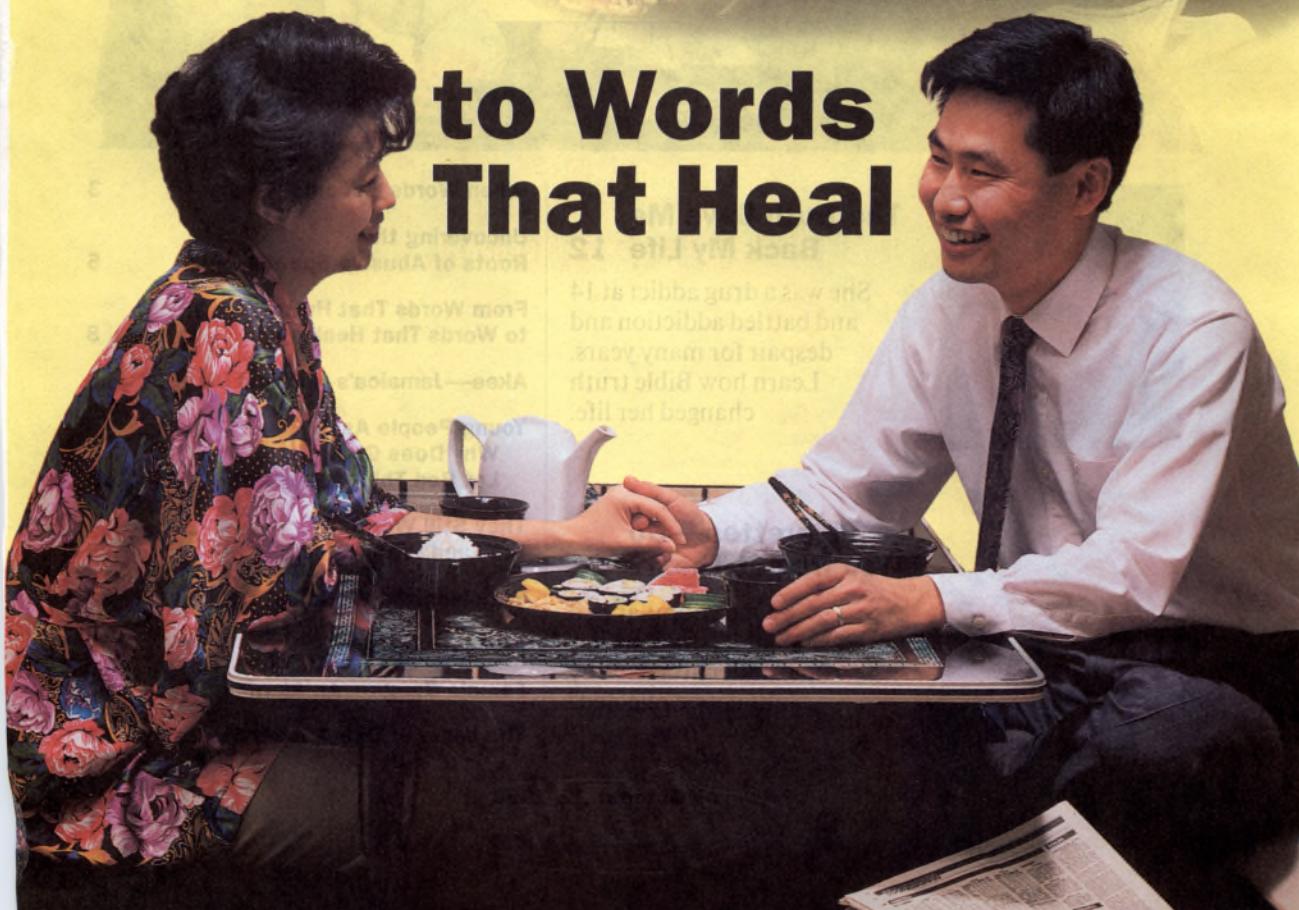


Awake!

October 22, 1996

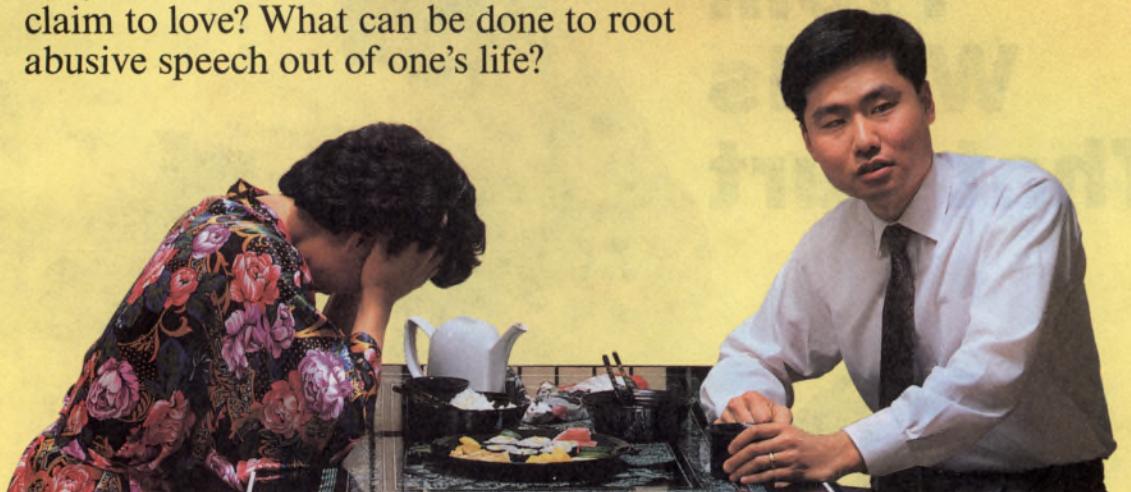
From Words That Hurt

to Words That Heal



From Words That Hurt to Words That Heal 3-11

How damaging to a relationship are abusive words? Why do some people berate the person they claim to love? What can be done to root abusive speech out of one's life?



The Truth Gave Me Back My Life 12

She was a drug addict at 14 and battled addiction and despair for many years.

Learn how Bible truth changed her life.



Cigarettes—Do You Reject Them? 21

Once popular and fashionable, smoking has come under attack. Why should it be rejected?

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When Words Become Weapons

*"There exists the one speaking thoughtlessly
as with the stabs of a sword."*

—PROVERBS 12:18.

WITHIN weeks after the wedding, it started," says Elaine.* "Unkind remarks, belittling comments, and efforts to put me down. I was no match for my husband. His quick mind and quick tongue could twist and distort everything I said."

Throughout her marriage Elaine has been subjected to an insidious type of assault that leaves no scars and elicits little sympathy. Sadly, her situation has not improved with the passing of time. "We have been married now for more than 12 years," she says. "There is not a day that passes without his being critical and sarcastic toward me, using harsh, vulgar speech."

The Bible is not exaggerating when it says that the tongue can be "an unruly injurious thing, . . . full of death-dealing poison." (James 3:8; compare Psalm 140:3.) This is especially true in marriage. "Whoever said 'sticks and stones can break my bones but

words can never hurt me' was dead wrong," says a wife named Lisa.—Proverbs 15:4.

Husbands can also be the target of verbal aggression. "Do you know what it's like to live with a woman who is constantly calling you a liar, a stupid idiot or worse?" asks Mike, whose four-year marriage to Tracy is heading toward divorce. "I can't repeat in polite company the things she says to me. That's why I can't talk to her and why I stay at work so late. It's a lot safer than coming home."—Proverbs 27:15.

With good reason, the apostle Paul admonished Christians: "Let . . . screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you." (Ephesians 4:31) But what is "abusive speech"? Paul distinguishes it from "screaming" (Greek, *krau·ge'*), which denotes simply raising the voice. "Abusive speech" (Greek, *bla·speh·m'i'a*) refers more to the content of the message. If it is tyrannical, malicious, demeaning, or insulting, then it is abusive speech—whether it comes out in a shout or in a whisper.

* Some names in this series of articles have been changed.



"I'd rather he hit me and get it over with than play these mind games for hours"

The Wounds of Words

A pattern of harsh speech can weaken a marriage, just as ocean waves can erode solid rock. "The more intense and prolonged," writes Dr. Daniel Goleman, "the greater the danger.

... Habitual criticism and contempt or disgust are danger signs because they indicate that a husband or wife has made a silent judgment for the worse about their partner." As affection breaks down, husband and wife become, as one book puts it, "married legally, but not emotionally." In time, they may no longer be married at all.

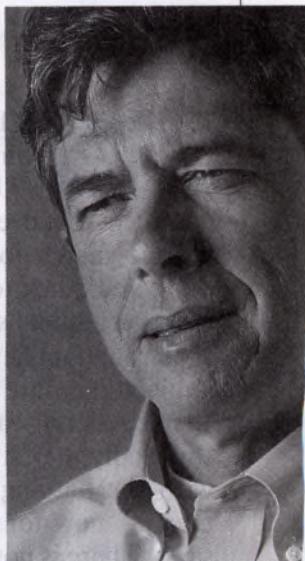
Railing speech, however, can affect more than the marriage itself. A Bible proverb states: "Because of the pain of the heart there is a stricken spirit." (Proverbs 15:13) The stress that results from a constant barrage of hurtful words can take a heavy toll on one's health. For example, a study conducted by the University of Washington

(U.S.A.) revealed that a woman who suffers constant reviling may be more prone to colds, bladder problems, yeast infections, and gastrointestinal disorders.

Many wives who have endured both verbal and physical battering remark that words can hurt more than fists. "The bruises from his slaps would eventually heal and go away," says Beverly, "but I'll never never forget the awful things he said about the way I look, the way I cook, how I take care of the kids." Julia feels much the same way. "I know it sounds nuts," she says, "but I'd rather he hit me and get it over with than play these mind games for hours."

But why do some people attack and berate the one whom they professed to love? The following article addresses this question.

"Do you know what it's like to live with a woman who is constantly calling you a liar, a stupid idiot or worse?"



Awake!

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

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Uncovering the Roots of Abusive Speech

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

—MATTHEW 12:34.

SOME two millenniums ago, Jesus Christ stated the above words. Yes, a person's words often reflect his deepest feelings and motives. They may be praiseworthy. (Proverbs 16:23) On the other hand, they may be treacherous.—Matthew 15:19.

One woman said regarding her mate: "He seems to get angry out of the blue, and living with him is often like walking through a mine field—you never know what will trigger an outburst." Richard describes a similar situation with his wife. "Lydia is always primed for a fight," he says. "She doesn't just talk; she lashes out in this belligerent way, pointing her finger at me as if I were a child."

Of course, arguments may erupt even in the best of marriages, and all husbands and wives say things that they later regret. (James 3:2) But abusive speech in marriage is more than that; it involves demeaning

and critical speech that is intended to dominate, or control, one's spouse. Sometimes, harmful speech is disguised in a veneer of mildness. For example, the psalmist David described a man who was soft-spoken, yet inwardly sinister: "Smother than butter are the words of his mouth, but his heart is disposed to fight. His words are softer than oil, but they are drawn swords." (Psalm 55:21; Proverbs 26:24, 25) Whether outwardly malicious or camouflaged, harsh speech can devastate a marriage.

How It Begins

What causes a person to use abusive speech? Generally, the use of such speech can be traced back to what one sees and hears. In many lands sarcasm, insults, and put-downs are considered acceptable and even humorous.* Husbands in particular

* Evidently, the same was true in the first century. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* notes that "for the Greek it was one of the arts of life to know how to insult others or bear insults against oneself."

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may be influenced by the media, which have often portrayed "real" men as domineering and aggressive.

Similarly, many who use denigrating speech were raised in homes where a parent's anger, resentment, and scorn were spewed out on a regular basis. Thus, from an early age, they received the message that this type of behavior is normal.

A child raised in such an environment may pick up more than a pattern of speech; he may also assimilate a distorted view of himself and others. For example, if harsh speech is directed at the child, he may grow up feeling worthless, even provoked to being wrathful. But what if the child simply overhears his father verbally battering his mother? Even if the child is very young, he can absorb his father's contempt for women. A boy may learn from a father's conduct

Tragically, many husbands misuse their power by dominating the woman they may have vowed to love and cherish

that a man needs to be in control of women and that the way to get control is to frighten them or hurt them.

An angry parent may raise an angry child, who in turn may grow up to become "a master of rage" who commits "many a transgression." (Proverbs 29:22, footnote) The legacy of injurious speech can thus be passed on from one generation to the next. With good reason, Paul counseled fathers: "Do not be exasperating your children." (Colossians 3:21) Significantly, the Greek

word translated "exasperating," according to the *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, can carry the sense of "preparing and stirring up for combat."

Of course, parental influence does not excuse lashing out at others, verbally or otherwise; but it does help explain how a tendency toward harsh speech can become deeply ingrained. A young man may not physically abuse his wife, but does he abuse her with his words and his moods? Self-examination may reveal to a person that he has absorbed his father's contempt for women.

Obviously, the above principles can also apply to women. If a mother verbally abuses her husband, a daughter may treat her husband in the same way when she gets married. A Bible proverb says: "It is better to be living in a waste land, than with a bitter-tongued and angry woman." (Proverbs 21:19, *The Bible in Basic English*) Nevertheless, a man needs to be particularly cautious in this matter. Why?

The Power of Oppressors

The husband usually has greater power in a marriage than the wife does. He is almost always physically stronger, making any threats of physical harm all the more terrifying.* Additionally, the man often has better job skills, more independent living skills, and greater financial advantages. Because of this, a verbally battered woman is likely to feel trapped and alone. She may agree with the statement of wise King Solomon: "I myself returned that I might see all the acts of oppression that are being done under the sun, and, look! the tears of those being oppressed, but they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there

* Verbal aggression can be a stepping-stone to domestic violence. (Compare Exodus 21:18.) Says one counselor for battered women: "Every woman who comes for a protective order against the beatings, stabbings, or chokings that endanger her life has had, in addition, a long and painful history of nonphysical abuse."



A child is influenced by the way his parents treat each other

was power, so that they had no comforter." —Ecclesiastes 4:1.

A wife may be confused if her husband vacillates between extremes—courteous one moment, critical the next. (Compare James 3:10.) Furthermore, if her husband is an adequate material provider, a wife who is the target of harsh speech may feel guilty for thinking that something is wrong in the marriage. She may even blame herself for her husband's conduct. "Just like a physically battered wife," confesses one woman, "I always used to think it had something to do with me." Says another wife: "I was led to believe if I would just try harder to understand him and 'be patient' with him I would

find peace." Sadly, the mistreatment often continues.

It is indeed tragic that many husbands misuse their power by dominating the woman they may have vowed to love and cherish. (Genesis 3:16) But what can be done about such a situation? "I don't want to leave," says one wife, "I just want him to stop abusing me." After nine years of marriage, a husband admits: "I realize that I am in a verbally abusive relationship and that I am the abuser. I definitely want to change, not leave."

There is help for those whose marriage has been racked by hurtful speech, as the following article will show.

From Words That Hurt to Words That Heal

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue."

—PROVERBS 18:21.

REVILING—a deliberate practice of using insulting, abusive speech—is clearly condemned in the Bible. Under the Mosaic Law, one who reviled his parents could incur the death penalty. (Exodus 21:17) Thus, Jehovah God does not view the matter lightly. His Word, the Bible, does not support the notion that whatever happens ‘behind closed doors’ is of little consequence as long as one claims to serve God. The Bible states: “If any man seems to himself to be a formal worshiper and yet does not bridle his tongue, but goes on deceiving his own heart, this man’s form of worship is futile.” (James 1:26; Psalm 15:1, 3) So if a man verbally abuses his wife, all of his other Christian works could be rendered useless in God’s eyes.*—1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Furthermore, a Christian who is a reviler could face expulsion from the congregation. He could even lose out on the blessings of God’s Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:9, 10) Clearly, a person who is hurtful with his words needs to make a drastic change. But how can this be accomplished?

Bringing the Problem to Light

Obviously, an offender will not change unless he clearly understands that he has a serious problem. Unfortunately, as one counselor observed, many men who use abusive speech “do not view their behavior as abuse

* Though we refer to the offender as a male, the principles herein apply equally to females.

at all. To these men, such actions are entirely normal and are the ‘natural’ way husbands and wives relate.” Thus, many will not see the need to change until the situation is straightforwardly brought to their attention.

Oftentimes, after prayerfully weighing her situation, the wife will feel compelled to speak up—for her own welfare and that of her children and out of concern for her husband’s standing with God. True, there is always the chance that speaking up may make matters worse and that her words may be met with a volley of denials. Perhaps a wife can circumvent this by giving careful forethought to how she will broach the subject. “As apples of gold in silver carvings is a word spoken at the right time for it,” says the Bible. (Proverbs 25:11) A mild yet frank approach at a calm moment may reach his heart.—Proverbs 15:1.

Instead of making accusations, a wife should try to express herself from the standpoint of how the hurtful speech affects her. “I” statements often work best. For example, ‘I feel hurt because . . .’ or ‘I feel crushed when you say to me . . .’ Such statements are more likely to reach the heart, for they attack the problem rather than the person.—Compare Genesis 27:46-28:1.

• A wife’s firm but tactful intervention can have good results. (Compare Psalm 141:5.) A man we will call Steven found this to be

A Christian elder may be able to help a couple communicate

so. "My wife recognized the abuser in me that I could not see, and had the fortitude to bring it out into the open," he says.

Getting Help

But what can a wife do if her husband refuses to acknowledge the problem? At this point some wives seek outside assistance. In times of such distress, Jehovah's Witnesses can approach their congregation elders. The Bible urges these men to be loving and kind when shepherding the spiritual flock of God and, at the same time, to "reprove those who contradict" the healthful teaching of God's Word. (Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:1-3) While it is not their place to meddle in the personal affairs of married couples, the elders are rightly concerned when one mate is afflicted by the harsh speech of the other. (Proverbs 21:13) Closely adhering to Bible standards, these men do not excuse or minimize abusive speech.*

The elders may be able to facilitate communication between the husband and the wife. For example, one elder was approached by a woman who told of years of verbal battering by her husband, a fellow worshiper. The elder arranged to meet with

* To qualify to serve or to continue serving as an elder, a man is not to be a smiter. He cannot be one who strikes people physically or browbeats them with cutting remarks. Elders and ministerial servants are to preside over their own households in a fine manner. No matter how kindly he may act elsewhere, a man does not qualify if he is a tyrant at home.—1 Timothy 3:2-4, 12.



the two of them. As each one spoke, he asked the other to listen without interrupting. When it was the wife's turn, she said that she could no longer tolerate her husband's explosive anger. For years, she explained, she had a knot in her stomach at the end of each day, never knowing whether he would be in an angry mood when he walked through the door. When he exploded, he would say demeaning things about her family, her friends, and her very person.

The elder asked the wife to explain how her husband's words made her feel. "I felt like I was this bad person whom no one could love," she replied. "I would sometimes ask my mother, 'Mom, am I a difficult person to live with? Am I unlovable?'" As she described how his words made her feel, her husband began to cry. For the first time, he could see how deeply he had been hurting his wife with his words.

You Can Change

Some Christians in the first century had a problem with abusive speech. The Christian



**Husbands and wives
should make a real effort
to understand each other**

apostle Paul admonished them to put away “wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk.” (Colossians 3:8) However, harsh speech is more a problem of the heart than of the tongue. (Luke 6:45) That is why Paul added: “Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality.” (Colossians 3:9, 10) So change involves not only *talking* differently but also *feeling* differently.

A husband who uses injurious speech may need help to determine just what motivates his behavior.* He would want to have the attitude of the psalmist: “Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my disquieting thoughts, and see whether there is in me any painful way.” (Psalm 139:23, 24) For example: Why does he feel the need to dominate, or control, his mate? What triggers a verbal assault?

* Whether a Christian pursues treatment is a personal decision. He should be sure, however, that any treatment he receives does not conflict with Bible principles.

Are his attacks a symptom of deeper resentment? (Proverbs 15:18) Does he suffer from feelings of worthlessness, perhaps resulting from an upbringing that was marked by critical speech? Such questions can help a man uncover the roots of his behavior.

Abusive speech is difficult to uproot, though, especially if it has been inculcated by parents

who themselves were verbally caustic or by a culture that promotes domineering behavior. But anything that is learned can—with time and effort—be *unlearned*. The Bible is the greatest help in this regard. It can assist one to overturn even strongly entrenched behavior. (Compare 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.) How?

Proper View of God-Assigned Roles

Often, men who are verbally injurious have a distorted view of the God-assigned roles for husband and wife. For example, the Bible writer Paul states that wives are to be “in subjection to their husbands” and that “a husband is head of his wife.” (Ephesians 5:22, 23) A husband may feel that headship entitles him to absolute control. But this is not so. His wife, though in subjection, is not his slave. She is his “helper” and “complement.” (Genesis 2:18) Thus, Paul adds: “Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated

his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it, as the Christ also does the congregation.”—Ephesians 5:28, 29.

As head of the Christian congregation, Jesus never berated his disciples, causing them to wonder nervously when the next outburst of criticism would occur. Instead, he was tender, thereby preserving their dignity. “I will refresh you,” he promised them. “I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart.” (Matthew 11:28, 29) Prayerful meditation on how Jesus exercised his headship can help a husband to view his headship in a more balanced light.

When Tensions Arise

Knowing Bible principles is one thing; applying them while under pressure is quite another. When tensions arise, how can a husband avoid slipping back into a pattern of harsh speech?

It is not a sign of manliness for a husband to be verbally aggressive when he is upset. The Bible states: “He that is slow to anger is better than a mighty man, and he that is controlling his spirit than the one capturing a city.” (Proverbs 16:32) A real man controls his spirit. He shows empathy by considering: ‘How do my words affect my wife? How would I feel if I were in her position?’—Compare Matthew 7:12.

The Bible acknowledges, though, that some situations can provoke anger. About such circumstances the psalmist wrote: “Be agitated, but do not sin. Have your say in your heart, upon your bed, and keep silent.” (Psalm 4:4) It has also been stated this way: “There is nothing wrong with being angry, but it is wrong to verbally attack by being sarcastic, humiliating or demeaning.”

If a husband feels that he is losing control of his speech, he can learn to call a time-out. Perhaps it would be wise to leave the room, go for a walk, or find a private place to cool

down. Proverbs 17:14 says: “Before the quarrel has burst forth, take your leave.” Resume the discussion when tempers have settled.

Of course, no one is perfect. A husband who has had a problem with harsh speech may relapse. When this happens, he should apologize. Putting on “the new personality” is a continuing process, but one that reaps large rewards.—Colossians 3:10.

Words That Heal

Yes, “death and life are in the power of the tongue.” (Proverbs 18:21) Hurtful speech must be replaced with words that buildup and strengthen a marriage. A Bible proverb states: “Pleasant sayings are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and a healing to the bones.”—Proverbs 16:24.

Some years ago, a study was conducted to determine what factors caused strong families to function effectively. “The study found that the members of these families liked each other, and kept on telling each other that they liked each other,” reports marital specialist David R. Mace. “They affirmed each other, gave each other a sense of personal worth, and took every reasonable opportunity to speak and act affectionately. The result, very naturally, was that they enjoyed being together and reinforced each other in ways that made their relationships very satisfying.”

No God-fearing husband can truthfully say he loves his wife if he willfully injures her with his words. (Colossians 3:19) Of course, the same would be true of a wife who verbally batters her husband. Really, it is the obligation of both mates to follow Paul’s admonition to the Ephesians: “Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers.”—Ephesians 4:29.

The truth gave me back my life



Most of my former friends
have died from AIDS.

Prior to their deaths, I would
often see them in the streets.

I too would be dead if it had
not been for the truth.

Let me explain.

I WAS born on December 11, 1954, the second and last child of John and Dorothy Horry. They named me Dolores, but at birth Mom called me Dolly because she thought I looked like a baby doll. The nickname stuck, but little did people know then that I would become Mom's worst nightmare.

We lived in a railroad apartment—so named because of its long, narrow design. It was located on 61st Street in New York City. The apartment was not very pleasant; we shared space with rats. However, after I was bitten one night, we were out of there in no time.

In 1957 we moved to the east side of lower Manhattan. Compared to where we had moved from, this was great—nice bedrooms, a huge park outside my window, and a view of the East River. I could watch the boats sailing by and the children playing football and baseball in the park. Yes, this was paradise for me. Then my secure world started to tumble down.

Alcoholism and Drugs

Mom and Dad argued a lot. I didn't understand why at first, but then I started to notice that my dad was drunk all the time. He couldn't hold a job, and Mom was the only one working. When my friends found out that Dad was an alcoholic, the ridicule I received made my life miserable.

Things continued to get worse. Finally, Dad became violent and Mom put him out. So we became a one-parent family. I was about eight or nine, and I felt devastated by our family situation. Mom had to work continually to make ends meet, leaving my sister and me with neighbors after school.

By the sixth grade, I became very rebellious. I would skip classes and go to the nearby Tompkins Square Park and try to drink my little life away. Soon I began run-

ning with a crowd of much older friends. I was only 11 years old, but I was big for my age, so I was able to pass for 16 or 17. This new crowd of friends drank, smoked marijuana, used LSD, and injected heroin. Well, I wanted to fit in, so I started to experiment with these substances. By age 14, I was dependent on them to function.

Mother Finds Out

"I brought you into this world, and I'll take you out." This was a saying of mothers in our neighborhood who had been deeply hurt and disappointed by their children. When Mom, who is usually a very cool and controlled person, found out that her 14-year-old was using heroin, she said she was going to do just that—take me out.

I ran into the bathroom and tried to lock the door by bracing my legs against the tub, but I was too slow. I was really in trouble now! Needless to say, I received the beating of my life. The only thing that saved me from Mom's anger was that my sister and the person who had told on me were able to get into the bathroom and hold my mother so I could escape from the apartment. When I finally returned home—I had run away for a few days—I agreed to get some help for my drug problem.

Getting Professional Help

A few months later, I saw a commercial on TV about a drug rehabilitation facility. It is a place where people who really want help to overcome their drug problems can get it. I discussed what I saw with Mom, and she sent me to one of their locations in New York City. The facility provides a familylike atmosphere where people receive motivation to change their entire life-style. I lived there for about two-and-a-half years.

Although I benefited from the help provided, I was deeply disappointed when I learned that some staff members whom I

trusted and respected—and who were supposed to have quit using drugs—were back on them again. I felt betrayed and foolish. They had taught us that the old saying, "Once an addict, always an addict," was a lie. But I now viewed them as living proof that it wasn't.

Nevertheless, at age 17, I returned home drug free and determined to do my best never to use heroin again. In the meantime, my mother and sister had started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Still the Black Sheep of the Family

Even though I had stopped using drugs, I still felt like the black sheep of the family. This is because I wasn't ready to live by the new rules of the household, which included no smoking, no partying at discos, and so forth. It wasn't long before Mom put me out of the apartment because I refused to change my associations and my worldly attitude. I really hated her for this, but actually it was the best thing she could have done for me. She stood her ground on righteous principles and never wavered.

So I left to make a new and better life for myself. I returned to school to learn a trade to help finance my way through college. I did quite well and was accepted back into society. I got a good job and my own apartment. Then romance entered the picture when I met an old boyfriend. We renewed our relationship and intended to do things right and get married.

Eventually, however, my boyfriend began using drugs, and things started to go downhill for both of us. Unable to bear the emotional pain, I did what I knew best—I medicated my feelings. I became involved with cocaine, which provided what was called the rich man's high. Cocaine was accepted then because many did not consider it addictive. But for me it proved to be worse than heroin.

During the mid-1970's, I was on cocaine for about three years. Finally, I started to see the vicious circle I was in, and I began to wonder, 'Is this all there is to life?' I figured that if it was, then I was tired of it. I went back to Mom and told her that I had had enough and that I was returning to the rehabilitation center. After another year and a half there, I was again drug free.

I Almost Found the Truth

Again I got a good job and found a nice apartment and a boyfriend. We became engaged. Meanwhile, Mom kept in touch with me on a regular basis. She would talk to me about the Bible and send me *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, but I never looked at them. I told Mom about my plans to marry and raise a family. So she sent me a book that changed my life forever—*Making Your Family Life Happy*.

As I read this book, I knew what I wanted and that I had been going about getting it in the wrong way. Finally, someone understood how I felt and what was really in my heart. I was not a strange person for having the feelings I had—I was normal! However, the person I was involved with laughed at me when I tried to show him the *Family Life* book and the Bible. He wouldn't make the changes necessary to enjoy a happy family life. So I had a hard decision to make—to stay or to leave. I decided that it was time to move on.

My boyfriend was enraged. When I returned home one day, I found that he had cut all my clothes to shreds with a razor. Almost everything I owned was gone—shoes, coats, furniture—it was either ripped up or sold. All I had left were the clothes on my back. I wanted to lie down and die. Sometimes in life you get tired of the struggle. So you go back to doing what you have always done to cope—you medicate the feelings. I figured it was either that or suicide.

Even though I returned to drugs again, Mom never gave up on me. She would visit me and bring copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* One evening during a conversation, I told her how I felt—that I was tired of trying and that I was at my wit's end. She said simply: "You've tried everything else, why not give Jehovah a try?"

Saved by the Truth

It was in 1982 that I agreed to do what she had been urging me to do for years. I started to study the Bible seriously. Soon I became excited about the things I was learning. I began to appreciate that my life is very precious to Jehovah and that there is a real purpose to life. But I realized that if I was going to serve Jehovah, I had a lot of changing to do and that I needed support emotionally and spiritually. So I asked Mom if I could move back home.

Mom was wary, since I had so often disappointed her. She spoke with a Christian elder regarding my request to move back in with her. When he sensed that Mom felt that there was a good possibility I might really change this time, he urged: "Why not give her another chance?"

Thankfully, this time I didn't disappoint Mom. I continued to study the Bible and began to attend Christian meetings regularly. With the help of Jehovah, I turned my life around. The advice provided by the Bible, God's Word of truth, enabled me to make it through hard times. (John 17:17) I even quit smoking cigarettes, an addiction that was harder for me to overcome than addiction to heroin and cocaine. For once I really felt glad to be alive.

A few months later, on December 24, 1983, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. The following April, I began to auxiliary pioneer, a form of increased ministry. At first, my former associates made fun of me when they saw me in

the ministry. It was just as the apostle Peter forewarned: "Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you."—1 Peter 4:4.

In September 1984, I became a regular pioneer, and soon I was conducting ten weekly Bible studies. Some of these studies were with people who had ridiculed me when I first started in the ministry. This was a very exciting time in my life because I was able to help a number of youths embrace Bible truth. I had always wanted children, so to become a mother, as it were, to spiritual children has been a source of constant joy to me.—Compare 1 Corinthians 4:15.

As the years passed, I would see on the streets near our home former friends with whom I had once done drugs. As a result of sharing needles with infected persons, they had contracted AIDS and looked awful. Many have since died. I know that I too would probably be dead if it had not been for Bible truth. In effect, it has given me back my life.

Avoid the Pain

I often wish that as a child I had known the truth and avoided a life full of pain and misery. Jehovah now helps me deal with the pains resulting from a misspent youth, but I'll have to wait until the new system for a total healing of the emotional scars. (Revelation 21:3, 4) Today I try very hard to tell young ones that they are blessed to know Jehovah and to have the help of his organization to apply what he is teaching.

The world may appear to be glamorous and inviting. And it wants you to believe that you can have its form of fun without pain. But this simply isn't possible. The



With my mother, witnessing in Tompkins Square Park

world will use you, and when it is through, it will throw you away. The Bible truthfully says that the Devil is the ruler of the world—indeed its god—and that we should be loving neither the world nor the things in it. (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:19) Since worldly people are existing as slaves of corruption, their company cannot bring you true happiness.—2 Peter 2:19.

My hope is that relating these things about myself will help others see that "the real life"—everlasting life in God's new world—is the only worthwhile life for which to strive. No matter what ups and downs we may experience as we walk in the truth, the grass on the other side of the fence, in Satan's world, is not greener. Satan just tries to make it look that way. I pray that, along with all my Christian brothers and sisters, I may keep my eyes focused on the real life, yes, on everlasting life in the Paradise earth. (1 Timothy 6:19)—*As told by Dolly Horry.*

Akee

Jamaica's National Dish

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN JAMAICA

IT IS Sunday morning on the Caribbean island of Jamaica. "Breakfast is served," announces the cheerful hostess to her foreign visitor.

"I see we are having scrambled eggs for breakfast," the visitor says.

"Oh no," answers the housewife, "that is akee and salt fish. Taste it."

"It is delicious," her visitor responds. "But it certainly looks like scrambled eggs! What is akee? Is it a fruit or a vegetable?"

"That is an old question," replies the



housewife. "Botanically, akee is regarded as a fruit, but on the dining table, it is considered by many to be a vegetable."

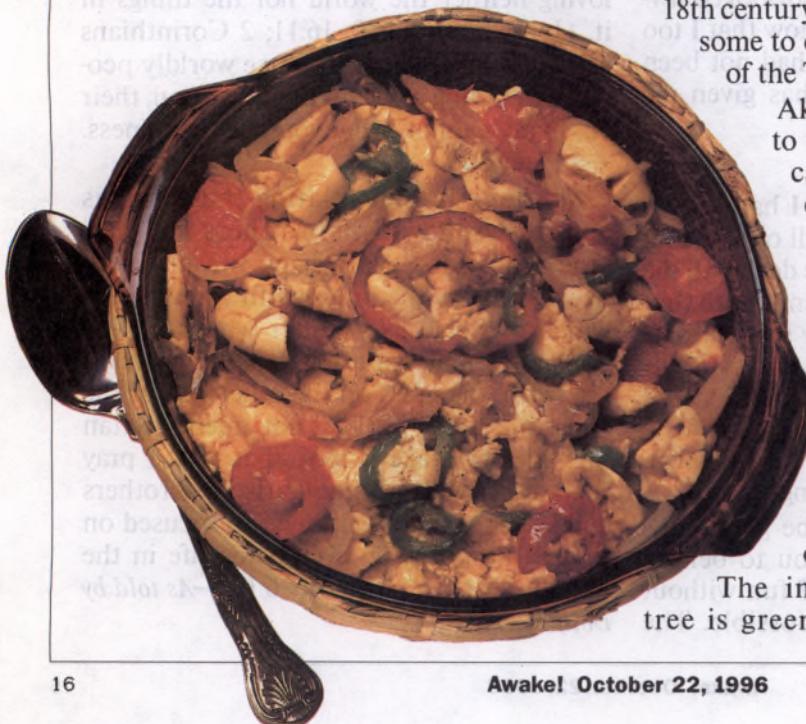
Let us tell you more about akee.

An Appreciated Tree

The akee tree originated in West Africa. According to the book *A-Z of Jamaican Heritage*, by Olive Senior, the first plants reached Jamaica when they were purchased from the captain of a slave ship in the 18th century. The name akee is believed by some to originate from the word *ankye* of the Twi language of Ghana.

Akee trees are big, reaching up to about 50 feet in height. They can be found all over Jamaica, and their fruit is eaten by all classes of people. The dish prepared with akee is fondly called Jamaica's national dish. Akee is usually mixed with imported salted codfish in a sauce of onions, peppers, and other seasonings. When the salted cod is not available, akee is eaten with other fish or meats or by itself.

The immature fruit of the akee tree is greenish in color, but as it ma-



Fruit of the akee tree

tures it takes on a bright reddish color. When fully mature, the fruit bursts open and is ready to be picked. When the fruit opens, three arils are exposed, each of which has a black seed attached to the top. The cream-colored arils are the parts that are actually eaten after the black seeds and the reddish substance in the center of the arils are removed.



When a Source of Danger

Occasionally there have been incidents of food poisoning—especially in children—that have been associated with the eating of akee. Investigations have pinpointed the cause to be the eating of immature fruit. Research has confirmed that before the fruit bursts open, it contains hypoglycin, an amino acid.

Biochemists have discovered that hypoglycin interferes with the breakdown of fatty acids. This can lead to a buildup in the blood of various short chain acids, causing drowsiness and coma. Hypoglycin also blocks the production of blood glucose, which is vital to metabolism.

Findings indicate that the hypoglycin in akees is dissolved when unopened fruits are cooked. Therefore, the water in which akee is cooked should be discarded and should not be used to cook any other food. Warnings about the danger of eating or cooking immature akees have been given from time to time by the Department of Public Health.

Most lovers of akee say that they have eaten it all their lives and have never suffered harmful effects. So some may deny that akee can be dangerous.

Popularity Growing

In spite of the periodic reports of poisonings, akee and salt fish is growing in popularity as a Jamaican meal. Yet, the partnership has come under threat, as the price of imported codfish has increased dramatically in recent years. But akee can be prepared with other kinds of fish and meats, so the majority of people will probably not abandon this national dish of Jamaica.

If your interest in akee has been stirred, you may not have to visit here to sample it because it has become a popular export. Yes, akee is canned and shipped to other countries, especially lands to which large numbers of Jamaicans have immigrated. So if you see canned akee in your country or if you pay a visit to Jamaica, try eating some akee and salt fish. Who knows? You too may fall in love with its unique taste!

**Young
People
Ask...**



Why Does God Let Bad Things Happen?

LIDIJA was a mere teenager when war erupted in her homeland—the country formerly known as Yugoslavia. “I spent many days and nights in a dark shelter,” she recalls. “Often I was tempted to run outside, even if it would mean getting killed! Before the war, you had all you wanted, but now you were happy just to be alive.”

The stresses and strains of war soon took their toll on Lidija spiritually. She says: “We could not go in the preaching work or to the meetings for weeks. I really thought that Jehovah was neglecting us. I would ask myself, ‘Why is he not helping us now?’”

Wars, crime, violence, disease, disasters, accidents—bad things like these can happen even to young ones. And when tragedy strikes close to home, you may naturally wonder, ‘Why does God let these bad things happen?’

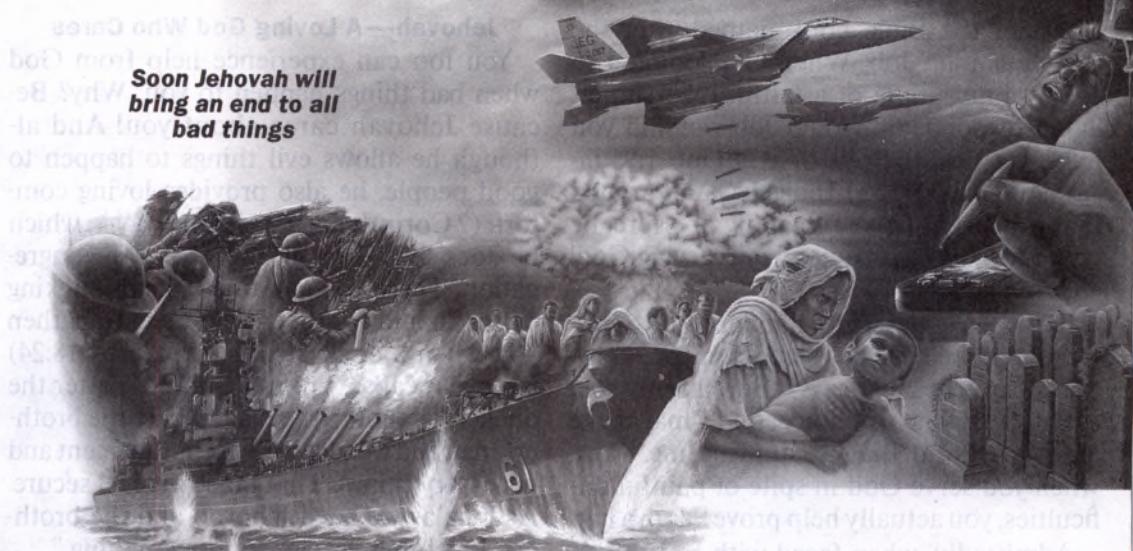
Men of God in times past asked questions like that. When the prophet Habakkuk, for example, saw the despicable state of affairs that existed among God’s people, he lamented: “How long, O Jehovah, must I cry for help, and you do not hear? How long shall I call to you for aid from violence, and you do not save? Why is it that you make me see what is hurtful, and you keep looking upon mere trouble?” (Habakkuk 1:2, 3) Some Christian youths today experience similar emotional distress.

Consider how one young Christian felt after the unexpected death of her father. She says: “I went berserk, screaming out of the window, yelling at Jehovah God. . . . I blamed him for everything. How could this happen? Dad was a great father and a loving husband, and now this happens—doesn’t Jehovah care?” In a situation like this, it is only normal to feel some confusion, hurt, or even anger. Remember, the faithful prophet Habakkuk also was troubled that wickedness was allowed to exist. Nevertheless, if a person continues to nurture bitter feelings, there is a danger. He could become “enraged against Jehovah himself.”—Proverbs 19:3.

How, then, can you avoid giving in to feelings of rage and bitterness? First, you must understand where evil comes from.

Bad Things Do Not Come From God

The Bible makes it clear that God never intended that we suffer this way. He placed the original couple in a paradise home that was free from pain and suffering. (Genesis 1:28) No doubt you well know how things went wrong: An invisible spirit creature, who came to be known as the Devil and Satan, in-



Soon Jehovah will bring an end to all bad things

duced Adam and Eve to disobey God. (Genesis, chapter 3; Revelation 12:9) By doing this, Adam condemned all his offspring to sin and its devastating effects.—Romans 5:12.

Clearly, it was not God who brought evil upon mankind, but man himself. (Deuteronomy 32:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29) Indeed, all the bad things that people suffer today—the sickness, the death, the wars, the injustices—resulted from Adam's willful act of disobedience. Furthermore, we are all subject to what the Bible calls "time and unforeseen occurrence." (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Both the wicked and the righteous experience freak accidents and tragedies.

God's Permission of Wickedness

While it is comforting to know that God is not the source of wickedness, you may still wonder, 'Why does he allow wickedness to continue?' Again, this goes back to issues raised in Eden. God told Adam that if he disobeyed, he would die. (Genesis 2:17) The Devil, though, told Eve that if she ate from the forbidden tree, she would *not* die! (Gen-

esis 3:1-5) In effect, Satan called God a liar. Furthermore, Satan implied that man would be better off if he made his own decisions and didn't have God telling him what to do!

God could not ignore these charges. Have you ever seen a classmate challenge a teacher's authority? If the teacher lets him get away with it, other students start acting up too. In a similar way, universal chaos could have erupted had Jehovah not met Satan's challenge head-on. Jehovah did that by allowing man to follow Satan's way of doing things. Has man come to enjoy the godlike independence that Satan promised? No. Satan's rule has brought havoc and misery, proving him to be a vicious liar!

Will God allow wickedness to go on forever? No. To settle the issues Satan raised, God will soon bring an end to all wickedness. (Psalm 37:10) But how are we to cope in the meantime?

An Issue That Involves You

Realize, first of all, that this issue between God and Satan involves *you*! How so?

Consider the Bible book named after the righteous man Job. When God pointed to Job as an example of a faithful worshiper, Satan responded: "Would Job worship you if he got nothing out of it?" (Job 1:9, *Today's English Version*) Indeed, Satan argued that if he was allowed to apply pressure, he could turn *any* man away from serving God! —Job 2:4, 5.

Satan has therefore slandered all God-fearing people. He has slandered you. However, Proverbs 27:11 says: "Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me." Yes, when you serve God in spite of painful difficulties, you actually help prove Satan a liar!

Admittedly, when faced with bad things, it is not easy to think of the issues involved. Diane, who was only ten years old when her mother died, says: "I feared that I would become hardened or bitter because of trials in my life." However, knowing why God has permitted wickedness has helped her to gain a healthy view of her problems. She now says: "Even though there are things difficult to deal with in my life, Jehovah's hand has always been with me."

Diane reminds us of a very important fact: Jehovah does not expect us to cope with these pressures on our own. Psalm 55:22 assures us: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter." Young Kotoyo found this to be true. She faced tragedy when her parents were killed in the 1995 earthquake that struck Kobe, Japan. Speaking for herself and her younger siblings, she says: "Since my mother taught us to rely on Jehovah, we can endure."

What about Lidija, the young girl mentioned at the outset? In time, she came to realize that Jehovah had not abandoned her at all. She now says: "Jehovah was always there for us. He led us and directed our steps."

Jehovah—A Loving God Who Cares

You too can experience help from God when bad things happen to you. Why? Because Jehovah cares about you! And although he allows evil things to happen to good people, he also provides loving comfort. (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4) One way in which he does so is through the Christian congregation. There you can find 'friends sticking closer than a brother,' who can strengthen you when a crisis strikes. (Proverbs 18:24) Kotoyo recalls: "From the first day after the quake, we went to the place where the brothers met, and we received encouragement and necessary things. That made me feel secure. As long as we have Jehovah and the brothers, I feel that we can endure anything."

Because Jehovah knows you as an individual, he can also take care of your needs when bad things happen. Daniel reflects on how he has coped with the loss of his father, saying: "Jehovah becomes a father to you, and his organization provides spiritual men as role models. Jehovah always provides answers to questions I have that I would have naturally discussed with my dad." Diane has similarly experienced Jehovah's loving care since the death of her mother. She says: "Through older, spiritually mature ones who have provided encouragement, direction, and counsel, he has guided me and helped me to cope with any discouragement."

Of course, experiencing bad things is never pleasant. But take comfort in knowing *why* God permits such things. Constantly remind yourself that God will remedy the problem very soon. Why, all traces of the bad things we have experienced will eventually be erased! (Isaiah 65:17; 1 John 3:8) By taking advantage of all the provisions God makes to help us cope, you can do your part in proving Satan a liar. In time, 'God will wipe out every tear from your eyes.'—Revelation 21:3, 4. better life soon no bid not end

CIGARETTES

Do You Reject Them?

*A nation that helped introduce tobacco
to the world is taking the lead
in warning of its dangers.*

TOBACCO," a historian wrote, "has no literal history prior to the discovery of America." Natives in the Caribbean offered it to Columbus. Its export ensured the survival of Jamestown, the first permanent British settlement in North America. Its sale helped finance the American Revolution. And the early U.S. presidents George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were tobacco growers.

In more recent times, Hollywood used cigarettes as a symbol of romance, charm, and manhood. American soldiers gave them to people they met in countries where they fought. And it is said that following the second world war, cigarettes were currency "from Paris to Peking."

But things changed. On January 11, 1964, the U.S. surgeon general released a 387-page report linking smoking with emphysema, lung cancer, and other serious diseases. Soon

federal law required the warning "Caution: Cigarette Smoking May Be Hazardous to Your Health" on all cigarette packages sold in the United States. Now, smoking is said to be responsible for an estimated 434,000 deaths a year in the United States. That is more than the number of all the Americans killed in battle during the past century!

Restrictions Imposed

Over ten years ago, Aspen, Colorado, a popular winter resort, prohibited smoking in its restaurants. Since then, nonsmoking sections have become more common in restaurants, the workplace, and other public places. Several years ago, a Californian asked his daughter where the nonsmoking section was in a Virginia restaurant. "Dad," she replied, "this is tobacco country!" By the time of his next visit, half of that restaurant had been reserved for nonsmokers. Recently, he saw no one smoking there.

It has been "estimated that during the 1990s in developed countries, tobacco will cause approximately 30 percent of all deaths among those 35 to 69 years of age, making it the largest single cause of premature death in the developed world."

—NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE

CANCER WARNINGS

The following warnings are from the American Cancer Society's brochures *Facts on Lung Cancer* and *Cancer Facts & Figures —1995*:

- "Nonsmoking wives have a 35% higher risk of lung cancer if their husbands smoke."
- "An estimated 90% of lung cancer cases in men and 79% in women are caused by cigarette smoking."
- "For a 2-pack a day smoker who has smoked over 40 years, the lung cancer mortality rate is about 22 times higher than a nonsmoker."
- "The best safeguard against lung cancer is never to start to smoke, or to stop immediately."
- "There is no such thing as a safe cigarette."
- "The use of chewing tobacco or snuff increases risk of cancer of the mouth, larynx, throat, and esophagus and is a highly addictive habit."
- "The excess risk of cancer of the cheek and gum may reach nearly fiftyfold among long-term snuff users."
- "People who quit smoking, regardless of age, live longer than people who continue to smoke. Smokers who quit before age 50 have half the risk of dying in the next 15 years compared with those who continue to smoke."



But having separate sections for smokers has not solved the problem. Large state-sponsored billboards along major California highways asked: "Do you think smoke knows how to stay in the smoking section?"

When New York City banned smoking in its larger restaurants, owners protested that this would alienate tourists from Europe

where, they said, few regulations govern smoking. Yet, an earlier survey had found that 56 percent of Americans would be *more* likely to go to a nonsmoking restaurant, while only 26 percent would be less inclined to do so.

A sign in New York City's subway cars says: "In any language the message is the same: No smoking anytime, anywhere, in our stations or on our trains. Thank you." The sign states this message not just in English but also in 15 other languages.

Is the matter really that serious? Yes. If 300 people were to die in a major catastrophe, it would be on the news for days, perhaps even weeks. But an article in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* said it has been estimated that 53,000 Americans die each year from the long-term results of breathing the smoke of *other* people's cigarettes. That, it said, would make breathing such secondhand, or environmental, tobacco smoke "the third leading preventable cause of death, after active smoking and alcohol."

Children—Defenseless Victims

What about smoking in the home? *Healthy People 2000*, a U.S. government publication that set goals for reducing "premature death and needless disease and disability," said: "Tobacco use is responsible for more than one of every six deaths in the United States and is the most important single preventable cause of death and disease in our society."

It added: "Cigarette smoking during pregnancy accounts for 20 to 30 percent of low birth weight babies, up to 14 percent of preterm deliveries, and about 10 percent of all infant deaths." Mothers who smoke, it said, can pass on the constituents of tobacco smoke, not only by breast-



Smoke doesn't stay in the smoking section

feeding the infant or by smoking around the infant but also by "putting the infant in a room where smoking occurred recently."

Fathers too are involved. The same publication advised: "If people who have contact with children must smoke, they should smoke outdoors or in areas that do not contribute air to places where the child might be." The risk increases with the number of adults smoking in the same room and with the number of cigarettes smoked. Thus, Joycelyn Elders, former U.S. sur-

Smoking during pregnancy accounts for about 10 percent of all infant deaths



geon general, said: "Your children are the innocent victims of your addictions."

Other people are also at risk. A state-sponsored television commercial in California showed an old man sitting alone. He said that his wife was always 'getting on his case' about smoking. "She even threatened to stop kissing me if I didn't quit. I said it's my lungs, and it's my life. But I was wrong. I didn't quit. I had no idea the life I'd lose wasn't mine . . . It was hers." Looking sadly at her picture, the old man added: "My wife was my life."

THE FARMER'S DILEMMA

For generations tobacco has supported families whose farms are too small to provide a living wage with any other crop. This fact obviously presents a conscience problem for many people. Stanley Hauerwas, professor of theological ethics at Duke University, a school that was founded by a tobacco baron, said: "I think the great agony of people who grow tobacco is . . . when they started growing it, they didn't know it would kill anyone."



Changed View

Such warnings have contributed to a major decline in smoking in the United States. Amazingly, an estimated 46 million Americans—49.6 percent of those who ever smoked—have quit!

However, tobacco companies have huge advertising budgets and are fighting back. The decrease in smoking has slowed. Joseph A. Califano, Jr., of the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at New York's Columbia University, said: "The biggest threat to the public health from the tobacco industry [is] its use of advertising and marketing aimed at children and teenagers who represent a fresh crop of addicts to its deadly products."

The Journal of the American Medical Association said: "An estimated 3000 young people, mostly children and adolescents, become regular smokers each day. This represents about 1 million new smokers each year who partially replace the approximate 2 million smokers who either quit or die each year."

More than half of all U.S. smokers start by the age of 14. David Kessler, commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administra-

tion, said that of the 3,000 children who begin smoking each day, almost 1,000 will eventually die from smoking-related illnesses.

If such figures trouble you, it would be well to remember that our children follow our example. If we don't want them to smoke, we must not do so either.

Overseas Sales

Although U.S. cigarette consumption has fallen, the foreign market grows. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that "exports have more than tripled and sales from U.S. tobacco plants abroad have surged." *The New England Journal of Medicine* said that in developing countries "little emphasis is placed on the hazards of smoking," allowing tobacco companies "to penetrate foreign markets rapidly."

Yet, Patrick Reynolds, son of R. J. Reynolds, Jr., and descendant of the founder of the company that produces Camel and Winston cigarettes, said that 1 out of 5 deaths in the United States is due to smoking. Reynolds was also reported as saying that smoking causes more deaths annually than cocaine, alcohol, heroin, fire, suicide, homicide, AIDS, and auto accidents *combined* and that it is the single most preventable cause of death, disease, and addiction in our era.

Does it seem strange that the nation that helped the world learn to smoke has developed a growing national opposition to tobacco? If so, it might be well to ask ourselves, 'Who best should know?'

Modern Maturity magazine told of a woman who had smoked for more than 50 years. She said: "When you are hooked, you are hooked." But she got rid of the mystique that had started her smoking in the first place, analyzed her excuses for continuing, and quit.

"Try it," she wrote. "It feels wonderful."

They Still Work the Land With **H O R S E S**

BY *AWAKE!* CORRESPONDENT IN AUSTRALIA

IN THIS age of high technology, some may find it hard to believe that there are farmers who still work their land with horses. But there are places where teams of husky draft horses are used instead of tractors.

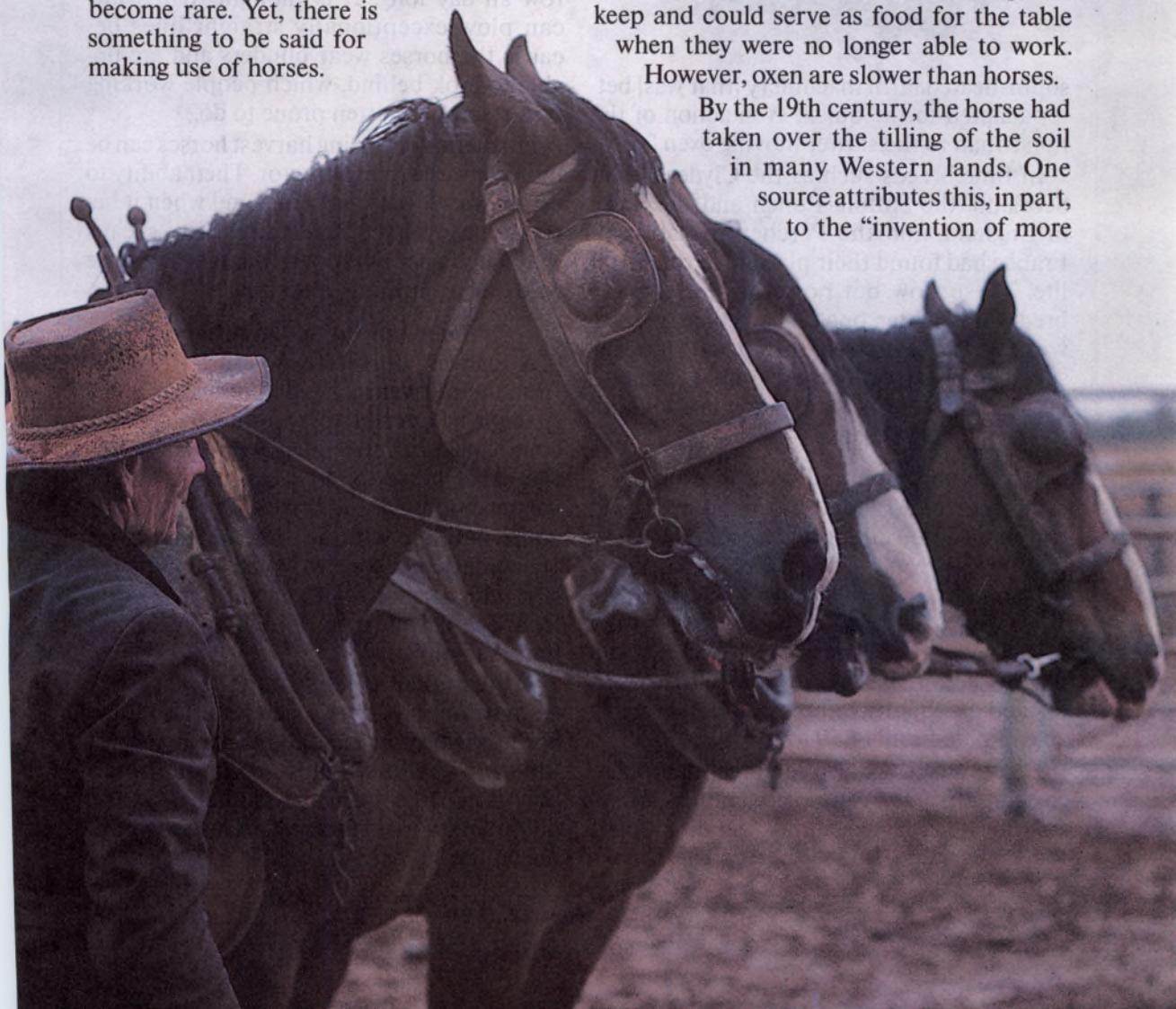
Admittedly, horse-worked farms have become rare. Yet, there is something to be said for making use of horses.

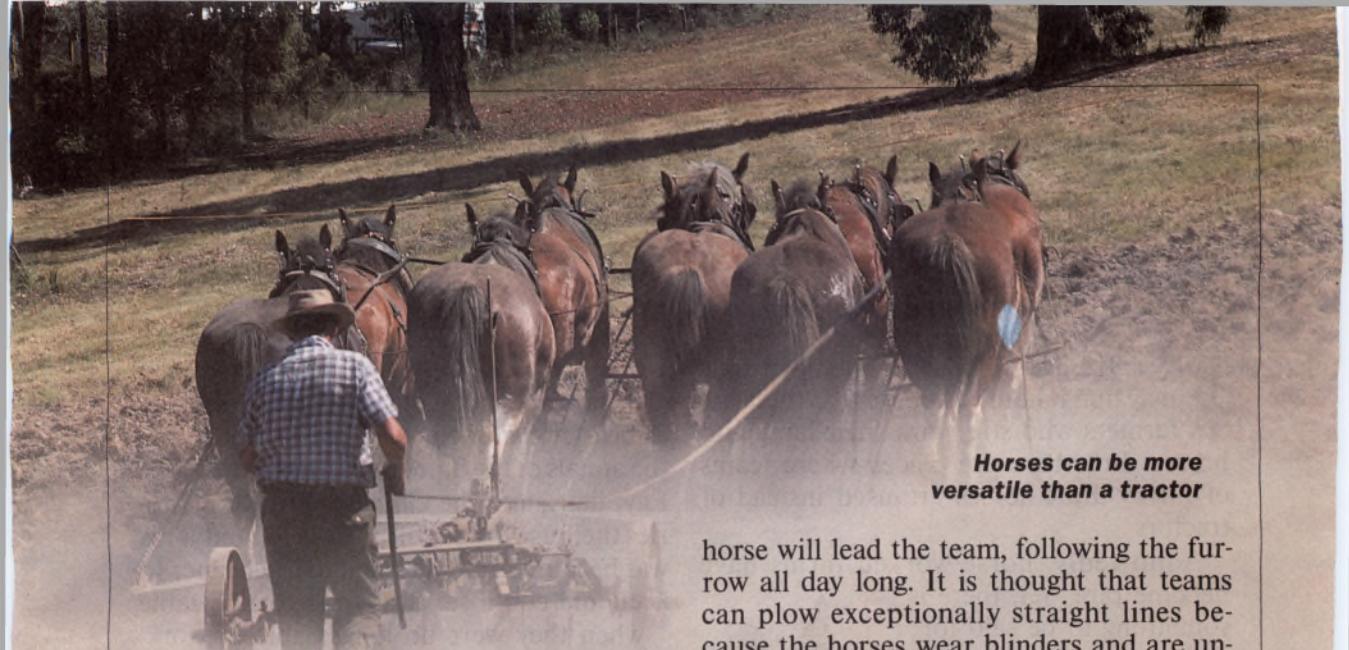
Use in Agriculture

From early times horses have been used as beasts of burden. They are mentioned in the annals of the Sumerians, the Hittites, the Egyptians, and the Chinese. But for centuries their use in agriculture was limited. This was because oxen were said to be cheaper to keep and could serve as food for the table when they were no longer able to work.

However, oxen are slower than horses.

By the 19th century, the horse had taken over the tilling of the soil in many Western lands. One source attributes this, in part, to the "invention of more





Horses can be more versatile than a tractor

sophisticated farm machinery [that was] better adapted to the quick, even action of the horse than to the slower-moving oxen."

In time breeds such as the Clydesdale in Scotland, the Suffolk Punch and the Shire in England, and the Percheron mainly in France had found their place in agricultural life. These slow but powerful horses were bred with lighter ones to produce a horse with a little less strength but with greater speed. Such specially bred animals came to be called draft horses, referring to their ability to pull heavy loads.

Horse Compared With Tractor

Of course, no horse has been bred that can equal the pulling power of a modern tractor. But you may be surprised to know how much strength horses have! In 1890, two Clydesdale draft horses pulled a fully loaded wagon with its wheels locked! And in 1924 a pair of English Shire horses performed an equally impressive feat, exerting an estimated pull of 50 tons!

Draft horses are also intelligent and exercise initiative. For example, a team of horses plowing a field needs almost no direction if there is a good furrow horse. The furrow

horse will lead the team, following the furrow all day long. It is thought that teams can plow exceptionally straight lines because the horses wear blinders and are unable to look behind, which people working on a tractor are often prone to do.

Furthermore, during harvest horses can be more versatile than a tractor. Their ability to do an *exact* 90-degree turn—and when it becomes necessary, a 180-degree turn—means that they do not miss covering any part of the field during farming operations.

Teams of Horses in Action

A team of horses responding to orders from their driver makes an impressive sight. A team is trained to respond to specific commands with specific maneuvers, though the exact language and expressions used vary according to the driver. The horses become familiar with an individual driver's vocabulary and tone of voice. A characteristic whistle, along with encouraging words from the driver, may be the signal for the horses to move off.

In Australia the horse on the right of the team (from the driver's viewpoint) is known as the offside horse and the horse on the left, the nearside horse. This designation probably originated from the manner in which old-timers worked their teams, usually walking on the left side.

How exciting it is to watch a line of ten horses as they execute a 90-degree turn, reacting to the calls of the driver! To turn left, the nearside horse must take small steps backward, while the rest of the team march in a quarter circle around him. Then, if the turn is to be made to the right, the off-side horse must take small steps backward. In drier climates it is quite a sight to see the team disappear in a cloud of dust and then reappear as a wall of pounding horseflesh after the turn is completed!

Each horse is known by its name and responds to it according to the tone of voice used by the teamster. If one horse slacks off, a sharp, reproofing tone in the use of its name is usually all that is needed. In early training the horses often have to learn that such a tone is accompanied by the flick of a stick or a whip. Once that lesson is learned, however, the stronger discipline is rarely, if ever, needed.

A Typical Workday

A farmer may rise about five in the morning to feed the horses and have his own breakfast while the horses are feeding. The horses learn to drink well before the day's work starts because they will get nothing else to drink before lunch. Each horse is brushed down before being harnessed. This prevents irritation to the skin and is a pleasant sensation. Usually the horses crowd around and patiently await their turn. Then, they are harnessed and yoked together. All of this can take up to an hour or more, depending on the size of the team. Also, nose bags are prepared for the horses' midday meal. After all, the driver is not the only one who deserves a lunch break!

The team toils uncomplainingly for eight or ten hours, and if collars and equipment fit well, the horses will not finish the day with sore, chafed shoulders. As evening starts to fall, man and beast are glad to head

for the homestead to enjoy a quiet feed, a long drink, and a good rest.

Those who still work their land with horses may be quick to say that this is far more enjoyable than listening to the roar of machinery all day long. The serenity makes a farmer feel a part of the land. He is able to notice more closely the creation around him—the sound of birds scratching as they inspect the freshly turned soil in the plowed furrows; the smell of damp grass; the crackling of the frost as the plow knives through the chilled earth on a cold morning—little things that tend to go unnoticed when the farmer is bombarded by the noise of a tractor.

True, tractors can work 24 hours a day, which is a feat not possible for horses. It is also true that tractors can work more land and that they require less maintenance. But no tractor ever produced an adorable little one, and this is just one of the pleasures that makes working with horses incomparable. The teamster can also enjoy a "conversation" with his horses as they work. And they answer by their obedience, with their ears pricked forward to catch his every word.

Farming is hard and, at times, tedious work. But for those who still plow their fields the old-fashioned way, with horses, there can be joys aplenty from working so closely with these sinewy, hardworking animals of God's creation.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**False Religion
Rides to Its Destruction!**

**We Were Hostages
During a Prison Uprising**

Whose Guidance Can You Trust?

WATCHING THE WORLD

Tobacco and Jobs

"Reductions in spending on tobacco products will boost employment" in some areas of the United States, says a report in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*. Computer projections were used to show how funds previously spent on tobacco might be spent on other things, with a net increase in jobs nationwide. The report also states that tobacco-growing regions would not lose as many jobs as the tobacco industry estimates. "The primary concern about tobacco should be the enormity of its toll on health and not its impact on employment," states the report. The American Medical Association also called on stock market investors to sell their shares in 13 tobacco companies, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Scott Ballin, of the American Heart Association, stated: "We should not be supporting companies that continue to sell disease and death in this country and overseas."

World's Tallest Buildings

For the first time in over a century, the world's tallest building is not to be found in the United States. The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, the international arbiter of skyscrapers, has awarded that distinction to the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The previous record holder, the Sears Tower in Chicago, is still tallest if its television towers are included. The council, however, decided that those towers are not integral to

the building's architecture. The construction of tall buildings in various countries in Asia is viewed by supporters as a symbol of the astonishing economic growth in that area. In fact, the Petronas Twin Towers are due to lose their lofty title to the World Financial Center, scheduled to be completed in Shanghai, China, by the end of the decade.

Seabird Rescue?

When a major oil spill occurs at sea close to land, the effect on wildlife can be tragic. Sometimes organizations—many staffed by volunteer workers—jump into action to do what they can. One of the



first priorities is to clean oil-covered seabirds. But how effective and lasting is this? Modern research indicates that of the many thousands cleaned and returned to their habitat, most die within ten days. Why? Aside from the shock of human handling, the birds will have ingested some oil when trying to preen, and this will eventually kill them. To counteract this, birds handled in Britain are fed a mixture of kaolin, charcoal, and glucose in an endeavor to purge them of the toxins. Even so, very few birds live long

enough to breed, and the cleaning must be viewed as something of a "cosmetic exercise," concludes one ecologist quoted by *The Sunday Times* of London.

Type-C Hepatitis and Blood

A report by the French National Network of Public Health concludes that "between 500,000 and 600,000 people in France have been infected by the hepatitis-C virus." According to the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*, 60 percent of the infections by the type-C hepatitis virus are due to blood transfusions or intravenous drug use. In addition, some people have been contaminated during medical treatment through improperly sterilized equipment. Type-C hepatitis can lead to cirrhosis or cancer of the liver.

When You Quit Smoking

Within 20 minutes after a person quits smoking, the body begins to change for the better. *Reader's Digest* published the following list of beneficial changes that occur at specified times after a smoker quits. Twenty minutes: Blood pressure and pulse rate drop to normal; temperature of hands and feet increases to normal. Eight hours: Carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal; oxygen level in blood increases to normal. Twenty-four hours: Possibility of heart attack decreases. Forty-eight hours: Nerve endings start regrowing; ability to taste and smell is enhanced; walking becomes easier. Two weeks to

three months: Circulation improves; lung function increases up to 30 percent. One to nine months: Coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath decrease; lung cilia regrow. One year: Risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker.

Sex and Violence From the Library

Some libraries in Connecticut, U.S.A., allow children to check out movies portraying lovemaking and graphic violence, according to *The Advocate*, of Stamford, Connecticut. At times, children have free access to library computers that are connected to the Internet. This raises further questions about what material is available to youngsters. Many parents expressed shock, but library officials took the position that only parents have the right and the responsibility to monitor what their children take out of the library. "It's a sticky situation," commented librarian Renee Pease, noting that "a lot of fiction may not be appropriate for children."

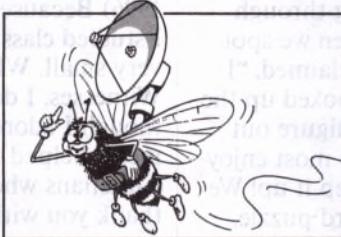
Female Mutilation

A young African woman who received asylum in the United States has drawn renewed attention to female genital mutilation, reports *The New York Times*. The woman stated that she was fleeing mutilation as a condition of a coerced marriage. In many African countries, parts of a girl's genitals are cut off, either in infancy or as initiation into womanhood. This is often performed without any anesthesia or hygienic precautions. Aside from

the emotional toll, the results can be infection, hemorrhage, infertility, and death. (See the April 8, 1993, issue of *Awake!*, pages 20-4.) According to the newspaper, it is estimated that from 80 million to 115 million women have been subjected to this practice. Action has been taken to make it illegal in the United States.

Tracking Honeybees

The world's tiniest radar antennas, only 5/8 inch high, have been glued to the backs of some British bees. The antennas are devices that allow the bees to be tracked. It is hoped that the experiment will lead to even smaller antennas,



which would eventually be attached to African tsetse flies to monitor the insects' flight patterns. This could improve control of the sleeping sickness these flies carry. No batteries are needed to power the antennas, as they have the ability to pick up all the energy they need from the incoming tracking signals. As an added benefit, scientists hope to improve their knowledge of the habits of bees, with a view to locating beehives more effectively.

TV Linked to Epilepsy

The entrance of satellite TV into India, providing viewing for 24 hours a day, is lead-

ing to an increase of neurological problems in children. This claim was made by leading neurologists at the All India Neurology Update—1996 conference. Head of the neurology department of Amritsar Medical College, Dr. Ashok Uppal, stated: "Children are now glued for longer hours to the television, leading to an increase in what neurologists term as 'photo-stimulus sensitive epilepsy or television-induced epilepsy.'" Dr. Uppal advised parents to limit their children's television viewing or to give them breaks at regular intervals during long spells of watching.

Killer Identified

Although few Mexican women smoke tobacco, many over the age of 40 suffer from lung diseases that are usually associated with smoking, reports the newsletter *Health Inter-America*. The cause? "Cooking with woodstoves," researchers said recently. According to Peter Paré, a professor of medicine, the problem received little attention because "wood smoke is often not identified as a major health risk. Death is usually diagnosed as heart failure, when the real source of the problem is the excessive exposure to wood smoke." The World Health Organization estimates that 400 million people worldwide are at risk, mostly rural women who use wood stoves in small buildings with poor ventilation. Building chimneys will help, but according to Dr. Paré, "the biggest challenge is to convince people to change the way they have lived for centuries."

FROM OUR READERS

Protect Your Children I met a young woman who has taken in some children who were sexually abused. I offered her the October 8, 1993, issue with the series "Protect Your Children!" When I visited her again, she said: "The articles have helped me to deal with this new situation. I took the magazine with me when I had an appointment at juvenile court and showed it to the prosecutor. She, as well as the judge, was impressed with the articles and wanted to distribute them among the other lawyers." This young woman asked for more literature and is now studying the Bible with us.

E. T. V., Brazil

Crossword Puzzles A few days ago, my granddaughter and I were looking through the December 8, 1995, *Awake!* when we spotted the crossword puzzle. She exclaimed, "I love crossword puzzles!" So we looked up the scriptures together, and I let her figure out the answers herself. We spent the most enjoyable half hour or so together. Keep it up! We look forward to the next crossword puzzle.

M. G., Canada

I am nine years old. I love your magazine, but most of all I like the crossword puzzles because they help me remember Bible events and people. Thank you very much for this feature.

J. M. T., Brazil

Killer Diseases Thank you for the extensive, clear, and accurate series "Killer Diseases—The War Between Man and Microbe." (February 22, 1996) I never realized the immense complexity of the microbe and the amount of physical damage it can do.

C. L., United States

The magazine arrived at exactly the right time, since I had contracted pneumonia and had to take antibiotics. The articles helped me

understand why I felt worse rather than better after first taking the medication. I am grateful for this material, which was presented in such an easy-to-understand manner.

I. W., Germany

Ethiopia After reading the article "Fascinating Ethiopia" (February 22, 1996), my heart is filled with gratitude. I have many Ethiopian relatives who are not Jehovah's Witnesses. This article was so beautiful that I am confident it will spark their interest in learning about our great God, Jehovah.

J. R., Luxembourg

Former Geisha I was deeply moved by the article "The Child of a Frog." (February 22, 1996) Because of the influence of my mother, I studied classical ballet from the time I was very small. When I became one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I decided to give up ballet, although I adored it. This article encouraged me. It helped me to see that there are other Christians who have made similar sacrifices. I thank you with all my heart.

Y. S., Japan

My tears would not stop falling when I looked at the photograph of Sawako Takahashi with her happy, theocratic family. The sufferings I experienced in the past have long ruled my life, and a sense of victimization has brought me much misery. Realizing that Jehovah will forgive my past failings has given me the courage to work toward becoming a baptized Christian.

M. K., Japan

It was one of the most informative and pleasant stories I have ever read. It also helped me to understand what ancestor worship encompasses. I had never been able to comprehend this form of worship until I read this autobiography.

P. Y., United States



Female Gangs

An Alarming Trend



"RUTHLESS, volatile and brutal" were words used by *The Globe and Mail* newspaper to describe girl gangs based in Canadian high schools. Tired of being part of male gangs, a growing number of girls are asserting their independence. One Toronto police detective, specializing in youth gangs, observed that girls are "asserting themselves in a very violent way." They have a willingness to "use weapons and 'extreme' force" and are "often more ruthless and aggressive than their male counterparts," said Dr. Fred Mathews in the *Globe*. Why? A popular perception among lawless youths, according to one police constable, is that girls are "likelier to get less time in jail if they're caught." A police spokesman told the *Globe* that "girls as young as 11 are involved in petty crime and trafficking in drugs and weapons in high schools."

Dr. Mathews, a psychologist and authority on such violence, interviewed female gang members over a ten-year period and found

them to be "angry and rebellious, largely owing to an abusive or dysfunctional family." What draws such youths to gangs? Gangs offer "a sense of community and security," says a former member. However, when interviewed by the newspaper, she admitted to two attempts at suicide in order to escape from the gang and added: "A lot of those so-called accidental deaths and the suicides in the suburbs are nothing more than gang murders. You protect each other when you're in the gang. The problem is that you can't protect each other from each other."

One concerned high-school teacher said: "The violent girls we deal with are completely unpredictable. When they're angry, you don't know where they are going to strike. And if you're a teacher, that's very scary." Concerning "the last days," the Bible predicted that times would be "hard to deal with" because people, including youths, would be "without self-control, fierce."—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

A color photograph showing a man from the side and slightly from behind, wearing a light-colored t-shirt. He is looking down at a magazine he is holding. The magazine has a red cover with a checkered pattern and a large headline in Portuguese. In the background, there's a blue trash bin filled with various items, including more magazines and papers.

The Value of One Awake! Magazine

In August 1993, a man in São Paulo, Brazil, found a copy of *Awake!* in the garbage. After reading it with appreciation, he sent a note to the Watch Tower Society's address in Brazil. He wrote: "Please send me information about a free home Bible study. I'm certain that it will help me a lot."

The man's request was forwarded to a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses near where he lives. The man was visited, and a Bible study was started with him. In September 1995, the man symbolized his dedication to God by water baptism at a convention of the Witnesses.