishimura checking the whereabouts of fellow believers*

Yugawara, where Nishimura's son serves as an elder in the local congregation. The apartment in which they settled became a liaison center for the evacuees of the Oshima Congregation.

At 8:00 the next morning, the Branch Committee at the branch headquarters of the Watch Tower Society in Ebina decided to send immediately two branch representatives to the Izu area and two to the Tokyo area to organize relief work.

As the branch representatives discussed relief work with Nishimura, Mitsuo Shiozaki arrived with relief supplies from his congregation in Numazu. Evacuees especially appreciated the clothes he distributed among them, for quite a number of

* This much-loved witness of Jehovah died in February 1987.



Mitsuo Shiozaki distributes relief supplies



Many evacuees slept on cold gymnasium floors

them did not have any clothing other than what they wore when they left their island. They also gratefully accepted the food he had brought along.

Relief committees were designated in Izu and Tokyo to distribute needed funds to members of the Oshima Congregation. Such committees were also to look after the spiritual needs of the evacuees.

Relief Work in Tokyo

At 9:55 p.m. on November 21, after some ships had left with evacuees for cities on the Izu Peninsula, the governor of Tokyo ordered that all evacuees be sent to Tokyo. Yoshio Nakamura, an elder in the Mita Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Tokyo, was asked to organize the relief work there. Nakamura's apartment became the headquarters for relief work in Tokyo.

He asked some from his congregation and some from the Shinagawa Congregation to come with him. Ten of these left Nakamura's at about two o'clock Saturday morning and headed for the piers where the boats from Oshima were scheduled to arrive. The brothers were equipped with signs saying: "Members of the Oshima Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, please get in touch with us."

Until the last ship came, they went back and forth between the two piers where the boats arrived. It was then after ten o'clock Saturday morning. Jehovah's Witnesses in the Chuo Congregation also went to another pier where the ships from Oshima arrived. Not knowing which ships would have their fellow believers aboard, the Witnesses in Tokyo tried to meet all the ships that came in to Tokyo.

"Jehovah's Witnesses," recalls Kazuyuki Kawashima, "were the only representatives of a religious group who came to meet their fellow believers at the pier. The only other group that met the evacuees was from the teachers' union."

By Saturday evening, members of the Mita and Shinagawa Congregations had voluntarily assembled clothing and other relief supplies for immediate distribution among their spiritual brothers from Oshi-

ma. The Witnesses loaded these supplies into a van and visited the shelters where the Witness evacuees were accommodated. The Witnesses from Oshima as well as non-Witnesses who were there benefited from the relief supplies.

Encouraged by the Concern of Others

One Witness evacuee related: "When we left Oshima, we ourselves did not know where we were going. As we got off the ship, however, we spotted a sign saying, 'Jehovah's Witnesses.' Imagine how surprised and impressed we were! Tears welled up in my wife's eyes as she was overcome by relief at finding our brothers there to meet us at the pier."

"No sooner had we settled down in the Sports Hall in Koto Ward and telephoned Brother Nakamura than the branch representatives arrived to encourage us. This

really impressed us, and we could find no words to express our appreciation."

During the week, the relief-committee members visited all shelters accommodating the Witnesses and checked the needs of their fellow believers. They found that evacuated Witnesses were well taken care of by local congregations. Some Bible students were invited to the homes of local Witnesses for meals every day, and they appreciated such acts of kindness shown to them by Witnesses whom they did not know before this disaster.

This evacuation was successful because appropriate warnings were given and the people heeded them. But all mankind is facing a far greater danger that is coming with great speed. Warning is now being given, showing people how to escape this danger and preserve their lives. Will you heed this warning?

Will You Heed Warnings of Imminent Disaster?

SOME natural disasters cause a disruption in the lives of people; others, great destruction of life and property. Usually, though, such affect only a small part of the earth and its population at any one time. Our present generation, however, is facing a disaster of earth-wide dimensions that will affect all humankind.

No, it is not a nuclear war between the superpowers, although that would be a terrible disaster. Rather, we are speaking of God's expressed purpose to remove all badness from the face of the earth.

The scope of this disaster was expressed by Jesus in his prophecy pertaining to the conclusion of the system of things: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved."—Matthew 24:3, 21, 22.

They Saved Their Lives

Jesus compared this worldwide disaster with an earlier world calamity, the Flood of Noah's day, stating: "For just as the days of



**By heeding
warnings, Lot and
his daughters
escaped destruction**

Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matthew 24:37) The Bible states that in the days before the Flood "the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time." Jehovah said: "I am going to wipe men whom I have created off the surface of the ground."—Genesis 6:5-8.

As for Noah, we read at Hebrews 11:7: "By faith Noah, after being given divine warning of things not yet beheld, showed godly fear and constructed an ark for the saving of his household." Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives were all preserved alive through the Flood.

The rest of mankind at that time, however, ignored the warning given. According to Jesus' words, people in those days before the Flood were "eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and *they took no note* until the flood came and swept them all away."—Matthew 24:38, 39.

In the days of Lot, God determined to bring the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah to ruin because of their gross immorality. Yet, they continued 'eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting

and building' as though nothing was about to happen. Though Lot warned his prospective sons-in-law of the danger, 'in their eyes he seemed like a man who was joking.' But God directed fire and sulfur to rain from the skies, destroying all of them. Lot and his daughters obeyed the warning and saved their lives.—Luke 17: 28, 29; Genesis 19:12-17, 24.

Warning in Jesus' Day

In Jesus' day the Jewish people had rejected God's Word in favor of their own traditions, and they also rejected God's Son as the Christ, or Messiah. God determined to execute his judgment upon them and their glorious city, Jerusalem, by means of the Roman armies. Jesus gave warning about this and told his disciples how to escape that judgment. He said:

"When you catch sight of the disgusting thing that causes desolation, as spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in a holy place, . . . then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains." And: "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. Then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains, and let those in the midst of her withdraw, and let those in the country places not enter into her; because these are days for meting out justice, that all the things written may be fulfilled." (Matthew 24:15, 16; Luke 21:

20-22) It would be a time for urgent action, a person not even taking time to secure his material possessions. Jesus said: "Let the man on the housetop not come down to take the goods out of his house; and let the man in the field not return to the house to pick up his outer garment."—Matthew 24:17, 18.

In the year 66 C.E., Jerusalem was surrounded by Roman troops under Cestius Gallus, in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. The Romans, who were actually undermining the temple wall and thus standing in the holy place of the Jews, were something disgusting to the Jews. The warning sign was there but no opportunity to flee. Then Cestius Gallus unexpectedly withdrew his troops. Christians began fleeing to the mountains. The majority of the people, however, remained in the city, and other Jews continued to come into it for their religious festivals.

In 70 C.E., when the city was crowded with Passover celebrants, the Roman forces under General Titus returned with a vengeance and laid siege to Jerusalem. In time the walls were breached, the temple and the entire city destroyed, and according to the historian Josephus, 1,100,000 people died, and 97,000 survivors were sold into slavery to Egypt and other lands. This was the lot of those who failed to heed Jesus' warning. Those who fled from the city, as Jesus had commanded, preserved their lives.

Heed the Warning Now

Jesus' prophecy, as recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, was to have a greater fulfillment. Remember, Jesus was also answering the question of his apostles about the sign of his presence, which the Bible associates with the end of a whole world system of things. (Daniel

2:44; Matthew 24:3, 21) Jesus outlined that his return, or presence, which would be invisible, would be marked by a sign that would include wars, food shortages, earthquakes, pestilences, increase of lawlessness, persecution of his disciples, anguish of nations, and men becoming faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth.—Matthew 24:7, 8, 12; Luke 21:10, 11, 25, 26.

Who can deny that the generation since World War I has experienced an increase in all these pangs of distress? So that people would understand the significance of these things, Jesus prophesied: "And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) Jehovah's Witnesses have zealously preached this good news of the Kingdom in more than 200 lands in some 200 different languages, warning people of the imminent execution of God's judgment. With reference to those who would see the beginning of pangs of distress, which began with World War I, Jesus stated: "This generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur."—Matthew 24:34.

The way to heed Jesus' warning is, not by fleeing to literal mountains or by escaping to some other area of the earth, but by turning to the true God, Jehovah, and learning of his provision for preservation of life. You can do this by contacting those who are giving this warning, Jehovah's Witnesses, letting them study the Bible with you, and associating with them.

If heeding warnings was critical for some ten thousand Japanese who escaped destruction from a volcano, how much more vital it is for us to act now to receive Jehovah's protection from worldwide destruction in this time of the end!

The Pope's Visit to Australia

—Just a Pilgrimage?

By "Awake!" correspondent in Australia

ON MONDAY, November 24, 1986, an Air New Zealand Boeing 767 aircraft touched down at Canberra, Australia's capital. On board was Pope John Paul II, visiting the world's smallest continent as part of his longest-ever overseas tour.

To greet him were the governor-general and the prime minister of Australia, along with their wives, and, of course, many dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church, for this was a visit by one who is not just a religious leader but also a head of state.

Formalities over, John Paul directed his opening address to all Australians, not just to Roman Catholics. He began: "To all Australians, people of undoubted goodwill, I come as a friend. . . . I am embracing the entire country: the young and the old, the weak and the strong, those who believe and those whose hearts are weighed down by doubt."

If "those who believe" meant Roman Catholics, the number in Australia is almost 4 million—25 percent of the population. And though Australia has long been considered a secular society, the ratio of practicing Catholics in this land is quite high. In fact, 35 to 38 percent of Australian Catholics regularly attend Mass.

Despite this, however, the Catholic Church in Australia does have its problems. In the 1950's the church was split by a labor dispute, resulting in the development of factions that have become increasingly

critical of one another. Also, attendances at Mass are falling, and the ranks of priests are thinning. Additionally, more and more of the Catholic laity are ignoring the church's teachings on contraception, abortion, and divorce.

"Look, Listen, and Then Judge"

The theme chosen for the papal visit was "Christ the way, the truth and the life." This was a fine Scriptural theme, and many looked forward to the pope's shedding some guidance and truth on problems today facing Catholics and Australians in general. Some expected that he might condemn nuclear testing in the Pacific—a problem literally on Australia's doorstep. Others were keen to hear him support Aboriginal land rights or speak on labor disputes and perhaps discuss women's rights.

The tour organizer, Australian Monsignor Brian Walsh, a priest of 30 years' standing, was hopeful that important things would be covered in some of the papal addresses. So he encouraged all, even skeptics, to "look, listen, and then judge."

"Wiping Their Hands on the Papal Face"

Pope John Paul had made more than 30 overseas tours before coming to Australia, and the 60 and more countries he visited saw memorabilia of all descriptions produced to commemorate the occasion and, hopefully, to earn profits for promoters. Australia was no exception. The church

tried to keep a degree of control over such sales in the hope that "nothing in absolute bad taste [would] emerge." But this is always a touchy area. For example, a well-known Catholic nun complained about commemorative tea towels and people "wiping their hands on the papal face." The same nun also said: "Imagine the Sermon on the Mount being delivered, surrounded by souvenir-sellers, hot dog salesmen, TV cameras and Portaloos [portable toilets]."

However, it was not the multitude of medallions, spoons, T-shirts, and posters that drew most comment. It was the overall sponsorship. One sponsor was a brewery that issued cans of beer bearing the papal miter. As Australians are among the heaviest beer drinkers in the world, this venture proved profitable. But it also caused controversy and outspoken criticism.

Another sponsor was an Australian mining company that is well known for rigidly opposing Aboriginal land rights, an issue that the pope was known to support strongly. So it was not surprising that approval for this sponsorship was noted as being unusual. Indeed, some were quite vocal as to why there was need for sponsorship at all. Another nun voiced her objection by saying: "If Jesus came, no one would sponsor Him. He may well attack the whole concept of corporate sponsorship."

Who Footed the Bill?

Although many invitations came from the Catholic Church, it seems the pontiff only visits countries where an invitation is received from the government or the head of state. This meant that for the Australian visit, both federal and state governments shared part of the cost.

Some non-Catholics felt a sense of injustice at being asked to share in footing the bill, especially as some believed that a re-

"If Jesus came, no one would sponsor Him"

cent visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury had passed almost unnoticed. More disturbing to others was the fact that the cost was being estimated at 12 times the amount spent on an earlier visit by Queen Elizabeth II.

Unity—On Whose Terms?

In an effort to bring an ecumenical flavor to the visit, however, the pope spoke to a gathering of representatives of 14 other religious groups in Melbourne and held an interdenominational service there, urging all to put aside their differences and to pray for peace. He visited St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Melbourne, said a prayer for peace, and lit a candle symbolizing hoped-for reunification of the Christian churches.

Generally speaking, Australian Protestants were polite and well mannered during the time the pontiff was in the country. But some denominations, such as the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Baptists, made it clear that they did not accept the pope as the head of all Christians nor the claim that the apostle Peter had been bishop of Rome. They stressed that such claims found no support in Scripture or in church history. On the other hand, the Uniting Church, which has quite a large following in Australia, welcomed the visit, saying that to many people in their church, the pope was in a sense their pope too.

"Perhaps He Needs a New Speech Writer"

Apparently, all the pope's speeches were written in Australia and sent to Rome,

"The Pope came as a pilgrim with all the extravaganza and razzamatazz of a megastar"

where the pope himself wrote them out in Polish, adding whatever touches he found necessary. Someone else translated them back into English, and an Australian bishop cast an eye on the final product. The pope then practiced the speeches before the current master of pontifical ceremonies, who is an Irishman.

Veteran Vatican correspondents have several times heard much of what the pope has to say in his prepared speeches. Nevertheless, the language nicknamed papalese can be a hard nut to crack, even for experienced reporters. One spokesman from an Italian news agency felt that the pope's speeches were often obscure and too long. An Australian reporter expressed disappointment that the homilies were so bland and full of self-evident truisms. Another journalist, writing in the *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper, said: "His speeches have been conservative, often stating the obvious, and at times obscure. . . . Perhaps he needs a new speech writer . . . If his speeches confuse experienced correspondents they must bewilder the average person seeking enlightenment."

"The Church Opens Her Arms to You"

Despite the confusion claimed by some correspondents, however, the church hoped that the speeches would not bewilder the average person seeking enlightenment. The population had been encouraged 'to come, look, and listen,' and come they did by the thousands. The highest attendance at any one location was an estimated quarter of a million at the Sydney Randwick Racecourse. In his sermon

there, John Paul concentrated primarily on those he regarded as lapsed Catholics. With arms opened in a wide gesture, he pleaded: "To all those who have wandered from their spiritual home I wish to say, Come back! The Church opens her arms to you, the Church loves you."

Physically, it was certainly an arduous trip for a person 66 years of age. Altogether, the pope traveled some 6,800 miles (11,000 km) in almost a week and attended more than 50 separate events, including celebration of the Eucharist (Mass) in state capitals, as well as in Darwin and Alice Springs. For many of the faithful, it was an emotional experience. One man in Western Australia commented: "When the Pope arrived [in Perth] it was like Christ's entry into Jerusalem." Another in Melbourne commented about his presence: "He has the body language seen in some Indian mystics." Many cried openly.

Tour organizers were generally satisfied with the large attendances at the gatherings. Most of those who did attend enjoyed the spectacle of a 14-piece rock band, well-trained choirs, the 21-gun salute of welcome, the papal guards, the processions, and the flags. There were even clowns, said to have been arranged "to put smiles on people's faces."

A Catholic priest, who is also a columnist for the Sydney *Sunday Telegraph*, wrote: "So, this is the way the pilgrim Pope is coming to meet the people of Australia: non-Catholics and Catholics in a fast, razzle dazzle, multi-million dollar road show." "The Pope came as a pilgrim with all the extravaganza and razzamatazz of a mega-



Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

Aboriginal men line up to kiss the hand of Pope John Paul II

star." A *Sydney Morning Herald* editorial commented on what seemed to be emphasis on the "spectacle" angle: "And here is the gamble that the pilgrim Pope is taking. The spectacle, it seems, is to be the message. . . . The haunting question is: how lasting will the impact be?"

Message for the Australian People

For the thousands who came to listen, what message did the speeches (prepared in Australia) contain?

To the Disabled: Physical limitations can be transformed by Christ's love into something good and beautiful and can make one worthy of the destiny for which one was created.

On Unemployment: The need is for the social order to recognize that humans are more important than things. People must always remember that the worker is more important than profits or machines.

To the Media: They must realize the responsibility they have not only to report on evil but to help eliminate it, the challenge not only to report good deeds but to encourage them.

To Aboriginals: What has been done cannot be undone. Aboriginal reserves still exist today and require a just and proper settlement that still lies unachieved.

John Paul also spoke on the need for peace as the 1986 International Year of Peace drew toward its close. Addressing a crowd of over 30,000 composed predominantly of young people at a Youth Celebration in Sydney, the pontiff said: "If you want peace,

work for justice, . . . defend life, . . . proclaim truth, . . . treat others as you would like them to treat you."

In his farewell speech, he urged Australian people to remember who they were and where they were going, telling them that as a nation they were called to greatness. Then, to the background music of the songs "God Bless Australia" and "On the Road to Gundagai," John Paul II climbed the steps to the gleaming white Qantas jet that headed back for Rome via the Seychelles Islands.

Any Lasting Results?

What were the results of the papal visit? The Brisbane *Courier Mail* came to the following thought-provoking conclusion: "It has been a tour with high points and low points, surprises and disappointments. . . . The Australian Catholic Church will need to do some hard thinking. If Pope John Paul II, a man of remarkable charisma, cannot lure Catholics back inside the walls of the church it seems unlikely anything offered by his local bishops will succeed."



Black-crowned night heron



Gold and blue macaw

Singapore's World of Birds

FIRES the cannon!" At his keeper's command, Sudden Shot, a beautiful blue-fronted Amazon parrot, bends his head. His powerful beak presses the trigger. Instantly a table-tennis-type plastic ball shoots from the metal tube. But it does not have the chance to travel far. Mr. Horn, a well-groomed toucan, is waiting for it. With a deft flick of the head, his extraordinary orange-colored bill opens to pluck the ball from the air with the greatest of ease.

The keeper rewards our feathered duo with seeds readily at hand as the audience in the small amphitheater breaks into spontaneous applause.

Every year, close to three

quarters of a million people visit Singapore's Jurong Bird Park, a 50-acre (20 ha) site that has become home to more than 3,000 birds, over 300 species gathered from around the world. What a fascinating, delightful place it is!

Five acres (2 ha) of the park are now "the world's largest enclosed walk-in aviary," as the official guidebook describes it. As we stroll through under the fine mesh draped high above the trees, birds are everywhere. Brilliantly colored parrots chatter noisily as a fairy bluebird quietly flits from tree to tree. A purple gallinule deftly walks across the water lily leaves, its enormous feet giving it perfect balance. Numer-

ous waterfowl splash in a stream fed from a one-hundred-foot high (30 m) artificial waterfall. At the end of the path, we join a group of tourists to admire a proud peacock with tail open in full display.

In complete contrast, all is quiet in the nocturnal house. Rare owls perch motionless as we whisper to each other in the darkened corridors. Black-crowned and nankeen night herons wait patiently in their mangrove-swamp setting. But the rarest birds we had hoped to see, the kiwis, New Zealand's national symbol, remain elusive to us. Then we see the unusual Australian tawny frogmouth unexpectedly staring down at us.



Brown kiwi ▲

Greater flamingo ▼



Out in the open once again, we pass the lake, resplendent with its flock of flamingos, and go on to quieter pathways. We marvel at the birds of prey and move on to watch breathlessly as the hummingbirds so delicately sip nectar from the hibiscus. How is it possible that this, the smallest of birds—some weigh less than an ounce (28 gm)—can beat its wings up to 70 times a second? Truly, it is a magnificent marvel of design.

To care for the inhabitants of this Jurong Bird Park is a prodigious task. Correct foods and habitats have to be maintained carefully. Yet, despite Singapore's tropical heat, Humboldt penguins from the cold waters off South America's west coast breed contentedly here, just as the native songbirds do.

Now we are just in time to see Mac the macaw astride his high-wire bicycle. As he pedals across the thatch-roofed stage, the young children shriek with delight. "It took three months to teach Mac to do it," explains Jerry Tan, the park's public-relations man, "and we train between 50 and 60 birds a year." Trainers have to be kind and patient. Birds are rewarded, never punished. "We are still looking for two more bird trainers."

But it is not for us. Soon we must return to our northern clime, to our friendly robin, whose red breast will bring a little color into our garden. Then, how pleasant it will be to recall memories of this glorious pageant.—Contributed.



How Can I Serve God if My Parents Oppose Me?

THEY were beaten, subjected to threats and privations, and finally forced to move away from home. The source of this mistreatment? Members of their own family. Such was the experience of Kamal, Chani, and Jaswinder, three young sisters from India living in England. They wanted to become Christians, but their parents—indeed their whole family—bitterly opposed their abandoning traditional religious beliefs.

Perhaps you are in a similar position. Through a study of the Bible, you have cultivated a desire to be one who 'worships the Father with spirit and truth.' (John 4:23) It may be, though, that your parents have become disillusioned with religion or that your newfound faith conflicts with their long-held religious beliefs. Whatever the case, it should not surprise you that family opposition exists. Jesus himself prophesied that true Christianity would often divide families. (Matthew 10:34-37) The question is, Just how should you handle the situation?

These three young women stayed firm in their Christian faith in spite of family opposition

Kamal, Chani, and Jaswinder stood firm for the Scriptural principles they were learning. They were able to worship freely only after they moved out on their own from the industrial Midlands to the southern part of England. Likely, however, you are still legally subject to your parents. What, then, can you do, while living at home, to overcome opposition from those



whom you love? The Bible gives some guiding principles.

Maintain a Respectful Attitude

At 1 Peter 3:15 the Bible encourages us to share our faith "with a mild temper and deep respect." Yet, you may be so enthused about newly learned Bible truths that you tend to be overbearing or pushy about your beliefs, perhaps even making your parents look foolish. No one likes to appear ignorant. So if you are constantly correcting your parents as a result of things you have learned, expect a negative reaction on their part.

Rita, a teenager living in Germany at the time, confesses: "Everything I learned I told my parents right away, in effect telling them that what *they* were believing was not right." But parents have a right to hold personal opinions and beliefs without being criticized—especially by their own children. Admits Rita: "I should have been more respectful toward them and should have acknowledged their own belief in God."

Paul told the young man Timothy that he should "not severely criticize an older man." Would that not also apply at home, with your parents who love you?—1 Timothy 5:1.

Obey Your Parents

"Children, be obedient to your parents," commands the Bible. (Ephesians 6:1) Kay followed this principle. She came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses when she was just eight years old. "My parents raised us to be tolerant of others," Kay says, "so they permitted me to study the Bible and go to meetings." Even so, Kay had to work hard to make sure that all she said and did reflected well on her faith.

"As I started to associate with Jehovah's

people," Kay explains, "I realized that if I was disobedient, not only would my parents not like it but they would not see the truth as a good influence on me. So if I was asked to take out the trash, be home at a certain time, practice the piano, or whatever, I would try to obey as best I could. I would never talk back."

Kay's parents never did come to share her beliefs. Because of her obedience, however, she was able to practice her faith without opposition, becoming a baptized Christian at the age of 19.

Communicate With Your Parents

Said wise King Solomon: "I proved to be a real son to my father, tender and the only one before my mother." (Proverbs 4:3) Yes, the fact that your parents do not share your faith does not make them your enemies. You should still endeavor to be "a real son" or daughter. Try to understand their deep hurt over your pursuing a faith that seems strange to them. At the same time, freely share your feelings and concerns with them. True, because your thoughts are now guided by Bible principles, you may differ with your parents on certain issues.—1 Corinthians 2:14.

A young man named Alan, for example, wanted to spend more time in the Christian ministry. His parents, though, wanted him to continue his college education. Alan recalls: "I guess I was a little bit fearful about confronting my father on such a major decision. So I decided to leave school secretly—and that caused many more problems. I had to work hard afterward to build up our mutual trust, whereas had I explained my plans, even though it may have been tough initially, I think he would have respected me more, and I would have saved both of us a lot of heartache."

But what caused Alan to be so hesitant

about talking with his parents? He confesses: "It is possible to develop a persecution complex when parents block something we might want to do. We may think: 'This is what I learned about! A man against his father; his enemies, persons of his own household!'" (Matthew 10:35, 36) Alan learned the hard way that parents need not

Unbelieving parents may at times have difficulty relating to a Christian youth's concerns

be treated as enemies. He now advises: "Communicate! Let them know your feelings. I think most parents will give a listening ear—if they see that sincerity is really there."

While you must be firm for godly principles, "if possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." (Romans 12:18) By letting your parents know how you really feel about certain matters, confrontations can often be avoided or minimized. Of course, if your parents insist upon your taking a certain course of action, by all means obey them as long as such a course does not conflict with Bible principles. Rather than being inflexible, "let your reasonableness become known."—Philippians 4:5.

Gain the Support of Fellow Christians

"Listen to your father who caused your birth, and do not despise your mother," says Proverbs 23:22. At times, though, your unbelieving parents may have difficulty understanding some of your concerns. A preteenager named John, for example, tried discussing a Bible principle with his father. His father's response? "I do not want to be dependent upon a Bible

or an organization, so you're on your own!"

But you are not really on your own. Jesus promised the support of spiritual "brothers and sisters" within the Christian congregation. (Mark 10:30) Kay, mentioned earlier, found this to be true in her case. "My Christian brothers and sisters," she recalls, "became like my family." Not that any other person, however beloved, can replace in all respects a natural parent. Yet, within the congregation we can find those who will be dear to us—like fathers and mothers—and who can give us invaluable counsel and advice.—Compare 1 Corinthians 4:15.

Keep a Positive View!

Admittedly, even with the help of the foregoing counsel, you will no doubt find your situation quite difficult. But remember: Both people and circumstances can change! The three Indian sisters mentioned at the outset report: "Because of our steadfastness and respectful attitude, we now enjoy a happy relationship with the entire family." An English girl named Jane similarly writes: "I have had to struggle many times and fight for the truth, but now my parents accept more readily my beliefs as a true Christian, and I look forward to being baptized soon."

In some cases parents, moved by the sterling examples of their own children, have themselves become dedicated servants of Jehovah! So it is possible for you to earn respect for your godly course of action and become an example not just to "the faithful ones" but also to those you dearly love at home. (1 Timothy 4:12) Do not give up in your determination to serve God. Prayerfully follow through on the suggestions made here, and rely upon Jehovah. Assured the psalmist: "Roll upon Jehovah your way, and rely upon him, and he himself will act."—Psalm 37:5.



1987— Year of the Homeless

WHEN night falls, thousands of people in Bombay, São Paulo, Mexico City, New York City, and scores of other cities bed down in ducts, under bridges, and on sidewalks. They huddle in cardboard boxes, stretch out on crumpled newspapers, or doze off on bare concrete. The world's one hundred million homeless are "home."

Yet, millions more are homeless in still another sense. They live as squatters in illegal and unsightly shantytowns, slums where oozy streets are the bathrooms and ever-present vultures are the garbage collectors. Their makeshift "homes" are leaky sheds made from gunnysacks, reed mats, hammered-out oil drums, mud, and stones. More than half of all Third World city dwellers live in such abominable conditions.

To focus world attention on the plight of the urban homeless and to improve their living conditions, the United Nations organization has declared 1987 to be the International Year of the Homeless.

"Throughout the world, we have to realize that we cannot get around this problem any longer," says Max van der Stoel, chairman of the Dutch National Committee of the Year of the Homeless. "It is one of the world's most serious problems." And the problem is growing. *NieuwsBrief voor het Internationale Jaar van de Daklozen* (Newsletter for the International Year of the Homeless) estimates that in the coming decade or so, one billion more people will add their shacks to the already bulging urban slums—doubling the population of many Third World cities!

What can be done about the problem? Clearing away the shantytowns would only increase the number of homeless people. The UN thus opts, instead, for slum improvement, providing slum areas with basic provisions, such as sanitary facilities. And rather than sending in bulldozers—leaving a trail of pulverized sheds and desperate people—governments could give squatters housing se-

curity, perhaps in the form of leasing. The UN further recommends that urban-development funds be drastically increased because, as the newsletter put it, "housing, together with food and clothing, belongs to the most basic human need."

"Sustenance and covering" are indeed basic needs. (1 Timothy 6:8) And God encourages us to perform acts of human kindness to provide relief for those who are lacking, especially for our fellow believers. (1 John 3:17; Galatians 6:10) Nevertheless, God's Word helps us to have a realistic view of mankind's problems. Observed King Solomon: "That which is made crooked cannot be made straight." (Ecclesiastes 1:15) Consequently, projects such as the International Year of the Homeless, though doubtless well intentioned, cannot fully solve man's problems.

Does this leave no hope for the homeless? On the contrary! During the sixth century B.C.E., Jehovah God foretold a "housing project" that would be built in Judah—a land that first would be "a desolate waste, without an inhabitant" for 70 years. (Jeremiah 9:11; 29:4, 5, 10; 32:43) Likewise, today's homeless can be sure that Jehovah will rehabilitate mankind on a worldwide scale. (Isaiah 65:21) How comforting to know, then, that the Year of the Homeless will soon be followed by a millennium that will bring real peace, security, and ample housing!—Revelation 20:4; 21:3, 4.

Do Women Belong in the Pulpit?

"**M**OST Christian laymen cannot understand why, if women can be monarchs, prime ministers, judges, surgeons, scientists, they must be prevented from celebrating Holy Communion and marriages," writes Church of England clergyman Nicholas Stacey in *The Times* of London.

Although the Church of England trains women for special service, up till now it has not permitted women to serve as priests to administer its sacraments. Do you agree with the stand of the church, or do you believe that women should be in the pulpit?

Could Split Churches

The issue of women as clergy has become a wedge between members of the same religion. The Church of England could easily split into two separate institutions over the issue, warns Dr. Graham Leonard, Bishop of London, the leading cleric opposing ordination of women.

The issue of women as clergy has become a wedge between members of the same religion

Some people blame prejudice for keeping women out of the pulpit, but more is involved.

For decades, the Church of England has been trying to reconcile its differences with Rome. But in a recent letter to the Archbishop of

Canterbury, the pope said that any admission of women to the priesthood would constitute "in the eyes of the Catholic Church, an increasingly serious obstacle to that progress."

One important element, though, has been left out of this debate—the Bible. How did women serve in the early Christian congregation, and what should be their role today?

Equal but Different

At the birth of the Christian congregation in the year 33 C.E., women along with men were recipients of holy spirit. This is exactly as the prophet Joel had foretold centuries earlier, the apostle Peter explained.—Acts 1:13-15; 2:1-4, 13-18.

Later, Peter came to full realization of another important fact: "God is not partial." (Acts 10:34) Literally, that scripture means that God is not a "taker of faces." A "taker of faces" shows recognition and preference for another person. In ancient times, many a judge would favor the wealthy over the poor. Or verdicts would be handed down based on nationality, social rank, family, or friendship rather than on the facts. But Jehovah does the opposite. He favors only those who fear him and work righteousness. When it comes to salvation, God does not esteem a man's 'face' over a woman's 'face.' Both are on an equal footing with him.—Acts 10:35.

Therefore, the Scriptures afford Christian men and women an equal measure of honor as members of the congregation. The apostle Paul

writes to Christians in Galatia that "there is neither slave nor freeman, there is *neither male nor female*; for you are all one person in union with Christ Jesus." All have an independent spiritual standing before God; yet all are united as a body of his servants. All are alike in God's household.—*Galatians 3:26-28.*

Nevertheless, there are differences between men and women in the congregation. But just as natural differences between a man and a woman are no obstacle to their complementing each other, so the different privileges that men and women enjoy within the Christian congregation should not be an obstacle to the congregation's harmony. What are those differences?



Teachers—When and to Whom?

The differences center on teaching and authority. Women are barred from serving in an official teaching capacity in the congregation and from exercising spiritual authority over fellow congregation members. In his pastoral letter to Timothy, Paul plainly states: "I do not permit a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence." —*1 Timothy 2:12.*

Paul next points to the basis for not allowing women to be teachers—a divinely appointed relationship between man and woman. "For Adam was formed first, then Eve," he writes. (*1 Timothy 2:13*) God could have created Adam

and Eve at the same moment, but he did not. Adam existed for some time before Eve. Does this not reveal God's purpose for Adam to direct, to be the head, rather than Eve? (*1 Corinthians 11:3*) And to teach is, in effect, to act as a master, or head, over those taught. Those taught listen and quietly learn. Thus, in the congregation only men are to be teachers and overseers.

Need the fact that women do not teach in the congregation cause frustration and resentment? No. Women are free to teach Christian doctrine and are invited to do so. In what context and under what circumstances? Older women can be "teachers of what is good" to the younger women. And just as Eu-nice and her mother Lois instructed Timothy, so Christian women still follow their example in training chil-

dren in "The Way" of the truth.—*Titus 2:3-5; Acts 9:2; 2 Timothy 1:5.*

Today, Christian women also follow the examples of Euodia and Syntyche by preaching the good news publicly. (*Philippians 4:2, 3*) They can be teachers by conducting Bible studies with interested people. (*Matthew 28:20*) Hundreds of thousands of women find spiritual fulfillment in this urgent work of preaching and teaching. They point others to the establishment of a world of righteousness and peace under the reign of Jesus Christ—a hope they share equally with their Christian brothers.—*Psalm 37:10, 11; 68:11.*

A Little Light on Your Subject

DO SOME of your photographs give your friends luminous red eyes or make the men appear to be wearing long hair when they are not? Do your outdoor photos disappointingly show hollow, dark eyes and other problems with shadows? Again, has someone in a large hall ever laughed when seeing you at the back of the hall taking a flash photograph of people on the stage? These camera disappointments have one thing in common—a problem involving light on your subject.

If so, you may appreciate some hints about how to overcome them. These tips are not intended for the professional but for those of you who are trying your hand at flash photography.

Those Red Eyes

The annoying red-eye effect (or white-eye if you are using black and white film) is the bright reflection of the flash from the subject's eyes. This happens when the flash unit is positioned very close to the camera lens and both are pointed at the subject. Similarly, light reflected from a shiny surface on or near the subject may cause a glare, or flare, to show up in the picture.

When taking pictures indoors, why not try tilting your flash unit toward the ceiling if your equipment allows for it? (Illustration A) The reflected light will usually be sufficient for your photograph. Another alternative is to use a cable attachment for the unit, unless you are using a camera that has a built-in flash unit. This will enable you to

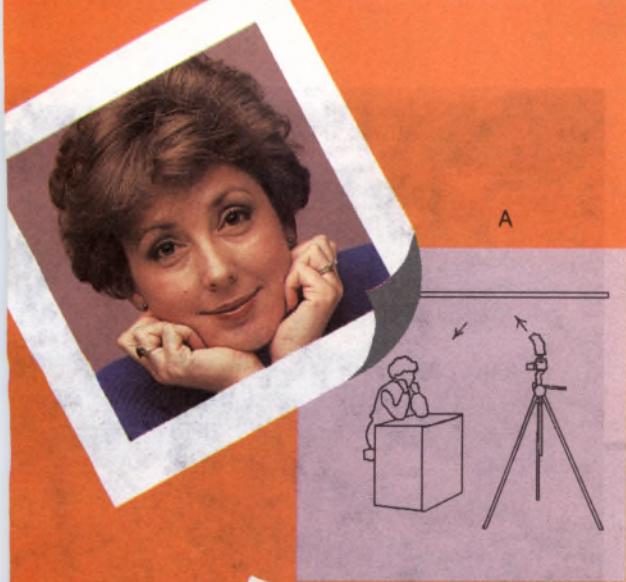
position the flash away from the camera at any angle that will reduce undesired reflection and shadows. If it is not possible to use either of these methods, then try having your subjects look slightly away from the lens of the camera.

Something else to bear in mind for color photographs: Reflected light will be tinted by the color of the surface from which it is bounced. So make sure that the ceiling, wall, or other surface that you are using as a reflector is white or has a neutral color. You can also further cut down glare by using a lens shade or by covering or masking shiny surfaces where possible.

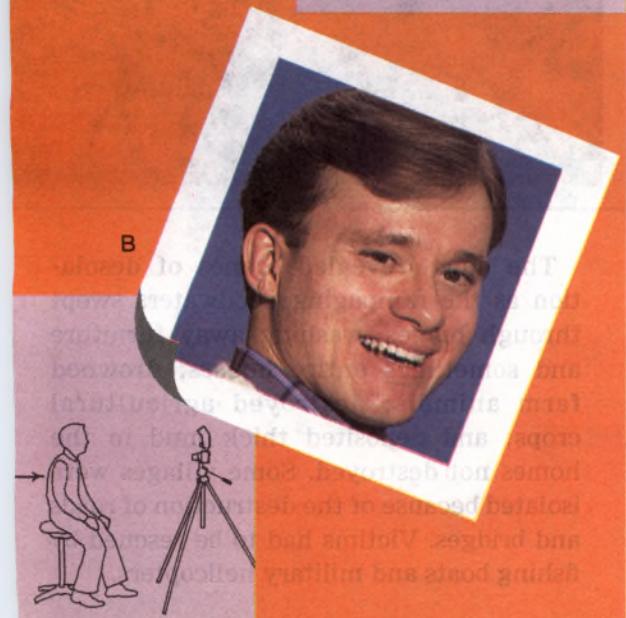
More About Shadows

When your photograph of Uncle John shows plenty of hair at the back of his head, you are shocked. He has no hair! Actually, you are having a problem with the momentary shadows produced by the flash. Uncle John was too near the background. Next time try moving him forward, away from it. (Illustration B)

You can also reduce such a problem by pointing the flash away from the subject toward a neutrally colored surface. The reflected light will give you the effect of indirect lighting, helping to eliminate unwanted shadows. You may find it interesting to locate dark areas where you want them by holding the flash unit high or low or off to either side. Be creative with your indoor shadows! Now take a look at the outdoor ones.



A



B



C

You have photographed your sister while she was wearing a wide-brimmed hat in bright sunlight. The settings on your camera were accurately adjusted, yet she showed up without a face—too much shadow under the hat. What can you do next time? Use a flash; but reduce its brightness by using a smaller lens aperture or by masking the transparent screen of the flash unit with a white handkerchief. (Illustration C) Remember, too, to guard against red or white eyes as we have already explained. Use of the flash will also eliminate or soften shadows around the eyes and under the nose and chin in photographs taken under the midday sun.

Range of Light

If you do not wish to advertise your inexperience, you will avoid attempting flash photographs of subjects that are too far from you. Every flash unit has limited range, and its light is useless beyond that range. Indeed, it may even obscure your subject by brightening only the foreground within its range. So save your flash for subjects that are near enough. Using a flash in any darkened auditorium is also very inconsiderate of others in the audience.

Finally, since the intensity or brightness of light on the subject decreases greatly with distance, make sure that there is not too much depth in your group pictures. Arrange your groups in only one or two rows. You can compensate for light falloff to some extent by putting those of the group who have darker clothing or skin in front.

Well, now, is flash photography difficult? Not really. And it will be more fun as you use better methods to throw a little light on your subject.

Disasters

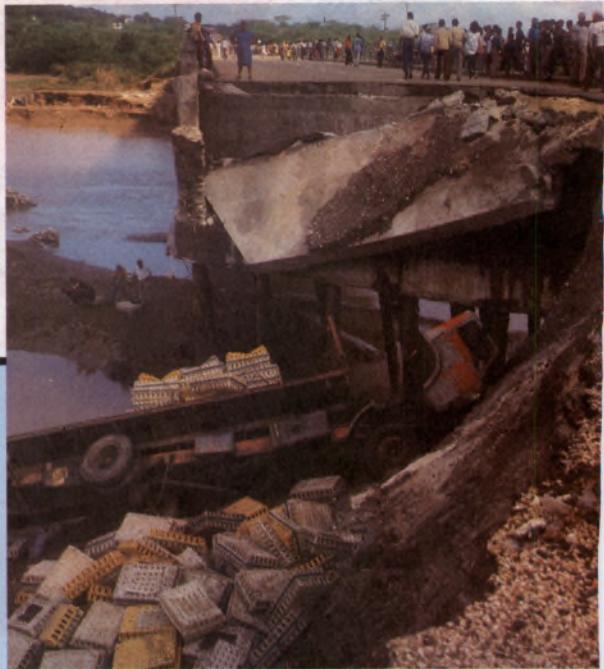
—A Time for Acts of Love

On the average, the world is hit with 26 major disasters per year, with floods taking the lead. They are the most frequent, disrupting the lives of millions of people each year. How would you react if a disaster—large or small—struck your area? Would you show loving concern for others? Would you know how? Perhaps the following story may help.

By "Awake!" correspondent in Jamaica

"WATER, water, the Rio Minho River is flooding! Everybody wake up and run. The river is overflowing!" Frantic voices shouting in the early morning hours of June 6, 1986, snapped Tony Burgher and his wife to attention. This was no false alarm. They hopped out of bed, grabbed their 3-year-old son, and scrambled to the roof. Tony and his wife were not alone in their exodus.

Many inhabitants of the southern section of the island of Jamaica woke up to find muddy water swirling under their beds. What had happened? The hills that rose above the Plain of Vere had heavy, continuous rains for many days. The runoff had raised the level of the Rio Minho River to the point where the river broke its banks and spilled tons of muddy water onto the plains.



The dawn revealed scenes of desolation as the rampaging floodwaters swept through homes, washing away furniture and sometimes entire houses; drowned farm animals; destroyed agricultural crops; and deposited thick mud in the homes not destroyed. Some villages were isolated because of the destruction of roads and bridges. Victims had to be rescued by fishing boats and military helicopters.

Arranging Relief

The Witnesses at the Watch Tower branch office in Kingston were concerned about their fellow Witnesses in the affected areas. So on the following morning, three members of the Branch Committee traveled by car to the worst-hit area. After many detours to avoid floodwaters, they contacted an elder of one of the congregations in the flooded region. He led them to

the home of Tony Burgher, a special pioneer minister. Tony and his family had by then left the rooftop and were sheltered in a nearby public-school building that was being used as a relief center. Tony reported to the committee about the rest of the affected brothers. After a quick assessment of their immediate needs, arrangements were made with elders from a nearby congregation to supply the flood sufferers with food. By five o'clock that afternoon, a supply reached them.

On Sunday, the second day following the flood, an appeal was sent to all the congregations in Kingston to help with food, clothing, and drinking water. The response was prompt, and needed supplies arrived in generous quantities at the branch. By that afternoon a truckload of donated supplies was dispatched to the flood victims.

Acts of Loving Concern

The contributions sent to the branch exceeded by far the needs of those who suffered loss. A 13-year-old handicapped son of a Witness, upon hearing of the disaster, donated his entire savings of \$160, U.S., to the branch office of the Society to be used for relief. Another thought of their spiritual needs and donated a Bible wrapped in plastic. "Many eyes filled with tears as we saw the gifts of mercy from our brothers," said Tony.

One week after the flood, a group of Witnesses returned to the flood area to clean up the homes that were filled with mud and to bury dead animals. In the volunteer group was a sister with one leg. Though she was handicapped, love moved her to travel 60 miles (97 km) to help her spiritual brothers.

The floor of one Kingdom Hall was covered with mud three feet (0.9 m) deep. The

brothers, though, knowing they must 'not forsake gathering together,' worked late into Saturday night—the day after the flood—to have the hall ready for Sunday. (Hebrews 10:25) How happy they were to see that 16 were present for the meeting on Sunday morning!

Reaction to Acts of Brotherly Love

The government of Jamaica organized relief for those affected island-wide and also organized a national clean-up campaign, but the speed with which Jehovah's Witnesses moved in to help their spiritual brothers and interested persons clean up their homes caused one observer to remark that "the Witnesses worked faster than the government."

"Imagine," one woman confided to her Witness neighbor, "they brought you drinking water all the way from Montego Bay [more than 100 miles (160 km) away]; they are really loving!" The unbelieving relative of another Witness, on seeing the concern and love displayed, remarked: "I don't believe in their way of worship, but one thing I have to say, They are very loving."

In Our Next Issue

- Our Beautiful Earth—How Much of It Will We Leave Our Children?
- When a Fact Is Not a Fact
- From Black Militants to Jehovah's Witnesses

From Our Readers

Beating Stress

Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . Can I Beat Stress?" (April 8, 1987) I am one of your subscribers and want to tell you how good it is to find one's own feelings put in writing. We always believe we're the only ones who feel a certain way. The sympathetic spirit that guides you has touched my heart, and I hope that of many others.

S. S., Italy

Many thanks for the article on beating stress. I am almost 12 years old, and some of my schoolwork makes me nervous, especially English. Sometimes I just don't feel like continuing. But the article contained five points that I will now try to apply.

M. N., Federal Republic of Germany

As a reminder, the five points are: (1) Reduce irritants. (2) Organize and limit your activities. (3) Lessen fear of failure. (4) Talk to somebody. (5) Pray to God.—ED.

What Do Clothes Mean?

I enjoyed reading the article "What Do Clothes Mean to You?" (February 8, 1987) It gave tips and very useful ideas of how to get the most out of one's wardrobe and the maintaining of proper balance regarding clothes. It is important to bear these factors in mind so that our grooming reflects favorably on our Creator.

P. T., England

The article "What Do Clothes Mean to You?" helped me very much. I used to like clothes that were the very latest

style, but the article showed me the need for caution in this regard and that a good guide is that each person always dress according to his or her age. Thank you for the suggestions for a quality wardrobe.

R. R., Brazil

Phobias

I was absolutely amazed when your articles on "Phobias" discussed my personal problem. (February 8, 1987) For about 20 years I have experienced a very real problem with writing in the presence of other people, especially when it comes to a signature. I honestly believed I was totally alone with this problem. You can, no doubt, understand my amazement when this very problem was mentioned in *Awake!* At last I realized I was not alone, that someone else knew what it is like to experience this fear and was probably trying to avoid situations in which it arose. I felt this article was meant by God to be read by me, and I thank God for the man and the girl who brought it to my door.

J. M., England

I am 13 years old and wish to thank you for the articles on "Phobias." I very much enjoyed reading the articles, especially since I suffer from claustrophobia. It really is obsessive! Sometimes I feel I am going mad. I felt it was no use going to a doctor and that I had to solve the problem on my own. Now, thanks to your article, I realize that I should talk to my doctor about it and try to calm down, since I'm quite easily agitated.

T. Z., Italy

Watching the World

Vatican Losing Influence

For centuries the names Spain and France have been synonymous with tasty wines and staunch Catholicism. Today, the wines are still flowing, but support for the Roman Catholic Church in these two South European countries is rapidly declining. *Kruispunt*, a Dutch Roman Catholic magazine, reports that only 46 percent of all Spaniards still want to be registered as practicing Catholics, and a mere 18 percent of all people in Spain are attending church each week. Similarly, the Sofres Institute in Paris, France, announced that 55 percent of all Roman Catholics in that country feel that they can disregard official statements of the pope and yet be good Catholics. They believe that abortion and premarital sex are permissible and that "it is absolutely unnecessary to belong to a parish or a Catholic organization." The studies indicate that in both Spain and France 15 percent of the population has now turned away from religion.

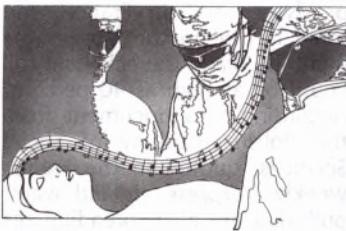
Life-Shortening Combination

"The combination of poor nutrition and too frequent pregnancies can reduce a woman's life span by five years for each baby she has," states *Asiaweek*. "International specialists recom-

mend two to three years between pregnancies." The longer intervals will protect the mother from "maternal depletion" due to pregnancy and breast-feeding and improve the health of the child as well. The report also cites the benefits of breast-feeding "in preventing malnutrition and reducing infant mortality."

Music for Surgery

Can music help patients during surgery? The results of research conducted at the Jeffer-



son General Hospital in Port Townsend, Washington, suggest it can. The effects of music in the operating room on 25 different patients were studied by music therapist Helen Lindquist Bonny and nurse anesthetist Noreen McCarron. Music instead of sedation was used to quash the sounds within the operating room that often create anxiety before an operation. Melodious music reduced blood pressure

and heart rates, notes *American Health*, and also cut by half the sedatives needed to calm patients. A comparable study in the Federal Republic of Germany showed a similar reduction. Classical music, as well as popular music from the '40's and '50's, with even tempos and rhythms was used. Wild, raucous sounds were shunned. McCarron claims that the soothing effect of music is equivalent to 2.5 mg of Valium. Patients listening to it generally felt better after their operation and could go home sooner.

Advancing Deserts

"Every year, an area twice the size of Belgium, 60,000 square kilometres [23,000 sq mi], becomes a desert," states *New Scientist* magazine. "This is despite promises made 10 years ago by 94 nations to turn back the tide of sand." Most of the \$6 billion (U.S.) allotted so far by the richer nations to halt desertification of land has been used for sanitation and road building. While some regional successes have been noted, not a single nation has been able to halt the deserts' growth.

Exceeding Earth's Limits

The earth's systems that support life are being pushed over

"thresholds" beyond which there will be permanent change and damage, warns Worldwatch Institute. Its new report, *State of the World 1987*, said that "efforts to improve living standards are themselves beginning to threaten the health of the global economy." The results of contamination, extinction of plant and animal species, and declining food and fuel production "are making the earth less habitable for future generations," the report stated. It added: "No generation has ever faced such a complex set of issues requiring immediate attention. Preceding generations have always been concerned about the future, but we are the first to be faced with decisions that will determine whether the earth our children inherit will be inhabitable."

Poison's Price

Many poisons are worth far more than either gems or gold, says the Soviet magazine *Sputnik*. "For example, an ounce of the poison of the cobra costs 9,000 dollars [U.S.], that of *Bungarus caeruleus* 14,000 dollars, one of the sea snake 43,000 dollars, the North-American coral cylinder-snake 56,000 dollars, the African boomslang snake 283,000 dollars, that of the bumblebee (*Bombus muscorum*) 1,134,000 dollars, and that of the female American black widow spider 2,360,000 dollars." Why so high priced? Because of difficulty in obtaining them, as some species are very rare. Besides, insects yield only milligrams of poison and snakes about ten droplets, and a month may be needed to develop another dose. Despite the cost, such poisons are in demand for

use in serums to save those bitten and as disease cures.

Pollution's Heavy Toll

"In Switzerland, where half the land area is forest or mountain country, the average acid rain toll is 50 percent," reports the *International Herald Tribune*,



while "in some areas . . . the rate of dead or dying trees has hit 65 percent." Such statistics are alarming to ecologists who view acid rain as a serious problem affecting much of northern Europe. In the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, over 50 percent of the trees are dead or dying, and in France, the same is true in the Vosges region. In Poland the acid-rain toll could be as high as 40 percent. According to a document from the Polish Academy of Social Sciences, quoted in the French weekly *L'Express*, air and water pollution are also spreading disaster in Poland. Despite Europe's serious problem with pollution, Dr. Claude Martin, an acid-rain specialist, confessed: "There is a certain reluctance to act on it and act strongly enough."

"Crash Effort"

Exactly how many species of plants and animals exist is unknown. Estimates range from 5 to 30 million, while only some

1.6 million of them have been identified thus far. Since so relatively few have been studied for scientific lessons or economic utility, explains *The New York Times*, biologists are "calling for a new age of natural exploration, a crash effort to find and study millions of species before they are wiped out." Most of these species live in tropical rain forests, which are being destroyed by logging operations or converted to farms and ranches. Although small creatures and plants do not engender public sympathies as do whales or pandas, they "are the foundation of intricate webs that ultimately support all life, including humans," reports the *Times*.

New Blood Threat

United States health officials are concerned that a rare cancer-causing virus may be spreading in a fashion similar to the one that causes AIDS. "We have evidence now that a virus spread by blood and associated with a very serious disease has been detected in the U.S.," says S. Gerald Sandler, medical director of the Red Cross. The virus, called human T-cell leukemia virus one, or HTLV-I, is the first virus known to cause cancer in humans. In addition to causing a form of adult leukemia, the virus has also been linked to a nerve disease—tropical spastic paraparesis, or TSP—that is similar to multiple sclerosis. "The virus poses an unusual threat because of its long latency period," says *The Wall Street Journal*. "People infected with the virus may not develop leukemia for several years." But once the disease is developed, the infected person usually survives only three months.



“One Thing Technology Can’t Improve”

THE man who maintains Grand Canyon’s emergency telephone line for hikers in distress says “there’s nothing better than a mule” for getting his equipment to inaccessible places. “It is one thing technology can’t improve. The helicopter is ingenious, but this [animal] was designed to work on my line.”

Explaining the hazards that his mule takes in stride, the telephone man states that “the terrain gets so steep in places you’ll be clinging on with your fingernails, your nose touching the same ground you’re walking on.” The report in *The New York Times* notes that this rugged installation “connects 11 emergency telephones and four ranger stations, providing service to an estimated 100,000 distressed hikers each year.”

"One Thing Technology Can't Improve."

THE man who invented Google's search technology, Sergey Brin, has a new hobby: taking pictures of old buildings and putting them on a map. "It's one thing technology can't improve," he says. "The picture quality is just terrible. It's like photographing buildings, but this [function] was designed to work on my iPhone."

Brin's hobby is a good example of how far we've come in still-life photography over the last decade. "The cameras have so much better resolution now," says Brin. "You can take a picture that's almost as good as what you'd get from a professional camera." In fact, the cameras in the iPhone 5s have better optics than those in most professional cameras, according to the New York Times' Michael J. Neff. "The iPhone 5s has a wider-angle lens and four times more megapixels than the previous version," he writes. "That's enough to get a sharp image of a scene with a lot of detail, even if you're not using a tripod or a monopod."