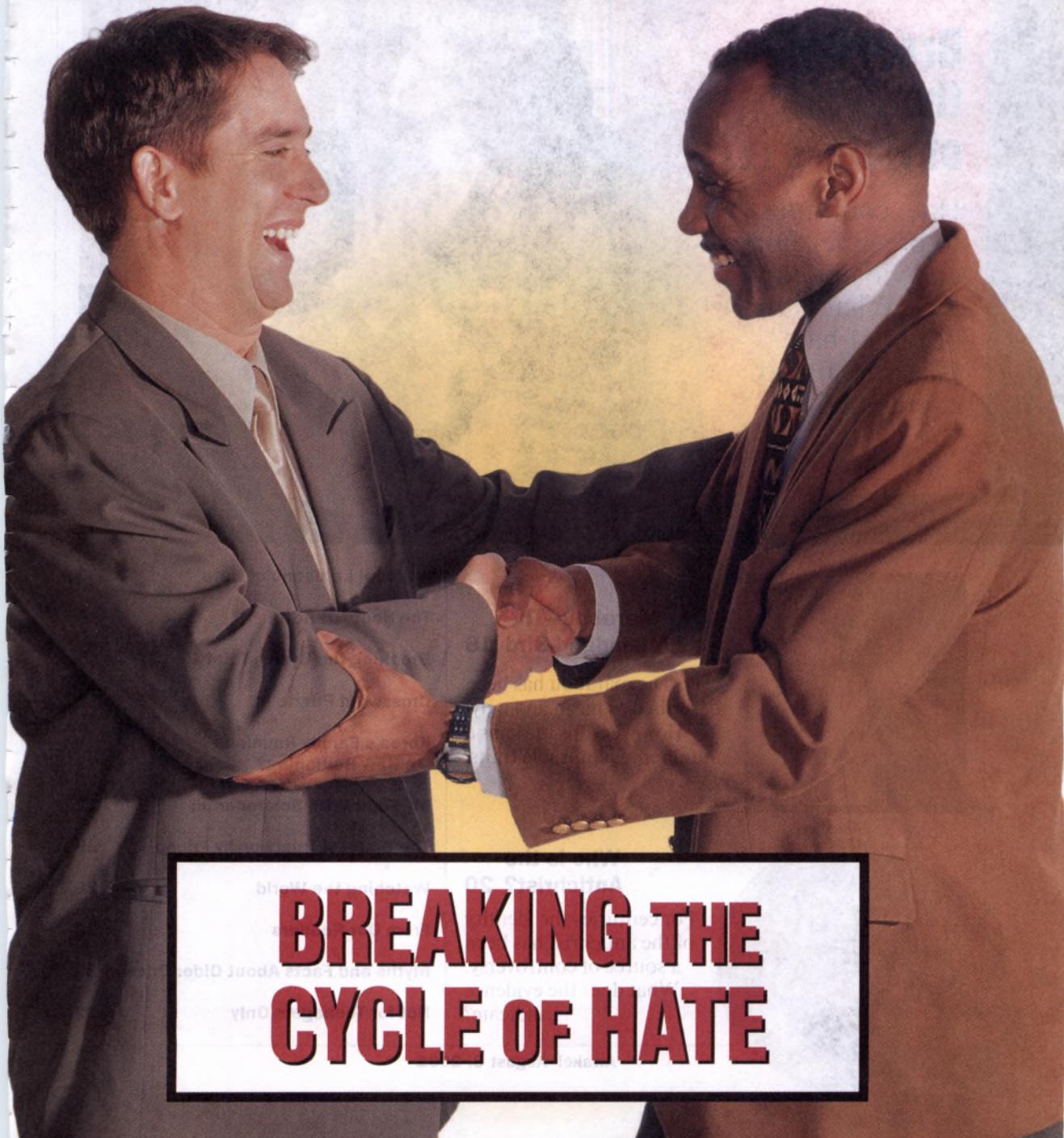


Awake!

August 8, 2001



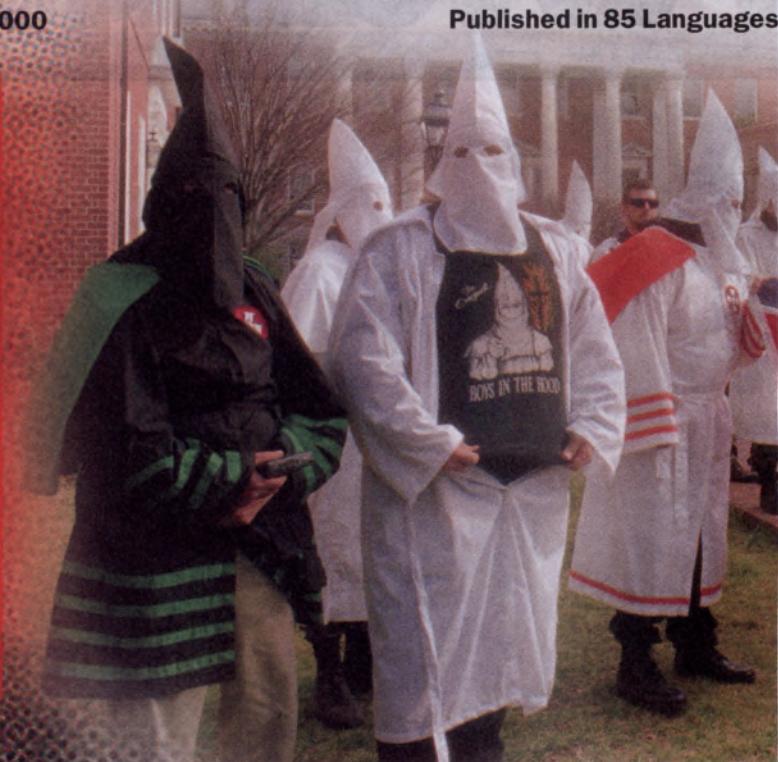
**BREAKING THE
CYCLE OF HATE**

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Breaking the Cycle of Hate 3-11

Hate continues to breed tension and violent conflict. What is the origin of hate? Is it possible to overcome it?



AP Photo/John Gillis



Marabou—The Misjudged Bird 16

The marabou has been described as mean and ugly.

However, this bird has a number of admirable traits.

Who Is the Antichrist? 20

For centuries the identity of the antichrist has been a source of controversy. What does the evidence indicate?



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Kernal Jufri/Sipa Press

A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC OF HATE

THERE is a monster on the loose—a monster called hate. And it is running rampant all over the globe.

In the Balkans a province is reeling from the spasms of a recent ethnic cleansing campaign. Centuries-old animosities have led to mass executions, rape, expulsions, burning and looting of homes and villages, destruction of crops and livestock, hunger, and starvation. Land mines still abound.

In East Timor, Southeast Asia, 700,000 frightened people had to flee the terror of killings, beatings, indiscriminate shootings, and forcible displacement. They left behind a landscape laid waste by marauding militias. "I feel like a hunted animal," cried one of the victims.

In Moscow an apartment building was ripped apart by a huge terrorist bomb blast. The bodies of 94 innocent people—some of them children—were scattered about by the

explosion. Over 150 were injured. In the aftermath of such horror, people ask, 'Who will be next?'

In Los Angeles, California, a racist took aim at a group of preschool Jewish children and later gunned down a Filipino mailman.

Hatred can well be described as a global epidemic. Almost every day, news reports reveal what happens when racial, ethnic, or religious animosity joins hands with lawlessness. We see nations, communities, and families torn apart. We see countries embroiled in wholesale genocide. We see unspeakably inhumane acts being perpetrated simply because some people are "different."

If the monster called hate is ever to be caged, we must understand the origins of such hateful violence. Is hate implanted in human genes? Is it learned behavior? Is it possible to break the cycle of hate?

THE ROOTS OF HATE

HATE made its appearance early in man's history. The Bible account at Genesis 4:8 says: "It came about that while they were in the field Cain proceeded to assault Abel his brother and kill him." "And for the sake of what did he slaughter him?" asks the Bible writer John. "Because his own works were wicked, but those of his brother were righteous." (1 John 3:12) Abel fell victim to one of the most common causes of hatred: jealousy. "The rage of an able-bodied man is jealousy," says Proverbs 6:34. Today, jealousy over social status, wealth, resources, and other advantages continues to pit people against one another.

Ignorance and Fear

But jealousy is just one of the many causes of hatred. Oftentimes, hatred is also fueled by ignorance and fear. "Before I ever learned to hate, I learned to fear," said a young member of a violent racist group. Such fear is most often rooted in ignorance. According to *The World Book Encyclopedia*, prejudiced people tend to have opinions that are "held without regard to the available evidence. . . . Prejudiced individuals tend to twist, distort, misinterpret, or even ignore facts that conflict with their predetermined opinions."

From where do these opinions come? Says one online information service: "History accounts for many

Awake!

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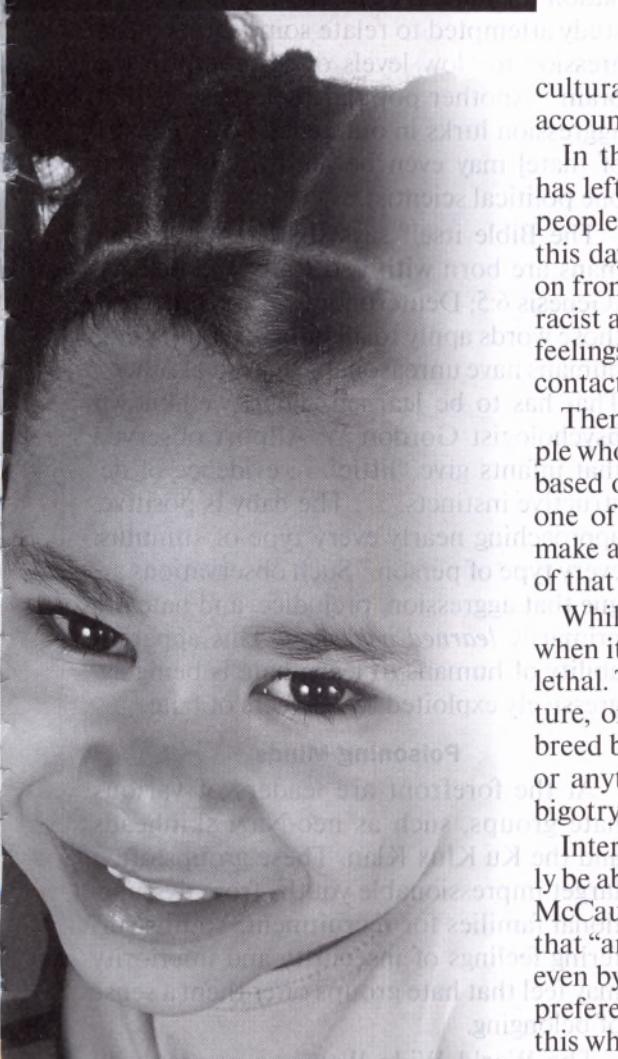
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cultural stereotypes, but our own personal history accounts for many of our biases too."

In the United States, for example, the slave trade has left a legacy of tensions between many whites and people of African descent—tensions that persist to this day. Oftentimes, negative racial views are passed on from parents to children. One self-confessed white racist admitted that he thus developed negative racial feelings "in a complete absence of even the slightest contact with black people."

Then there are those who simply believe that people who are different are no good. This opinion may be based on a solitary unpleasant encounter with someone of a different race or culture. From that, they make a quantum leap to the conclusion that *everyone* of that race or culture must share undesirable traits.

While bigotry is ugly enough on an individual scale, when it infects an entire nation or race, it can become lethal. The belief that one's nationality, skin color, culture, or language makes one superior to others can breed bigotry and xenophobia (the disdain for anyone or anything foreign). During the 20th century, such bigotry was often expressed violently.

Interestingly, hatred and bigotry need not necessarily be about skin color or nationality. Researcher Clark McCauley of the University of Pennsylvania writes that "arbitrary division of individuals into two groups, even by flipping a coin, is enough to generate ingroup preference." One third-grade teacher demonstrated this when, as part of a famous experiment, she divided

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Prejudice and hate are learned behaviors!

her class into two groups—blue-eyed children and brown-eyed children. Within a short time, animosities developed between the two groups. Even alliances based on things as trivial as a preference for the same sports team can result in violent clashes.

Why All the Violence?

But why are such animosities so often expressed in violent ways? Researchers have probed deeply into such issues and can still only offer theories. Clark McCauley compiled an extensive bibliography of the research done on human violence and aggression. He cites one study indicating that “violent crime is associated with waging and winning wars.” The researchers found that “nations participating in WWI and WWII, especially nations on the winning side in these wars, show increases in homicide after the war is over.” According to the Bible, we live in an age of warfare. (Matthew 24:6) Could it be that such wars have somehow contributed to the rise in other forms of violence?

Other researchers seek a biological explanation for human aggression. One research study attempted to relate some forms of aggression to “low levels of serotonin in the brain.” Another popular hypothesis is that aggression lurks in our genes. “A large part of [hate] may even be hardwired,” argued one political scientist.

The Bible itself says that imperfect humans are born with bad traits and defects. (Genesis 6:5; Deuteronomy 32:5) Of course, those words apply to all humans. But not all humans have unreasonable hatred of others. That has to be learned. Thus, well-known psychologist Gordon W. Allport observed that infants give “little . . . evidence of destructive instincts. . . . The baby is positive, approaching nearly every type of stimulus, every type of person.” Such observations argue that aggression, prejudice, and hate are primarily *learned behaviors!* This apparent ability of humans to learn hate is being aggressively exploited by teachers of hate.

Poisoning Minds

At the forefront are leaders of various hate groups, such as neo-Nazi skinheads and the Ku Klux Klan. These groups often target impressionable youths from dysfunctional families for recruitment. Youths suffering feelings of insecurity and inferiority may feel that hate groups offer them a sense of belonging.

The World Wide Web is a particularly powerful tool that some have used to foster hate. According to a recent tally, there may be as many as 1,000 hate-mongering Web sites on the Internet. *The Economist* magazine quotes the owner of one hate Web site as boasting: “The Net has provided us with the opportunity to bring our point of view to hundreds of thousands of people.” His Web site includes a “Kids’ Page.”



Hate groups are using the Internet to recruit youths



AP Photo

When teens surf the Net for music, they can happen upon links to sites for downloading hate music. Such music is usually loud and violent, with lyrics expressing strong racist messages. These Web sites, in turn, provide links to newsgroups, chat rooms, or other Web sites that promote hate.

Some hate Web sites offer special sections containing games and activities for young people. One neo-Nazi Web site attempts to use the Bible to justify racism and anti-Semitism. The group has also created a page that offers crossword puzzles with racist comments. Its purpose? "To help the young members of the white race understand our fight."

But not all promoters of hate are from the lunatic fringe. A sociologist who wrote about the recent conflicts in the Balkans said about certain reputable authors and public-opinion makers: "I was dumbfounded

ed to see [them] adopt a style which panders to their compatriots' basest impulses, stirs up their passionate hatred, blinds their judgement by urging them to see no behaviour as taboo . . . , and falsifying reality."

Not to be overlooked in this regard is the role of the clergy. In his book *Holy Hatred: Religious Conflicts of the '90's*, author James A. Haught makes this shocking observation: "A great irony of the 1990s is that religion—supposedly a source of kindness and human concern—has taken the lead as the foremost contributing factor to hatred, war, and terrorism."

The causes of hate are thus seen to be many and complex. Does this mean that there is no way for mankind to stop repeating the folly of its hate-filled history? Is there anything that can be done on an individual as well as on a global scale to fight the misunderstanding, the ignorance, and the fear that beget hate?

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF HATE

"Love your enemies."—MATTHEW 5:44.

FOR days the leaders of two enemy nations carried on intense peace negotiations. The president of a powerful industrialized land lent his presence to the discussions, using his considerable influence and diplomatic skills to try to bring the two leaders together. But the end result of these agonizing efforts was simply more agony. Within weeks the two nations were engaged in what *Newsweek* magazine called "the worst violence between them in two decades."

Throughout the world, hatred and animosity between various ethnic and national groups refuse to die, despite the best efforts of national leaders. The cycle of hate progresses ever more quickly, fed by ignorance, bigotry, and propaganda. But while today's leaders vainly grope for new and innovative solutions, they fail to see that the best solution is an old one—something as old as the Sermon on the Mount. During that sermon Jesus Christ encouraged his listeners to submit to God's ways. In that context he made the statement quoted above, namely, "Love your enemies." That exhortation is not only the best solution to the problem of hate and prejudice but the *only* workable solution!

Skeptics brush off the idea of loving one's enemies as hopelessly idealistic and impractical. However, if hatred is learned behavior, then is it not reasonable to assume that it can be *unlearned*? Jesus' words thus hold out real hope for mankind. They show that it is possible to put aside even long-standing animosities.

Consider the situation in Jesus' day among his Jewish listeners. They did not need to go far to find enemies. Roman troops continued to hold sway over the region, subjecting the Jews to oppressive taxation, political manipulation, abuse, and exploitation. (Matthew 5: 39-42) However, some could even view fellow Jews as enemies because of petty disagreements that had been left unresolved and allowed to fester. (Matthew 5:21-24) Could Jesus really expect his listeners to love individuals who had caused them hurt and pain?

The Meaning of "Love"

First, realize that by "love," Jesus did not have in mind the sort of affection that might exist between close friends. The Greek term for love used at Matthew 5:44 comes from the word *a·ga'pe*. This word carries the meaning of love that is guided or governed by principle. It does not necessarily include warm affection. Because it is guided by righteous principle, such love moves one to seek the best interests of others, regardless of their behavior. *A·ga'pe* love can thus transcend personal enmities. Jesus himself demonstrated such love when, instead of calling down evil on the Roman soldiers who impaled him, he prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."—Luke 23:34.



Is it realistic to expect that the world will embrace Jesus' teachings on a large scale and that people will begin to love one another? No, for the Bible indicates that this world will continue plunging headlong toward disaster. "Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse," predicts 2 Timothy 3:13. Nevertheless, *individuals* can break the cycle of hate by becoming thoroughly educated in righteous principles through a study of the Bible. The record clearly shows that many have thus learned to resist the flood of hate swirling around them. Consider a few real-life cases.

Learning to Love

At the age of 13, José was involved in guerrilla warfare as a member of a terrorist group.* He was taught to hate the people allegedly responsible for the injustices he saw

* Not his real name.

around him. If feasible, his aim was to eliminate them. Seeing so many of his companions fall in death, José became filled with feelings of bitterness and revenge. While making grenades, he would ask himself, 'Why is there so much suffering? If there is a God, does he not even notice?' Many times he wept, confused and depressed.

José eventually came in contact with a local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. At his first congregation meeting, he immediately noticed the loving atmosphere there. Everyone greeted him in a warm and friendly manner. Later, a discussion on the subject "Why Does God Permit Wickedness?" provided answers to the very questions he had been asking.*

In time, increased knowledge from the Bible led José to make changes in his life and in his way of thinking. He came to learn that "he who does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates . . . is a manslayer,

* See chapter 8, "Why Does God Permit Suffering?" in the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.



**Ethiopian and Eritrean Witnesses
worship together in peace**



and . . . no manslayer has everlasting life remaining in him.”—1 John 3:14, 15.

Breaking his ties with his terrorist companions proved to be challenging, though. Every time he went to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses, he was followed. Some former associates even attended a few meetings so as to understand what had brought about such a change in José. Once they were satisfied that he was not a traitor or a danger to them, they left him alone. At age 17, José was baptized as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. He soon started preaching full-time. Instead of scheming to kill people, he now takes them a message of love and hope!

Tearing Down Ethnic Barriers

Can members of ethnic groups tear down the barriers of hate that separate them? Consider the Amharic-speaking group of Jehovah’s Witnesses in London, England. Some 35 individuals make up that group—20 of these are Ethiopian and 15 are Eritrean. They worship together peacefully and unitedly, in

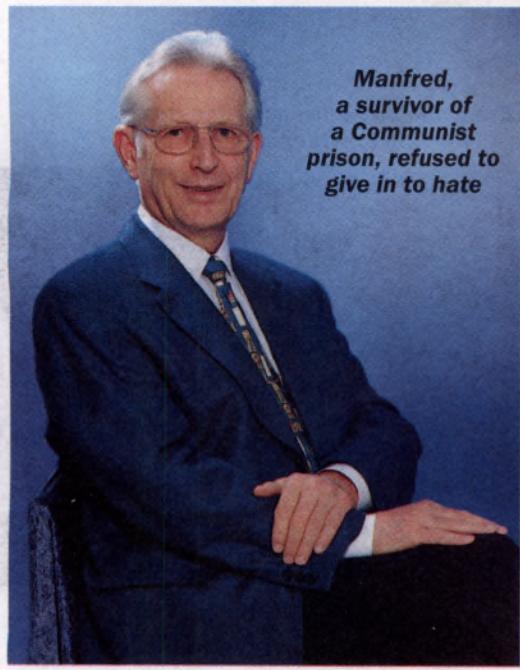
spite of the fact that in Africa, Eritreans and Ethiopians recently fought a bitter war.

One Ethiopian Witness had been told by his family: ‘Never trust Eritreans!’ But now, he not only trusts his Eritrean fellow Christians but calls them brother and sister! Although these Eritreans normally speak the Tigrinya tongue, they chose to learn Amharic—the language of their Ethiopian brothers—so that they can study the Bible along with them. What a marvelous testimony to the strength of godly love as “a perfect bond of union”!—Colossians 3:14.

Letting Go of the Past

But what if one has been the victim of inhumane treatment? Is it not normal to harbor animosity toward one’s tormentors? Consider Manfred, a Witness from Germany. He spent six years of his life in a Communist prison simply because he was one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Did he ever feel hatred for his oppressors or the desire to take revenge? “No,” he answered. According to the German newspaper *Saarbrücker Zeitung*, Manfred explained: “To do injustice or to

*Manfred,
a survivor of
a Communist
prison, refused to
give in to hate*



***The Bible can help tear down the barriers
that separate people***



repay injustice . . . sets a cycle in motion that time and again leads to new injustice." Manfred clearly applied the Bible's words: "Return evil for evil to no one. . . . If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men."—Romans 12:17, 18.

A World Without Hatred!

Jehovah's Witnesses do not claim to be perfect in this regard. They often find that putting aside old animosities and hatreds is not easy. It takes continuous, diligent work to apply Bible principles in one's life. But by and large, Jehovah's Witnesses are a living example of the power of the Bible to break the cycle of hate. Through a program of home Bible studies, Witnesses are helping thousands of people each year to break free from the shackles of racism and bigotry.* (See the box "Bible Counsel Helps Eliminate Hatred.") That success is a foreglimpse

* A free home Bible study can be arranged by contacting Jehovah's Witnesses locally or by writing to the publishers of this magazine.

of the results of the worldwide educational program that will soon help eliminate hatred and its causes completely. This future educational program will take place under the supervision of God's Kingdom, or global government. Jesus taught us to pray for that Kingdom in the Lord's Prayer, when he said: "Let your kingdom come."—Matthew 6:9, 10.

The Bible promises that under the supervision of this heavenly government, "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah." (Isaiah 11:9; 54:13) The oft-quoted words of the prophet Isaiah will then see fulfillment on a global basis: "[God] will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4) God himself will thus break, once and for all time, the vicious cycle of hate.

BIBLE COUNSEL HELPS ELIMINATE HATRED

- "From what source are there wars and from what source are there fights among you? Are they not from this source, namely, from your cravings for sensual pleasure that carry on a conflict in your members?"

(James 4:1) Conflicts with others can often be eliminated if we learn to curb selfish desires.

- "[Keep] an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others."

(Philippians 2:4) Putting the interests of others ahead of our own is another way to eliminate unnecessary conflict.

- "Let anger alone and leave rage; do not show yourself heated up only to do evil." **(Psalm 37:8)** We can and must control destructive impulses.

- "God . . . made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire sur-

face of the earth." **(Acts 17:24, 26)** It is illogical to feel superior to people of another race, since we are all members of the same human family.

● 'Do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind consider that the others are superior to you.' **(Philippians 2:3)** It is folly to look down on others—for other people often have qualities and abilities that we do not have ourselves. No one race or culture has a monopoly on all that is good.

● "Really, then, as long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all." **(Galatians 6:10)** Simply taking the initiative to be friendly and helpful to others, regardless of their race or culture, can do much to bridge communication gaps and eliminate misunderstandings.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Clues Across

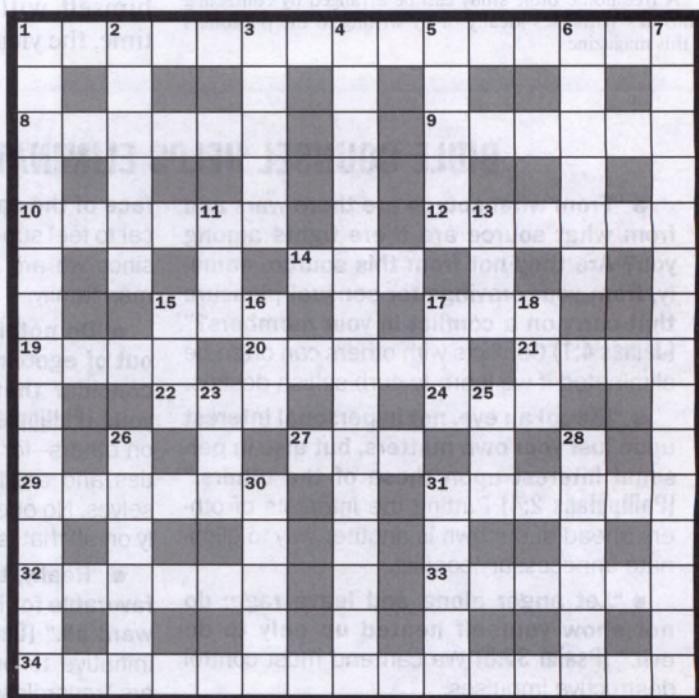
1. What Jesus' footstep followers receive from Jehovah when anointed with holy spirit [2 words] (Hebrews 3:1)
8. The name that Jehovah gave to Hosea's second son by his wife Gomer to show that He had disowned faithless Israel (Hosea 1:9)
9. A city of Asher assigned to the Gershonites (1 Chronicles 6:74)
10. James said that the wisdom that stems from God is this first of all (James 3:17)
12. Nebuchadnezzar paid this after Daniel interpreted the king's dream (Daniel 2:46)
14. Used to give things color (Exodus 28:5)*
15. The psalmist, in his lonely affliction, felt like this little bird (Psalm 102:6)
17. Those finding "the road leading off into life" (Matthew 7:14)
19. What Moses used to cover his face because it "emitted rays" after God spoke with him (Exodus 34:35)
20. Although he had sided with Absalom against David, David offered him the place of Joab as army chief (2 Samuel 19:13)
21. Following the Babylonian exile, Benjaminites from this city returned with Zerubbabel's caravan (Nehemiah 11:31)
22. The manna that the Israelites miraculously received as food in the wilderness descended with this (Numbers 11:9)
24. The Pharisees tried to entrap Jesus by asking him if it was lawful to pay this (Matthew 22:15-21)
27. In this, Jochebed concealed her three-month-old "good-looking" baby (Exodus 2:2, 3)
29. Draws (Isaiah 44:13)
31. Following Balaam's direction, Balak built seven of them at each of three vantage points (Numbers 23:1, 14, 29)
32. After the Exodus from Egypt, his son Pagiel was appointed chieftain of the tribe of Asher (Numbers 1:13)
33. One of Haman's ten sons killed by the Jews in Shushan the castle (Esther 9:8)
34. The fate of the people who followed Judas the Galilean [2 words] (Acts 5:37)

* The scripture cited has a form of the word needed.

Clues Down

1. What Jehovah declared the seasonal festivals to be [2 words] (Leviticus 23:2)
2. The father of Jechonias, King Josiah's mother (2 Kings 22:1)
3. At Pentecost 33 C.E., this was so loud that people came to see what was happening (Acts 2:2, 6)
4. Jonathan told Saul that David was not present to eat with them because he had to offer this [2 words] (1 Samuel 20:6)
5. At this hill "in front of Giah," Abner made his last stand and persuaded Joab to stop pursuing him (2 Samuel 2:24-28)
6. The second of Asher's four sons (Genesis 46:17)
7. One of the seven that John saw first in his vision [2 words] (Revelation 1:12)*
11. The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet (Psalm 119:169, superscription)
13. To be indebted for (Revelation 7:10)
15. The type of personality that Christians must "put away" (Ephesians 4:22)
16. Paul says that its purpose was to "make transgressions manifest" (Galatians 3:19)
17. One of the things that the Israelites could not lawfully eat (Leviticus 3:17)
18. Because it melts easily, it was used to illustrate the destruction of God's enemies (Psalm 68:1, 2)
23. The first one reported to have used God's name (Genesis 4:1)
25. When one's ear was pierced with this, it indicated that he chose to remain a slave (Deuteronomy 15:17)
26. One of five kings who sought to punish Gibeon for making peace with Israel (Joshua 10:3, 4)
28. This proconsul of Achaea refused to judge a case against Paul (Acts 18:12-16)
30. Meaning (Mark 4:12)
31. Before proceeding to Jerusalem, Ezra proclaimed a fast at this river in Babylonia (Ezra 8:21)

Crossword Solutions Page 19



KOREA'S Family Reunions

A New Beginning?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

IT WAS called a great human drama. It attracted over 1,300 domestic reporters and over 400 foreign correspondents. The event was the reuniting of families from the northern and southern parts of Korea—families that have been separated for some 50 years.

For a half century, many Koreans have had no contact with their relatives—by letter, fax, or phone. The demilitarized zone dividing the land has kept family members isolated from one another. What made this reunion possible?*

A Significant Reunion

On August 15, 2000, an airplane displaying the flag of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea touched down at the Republic of Korea's Kimpo International Airport. The plane carried passengers from the north who had received evidence through the International Red Cross that some of their relatives were still alive in the south. This same aircraft then picked up 100 Koreans from the south and headed north, making it possi-



A husband and wife (top) and a mother and son (bottom) are reunited

ble for them to meet their relatives. Imagine having a brother, a sister, a mother, a father, a son or daughter, or a marriage mate whom you have not seen for over 50 years! Many who came for this reunion were in their late 60's and 70's, and they had not seen their relatives since they were teenagers!

These visits were arranged to last only four days and three nights, after which all would have to return to their respective countries. No doubt this is why many reunited family

* A government-sponsored reunion also took place in 1985.

members talked nearly nonstop! Because of the likelihood of trauma and shock, doctors, nurses, and ambulances were at the ready. Not surprisingly, these had to be utilized.

The reunions involved only a very small fraction of the total number of separated families. Some estimate that there are 690,000 people over 60 years of age and 260,000 over 70 years of age, who are still separated from loved ones. However, out of 76,000 from the Republic of Korea who met certain requirements and applied to visit their relatives in the north, only 100 were selected for this reunion.

Among these was 82-year-old Yang Jin-yeul. He received notice through the Red Cross that Yang Won-yeul, his 70-year-old brother in the north, was looking for his relatives in the south. Yang Jin-yeul's younger brother had been a student at a university in Seoul in 1950 when he disappeared during the Korean War. Nothing had been heard from him since then. The two of them, along with their two sisters, were reunited after five decades of separation!

Lee Pok-yon, 73 years old, was reunited with his 70-year-old wife and two sons. He had last seen his family when the sons were only two and five years of age. During the war he had left home one day saying that he was going out to buy a bicycle. He disappeared and had not been heard from since. At their emotional reunion, his wife, now ill with palsy and diabetes, got to ask the question she had pondered for decades: Why had it taken him so long to buy that bicycle?

Lee Chong-pil, 69 years old, was a middle-school student when he became separated from his family in 1950 and was registered as missing. He was reunited with Cho Won-ho,

his 99-year-old mother, two brothers, and two sisters in the south. Unfortunately, his aged mother was not able to recognize him.

These are only a few of the many touching reunions that took place. The event was carried live on several TV stations locally and abroad. Watching these reunions, viewers were also moved to tears of joy! Many wondered if this would lead to more. At any rate, the reunions soon came to an end, this parting proving to be almost as painful as the original separation. Loved ones did not know if or when they would ever meet again.



Practicing ancestor worship, a man bows down to a portrait of his father, who died before they could be reunited

A Half Century of Separation —Near an End?

On August 15, 1945, Korea threw off the yoke of 36 years of Japanese colonial rule. However, Korea was soon to be divided by the politics of the day. By ousting the Japanese from the Korean peninsula, the American forces gained control of the territory south of the 38th parallel, and the Soviet forces controlled the territory to the north. The war that soon erupted failed to resolve matters. Now there were two governments in Korea. From 1945 onward and throughout the Ko-

rean War, thousands of families were separated. When the war finally ended in 1953, a demilitarized zone laced with land mines now carved the country in two.

For decades, there were few signs of reconciliation. However, on June 13, 2000, a plane carrying the president of the Republic of Korea, Kim Dae-jung, landed at Pyongyang's Sunan Airport. The head of state of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Jong-il, was on the tarmac waiting to greet him. A sudden and unexpected door of hope seemed to be opening. Never before had these two leaders met. But on



Yang Jin-yeul (far left) is reunited with his brother (middle) from the north

this occasion they acted like long-lost brothers. A three-day summit ensued wherein the two leaders pledged to work toward ending the half century of animosity and to work for reconciliation. The reunions of separated family members were among the first results of that summit. Other initiatives were soon in the making.

The two leaders also came to an accord on reconnecting the railroad between the north and the south. There are seven miles of rail in the southern part of Korea and five miles in the northern part that are to be re-

paired by September 2001. This railroad will cut through the demarcation line, once again linking the two parts of Korea. And when the railroad is eventually connected to the Trans Chinese Railroad, it will extend from the Korean peninsula through China and on to Europe. It will truly be, in the words of President Kim Dae-jung, "a new silk road of iron." Another rail line will eventually cut through the middle of the demarcation line and connect to the Russian Trans-Siberian Railroad.

Whether these initiatives truly herald a new beginning remains to be seen. In the meantime, the efforts to reunite families are commendable. Even so, it is evident that mankind needs global rulership by God's Kingdom. (Matthew 6:9, 10) As early as 1912, Jehovah's Witnesses began organizing the spreading of this message of hope in the Orient. Many in the northern part of the Korean peninsula got to hear it, and a number embraced it. Scores of these, however, were imprisoned during Japanese rule because of their refusal to go to war.

After the end of World War II and their release from prison, these Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses, began to associate together. Most of them came south where they could enjoy freedom of worship.

In June of 1949, the first congregation was formed in Seoul, and today that has grown into a great organization of over 87,000 active Witnesses in the Republic of Korea. Among these are thousands who are also separated from their relatives in the north.

Perhaps events will unfold in a way that will allow for the reuniting of all separated families in Korea. More important, an end to this separation may make it possible for the 22 million inhabitants of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea finally to have an opportunity to hear the Bible's message.

Marabou

The Misjudged Bird

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN KENYA

OF THE many birds found in Africa, few have come under the severe criticism that the marabou has suffered. The bird is commonly portrayed as being mean and ugly and as lacking good motive. Clearly, the marabou has a serious public relations problem.

Are you attracted to birds that have elegant looks and melodious voices? Well, the marabou has neither. With a pink head and neck

that are bereft of feathers, the bird appears sullen and forlorn. In adults, a reddish inflatable pouch resembling a thick, round necktie hangs on the throat. Most people feel that the pouch does little to adorn the creature. However, Dr. Leon Benun, head of the Ornithology Department at the National Museums of Kenya, reminds us: "Just because the pouch looks ugly to us doesn't mean it's ugly to the marabou." Even so, as yet, no one knows the biological function of this pouch.

The bird's feeding habits likewise do little to endear it to observers. For one thing, it is a carrion eater. When carcasses cannot be found, it has been known to kill other birds to satisfy its healthy appetite. Little wonder that many people seem to hate it with a passion.

The bird's heavy, wedge-shaped bill can grow to a length of more than ten inches

Yet, despite its ungainly looks and traits, the marabou has a number of admirable qualities. Join us as we better acquaint ourselves with this much-maligned bird.

"If there is a bird of more evil omen than the marabou . . . , I have yet to meet it."

The World's Wild Places
—Africa's Rift Valley.

© Joe McDonald

The marabou has a wingspan of more than eight feet

A Giant Among Birds

The marabou is arguably the largest of the stork family. A full-grown male can reach a height of five feet and weigh over 15 pounds. Females are slightly smaller. The bird's heavy, wedge-shaped bill can grow to a length of more than ten inches—a powerful asset in extracting pieces of meat from a carcass.

As large as it is, this stork is an accomplished flier. With a wingspan of more than eight feet, the marabou is able to glide with the best. In flight, it is the very picture of elegance with its head slightly retracted to the shoulders and its long legs extended behind the body. It has mastered the use of warm air currents, or thermals, and can fly to such great heights that at times it is nearly invisible from the ground! Why, marabous have been known to soar as high as 13,000 feet!

Responsible Parents

Particularly admirable, though, is the job the marabou does as a parent. Indeed, parenting is

a demanding occupation that starts with the construction of a nest. After selecting a suitable location, the male, to be joined later by a female, initiates the building work. The nest, sometimes constructed 100 feet above the ground, is nothing fancy. The three-foot-wide structure is little more than a rough, open platform of dry sticks, tree branches, and leaves. In fact, a breeding bird will sometimes inherit an old nest, giving it

Young marabous receive marvelous care

© M.P. Kahl/VIREO



a new lease on life by adding twigs and other materials. Some colonies of marabous have been known to maintain a nesting site for 50 years.

While a new home is still under construction, the male marabou begins the process of finding a mate. Contrary to the norm among many bird species, the male waits to be approached by the female. Several prospective mates will present themselves with the hope of currying the male's favor. Rejections are common. But persistence pays off, and a female will finally be accepted. During the ensuing courtship, both birds, their neck pouches fully inflated, will ut-

ter vocalizations intended to scare away unwanted parties. These have been described as moos, whines, and whistles—the only known sounds of marabous, except for the occasional clattering of their huge bills. A strong bond develops, cemented by a popular "up-down" greeting that is displayed whenever a partner returns to the nest after an absence. This involves throwing the head backward, lowering it, and then making a prolonged clattering of the bill.

The couple finish the nest together. Egg incubation will also be a shared task. After an incubation period of one month, two or three chalky white eggs will hatch into little pinkish, sparsely feathered chicks that will be objects of interest to both parents. These young marabous receive marvelous care. A vigorous feeding program that includes highly nutritious foods, such as fish, will begin. In swampy areas, where marabous are frequent visitors, the parents are able to obtain a good supply of frogs, another common item on the birds' menu.

The hatchlings are able to feed by collecting food fragments that are regurgitated onto the nest by the parents. Growth for the young birds is slow, and it is not until they are four months old—when they are also able to fly away from the nesting site—that they begin surviving on their own.

Sanitation Workers

While the marabou has often been disdained as a carrion eater, it actually performs quite a useful service. Predatory animals leave the African plains littered with rotting carcasses. Left unattended, these carcasses could easily spread disease and be dangerous to both man and beast. However, the marabou performs the useful chore of garbage removal. Together with vultures—also birds of prey with healthy appetites—they survey the plains for an abandoned kill. When one is located, the marabous will wait for the more aggressive vultures to open the carcass with their strong curved beaks. At a

The biological function of the marabou's pouch is not yet known





**The nest is sometimes constructed
100 feet above the ground**

convenient moment, a marabou, with its long bill drawn like a surgical knife, will make a quick dash to the carrion, grab a piece of flesh, and return to the sidelines awaiting another opportunity. When the vultures have eaten their fill, it is time for the marabous to fight over any scraps of flesh left. The marabous will consume almost anything that can go down their throats, except for the bones. Pieces of meat weighing as much as 20 ounces are swallowed with ease.

In recent years the marabou has extended its sanitation work beyond the wild. The bird has lost most of its fear of man and is now a common visitor at city and village garbage dumps. The result? A cleaner environment. The marabou even sifts through the waste fluids from slaughterhouses, looking for any remaining morsels. Just how tough this bird can be is illustrated by the following example. While rummaging for scraps around a slaughterhouse in western Kenya, a marabou managed to swallow a butcher knife. A few days later, the knife—clean and shiny—was found near the same

spot, while the marabou that had regurgitated it carried on its business as usual, having suffered no apparent ill effects!

The Marabou's Future

While its closest relative, the greater adjutant stork of Asia, is diminishing, the African marabou flourishes. It has no known enemies in the wild. In times past, the marabou's most cruel enemy was man. The large stork was shot, and its soft backside feathers were plucked to add beauty to women's headdresses. "It is almost inconceivable," says the book *Storks, Ibises and Spoonbills of the World*, "that such delicate and beautiful plumes, when adorning a fan or some finery dear to a woman's heart, are the product of this huge, gaunt and repulsive looking scavenger." Fortunately for these birds, such wanton destruction has diminished over the years, and their numbers are again on the rise. No doubt our brief look at the marabou has revealed that it simply does not deserve to be scorned and maligned. Its efficiency and industriousness in cleaning the environment benefit us greatly. Though it is not the most beautiful of birds, it still brings glory to its Creator in its own humble way.—Psalm 148:7, 10.

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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O	E	A	M	M	I	A	M	S	H	A	L			
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Who Is the Antichrist?

"YOU HAVE HEARD THAT ANTICHRIST IS COMING."—1 JOHN 2:18.

If you were warned that a dangerous criminal was seen heading toward your neighborhood, what would you do? You would likely search out accurate details about his appearance and methods. You would be on the alert.

A similar situation exists today. We have been warned by the apostle John's words: "Every inspired expression that does not confess Jesus does not originate with God. Furthermore, this is the antichrist's inspired expression which you have heard was coming, and now it is already in the world." (1 John 4:3) Is there such an antichrist, an enemy of God and deceiver of men, now threatening the well-being of all humanity?

John used the term "antichrist" five times in two of his epistles. It refers to an entity that opposes what the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ and includes impostors who present themselves as Christ or as sent by him. The Bible gives reliable information about the antichrist. But as sometimes happens with felons, unfounded reports regarding this enigmatic entity have received more notice than the truth.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

Since the days of the apostle John, men have claimed that John's words about an antichrist designate one specific individual. People have proposed various candidates. Centuries ago many thought that Roman Emperor Nero was the anti-

christ. Later, the flood of hatred and terror let loose by Adolf Hitler convinced many that he was the antichrist. The term was even applied to German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Yet others believe that the antichrist is still to come and that he will appear as a shrewd, ruthless politician who is out to rule the world. They believe that the wild beast of Revelation chapter 13 is a specific reference to the antichrist mentioned by John. They say that its mark of 666 will somehow identify this future champion of wickedness.

Those promoting these ideas assume that John pointed to just one antichrist. But what do his words show? Consider 1 John 2:18: "Just as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now there have come to be many antichrists." Yes, "many antichrists," not one, were responsible for the spiritually

Nero on pages 2 and 20:
Courtesy of the Visitors
of the Ashmolean
Museum, Oxford



troubled situation back in the first century. Today there are, not one, but many anti-christs who form the antichrist class. Collectively, they have heaped spiritual ruin upon mankind. (2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13) Who make up the antichrist?

Let us look at the wild beast of Revelation chapter 13 as a possibility. The apostle John wrote: "The wild beast that I saw was like a *leopard*, but its feet were as those of a *bear*, and its mouth was as a *lion's* mouth." (Revelation 13:2) What do these elements signify?

Bible scholars have noted a connection between Revelation chapter 13 and Daniel chapter 7. God gave Daniel a vision of figurative beasts, including a leopard, a bear, and a lion. (Daniel 7:2-6) What meaning did God's prophet assign to them? He wrote that those wild animals symbolized earthly kings, or governments. (Daniel 7:17) So we can logically conclude that the wild beast of Revelation represents human governments. Since these governments oppose God's Kingdom, they constitute a part of the antichrist.

Who Else Make Up the Antichrist?

When the Christ, the Son of God, walked the earth, he had many enemies. Although he is now beyond physical reach, he has modern-day opponents. Note who are included among them.

The apostle John stated: "Who is the liar if it is not the one that denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one that denies the Father and the Son." (1 John 2:22) Apostates and leaders of false worship twist the clear teachings of Jesus into knots of religious deceit. Such ones reject Bible truth and spread lies in the name of God and Christ. They deny the true relationship of the Father and the Son by their Trinity doctrine. Therefore, they too are a part of the antichrist.

Jesus forewarned his disciples at Luke 21:12: "People will lay their hands upon

you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons . . . for the sake of my name." Since the first century, true Christians have endured savage persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12) Fomenters of such treatment work against Christ. They too are a component of the antichrist.

"He that is not on my side is against me, and he that does not gather with me scatters." (Luke 11:23) Here Jesus proclaims that all who oppose him and the divine purposes he supports fall into the category of the antichrist. What end awaits these?

What Awaits Antichrists?

"[God] will destroy those speaking a lie. A man of bloodshed and deception Jehovah detests," says Psalm 5:6. Does this apply to antichrists? Yes. The apostle John wrote: "Many deceivers have gone forth into the world, persons not confessing Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist." (2 John 7) For their lies and deception, Almighty God will bring ruin upon antichrists.

As the time of executing that sentence draws near, true Christians must not allow anti-Christian deceit and pressure, especially from apostates, to weaken their faith. John's warning is urgent: "Look out for yourselves, that you do not lose the things we have worked to produce, but that you may obtain a full reward."—2 John 8.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Coping With Post-traumatic Stress

Changing Attitudes Toward Old Age

How Can I Make Bible Reading More Enjoyable?

My Fight With Scleroderma

AS TOLD BY MARC HOLLAND

FIVE years ago our family was extremely busy in the Christian ministry. Life seemed so promising.

Then, in April 1996, both my wife, Lisa, and I got the flu. While Lisa started slowly to recover, I did not. My flu progressed to pneumonia, which lasted ten weeks. What followed was the beginning of pain and the swelling of my hands and feet. When I walked, I felt as if I were walking on rocks. A few months earlier—at just 45 years of age and 165 pounds—I had been the picture of health. The results of all the tests taken at my annual physical had been normal. Now my doctors were deeply puzzled by my symptoms. The pain kept increasing in my joints and muscles, and by July my skin began to tighten. I was always seeking warmth and could hardly stand air-conditioning.

Immediately we began doing research to find an explanation for this bizarre sickness. In July 1996 our family doctor sent me to a specialist in rheumatology. It was especially cold in his office, and by the time the doctor came in, I looked as though I had blue gloves and socks on my bare hands and feet. After the examination the doctor gave his grim diagnosis. I had diffuse scleroderma (SD).—See the box “Scleroderma—When the Body Turns Against Itself.”

The doctor explained that there is no cure for the disease and that it is life threatening.



SD is very painful, much like its sisters lupus and rheumatoid arthritis. And because some of the symptoms are invisible—such as pain and acute fatigue—other people may not understand the limitations imposed on the sufferer.

New Challenges

Our family had always worked as a team in Jehovah's service. For example, we had moved to where the need was greater for Bible teachers. We had also had the privilege of working as volunteers on many Kingdom Hall construction projects in the United States and abroad. We had even shared in foreign disaster relief work. In fact, just before that flu, we had been ready to move to Mexico to assist English-speaking groups of Jehovah's Witnesses and to help with construction work there. Now it appeared that our life of active service would change radically.

Important decisions and responsibilities began to fall on Lisa's shoulders. Sometimes she was so overwhelmed with everything happening so fast that she could only think to say to Jehovah, “Please help us to make wise decisions today.”

It is not known what causes SD, and the disease itself is not treatable. Instead, relief is sought for its symptoms. Tests conducted on me showed that I had a lung capacity

of 60 percent and later only 40 percent. My lungs were hardening, and the only treatment offered was chemotherapy to slow or shut down my immune system. This would make me sicker, and although it might help me for a short time, no guarantees of a more lasting impact were given. We decided that I was sick enough already and declined to accept this treatment. For the first of four times, my family made funeral arrangements for me.

Progressive Effects of SD

Some doctors have described my case as the worst they have seen. It was so aggressive that by the end of September 1996, my skin had tightened from the top of my head through my trunk to mid-thigh and from my feet to behind my knees. When I raised my chin up, I could feel the skin on my thighs move. I was losing weight, and the pain was

becoming intolerable. At this point the doctors felt that I might live one year.

Time seemed to be moving in slow motion. In the six months since the flu, I had become totally disabled, being in bed 24 hours a day. I had now lost nearly one third of my weight. I couldn't dress myself. I was frustrated by not being able to feed myself properly, spilling much on my clothes and bed. My hands were starting to curl half closed as if I were holding a small ball, and I was unable to bend my wrists. Swallowing was becoming a problem, as my esophagus was losing flexibility. I needed help getting in and out of the bath as well as on and off the toilet. The pain was excruciating and unrelenting. I slept more and more, sometimes 18 to 20 hours a day.

By doing personal research on SD, Lisa found a study on the use of antibiotics in

Scleroderma

When the Body Turns Against Itself

The term "scleroderma" (SD) comes from a Greek word meaning "hard skin," though all connective tissue—not just skin—is affected. It is a chronic autoimmune disease primarily afflicting females and is characterized by abnormal thickening of the skin. It is often misdiagnosed, sometimes for years, since it presents different symptoms in varying degrees in each patient.

The cause of SD is unknown. Scientists agree that in cases of SD, the body produces an excess of collagen, which then attacks the body's healthy tissue. Thus, it is often said that SD is a disease

in which the body turns against itself.

There are two major variants of SD as well as other less common forms. The most serious form is called diffuse or systemic and is characterized by rapid development of a thickening of the skin, beginning with the hands and face and extending to the arms and trunk. People with diffuse SD are at greater risk for developing internal-organ involvement early in the course of the disease. The other major form is often called limited or localized SD.

In cases of diffuse SD, the areas of skin hardness

are widespread and typically appear on both sides of the body. Diffuse SD also includes inflammation of the muscles and swelling of the fingers, hands, and feet. Gastrointestinal problems are common, but more serious is lung, heart, and kidney involvement.

The vascular system is also affected, many times beginning with Raynaud's phenomenon, where the fingers and toes lose circulation and turn white, red, or blue upon exposure to cold and cause spasms of pain.

At present there are no proven treatments or cures for any forms of SD.

treating the disease.* We contacted many patients who had tried this treatment, and their remarks were positive. We copied all the information and took it to my doctor, asking him to read it. The doctor felt that I had nothing to lose, so he prescribed those antibiotics. They seemed to stabilize my condition for a while.

Spiritual Activities Not Forsaken

I continued to make the effort to go to Christian meetings. To assist in this regard, we bought a van, as I was unable to bend my stiff body in order to get into a car. I often carried a bowl with me, as the car ride made me nauseated. I also brought blankets and heating pads to keep me warm. To give my talks, I usually had to be pulled up the steps of the platform and lowered into a chair, as my joints were locked.

I was no longer able to engage in the door-

* These included minocycline (Minocin) and tetracycline. *Awake!* does not endorse any health treatment. Decisions regarding health issues and medication are entirely personal.

to-door preaching work—an activity that I loved very much and that had been a large part of my life. However, I was able to preach informally to my nurses and doctors. I could also make phone calls to former Bible students. Seeing our active theocratic life come almost to a standstill was discouraging, even depressing. During that period we were unable to take our son, Ryan, in the door-to-door ministry because my wife had to be with me 24 hours a day. But some pioneers, full-time evangelizers, in our congregation offered to help in that regard.

As my illness began to stabilize, however, we began giving more thought to our Christian ministry. We sold our house and moved closer to our daughter Traci and her husband, Seth, so that they could help with both practical and emotional support.

Active Though Disabled

Since I was confined either to bed or to a wheelchair, I could no longer work secularly. However, the brothers in our new congrega-

Understanding Scleroderma Sufferers

To provide meaningful support to victims of scleroderma (SD), better understanding of them is needed. Because the disease is frequently misdiagnosed, a victim of SD may go for years without knowing the true nature of his or her illness. In the early stages, he may be subjected to a demanding diagnostic process. If a diagnosis is not forthcoming, he may feel powerless, isolated, and frightened, knowing that changes are occurring in his body that cannot be explained.

Sufferers often face losses, limitations, and chang-

es on a number of levels. If physical limitations make it necessary for him to depend on others for care and treatment, his independence may be threatened. On a personal level, changes in relationships with loved ones may occur as family roles and responsibilities are transformed. The sufferer may also be unable to spend time with friends or engage in leisure activities. Professionally, it may be necessary for him to change careers or to stop working altogether.

Given these changes, it is not uncommon for the afflicted person to experience

feelings of low self-worth. It is important for the sufferer to be aware that such feelings are a natural reaction to the illness.

On the positive side, many SD victims have found that love, joy, and hope have deepened in their lives as family members and others reach out to assist them. Although the victim and his loved ones are faced with difficult challenges, they can choose to maintain hope and a positive attitude. Feelings of hopelessness and frustration are valid, but the sufferer need not surrender to them.

Our daughter Trisha and her husband, Matthew, serve at Bethel



I'm able to help on construction projects even from my bed



Our daughter Traci and her husband, our son Ryan, and my wife, Lisa



gation gave me some responsibilities to handle. Gratefully, I accepted the assignment of arranging for Sunday lectures at our Kingdom Hall. Gradually I was able to contribute more to the local congregation. Though my condition has improved somewhat and I am able to move with less restriction, it is still difficult for me to stand. So I give my talks sitting down.

Because of our experience in construction, we were asked to work with Kingdom Hall projects. Lisa and I thus assist in purchasing items needed for them. I do this work from my bed. Such opportunities for added activity keep Lisa and me happily occupied for a few hours every day.

Our son, Ryan, has been a firm support, carrying part of the load of caregiving, even though he was just 13 when this ordeal began. But it has been a pleasure to watch him grow as a spiritual man. Soon after our move, he began serving as a pioneer.

Encouraging Others

We have learned much firsthand about encouraging those with severe or chronic illness. SD's symptoms of pain and fatigue are invisible, but they still exact a terrible physical and emotional toll. At times, I have felt depressed. The debilitating symptoms of ul-

cerations and body deformation as well as the crippling of my hands have also been quite distressing.

However, the many cards and phone calls from friends have helped me to carry on. We have especially appreciated the loving friends who assured us that we were in their prayers. In turn, we ourselves have looked for and visited others with the same disease so that we could encourage one another. In the process, we have made some precious new friends.

Our life is not easy. In fact, we still have some very bad days, and we don't know what the future will bring. Though we are unable to do the things we had planned, there is no doubt that we can still be happy. Our happiness comes primarily from enjoying a good relationship with Jehovah. We have also found that by keeping busy in Christian activities despite our circumstances, we can retain a measure of joy. We are a living testimony to the fact that Jehovah opens up doors of opportunity and gives abundantly "the power beyond what is normal." (2 Corinthians 4:7) We find strength in keeping close to our hearts God's promise of a time soon when "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" —Isaiah 33:24.



The Diary

A Trustworthy Friend

A DIARY can be a trusted companion, an empathetic friend in an unsympathetic world. A diary "allows us to leave a collection of still lifes that records our personal journeys," says writer Christina Baldwin. Like a photo album that visually chronicles our past, a diary provides us with written "snapshots" that reveal and preserve the passage of our lives.

In Bible times governments often kept track of significant events. The Bible itself refers to a number of such official accounts. (Numbers 21:14, 15; Joshua 10:12, 13) The Greeks developed a type of almanac called *ephemerides*,* where they recorded the daily movements of the stars and the planets. The Romans, who conquered Greece, adopted the use of these journals but, with characteristic practicality, enhanced their value by adding daily events of community and public interest. They called them *dia-*

It was not until the 17th century, however, with the writing of the journal of Englishman Samuel Pepys, that the diary as a repository of private everyday events became popular in Western lands. Containing an unusual mix of piety and worldliness, Pepys' diary has given historians one of the most insightful accounts of life under the English monarch Charles II.

From that point on, journal keeping became increasingly popular. Many diaries have even become valuable historical documents. Noteworthy among these is the journal of a young Jewish girl who hid from the Nazis. Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* is a searing testament of man's inhumanity to man.

What Is the Appeal of the Diary?

Writing in a journal seems to address a fundamental human de-

* From the Greek *ephemeros*, meaning "lasting for one day."

Tips on Getting Started

- ◆ Choose a journal that is durable, perhaps easy to carry.
- ◆ Find a quiet time and a place where you can be alone. Date every entry.

- ◆ If you miss a few days, do not panic; just pick up where you left off.
- ◆ Do not criticize your work. Be free, and let the words flow. Record details—do not just generalize.

sire—self-expression. Whether recording our joy at a baby's first words or the growth of a loving relationship, a diary permits us to reflect on the events that shape our lives. Reading the entries later allows us to relive those precious moments and the feelings they engendered.

One of the diary's greatest advantages is its ability to help us to know ourselves. Writer Tristine Rainer calls it "a practical psychological tool that enables you to express feelings without inhibition."

The Bible says at Proverbs 12:25: "Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down." If a person is reluctant to talk about his "anxious care" with someone, expressing himself in writing may be an alternative. Journal writing is thus often suggested as a helpful tool in dealing with emotional pain. A diary can become a place to reflect on one's life, set new goals, and perhaps work out solutions to problems. Writing about one's problems and feelings can help one to focus on the real issues and put them in perspective.

Keeping a diary can also be an educational tool. The American Federation of Teachers advises parents: "Encourage your children to keep a diary. Writing in a journal develops writing skills and creativity."

How Do I Get Started?

First, find a quiet place and a journal or notebook that you are comfortable with. Admittedly, an empty page waiting to be filled can be quite intimidating. But the key is to be honest, spontaneous, and simple. You might ask yourself questions such as: 'What did I do today? How did it affect me? What did I eat? Whom did I see? What is going on in the lives of those whom I care about?' Or you might begin with the present moment, asking: 'Where am I in life right now? What are my goals? My dreams?' Then, without being critical, let the writing flow.

Write as much or as little as you like. Write as often or as seldom as you like. Be open and candid. Do not worry about grammar or spelling. No one else will see your work. You might try pasting in photographs, newspaper clippings, or anything else that is impor-

tant to you. It is your book. It can be neat or sloppy, small or large. And you only have to write when you want to. If diary keeping becomes a rigid duty, you will set yourself up for failure and disappointment.

—See box.

Just as a scientist may use a journal to observe and record changes in some organism that he is studying, a diary may help you to observe and study your own behavior patterns and tendencies in your life. Your journal will reveal your joys, your pains, your weaknesses, your strengths. It will improve your ability to express yourself. True, keeping a diary demands commitment, but such commitment can offer rich rewards.—Contributed.

WATCHING THE WORLD

Record Disasters in 2000

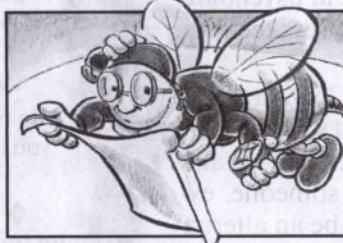
A record number of natural disasters occurred worldwide in the year 2000, reports the reinsurer Munich Re. All told, more than 850 catastrophes were reported, killing 10,000 people and causing more than \$30 billion in damages. Even though natural disasters were higher in number, economic and human losses were less severe than in the preceding year. That's because most of the disasters happened in less densely populated areas, says the company's press release. Storms accounted for 73 percent of the insured losses, and floods caused 23 percent. The report says that "the losses generated by natural catastrophes must be expected to continue increasing in the future" because of population growth and the rise in property values.

See-Through Envelopes

A U.S. company has developed a spray that "makes unopened envelopes transparent" without leaving a trace, reports *New Scientist* magazine. The spray works on all colors of envelopes and is a "non-conductive, non-toxic, environmentally safe liquid," says company spokesman Bob Schlagel. Apart from leaving an odor for 10 or 15 minutes, "there's no smudging of ink on the envelope or on the letter, no watermark, no evidence at all," adds Schlagel. The product was developed to help law-enforcement agencies to detect letter bombs and other potentially dangerous pack-

ages. However, the spray could also be used to read unopened letters, which led one human rights official to call the product ethically questionable.

Bee Navigation



The ability of bees to navigate from hive to flowers and home again is well-known. But colonies of migratory bees from Assam, northern India, evidently travel hundreds of miles and then return not only to the same tree but also to the same branch where their relatives nested some two years earlier! What makes this so remarkable is that worker bees live for only three months or less. So the bees that return are several generations removed from the bees that built the original hive. How they find their way back is a mystery. *The Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper reports that it might involve the sense of smell. Another possibility is that the surviving queen may somehow communicate information to the scout bees by a dance, showing them the direction in which to fly.

Language and the Brain

Two areas of the brain used by hearing people when perceiving and speaking language are also used by deaf people

when using sign language, reports *Science News*. Brain scans show that "these patches of neural tissue spring to action in deaf people who are using sign language," the report says. According to Laura-Ann Petitto of McGill University in Montreal, who headed the study, this indicates that these areas of the brain control "fundamental features of language that can be expressed either through speech or signing." This underscores the need for further study of the human brain's flexibility in facilitating language. Says *Science News*: "Considerable overlap exists between brain regions involved in spoken and signed language."

Whitewashing Prostitution

A German court has determined that prostitution is "not fundamentally immoral," provided it does not involve criminal coercion, reports the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Berlin's administrative court ruled that a café in Berlin-Wilmersdorf can continue to operate, even though prostitutes use it to initiate contact with their customers and then rent rooms nearby. The judges said that their ruling reflected society's changed attitude toward prostitution. A poll of 1,002 people showed that 62 percent felt prostitution should be recognized as an ordinary occupation. According to the judges, a second poll revealed that the majority feel that "the integration of sexual services into the economic fabric" of Germany took place long ago.

Sleep and Memory

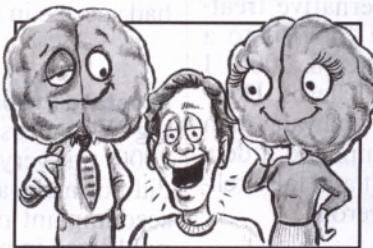
Sleep researchers have found that getting a good night's sleep, rather than burning the midnight oil, "is a prerequisite to effective recall in subsequent weeks," comments *The Independent* of London. Professor Robert Stickgold of Harvard Medical School used 24 volunteers—half of them were allowed a night's sleep after a learning session, while the rest were kept awake all night. Both groups then slept normally for the following two nights to help the sleep-deprived group overcome their fatigue. A memory test showed that those who slept the first night "were significantly and consistently better at performing the memory task, while the second group showed no improvement, despite their catch-up sleep." Because sleep apparently helps to consolidate memories, these findings demonstrate that substituting study for sleep—especially the earlier deep, or "slow-wave," sleep—provides little benefit.

Chernobyl Mutation Dangers

"Plants growing near to the stricken nuclear plant at Chernobyl in the Ukraine have been found with six times the amount of genetic damage compared to normal flora," reports *The Independent* of London. Researchers from Switzerland, Britain, and Ukraine planted two identical crops of wheat—one in contaminated soil and the other 20 miles away in similar but uncontaminated soil. They then used the seeds from these crops to sow more crops in the same two locations. Although exposed to rel-

atively low radiation, the wheat near the reactor site showed an alarmingly high rate of genetic damage, or mutation. Concerned scientists warn that chronic exposure to such radiation can have effects that are as yet unknown. These findings raise special concerns for future generations of plants, animals, and humans exposed to the Chernobyl radiation.

Men and Women Listen Differently



Researchers have determined that women use both sides of their brain for listening, while men use only one side of their brain, reports Discovery.com News. In a study, 20 men and 20 women underwent a brain scan while listening to a tape recording of a book. The brain scans showed that men listened mostly with the left side of their brain, which is associated with listening and speech. Women, on the other hand, showed activity on both sides of the brain. Dr. Joseph T. Lurito, an assistant radiology professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine, says: "Our research suggests language processing is different between men and women, but it doesn't necessarily mean performance is going to be different." Other studies seem to indicate that women "can handle listening to two conversations at once," says Dr. Lurito.

Do-It-Yourself Religion

The decline of religion is intensifying in France. This is one of the conclusions of a survey sponsored by the Catholic newsmagazine *La Vie*. When asked to pick from a list of 14 priorities, only 7 percent of those polled chose "spiritual quest" as being important to them. Selected ahead of spiritual pursuits were free time, professional success, personal liberty, cultural life, sex life, and material success. According to sociologists Pierre Bréchon and Gérard Mermet, the poll indicates that religion is a victim of individualization. In what sense? People "patch together" different beliefs, picking out "what seems to comply with their own way of life and thinking," says Bréchon.

Legal Suicide

Last April the Netherlands became the first nation formally to legalize assisted suicide, reports Rotterdam's *NRC Handelsblad*. The Dutch Senate approved the so-called mercy killing bill by a vote of 46 to 28. The legislation allows physicians to help end the lives of patients who are terminally ill or facing unremitting and unbearable "suffering." Dutch lawmakers require that euthanasia patients meet the following strict guidelines: The patient's request must be voluntary. The patient and doctor must agree that there is no reasonable alternative solution that is acceptable to the patient. At least one independent doctor must examine the patient. And the euthanasia must be performed in a medically acceptable manner.

FROM OUR READERS

Unemployment I wanted to tell you how much encouragement I received from the article "Whatever Happened to the 'Job for Life'?" (October 8, 2000) The tips on how to prepare for downsizing and how to survive unemployment were wonderful. I feel more relaxed for the job interview that I will be going on.

F. W., United States

Chinese Pharmacy I have concerns regarding the theory behind the alternative treatment described in the article "A Visit to a Chinese Pharmacy." (November 8, 2000) I have no objection to the use of herbs. However, isn't more involved in yin and yang than just hot and cold? You oversimplified a doctrine that is rooted in the occult and false religion. Doesn't that make it dangerous?

V. A., United States

It is true that in the Orient the principle of yin and yang has been applied in many endeavors, including divination. However, this would not rule out its use in other ways that are not prohibited in the Scriptures, such as in making a medical diagnosis. Individual Christians must therefore decide whether to utilize systems of medicine based on this principle.—ED.

Children's Problems I was deeply moved by the series "The Problems of Children—The Solution at Last!" (December 8, 2000) I have dark memories of my childhood. My mother drank and treated me abusively almost every day. As time went by, I fell into depression and often wanted to die. The articles reminded me of how important the bond between children and parents is. Now that I have experienced Jehovah's love for me, I am trying to be more understanding of my mother; she had similar experiences in her childhood.

U. P., Republic of Korea

I am a teacher originally from Argentina, and I think it would be marvelous if all par-

ents and teachers would put into practice the counsel of this issue—and of the Bible, which you quote so much.

F. S., Spain

Anger I read the "Watching the World" item "Anger and Your Heart." (December 8, 2000) It is so true. I have a heart problem that often makes me feel tired and sick. School is a challenge for me because I can't allow myself to get upset. Thanks to Jehovah God, though, I have had success in removing anger from my life.

A. F., United States

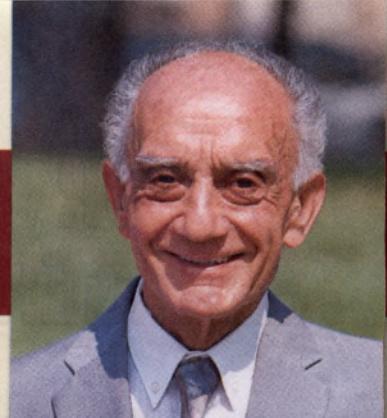
Prostate Problems The recent article "Coping With Prostate Problems" (December 8, 2000) was very much appreciated. However, it did not make any mention of the radioactive-seed-implant procedure. It has recently been publicized in major U.S. magazines and has a low rate of side effects.

H. Z., United States

Thanks for alerting our readers to this treatment. Reports indicate that radioactive-seed therapy (brachytherapy) is less disruptive for a patient than traditional surgery and that in some cases it may be equally effective. It will be some time, however, before doctors know its long-term effects. In the meantime, patients should become fully informed of their options before making a choice.—ED.

Yellowstone My applause for the article "Yellowstone—Crucible of Water, Rock, and Fire"! (December 8, 2000) My wife and I had the pleasure of working in this park during the past year. My wife worked on a research database, and I surveyed wetlands. So when this article appeared, we got quite excited and just had to read it immediately. Excellent work! Good choice of photographs and good research. The information was accurate on all counts. But one just has to come and see this place! There is no end to the beauty.

D. S., United States



Myths and Facts About Older Ones

Myths about old age abound. "Ageing—Exploding the Myths," a publication of the World Health Organization's Ageing and Health Programme, exposes the fallacy of some of these myths. Consider a few examples.

Myth: Most older people live in the industrialized world.

Fact: Actually, over 60 percent of the world's 580 million older people live in developing countries. An increasing number of people in these lands are reaching old age as a result of better health care and improvements in sanitation, housing, and nutrition.

Myth: Older people have nothing to contribute.

Fact: Older people make substantial contributions by doing work for which they are not paid. For instance, an estimated 2 million children in the United States are being cared for by their grandparents, with 1.2 million of them living in their grandparents' home. Thus older people provide shelter, food, and education and convey cultural values to their grandchildren while enabling mothers and fathers to continue as members of the work force. Likewise, in the industrialized world, many volunteer organizations would not function without the contribution made by older people. They are also much-needed caregivers. In some developing countries, where up to 30 percent of the adult population have contracted AIDS, older people care for their infected adult children, after whose death they will have to raise their orphaned grandchildren.

Myth: Older people leave the work force because they can no longer perform their jobs.

Fact: They more often leave the work force because of disadvantages in education or training or because of ageism (prejudice against the elderly) rather than older age in itself.

Myth: Older people do not want to work.

Fact: Older people are often excluded from paying jobs despite their willingness and ability to continue working. Especially during periods of unemployment, it is often argued that older ones should leave paid employment to free up places for younger job seekers. However, the early withdrawal of older workers from the labor force does not necessarily translate into jobs for the young. A younger unemployed job seeker may not have the skills needed to take the place of an older worker. Experienced older workers help to ensure the maintenance of productivity and the stability of the work force.

With these facts in mind, notes the World Health Organization (WHO), the world community should view its aging population as a source of expertise that can be put to good use. Alexandre Kalache, group leader of WHO's Ageing and Health Programme, therefore notes that "countries . . . should see their ageing populations not as a problem but as a potential solution to problems." And that is a fact.

NOT FOR TEENAGERS ONLY

In a letter to the administrative office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Poland, 25-year-old Jolanta explained that she had been depressed. She has a physical disability that prevents her from walking, and within a six-month period, both her mother and her grandmother had died. But then she began reading the publication *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*. She wrote:

"I believed that this publication was good for teenagers but not for me," she said. "How wrong I was! Studying chapters 12 to 16 of the book, I found clear answers to my questions: 'Why do I get so depressed and feel lonely?' 'Why don't I like myself?' and 'Why have I been so grieved after my beloved relatives' deaths?'"

She continued: "Two points on page 130 appealed to me: 'Knowing that your grief is normal is a big help in coming to grips with it. But it only prolongs grief to continue to deny reality.' Reading these words strengthened my grip on my hope to see those who have fallen asleep in death, which added deeper meaning to my life."

