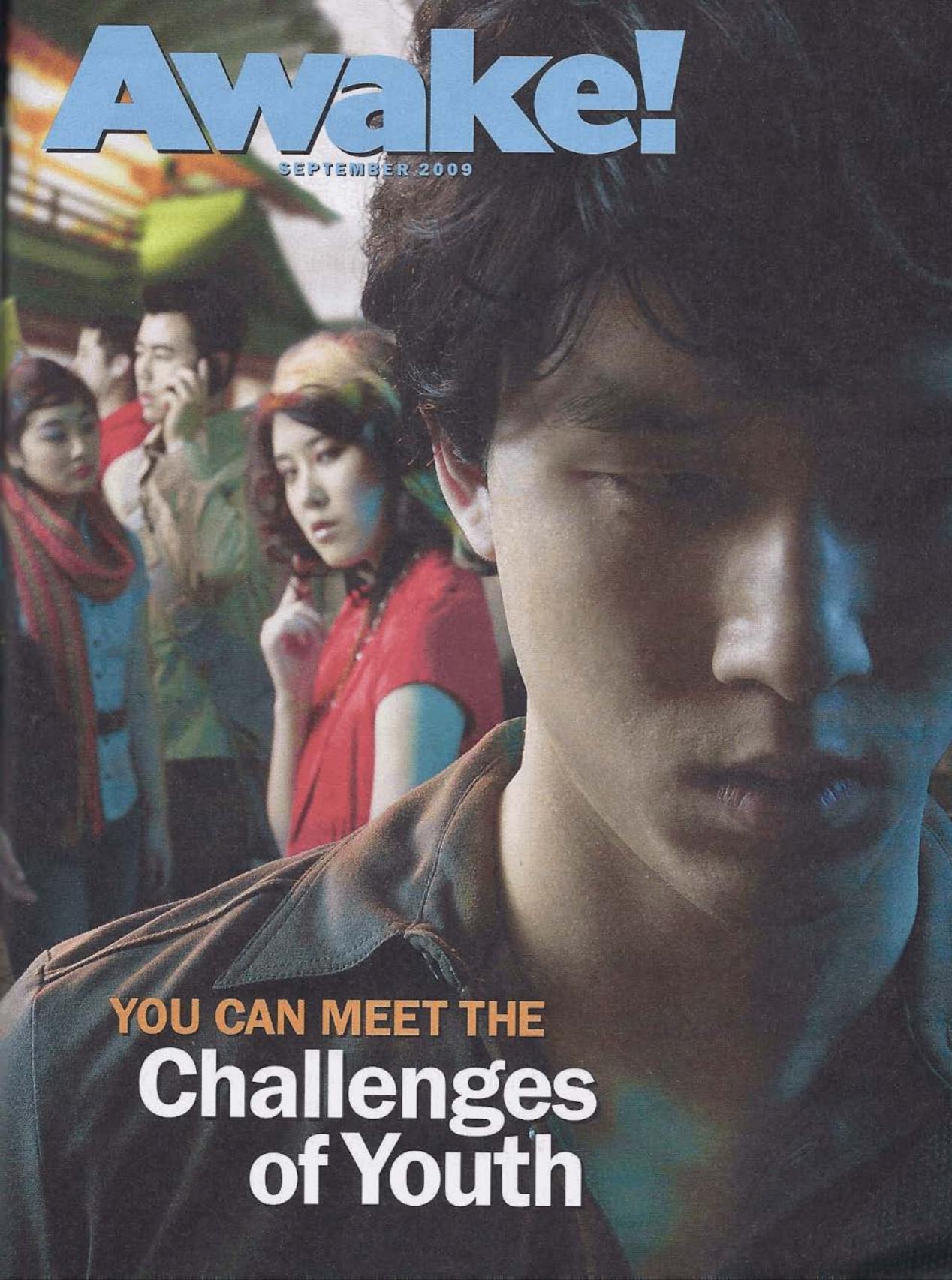


Awake!

SEPTEMBER 2009



YOU CAN MEET THE
**Challenges
of Youth**

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000
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- 3 What Are the Challenges?
- 7 How Youths Can Find Help
- 12 Faithful to God for Over 70 Years
- 16 The Sea Buckthorn —A Tree of Many Uses
- 17 Young People Ask How Can I Control My Temper?
- 20 Keeping Fast Hold of God's Right Hand
- 21 How Modern Farming Has Changed the World
- 28 A Pillar on the Sea
- 29 From Our Readers
- 30 Watching the World
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 Evolution or Creation —Which?

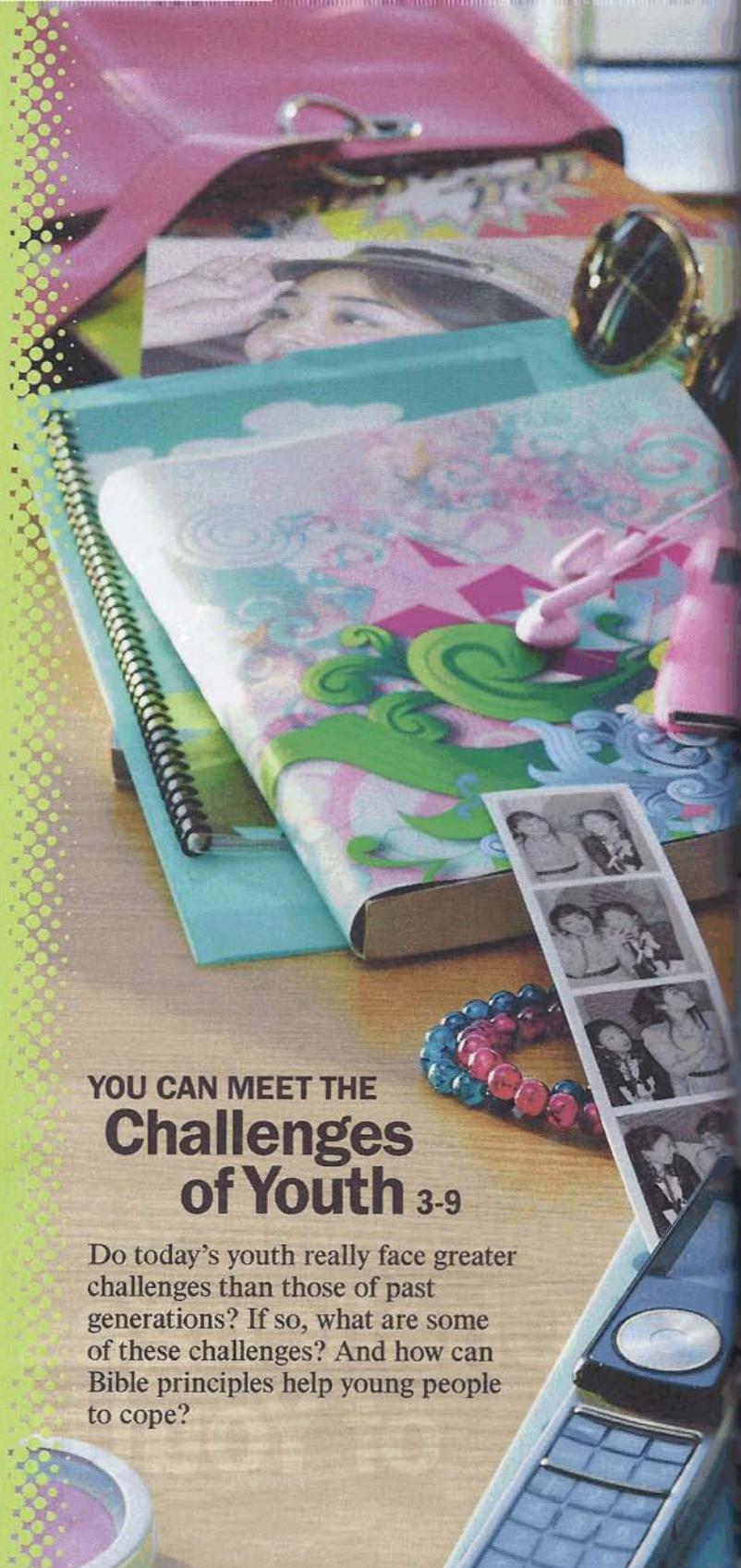
10 Will Bad People Burn in Hell?

What does the Bible teach about this? Learn why it is important that we know.

Photo: www.comstock.com

24 Herod the Great —A Master Builder

What did Herod build, and why were Jesus' disciples impressed? What conclusion was recently reached about Herod's burial place?



YOU CAN MEET THE Challenges of Youth 3-9

Do today's youth really face greater challenges than those of past generations? If so, what are some of these challenges? And how can Bible principles help young people to cope?

What Are the Challenges?

What do you think? Are the challenges facing youths of the current generation more difficult than those of the past? If your answer is no, you may feel that today's teens are the most blessed of any group of young people in history.

In many countries, medicine controls diseases that formerly robbed the young of health and life. Technology produces electronic tools and toys that previous generations only dreamed about. And economic development has lifted millions of families out of poverty. Indeed, countless parents work hard to provide their children with living conditions and educational opportunities that they themselves lacked.

Without a doubt, youths today have many advantages. But they also face unprecedented challenges. One reason is that mankind is now living during a period of time that the Bible calls "the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 24:3) Jesus Christ accurately foretold that this era would be marked by massive social upheaval. (Matthew 24:7, 8) The Bible calls this same era "the last days" and describes the prevalent social conditions as "hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) Consider just some of the hard-to-deal-with challenges facing teens today.

Challenge 1

Increased Isolation

Movies, TV shows, and magazines have portrayed youths as constantly surrounded by a group of friends who grow with them through school and maintain that bond as adults. The reality for most teens is quite different.

Researchers Barbara Schneider and David Stevenson, who analyzed interviews conducted with thousands of youths in the United States, found that "relatively few students consistently had the same best friend or a small group of friends over time." Many youths "lack

Many youths lack close friends in whom they can confide



a sense of connection and have few close friends with whom they feel comfortable discussing problems or sharing ideas," say Schneider and Stevenson.

Teens who do make friends seem to have little time to spend with them. One extensive study in the United States found that most teenagers spend about 10 percent of their time in face-to-face contact with friends but up to 20 percent of their waking hours alone—more time than they spend with either family or friends. They eat alone, travel alone, entertain themselves alone.

Encouraging this trend toward isolation is the proliferation of electronic devices. For example, in 2006, *Time* magazine reported that youths in America between the ages of 8 and 18 spent, on average, six and a half hours a day with their eyes glued to the TV, their ears plugged with earphones, or their hands hovering over video-game controls or computer keyboards.*

Of course, this generation is not the first to spend hours enjoying music or playing games. (Matthew 11:16, 17) But the sheer quantity of time now spent in electronic isolation instead of interaction with family can be detrimental. Say researchers Schneider and Stevenson: "Young people report having lower self-esteem, being less happy, enjoying what they are doing less, and feeling less active when they are alone."

* Youths who isolate themselves in their room have become so commonplace in Japan that they have been given a name, the *hikikomori*. Some people estimate that there are between 500,000 and 1,000,000 *hikikomori* in Japan.



Challenge 2

Pressured for Sex

Teens and even preteens are under tremendous pressure to experiment with sex. Nathan, a youth who lives in Australia, says: "Most kids I knew at school began having sex between the ages of 12 and 15." A young woman named Vinbay, who lives in Mexico, says that casual sex was very common among youths at her school. "Those who did not have sex were considered strange," she says. "Casual sex is so common among my peers that only saying no once is not enough," says Ana, a 15-year-old who lives in Brazil. "You repeatedly have to reject the invitations."

Researchers in the United Kingdom surveyed a thousand youths whose ages ranged between 12 and 19 and who were from a vari-

Awake!®

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

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According to one study, girls who experiment with sex are three times more likely to be depressed than girls who do not

ety of backgrounds. They found that almost 50 percent of the youths regularly engaged in some form of sexual activity. Over 20 percent of these sexually active youths were only 12! Dr. Dylan Griffiths, who oversaw the research, says: "The controls that the family, the Church and other institutions traditionally exerted have vanished, leaving the young as casualties."



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

^o CD also available.

^o MP3 CD-ROM also available.

^o Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Are youths who experiment with sex really "casualties"? In a report published in 2003, researchers Rector, Noyes, and Johnson drew a direct link between teenage sexual activity, depression, and an increased risk of attempted suicide. They analyzed interviews with 6,500 teenagers and found that "sexually active girls are more than three times more likely to be depressed than are girls who are not sexually active." And among boys those "who are sexually active are more than twice as likely to be depressed as are those who are not sexually active."

Challenge 3

Fractured Families

Youths in the United States have experienced rapid changes in family structure and a shifting set of values. "In the past few decades there have been several major demographic changes that directly affect the lives of teenagers," says the book *The Ambitious Generation—America's Teenagers, Motivated but Directionless*. "The size of the average American family has been decreasing, so adolescents are likely to have fewer siblings. As divorce rates continue to rise, more children are spending part of their childhood with a single parent. And more mothers of children under eighteen are working, so it is less likely that there is an adult at home."

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. **America, United States of:** 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. **Australia:** PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Bahamas:** PO Box N-1247, Nassau, NP. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. **Germany:** Zweigbüro, Am Steinfeis, 65618 Selters. **Guam:** 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. **Guyana:** 352-360 Tyrell St, Republic Park Phase 2 EBD. **Hawaii:** 2055 Kamehameha IV Road, Honolulu, HI 96819-2619. **Jamaica:** PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **Japan:** 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. **Puerto Rico:** PO Box 3980, Guayanabo, PR 00970. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Kruksdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

Whether children are living with one or with two parents, many feel alienated from their parents at the very times they need them most. A study that followed 7,000 teens over a period of years found that most of the adolescents considered their parents to be loving and accepting. Even so, "only a third said that they receive special attention and help when they have a problem." It also found that "for most adolescents, problem situations are seen as the times when parents are least likely to intervene and offer assistance."

In Japan the once strong family bond is being corroded by the desire for material success. Yuko Kawanishi, a professor of sociology, says: "Most parents of today's teenagers belong to the postwar baby-boomer generation, and grew up being exposed to a new set of values emphasizing economic success and material gains." What values do such parents pass on to their children? "Many parents today primarily care about their children's academic success," says Kawanishi. "As long as their children study," she continues, "other things have become secondary, or do not even matter, at home."

How can such an unbalanced emphasis on material success and academic achieve-

ment affect youths? In Japan the media often talk about *kireru*—a term describing the way young people suddenly snap under the pressure to perform. "When children appear to act crazy," says Kawanishi, "it may be because they do not perceive their family to have a controlling impact on their behavior."

A Reason for Optimism

Certainly, we are living in "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) However, the Bible does much more than just foretell that people living in this period would face increased trouble.

The Bible offers constructive counsel on how youths can improve their lives. Jehovah God, the Author of the Bible, keenly desires to teach young ones how to cope with challenges. (Proverbs 2:1-6) He wants them to have a good life. His Word can give "to the inexperienced ones shrewdness, to a young man knowledge and thinking ability." (Proverbs 1:4) Consider how Bible principles can help.

Self-Destructive Behavior

A government report in 2006 revealed that in Britain cocaine use among 11- to 15-year-olds doubled within a year. Some 65,000 youths said that they had experimented with the drug. In Holland more than 20 percent of youths between 16 and 24 years of age are said to be alcohol dependent to some degree or have an alcohol-related illness.

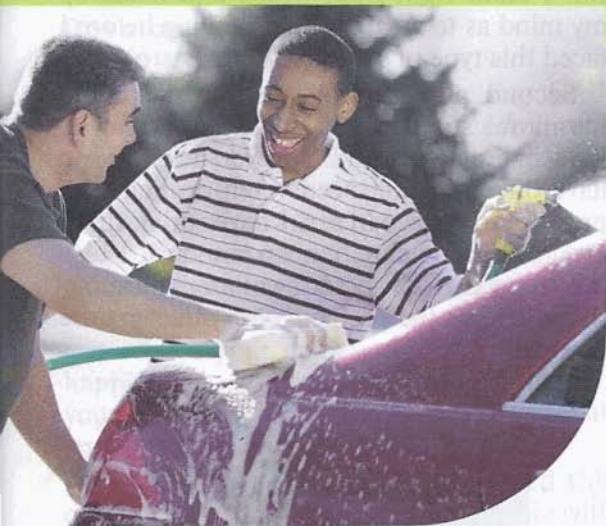
Many youths express their inner anguish in a more direct way. They cut, bite, or burn their own bodies. "It is estimated that three million Americans suffer from self-injury, and one in every 200 teenagers suffer from chronic self-injury," say researchers Len Austin and Julie Kortum.



How Youths Can Find Help

In an ideal world, all parents would provide consistent and loving guidance and training for their children. They would talk to them, read to them, eat with them, understand them. However, parents are not perfect. The Bible rightly states: "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."—Romans 3:23.

If you are a youth, you may feel that your homelife is less than ideal—and you may be right. Nevertheless, there is much you can do to reduce your anxiety and increase your happiness. Note just some of the ways in which applying Bible principles can help you.



Suggestion 1

Choose Association Over Isolation

"One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing; against all practical wisdom he will break forth." (Proverbs 18:1) Some youths feel awkward around people and find it easier to watch TV or play a video game. Others are painfully shy, so they isolate themselves. Elizabeth is a youth who describes herself as being in "a permanent state of shyness." She says: "My shyness is like a fear. I find it very hard to approach people and talk to them."

How has Elizabeth dealt with the challenge of shyness? She is one of Jehovah's Witness-

es, and as part of her worship, she regularly attends Christian meetings. Elizabeth says: "In spite of my shyness, I make it a goal to speak with one person at each meeting. If I fail, I try not to feel down. Instead, I focus on my achievements. I find that I have really benefited from getting to know others."

Why not write down the names of two or three people you would like to get to know better? Make it a goal in the following week or so to learn something new about one of them. Then write down one nice thing you could do for each of these people over the coming month, and then do it.—Acts 20:35.

If you lock yourself away from problems and people, you will inevitably become more concerned about yourself than is healthy. On the other hand, the Bible advises us to be "keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just [our] own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Philippians 2:4) If you apply that principle when dealing with those in your family and with others around you, you will see your own problems in perspective and be better able to handle them.



Suggestion 2

Flee From Sexual Immorality

"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18, New International Version) How can you avoid being pressured into engaging in immoral sex, when it is so prevalent among other youths?

First, you need to think this subject through *before* you face pressure or temptation. "The shrewd one considers his steps," states a wise proverb. (Proverbs 14:15) Mbali, a young woman who lives in South Africa, says: "In high school, I was persistently asked out by a young man in my class. The girls in class pressured me to date him because he was so good-looking—he was a model and played on the school soccer team. I thought he was attractive, but I had already decided not to compromise my moral standards. My peers felt that casual sex was no big deal. But I knew right from wrong and made up my mind as to what I would do long before I faced this type of situation."

Second, pray for God's help in sticking to his moral standards. Maggie, a youth who lives in England, says: "Prayer helps me to have the strength I need when dealing with pressure to engage in sex. I never think that I can handle the situation on my own. I also talk to my parents about the matter and sometimes discuss the problem with other mature friends."

What Teens Need From Parents

Shared Time: Jehovah God told parents in Israel that they should speak with their children often—"when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road." (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7) This requires that parents spend time with their children. Jesus evidently felt that children were deserving of his time. For example, when "people began bringing him young children for him to touch these," what was Jesus' reaction? "He took the children into his arms and began blessing them." (Mark 10:13, 16) What a fine example for parents!



Honest, Open Communication: The Bible says: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk." (Proverbs 15:22) Confidential talk with your children was necessary when they were younger. It is especially vital during the teen years, when youths likely spend less time at home and more time with school friends or other companions. If there is no confidential talk—no honest and open communication between children and parents—teenagers can become strangers in the house.





Suggestion 3

Develop Fellow Feeling for Your Parents

"All of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate." (1 Peter 3:8) You can't control whether your parents separate or not, nor can you control whether both must work full-time. But to some extent you can control whether you allow such challenges to destroy your relationship with them. One way you can reduce your anxiety and increase your happiness is by developing compassion for your parents by trying to understand the challenges they face.

A youth named Amber has applied this counsel. She admits that her relationship with her mother is sometimes filled with stress, misunderstandings, and frustration. Nevertheless, she says: "My mom has been through so much in her life. She has raised us four

children on her own. She has always given us a roof over our heads, food on the table, and clothes to wear. I really admire her strength, and I hope to show the same determination when I'm faced with hardship."

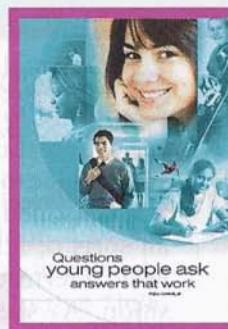
If you endeavor to put yourself in your parents' shoes and to feel the emotions they feel, it can help you to keep your problems in perspective. Doing so may also help you to recognize and imitate your parents' good qualities.

A Source of Reliable Advice

The suggestions above are just a sample of the practical wisdom found in God's Word, the Bible. As you learn more about this book, you will appreciate what reliable advice it provides.*

One way you can learn more about the Bible is by associating with Jehovah's Witnesses and studying it with them. Among these people you will find true friends who will support you through difficult times and help you to apply the Bible's wise counsel in your life. Living by Bible standards is certainly not easy. But if you choose this course of life, you will lastingly benefit yourself.—Isaiah 48:17, 18.

* The book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 2, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, is an excellent source of Bible-based advice on how youths can deal with the pressures they face. Similar information is also published on the Internet at the Web site www.watchtower.org/ype.



Appropriate Discipline: Discipline carries the thought of correction and training—although punishment may come into the picture. "Anyone foolish disrespects the discipline of his father, but anyone regarding reproof is shrewd," states Proverbs 15:5. A teenager cannot 'regard reproof' if it is not given. Of course, when disciplining teenagers, parents need to be balanced. They should avoid being so strict that they frustrate their offspring, perhaps even damaging their children's self-confidence. (Colossians 3:21) Yet, parents do not want to be permissive and fail to provide their youngsters with vital training. Permissiveness can be disastrous.*

* For more information see chapters 5 and 6 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.



THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

Will Bad People Burn in Hell?

GERTRUDE, a Pentecostal preacher, held firmly to her belief in a fiery hell. The very suggestion that there might not be any such place offended her sense of justice. She reasoned that without the fires of hell, all sorts of horrible crimes would go unpunished. Gertrude remained adamant in her position. As she put it, "I don't think that I'd want to worship God if there were no hellfire for the wicked."

Will bad people burn in hell, as many religions teach? If not, what punishment will they receive?

The First Act of Divine Punishment

According to the Bible, God created the first human pair perfect. (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 32:4) He placed them in a paradise

garden and gave them the opportunity to live forever. However, the first humans, Adam and Eve, had one restriction. God warned them: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die."—Genesis 2:16, 17.

Sadly, our first parents failed that simple test of loyalty and obedience. The Creator was obliged to sentence them to death. "In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return."—Genesis 3:19.

Had Adam and Eve been in danger of burning in hell, would not God have warned them about such a punishment? The fact is

"The dead . . . are conscious of nothing at all."—Ecclesiastes 9:5

that he mentioned nothing about suffering after death. How could they suffer? They did not have immortal souls that would survive after death. The Bible makes this very clear: "The soul that is sinning—it itself *will die.*" —Ezekiel 18:4.*

As the Giver of life, our Creator knows all there is to know about life and death. He tells us in his Word that "the dead . . . are conscious of nothing at all." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) That is why Adam and Eve could not suffer in a fiery hell after their death. They simply returned to the dust and ceased to exist. They were "conscious of nothing at all."

Can We Suffer After Death?

The Bible says at Romans 5:12: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men." Really, then, is it reasonable to believe that people suffer in hellfire for their sins, when Adam, the one who brought death upon the entire human race, simply became dust after dying?—1 Corinthians 15:22.

We all come under the same law that Adam was under. "The wages sin pays is death." Moreover, once a person dies, he is "acquitted from his sin." (Romans 6:7, 23) If both good and bad people die and nobody experiences suffering after death, where is God's justice?

* In the Bible, "soul" means the entire person—not something separate from the body. Genesis 2:7 says: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." Adam was not given a soul apart from his body. Rather, Adam himself was a living soul.

God's Justice

God's purpose for obedient mankind has not changed since he created the first human couple and directed them to have children and take care of the earth. (Genesis 1:28) This is clearly still his purpose, as he later declared: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 37:29.

Note that the righteous will live on this earth. They will have a life of perfect health and happiness. God's original purpose to have the earth filled with a righteous race of people will indeed "have certain success." This will occur when he replaces this present wicked system of things with a new world.—Isaiah 55:11; Daniel 2:44; Revelation 21:4.

Billions of people who have died in ignorance of God's requirements will benefit from a resurrection and will receive instruction for life in God's new world. (Isaiah 11:9; John 5:28, 29) On the other hand, anyone who refuses to conform to God's laws will be punished with "the second death." This is the death from which they will never awake.—Revelation 21:8; Jeremiah 51:57.

Clearly, as a God of love, Jehovah will not torture people in hellfire. (1 John 4:8) Nor will he tolerate wickedness indefinitely. Accordingly, Psalm 145:20 assures us that "Jehovah is guarding all those loving him, but all the wicked ones he will annihilate." Is that not loving and just?

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- Do we have an immortal soul?—Ezekiel 18:4.
- What is the condition of the dead?—Ecclesiastes 9:5.
- How will God punish the wicked?—Psalm 145:20.

Faithful to God for Over 70 Years

AS TOLD BY JOSEPHINE ELIAS

"Do not worry," my husband whispered through the prison bars. "Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah." I too was determined to stay faithful. Today I still feel the same way.

I WAS born in 1916 in Sukabumi, a small city in the highlands of West Java, Indonesia. My parents were wealthy Chinese who lived in a large house with servants. I had five brothers, three older and two younger. I was the only girl, and I became quite a tomboy. I clambered over rooftops and enjoyed sports. Yet, there was a matter that caused me great concern.

I dreaded the prospect of burning in hell. Naughty girls were sent to hell, my school-teachers said. And because I was naughty, I felt I would end up there. Later, while attending high school in Jakarta (then called Batavia), I became ill. The doctor thought I would die, so the landlady tried to comfort me by saying that I would soon be in heaven. I feared, however, that I was destined for hell.

My mother, Kang Nio, and my older brother Dodo rushed to Jakarta to get me. On our way home, Dodo asked, "Did you know that the Bible does not teach hellfire?"

"How do you know?" I asked. Mother read scriptures from the Bible showing that the dead are unconscious and are awaiting a resurrection. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; John 5:28, 29) "We learned these things from Jehovah's Witnesses," they explained. They handed me a small booklet entitled *Where Are the Dead?* which I started reading immediately.* Be-

fore arriving home, I declared, "This is the truth!"

Voice My Faith

My family had by then moved to Bandung, a large city in West Java. There I slowly recovered from my illness. In March 1937, we were visited by Clem Deschamp, an Australian Witness serving in Jakarta. During his visit my mother, my older brothers—Felix, Dodo, and Peng—and I were baptized in symbol of our dedication to God. Later, my younger brothers, Hartanto and Jusak, and my father, Tan Gim Hok, also became Witnesses.*

After we were baptized, we joined Clem in a special nine-day preaching campaign. He showed us how to preach using a testimony card that contained a simple Bible message in three languages. We also witnessed informally to relatives and friends. Soon our small group in Bandung became a congregation, the second in Indonesia.

Later that year our family moved to Jakarta to preach to its 80,000 Chinese inhabitants. Mother, Felix, and I took up the full-time Christian ministry as pioneers. I also preached in Bandung, Surabaya, and other places. For the most part, I preached alone. I was young, strong, and happy to be serving God. However, war clouds were looming

* The whole family stayed faithful to Jehovah. Josephine and Jusak, the sole surviving members, still serve Jehovah zealously in Jakarta.

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but now out of print.

on the horizon, and my faith would soon be tested.

War Brings Trials

In December 1941, Asia plunged into the chaos of World War II. The Imperial Japanese Army seized Indonesia in a viselike grip. Our Bible literature was banned, and we could not preach openly. I carried a chessboard when visiting interested people at their homes so that others would think I was merely playing chess.

In 1943, I married André, a fearless pioneer with a booming voice that commanded attention. Together we smuggled Bible literature to Witnesses throughout Java. Capture would have meant torture and death. We had many narrow escapes.

Once while boarding a train at Sukabumi, André and I were confronted by the dreaded *Kempeitai*, the Japanese military police. I carried banned literature deep inside my bag. "What do you have in the bag?" demanded a policeman.

"Clothes," André replied.

"And what is underneath the clothes?" he asked.

"More clothes," said André.

"But what is at the bottom of the bag?" the policeman inquired. I held my breath and prayed silently to Jehovah. "You had better check for yourself," André replied.

The policeman's assistant thrust his hand deep into the bag. Suddenly, he screamed in pain and yanked his hand from the bag. He had been pricked by a pin. The embarrassed officer quickly ordered us to close the bag and board the train.

On another trip to Sukabumi, the *Kempeitai* identified me as a Witness and summoned me to their local headquarters. André and my brother Felix followed along with me. There André was interrogated first. Questions rained down on him like hammer blows. "Who are Jehovah's Witnesses? Do you op-

pose the Japanese government? Are you a spy?"

"We are servants of Almighty God and have done nothing wrong," replied André. The commanding officer grabbed a samurai sword from the wall and held it aloft.

"What if I kill you now?" he snarled. André placed his head on the office desk and silently prayed. After a long pause, laughter erupted. "You are brave!" said the officer. He then dismissed André and called Felix and me in. When our testimony agreed with André's, the officer barked: "You are not spies. Get out of here!"

"I am a soldier for God's Kingdom, and a soldier cannot serve in two armies at the same time"

The three of us walked home, joyfully praising Jehovah. Little did we know that even more difficult trials lay immediately ahead.

More Tests of Faith

Several months later, André was denounced by "false brothers" and imprisoned by the *Kempeitai*. (2 Corinthians 11:26) I visited him in jail. He was thin and weak. He had survived by eating food scraps scavenged from the cell gutter. The jailers had not broken his integrity. As mentioned at the outset, he whispered through the prison bars: "Do not worry. Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah. They can carry me out as a corpse but not as a traitor."

After six months in jail, André appeared before the Jakarta High Court. Our family and friends crowded the courtroom. The atmosphere was tense.

"Why won't you join the Japanese army?" demanded the judge.

"I am a soldier for God's Kingdom," replied André, "and a soldier cannot serve in two armies at the same time."

"Would you tell others not to join the army?" asked the judge.

"No," said André, "it is for them to decide."

André continued his defense, quoting extensively from the Bible. The judge, a devout

You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion"

Muslim, was impressed. "Our beliefs may differ, but I will not force a person to disobey his conscience," said the judge. "You are free."

A wave of relief swept through the courtroom, and my heart leaped. André came to me and held my hand. Family and friends gathered around us, excitedly offering their congratulations.

Preaching True Freedom

After World War II ended, a four-year revolution against Dutch colonial rule erupted in Indonesia. Thousands of people were killed, and the residents of entire villages fled from their homes. Patriots tried to force us to shout their war cry "*Merdeka*," meaning "Freedom." But we told them we were neutral in such political affairs.

Despite the violence, we resumed preaching from house to house. We used our old testimony cards and the literature that we had saved from before the war. In May 1948, when the violence eased, André and I began to pioneer again, becoming the only pioneers in In-

donesia. Three years later we were thrilled to welcome 14 Witnesses to Jakarta, all of them graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in upstate New York, in the United States. The training they gave us equipped us for further responsibilities.

In June 1952, André and I accepted a special pioneer assignment in Semarang, central Java. The next year we ourselves attended the 22nd class of Gilead. After graduation we returned to Indonesia and were assigned to Kupang, Timor. Later assignments took us to South Sulawesi and North Sulawesi. There we faced further tests of faith.

Banned Again

In 1965 a coup attempt led to the death of hundreds of thousands of people. Some of Christendom's clergy took sides and claimed that Jehovah's Witnesses were Communists. Fortunately, the authorities were not easily deceived. The clergy, however, refused to give up their slanderous attacks on the Witnesses. Finally, on December 25, 1976, Jehovah's Witnesses were banned.

Soon after the ban was announced, the district attorney in Manado summoned André to his office. "Do you know that Jehovah's Witnesses are banned?" he asked.

"Yes," replied André.

"Are you now prepared to change your religion?" asked the official.

André leaned forward and dramatically beat his chest. "You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion," he boomed.

Stunned, the attorney asked, "What should I type in my report?"

"Write that I am still one of Jehovah's Witnesses and have done nothing wrong," said André.

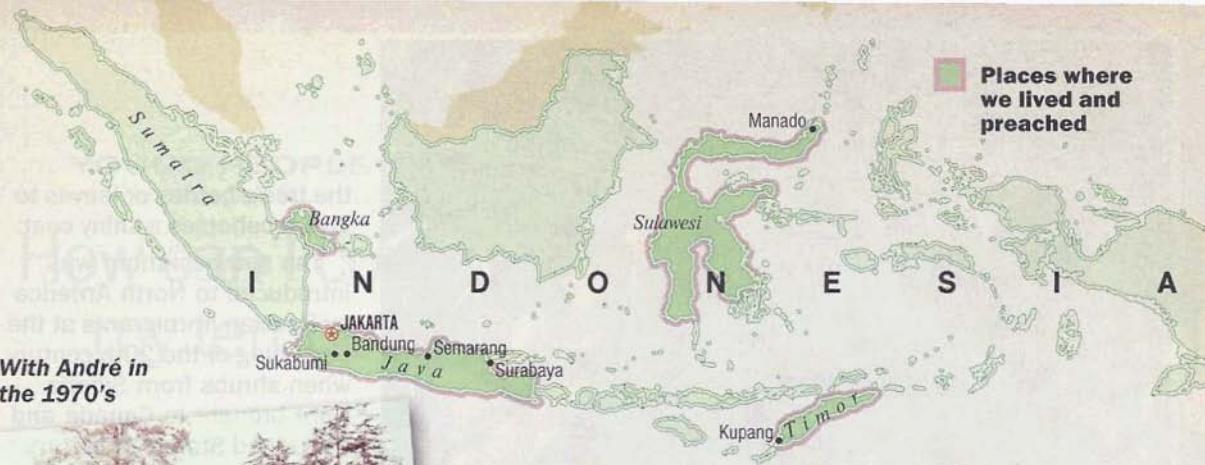
"I must confiscate your literature," said the attorney.

That night young Witnesses removed the literature from our house, leaving empty box-

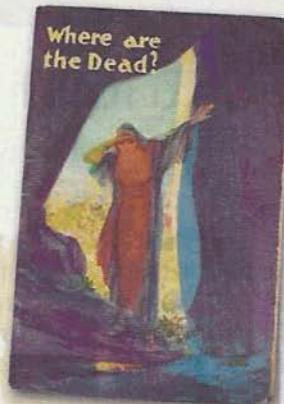
IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- **A House Divided—The Impact of Divorce on Adolescents**
- **You Can Succeed as a Single Parent**
- **What About Living Together Before Marriage?**

Places where
we lived and
preached



With André in
the 1970's



*When I was 15,
the small booklet
“Where Are the
Dead?” convinced
me of Bible truth*



es behind. We continued to preach, using the Bible. As for the district attorney, he never bothered us again.

A Wonderful Life!

André and I later pioneered in Surabaya, on the island of Java, and on Bangka, an island off southeast Sumatra. In 1982, however, poor health forced us to return to Jakarta. Here, in 2000, André died at the age of 85, a

zealous pioneer to the end. The year after his death, the ban was lifted.

What a wonderful life I have had! Today I am 93, and I have spent more than 70 years in the pioneer ministry. In 1937, when I was baptized, there were only 25 of Jehovah's Witnesses in Indonesia. Today, there are nearly 22,000. How I rejoice to have shared in that growth! But my journey has just begun. I want to serve God faithfully forever.



The Sea Buckthorn A TREE OF MANY USES

■ Traveling in Russia in early autumn, visitors to the countryside may come across the sea buckthorn,* a small shrub or tree, laden with small beadlike berries of a bright-orange hue. Instead of growing in clusters, the berries literally coat each branch and twig with an eye-catching layer of color.

The berries are edible, but watch out for the sharp thorns when picking berries by hand! You must pick each one individually and take care not to crush it. Favoring cold climates, the sea buckthorn is often found in mountainous regions from northwestern Europe to the Altai Mountains in Central Asia, as well as in western and northern China and in the northern Himalayas. For centuries the berries have been prized in such areas as China, Russia, and Tibet.

Mention of the sea buckthorn is found in both classic Tibetan medicinal texts and ancient Greek texts. Its Greek name, Hippophaë, means "shiny horse." The name is thought to refer to the ancient Greek practice of somehow using

* Perhaps so named because of its growth along the shores of Europe and Asia.

research has examined claims of the benefits of the sea buckthorn in cancer therapy, as well as in reducing cardiovascular risk factors and treating gastrointestinal ulcers, skin disorders, and liver ailments. The berry also makes a refreshing, tangy drink and is used as a tonic for various ailments.

A prized part of the sea-buckthorn berry is its small black seed. The oil in this seed contains most of the nutrients found in the berry. Some studies suggest that sea-buckthorn oil helps boost the immune system. In addition, cosmetics and skin-care products make use of the oil because of its acclaimed rejuvenating effects.

If you ever visit Russia, you may see and admire the beauty of the orange-gold berries of the sea buckthorn. Yet, as we have already noted, there is more to this plant than its beauty. Indeed, it is one of the many creations that testify to the wisdom and goodness of our Creator!



How can I control my temper?

How often do you lose your temper?

- Never Every month
- Every week Every day

Who is most likely to make you lose your temper?

- No one Schoolmates
- Parents Siblings
- Other

Below, describe a situation that typically provokes your anger.

.....

If you put a ✓ next to "Never" and "No one" and left the last entry blank, congratulations—you have control of your temper!

However, everyone reacts differently to trying situations and has shortcomings in one way or another. The Bible writer James said: "We all stumble many times." (James 3:2) In fact, when it comes to your temper, you may feel as does 17-year-old Serena.* "I have this pent-up energy," she says, "and often I take it out on whoever upsets me next. It could be my parents, my sister, or even my dog!"

Separating Myths From Facts

Do you find it difficult to keep a lid on your temper? If so, help is available. But first, let's dispel a few myths.

* Some names in this article have been changed.



■ **Myth:** "I can't control my temper—I come from a long line of hotheads!"

Fact: You may well be "disposed to rage"—perhaps because of the influence of family, environment, or other factors. But what you *do* with that rage is within your control. (Proverbs 29:22) The question is, Where do you want to be when it comes to your emotions—in the driver's seat or in the passenger's seat? Others have learned to control their anger, and so can you!—Colossians 3:8-10.

Key Scripture: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you."—Ephesians 4:31.

■ **Myth:** "If I'm angry, it's better to let it all out than to bottle it up inside."

Fact: Both approaches can be harmful to your health. True, there's a time to "give vent" to your concern. (Job 10:1) But that doesn't mean you should walk around like a stick of dynamite looking for a fuse. You *can* learn to express strong emotions without exploding.

Key Scripture: "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, . . . keeping himself restrained."—2 Timothy 2:24.

WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

"Venting to my diary—or to my mom—helps me to stay calm."

—Alexis, United States.



"If I'm completely stressed, going for a fast walk releases the energy, and the air clears my head." —Elizabeth, Ireland.



"I mentally remove myself from the situation and ask, 'What would happen if I started yelling?' I always end up seeing that it wouldn't help!" —Graeme, Australia.



■ **Myth:** "If I'm 'gentle toward all,' everyone will walk all over me."

Fact: People can sense that it takes real strength to display self-control, and they will respect you more if you do that.

Key Scripture: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." —Romans 12:18.

Taming Your Temper

If you tend to be temperamental, perhaps until now you've blamed others for your outbursts. For example, have you ever said, "She provoked me" or "He *made* me lose my temper"? If so, your very words suggest that others are holding the remote control to your emotions. How can you regain command? Try the following.

Assume responsibility. It all starts with acknowledging that you—and *only* you—can "make" yourself angry. So take finger-pointing accusations out of your vocabulary. Instead of saying, "She provoked me," admit to yourself, 'I allowed myself to be provoked.' Instead of saying, "He *made* me lose my temper," acknowledge to yourself, 'I chose to overreact.' Once you accept responsibility for your actions, you'll be better able to change them.—Galatians 6:5.

Anticipate the problem. The Bible says: "Sensible people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later." (Proverbs 22:3, *Today's English Version*) The key, then, is to anticipate the problem. Ask yourself, 'When is my temper most likely to flare?' For example, a girl named Megan says: "I work nights, and when I finish my shift, I'm extremely tired. That's when almost anything can send me over the edge."

Question: In what circumstances is your temper likely to flare?

Plan a better response. When provoked, take a deep breath, lower your voice, and speak slowly. Instead of making an accusation ("You thief! You took my sweater without asking!") try expressing how the action affects you. ("I really get frustrated when I want to wear my sweater and I find out that you 'borrowed' it without asking me.")

> DID YOU KNOW?

At times, God himself feels angry. Yet, his emotions are always justified, and he maintains complete control. He never overreacts!—See Exodus 34:6; Deuteronomy 32:4; and Isaiah 48:9.

Exercise: Think of a recent situation in which you lost your temper.

1. What provoked you?

2. How did you react? (What did you say and/or do?)

3. What might have been a better response?

Consider the consequences. Several Bible principles can help you to do that. For example:

■ Proverbs 12:18: "There exists the one speaking thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword." Words can hurt, and when you lose your temper, you're almost sure to say something you'll regret later.

■ Proverbs 29:11: "All his spirit is what a stupid one lets out, but he that is wise keeps it calm to the last." In the end, a tirade only makes *you* look foolish.

■ Proverbs 14:30: "A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism." A bad temper is bad for your health! Says a girl named Anita: "High blood pressure runs in my family, and the fact that I am prone to stress makes me think twice about losing my temper."

The lesson? Think of the consequences of your words and actions. Says 18-year-old Heather: "I ask myself, 'What if I lose my temper with this person? What will he or she think of me? How will it affect our rela-

You are the one who determines whether your temper reaches the boiling point



tionship? How would I feel if someone acted that way toward *me*?" You can ask the same type of questions before speaking or before sending a message—whether through the mail, over the phone, or via instant message, text message, or e-mail.

Question: What could result if someone upset you and in response you sent him or her an irate message?

Get help. "People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron," says Proverbs 27:17. (*TEV*) Why not ask a parent or a mature friend how he or she keeps calm?

Monitor your progress. Keep a journal, and monitor your progress. Each time you lose control, write down (1) what happened, (2) how you reacted, and (3) a better response. In time, you'll find that the *better* response becomes your *first* one!

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site
www.watchtower.org/ype

TO THINK ABOUT

At times, even people we wouldn't think would lose their temper have done so momentarily. What lessons can be learned from these examples?

- Moses.—Numbers 20:1-12; Psalm 106:32, 33.
- Paul and Barnabas.—Acts 15:36-40.

Keeping Fast Hold of God's Right Hand

■ Jezreel in Mexico was born with a rare skin disorder called congenital lamellar ichthyosis. It resulted in scaling and callousing of the skin on much of his body. "This gives me a repulsive appearance," explains Jezreel, "but the disorder is not contagious."

From the time Jezreel was little, he received treatment in various hospitals. At the age of two, he was put in a sterile environment in an isolation unit to avoid infections. However, nothing improved his skin condition. He was given psychiatric treatment to deal with his feelings of rejection.

People who believe that Jezreel's disease may be contagious often avoid him. This was particularly difficult for him to deal with when he was a child and wanted to play with other children. He recalls, "They would make fun of me and call me hurtful names like Mummy and Extraterrestrial."

On the other hand, suffering from this visible disorder has given Jezreel opportunities to talk to others about his Bible-based hope. People often approach him and ask if he was burned. When he says no, they ask him what is responsible for his appearance. He explains his skin disorder and tells them that presently there is no known cure.

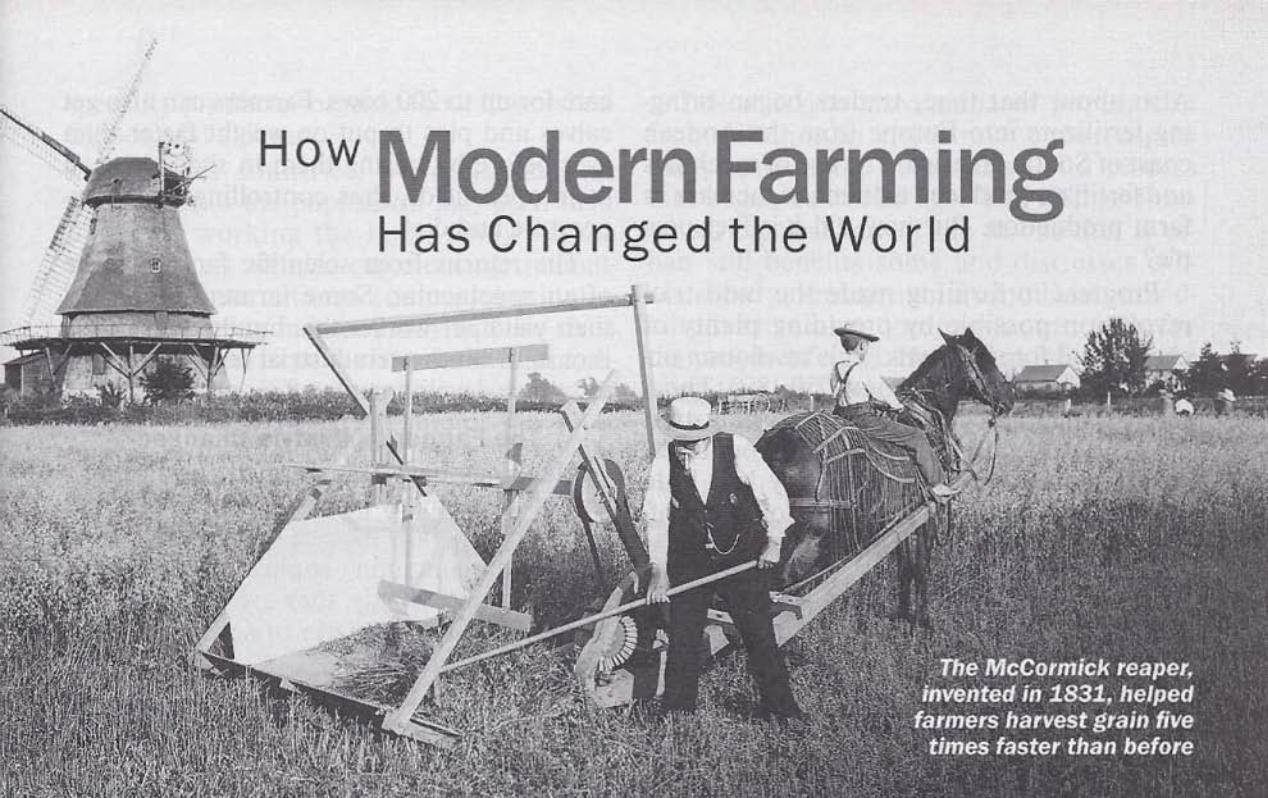
He then adds, "I have the best hope in the world because Jehovah God promises that those who obey his laws will live in a new world that is free of sickness and pain." (Revelation 21:3, 4) Discussing his condition in this way has allowed Jezreel to start Bible studies with people, and he has had the joy of seeing a number of them become fellow worshippers of God.



"I am grateful that I was born into a Christian family," Jezreel says, "and that as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I have close friends. None of them reject me because of my appearance. I was baptized at the age of 17, and in the 14 years since then, I have had many privileges of serving our Creator."

Jezreel keeps in mind Jehovah's encouraging words found at Isaiah 41:10, 13, which read: "Do not be afraid, for I am with you. . . . I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness. For I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, 'Do not be afraid. I myself will help you.'"

Keeping fast hold of Jehovah's right hand has helped Jezreel overcome self-consciousness and cope with the problems associated with this disease. Along with millions of others, he awaits the fulfillment of God's grand promises.



How Modern Farming Has Changed the World

The McCormick reaper, invented in 1831, helped farmers harvest grain five times faster than before

HOW do you obtain food? Do you buy it or grow it for yourself? Not long ago most of mankind were subsistence farmers—that is, they lived on food they grew for themselves. But now in some industrialized nations, only 1 person out of 50 works in farming. How did such a transformation occur?

Improvements in farming efficiency began slowly and then accelerated. Every step was traumatic for millions of families, and the process still continues worldwide. A look at how progress in farming has affected people can help you to understand the world today.

A Revolution Begins

Surprisingly, one of the biggest steps leading away from subsistence farming in Europe occurred during the 12th century when the horse collar was introduced. It enabled a horse to work without choking itself. Horses thus harnessed could pull harder, faster, and longer than the oxen that were formerly used. With horsepower, farmers could increase

their production. They could use iron plows on land that was previously impossible to cultivate. Another early step forward was the introduction of soil-improvement crops—such as beans, peas, clover, and alfalfa—which enrich the earth with nitrogen. Richer soil produced crops that were more abundant.

Those early advances were enough to permit some farmers to grow a surplus of food to sell. This led to the growth of towns, where people could purchase their food and work as manufacturers and tradesmen. From among these rich manufacturers, tradesmen, and farmers came the inventors of the first farming machines.

About 1700, Jethro Tull, an English farmer, invented a horse-drawn seed drill that replaced hand sowing, a practice that wasted seed. In 1831, in the United States, Cyrus McCormick invented a horse-drawn mechanical reaper that could harvest grain five times faster than could a man with a handheld scythe.

Also about that time, traders began bringing fertilizers into Europe from the Andean coast of South America. The use of machines and fertilizer produced a dramatic increase in farm production. But how did it affect people?

Progress in farming made the industrial revolution possible by providing plenty of cheap food for the towns. This revolution occurred first in Britain about 1750-1850. Thousands of families had to move to industrial towns to work in coal mines, iron foundries, shipyards, and textile mills. They had little choice. The small farmers who could not afford the new farming methods received less cash for their produce and so could not pay their rent. They had to leave their farms to live in overcrowded, disease-ridden slums. Instead of families farming together, men now had to work away from home. Even children worked long hours in factories. Other nations soon experienced similar changes.

Scientific Farming Brings More Changes

By 1850, some nations were prosperous enough to finance agricultural research. The scientific study of agriculture has led to continued change down to our day. For example, plant breeders studied genetics and developed plants with greater yields or disease resistance. Researchers also discovered the exact mixture of nitrates and phosphates needed for specific crops and soils. Weeds had kept farm laborers busy hoeing throughout the growing season. But many such workers lost their jobs when scientists developed sophisticated herbicides that slowed the growth of weeds. Insects, worms, and weevils are also old enemies of the cultivator. However, farmers can now select from an armory of chemicals to deal with almost any pest.*

The livestock farmer's life has also changed. Robotic milkers and computerized feeders allow one herdsman and his helper to

care for up to 200 cows. Farmers can also get calves and pigs to put on weight faster than ever before by raising them in sheds instead of in open fields, thus controlling their temperature and diet.

The returns from scientific farming were often spectacular. Some farmers increased their yield per worker to a hundred or even a thousand times preindustrial levels. But how did those developments affect people's lives?

The Farmer's Lifestyle Changed

Machines have transformed the farmer's way of life in many places. Most farmers and farm laborers now have to be skilled in operating and maintaining sophisticated machinery. And increasingly, they are lone workers. Gone is the camaraderie of sowing, hoeing, and harvesting in teams.

In many lands a new type of farmer has emerged, a highly educated businessman specializing in the mass production of just a few agricultural products or only one. He has invested heavily in land, buildings, and machinery. However, he is far from independent. Giant food-processing companies and supermarket chains dictate not only prices but also the variety, size, and color of his product. Agricultural engineers design his production system, and specialized companies supply him with the precise fertilizers, pesticides, and hybrid seeds needed for the specific conditions on his farm. He has come a long way from the farming methods of his ancestors. But he continues to struggle, and some people are concerned about the possible harmful effects of certain farming techniques.

Farmers Still in Crisis

In prosperous countries many farmers are still being forced off the land because they cannot compete with big farming corporations. Some farmers can only hang onto their cherished way of life by diversifying into leisure services including tourist accommodations or activities such as camping, golfing, and producing country crafts. Others turn to

* *Awake!* does not endorse any particular form of farming techniques.

specialty products—organic food, flowers, ostriches, and alpacas.

In poorer countries, where as much as 80 percent of the population may earn their living by working the land, many subsistence farmers are also experiencing traumatic change. International companies using industrial farming methods may acquire most of the best land to grow crops for distant markets. With few, if any, machines, subsistence farmers often work barren land or tiny plots to provide food for their families.

The massive movement of population from villages to cities now occurring in many lands is the culmination of a process that began centuries ago. The change from an agricultural way of life to one that is urban still benefits some and distresses others. Few governments, if any, have provided effective and compassionate help for the people affected. How mankind needs the Kingdom of God, under which there will be a change to a better way of life!—Isaiah 9:6.

TWO WAYS OF FARMING



Eusebio lives in the Andes, where he raises crops and tends 14 head of cattle. "They all have names," he says. "I like farming. We grow all of our own vegetables. My wife and I help our neighbors to plow and reap, and then they help us. None of us have machines. We plow with bulls, and on steep slopes we dig by hand.

"Disease once killed off most of our cattle. After that I took a short course in veterinary practice. We haven't lost a single animal to disease since then, and now I can help the neighbors with their animals. We sell cheese at the village market, but we earn very little. Even so, we always have food for our six children."

Richard farms more than two square miles of Canadian prairie. He works alone except for a single hired hand who works with him in sowing and harvesting seasons.

"Nowadays, the strain of farming is more mental than physical," says Richard. "Both my tractor and my harvester have air-conditioned cabins that protect me from dust and insects. I have machines that are 30 feet wide, so I can seed or harvest a quarter of a square mile in a single day. But I depend heavily on the machines, and that's where the stress comes in. Occasionally, I have to replace them on credit. Whether I can repay the loan depends on things beyond my control—rainfall, frost, market prices, and interest rates. The stress of farming has led to many marriage problems among farmers here, and even to suicide."

HEROD THE GREAT

A Master Builder

MORE than 2,000 years ago, he reigned for about three decades. His kingdom was based in Judea and included some of the surrounding areas. He is known in history as Herod the Great.

Herod is often remembered as a jealous murderer, not only of his family members but also of helpless little boys. When astrologers from the East reported to him that a future king had been born, Herod feigned a desire to honor the child. He asked them to find the child and return to him after that. But when God warned the astrologers not to return, Herod ordered the murder of all the boys two years of age and under in Bethlehem, the city where the astrologers had found Jesus, as well as its surrounding districts.—Matthew 2:1-18.

Earlier in his life, however, Herod had won the favor of many because of his remarkable building projects. He built temples, amphitheaters, hippodromes, and aqueducts, as well as palatial fortresses with luxurious bathhouses. His projects were truly impressive—even to modern engineers who study the sites.

Herod chose dramatic locations and integrated the architecture with the natural topography. His palaces were decorated with elaborate frescoes, rich stuccowork, and mosaic floors. He also introduced the Roman-style bathhouse to Judea, with hot and warm rooms and heating systems under the floor. In effect, he built entire cities, one of them with an artificial harbor.

Caesarea—A Port City

Herod built one of the largest seaports of the Roman world in Caesarea. Its dimensions have astonished archaeologists. There was anchorage space to accommodate a hundred ships, serving as a silent witness to the international trade center that Caesarea became.

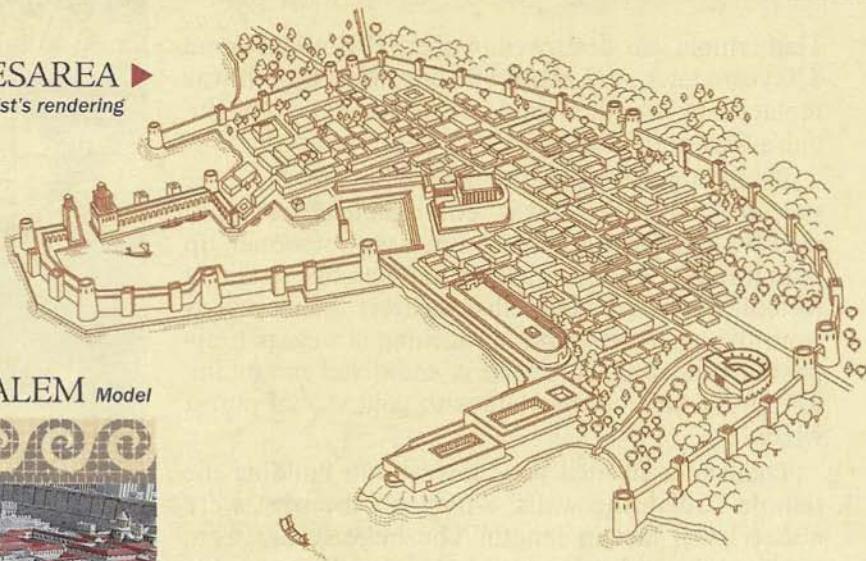
The piers and breakwaters were constructed with the most advanced techniques of the era. However, scholars were puzzled as to how workmen could have handled the colossal blocks measuring approximately 50 feet by 10 feet by 9 feet that the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus described. In recent times, divers have discovered that blocks Herod used were actually of concrete. To build the piers and breakwaters, the workers poured the concrete into wooden frames and then submerged and anchored them.

The well-planned port city included a temple dedicated to Caesar Augustus, a palace, a hippodrome, a 4,000-seat theater, and an underground sewage system. Aqueducts and tunnels delivered fresh water to Caesarea from springs in the Mount Carmel range nearly four miles away.

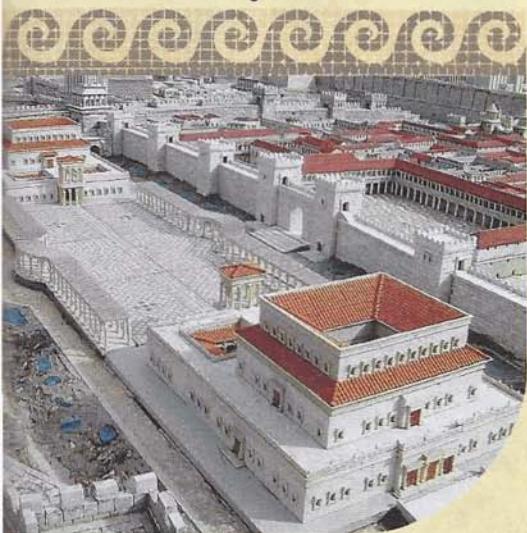
Jerusalem and Herod's Temple

The greatest of Herod's projects was the temple he built in Jerusalem. The original temple on the site was built by King Solomon, who followed architectural plans his father, David, had received by inspiration from God. (1 Kings 6:1; 1 Chronicles 28:11, 12)

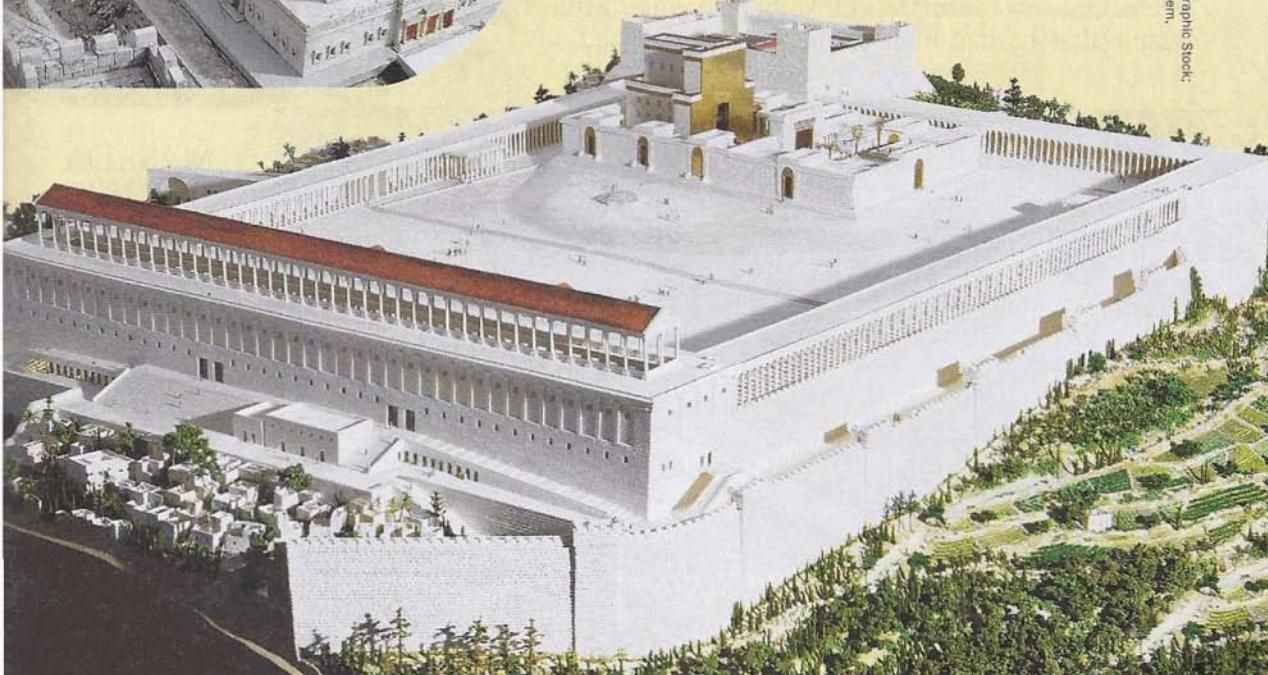
CAESAREA ▶
An artist's rendering



▼ PALACE IN JERUSALEM Model



▼ HEROD'S TEMPLE Model



Caesarea: Hiram Henriquez/National Geographic Stock;
Palace: Courtesy of Israel Museum, Jerusalem,
and Todd Bozley/BiblePlaces.com

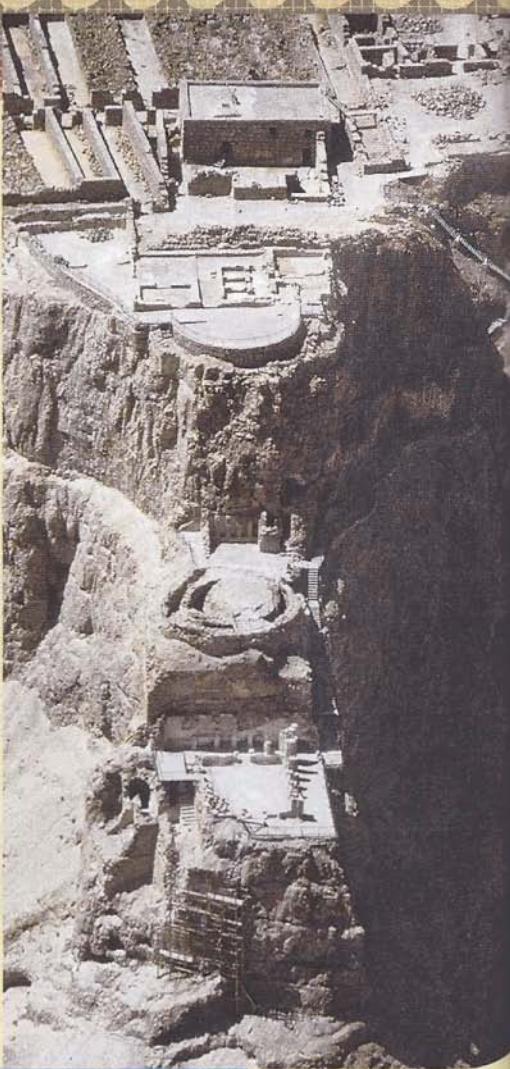
That temple was destroyed by the Babylonians some 420 years later, and about 90 years after that, it was replaced by a rather modest structure built by Judah's Governor Zerubbabel.

Regarding the temple that Herod built on the same site, Josephus wrote: It was "covered on all sides with massive plates of gold, the sun was no sooner up than it radiated so fiery a flash that persons straining to look at it were compelled to avert their eyes, as from the solar rays. To approaching strangers it appeared from a distance like a snow-clad mountain; for all that was not overlaid with gold was of purest white."

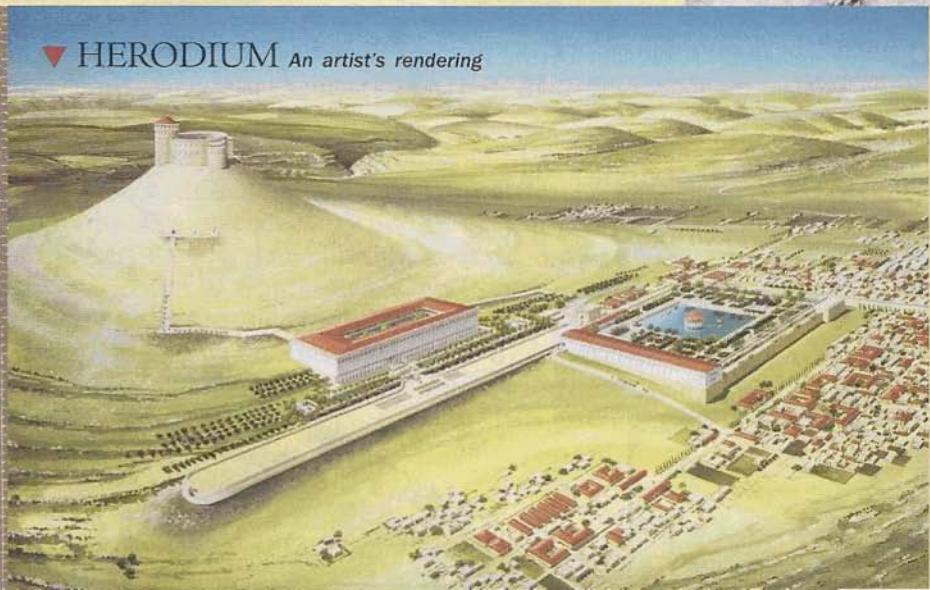
Thousands of men were involved in building the temple's retaining walls, which on the west were about 1,600 feet in length. The huge stones were set in place without mortar. One weighed close to 400 tons and was "unequalled in size anywhere in the ancient world," according to one scholar. No wonder disciples of Jesus were impressed! (Mark 13:1) The walls were topped by a huge platform called the Temple Mount—the largest man-made platform in the ancient world. It could have accommodated more than 25 American football fields!

Herod was responsible for other buildings in Jerusalem. One was the fortress of Antonia, adjoining the temple that he had built earlier. Herod also had a

Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) EST.



▼ HERODIUM *An artist's rendering*



MASADA *Ruins of the three-tiered palace*

palace constructed, as well as three unique multistory towers built at the entrance of the city.

Samaria and Jericho

Herod received as a gift from Augustus Caesar the ancient city of Samaria, which he renamed Sebaste. He embellished the city with various structures, including what was possibly a stadium surrounded by colonnades. He also constructed many sizable buildings decorated with ornate frescoes.

Jericho lies about 820 feet below sea level in the Jordan Valley and enjoys a subtropical climate. It extended over some 2,500 acres and had the character of a garden city. There Herod constructed a winter palace. He combined three palaces that he had built into one expansive dwelling, endowing each building with reception halls, baths, gardens, and swimming pools. No wonder he preferred Jericho as a winter residence!

Outstanding Palace-Fortresses

Yet, Herod had another option for winter living. He developed a fortress on the towering rock plateau known as Masada, which rises over 1,300 feet above the Dead Sea. At that location he built an elegant, three-tiered palace with a terrace and bathing pools, as well as another palace that featured a Roman bathhouse with heating pipes in the walls and a lavatory with a flushing system!

In that hostile desert environment, Herod created what one might call a royal health resort. He equipped it with a dozen cisterns able to hold some 10,500,000 gallons of water. Since the fortress was also provided with an efficient system for collecting and storing rainwater, there was ample water to grow crops and enjoy swimming pools and baths.

Another of Herod's remarkable feats of engineering was his palace-fortress of Her-

dium, located on a prominent hill about three miles southeast of Bethlehem. It consisted of two main parts: Upper Herodium and Lower Herodium. The upper part included an imposing palace-fortress topped by a five-story east tower—now in ruins—that once dominated the skyline. Two years ago international news agencies reported that remains of Herod's tomb had been discovered on the upper slopes of Herodium, stating that this confirmed Josephus' first-century report of Herod's funeral procession there.

Lower Herodium once had a complex of palace annexes and offices. The focal point was a Roman-style garden—embellished with columns—encircling an immense pool with a decorative island in the middle. The pool was almost double the size of a modern Olympic pool. It served as a reservoir, but it was also used for swimming and even for boating. The water came via aqueduct from a spring three and a half miles away.

Some years ago a visitor said this about the surrounding landscape: "To the east, we could see all the way to the Dead Sea. Here before us was the Judean wilderness where David successfully eluded his pursuer, Saul. Seeing the ruggedness of the territory, we understood how he could do so, especially since from his youth he must have been very familiar with the territory. We thought, too, that, while pasturing his sheep, David perhaps often climbed this very hill for the magnificent view we were enjoying."

Volumes have been written about Herod's building projects. There is much speculation as to why he launched such an extensive building program. Some have said it was for personal fame or to curry political favor. Whatever the motive, this brief overview confirms the fact that Herod the Great, besides being a ruthless despot, was a master builder.

A Pillar on the Sea

■ Have you ever seen a waterspout? One formed off the coast of Tahiti on December 25, 2005. The long funnel of whirling wind and water between the sea and the sky lasted for about 30 minutes. Then it slowly turned white and disappeared.

Waterspouts are sometimes called tornadoes over water, but they are usually weaker than tornadoes in their intensity. They generally last about ten minutes, although some have continued for an hour. Because they develop at sea, their detection usually depends on chance observations. This makes it difficult for meteorologists to understand them fully. According to reports, they may make a loud noise, similar to that of a freight train.

When describing his emotional turmoil, a Bible psalmist of ancient times wrote: 'Watery deep to watery deep is calling at the sound of your waterspouts.' (Psalm 42:7) Although we cannot say that this type of waterspout is what the Bible psalmist was referring to, his feelings might well have been depicted by this phenomenon. He said that his soul was "in despair" and was "boisterous" within him. Yet, he drew comfort from his God. "Wait for God," he declared to his own soul, "for I shall yet laud him as the grand salvation of my person and as my God."

—Psalm 42:11.

Just like the psalmist, we may experience afflictions that can be compared with a torndolike whirlwind over the sea. But if we wait for God, he will prove to be the grand salvation for us.

**Young People Ask . . . What if My Sibling Has Committed Suicide?**

(June 2008) Before she died, my older sister battled depression for five years. Since I had witnessed the misery of her illness, I thought, ‘What a pitiful life she had!’ However, the *Awake!* article suggested that we recall pleasant memories. While recalling my pleasant memories, I began to feel that it wasn’t “a pitiful life” but that my sister actually had a happy life, as there were more happy times than hard times.

S. Y., Japan

Young People Ask . . . Why Don’t My Parents Trust Me?

(April 2008) By reading and applying the Bible principles found in *Awake!* I learned that building trust and maturing is like a flight of stairs, not a door you immediately walk through. To be given more freedom, I needed to prove myself to my parents. I had to finish my chores and do my school homework. Thank you for articles like this one.

T. L., United States

Living With Albinism (July 2008) As a person living with this condition, I was at first happy to see the article. However, I was unhappy to see the word “albino” used in the article over and over again. It has been used in very derogatory forms as a word of hate toward people with this condition.

A. L., United States

“Awake!” responds: We apologize for any distress this may have caused our readers. Our use of the word “albino” was derived from its medical usage. We admit, however, that some have used the term in a hurtful way. On the other hand, many with albinism accept the word and do not feel offended by its usage. It certainly was not our intent to malign anyone.

1. Annas has no money in his hand. 2. The apostle Peter is missing from the picture. 3. Deborah—Jude 4:4-9. 4. Jabin—Jude 4:2. 5. True.

Thank you for publishing this article, for I too am an albino like John. To read an article about albinism that was true, factual, thoughtful, educational, and informative was most appreciated. As a result, my friends better understand my condition.

T. M., United States

A Love More Powerful Than a Hurricane!

(August 2008) Articles like this remind me not to be anxious about the future but to rely fully on God. Three years ago I experienced brotherly affection when a flood destroyed the house of my unbelieving parents. Jehovah’s Witnesses from the local congregation quickly came to their aid. I thank Jehovah that I am part of his organization.

D. W., Poland

The Wonders of Corn (August 2008) Our family planted corn in our vegetable garden, but we were not able to harvest even-size kernels. Now, thanks to this article, we understand the reason. We were only able to plant five or six seedlings, so they weren’t being pollinated the way a large field would be. Last year, by carefully pollinating each strand of the “silk road,” we were able to harvest sweet, delicious corn with even-size kernels. Thank you very much.

R. W., Japan

Human Rights for Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted in 2007, has now been translated into Maya and Nahuatl, the two most widely spoken indigenous languages in Mexico. "At least 10 million people [in Mexico] are not aware of their rights," says the newspaper *El Universal*. "Therefore, they often do not know that they are victims of abuse." The translations, it is said, will be a tool for enabling these people to have their basic human rights respected.

Selling Virginity

The readiness of some Polish youths to have their first sexual experience for money shocks sociologists, reports the magazine *Newsweek Polska*. "A simple message reaches young people from all sides: everything is for sale," says psychologist Jacek Kurzepa of the University of Zielona Góra. An increasing number are even auctioning off their virginity on the Internet. The price that young people pay for making such a choice, however, is high. "That decision has an impact on the rest of [one's] life and the future relationship with a partner," says Kurzepa.

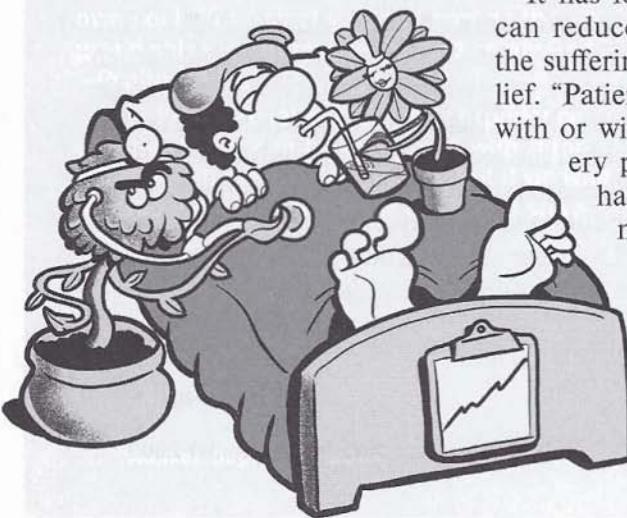
■ "Nine out of every ten disasters are now climate-related. Recorded disasters have doubled in number from 200 a year to more than 400 over the past two decades." —JOHN HOLMES, UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR.

The Amazon Once Hosted Urban Civilization

Vast areas of southern Amazonia believed to be virgin forests may once have hosted urban communities "surrounded by large walls." This conclusion was reached by anthropologists working in Mato Grosso, Brazil. There they discovered "networks of walled towns and smaller villages" overgrown by tropical forest and covering an area of perhaps 11,600 square miles. Some of the towns occupied 150 acres. A report by the University of Florida, whose anthropologists made the discovery, says that the settlements "date from around 1250 to 1650, when European colonists and the diseases they brought likely killed most of their inhabitants."

Plants Aid Postoperative Recovery

It has long been suspected that contact with nature can reduce stress, produce positive feelings, and ease the suffering of the sick. New research confirms that belief. "Patients were randomly assigned to hospital rooms with or without plants during their postoperative recovery periods," explains *Science Daily*. Patients who had plants in their rooms experienced less pain, needed significantly less pain medication, had better heart rate and blood pressure, and reported greater satisfaction with their rooms than their counterparts. Some 93 percent of those exposed to plants said that these were the "most positive" aspect of their rooms.





What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read Acts 5:1-5. Now look at the picture. What features are missing? Write your answers on the lines below, and complete the picture by coloring it and drawing in the missing elements.

- 1
- 2

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, do you think, did Ananias lie? What lessons do you learn from this account?

From This Issue

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

PAGE 11 **What happens to the soul that sins?**

Ezekiel 18:_____

PAGE 11 **Of what are the dead conscious?**

Ecclesiastes 9:_____

PAGE 17 **What do we all do many times?** James 3:_____

PAGE 17 **What should you let be taken away from you?**

Ephesians 4:_____



Children's Picture Search

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

What Do You Know About Judge Barak?

Read Judges 4:1-24. Now answer the following questions.

3

Who was the prophetess that helped him?

4

He delivered Israel from which king of Canaan?

5

True or false? Judge Barak lived after Joshua.

FOR DISCUSSION: What part did women play in the victory that Israel gained over the Canaanites? What important part do women play today in serving God?





Evolution or Creation Which?

■ When she was 12, a girl in Mexico named Aspen was asked by her biology teacher to explain to the seventh-grade class why she believed in creation instead of evolution. Aspen made a good defense, explaining that every organism has a perfect design, which proves the existence of a designer and creator. Knowing that Aspen's parents are geologists, the teacher then asked her to prepare and present information on whether the fossil record supports creation.

The next day Aspen took some sample fossils to school and told the class that the fossil record does not give evidence of gradual changes. She also explained that each group of fossils appears in a different geological era, corroborating the Genesis account of creative days.

The school principal was present and congratulated Aspen on her conviction and defense of creation. The biology teacher com-

mented that creation makes everything clear, while evolution leaves many doubts. Aspen then left literature that provides scientific support for creation with her teacher, her fellow students, and the principal.

