

# Awake!

APRIL 2008



ARE WE  
LIVING IN THE  
LAST DAYS?

ALSO: WHAT  
DOES GOD  
EXPECT OF  
YOU? PAGE 20

# **Awake!**

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## **ARE WE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS? 3-9**

What is meant by the Biblical expression “the last days”? How do they affect us individually? Is there hope of a brighter future?



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## THE LAST DAYS

# OF WHAT?

**A**SIGN in a store window proclaims: "Last Days." Its message is fairly obvious. It can mean that a sale will be ending soon or that the store will be closing. But what if someone says, "We are living in the last days"? What does that mean?

The terms "the last days" and "the time of the end" have been in use for a long time. (2 Timothy 3:1; Daniel 12:4) Over 2,500 years ago, the prophet Daniel was given visions of world powers and of the conflicts that would take place between them up until "the time of the end." He was told that the meaning of these visions would be made clear at that time. (Daniel 8:17, 19; 11:35, 40; 12:9) Daniel also recorded: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Daniel 2:44.

Jesus Christ referred to "the end" when answering a question

about "the sign of [his] presence and of the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 24:3-42) Evidently, both Daniel and Jesus were referring to a finality—a dramatic change that would affect the people who live and have lived on our globe. Daniel wrote of the end of all earthly governments. Jesus spoke of "the conclusion of the system of things."

Should you be concerned? Of course. All mankind should be, as all are involved. Still, many take this matter lightly. The Bible foretold: "In the last days there will come ridiculers with their ridicule, proceeding according to their own desires and saying: 'Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning.'" (2 Peter 3:3, 4) Yes, some today feel that history just keeps repeating itself and that life as we know it will go on this way endlessly.

Is there any evidence that we are *really* living in what the Bible calls the last days? Let us see.

# WHEN?

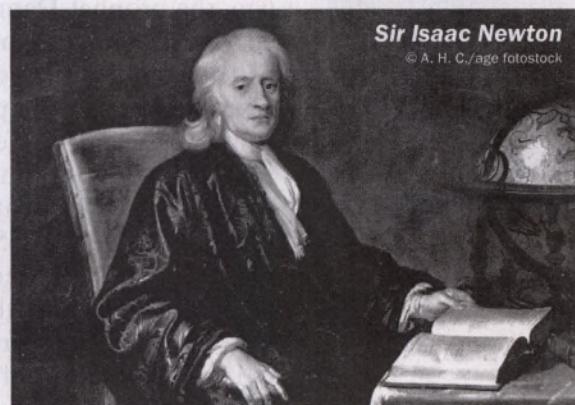
**I**N A little over a billion years, we expect Earth to become a baked, barren, powder-dry desert. It's hard to imagine how multicellular life could survive," says a recent issue of the magazine *Sky & Telescope*. Why? "A brightening Sun will boil the seas and bake the continents," says *Astronomy* magazine, adding: "This apocalyptic scenario is more than an inconvenient truth—it's our inevitable destiny."

The Bible, however, states: "[God] has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, or forever." (Psalm 104:5) Surely, the Creator of the earth can also maintain its existence. In fact, he "formed it . . . to be inhabited." (Isaiah 45:18) But not by a wicked, dying race of humans. God set a time for the restoration of his rulership by means of the Kingdom spoken of at Daniel 2:44.

Jesus preached about the Kingdom of God. He spoke of a time for judging the nations and peoples. He warned of a tribulation that would be greater than any that had yet occurred. And he gave a composite sign to indicate when the end of the world as we know it would be at hand.—Matthew 9:35; Mark 13:19; Luke 21:7-11; John 12:31.

That such an important person as Jesus would tell of those things has stirred the imagination of many people. When would those events occur? By studying Bible prophecy and chronology, some have sought to determine just when the end might be. One who researched the subject was the 17th-century mathematician Sir Isaac Newton, the discoverer of the law of universal gravitation and the inventor of the calculus.

Jesus said to his disciples: "It does not belong to you to get knowledge of the times or seasons which the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction." (Acts 1:7) And when giving "the sign of [his] presence and of the con-



## Awake!®

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

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clusion of the system of things,” Jesus noted: “Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father.” (Matthew 24:3, 36) Then, after making a comparison between the destruction of the wicked world of mankind in Noah’s day and the destruction that would take place during “the presence of the Son of man,” Jesus stated: “Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”—Matthew 24:39, 42.

So while the exact time of the coming end of this “system of things” has not been revealed to us, “the sign” that Jesus gave would let us know when we are in the time period known as “the last days.” (2 Timothy 3:1) It would be a time to “keep awake” so that we “may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur.”—Luke 21:36.

Before giving the actual sign, Jesus warned: “Look out that you are not misled; for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The due time has approached.’ Do not go after them. Furthermore, when you hear of wars and disorders, do not be terrified. For these things must occur first, but the end does not occur immediately.”—Luke 21:8, 9.

### What Is the Sign?

Telling us what will mark the last days, Jesus went on to say: “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be great earthquakes, and in one

place after another pestilences and food shortages; and there will be fearful sights and from heaven great signs.” (Luke 21:10, 11) Jesus also said: “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) The events that Jesus mentioned—wars, earthquakes, pestilences, food shortages—would not be new in themselves. They have been happening since early in human history. The difference would be that they would all occur in one time period.

Ask yourself, ‘When have all the facets mentioned in the Gospels occurred in the same era?’ Since the year 1914, man has witnessed devastating *world* wars; great earthquakes with their tragic consequences, such as tsunamis; widespread deadly diseases such as malaria, flu, and AIDS; millions of people wasting away for lack of food; a global climate of fear because of threats from terrorism and weapons of mass destruction; and the preaching of the good news of God’s heavenly Kingdom worldwide by Jehovah’s Witnesses. These events have occurred just as Jesus foretold.

Keep in mind, too, what the apostle Paul wrote: “Know this, that in the *last days* critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of

**JESUS  
SAID THAT  
ONLY GOD  
KNOWS  
“THAT DAY  
AND HOUR”**

**Languages:** Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Danish, <sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Dutch, <sup>+</sup> English, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish, <sup>o</sup> French, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Georgian, German, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Greek, Gujarati, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Japanese, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Kannada, Kirghiz, Korean, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Myanmar, Norwegian, <sup>+</sup> Polish, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup> Portuguese, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, <sup>#</sup><sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Swahili, Swedish, <sup>+</sup><sup>o</sup> Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

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**Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study?** Please send your request to Jehovah’s Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see [www.watchtower.org/address](http://www.watchtower.org/address). **America:** United States of: 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Bahamas:** Box N-1247, Nassau, N.P. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** P.O. Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. **Germany:** Niederselters, Am Steinfeis, D-65618 Selters. **Guam 96913:** 143 Jehovah St., Barrigada. **Guyana:** 352-360 Tyrell St., Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. **Hawaii 96819:** 2055 Kam IV Rd., Honolulu. **Jamaica:** P.O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **Japan:** 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref., 243-0496. **Puerto Rico 00970:** P.O. Box 3980, Guaynabo. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power.” (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Yes, “critical times” marked by rampant lawlessness, godlessness, cruelty, and self-seeking aggressiveness would become evident throughout the earth.\*

But could “the last days” that precede the end be yet some time in the future? Is there other evidence to indicate when they would start?

### **When Would “the Time of the End” Start?**

After he received a preview of events that would occur far in the future, the prophet Daniel was told: “During that time [“the time of the end” mentioned at Daniel 11:40] Michael [Jesus Christ] will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your people.” (Daniel 12:1) What would Michael do?

The book of Revelation speaks of the time when Michael would be active as King. It states: “War broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon and its angels battled but it did not prevail, neither was a place found for them any longer in heaven. So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. On this account be glad, you heavens and you who reside in

\* For additional evidence of “the last days,” see *Awake!* of April 2007, pages 8-10, as well as *The Watchtower* of September 15, 2006, pages 4-7, and of October 1, 2005, pages 4-7, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

them! Woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time.”—Revelation 12:7-9, 12.

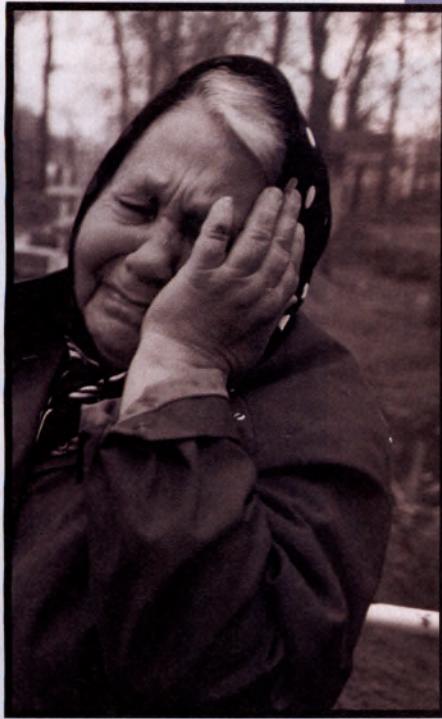
Bible chronology indicates that this battle, cleansing the heavens of Satan and his demons, would result in great woe for the earth because of the Devil’s anger at knowing that his time left for ruling the earth was short. His anger would increase during the last days until his total defeat at the war of Armageddon.—Revelation 16:14, 16; 19:11, 15; 20:1-3.

After mentioning the outcome of that heavenly battle, the apostle John declared: “I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ, because the accuser of our brothers has been hurled down, who accuses them day and night before our God!’” (Revelation 12:10) Did you note the announcement of the Kingdom’s establishment under Christ? Yes, that heavenly Kingdom was installed in 1914.\* However, as Psalm 110:2 indicates, Jesus would be ruling “in the midst of [his] enemies” until the time when Kingdom rule would exercise dominion over the earth as it has done in heaven.—Matthew 6:10.

Interestingly, the angel who told the prophet Daniel of the events to come also stated: “As for you, O Daniel, make secret the words and seal up the book, until the time of the end. Many will rove about, and the true knowledge will become abundant.” (Daniel 12:4) This provides additional evidence that we are now in “the time of the end.” Knowledge of the meaning of these prophecies has already been made clear and is now being proclaimed worldwide.<sup>#</sup>

\* For details concerning Bible chronology, see pages 215-18 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

<sup>#</sup> See the book *Pay Attention to Daniel’s Prophecy!* and the 2008 *Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses*, pages 31-9, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.



▲ © Paul Smith/Panos Pictures

### **The sign that Jesus gave has been in evidence since 1914**

#### **When Will “the Last Days” End?**

Exactly how long the last days will be is not mentioned in the Bible. But in the last days, the earthly situation is bound to get worse as Satan’s time gets shorter. The apostle Paul forewarned that “wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled.” (2 Timothy 3: 13) And in speaking of things yet to come, Jesus stated: “Those days will be days of a tribulation such as has not occurred from the beginning of the creation which God created until that time, and will not occur again. In fact, unless Jehovah had cut short the days, no flesh would be saved. But on account of the chosen ones whom he has chosen he has cut short the days.”—Mark 13:19, 20.

Some of the events yet to come are the “great tribulation,” including the war of Armageddon, and the restricting of Satan and his demons so that they cannot affect the earth. (Matthew 24:21) “God, who cannot lie,” has assured us that these things will take

place. (Titus 1:2) Armageddon and the abyssing of Satan will be the result of divine intervention.

The apostle Paul was inspired to tell us just what would precede the coming destruction at God’s hands. In regard to “the times and the seasons,” he wrote: “Jehovah’s day is coming exactly as a thief in the night. Whenever it is that they are saying: ‘Peace and security!’ then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3) Just what causes that false cry of “peace and security” is not stated, and only time will tell; but it will not forestall the coming of Jehovah’s day of judgment.\*

If we are convinced of the reality of these prophecies, knowledge of the facts should move us to act. In what way? Peter answers: “Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah!” (2 Peter 3:11, 12) Yet, you may wonder, ‘Of what benefit is this to me?’ The next article will answer that question.

\* See the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!* (2006 printing), pages 250-1, paragraphs 13 and 14.

## THE LAST DAYS

# THEN WHAT?

SOME people shudder at the thought of "the last days." (2 Timothy 3:1) All they envision are critical times. So why have so many throughout the ages looked forward to them? Because the last days also indicate that better times are to come.

Sir Isaac Newton, for example, was convinced that the time of the end would result in a new era of global peace and prosperity under the Millennial Rule of God's Kingdom. He stated that the prophecy of Micah 4:3, as well as that of Isaiah 2:4, would be fulfilled at that time: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. They will not lift up sword, nation against nation, neither will they learn war anymore."

When Jesus spoke of the time of the end, he urged his followers to adopt a positive viewpoint. After telling of the hardship, anxiety, and fear that would prevail during the great tribulation, he said: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) Deliverance from what?

### What God Promises

War, civil strife, crime, violence, and hunger are a few of

the things that plague humanity today and cause millions to live in fear and dread. Have any of these affected you? Then note what God promises:

"Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more . . . The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."

—Psalm 37:10, 11.

"My people must dwell in a peaceful abiding place and in residences of full confidence and in undisturbed resting-places."

—Isaiah 32:18.

"[Jehovah] is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire."

—Psalm 46:9.

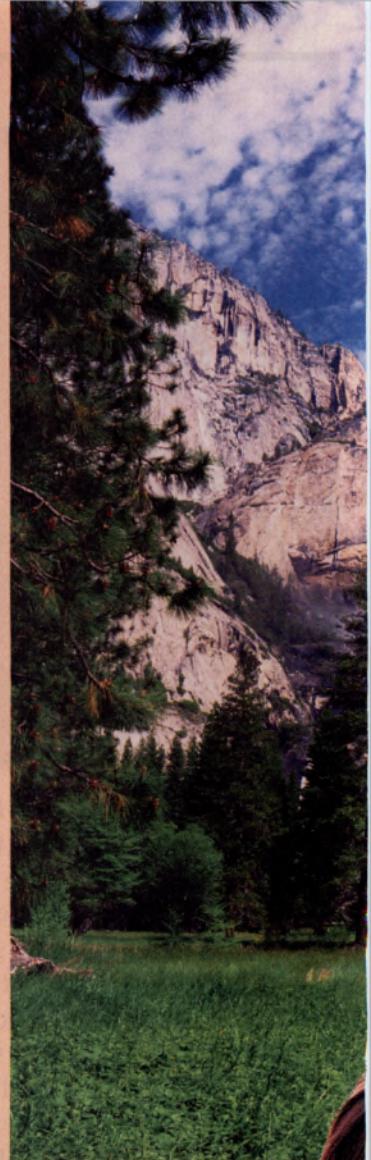
"They will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble."

—Micah 4:4.

"There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow."

—Psalm 72:16.

"As for the one listening to me, he will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity." —Proverbs 1:33.





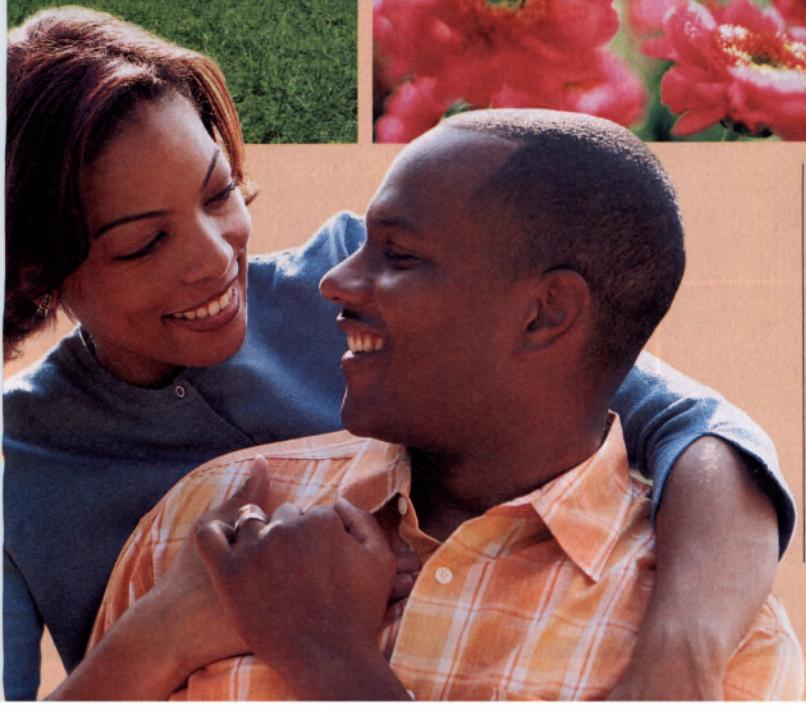
Even if we are in a place where living conditions are relatively pleasant, we all face the prospect of sickness and death. These too will be gone in God's new world. We can therefore look forward to seeing again our loved ones who have died. Note the following:

**"No resident will say: 'I am sick.'"—Isaiah 33:24.**

**"[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."**—Revelation 21:4.

**"As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing."**—1 Corinthians 15:26.

**"The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear [Jesus'] voice and come out."**—John 5:28, 29.



The apostle Peter summed up all of this nicely when he wrote: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 3:13) For righteousness to exist earth wide, the removal of anyone who would disrupt that condition would be required. The same is true of the nations today, which cause much strife and bloodshed by selfishly seeking their own interests. All earthly rulerships will be replaced by the rulership of God's Kingdom under Christ. Concerning that rule, we are assured: "To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite. The very zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this."—Isaiah 9:7.

These prospects can be yours, for the Bible assures us: "[God's] will is that all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Timothy 2:4) Do not delay. Take in the knowledge that means everlasting life. (John 17:3) Start by contacting the publishers of this magazine and requesting a free home Bible study.

***You can look forward to living forever in peace and perfect health in the coming Paradise here on earth***



▼ Opera stage



▼ Opera house



BY AWAKE! WRITER IN ITALY

THE singer stands erect in an open posture, his head held high, chest raised, forehead, lips, and mouth relaxed. After a brief introduction by the orchestra, the tenor launches into a much-anticipated aria. The notes flow with apparent ease, while the voice seems to emanate from some source outside the singer's body. A thunder of applause erupts at the end of the aria.

Opera is a theatrical drama presented by singing actors and accompanied by orchestral music. Do you enjoy opera? Have you ever had the chance to attend a performance in an opera house? What do you think is the secret to the opera singer's beautiful voice?

## The Voice—A Musical Instrument

The voice is a wonderful gift from God, and it has appropriately been called a musical instrument. Though few people can produce music like an opera singer, singing is for many a part of life that comes almost as naturally as eating or sleeping. Whether you sing well or not, no doubt you would be interested in taking a closer look at how this "instrument" works.

The larynx, located in the middle of your throat, is the organ that actually produces sound. It is formed by a cartilage shell surrounding a cavity that houses two tiny folds of muscle—your vocal cords. How is sound produced? During normal breathing, the vocal cords are relaxed and form a triangular opening in the windpipe, known as the glottis. When you sing, the air being forced through the larynx increases, the glottis narrows, and the vocal cords vibrate, producing sound. The tighter the cords are stretched, the greater the number of vibrations and the higher the pitch of sounds produced. Decreasing the air pressure and relaxing the vocal cords, on the other hand, increases the opening of the glottis, causing vibrations to decrease and sounds to become deeper.

### Technique and Physique

As a young man, Enrico Caruso had a splendid voice; yet, it was lacking in power. Training strengthened it. A beautiful voice is a natural endowment, but in opera singing, technique is also important. The singer needs to learn how to breathe in order to have an adequate air supply. Then he must learn how to control it. It is said that the famous 18th-century singer Carlo Broschi, known as Farinelli, could thus sing 150 notes in one breath.

Opera singers likewise need to learn to amplify their voice by using the body as a sound box. According to certain experts, the chest bones carry out this function for the deeper

notes, whereas the jawbone and facial bone cavities do so for the higher notes.

Many think that singing is merely a function of the throat. Yet, it has rightly been noted that the whole body sings, in the sense that all the person's energies are involved. Perfect balance has to be maintained in coordinating muscular tension in all parts of the body. Opera singing thus requires a considerable amount of physical exertion and energy, and this is perhaps why some opera singers have a stout build. Maria Callas was one of the most famous of all 20th-century opera singers, but many believe that her rapid weight loss resulting from a drastic diet contributed to the deterioration of her voice.

### The Evolution of Opera Singing

During the course of time, opera singing has undergone an evolution in style and technique. Let us take just two examples. When the setting for operas changed from chapels or other confined spaces to opera houses, soft, delicate, and effortless singing gave way to singing strengthened by natural body resonators. This transition was accentuated by the shift from the rather modest orchestras used by Mozart to the much larger ones used, for example, by Verdi and Wagner. In the 17th and 18th centuries as well as part of the 19th century, opera music was entirely subordinated to the virtuosity, or technical skill, of the singer. The style that characterized the second half of the 19th century and the first part of the 20th was quite different. In this period, the voice, while still an important part of the opera, became just one of its essential elements.

The potential of opera stimulated extensive musical production. Such composers as Paisiello, Cimarosa, Gluck, Mozart, Donizetti, Rossini, Bellini, Wagner, Verdi, Puccini, Bizet, Meyerbeer, and Mascagni, to name some of the most famous, wrote unforgettable scores capable of stirring deep emotion.

## Excesses in the Name of Music

There have also been dark moments in the history of opera singing. Think of the castrati, who for more than a century dominated Italian opera.\* Young boys were emasculated before puberty in order to preserve their high-pitched voices with exceptional range and power. "It was the Church," says Guido Tartoni, "with its prohibition on women's . . . singing in chapels," that fostered such a practice.

Well-known opera singers have become stars, and some of their fans have wor-

\* For further information on the castrati, see *Awake!* of February 8, 1996, pages 11-14.

shipped them. The funeral for Luciano Pavarotti was an example of that adulation. Maria Callas was called *La Divina* (the Divine), and Joan Sutherland, *La Stupenda* (the Amazing). However, if opera singing has developed a certain popularity, it is the result of its ability to excite audiences.

Perhaps in the future you may hear a soprano singing some celebrated aria. If so, pause and think of the training and discipline required to produce that beautiful voice. It may stimulate you to begin thinking of opera singing as did one writer who called it a way "to join words to music and to give poetry . . . the wings of a melody."

## SOME VOICE CLASSIFICATIONS

**Coloratura soprano:** A female voice that easily handles rapid, high notes. The singer often plays a lively and witty character.

**Lyric soprano:** A richer female voice. The singer plays the role of a sentimental or a romantic character.

**Dramatic soprano:** An even deeper female voice. The singer is generally assigned the role of a dramatic character.

**Mezzo-soprano:** A female voice richer and deeper than the dramatic soprano. The singer often plays an elderly woman or the soprano's antagonist.

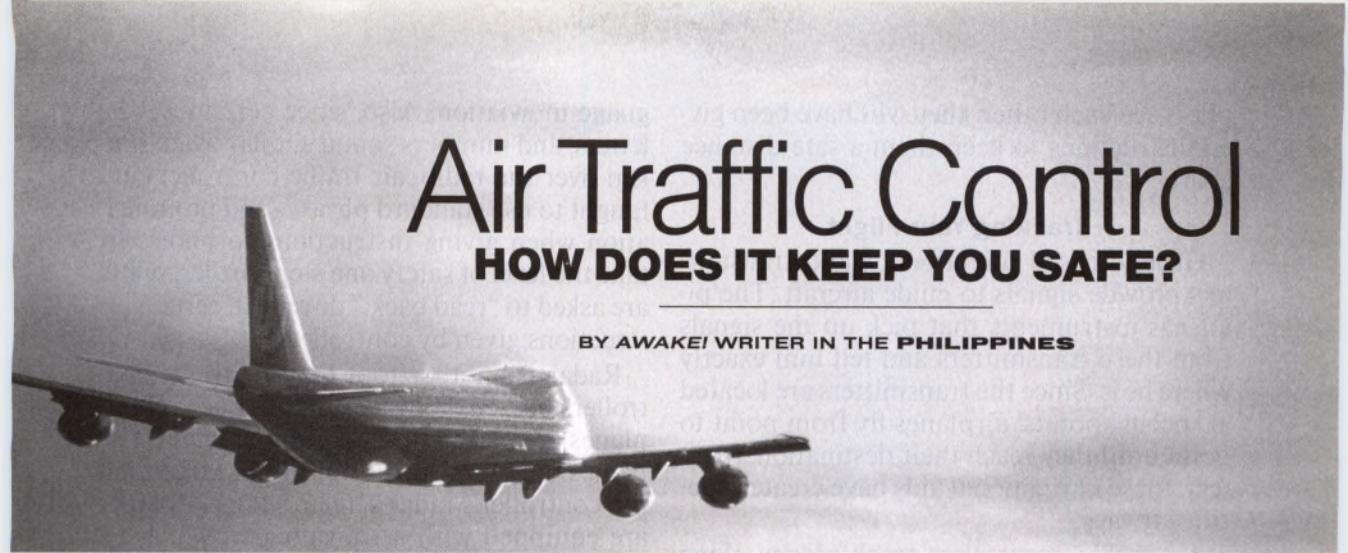
**Contralto:** A rare female voice. The singer plays the same character roles as the mezzo-soprano.

**Tenor:** A male voice with characteristics similar to the soprano—light, lyrical, dramatic. The singer often plays a lover or a hero.

**Baritone:** This voice falls between the tenor and the basso. The singer plays the role of a brother, a father, or a rival.

**Basso:** This deepest of male voices is divided into three categories: *brilliant*, *cantante*, and *profundo*. The first is suitable for lively, witty characters; the second for sentimental roles; and the third for characters expressing intense feeling.





# Air Traffic Control

## HOW DOES IT KEEP YOU SAFE?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN THE PHILIPPINES

**W**HILE flying, have you ever wondered how the pilot knows where he is going? Perhaps you felt uneasy as you thought of the dozens or even hundreds of airplanes crisscrossing the skies at the same time. How do they keep from colliding?

Such questions are natural concerns for travelers. However, statistics show that travel by commercial airliner is quite safe,\* in fact safer than traveling by motorcycle or car. A key factor contributing to its safety is the air traffic control system.

### Guiding Your Flight Safely

The captain, or pilot in command, is the one primarily responsible for the safe operation of an aircraft. However, there are many occasions when he cannot see other airplanes flying around him and he is unaware of their presence. For this reason, most nations have an air traffic control system. Ground-based workers keep track of every phase of flights that operate under instrument flight rules.

Samuel, an air traffic controller in California for 13 years, says: "Air traffic control specialists play a vital role in the safety of air traffic. The first priority is to provide separation

\* In one recent year in the United States, air carriers flew 6.8 billion miles, and there was an average of only one accident for every 334,448 hours flown.

between aircraft." Melba, an air traffic supervisor, gives a further explanation, "First and foremost is safety, but aside from safety, we also provide for the expeditious and orderly flow of traffic." Thus, in addition to helping avoid collisions, air traffic controllers assist in keeping planes moving.

What all of this means is that while the pilot is tending to his cockpit duties, there are many ground-based eyes and ears following the flight. The pilot regularly talks by radio not only to controllers at the departure and destination airports but also to those at several points in between.

Monitoring what the pilot cannot yet see is very important in this age of high-speed aircraft. Imagine that two commercial jets are on a head-on course. By the time the pilots spot each other with the naked eye, they may have only seconds to avoid impact! It is air traffic control's responsibility to prevent that situation from occurring. Long before the

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Should You Fear the Future?
- Will Earth Be a Paradise?
- Why Not Just End It All?

pilots see each other, they will have been given instructions to keep them a safe distance apart.

### Tracking Your Flight

Ground-based directional radio transmitters provide signals to guide aircraft. The pilot has instruments that pick up the signals from these transmitters and tell him exactly where he is. Since the transmitters are located at specific points, airplanes fly from point to point until they reach their destination. In effect, these navigational aids have created specific airways.

Air traffic controllers track planes along the airways. Before departure, pilots are required to file a flight plan that shows their intended route of flight. The controller has a copy of what is called a flight progress strip. Salvador Rafael, an air traffic control chief, explains how this is useful: "There are intersection points on the airways. When a pilot comes over those, he has to report that information to the controller. Then the controller will mark that on his flight strip." The controller now has a mental picture of the path of that aircraft.

To get those reports, the controller has another tool—the radio. He knows where the plane is, and the pilot receives instructions to help him keep a safe distance from other aircraft. Controllers and pilots usually have a selection of radios and frequencies. Should one fail, they can use another.

What about international flights where different languages are encountered? To avoid dangers that could result from miscommunication, the International Civil Aviation Organization selected English as the common lan-

guage in aviation. Also, since certain words, letters, and numbers sound similar when spoken over the radio, air traffic controllers are taught to use standard phrases and pronunciation when giving instructions to pilots. To take the level of safety one step further, pilots are asked to "read back," or repeat, certain instructions given by controllers.

Radar is another tool that air traffic controllers use. Radio waves that bounce off airplanes are picked up by a radar antenna. The planes then show up as objects, or targets, on the controller's radar screen. Many airplanes are equipped with a transponder, which returns an identification signal to the radar. When this signal is combined with computer input, the aircraft show up on a radar screen, complete with flight number, speed, altitude, and aircraft type.

If the controller sees a need to maneuver aircraft to prevent a collision, he has several options. He may instruct a pilot to change **(1) heading**, or direction. This is called vectoring. Or he may direct a change in **(2) speed** if, for example, one airplane is overtaking another. A very common way he may separate aircraft is by directing a change in **(3) altitude**.

As a safety enhancement, many radar systems can alert the controller when dangerous situations exist. For example, visual and audible alarms go off if the system anticipates that two aircraft will get too close to each other. Another alarm goes off if an airliner appears to be getting too close to the ground.

### The Goal—Your Safety

Plans are already being implemented to enhance the air traffic control

## TRACKING YOUR FLIGHT

Air traffic control system

Ground-based directional radio transmitters



## Global Positioning System

system. Earth-based navigation systems often require restricting aircraft to specific routes and altitudes. This results in wasted airspace and longer flight routes. Future flights will rely even more on satellite-based systems, such as the Global Positioning System, which will allow for much more flexibility in routing airplanes and will result in easier control of transoceanic flights.

Tower and controllers:  
NASA Ames Research Center; control center:  
U. S. Federal Aviation Administration



**Air traffic control tower**

**Air traffic controllers**



**Air traffic control center**



Radar antenna

As our brief coverage of air traffic control has shown, your pilot is not the only one who knows where your airplane is at any given moment. In fact, several others on the ground are monitoring the progress of your flight. The system has been designed to minimize dangers and maximize safety. No wonder accident rates for commercial aircraft are very low!

So if you are a passenger, there is little reason for apprehension. The next time you take a long-distance flight, remember that the eyes and ears of air traffic control are attentive to your safety. Sit back, relax, and enjoy a comfortable flight!

# The Mediterranean's Liquid Gold

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SPAIN

**"From green I changed to black, then  
they carefully crushed me, and into fine gold  
they finally transformed me."**

—A traditional Spanish riddle.



**W**HEN an olive ripens on the tree, it turns from green to shiny black. But inside its dark exterior lies "gold" waiting to be extracted. When crushed, ripe olives release a golden liquid, one that has graced the tables of Mediterranean households for thousands of years. This liquid gold—olive oil—is a treasured product of olive trees, which carpet hillsides from Portugal to Syria.

The oil of these hardy trees pleases the palate and contributes to good health. Mediterranean people have always understood "oil" to mean "olive oil." In fact, the Spanish word for "oil," *aceite*, comes from the Arabic word *azzáyt*, which literally means "juice of the olive." And olive oil is just that—the unadulterated fruit juice of crushed olives. Since oil flows from the olives without the need of additives or any chemical process, all of the

## Traditional Process of Obtaining Olive Oil

**Workers beat the branches to harvest the crop**



AWAKE! © 2008 Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Pennsylvania

oil's natural qualities, flavor, and aroma are preserved.

### A Golden Liquid That Remains Unsurpassed

Historian Erla Zwingle explains that olive oil has been "valued through the ages for food, fuel, salve, and sacrament." Today "the olive's liquid gold remains unsurpassed among oils," she adds. For thousands of years, the simple process of obtaining olive oil has remained the same. First, the harvesters beat the trees' branches with rods to make the olives fall to the ground, where they are gathered. Then, the whole olives, including the pits, are crushed in a mill. Next, the solids are removed. Finally, the oil is separated from the water in a settling tank and is ready for consumption.\*

Unlike gold, however, olive oil is almost as varied as wine. Worldwide, there are a billion olive trees under cultivation.<sup>#</sup> And horticulturists have classified more than 680 different varieties of olives. Apart from the difference in variety, such factors as the type of soil, the weather, the harvest date (ranging from November to February), and the extraction process influence the oil's unique flavor,

\* Only extra-virgin olive oil and virgin olive oil are direct extractions from the fruit. Refined, or common, olive oil and olive-pomace oil are chemically treated to neutralize strong flavors.

<sup>#</sup> These trees produce about 460 million gallons of olive oil every year.

color, and aroma. Independent teams of professional tasters define the flavor of different oils as sweet, pungent, fruity, or harmonious. The tasters ensure that the quality of the final product is maintained.

The Mediterranean climate favors the cultivation of olive trees, and thus about 95 percent of all olive oil produced in the world comes from the Mediterranean basin. Travelers will notice groves of olive trees covering hillsides in Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey. Truly, the rich bounty of the olive can be described as the "liquid gold of the Mediterranean."

### A Healthful Ingredient of the Mediterranean Diet

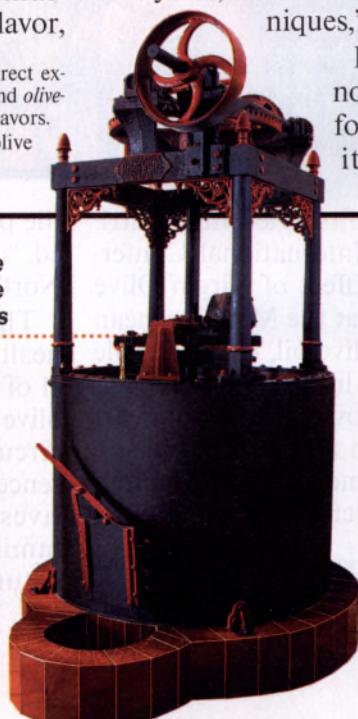
For centuries, Mediterranean cuisine has depended on olive oil to enhance the flavor of many typical dishes. It can be used when frying, marinating, or seasoning food. "A product that has been consumed for 4,000 years must be good," asserts master chef José García Marín, describing the importance of olive oil in Spanish cooking. "And the quality of this 'nectar' has improved in recent years, thanks to careful production techniques," he adds.

Researchers have long noticed that people who follow a traditional Mediterranean diet enjoy

Millstones and machine: Museo del Olivar y el Aceite de Beleña

Millstones  
crush the  
whole olives

This ancient machine  
was used to separate  
the oil from the solids



Olive oil  
comes out of  
a modern press





**Top:** Centuries-old grove of olive trees

**Right:** Ancient olive-oil lamp

**Far right:** An illustration of Jesus' parable of ten virgins with oil lamps



Lamp: Museo del Olivar y el Aceite de Baena

significant health benefits.\* Recently, nutritionists organized an International Conference on the Healthy Effect of Virgin Olive Oil. They concluded that the Mediterranean diet, including virgin olive oil, is compatible with a healthier, longer life. A diet rich in virgin olive oil may help lower the risk of heart disease and cancer. "In all countries where the populations consume a typical Mediterranean diet . . . in which virgin olive oil is

\* Fruits and vegetables are also usual components of this diet.

the principal source of fat," the experts stated, "cancer incidence rates are lower than in Northern European countries."

There may be many reasons for these health benefits. One of them is the high level of oleic acid (up to 80 percent) found in olive oil, which has a positive effect on the circulatory system. Furthermore, the absence of chemical processing and preservatives means that olive oil retains the vitamins, monounsaturated fats, and other natural ingredients of the ripe fruit.

# What You Should Know About Olive Oil

- The oil's qualities last up to 18 months.
- Light deteriorates its components, so oil should be stored in a cool, dark place.
- Olive oil loses its antioxidants if used for frying more than once.
- Nutritionists recommend that to benefit

Because of the antioxidant capacity of its minor components, such as vitamin E and polyphenols (aromatic compounds), olive oil also protects and tones the skin. Thus, it is commonly used in cosmetics, lotions, shampoos, and soaps. The ancient Greeks and Romans used olive oil enriched with herbs for cleaning and moisturizing the skin. Later, in the sixth century, French craftsmen started to make soaps from olive oil, mixing the oil with ashes from sea plants.

## Olive Oil in Bible Times

In Bible times olive oil was used extensively as a food, a cosmetic, a fuel, and a medicine, as well as for other purposes. The Bible refers to olive oil more than 250 times, either as the oil itself or as the basic ingredient of perfumed oils.

The Scriptures clearly portray the important role that olive oil played in the life of a typical Israelite family. It was a key part of their diet, and its abundance was a sign of prosperity. (Joel 2:24) Both men and women used olive oil as a skin lotion. Before meeting Boaz, Ruth ‘rubbed herself with oil.’ (Ruth 3:3) After seven days of fasting, King David “got up from the earth and washed and rubbed himself with oil and changed his mantles and came to the house of Jehovah.” —2 Samuel 12:20.

Ancient lamps required a reliable supply of olive oil. (Matthew 25:1-12) “Pure, beaten olive oil” was used to illuminate the taberna-

fully from the healthful properties of olive oil, people should use it throughout life.

- The health benefits of olive oil are enhanced when it is used as a basic ingredient of a Mediterranean diet, which is rich in fish, vegetables, legumes, and fruits.

cle in the wilderness. (Leviticus 24:2) By the time of King Solomon, olive oil had become an important commodity of international trade. (1 Kings 5:10, 11) Prophets anointed kings with oil. (1 Samuel 10:1) Kindly hosts showed hospitality to guests by greasing their heads with oil. (Luke 7:44-46) The neighborly Samaritan of Jesus’ illustration treated the wounds of an injured man with oil and wine. —Luke 10:33, 34.

In the Scriptures, soothing counsel and comfort are compared to oil because of its widespread medicinal use. The Christian disciple James wrote: “Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, greasing him with oil in the name of Jehovah. And the prayer of faith will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up.” —James 5:14, 15.

The riches of the olive tree are not fleeting. One olive tree can supply its owners with three to four liters of oil each year for many centuries! There is no doubt about it: This liquid gold can improve our health, soothe our skin, and enhance our food.

1. Jesus. 2. The way he or she treats Jesus' spiritual brothers. 3. The sheep receive everlasting life; the goats depart into everlasting destruction. 4. Nahor. —Luke 3:34. 5. Terah.—Luke 3:34. 6. Abraham.—Luke 3:34.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

# What Does God Expect of You?



**O**UR busy lives place many demands on us. At times it may be a struggle for us to meet all of our obligations. Yet, we need to keep in mind that life itself is a gift we have received from God. (Psalm 36:9) How much of our time and energy does God expect us to devote to him? The Bible's reasonable answer is encouraging.

Jesus knew better than anyone else what his Father expects of humans. (Matthew 11:27) When asked to identify the greatest commandment, Jesus said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength." (Mark 12:30) What does that mean? Is that asking too much?

## What Whole-Souled Love for God Involves

Our love for God can grow as we reflect on his unlimited goodness toward us. If our love is whole-souled, we will be moved to give God the best of whatever we have. We will feel as did the Bible writer who asked: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me?" (Psalm 116:12) How does such love for God affect our use of time?

The Bible does not prescribe a set number of hours that we must reserve for worship each week. However, it identifies activities that should be given priority in life and explains why they should. For example, Jesus taught that taking in knowledge of God is an essential step leading to "everlasting life." (John 17:3) He also said that his followers should help those who do not know God to gain life by sharing the knowledge of God with them. (Matthew 28:19, 20) The

Bible instructs us to meet with fellow believers regularly to gain spiritual strength and provide mutual encouragement. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) All these activities take time.

Does God expect us to live fanatically—excluding all activities from our life except worship? By no means! Practical matters of everyday life need attention too. The Bible instructs family heads to provide for the needs of their families, saying: "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he . . . is worse than a person without faith."—1 Timothy 5:8.

God created man with the ability to enjoy life. It is only proper, then, to spend time with our families and friends, enjoying good

food and wholesome relaxation. King Solomon wrote: "I have come to know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good during one's life; and also that every man should eat and indeed drink and see good for all his hard work. It is the gift of God."—Ecclesiastes 3:12, 13.

Jehovah God also understands human limitations, "remembering that we are dust." (Psalm 103:14) The Bible acknowledges the need for us to get sufficient rest. After a period of busy activity, Jesus invited his disciples to go "privately into a lonely place and rest up a bit."—Mark 6:31.

So a life pleasing to God is balanced and can include a variety of activities. However, all of our affairs—whether directly related to worship or not—should reflect our whole-souled love for God. The Bible's counsel is: "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory."—1 Corinthians 10:31.

### **Successfully Setting Priorities**

Does putting the worship of God first in life seem unrealistic or beyond your capability? It is true that giving God what he expects may require changes—even sacrifices—in our use of time. But surely our loving Creator has not asked us to do the impossible. In fact, he gives us abundant help to do his will. We can succeed if we rely on "the strength that God supplies."—1 Peter 4:11.

You may feel a measure of stress as you adjust your schedule to include spiritual activi-

ties. Take time frequently to speak to Jehovah God, the "Hearer of prayer." (Psalm 65:2) In prayer, you can express any anxiety you feel, knowing that "he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7) King David prayed: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God." (Psalm 143:10) Likewise, you can ask God for help to make necessary adjustments in your life.

The Bible contains the warm invitation: "Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you." (James 4:8) As you start to share in activities that please God, such as studying the Bible and attending Christian meetings, you will draw closer to God. He, in turn, will strengthen you to make further progress.

Regarding her efforts to adjust priorities, Jelena, who is studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, says, "It has not been an easy journey for me." But she adds: "Once I started attending Christian meetings, I gained strength to apply what the Bible says. Persistent support from others has helped too." Experiencing the benefits that come from serving God provides additional motivation. (Ephesians 6:10) Jelena notes, "I have improved in my relationship with my husband and in the way I discipline my children."

Jehovah's powerful holy spirit can strengthen and motivate you to review life's priorities and 'buy out the time' to serve God despite the pressures of modern-day life. (Ephesians 3:16; 5:15-17) Jesus said: "The things impossible with men are possible with God."—Luke 18:27.

### **HAVE YOU WONDERED?**

- Why should you put the doing of God's will first in your life?  
—Psalm 116:12; Mark 12:30.
- In what activities does God expect you to share?—Matthew 28:19, 20; John 17:3; Hebrews 10:24, 25.
- How can you successfully adjust your priorities to please God?  
—Ephesians 5:15-17; James 4:8.

# Boating in the Backwaters of KERALA

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN INDIA

**I**MAGINE cruising in a beautifully furnished houseboat that could take you through the deltas of 44 rivers. That is possible in the 550-mile-long backwaters of the state of Kerala, in southwest India. It is a joyful experience, a unique one—indeed, it is like floating on nature's lap. As your boat lazily moves along, you cannot help but admire the coconut-rimmed lagoons, lush green paddy fields, natural lakes, and man-made canals. Yes, likely because of these backwaters, the *National Geographic Traveler* listed Kerala as "one of the top 50 'must-see' destinations of a lifetime."

Not to be missed are the folk who live on the shores of the many canals. They remember a time when there were neither tourists nor five-star hotels in their neighborhood. However, their lives have not changed much. Although some of them are now employed in newly developed hotels or other tourism-related establishments, by and large their culture and their daily routine remain the same. They care for their paddy fields and coconut groves, supplementing their daily diet and income by fishing and selling fish.

## Fishing in the Backwaters

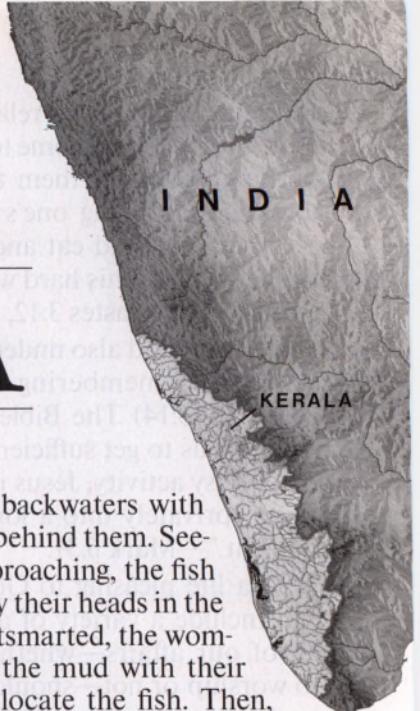
Fishing is part of life here. A sight you may see nowhere else is that of women catching pearl spot fish, or *karimeen*, with their bare hands. Unique to Kerala's backwaters, *karimeen* are a delicacy to Indians and foreigners alike. Searching for the fish, the women

wade through the backwaters with their pots floating behind them. Seeing the women approaching, the fish dive down and bury their heads in the mud. Not to be outsmarted, the women feel around in the mud with their sensitive feet and locate the fish. Then, ducking quickly under the water, they grab the unsuspecting prize with their bare hands and transfer their wriggling catch to the floating pots. When they have caught a sufficient number, they wade to the shore, where eager buyers are waiting. The bigger and more expensive fish go to five-star hotels, where they delight the rich, while the smaller ones become a tasty meal for those of more modest means.

## Chinese Fishing Nets

A common sight on the shores of the backwaters are graceful Chinese-style fishing nets. These also serve as a major tourist attraction.

It is believed that Chinese traders from the court of Kublai Khan first brought the nets to Cochin (now Kochi) before the year 1400. These hand-operated fishing devices were used first by the Chinese and then later by Portuguese settlers. Today they provide a livelihood for many Indian fishermen, as well as food for countless people, even as they did over 600 years ago. Surprisingly, the catch from one net can feed an entire village. For many tourists a romantic picture of the drying nets silhouetted against the setting sun





**Fishing is part of life in Kerala ▲  
Women catching fish bare-handed ►**

Top photo: Salim Pushpanath  
has a special place in their vacation photograph album.

It is not only images of the Chinese nets that beckon tourists to the backwaters. Aquatic activities, such as the traditional snake boat races, attract thousands each year.

#### **Boat Races in the Backwaters**

Snake boats are long, slim canoes. The stern is shaped like a cobra's hood, hence the name snake boat. In times past, the warring kings of the backwaters used these boats for their postharvest wars. When the wars finally ceased, the need for the boats lessened. Only during temple festivals did these majestic craft ply the waters. With great fanfare, they were crewed and decorated and used as showpieces of the local culture. During the festive period, boat races were held in honor of dignitaries who attended. This tradition, which began about a thousand years ago, is still thriving.

It is common for as many as 20 such boats to compete in the races, each manned by a



crew of between 100 and 150 men. Over a hundred with short oars sit in two rows along the length of each boat. Four helmsmen with longer oars stand at the stern to steer the boat. Two others stand midship, beating wooden rods on a sounding board to mark time for the oarsmen. Such encouragement is complemented by at least half a dozen other men who ride along. These men clap, whistle, shout, and sing the unique boatmen's songs to urge the crew to keep up the pace. Then, after precision rowing to the rhythmic beat, the young men release their remaining energy in a spectacular race to the finish line.



**Snake-boat racing**

In 1952, India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, visited Alleppey, a key town in the backwaters, and was greatly impressed by a boat race he attended there. In fact, so fascinated was he that he ignored security arrangements and jumped onto the winning boat, clapping and singing along with the rowers. On his return to Delhi, he sent a gift, a silver replica of a snake boat, bearing his signature and the inscription: "To the winners of the boat race which is a unique feature of community life." This silver boat is used as the trophy for the annual Nehru Trophy Race. About a hundred thousand people flock to see such races every year. At those times the generally slow-paced backwaters really come alive.

#### **Luxury Hotels That Float and Cruise**

Snake boats are not the only backwater vessels that attract tourists. Increasingly popular are rice boats—old-style vessels converted into luxurious houseboats.

Although many of those used by tourists are newly constructed, rice boats still exist that are more than a hundred years old and that have been made over for tourism. Originally they were known as *kettuvallam*, meaning "boat with knots." The entire boat was made of jackwood planks and was held together with coir-rope knots, without the use of even a single nail. These boats were used for carrying rice and other commodities from village to village and spices to faraway places.

**Houseboat ▶**  
**"Kettuvallam" ▼**

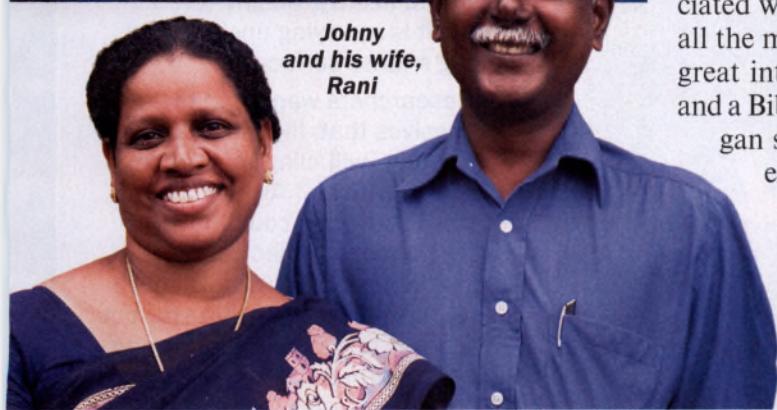
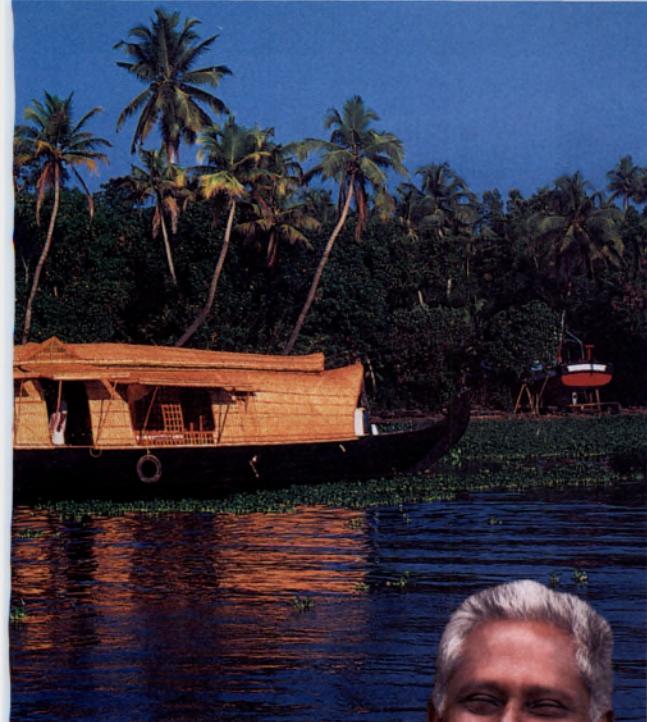


Selim Puspananthan

With the arrival of modern conveyances, the boats became almost obsolete. Then a bright entrepreneur hit upon the idea of converting them into houseboats for the tourist industry. With balcony, luxury bedrooms with en suite facilities, and beautifully furnished living rooms, the houseboats can be called floating hotels. Attendants are provided to take your boat wherever you want to go and to cook whatever you wish to eat.

When evening comes, the boats are anchored either near the shore or, for those who desire more peace and privacy, out in the middle of a lake. There one can enjoy the enchanting backwater silence except, of course, for the occasional splash of a sleepless fish!

Not all backwater life is so relaxed, however. "Fishers of men" are awake and zealous in the area.



### 'Fishing for Men' in the Backwaters

The expression "fishers of men" comes from Jesus' words to the fishermen who became his disciples. He said: "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus was referring to the work of helping people to become his disciples. (Matthew 4:18, 19; 28:19, 20) That commission is being fulfilled by Jehovah's Witnesses the world over, including those in the areas surrounding the backwaters.

There are 132 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in Kerala, including 13 around the

backwaters. Many members of these congregations are also fishermen by trade. While out fishing, one of them spoke about God's Kingdom to a fishing companion. Soon the man could see the difference between the teachings of his church and the Bible. His wife and four children became interested too. A study of the Bible was started with them. Their progress was fast, and four of the six are already baptized. Two more of the children are progressing toward that goal.

Members of one congregation traveled by boat to a small island in order to preach there. Because of the irregular boat service to and from the island, the local people call it *kadamakudi*, meaning "trapped if you enter." There the Witnesses met Johny and his wife, Rani. Although Catholics by birth, they associated with a meditation center and donated all the money they could to it. Johny showed great interest in the message of Bible truth, and a Bible study was started with him. He began sharing his newfound faith with others. Bible truth helped him to give up smoking and to stop abusing alcohol!

Johny's secular work was not in harmony with the Scriptures, so he made changes. At first this brought financial difficulty upon the family. Soon, however, Johny started catching crabs to sell and was thus able to care for the family. He was baptized in September 2006, and his wife and two children were baptized a year later. The prospect of living eternally in a global paradise has completely changed their view of life. —Psalm 97:1; 1 John 2:17.

Truly, visiting Kerala's backwaters is an enjoyable experience. That is so not only because of the Chinese fishing nets, the snake boats, and the houseboats but also because of the "fishers of men," the faithful Witnesses of Jehovah who live there.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

# Gecko Adhesive



The underside of  
a tokay gecko



Microscopic hairs on  
a gecko's foot

Gecko: Breck P. Kent; close-up: © Susumu Nishinaga/Photo Researchers, Inc.

■ Scientists are awed by the gecko's ability to scale smooth surfaces—even skittering across a smooth ceiling—without slipping! How does this amazing little lizard do it?

The Bible says that the gecko "takes hold with its own hands." (Proverbs 30:28) The gecko's feet do indeed resemble hands, and they grasp smooth surfaces with amazing agility. Each toe contains ridges that have thousands of hairlike protrusions. Each protrusion, in turn, has hundreds of microscopic filaments. The intermolecular forces (called van der Waals forces) that emanate from these filaments are sufficient to hold the lizard's weight—even when it is scurrying upside down along a glass surface!

Researchers want to make adhesives that, like the gecko's feet, will cling to smooth surfaces.\* Among other uses, this could have "a variety of medical applications," notes Science News magazine, "from bandages that stay put when wet to a tape alternative to surgical sutures."

After this brief consideration, what do you think? Did the gecko's adhesive come about by chance? Or was it designed?

\* Scientists are also analyzing the protein that is secreted from mussels, which gives these underwater creatures the ability to cling to wet surfaces.

## Why don't my parents trust me?

*"I wish my parents would let me venture out a little. It's not that I want to go explore the world. I'd just like to be able to visit my aunt, for example, without my mom worrying that I'm thinking about leaving home."—Sarah, 18.\**

*"I'm always asking my parents why they don't trust me when I want to go out with a group of friends. Often they tell me: 'We trust you. We just don't trust your friends.' It really bothers me when they say that!"—Christine, 18.*

**T**RUST is a lot like money. Earning it is hard, losing it is easy, and no matter how much you're given, it *never* seems to be enough. "Whenever I want to go out," says 16-year-old Iliana, "my parents bombard me with questions about where I'm going, the people I'm going with, what I'll be doing, and when I'll be back. I know they're my parents, but it irritates me when they question me like that!"

Do you feel at times that your parents could trust you more? If so, what can you do about it? First, let's look at why trust is such a hot-button topic between many parents and youths.

### Growing Pains

The Bible acknowledges that "a man will leave his father and his mother." (Genesis 2:24) Of course, the same can be said of a woman. Whether you're a boy or a girl, a

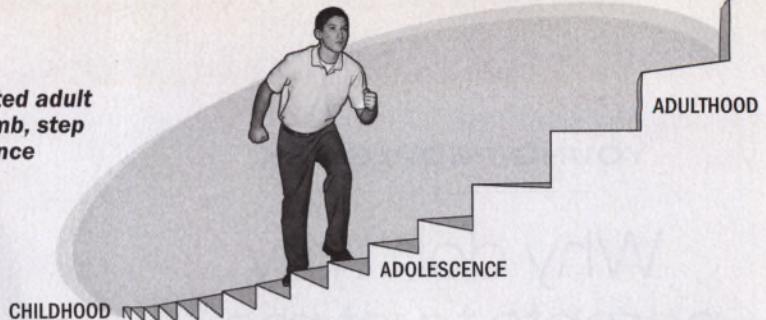
vital objective of adolescence is to prepare you for adulthood—the time when you'll be equipped to leave home and perhaps raise a family of your own.

However, the transition to adulthood isn't like a door that you simply walk through when you reach a certain age. It's more like a stairway that you climb, step by step, throughout your adolescence. Granted, you and your parents may have conflicting opinions as to just how far you've progressed up that stairway. "I'm 20 years old, and this is still an issue," says Maria, who feels that she's not trusted when it comes to her choice of friends. "My parents think that I wouldn't have the strength to walk away from a bad situation. I've tried telling them that I have *already* walked away from bad situations, but that's not good enough for them!"

As Maria's comments reveal, the issue of trust can be a source of considerable tension between youths and parents. Is that true in

\*Names in this article have been changed.

**The transition to being a trusted adult is like a stairway that you climb, step by step, throughout adolescence**



your family? If so, how can you earn greater trust from your parents? And if you've lost their trust because of some unwise actions on your part, what can you do to repair the damage?

### Prove Yourself Trustworthy

The apostle Paul wrote to first-century Christians: "Keep proving what you yourselves are." (2 Corinthians 13:5) True, he wasn't primarily addressing adolescents. Still, the principle applies. The degree to which you're accorded trust often matches the degree to which you prove yourself trustworthy. Not that you have to be perfect. After all, everyone makes mistakes. (Ecclesiastes 7:20) Overall, though, does your pattern of behavior give your parents reason to withhold their trust?

For example, Paul wrote: "We wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Hebrews 13:18) Ask yourself, 'What kind of track record do I have when it comes to being up front with my parents about my whereabouts and activities?' Consider the comments of a few youths who have had to take a hard look at themselves in this regard.

**Lori:** "I was secretly e-mailing a boy I liked. My parents found out about it and told me to stop. I promised that I would, but I didn't. This went on for a year. I'd e-mail the boy, my parents would find out, I'd apologize and promise to stop, but then I'd do it again. It got to the point that my parents couldn't trust me with anything!"

**Why, do you think, did Lori's parents withhold their trust, and how could Lori have behaved more responsibly after her parents first**

**talked to her about the problem? Write your answer below.**

**Beverly:** "My parents didn't trust me when it came to boys, but now I can understand why. I was flirting with a couple of them who were two years older than I was. I was also spending long hours on the phone with them, and at gatherings I'd talk to them and almost no one else. My parents took away my phone for a month, and they wouldn't let me go places where those boys would be."

**Why, do you think, did Beverly's parents withhold their trust for a time, and what could she have done to repair the damage?**

**Annette:** "When I was in middle school, a friend and I each took a beer home from a gathering—although we knew that our parents would not approve—and decided to drink it later just for fun. My friend's beer can was discovered by her mother. Then it came out that I had one too. The worst part of it was the look of disappointment on my mother's face!"

**If Annette were your younger sister, what advice would you give her so that she could regain the trust of your mom?**

## Regaining Trust

What if, like the youths quoted above, your actions have contributed to your parents' lack of trust? Even if that's the case, be assured that you can turn the tide. But how?

Likely your parents will accord you greater trust as you build up a record of responsible behavior. To illustrate: Imagine a man who owes money to a bank. If he makes payments regularly, he'll earn the bank's trust and the bank may even extend more credit to him in the future. It's similar at home. If you prove trustworthy—even in small things—your parents are likely to trust you more in the future.

Annette came to understand that fact. "When you're younger," she says, "you don't fully appreciate the importance of being trusted. Now I feel more responsible, and I feel compelled to act in a way that will help me retain my parents' trust." The lesson? Rather than complain about your parents' lack of trust in you, focus on building up a record of trustworthy behavior.

For example, are you dependable in the areas listed below? Check the box next to any traits you need to work on.

- Keeping my curfew
- Being punctual
- Finishing chores
- Keeping my room clean
- Using the phone
- Following through on my promises
- Being financially responsible
- Getting out of bed without prodding
- Speaking the truth
- Admitting mistakes and apologizing
- Other .....

### TO THINK ABOUT

- Why might your parents hesitate to accord you greater trust even when you work hard to prove yourself trustworthy?
- Why is communication with your parents vital if you are to earn greater trust?

Why not make a personal resolve to *prove* yourself trustworthy in the areas you checked off? Follow the admonition found in the Bible: "Put away the old personality which conforms to your former course of conduct." (Ephesians 4:22) "Let your Yes mean Yes." (James 5:12) "Speak truth each one of you

### Focus on building up a record of trustworthy behavior

with his neighbor." (Ephesians 4:25) "Be obedient to your parents in everything." (Colossians 3:20) In time, your advancement *will* be manifest to others, including your parents. —1 Timothy 4:15.

But what if you feel that despite your best efforts, your parents aren't giving you the trust you deserve? Why not talk over the matter with them? Instead of complaining that *they* need to be more trusting, respectfully ask them what they think *you* need to do to earn their trust. Explain your goals clearly in this regard.

Don't expect your parents to make concessions immediately. No doubt they'll want to make sure that you'll make good on your promises. Use this opportunity to prove yourself trustworthy. In time, your parents may well accord you greater trust. That was the case with Beverly, quoted earlier. "It's much harder to gain trust than it is to lose it," she says, adding, "I'm gaining trust right now, and it feels good!"

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

## Jehovah's Witnesses Registered in Turkey

On July 31, 2007, Jehovah's Witnesses in Turkey received official notification that they had been registered as a religious legal entity. This status allows them to purchase and own property, rent meeting places, accept donations, and defend their legal interests in court when necessary.

## Internet "Lowers Inhibitions"

In a press release, a German Web site designed to facilitate marital infidelity boasted 310,000 users and 1,000 new registrations each day. The agency prided itself on providing extramarital liaisons with "100 percent anonymity." One of the directors said: "The anonymity of the Internet lowers inhibitions" and makes it "easier to establish frank and open contacts." Another director expressed confidence that the Internet will make infidelity even more popular.

## Problematic Fossils

Scientists often portray the final "stages" of "human evolution" as a progression from *Homo habilis* to *Homo erectus* to "modern man," *Homo sapiens*. Two fossils found within walking distance of each other in Kenya, how-

■ In the past six years, "nearly 100,000 people . . . have been murdered in the United States."—THE NEW YORK TIMES, U.S.A.

■ An Internet social network has deleted the profiles of 29,000 convicted sex offenders who used its service. "The exploding epidemic of sex offender profiles on [the site] screams for action," said Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal.—REUTERS NEWS SERVICE, U.S.A.

■ "China is gripped by a shortage of names. . . . A national survey in 2006 showed [that] about 85 percent . . . of China's 1.4 billion people share only 100 surnames."—CHINA DAILY, CHINA.

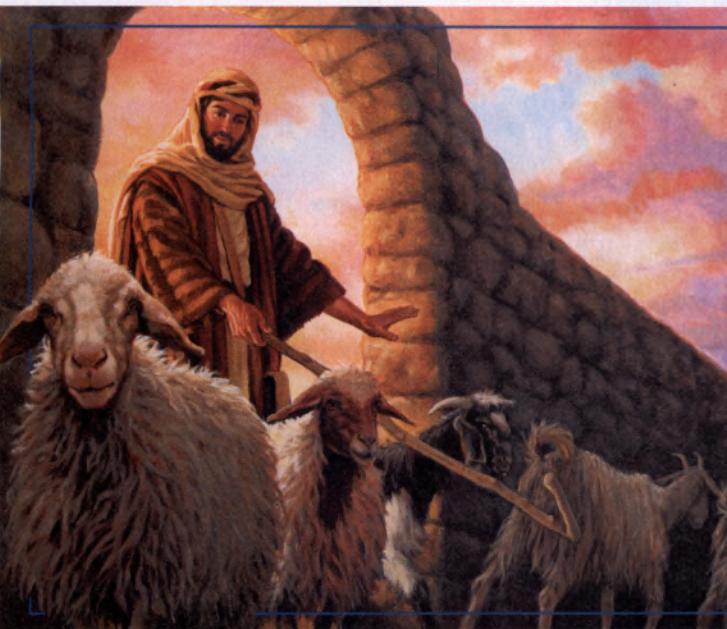
■ Per mile driven, "motorcyclists are 32 times more likely to die" in traffic accidents than occupants of cars.—UC BERKELEY WELLNESS LETTER, U.S.A.

ever, have now been interpreted as indicating that the two species *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*, thought to be human ancestors, lived at the same time. "Their co-existence makes it unlikely that *Homo erectus* evolved from *Homo habilis*," states Meave Leakey, one of the authors of the report.

## Worse Weather During Weekends?

Many Germans suspect that weekends have worse weather than workdays. An analysis of 15 years of weather data from different parts of Germany may prove their suspicions true, reports *Der Spiegel*. The warmest day is Wednesday, and the coolest, Saturday. On Saturdays, there is 15 percent more rain and it rains 10 percent more often than on Mondays, the driest days. Tuesdays have an average of 15 minutes more sun than Saturdays. Researchers assume that man-made emissions during the week accumulate toward the weekend, reflecting sunlight and helping to form clouds by providing nuclei for condensation.





### Explain the Illustration

**1. In the account recorded at Matthew 25:31-46, who has the title "Son of man"?**

CLUE: Read Matthew 16:13-17.

**2. What determines whether a person is classed as a sheep or a goat?**

**3. What happens to the sheep and to the goats?**

**FOR DISCUSSION:** Who specifically are those referred to as "my brothers"? What can you do to help them?

### From This Issue

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

**PAGE 3 What would ridiculers say during the last days?**

2 Peter 3:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 7 When will sudden destruction come?**

1 Thessalonians 5:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 20 Why should a family head provide materially for his or her family?** 1 Timothy 5:\_\_\_\_\_

**PAGE 28 How should we wish to conduct ourselves?**

Hebrews 13:\_\_\_\_\_



### Children's Picture Search

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

### Who Is Part of Jesus' Family Tree?

Consider the clues. Look up the scriptures. Then write the correct names in the spaces provided.

**4**

CLUE: I am the grandfather of Abraham.

Read Genesis 11:24-26.



**5**

CLUE: I moved with my family from the city of Ur to go to the land of Canaan. Read Genesis 11:31.

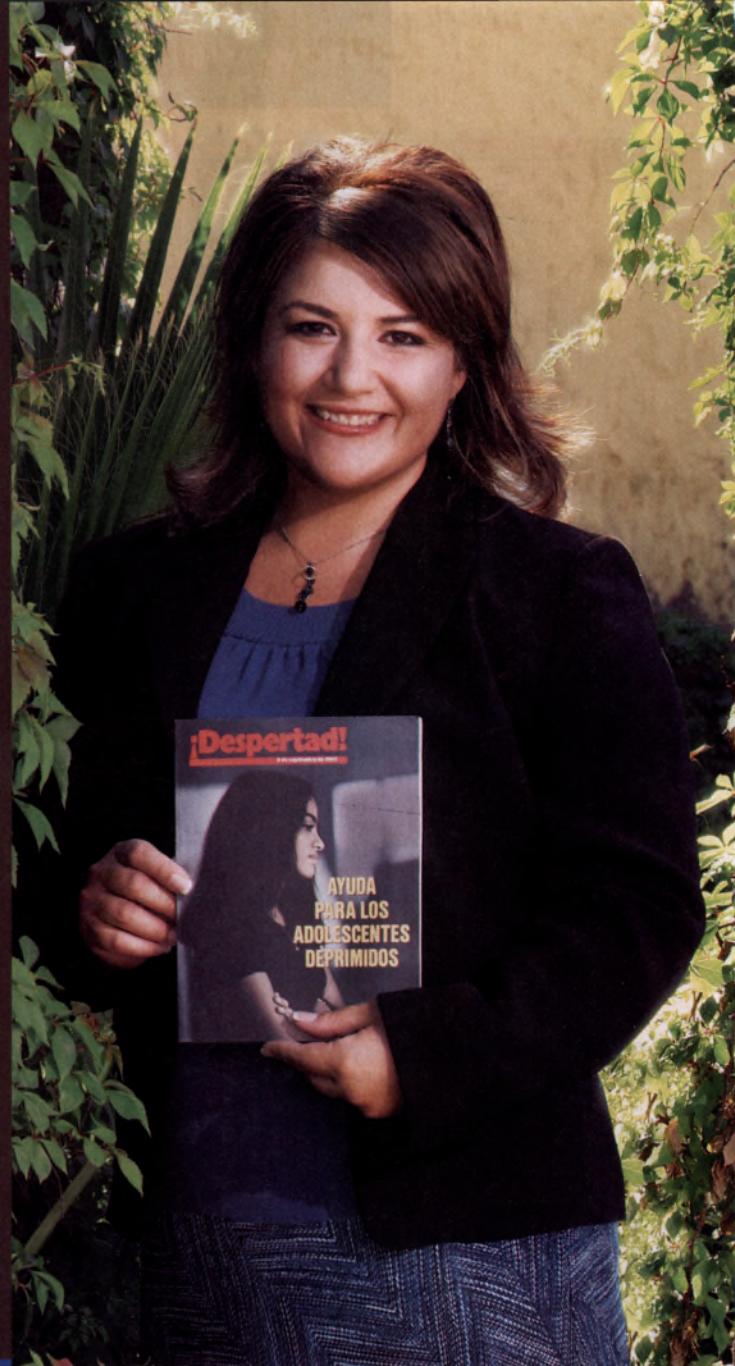
**6**

CLUE: Jehovah changed my name because he said I would become "a father of a crowd of nations." Read Genesis 17:5.

# Overcoming Teenage Depression

STUDENTS taking an English course in Mexico were asked to prepare a talk on a subject of their choice. Maritza explains: "I had been going through a period of depression, and the series of articles 'Help for Depressed Teens,' in *Awake!* of September 8, 2001, had helped me. So I used the information in the magazine, and my talk was graded excellent. Afterward, I gave the students and the teachers a copy of that series."

Two years later, while engaging in the Christian ministry, Maritza visited a student who was taking the same English course. To Maritza's surprise, the student showed her a copy of the *Awake!* series on teenage depression. It seems that the teacher values it so much that she gives each of her students a copy!



Questions  
**Young People Ask**  
Answers That Work

