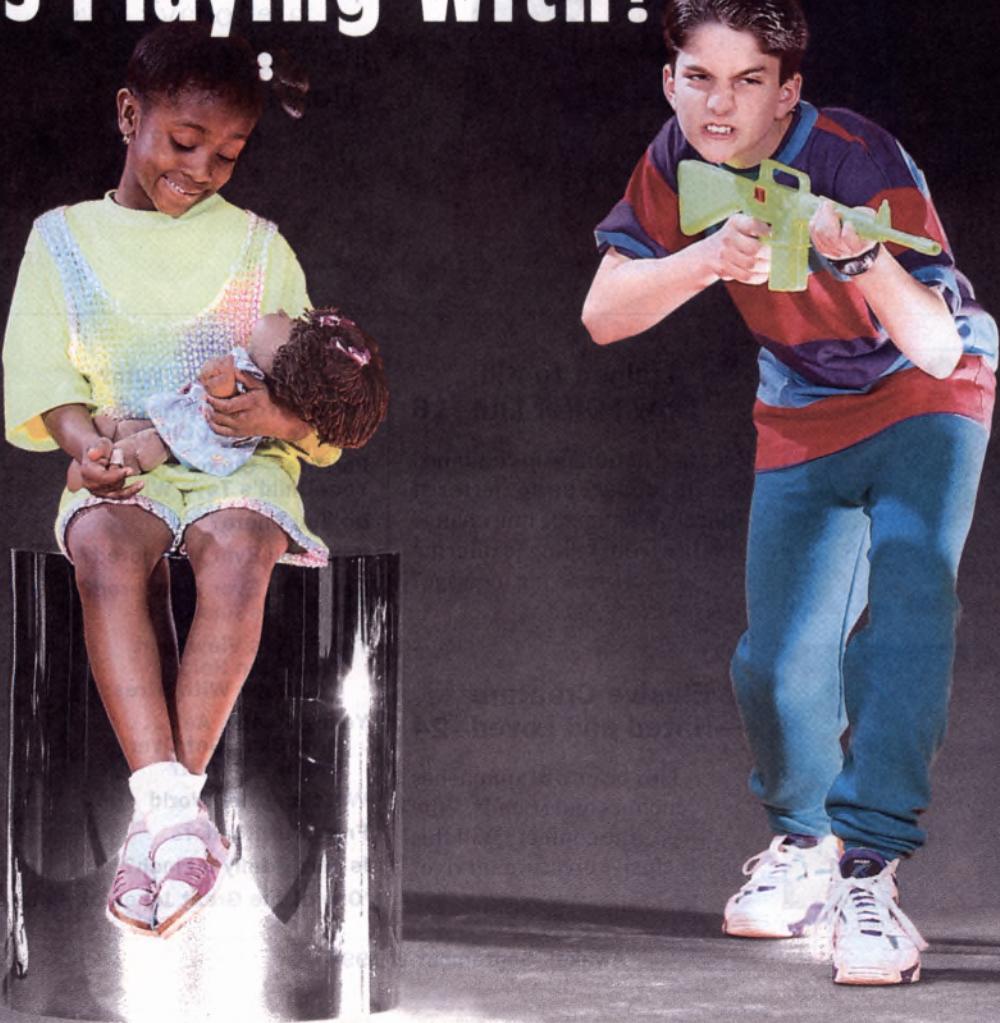


Awake!

September 8, 1994

**Do You Know
What Your Child
Is Playing With?**



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Innocent toys have been a part of children's lives for centuries. But are today's toys always so innocent? How might toys be affecting your children?



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Race and nationalism combined to produce an antiterrorist officer. What made him change his life from killing to offering a lifesaving message?



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Thomas Kitchin

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Parents What Is Your Child Playing With?

"**A**LL work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." So goes an old saying. Play has always been an important part of the lives of children. It is by means of play activities that children stretch their minds and their muscles and develop important skills. Nevertheless, today children's play has become big business. Toyland is ruled, not by children or by parents, but by manufacturers, retailers, advertisers, and clever marketing researchers. Armed with new toy-making technology and the backing of the powerful media, they are redefining the world of play—with serious implications both for parents and for children.

No doubt many in the toy industry have a genuine interest in the welfare of children. All too often, though, profit takes priority. The question becomes, not what will educate children or stimulate their imaginations, but simply what will sell. And what sells is not always the simple cloth, wood, and plastic playthings of yesteryear but high-tech, realistic toys that leave little or nothing to a child's imagination.

One manufacturer, for example, markets a set of toy cars equipped with tiny dummies that come apart on impact. When the cars collide, the dummies spew their arms, legs—and heads—out the window of their tiny vehicles. Another realistic toy tries to simulate pregnancy. A knapsacklike pouch designed to go around the belly of a little girl simulates the tiny kick and heartbeat of a developing fetus.

Some believe that such toys have educational value. Donna Gibbs, director of media relations for one toy manufacturer, calls the pregnancy simulator "a fun way for [little girls] to share what mommy is going through." Not everyone shares her enthusiasm, however. Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, professor of pediatrics at Harvard University Medical School, calls this toy an "invasion of a parent's opportunity to share something precious with a child." Dr. David Elkind, a professor of child study, contends that "these toys are going too far." He says that a doll that simulates a fetus "is far removed from what [children] can understand or appreciate." As for toys that realistically simulate the carnage of an auto crash, he adds that since television is already saturated with violence, "why reinforce it with this kind of toy?"—*The Globe and Mail*, February 8, 1992.

Controversy also surrounds other popular games, such as video war games and high-powered water guns. Considering that, according to the president of Toy Manufacturers of America, "there are an estimated 150,000 toys on the market at any given time," parents have a formidable challenge in deciding which toys they should purchase. What should guide parents in this respect? Is there a legitimate reason for concern regarding some of today's toys? The following articles will consider these and other related questions.

Today's Toys

What Do They Teach Our Children?

CHILDREN have a natural urge to play. According to the book *Choosing Toys for Children*, healthy children "spontaneously create their own worlds of exploration and fantasy." This was true even in ancient times. Back then it was common to see children 'playing in the public squares.' (Zechariah 8:5) Such play often involved creative, imaginative games.—Compare Matthew 11:16, 17.

Appropriately, then, play has been called a child's work, and if that is true, then toys can be said to be a child's tools. Says *Parents* magazine: "Play is the way children learn about the world. . . . Playing with toys reduces the world to child-size proportions, a world that a child can handle and control. Play develops muscles and coordination, fosters socialization, tests the barriers between reality and fantasy, and helps children learn to communicate with one another, to take turns, to share. Play stimulates the imagination and gives experience in problem-solving skills."

Toys were also important to children in Bible times. Excavations in Israel have

unearthed a small treasure trove of children's toys, such as rattles, whistles, and miniature pots and chariots. *The World Book Encyclopedia* states: "In ancient Africa, children enjoyed balls, toy animals, and pull toys. Children of ancient Greece and Rome had fun with boats, carts, hoops, and tops. During the Middle Ages in Europe, popular toys included clay marbles, rattles, and puppets."

Toys that are stimulating, interesting, and educational still play an important role today. Yet, there is an alarming array of playthings on the market that are of doubtful worth. Says a 1992 article in *Time* magazine: "Don't look to this year's crop of new toys if you're seeking some good, clean fun. Virtually every major manufacturer [is] accentuating the nauseating." One line of toys included a life-size plastic skull that children can style to be "as repugnant as possible." Also for sale are toys that simulate body functions, such as vomiting. Parents and children alike are being subjected to formidable pressures to buy these toys.

Awake!

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

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Selling to Children

The journal *Pediatrics in Review* notes that the ancient "Code of Hammurabi made it a crime punishable by death to sell anything to a child." However, today's toy manufacturers and advertisers do not blush at pitching their expensive wares to guileless children. Using sophisticated research techniques, toy developers tap into the minds of children. And by continually adding new twists to their products, they can make last year's model seem obsolete, and this year's indispensable.

The toy industry also makes full use of the power of television. In the United States, television programming for children is virtually flooded with toy commercials. Using fancy camera work, special effects, and evocative music, the commercials make the dullest of toys seem magical, exciting. Although most adults can see through such manipulation, "younger children believe that commercials are telling the truth."—*Pediatrics in Review*.

Many of the shows directed at children amount to little more than program-length commercials. According to the publication *Current Problems in Pediatrics*, such programs are "designed to sell a toy rather than to educate or enrich the lives of children." The program *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, for example, has spawned "over 70 products, a breakfast cereal, and a movie."

According to *Pediatrics in Review*, "many studies demonstrate that children exposed to

commercials nag their parents to buy the products advertised." The founder of one international toy company says: "You just watch kids tugging at their parents' coats and you know what they're saying: 'If I don't have this toy, I will die.'" Little wonder, then, that in Canada alone, shoppers spend more than \$1.2 billion each year on toys for their children, grandchildren, and friends.

War Games

Video war games are among the leaders in the toy industry. Proponents claim that such games help develop problem-solving skills, eye-hand coordination, and motor skills, as well as stimulate curiosity. "Used correctly," says an article in *The Toronto Star*, "an electronic plaything can be harmless, even educational." "But," the paper admits, "more often it's an isolating activity, even an obsession."

Consider one boy who became obsessed with playing video war games. Says his mother: "He's incredible—he won't leave the screen until he kills everybody." How old is this child? Only two years old! His tiny thumb is blistered from pushing buttons four to five hours a day. Yet, the mother seems unconcerned. "The only worry I have is he wants everything done like that," she says with a snap of her fingers. The game "is so fast . . . , and real life's not that fast."

According to *The Toronto Star*, some opponents of video games feel that the games "discourage children from learning to amuse themselves with imagination, reading or other

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traditional pastimes, as well as tempting them away from school homework." Some child educators even say that 'video games are a seductive menace and are capable of encouraging a violent, reclusive behavior in children.'

Television news coverage of the bombings during the Persian Gulf war in 1991 stimulated a huge demand for more conventional war toys. Topping the list of popular items were models of Abrams tanks, Scud missiles, and Hind helicopters. Experts fear that playing with such toys may encourage aggression or perhaps desensitize children to violence. At the very least, doing so runs counter to the spirit of the Bible text at Isaiah 2:4, which foretold that God's people would not "ever again be trained for war."—*The New English Bible*.

There have been occasions when realistic-looking toys, such as high-powered water guns, have triggered real violence. In one North American city, a high-powered plastic water-gun clash erupted into real gunfire, resulting in the death of a 15-year-old. In a separate incident, two youths were wounded by an enraged gunman after he was soaked by squirt guns. Numerous other violent incidents have been triggered by seemingly harmless water-gun battles.

The Message You Send

Few responsible parents really approve of violence. Still, the war-toy industry flourishes. Sometimes parents prefer to compromise their own beliefs rather than to incur the wrath of a child. In doing so, however, they may be doing the child untold harm. Canadian mental-health researcher Susan Gold-

berg argues: "When we give toys to children, we're indicating our approval of what a toy represents." True, it is only normal for some children at times to display some aggressive behavior. "Without toy guns," argues one psychologist, "children would make their own versions, even using their fingers." Maybe. But should a parent encourage aggression by providing children replicas of the arms of violence?

It is also true that few children will actually take up a life of crime simply because they played with a toy gun. But if you give your children such toys, what message are you sending? Do you want them to believe that violence is fun or that killing and war are exciting? Are you teaching them respect for God's standards? His Word says: "Anyone loving violence [God's] soul certainly hates."—Psalm 11:5.

Susan Goldberg further notes that 'the more time children engage in violent play with silent approval of parents, the more likely they are to use aggression to solve problems.' The Bible says at Galatians 6:7: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." Can a child possibly reap good personality traits from violent play?

To be fair, it must be acknowledged that all children are different. One child may get addicted to an electronic game, but another may not. And whether children really relate the electronic zaps on a video screen to real-life violence is open to debate. Parents must therefore decide what is best for their own children and exercise great care in the selection of their children's toys.



Playing helps children learn how to relate to one another

Parents Choose Your Child's Toys Wisely

CHILDREN are "an inheritance from Jehovah," says the Bible. (Psalm 127:3) God-fearing parents therefore recognize their responsibility to train their children "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4) They do not leave it to toy manufacturers to shape the personalities of their children.

Toys can play an important role in stimulating the emotional and mental growth of children. This does not mean, however, that parents must spend a lot of money on high-tech gadgets. Some of the most wholesome and stimulating playthings will cost you next to nothing.

A simple cardboard box can be turned into a playhouse, an airplane, or anything a child's fertile imagination can envision. A pail and a shovel allow a child to build sand castles. Simple blocks, puzzles, clay, and crayons can likewise provide hours of wholesome recreation. For older children, art materials and hobby kits can teach useful skills and provide a healthy outlet for creativity—infinitely more satisfying than zapping computerized blips.

Some play activities require no special equipment at all. A walk through the woods can be an exciting adventure for a child, especially when accompanied by a loving, involved parent. Why, even basic household skills can be taught as fun activities. Writes Penelope Leach in her book *Your Growing Child*: "Cooking a cake or a meal, digging the garden, cleaning the car or painting the ceil-

ing, doing the shopping or bathing the baby may all be work to you, but to your child they may be among the most desirable kinds of play."

Seven Helpful Guidelines

Of course, there is a place for manufactured toys. And if the family budget has room for them, you may want to ask yourself the following questions before making a purchase:

1. *Does the toy really stimulate my child's curiosity and imagination?* If not, he will quickly become bored with it. A toy may look good in a TV commercial, but remember: The child actors and actresses have been paid to look excited about the toy. Your child may not react the same way. Try observing him at play or in a toy store. Toward what types of playthings does he gravitate?

Parents sometimes feel that a toy has no value unless it is "educational." Professor Janice T. Gibson, however, reminds us: "Children learn from all toys they play with. What is important is that they have fun so that they keep on playing in ways that are good for them."

2. *Is the toy appropriate for my child's physical and mental abilities?* Sometimes a child simply isn't strong enough, patient enough, or agile enough to use a particular toy. A parent, though, may be inclined to buy it because it has a certain nostalgic appeal. But can a three-year-old boy really operate an electric train set—or swing a baseball bat? Why not

wait until your child is better equipped to appreciate such playthings?

3. *Is the toy safe?* Small toddlers tend to put everything into their mouths and can easily choke on tiny wooden blocks or plastic objects. Sharp or pointed edges can be dangerous to children of any age. You may also want to ask yourself if the toy is likely to be thrown or used as a weapon against a sibling.

In the United States, some toys are labeled to indicate the specific age groups they are designed for. Adhering to such recommendations can protect your child from injury. If in doubt regarding a toy, try asking the store clerk if a demonstration model is available for your examination.

4. *Is the toy well constructed and durable?*

"Toddlers who like to drop, throw, and taste everything can wreak havoc on toys that are not durable," *Parents* magazine reminds us.

5. *Is the toy worth the money?* TV commercials rarely discuss price, but toys do cost. Much of the money pays for the brand name rather than the actual materials involved. Furthermore, commercials often cultivate unrealistic expectations in children, which can result in great disappointment.

Teach your children to be shrewd shoppers. Proverbs 14:15 says: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps." An article in *The New York Times* said: "Sometimes you can point



out ahead of time why a particular toy is poorly made or merchandised in a misleading way." The *Times* added: "Children become much savvier consumers when the money comes out of their pockets instead of yours."

Of course, the real value of a toy goes beyond its materials or workmanship. Important factors are how much your child will use it, and how much pleasure it will bring him. A backyard swing set may be relatively expensive, but it may provide many hours of fun over a period of years. A cheap toy that is quickly discarded may turn out to be a poorer investment in the long run.

6. What values and standards does the toy teach?

Professor of child study David El-

kind cautions that "toys should stimulate children's imaginations in positive, not negative, ways." Avoid toys that are gruesome, that clearly promote violence, or that mimic adult vices, such as gambling.

What about toys based on popular fairytale or science-fiction characters? Such stories generally deal with the triumph of good over evil. Some parents thus view the 'magical elements' in these tales as simple flights of a childish imagination and see no harm in letting their children enjoy them. Others may fear that the stories could stimulate an interest in the occult. (Deuteronomy 18:10-13) Without judging others, parents must make their own decisions in this regard, considering the effects such stories—and any toys based on them—have on their children.

Remember too the principle at 1 Corinthians 10:23: "All things are lawful; but not all things are advantageous." While a popular toy may not be objectionable to you, is it truly advantageous to purchase it? Could it offend or stumble others?

Toys that claim to be educational should also come under parental scrutiny, especially when they purport to teach children about sexual matters and pregnancy. Is the child ready for such information? Would the information be better conveyed through discussions between you and your child?* Certain toys might convey the physical aspects of such matters, but do they convey proper moral attitudes?

7. Do I really want my child to have this toy?

You may feel that your child already has too many toys, that the toy is simply not practical for your circumstances, or that the toy makes more noise than you can live with. If such problems cannot be resolved, you may have little choice but to say no. This is not easy.

* See the articles on sex education in the February 22, 1992, issue of *Awake!*



But giving in to every childish whim and demand will not help your child grow into a balanced adult. Note the principle at Proverbs 29:21: "If one is pampering one's servant [or child] from youth on, in his later life he will even become a thankless one."

This does not mean that as a parent, you have to be dogmatic and unreasonable. That would only cause your child to feel angry and resentful. "The wisdom from above is . . . reasonable." (James 3:17) One child-care expert put it this way: "You need to sit down with your child and explain very carefully why you don't want to give him certain toys."

Some Things More Important Than Toys

While toys can be valuable tools for educating and entertaining, they are only things. A child may love a toy, but a toy cannot love a child. Children need loving attention that only parents can give. "Essentially a parent is the best toy yet devised," says Dr. Magdalena Grey. When parents play with their children, they help forge a close emotional bond and contribute to the growth of healthy attitudes and emotions.

Yes, children need healthy play. But more important, they need moral and spiritual di-

rection. "This means everlasting life," says the Bible, "their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Parents can play a major role in helping their children gain this lifesaving knowledge. Families among Jehovah's Witnesses try to make a study of the Bible a part of their regular routine. Often they do so with the assistance of publications such as *My Book of Bible Stories*, *Listening to the Great Teacher*, and *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, which have been written especially for young ones.* These books do not merely entertain—they have helped thousands of children develop a solid faith in God. Children also appreciate audiocassette recordings of Bible dramas and of publications such as *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*.*

True Christians therefore do more than play with their children—they also pray with them, study with them, and talk with them. Giving such loving attention takes time and much effort. But in the long run, it brings a child more lasting joy than any game or shiny toy can!

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

Do You Snore?

ARE YOU a heavy snorer? Some people are and do not even know it. Thus, they are not aware of why they wake up feeling weak and groggy. Their disorder is known as sleep apnea. While a person with this disorder sleeps, throat muscles that keep the breathing passages open relax to the point that the airway closes. Up to a minute may pass before the person gasps for air and awakens briefly. Most apnea sufferers do not know that their sleep is disrupted. The only clue may come from a roommate who is often awakened by the snoring. Experts believe that apnea con-

tributes to car and job accidents and that it may be a factor in strokes and heart attacks.

Is there a solution? The *Complete Home Medical Guide* (Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons) advises: "Men are affected 20 times more often than women. More than half the sufferers are obese, which further compromises the normal flow of air. Weight reduction, therefore, is an important part of therapy." The same source suggests that in severe cases, an operation to reduce the airway obstruction might be advisable.

Have You Ever Wondered?

WHAT is one of the major stumbling blocks that separates Muslims and Jews from the religions of Christendom? It is the teaching of the "Most Holy Trinity." What does this dogma state? The Trinity was defined in the Athanasian Creed as the worship of "one God in Trinity . . . The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three gods, but one God." Each is said to be eternal, to be almighty, with none greater or lesser than another; each said to be God, and yet together being but one God. Theologians describe it as a mystery.

Does the Bible say anything about the Trinity?* The following questions might lead you to some interesting conclusions. Biblical answers are found on page 12.

* For a detailed understanding of this subject, please consult the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, pages 380-1 and 405-25, and the brochure *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, both published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

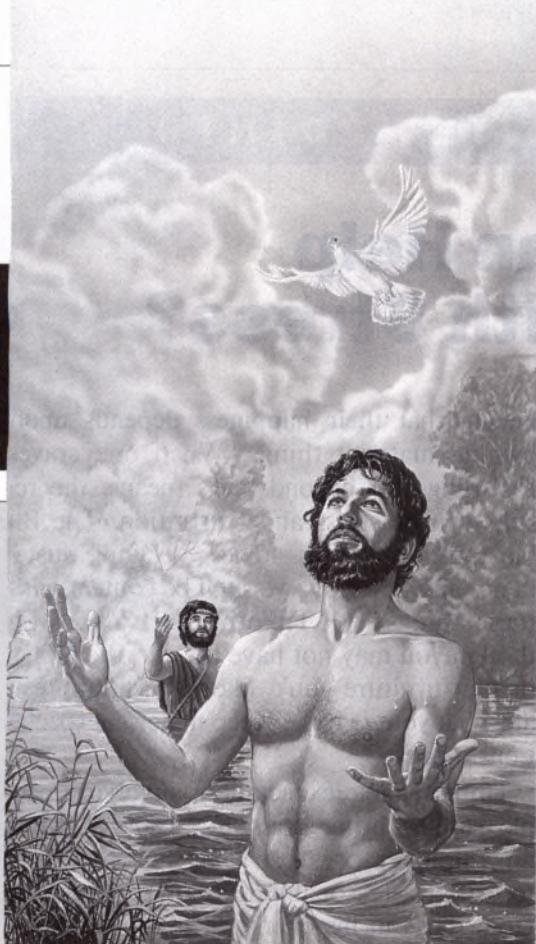
1. If God is and always has been a Trinity, did the Jews find that teaching in the Hebrew Scriptures ("Old Testament")?
2. What do the Hebrew Scriptures say about God?—Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 145; Zechariah 14:9.
3. Do the Hebrew Scriptures refer to the holy spirit?—Judges 15:14; Zechariah 4:6.
4. In the Hebrew Scriptures, is the holy spirit referred to as a person or as God's active force?—Judges 14:6; Isaiah 44:3.
5. Do the Hebrew Scriptures refer to a promised Messiah, or Anointed One?—Daniel 9:25, 26.
6. Does any text in the Hebrew Scriptures equate the Messiah with God?—Psalm 2:2, 4-8; Isaiah 45:18; 61:1.
7. Does any Hebrew text give a solid basis for believing that Jehovah is three persons in one God?—Isaiah 44:6; 46:9, 10.
8. Who sent Jesus to the earth? Then who is superior?—John 5:19, 23, 30; 8:42; 14:28; 17:3.
9. Did Jesus ever say that he was God?—John 7:28, 29; 14:6.
10. Many saw Jesus, but has any man ever seen God?—John 1:18; 6:46.
11. Did Jesus say that he was the 'Son of God' or that he was 'God the Son'?—John 10:36; 1 John 4:15; 5:5, 13.
12. Did Jesus ever say that he is equal to the Father?—John 14:28; 20:17.
13. Do the words "I and the Father are one" prove a Trinity?—John 10:30; 17:21; Matthew 24:36.
14. How did the early disciples view Jesus?—John 1:29, 34, 41, 49; 6:69; 1 Corinthians 11:3.
15. How did God view Jesus?—Mark 9:7; Luke 2:9-11.
16. Do the Greek Scriptures ("New Testament") contradict the Hebrew Scriptures regarding the holy spirit being God's active force?—Matthew 3:11; Luke 1:41; John 14:26; Acts 1:8; 4:31; 10:38.
17. At the time of Jesus' baptism, where were the Father, the Son, and the holy spirit? Were they three in one?—Matthew 3:16, 17.
18. What position does the resurrected Jesus occupy in the heavens?—Acts 7:55, 56; Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 12:2.
19. Who gave Jesus that exalted position?—Philippians 2:9-11.
20. Does that make Jesus God or second only to God in the universe?—1 Corinthians 11:3; Philippians 2:9-11.
21. Who is the Supreme Sovereign of the Universe?—Deuteronomy 3:24; Acts 4:24-27; 1 Corinthians 15:28.

Have You Ever Wondered? The Bible's Answers

"After being baptized Jesus immediately came up from the water; and, look! the heavens were opened up, and he saw descending like a dove God's spirit coming upon him. Look! Also, there was a voice from the heavens that said: 'This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.'"—Matthew 3:16, 17.

Following are some of the texts that answer the questions asked on page 11:

1. *The Encyclopedia of Religion* admits: "Theologians today are in agreement that the Hebrew Bible does not contain a doctrine of the Trinity." The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* also says: "The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is not taught in the O[ld] T[estament]."
2. "Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." (*Deuteronomy* 6:4) "Jehovah must become king over all the earth. In that day Jehovah will prove to be one, and his name one."—*Zechariah* 14:9.
3. "Jehovah's spirit became operative upon [Samson], and the ropes that were upon his arms came to be like linen threads that have been scorched with fire, so that his fetters melted off his hands." (*Judges* 15:14) "This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, 'Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,' Jehovah of armies has said."—*Zechariah* 4:6.
4. "Jehovah's spirit became operative upon [Samson], so that he tore it in two, just as someone tears a male kid in two, and there was nothing at all in his hand." (*Judges* 14:6) "I shall pour out my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your descendants."—*Isaiah* 44:3.
5. "You should know and have the insight that from the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks. . . . And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off, with nothing for himself."—*Daniel* 9:25, 26.
6. "This is what Jehovah has said, the Creator of the heavens, He the true God, the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, He the One who firmly established it, who did not create it simply for nothing, who formed it even to be inhabited: 'I am Jehovah, and there is no one else.'"—*Isaiah* 45:18.
7. "Remember the first things of a long time ago, that I am the Divine One and there is no other God, nor anyone like me."—*Isaiah* 46:9.
8. "I cannot do a single thing of my own initiative; just as I hear, I judge; and the judgment that I render is righteous, because I seek, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (*John* 5:30) "If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going my way to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am."—*John* 14:28.
9. "I have not come of my own initiative, but he that sent me is real, and you do not know him. I know him, because I am a representative from him, and that One sent me forth."—*John* 7:28, 29.
10. "No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten god who is in the bosom position with the Father is the one that has explained him." (*John* 1:18) "Not that any man has seen the Father, except he who is from God; this one has seen the Father."—*John* 6:46.



Did God pour out holy spirit on himself?

...the Son of man has come to serve, not to be served; for he came to give his life a ransom for many. ...He who sins does not have God's spirit within him." (Matthew 20:28) "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ...For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ...He who sins does not have God's spirit within him." (John 3:13-18)

15. "A voice came out of the cloud: 'This is my Son, the beloved; listen to him.'"—Mark 9:7.

16. "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you." (Acts 1:8) "God anointed [Jesus] with holy spirit and power."—Acts 10:38.

17. See illustration, left, and text above and on page 12.

18. "As we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Hebrews 12:2.

19. "For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name."—Philippians 2:9.

20. "The head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God."—1 Corinthians 11:3.

21. "O Sovereign Lord Jehovah, . . . who is a god in the heavens or on the earth that does deeds like yours?" (Deuteronomy 3:24) "When all things will have been subjected to him [Jesus], then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone."—1 Corinthians 15:28.

11. "Do you say to me whom the Father sanctified and dispatched into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, I am God's Son?"—John 10:36.

12. "If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going my way to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am."—John 14:28.

13. "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father." (Matthew 24:36) "In order that they [Jesus' followers] may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, that they [Jesus' followers] also may be in union with us, in order that the world may believe that you sent me forth."—John 17:21.

14. "See, the Lamb of God that takes away the

What Can Help You Cope With Stress?

ARE you a victim of stress? If so, you have plenty of company. These are "critical times hard to deal with," and people of all ages and walks of life are experiencing stress. (2 Timothy 3:1) Some experts claim that more than half of all visits to the doctor are due to stress-related problems.

Yet stress is not necessarily a bad thing in itself. "In fact," says a stress-clinic director, "it gives us our excitement, enthusiasm for living, energy for getting things done. We enjoy it—if we can manage it."

On the other hand, stress can be devastating, destructive. What, then, if stress is causing problems for you? Here are a few suggestions based on Bible wisdom that may help you minimize its destructive effects.

Avoid Unreasonable Expectations

"Expectation postponed is making the heart sick," says the Bible. (Proverbs 13:12) When expectations are never fulfilled, the stress can be overpowering. This is almost bound to occur when we set our expectations unrealistically high.

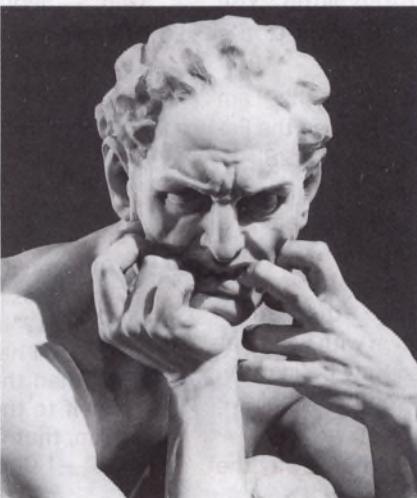
For example, the advertising media have duped many into be-

lieving that their happiness depends upon owning material things. When one craves for things far beyond one's means, the results can be stress and frustration. The Bible thus offers this advice: "Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Timothy 6:8) Yes, even though you may not have the car, the home, or the furniture you'd like to own, appreciate what you *do* have. Keep material expectations modest.

Unreasonable expectations involving people can also bring stress. For example, while an employer or supervisor has the right to expect a reasonable level of performance from those in his charge, it is foolish to expect perfection from them. Carlos, a Brazilian factory supervisor, says: "You have to accept people as they are. If you expect more than they can give, it will elevate the stress level, making everyone unhappy."—Compare Jeremiah 17:5-8.

Control the Stress of Achievement

The *Latin America Daily Post* reveals another source of stress, stating that 'achievement-oriented, competitive



The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Funds given by the Josephine Bay Paul and
C. Michael Paul Foundation, Inc., and the Charles Ulrich and
Josephine Bay Foundation, Inc., and the Fletcher Fund, 1967.

behavior is a significant risk factor in heart disease.' A young accountant admits: "At the office I'm so nervous and afraid to reveal any weakness. I work intensely and feel it frustrating not to receive acknowledgment from others."

Regarding such quests for recognition and achievement, Solomon said: "I myself have seen all the hard work and all the proficiency in work, that it means the rivalry of one toward another; this also is vanity and a striving after the wind."—Ecclesiastes 4:4.

The fact is, 'the swift do not always have the race' when it comes to job advancement or recognition. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Maria, a Brazilian office worker, put it this way: "A person may have ability, but circumstances, and maybe even favoritism, can hinder promotion."—Compare Ecclesiastes 2:21; 10:6.

Keep your expectations modest and recognize your limitations. Work for the joy that work itself brings instead of working only for advancement. (Ecclesiastes 2:24) Really, the achievement-obsessed person not only loses much of the joy of life but also can become so tense that he undermines his own efforts to succeed. Dr. Arnold Fox thus advised: "Wanting to be the best in your field is an admirable goal, but don't allow that one thought to dominate your life. If you ignore thoughts of love, laughter, and the joy of life, or if you are so fixated that you forget to enjoy life, you are stressing yourself."

Things You Can Do

Another way to fight off the tension of daily pressures is to cultivate a sense of humor. (Ecclesiastes 3:4) You do not have to be a comedian to have a cheerful attitude. "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer, but a spirit that is stricken makes the bones dry."—Proverbs 17:22.

Do you have the tendency to put things off

until tomorrow? In the long run, procrastination increases rather than reduces stress. The Bible advises: "Do not loiter at your business." (Romans 12:11) Make a list, written or mental, of the things you need to do. (Proverbs 21:5) Then decide what things need to be done first—and set about doing them.

"A person may have ability, but circumstances, and maybe even favoritism, can hinder promotion"

What, though, if in spite of your best efforts, you still feel tense or stressed? You may need to make a concerted effort to change your thinking. Do not dwell upon past errors. This can add much stress to the present. A 19th-century philosopher wrote: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards." Although we can learn from failures, our present actions form our future.

King David pointed to the best stress remedy when he prayed to Jehovah: "Distresses of my heart have multiplied; from the stresses upon me O bring me out." (Psalm 25:17) Yes, David looked to God to relieve his anxieties. If you take the time to read and to meditate on God's Word, you will likewise find that you will feel closer to God. As you come to appreciate God's purposes, you will be moved to put his interests first in your life, which will relieve you of many unnecessary anxieties. (Matthew 6:31, 33) Learn to take one day at a time. Why add tomorrow's anxieties to those of today? Jesus put it this way: "Never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties. Sufficient for each day is its own badness."—Matthew 6:34.

Trained to Kill, Now I Offer Life

“Terrorists are holding hostages in a house in northern Israel.”

I WAS on a weekend leave from the Israeli army and was camping by the Sea of Galilee when I heard the news on the radio. I well knew what those words meant. I was an army officer in a special unit that was professionally trained to deal with terrorism. I also knew that I would have to be among those who would break in, kill the terrorists, and release the hostages. Without hesitation I jumped into my car and drove as fast as I could to the scene.

As officers in the Israeli army always go in first, I knew I would have to be among the first to face the terrorists, but the thought of getting killed or injured did not slow me down. I arrived at the scene just minutes after my friends in our unit had done the job, killing the five terrorists and releasing the hostages. I was so disappointed that I had missed that action.

Why did I feel that way? Because I was very nationalistic, and I wanted to prove my love for my country. But how did I get into this specialized antiterrorist unit?

I was born in Tiberias, in Israel, in 1958 and was brought up in a very nationalistic home. I believed my country was always right. So when I joined the army in 1977, I volunteered to serve in the most professional fighting unit in the Israeli army. Only a very small percentage of those applying are accepted to start the very difficult training course. Not all finish,

and of these, only a couple are chosen to become officers. I was one of them.

My success was really a reflection of my love for my country. I had good reason to be proud of myself. After all, I was an officer in a special fighting unit doing things that the average man in the street hardly sees, even in the movies. However, the success, fame, and secrecy were accompanied with a spiritual emptiness that grew until I began to realize that there must be more to life. So after more than four very difficult years, I left the army in order to travel and see the world.

Why I Left Israel

My travels around the world came to an end when, in Thailand, I met Kunlaya, my wife to be, who was then studying art at Bangkok University. Neither of us had had plans to get married, but our love was stronger than we realized. So Kunlaya stopped her studies, I ended my trip, and we decided to share our lives with each other. Where? In Israel, of course. “I have to help protect my country,” I said to her.

In Israel a Jewish man can marry only a Jew; so I was well aware that Kunlaya, who was then a Buddhist, would have to be converted to Judaism, something she was happy to do. But the religious Jews responsible for such a conversion did not want her. Wherever we turned for help, we met the same negative response: “Someone like you should find a nice Jewish girl and not marry this Gentile.”

Not only was Kunlaya a Gentile but she was also of a different race.

After six months of trying, we were at last invited to the religious court to be interviewed by three rabbis who would decide whether Kunlaya would be converted or not. There I found myself being reproved for wanting to marry a Gentile. They told me to send her home. "Why not take her as your slave!" one

made my decision, special efforts were made to separate us. Even my dear parents were pulled into all of this by strong religious feelings and the pressure that was put on us to leave each other.

In the meantime the war in Lebanon between the Israeli forces and the Palestinian guerrillas had started. I was, of course, called to join the fighting, and while deep in enemy territory risking my neck for my country, Kunlaya's passport was taken from her and she was asked to leave the country. All of this was part of the effort to get us apart. The very moment I found out what had happened, my love for my country died. For the first time, I began to realize what nationalism is all about. I had been willing to give so much for my country, and now I was not even allowed to marry the woman I loved! I felt very hurt and betrayed. As far as I was concerned, getting rid of Kunlaya was getting rid of me. Thus, fighting to win that case was in fact fighting for my own place in Israel, something I was not willing to do.

We had no choice but to fly overseas to get married and then return to Israel to make final arrangements before leaving the country. We left Israel in November 1983, but not before we made peace with my parents. I had always seen the hypocrisy in religion as the main cause of our troubles, yet I had never been so far from religion as I was then.

Finding the Truth About the Messiah

We were very surprised to learn that a particular immigration law made it impossible



rabbi then suggested. They rejected our application.

I had had enough. While they were yet speaking, I took Kunlaya by her hand and left the courtroom, declaring that Kunlaya would never be a Jew even if permitted and that I didn't wish to remain one. 'A religion that treats people this way is worth nothing anyway!' I thought to myself. Now that I had

for us to live in my wife's country. We had to look for a third country to live in! Our first son was born in Australia, but we couldn't stay there either. We continued moving from country to country. Two years had gone by, and gradually we began to lose hope of finding a place where we could live permanently. In October 1985, we landed in New Zealand. 'Just another country to go through,' we thought as we were hitchhiking north with our 11-month-old boy. But how wrong we were!

One evening we were invited for a meal by a nice couple. After hearing our story, the wife offered to help us with our application for permanent residence in New Zealand. The next day, just before saying goodbye, she handed me a small book entitled *The New Testament* (Greek Scriptures). "Read it," she said. "All its writers were Jews." I put it into my bag and promised to look at it. I had no idea what was in that book—Jews usually don't read Christian literature. We later bought an old car and proceeded to move south, making the car our home.

At one of the stops, I remembered my promise. I pulled the book out and started reading it. I found myself learning about the man the Jewish faith taught me to dislike, even to detest. I was surprised to read that Jesus had spent most of his life where I had spent most of mine, around the Sea of Galilee. I was more surprised to see the things he said. I had never heard anyone talk like him.

I tried to find fault with that man, but I couldn't. Instead, I just loved what he taught, and the more I read about him, the more I wondered why Jews had lied to me about him. I began to see that although I had never been religious, I had been brainwashed by religion even as I had been by nationalism. I wondered, 'Why do the Jews hate him so much?'

My question was partly answered when I read chapter 23 in Matthew. I literally jumped off my seat as I read that Jesus courageously exposed the hypocrisy and the wicked conduct of the Jewish religious leaders of his time. 'Nothing has changed,' I thought. 'These very words of Jesus apply fully to the Jewish religious leaders today. I've seen it and experienced it myself!' I could not help having a deep respect for this man who fearlessly spoke the truth. I was not looking for another religion, but I could not ignore the power of Jesus' teaching.

Hearing the Name Jehovah

I had finished reading about half of the Greek Scriptures when we arrived at Milford Sound, in the Fiordland of New Zealand's South Island. We parked our car beside another car with an Asian woman sitting near it. My wife started talking to her. When her British husband arrived, we briefly told them our story. The husband then proceeded to tell us that in the near future, God will destroy present-day governments and will have His government ruling a righteous world. Al-

Rami Oved with his family today



though it sounded good to me, I thought: 'This man is dreaming.'

The man continued, telling us about religious hypocrisy and the false teachings of Christendom's churches. Then his wife said: "We are Jehovah's Witnesses." It struck me, 'What are these Gentiles doing with the God of the Jews? And with that name Jehovah?' I knew the name, but it was the first time that I had heard it spoken. Jews are not allowed to pronounce that name. The couple gave us their address and some Bible literature, and we departed. Little did we know that meeting these two would change our lives.

Finding the Truth

Two weeks later we were in Christchurch. It was arranged for us to stay and to help on a sheep farm owned by members of a Pentecostal church. On the farm I completed reading the Greek Scriptures and started rereading it. I noticed how obvious God's existence was to Jesus. For the first time in my life I wondered, 'Does God really exist?' I began searching for the answer. I was able to get a copy of the complete Bible in my own language, Hebrew, and proceeded to read it, in order to find out more about Jehovah, the one claiming to be Almighty God.

My wife and I quickly realized that the teachings we learned from the owners of the farm were not in line with what we read in our Bible. Nor was their conduct. In fact, at one stage we were so upset by the way we were treated on the farm that I wrote a letter about it to the lady who had given us the Greek Scriptures. "Up till now, I believe, God has shown us which 'Christianity' is false, and if God is really there, he will now show us true Christianity." I wrote to her, not knowing just how correct I was. It was then that I remembered what those two Witnesses had told us about the hypocrisy of the churches. We decided to meet with the Witnesses again.

A few days later, that couple arranged for two other Witnesses of Jehovah, who lived nearby, to call on us. They invited us for dinner. At their place we discussed the Bible, and we loved what we heard. The next day we were again invited and had another long discussion. What they showed us from the Bible made so much sense that both my wife and I felt we had discovered something wonderful, yes, the truth!

We could hardly go to sleep that night. We knew that life would not be the same again. I began to read the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, published by the Witnesses, and as I was reading it, I felt as if I had been blind but now could see! I was able to understand the purpose of life, why man was put on earth, why we die, why God permits so much suffering, and how world events fulfill Bible prophecies. I borrowed as many books as I could from Jehovah's Witnesses and spent hours going through them. I could easily see the falsehood of the teachings of the Trinity, hellfire, and immortality of the soul. I loved the logic and the powerful Bible reasoning used by the publications.

Comparing Bibles and Believers

The owners of the farm tried to discourage us from studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. "They have a different Bible, a false translation," they told us. "Well, I will have to check it out," I said. I borrowed a few translations of the Bible from the farm owners and also got hold of a copy of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and compared them all with a copy of the Bible in the Hebrew language. I was thrilled to discover that the *New World Translation* was the most accurate and genuine translation. My confidence in the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society grew.

The first time we attended a meeting at the Kingdom Hall, we did not understand all that was discussed there, but we had no trouble

understanding the marvelous love that was shown to us by the congregation. We were impressed that the name Jehovah was mentioned so often. "Jehovah, Jehovah," I said over and over again on the way back from the meeting. "It is not just 'God' now, it is 'Jehovah God,'" I said to my wife.

Eventually we moved to Christchurch in order to associate more with Jehovah's Witnesses and to attend all the meetings. The publication *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* left no doubt in my mind that Jehovah God does indeed exist and that he is the Creator.

We Meet Palestinian Brothers

After getting in touch with the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Israel, I received some letters from Witnesses there. One of the letters was from a Palestinian living in the West Bank, and her opening words were: "My Brother Rami." I thought that was incredible, as Palestinians were my enemies, and here one of them was calling me "My Brother." I began to appreciate the unique worldwide love and unity existing among Jehovah's Witnesses. I read that during World War II, Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany were put in concentration camps, were made to suffer, and were executed because they would not learn to fight their spiritual brothers in other lands. Yes, this is what I expected of true followers of Jesus.—John 13:34, 35; 1 John 3:16.

We continued progressing in our study. In the meantime the immigration office of New Zealand kindly permitted us to live there permanently, which only added to our joy. Now we could settle down and worship Jehovah in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

My Parents Face the Truth

Of course, as soon as we learned these marvelous Bible truths, I started writing about them to my parents. They had already ex-

pressed a desire to come to visit us. "I have found something worth any amount of money," I wrote, building up their anticipation. They landed in New Zealand toward the end of 1987, and we started talking about the truth of the Bible almost immediately. My father thought I had gone mad because of my belief in Jesus, and he tried hard to prove me wrong. We had arguments nearly every day. In time, however, those arguments turned into discussions, and the discussions into a Bible study. With the genuine love extended to them by the Witnesses, my parents saw the beauty and the logic of the truth.

How joyful I was to see my parents being released from bondage to false religion and later from nationalism as well! After a four-month visit, they returned with the truth to their hometown by the Sea of Galilee. There they continued to study with two Witnesses from the nearest congregation, which was 40 miles away. They soon started telling others about Jehovah and his Word. A few days before the Persian Gulf war started, they symbolized their dedication to Jehovah.

In the meantime my wife and I had joined the worldwide family of Jehovah's Witnesses when we publicly symbolized our dedication to Jehovah God in June 1988. I well knew that for me there was only one way to serve Jehovah and that was as a full-time minister, so I seized the first opportunity to enter the full-time service. I will never forget how much I was willing to do for my country, even risking my life. How much more should I be willing to do so for Jehovah God, who I know will never let me down!—Hebrews 6:10.

We thank Jehovah for the incredible hope he gives us, the hope that soon planet Earth will be a beautiful home for those who truly love righteousness—a home that will be free of nationalism and false religion and, therefore, free from war, suffering, and injustice. (Psalm 46:8, 9)—*As told by Rami Oved.*

Young People Ask...



How Can I Get Over Daddy's Death?

"My dad died on the couch. I found him there. He had a heart attack. It was really scary because I was so close to him. . . . My mom still cries at night. It doesn't feel the same doing things without my dad."

—Emily.

THE death of a parent or close family member is a major trauma for an adolescent," says writer Kathleen McCoy. "He or she may feel temporarily devastated by grief, guilt, panic and anger." If you have lost a parent, then you well know how painful it can be.

It is only normal, though, to feel trapped in

a vortex of emotion when someone we love dies. The Bible says that when the patriarch Jacob was told that his son Joseph had died, he "ripped his mantles apart" in an outburst of grief. And even though "all his sons and all his daughters kept rising up to comfort him, . . . he kept refusing to take comfort." (Genesis 37:34, 35) You may similarly feel that the pain is so deep that it will never go away.

In time, it can. But the key is facing, instead of trying to ignore, your pain. Young John, for example, gave no outward indications that he was grieving the death of a family member. He did, however, start getting into fights in school. John explained: "I'm walking around with a big, hurting lump inside me. I tried to pound it out by fighting but it didn't work."

Other youths try to block out the hurt by getting involved in a whirlwind of activity. When others ask how they are doing, some may fend off such inquiries by a display of mock cheerfulness. Doing so may bury painful feelings for a while, but not for long. Says Proverbs 14:13: "Even in laughter the heart may be in pain."

Interestingly, an article in a youth-oriented magazine says: "In one study, teens who had suppressed their natural feelings of grief, anger or guilt after the death of a relative . . . were shown to have a higher incidence of involvement in destructive behavior, such as drug and alcohol abuse, risk taking (such as driving in automobiles at high speeds) and delinquent behavior." Fortunately, there are better ways to cope with grief.

A Time to Weep

Ecclesiastes 7:2 says: "Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart." Death can be frightening. And when a friend or loved one dies, some may try to

evade the painful reality of death by going to “the banquet house” and indulging in merry-making. Solomon, however, encourages facing death head-on and going to “the house of mourning.” Solomon adds: “Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.”—Ecclesiastes 7:3, *King James Version*.

Although this advice was primarily directed to the friends and the family of the bereaved, it is also beneficial for the bereaved one to face the pain of his loss. There is “a time to weep.” (Ecclesiastes 3:4) God-fearing men and women in Bible times thus allowed themselves to express, rather than suppress, their feelings of grief.—Compare Genesis 23:2; 2 Samuel 1:11, 12.

Allowing oneself to grieve has many benefits. Says the book *The Art of Condolence*: “The bereaved need to allow the pain and anguish of their suffering to take place. Healing is hampered by resisting the process.” Driven by the myth that real men don’t cry, however, some boys may find it particularly hard to express their feelings. But the greatest man who ever lived openly “gave way to tears” when his friend Lazarus died. (John 11:35) And tears are certainly appropriate when one has lost a parent. So feel free to mourn and weep. (Compare James 4:9.) Says the book *Death and Grief in the Family*: “Crying is one of the most important ways of getting the sadness out.”

Working Through Your Sadness

In Bible times, King David expressed his grief for his best friend, Jonathan, not only by weeping but also by putting his feelings in writing. “I am distressed over you, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant you were to me,” wrote David in the beautiful lament he called “The Bow.”—2 Samuel 1:18, 26.

You may likewise find it helpful to put your feelings in writing. The book *Giving*

Sorrow Words says: “Writing your feelings down can help in getting locked-up emotions out. . . . When you get angry, when you feel sad, write it down.” One teenage girl named Shannon says: “I kept a diary. I wrote down all my feelings. All my feelings flat out on paper. Everything I felt was on paper and that helped a lot . . . writing everything down.”

Another aid is physical exercise. “Bodily training is beneficial,” says the Bible. (1 Timothy 4:8) And notes one book on grieving: “Exercise is a good way of releasing energy.” An invigorating run, a brisk walk, or a refreshing bicycle ride can do much to help you work off the tensions that can build up when you are sad and grieving.

Talk to Someone

Be careful, though, that you do not completely isolate yourself from others. (Proverbs 18:1) Says Proverbs 12:25: “Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down, but the good word is what makes it rejoice.” How would a distressed person get that “good word” of encouragement? Only if he *talked to someone* and expressed his “anxious care.” Why not do so yourself? Open up and talk to someone you can trust.

Normally, your God-fearing parent would be the logical one to approach. But what if he or she is too swallowed up in his or her own pain to be of much help? Well, there are mature members of the Christian congregation who can help. Proverbs 17:17 says: “A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress.” After her mother’s death, young Morfydd leaned heavily upon the local congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses. “All the elders were very supportive,” she recalls, “but one in particular was always ready to listen to me.”

Why not reach out for such help and support? Let someone know that you need to talk. Perhaps you feel angry, scared, or guilty.

Or maybe you simply feel lonely and miss your parent. Talking things out with a sympathetic listener can really help.

Supporting Your Parent

Some youths, however, add to their distress by taking on loads they are not prepared to carry. The situation at home may now seem chaotic and disorganized. Your surviving parent may understandably be tense, irritable—and sad. Seeing his or her pain, you naturally want to help out. One authority on grief notes that “adolescents . . . may suppress their mourning in a misguided attempt to help their parents.” They may “act prematurely ‘grown-up,’ perhaps even taking on additional responsibilities.”



**Allowing oneself to weep
can aid the healing process**

Of course, you may have no choice but to take on *some* extra responsibilities because of your parent’s death. But this does not make you the man or the woman of the house. Your surviving parent is still in charge, and you can better support that one, not by taking over, but by being cooperative and obedient. (Ephesians 6:1) Remember that “wisdom is with the modest ones.” (Proverbs 11:2) Modesty involves knowing your limitations.

This is especially important to keep in mind if your surviving parent begins to lean on you for advice or begins burdening you with adult concerns. You want to be kind and supportive, but modesty will help you recognize that your life experience is quite limited. (Compare Hebrews 5:14.) So if you begin to feel a bit overwhelmed, talk matters over with your parent in a frank but respectful manner. (Proverbs 15:22) Perhaps you could suggest that he or she seek out some adult support in the congregation.

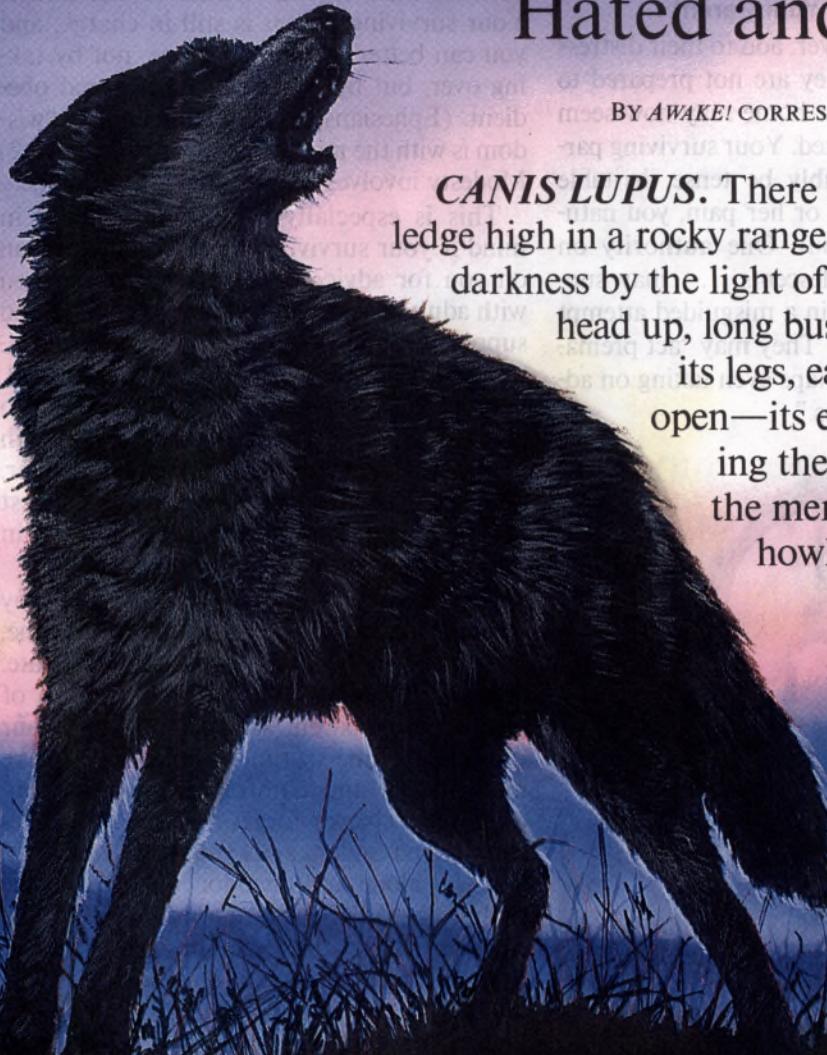
Coping with the death of a parent is by no means easy. But be assured that, in time, feelings of sadness will no longer dominate. (Compare Genesis 24:67.) Sad memories of your departed parent will still come into your mind from time to time. Yet you also have many warm and comforting memories to dwell upon. Never forget that Jehovah cares for you and understands your sadness. When you feel alone and abandoned, think of the psalmist’s words: “In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up.”—Psalm 27:10.

Keep reflecting, too, on the Bible-based hope of the resurrection and the prospect of seeing your parent once again—on a paradise earth. (Luke 23:43; Acts 24:15) Says young Kim who lost her father in death: “I think about my father every day. But I know he wouldn’t want us to give up or let anything halt our service to Jehovah. I want to be there to greet him when he returns in the resurrection.”—John 5:28, 29.

An Elusive Creature

Hated and Loved

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN CANADA



CANIS LUPUS. There it is on a craggy ledge high in a rocky range, outlined in the darkness by the light of the moon, with head up, long bushy tail between its legs, ears back, mouth open—its eerie howl piercing the night air. Why, the mere thought of its howling brings shivers of fear and excitement!

FEW people have had the privilege of seeing this beautiful but elusive creature—commonly known as the gray wolf or timber wolf—in the wild. Nevertheless, this fascinating animal brings to mind many and varied images.

Hated and Loved

Whatever the perception, emotions inspired by the word "wolf" have always run deep. It has been the focus of misunderstanding, bias, and fear. Some people despise the wolf because it is a predator. Wolves have been a constant irritation to farmers and ranchers by preying on sheep, cattle, and other livestock. Legends and folklore have contributed to its bad reputation. Who has not heard the expressions "a wolf in sheep's clothing" and "to keep the wolf from the door"? Fables picture it as "The Big Bad Wolf." One such story tells of a wolf threatening to eat a little girl. This has given people the notion that wolves attack people.

However, scientists and biologists view wolves another way. They regard them as extremely shy creatures who try to avoid humans as much as possible. In fact, according to a recent article appearing in *GEO* magazine, wolves actually fear man. Despite wolves' fierce appearance, there seems to be no basis for the belief that healthy, wild wolves of North America are a danger to man.

Biologist Paul Paquet, who has done extensive wolf research, admits to having a love for these wild creatures since his childhood. He has recorded some of his observations. He claims he has often seen wolves expressing happiness, loneliness, and humor. Once he observed an old, crippled wolf that could no longer hunt who was being brought food by other pack members. Even though the wolf had outlived its usefulness, the pack still valued its life and was keeping it alive. This



Thomas Kitchin/Victoria Hurst

characteristic of pack hunting, however, has threatened their very existence.

Pack Hunting

Hunting in packs is merely how wolves satisfy their hunger and feed their pups. It must be recognized, though, that the killing of sheep and cattle by wolves is an annoying problem for farmers. As a predator with excellent vision, a keen sense of smell, fine hearing, and an incredibly powerful bite—as well as being suited for running and trotting—the wolf is well equipped for the hunt. It is also an opportunist. It would be foolish to think this crafty creature would turn down any easily available prey it can catch or snatch—especially large, fat sheep and cattle. It might be said that wolves unwittingly “benefit” their prey in the wild by culling out the easier kill, the unhealthy and the weak, thus leaving more food for the healthy ones.

Wolf Communication

What about that eerie howling that can be heard for miles and that strikes fear in the listener? To the wolf this is simply a social activity of the pack—a form of communication. A wolf who has become separated during a hunt may climb a ridge and howl to attract other members of the pack. Or howling may be used to define its territory. Sometimes wolves seem to howl just to express happiness. When a pack get together to howl, you would almost think they were enjoying a sing-along. To us it might sound better if they were to sing in unison, but they appear to prefer chords. Of course

they have other means of communication as well. There are what have been described as the whimper, the growl, the bark, the social squeak, and the yipping of the pups in the den. Communication by posture is also used to establish social status and bonding among the pack.

A Beautiful Creature

Look closely at this outstandingly beautiful creature. Observe its thick coat of predominantly gray hair (some are jet black), with intermingled white, black, and brown hairs. Focus on the stare of its penetrating clear yellow eyes. Examine its facial markings. All of these make the wolf a magnificent animal to behold. Concerns, however, are being voiced about its future. Is there reason for concern?

Well, what was once common across much of Europe, Asia, and North America—the sighting of a wolf—is now rare in



Thomas Kitchin

Canada, Alaska, and less-populated regions of the United States, Europe, and Russia. People are saying they must make room for some wolves in selected wild areas. Since humans have learned to live with predators such as eagles, bears, and mountain lions, there are those who are asking, “Why not likewise live with wolves?”

Letting Nature Take Its Course

Protection, not eradication or control, is the byword. Parks are now regarded as safety zones for animals, not just wilderness playgrounds for people. According to *Canadian Geographic* magazine, park managers would like to see a naturally regulated ecosystem.

After a 40-year absence from Banff National Park, Canada, the principal predator, the wolf, returned on its own in the 1980's to the southern Rockies—only 65 in number, but a positive event in the minds of many. France reports the return of the wolf after a 50-year absence.* In Italy the wolf is also making a return and can be heard howling again at Tivoli, near Rome.

Wolf reintroduction as an endangered species in Yellowstone National Park, United States, is being considered. Wolves were part of the region's natural system over 40 years ago, before they were exterminated. Now many people, particularly park visitors, want them back. The livestock industry, however, is deeply concerned about wolves being reintroduced into their range. "When wolves are returned to Yellowstone, wolf management outside the park will become a fact of life," says wolf biologist L. David Mech.

What will tomorrow bring to this creature that lives in a world only partially glimpsed by humans?

The Future of the Wolf

The number of people supporting the recovery of an animal that has lived on the edge of human tolerance for so long indicates a decided shift in attitude. The book *The Wolf—The Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species* states: "There is still time left to rescue the species from its plight. Whether or not this is done depends on man's knowledge of the ecology and behavior of the wolf, his continued research into the ways of the wolf, and his learning to think of the wolf not as a competitor but as a fellow creature with which the earth must be shared."

Living in Peace

Peaceful coexistence between people and

* See "Watching the World" in *Awake!* of January 22, 1994.

wolves may have improved during the past few years, but where there is a conflict, true peace cannot be attained. This must be left to a time in the near future when, under the Creator's Kingdom government, all animosity and fear will be replaced with a trusting, sharing attitude for this strong but sensitive and shy creature.

Interestingly, the Bible characterizes the wolf in various prophetic settings, allowing us to see it in opposing lights. At Acts 20:29, 30, apostate men are metaphorically described as "oppressive wolves" who would attack the sheeplike Christian congregation and remove some individual members from the flock.

The prophecies in the Bible book of Isaiah, though yet to see final fulfillment, describe animals we know today to be each other's enemies as dwelling together peacefully. Note the absence of the prey-predator relationship at Isaiah 65:25: "'The wolf and the lamb themselves will feed as one, and the lion will eat straw just like the bull . . . They will do no harm nor cause any ruin in all my holy mountain,' Jehovah has said."

While man's efforts show that he is trying to tolerate the wolf, the scripture just quoted assures us that God has a place for it in his new system of things. Planet Earth will then be a shared home for all forms of life, including *Canis lupus*.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Satanism's Handmaidens —Drugs and Heavy-Metal Music

Australia's Wildflower Spectacular

Radial Keratotomy—What Is It?

WATCHING THE WORLD

Catholic Moral Theology and Young Italian Women

Young Italian women, whether Catholic or not, take little notice of the pope when it comes to their sexual morality. In fact, according to the results of research published by the Italian daily newspaper *La Repubblica*, as many as 90.8 percent of young women between the ages of 15 and 24 who were interviewed believed that "use of contraceptives must be guaranteed to women," while 66.7 percent defended "the right to interrupt 'an unwanted pregnancy.'" Furthermore, 80.2 percent of them believed that "the rights of homosexuals should be guaranteed and respected."

Toxins Found in Newborn's Hair

There is now biological evidence to prove that secondhand tobacco smoke breathed in by nonsmoking pregnant women makes its way into the fetus, says *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, Canada. New findings from a research team headed by Dr. Gideon Koren, a clinical pharmacologist at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, indicate that hair samples from newborn contain nicotine and its by-product, cotinine. The nonsmoking mothers were exposed to secondhand smoke for at least two hours a day, either at home or at work. According to Dr. Koren, routinely breathing secondhand smoke may be like "smoking two to four cigarettes a day." This new research "adds more weight to earlier studies that suggested that tobacco smoke exposure could affect children's behavioural and

cognitive development," adds *The Globe*. Dr. Koren cautioned that "in the litigious atmosphere we live in now, I cannot tell you that in 10 to 20 years we won't see babies suing their parents for wrongful birth based on smoking!"

Shoplifting Goes International

"Graduates" of a "theft school" in Santiago, Chile, are active in Montreal and Toronto, Canada, and some U.S. cities, reports *L'actualité*, a Canadian newsmagazine. The "school" teaches techniques for picking pockets and shoplifting and provides education in Canadian laws and police methods.



"Graduates" work in groups, carry false papers, and are equipped with specially lined clothes and gift wrapping to hide their loot. The Montreal Urban Community police have traced the network and made several seizures of stolen clothing since 1991. Recently their biggest recovery was a shipping container full of clothing destined for Chile. Both for police and for shopkeepers, however, this international network of organized shoplifting poses a formidable challenge. One Montreal detective quoted in *L'actualité* said that to get the international police to cooperate is difficult, since "it's not a priority to them."

Global Refugee Crisis

During 1992, nearly 10,000 people a day became refugees. So affirms *The State of the World's Refugees*, a new book by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). There were 18.2 million refugees worldwide in 1992, eight times as many as there were 20 years earlier. An additional 24 million people have become displaced in their own countries. In all, about 1 in every 130 people on earth has been forced to flee from home. The UNHCR magazine *Refugees* states: "The relentless increase in numbers —both of genuine refugees and of economic migrant—has imposed a serious strain on the 3,500-year-old tradition of asylum, bringing it close to collapse."

Are You Sleepy?

Are you getting enough sleep at night? One way to find out, says one researcher, is to eat a big meal and then go to a dull lecture in a warm room. If you are well rested, you may feel bored and restless but not sleepy. According to the *International Herald Tribune*, experts estimate that 100 million Americans do not get enough sleep. Most people need from eight to eight and a half hours of sleep at night; people from 17 to 25 years of age need even more. While many people get by with less sleep than they really need, sleep-deprived people are more likely to make mistakes. They also build up a "sleep debt." States the *Tribune*: "Parents bemoan their teenagers' 'laziness' because they sleep until noon on weekends, but most of these young people are

only trying to cancel some of their weeklong sleep debt."

Abuse by Clergy Exposed

One of Canada's largest sexual abuse investigations involving Catholic Christian Brothers has been finalized. "More than 700 victims have come forward from St. Joseph's school in Alfred, Ontario, and St. John's school in Uxbridge, Ontario, reports *The Toronto Star*. Complaints were lodged "against 30 men, including 29 members of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Charges would have been laid against another 16 if they were still alive," adds the *Star*. The victims still experience disturbing recollections of "childhood beatings and sexual attacks by the black-robed members of the Roman Catholic lay order into whose care they had been entrusted." The *Star* says that without a public inquiry, Canadians may never learn why men who claim to serve God subject young boys to sexual abuse.

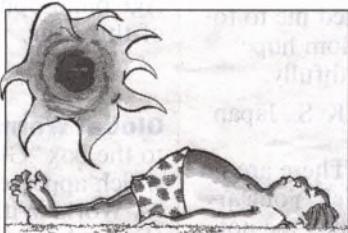
Thermometer Crickets

If you live in Africa, you can now find out the temperature without the aid of a thermometer, according to a scientific journal on zoology. This can be done, in Celsius, by counting the number of chirps an African tree cricket (*Oecanthus karschi*) makes in six seconds, and adding 12 to the total. Or if you are listening to the South African Cape species (*Oecanthus capensis*), by counting its chirps in three seconds and adding 11 to the total. The chirping of these two species of tree cricket is slow enough to count. It is also loud enough, since they position themselves on the leaves in such a way that the chirping is amplified as if through a loud-

speaker. As the night temperature drops, the chirping slows down. Explains the journal *African Wildlife*: "Crickets are 'cold blooded' so their metabolism is affected by air temperature. This affects almost every aspect of their lives, including the rates at which they sing."

Ultraviolet Troubles

Do you like to spend your vacations relaxing under the sun? If you do, be careful! Although the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays are beneficial in moderation, too much exposure can cause skin cancers, eye diseases, premature wrinkling of the skin, malignant skin tumors, and a weakening of



the body's ability to fight disease. According to the World Health Organization, UV levels are increasing because the ozone layer is decreasing. Now, in many parts of the world, including Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, UV health problems develop sooner and faster. How to protect yourself in sunny climes? Wear protective clothing, wear UV absorbing sunglasses, and stay inside at noontime, when UV radiation is strongest.

Religious Big Business

One of the few sectors of the Italian economy making a profit, and perhaps the only one to succeed in beating the recession, is business "conducted in the shadow of the Church," says the financial supplement of *La Repubblica*.

In fact, during the sixth Exhibition of Religious Products, held in Pompeii, the turnover for the 1,400 companies operating in the field "was calculated to be 400 billion lire [\$240 million, U.S.], with an estimated 15 per cent annual increase in the volume of sales." Furthermore, religious tourism, which in 1993 attracted some 35 million pilgrims to the various places of worship in Italy, had a turnover almost ten times as large. "Businesses 'blessed' by the church are booming," says the report, and "the Italian Catholic hierarchy, the Bishops' Conference and the Holy See have been aware of it with pleasure for some time." The church hierarchy has even organized and sponsored conferences—addressed even by high-ranking church officials—in order to manage the phenomenon.

Australia's High Suicide Rate

The suicide rate is growing so alarmingly in Australia that the Public Health Association has now included suicide prevention in its national public health policy. When the number of suicides exceeded the number of deaths from road accidents for two years running, the Public Health Association realized something concrete must be done, and urgently. *The Australian*, a newspaper, quotes an association spokesman as saying: "Until now, suicide has not been taken up by the public health community, yet it has the characteristics of other public health concerns. Its incidence is as large and its harm as extensive as other issues which absorb public health interest and resources." The present rate of suicides is a staggering 31 percent of all deaths not due to sickness, which is three percent higher than the rate of deaths caused by road accidents.

FROM OUR READERS

Grief Thank you so, so much for the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Help for Your Grief." (March 8, 1994) Recently my husband, an elder in the Christian congregation, was killed in an accident. Words cannot express the loss that our three children and I have experienced. What a blessing to read the article and to see that the feelings we are experiencing are normal!

N. S., United States

It was three years ago that my mother, and three months ago that my father, fell asleep in death. Even though the resurrection hope is sure, the separation caused by death is still painful. Your article has motivated me to focus more than ever on the Kingdom hope and to continue to serve God faithfully.

K. S., Japan

I lost my father a month ago. There are no words to express a daughter's grief. Your article was very timely and has helped me not to give up, despite the pain I feel.

A. P. L., Brazil

Cartoons I want to thank you for the article "Are Violent TV Cartoons Harmful?" (December 8, 1993) I am eight years old and I used to watch these cartoons. But when I read your magazine, I realized that such cartoons were not good, and now I do not watch them anymore.

L. T., Italy

New Age I have just finished reading the March 8, 1994, *Awake!* on "The New Age—Will It Come?" I was involved in meditation groups, self-improvement, and mind dynamics in the late '60's and early '70's. I was looking for something but not finding it. Then my wife contacted Jehovah's Witnesses, and I sat in on a study. I had found the truth! I got baptized and now have the privilege of serving as a missionary here in Ghana.

Thank you for this magazine. There are many others who are likewise searching for something.

D. D., Ghana

Though the New Age movement is a broad subject, you covered its various aspects in an interesting way in so little space! I appreciate how you extracted those things associated with the New Age movement that are not necessarily unscriptural in themselves, such as health, music, and environmental concerns. The series was sensitive, yet it did not stop short of telling the clear truths people need to hear. My sister is interested in New Age philosophies, and I will send her a copy of this issue.

R. H., United States

Global Warming I am writing in response to the box "Global Warming and Malaria," which appeared in connection with the series "A World Without Disease—Is It Possible?" (December 8, 1993) I am a scientist working in the area of ecology, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to take a position on the global warming issue with any confidence. It is true that increasing temperature could be expected to have an effect on a whole range of animal communities. But as to whether or not global warming really exists, it is much more difficult to be sure. The work that has been done stands on a very precarious statistical precipice. Some scientists even believe that raising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will actually *cool* the earth's surface!

K. O., England

The global warming theory was discussed at great length in our September 8, 1989, issue, and it is true that it is somewhat controversial. Our brief item was therefore not an endorsement of this theory but a valid warning of what could occur if global warming actually is taking place.—ED.



Is This Really a Finch?

FINCHES are known the world over. They live on all continents except frigid Antarctica. Even many ocean islands have their finch population. And they are usually quite pretty.

Take the American goldfinch as an example. They "add a special liveliness to wide-open country with their bright, yellow and black coloring . . . , their roller coaster flights over invisible hills and valleys of the air, and their sweet twitterings of Just-look-at-me!"—*Book of North American Birds*.

However, there is one finch that takes the prize for spectacular beauty—the five-inch-long Gouldian weaverfinch, found in northern Australia, especially in the eucalyptus savannas. You might find some captive in bird cages in your country. One encyclopedia



American goldfinch

states: "This has contributed to a marked decline in recent years."

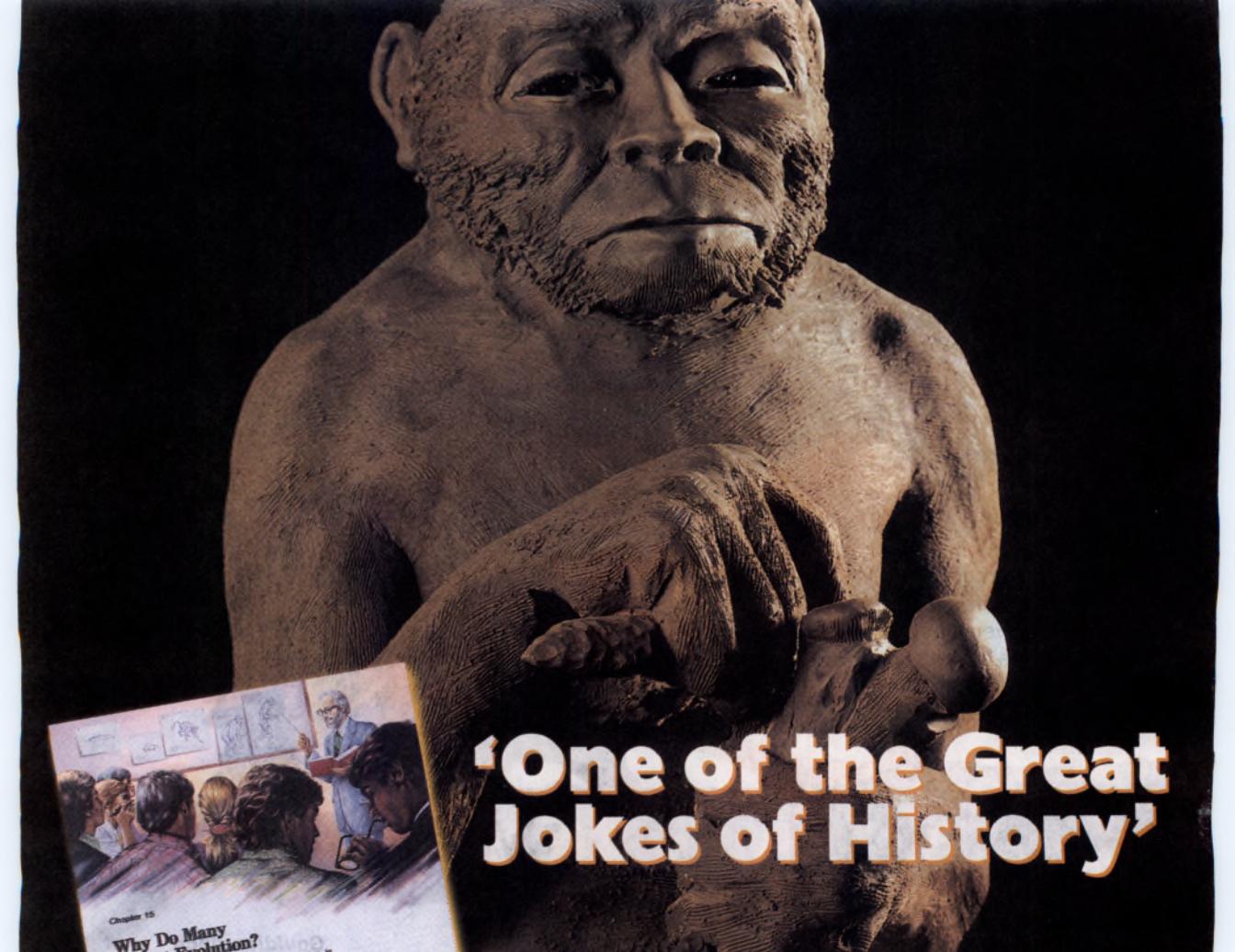
Finches have beaks that are designed internally for holding and shelling seeds. "Each seed is wedged in a special groove at the side of the palate and crushed by raising the lower jaw onto it. The husk is

Gouldian finch

then peeled off with the aid of the tongue, thus releasing the kernel, which is swallowed."

(*Birds: Their Life, Their Ways, Their World*) As for the Gouldian finch, however, "instead of taking [the seeds] from the ground it perches acrobatically on the seed heads, or picks out the seeds while clinging to a nearby twig."—*The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Birds*.

If ever you get to see a Gouldian finch, feel blessed to have witnessed such a colorful creation in such a small bird.



'One of the Great Jokes of History'

Chapter 15

Why Do Many Accept Evolution?

All we have seen, the evidence for creation is enormous. Why, then, do many people reject evolution and accept evolution instead? One reason is what they were taught in school. Science textbooks in most places present the evolutionary viewpoint.

The students are rarely, if ever, exposed to opposing arguments. In fact, arguments against evolution are usually prevented from appearing in school textbooks.

In the magazine *American Librarian*, a doctor wrote this about his children's reading: "The child is not presented with evolution as a theory. Rather statements are made in science texts as early as the second grade that on any reading of my child's textbook, evolution is presented as reality, not as a concept that can be questioned. The credibility of the educational system thus comprises

1. What are reasons why many people believe evolution?"

"**I** MYSELF am convinced that the theory of evolution, especially the extent to which it's been applied, will be one of the great jokes in the history books in the future. Posterity will marvel that so very flimsy and dubious an hypothesis could be accepted with the incredible credulity that it has." Those were the words of British broadcaster and writer Malcolm Muggeridge (1903-90) in lectures he gave at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. He added: "I think I spoke to you before about this age as one of the most credulous in history, and I would include evolution as an example."

Then why do so many scientists accept evolution? That question and many others are considered in detail in the 254-page book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*