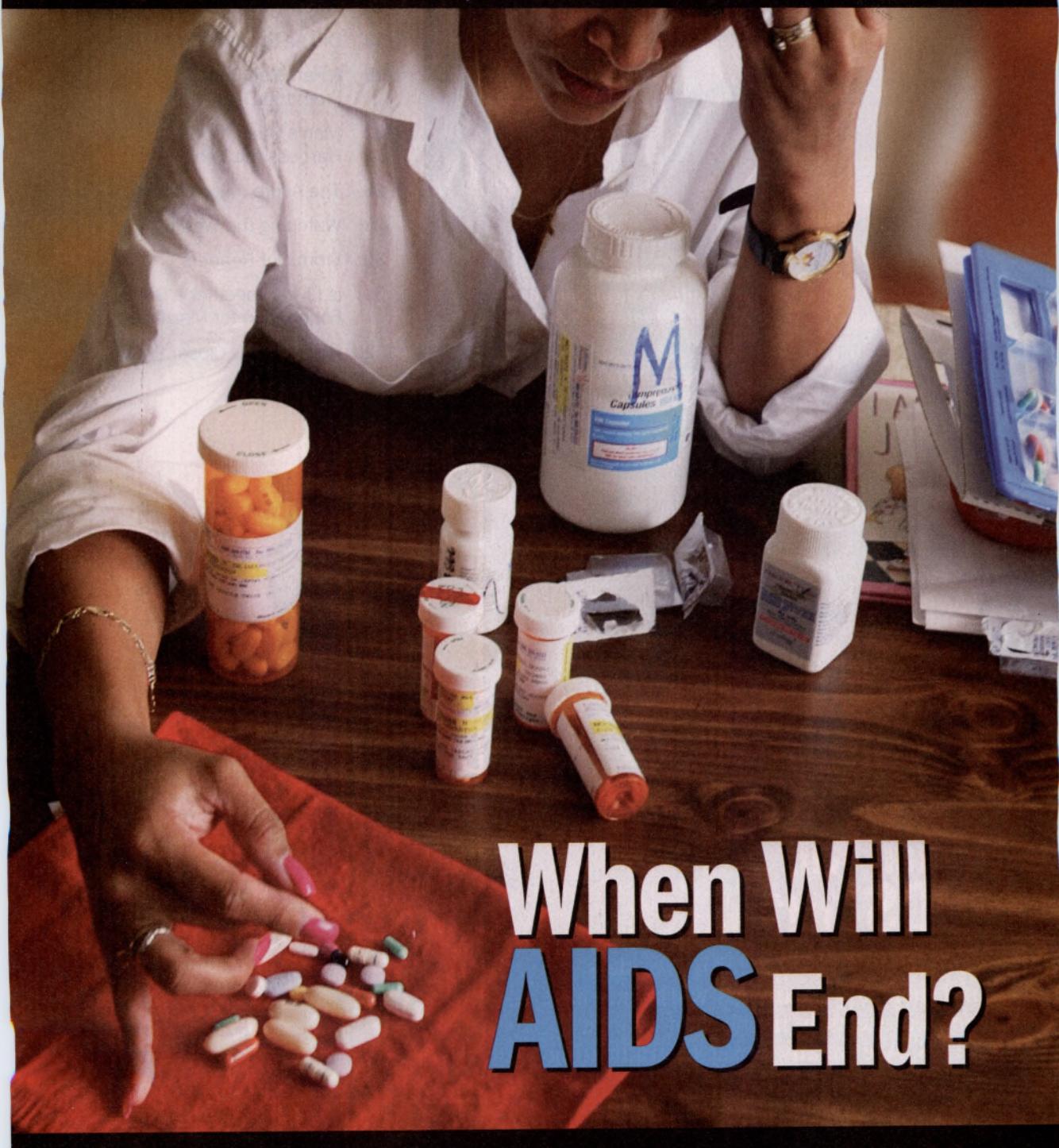


# Awake!

NOVEMBER 22, 2004



When Will  
**AIDS** End?

# Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 22,530,000  
PUBLISHED IN 87 LANGUAGES

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**■ SOUTH AFRICA**  
*Two children await the death of their parents from AIDS*

**■ COVER: UNITED STATES**  
*An AIDS patient prepares the combination of 14 different medications that she takes three times a day*

COVER: Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images

## When Will AIDS End? 3-11

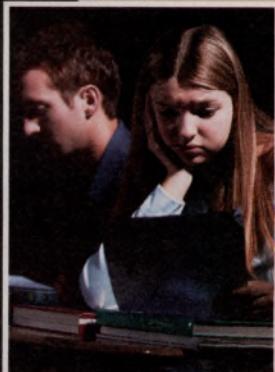
For some 20 years, health providers and medical researchers worldwide have labored tirelessly in the fight against AIDS. Are we any closer to eradicating this deadly disease?

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A high court rectifies a terrible injustice against a mother and her children.



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Many youths are afraid of failing. Yet, everyone makes mistakes. How can you avoid the painful feelings of failure?

# A Cure for AIDS URGENTLY NEEDED!

At the Central Market of Lilongwe, Malawi, Grace sells luxury shoes. She appears happy and healthy. Her cheerful smile, though, hides a tragic story.

In 1993, Grace and her husband were overjoyed at the birth of their daughter, Tiyajane. At the outset, Tiyajane seemed to be in good health. Yet, she soon stopped gaining weight and contracted one infection after another. At the age of three, Tiyajane died from AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

A few years later, Grace's husband also began to get sick. One day he collapsed and was taken to the hospital. Doctors could not save him. Grace's husband of eight years died of AIDS-related complications.

Grace now lives alone in a one-room house in the suburbs of Lilongwe. One might expect that at 30 years of age, Grace would be beginning to rebuild her life. She, however, explains: "I have got HIV so I will not get married or have any more children."\*

**S**ADLY, such experiences are hardly unique in Malawi, where an estimated 15 percent of the population are infected with HIV. At one rural hospital, according to the *Globe and Mail* newspaper, "bed occupancy is at 150 per cent, and the facility has lost more than 50 per cent of its medical staff" to AIDS. The prevalence of HIV infection is even higher in other countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In 2002 the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) reported: "The average life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa is currently 47 years. Without AIDS, it would have been 62 years."

\* HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus, is understood to be the virus that causes AIDS.

The plague of HIV/AIDS, however, is pandemic, extending far beyond the African continent. UNAIDS estimates that some four million adults in India are infected with HIV, adding: "With the current disease burden, HIV will emerge as the largest cause of adult mortality this decade." The epidemic is growing fastest in the Commonwealth of Independent States, a federation composed of most republics of the former Soviet Union. One report says that in Uzbekistan, "more HIV cases were reported in 2002 alone compared to the whole of the previous decade." HIV infection in the United States continues to be a leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 25 and 44.



© Peter Barker/Panos Pictures

■ INDIA Health volunteers receive education about AIDS



© Sean Sprague/Panos Pictures

■ BRAZIL A social worker comforts a woman suffering from AIDS



© Ian Teh/Panos Pictures

■ THAILAND A volunteer worker cares for a child born with HIV

## Worldwide, an estimated 42 million people have HIV/AIDS; 2.5 million are children

*Awake!* first published a series of articles on AIDS in 1986. That year, Dr. H. Mahler, then director of the World Health Organization, warned that some ten million people may have already been infected with HIV. Almost two decades later, the number of HIV cases worldwide has increased to an estimated 42 million, growing at a rate more than ten times the rate of population growth! Experts suggest that the future looks no less sinister. "In the 45 most affected countries," reports UNAIDS, "it is projected that, between 2000 and 2020, 68 million people will die prematurely as a result of AIDS."

With such an alarming infection rate, a cure for AIDS has never been more urgently needed. Thus, medical researchers have labored tirelessly to combat HIV. What advances have been made in the fight against this deadly plague? Is it reasonable to hope for an end to AIDS?

## 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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# Advances in the Fight Against AIDS

"Never in the history of humans has so much been learned about so complex an illness in so short a time," writes Dr. Gerald J. Stine in his book *AIDS Update 2003*. He claims that "the history of HIV/AIDS is one of remarkable scientific achievement." What has been achieved?

**M**ODERN medical knowledge and expertise have enabled researchers to develop drug combinations that offer new hope to HIV-infected people. Additionally, AIDS education programs have yielded results in several countries. But does the success of such efforts signal the beginning of the end of this deadly epidemic? Can current scientific and educational endeavors halt the spread of AIDS? Consider the following.

## Drug Therapy

"A Ray of Hope in the Fight Against Aids," read the headline in the September 29, 1986, issue of *Time* magazine. This "ray of hope" was generated by the results of a clinical trial using azidothymidine (AZT), an antiretroviral drug, to treat HIV. Remarkably, HIV patients who took AZT were living longer. Since that time, antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) have prolonged the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. (See the box "What Are ARVs?"

on page 7.) How successful have they been in treating HIV infection?

Despite the initial enthusiasm surrounding the release of AZT, *Time* magazine reported that AIDS researchers "were confident that AZT [was] not the ultimate weapon against AIDS." They were correct. Some patients were unable to tolerate AZT, so other ARVs were developed. Later, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a combination of ARVs for advanced HIV patients. Combination therapy, which came to involve the taking of three or more antiretroviral drugs, was enthusiastically welcomed by AIDS workers. In fact, at an international conference on AIDS in 1996, one doctor even announced that the drugs may be able to eliminate HIV entirely from the body!

Sadly, within a year it was evident that even strict adherence to the three-drug regimen could not eradicate HIV. Nonetheless, a

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report by UNAIDS says that “combination ARV therapy has enabled HIV-positive people to live longer, healthier, more productive lives.” In the United States and Europe, for example, ARV use has reduced AIDS deaths by over 70 percent. In addition, several studies have shown that selected ARV treatment can dramatically reduce HIV transmission from an infected pregnant woman to her child.

Yet, millions of HIV patients are denied access to ARVs. Why?

#### **“A Disease of Poverty”**

ARV therapy is widely administered in high-income countries. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that in some developing lands, only 5 percent of

**Last year 2 percent of those in Africa needing ARVs received them, compared with 84 percent in the Americas**

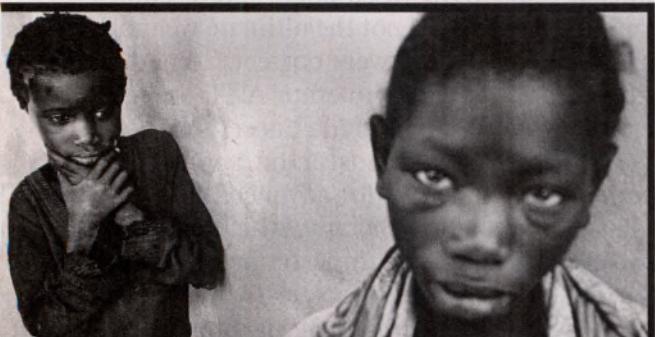
in most desperate need: aborigines, women and the poor.” *The Guardian* quoted one African mother who is HIV-positive as saying: “I don’t understand it. Why do these white men who have sex with men get to live and I have to die?” The answer to her question lies in the economics of drug production and distribution.

The average price of a three-drug ARV regimen in the United States and Europe is between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a year. Even though generic copies of these drug combinations are now being offered in some developing countries at a yearly rate of \$300 or less, this is still far beyond the reach of many who have HIV and live where ARVs are needed the most. Dr. Stine sums up the situation this way: “AIDS is a disease of poverty.”

#### **The Business of Making Drugs**

Developing generic versions of patented drugs and selling them at reduced prices has not been easy. Strict patent laws in many countries prohibit the unauthorized reproduction of brand-name drugs. “This is an economic war,” says the head of one large pharmaceutical company. Producing generic drugs and selling them to developing countries for a profit, he says, “isn’t fair to people who have discovered those drugs.” Brand-name drug companies also argue that diminishing profits could result in reduced funding for medical research-and-development programs. Others worry that low-cost ARVs destined for developing countries could actually end up on the black market in developed lands.

Proponents of low-cost ARV drugs counter that new drugs can be produced at between 5



■ **ZAMBIA** Two young HIV-positive girls await their medicine

those who need ARV therapy have access to the drugs. United Nations envoys have gone so far as to describe this imbalance as “a serious injustice” and “the grotesque obscenity of the modern world.”

Unequal access to therapy can also exist among citizens of the same country. *The Globe and Mail* reports that 1 in 3 Canadians who die of AIDS has never been treated with ARVs. Even though the drugs are available free of charge in Canada, certain groups have been overlooked. “Those missing out on proper treatment,” says the *Globe*, “are those

and 10 percent of the costs suggested by the pharmaceutical industry. They also say that research and development by private pharmaceutical companies have tended to neglect diseases afflicting poorer countries. Thus, Daniel Berman, coordinator of the Access to Essential Medicines project, states: "For new drugs, there needs to be an internationally-supported enforceable system that reduces prices to affordable levels in developing countries."

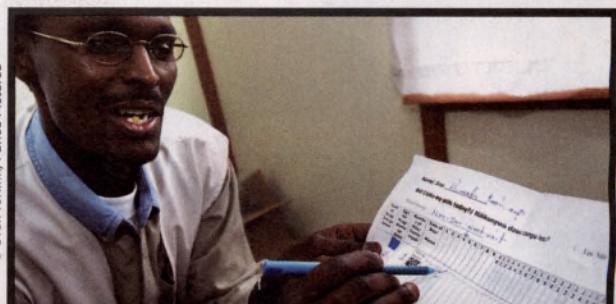
In response to this global need for ARV therapy, WHO has developed what is described as the three-by-five plan to provide ARVs to three million people living with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2005. "The three-by-five target must not become another unmet UN target," warned Nathan Ford of Médecins Sans Frontières. "It is only half the number of people with HIV/AIDS estimated to need treatment today and this number will be much greater [by 2005]."

#### Other Obstacles

Even if enough ARVs were supplied to developing lands, other obstacles would have to be overcome. Some drugs need to be taken with food and clean water, but hundreds of thousands of people in some lands can eat only every other day. ARVs (often 20 or more pills daily) need to be taken at a certain time each day, but many patients do not own a timepiece. Drug combinations need to be adjusted according to a patient's condition. But there is a critical shortage of physicians in many lands. Clearly, providing ARV therapy to developing countries will be a difficult hurdle to surmount.

Even patients in developed lands face challenges in using combination therapy. Research reveals that failure to take all prescribed drugs at scheduled times is alarmingly common. This may lead to drug resistance. Such drug-resistant strains of HIV can be transmitted to others.

© Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures



■ KENYA A doctor instructs an AIDS patient about ARV treatment

## What Are ARVs?\*

In a healthy person, helper T cells stimulate or activate the immune system to attack infections. HIV particularly targets these helper T cells. It uses the cells to replicate itself, weakening and destroying helper T cells until the immune system is severely compromised. Antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) disrupt this replication process.

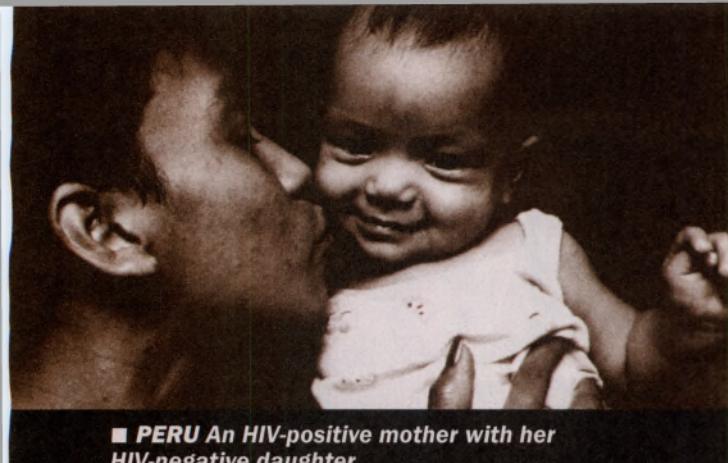
Currently, four main types of ARVs are administered. **Nucleoside analogues** and **non-nucleoside analogues** prevent HIV from copying itself onto a person's DNA. **Protease inhibitors** block a specific protease enzyme in infected cells from reconstructing the virus and producing more HIV. **Fusion inhibitors** aim to prevent HIV from entering cells. By suppressing HIV replication, ARVs can slow the progression from HIV infection to AIDS, dubbed the most severe clinical form of HIV disease.

\* Antiretroviral therapy is not prescribed for all people who have HIV. Those who have or suspect that they may have HIV should see a health-care professional before embarking on any medical treatment program. *Awake!* does not endorse any particular approach.

■ KENYA An AIDS patient receives her ARV medicine at the hospital

© Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures





© Annie Burgherdy/Panos Pictures

■ PERU An HIV-positive mother with her HIV-negative daughter

## Women now make up 50 percent of adults living with HIV/AIDS



© Ian Teh/Panos Pictures

■ THAILAND As part of their education, students visit an AIDS patient



© Sven Torfinn/Panos Pictures

■ KENYA A meeting with members of the organization Women Living With AIDS

## Women and AIDS

In 1982, when women were diagnosed with AIDS, it was thought that they must have been infected through intravenous drug use. Soon, it was realized that women could become infected through normal sexual intercourse and that they are at special risk of contracting HIV. Worldwide, women now make up 50 percent of adults living with HIV/AIDS. "The epidemic disproportionately affects women and adolescent girls who are socially, culturally, biologically and economically more vulnerable, and who shoulder the burden of caring for the sick and dying," reports UNAIDS.

Why is the growth of the disease among women a special concern to AIDS workers? HIV-infected women often face more discrimination than men, especially in some developing lands. If a woman is pregnant, the health of her child is endangered; if she already has children, caring for them becomes a challenge, particularly for a single mother. Further, comparatively little is known about the unique characteristics of HIV-infected women and their clinical care.

Certain cultural factors make the situation especially dangerous for women. In many countries women are not expected to discuss sexuality, and they risk abuse if they refuse sex. The men commonly have many sexual partners and unknowingly transmit HIV to them. Some African men have sexual relations with younger women to avoid HIV or in the false belief that sex with virgins can cure AIDS. No wonder WHO states: "Interventions must be aimed at men (as well as at women) if women are to be protected."

Dr. Stine points to another challenge faced by HIV patients. "The paradox of HIV treatment," he says, "is that sometimes the cure feels worse than the disease, especially when treatment begins before symptoms arise." HIV patients on ARVs commonly suffer from side effects including diabetes, fat redistribution, high cholesterol, and decreased bone density. Some side effects are life-threatening.

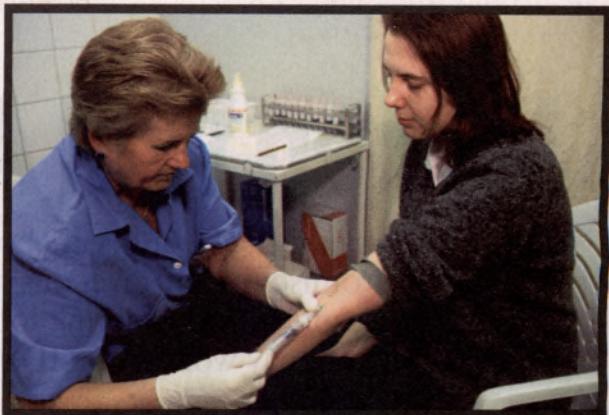
### Prevention Efforts

How successful have prevention efforts been in slowing the spread of AIDS and changing high-risk behaviors? Extensive AIDS education campaigns in Uganda during the 1990's cut HIV prevalence rates in that country from an estimated 14 percent to approximately 8 percent in 2000. Similarly, Senegal's efforts to inform its citizens about the risk of HIV infection have helped that country to maintain HIV prevalence rates below 1 percent among the adult population. Such results are encouraging.

On the other hand, AIDS education has not been so successful in other countries. A 2002 survey of 11,000 young Canadians revealed that half the students in their first year of high school believed that AIDS can be cured. According to a British study conducted the same year, 42 percent of boys between 10 and 11 years of age had never heard of HIV or AIDS. Yet, even youths who are aware of HIV and AIDS and the lack of a cure have grown complacent. "For many young people," says one doctor, "HIV has become just one of the many problems in their lives, like if they are going to get a good meal, who they are going to live with, whether they are going to school."

Not surprisingly, then, WHO states that "focusing on young people is likely to be the most effective approach to confronting the epidemic, particularly in high prevalence countries." How can youths be helped to act on warnings they have received regarding AIDS? And is it realistic to hope for a cure?

© Liba Taylor/Panos Pictures



■ **CZECH REPUBLIC** A blood test for AIDS, which is now treatable but not curable

## Myths About AIDS

### ■ HIV-infected people look sick.

"On average, it takes about 10 to 12 years for someone infected with HIV to develop AIDS," says Dr. Gerald J. Stine. "During this time, the HIV-infected will show few if any recognizable symptoms, but they are able to infect other people."

### ■ AIDS is a homosexual disease.

In the early 1980's, AIDS was initially identified as a homosexual disease. Today, however, heterosexual intercourse is the primary mode of HIV transmission in much of the world.

■ **Oral sex is "safe sex."** According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "numerous studies have demonstrated that oral sex can result in the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases." The risk of HIV transmission through oral sex is not as high as through other sexual practices. Nevertheless, the practice has become so prevalent that some doctors expect it to become a significant route for transmitting HIV.

■ **There is a cure for AIDS.** Although antiretroviral therapy can, in some patients, slow the progression from HIV to AIDS, there is currently no vaccine or cure.

# When Will AIDS End?

From an early age, youths are bombarded with sexual messages that encourage promiscuity. Intravenous drug use, another significant HIV route, is also widespread. Considering today's pervasive climate of irresponsible behavior, you may wonder if AIDS will ever end.



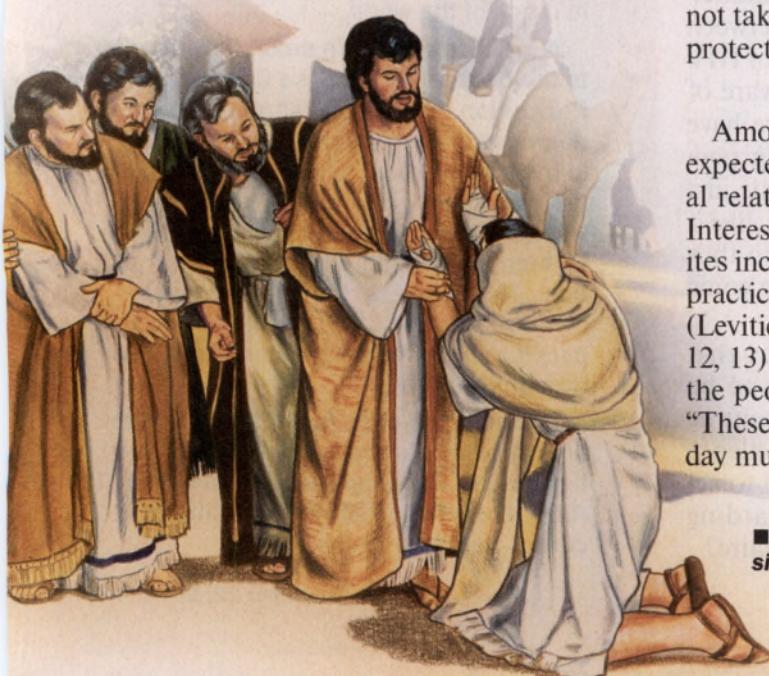
■ **Teaching your children about sex and drug abuse can protect them**

**H**EALTH professionals aptly point to behavioral changes as a vital strategy in the fight against AIDS. "Each and every generation of young people," says a report published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "needs comprehensive, sustained health information and interventions that help them develop life-long skills for avoiding behaviors that could lead to HIV infection. Such comprehensive programs should include the involvement of parents as well as educators."

Clearly, parents need to educate their children about these dangers before they are misinformed by their peers or others. This is not always easy. But it can save your child's life. Informing children about sex and drugs need not take away their innocence. It can actually protect them from losing their innocence.

## **Parental Training Is Vital**

Among God's ancient people, parents were expected to teach their children about sexual relations and how to protect their health. Interestingly, the laws of the ancient Israelites included clear moral guidelines as well as practices that protected them from infection. (Leviticus 18:22, 23; 19:29; Deuteronomy 23:12, 13) How were these laws to be taught to the people? Jehovah God told the Israelites: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart." Parents



■ **Jesus' ability and willingness to heal the sick showed what he will do in the future**

first had to understand the benefits of adhering to these laws and the consequences for failing to do so. Then, they were instructed: "You must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up."—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

One dictionary defines "inculcate" as "to teach and impress by frequent repetitions or admonitions." Obviously, time is involved. Parents who set aside time to teach their sons and daughters about the dangers of drug abuse and illicit sex certainly stand a better chance of seeing their children avoid types of behavior that can lead to contracting HIV and other diseases.\*

#### **Comfort for HIV/AIDS Sufferers**

Prevention efforts may be of little comfort to the millions of people who have contracted HIV/AIDS. Besides suffering the physical effects of the disease itself, they are often stigmatized and encounter rejection because of their condition. How so? A common, yet erroneous, belief is that casual contact can transmit HIV. Fear of contracting HIV/AIDS is understandable, since it is both communicable and fatal. Some have allowed their fear of the disease to become an irrational fear of people with it. Sufferers have been refused medical treatment, expelled from church, and even violently attacked.

Some people have contended that AIDS is a curse from God on the wicked. Admittedly, adhering to Bible standards on sexual morality, drug use, and blood would have kept many sufferers from contracting the disease. (Acts 15:28, 29; 2 Corinthians 7:1) Nonetheless, the Scriptures show that sickness is not evidence of God's punishment for a specific sin. On the contrary, the Bible states: "With evil things God cannot be tried nor does he

\* Many parents have found the book *Learn From the Great Teacher*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, to be helpful in progressively teaching young children about sex and basic moral principles.

himself try anyone." (James 1:13; John 9:1-3) A person who has HIV or AIDS because of failure to adhere to Scriptural standards but who has changed his behavior can be assured that he is not abandoned by God.

God's empathy and love for the chronically ill were evident when his Son, Jesus, came to earth. Encountering a leper during his travels, Jesus "was moved with pity, and he stretched out his hand and touched him." Jesus exercised his miraculous power and healed the leper. (Mark 1:40-42) Jesus did not look down

#### **Bible prophecy assures us that soon "no resident will say: 'I am sick'"**

on people who were ill. The love he displayed for them was a perfect reflection of his heavenly Father's love.—Luke 10:22.

#### **A Cure for AIDS—Soon!**

Jesus' miraculous healings do more than reassure us of God's love. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ now rules as a heavenly King. (Revelation 11:15) His ministry on earth showed that he has the power and the willingness to cure any malady afflicting mankind. That is exactly what he will do.

Bible prophecy assures us that soon "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isaiah 33:24) Despite the failure of mankind to stop the spread of AIDS or to provide effective treatment for all, we can be confident that AIDS will be abolished. "Bless Jehovah, O my soul," King David said, "and do not forget all his doings, Him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing *all* your maladies."—Psalm 103:2, 3.

When will this take place? What requirements does God have for those who hope to experience such blessings? We invite you to contact Jehovah's Witnesses to learn more about the Bible's wonderful promise.

# European Court Upholds a Mother's Rights

By *Awake!* writer in France

**O**N December 16, 2003, the European Court of Human Rights, located in Strasbourg, France, found the French courts guilty of religious discrimination against Séraphine Palau-Martínez, one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1996, Séraphine was granted a divorce from her husband, who had abandoned her two years earlier. She was given custody of their two children. But in 1997, by which time the children had been living with their mother for nearly three and a half years, the father refused to return them at the end of a visitation period. Séraphine relates: "When I went to fetch the children from school to take them home, the principal called the police. I had to see my children in the presence of police officers to ensure that I did not speak to them about my faith. It was as if I were a criminal. I was told that I could take the children only if I signed a declaration certifying that I would not speak to them about God or the Bible or take them to Christian meetings."

Séraphine turned to the courts. However, in 1998, the Court of Appeal of Nîmes granted custody to the father. It justified its decision with a severe and sweeping criticism of the educational principles that it believed Jehovah's Witnesses give their children. "It hurt so much," recalls Séraphine, "to be accused of harming my children, when all I was trying to do was give them what I thought was best for them—a Christian upbringing."

When the Cour de Cassation, the French supreme court of appeal, concurred with the appellate court, Séraphine decided to take the matter before the European Court of Human Rights. In a 6-to-1 decision, it ruled that "there

is no doubt in the eyes of the Court that the [French] court of appeal carried out a difference in treatment between the parents based on the applicant's religion. . . . Such a difference in treatment is discriminatory." It determined that the French court's decision was not based on Séraphine's capacity to look after her children—something that was never called into question—nor on hard facts but on "observations of a general nature about Jehovah's Witnesses." In view of this religious discrimination and violation of Séraphine's rights, the Court ordered France to pay damages and costs.

This decision is in harmony with a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights in June 1993 in a similar case in which the Court determined that Austria had discriminated against Ingrid Hoffmann, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, on the basis of her religion.\* "In harmony with the Hoffmann ruling," notes the French legal review *La Semaine juridique*, "this ruling confirms that a decision regarding parental authority can in no way be dictated primarily by

considerations of religion." Séraphine's lawyer stated: "This decision is very important, inasmuch as case law established by the Court is constant in asserting the right of Jehovah's Witness parents to an impartial judgment."

Asked how she felt about the decision, Séraphine, who now lives in Spain, declared: "I am very happy and relieved. Having my children taken away from me because of my religion and not seeing them for five years was a terrible ordeal, but Jehovah always sustained me. I hope that this ruling will help others in my situation."

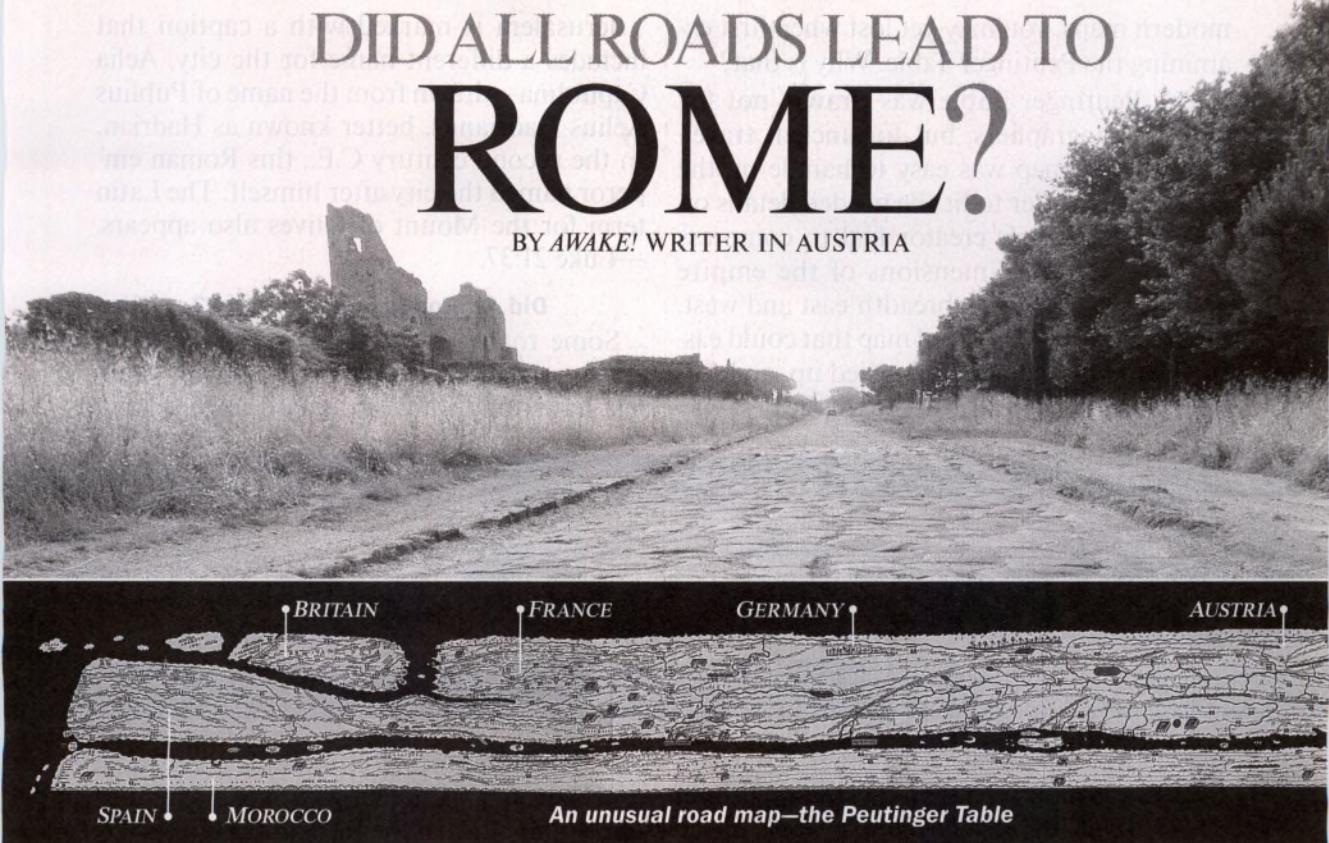
\* See *Awake!* October 8, 1993, page 15, "Jehovah's Witnesses Vindicated in Child-Custody Battle."



Séraphine

# DID ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN AUSTRIA



THE roads of the Roman Empire held far-flung provinces tightly bound to the capital. They connected the dense forests of Gaul with Greek cities and linked the Euphrates River with the English Channel. Above all, they made virtually every part of the realm accessible to the legions that spread the authority of Rome. From these paved thoroughfares, there were many secondary roads that branched out into the Roman provinces. This gave rise to the proverb, "All roads lead to Rome."

Over 50,000 miles of roads traversed the Roman Empire. How can someone today study them and understand the effect they had on that ancient world? One way is to examine a 13th-century map called the Peutinger Table.

Historians believe that the Peutinger Table

is a copy of a map originally made when Roman armies were still marching on the famous roads. In 1508, Konrad Peutinger, the town clerk of Augsburg in southern Germany, came into possession of that handmade copy, and his name became attached to it. Today it is in the Austrian National Library in Vienna under the Latin title *Tabula Peutingeriana*.

## The Roman World All Rolled Up

In modern classrooms students often study nearly square maps hanging on a wall. The Peutinger Table, however, is a scroll 13 inches wide and over 22 feet long when unrolled. It was originally made up of 12 separate sheets of parchment glued end to end. Of those, 11 exist today. This map shows the world of the Roman Empire's heyday, stretching from Britain all the way to India. Despite the knowledge you may have of that area on

modern maps, you may get lost when first examining the Peutinger Table. Why is that?

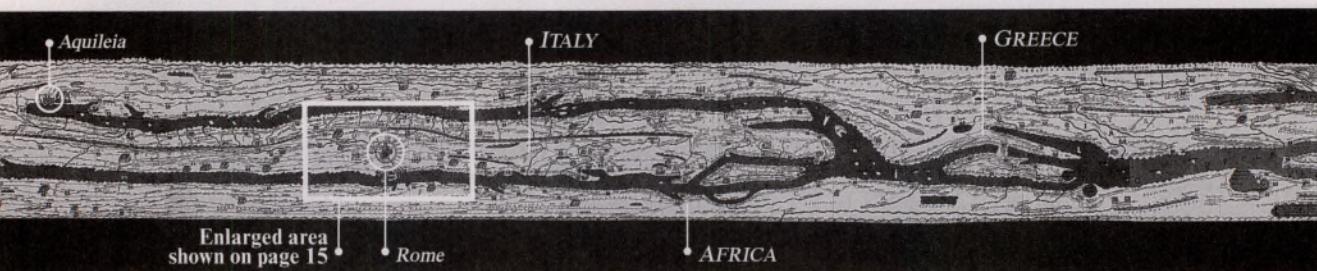
The Peutinger Table was drawn, not for modern geographers, but for ancient travelers. A scroll map was easy to handle on the road. But in order to fit the needed details on a scroll, the map's creator had to compress the north-south dimensions of the empire and greatly extend its breadth east and west. The result was a distorted map that could easily be opened, referred to, rolled up, and carried. A traveler could quickly see the best way

Jerusalem is marked with a caption that includes a different name for the city, Aelia Capitolina—drawn from the name of Publius Aelius Hadrianus, better known as Hadrian. In the second century C.E., this Roman emperor named the city after himself. The Latin term for the Mount of Olives also appears.

—Luke 21:37.

#### Did All Roads Lead to Rome?

Some roads led to Aquileia, a city located in northeastern Italy. On the map, Aquileia has strong walls and guard towers. As it



to get from one place to another. That was more important to people on the road than Italy's shape, the size of the Black Sea, or the actual direction in which they were going.\*

Different colors distinguish the Peutinger Table's features. Roads appear as red lines, mountains are brown, and rivers are green. The map names hundreds of towns and marks their locations with houses, walled courtyards, and towers. Those symbols seem to indicate the facilities present at each place. The map also shows distances between towns, stations, and rest stops.

Several Biblical places and events are noted on the Peutinger Table. Two descriptions in Latin are written in the area of Mount Sinai. One caption says: "The desert where the children of Israel under Moses wandered for 40 years." (Joshua 5:6) The other says: "This is where they received the Law on Mount Sinai."—Leviticus 27:34.

\* This still holds true for travelers. Modern metro or subway maps are often distorted but, at the same time, easy to use.

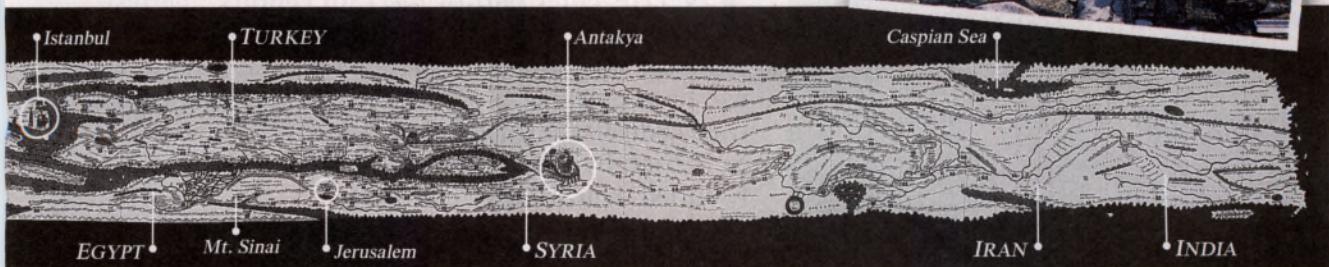
dominated important crossroads and had an excellent port, Aquileia was one of the most important cities in the Roman Empire.

The Via Egnatia crossed the Balkan Peninsula from the Adriatic Coast to Constantinople, now known as Istanbul. The Peutinger Table locates that city with the symbol of a goddess sitting on a throne but ready for war. Several roads led to Syrian Antioch, now the Turkish city of Antakya. Antioch was the third-largest city of the Roman Empire, after Rome and Alexandria. There the map shows a seated goddess with a halo.

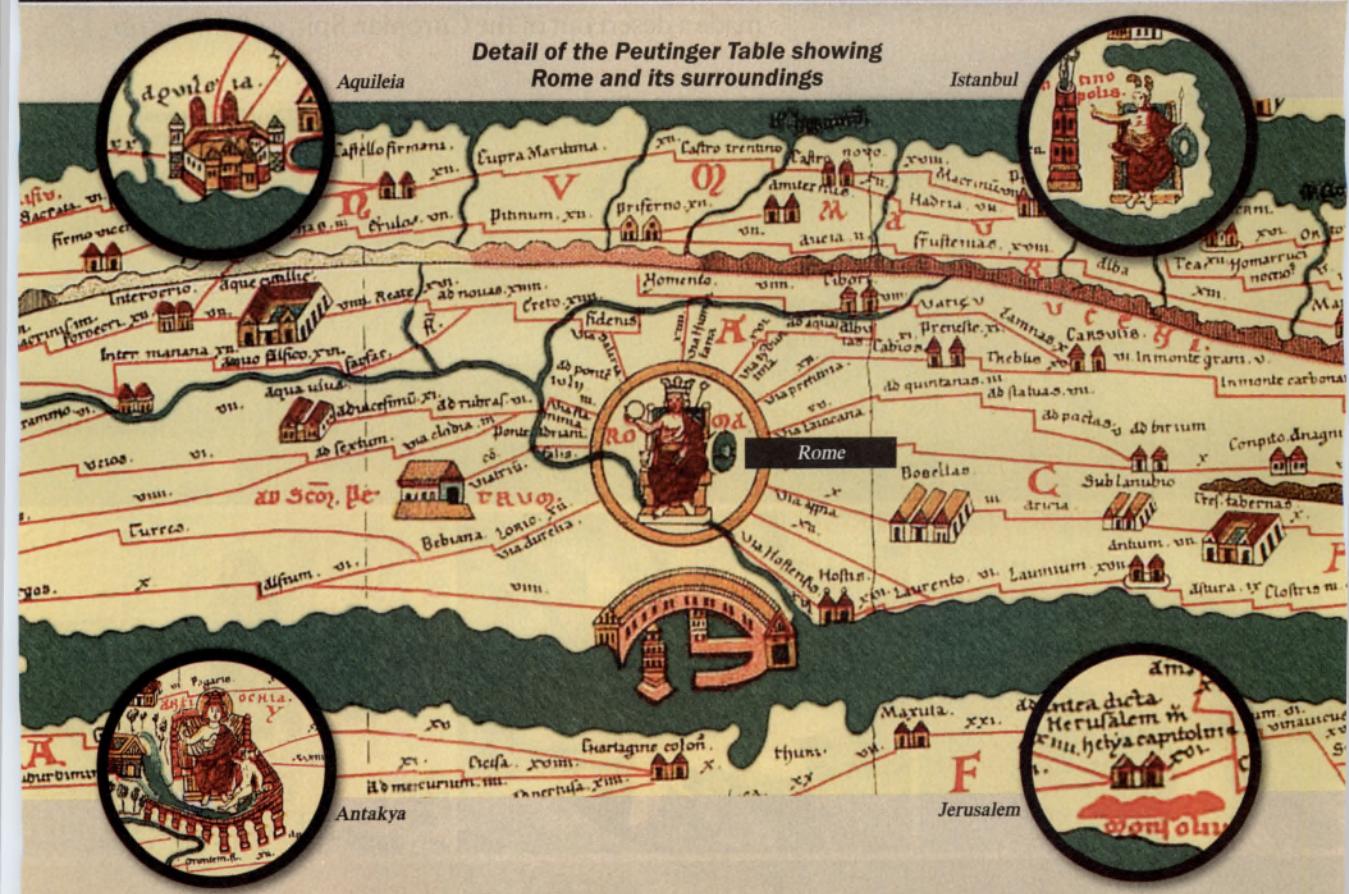
The Peutinger Table shows 12 roads leading into Rome. One of these is the Via Appia, or Appian Way. The book of Acts indicates that the apostle Paul traveled that road on his first journey to Rome. While Paul was en route, a group of Christians came down from Rome on the Via Appia and met him at Three Taverns, which also appears on the map.—Acts 28:15.

What symbol does the Peutinger Table use to represent Rome? It shows the city as a mighty empress in purple robes, sitting on a throne. The globe and the scepter in her hands stand for the world domination centered in that capital of the empire.

Is it accurate to say that all those roads led to Rome? Yes, when you consider the extensive network of feeder roads that branched out from the highways. The Peutinger Table shows how the empire's highways extended the reach of imperial power, allowing Rome to dominate the provinces for almost 500 years. Today you can still tour the Roman Empire on those ancient roads—that is, on the “wheels” of your imagination and with the Peutinger Table as your guide.



*Detail of the Peutinger Table showing Rome and its surroundings*





# A Paradise Reclaimed From the **DESERT**

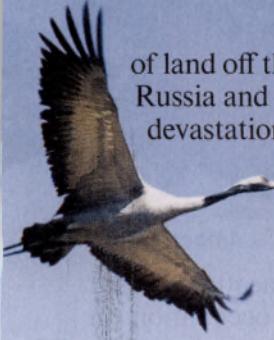
By *Awake!* writer in Lithuania

**I**N THE latter part of the 18th century, the residents of a small fishing village sensed that their home was doomed. For years a giant sand dune had been creeping toward their village. In vain they tried to divert the dune by building a triangular wooden barrier. By 1797, however, the dune had completely buried their village.

That was but one episode in an 80-year drama, during which dunes swallowed over a dozen villages and made a desert out of the Curonian Spit, a 60-mile strip

Bottom three inset photos: Gedimino Gražulevičius nuotrauka





of land off the Baltic Coast of what is now Russia and Lithuania. The causes of that devastation and the restoration of the region—now a major tourist attraction—make for a fascinating story.

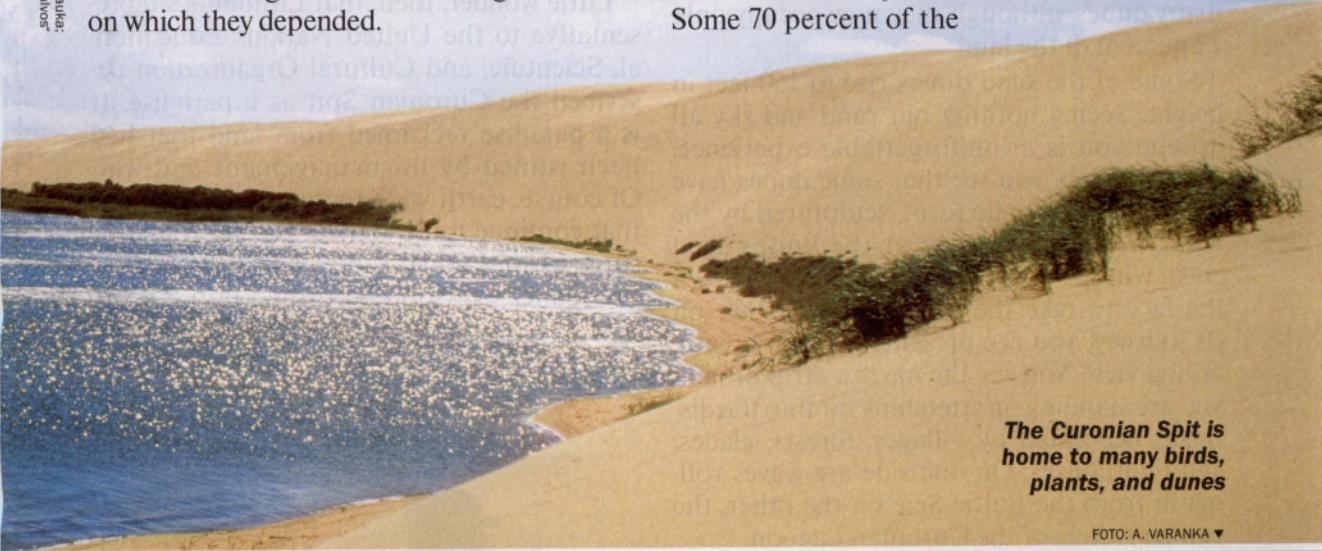
### A Victim of Mismanagement and Conquest

The sands of the Curonian Spit were covered with lush vegetation for many centuries. The forest provided the local people with plenty of game for hunting. By the early 18th century, the area had gained importance as part of the postal route between Western Europe and the Russian Empire. When the population increased during a period of peace, herds of livestock overgrazed the delicate green cover, and people overharvested timber from the forests. Little did the local residents realize how fragile the cover of vegetation was on which they depended.

The forest received its death stroke when a Russian army invaded in 1757 and chopped down its trees to build hundreds of shallow-draft boats for the siege of Königsberg (Kaliningrad), an important city in Prussia. During succeeding decades winds whipped up sand dunes and caused the disaster mentioned earlier.

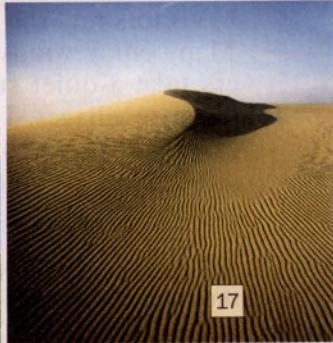
Could such a devastated landscape be restored? Georg David Kuwert, a determined postal employee, and his father, Gottlieb, were among those who believed so. In 1825 they set out to reforest the spit. It was a long, exhausting struggle. For more than a century, hundreds of people labored on the project. First they had to stabilize the ground with a special variety of sand-loving, deep-rooted grass. Then they planted thousands of acres with different varieties of hardy pines and birch. Finally the battle was won. Some 70 percent of the

Bird and grass: Gedimino Gražulevičiaus nuotrakai;  
background: UAB „Laimo“ spalvai



**The Curonian Spit is home to many birds, plants, and dunes**

FOTO: A. VARANKA ▼





**Wild boars**



**Mute swans**



**Amber**

dry land is now reforested. What is it like to visit the spit now?

### **Paradise for Tourists**

Today the Curonian Spit hosts as many as 8,000 tourists a day, and that is hardly surprising, since the spit's attractions are so varied. Whether you are hiking, cycling, or touring by car, the scenery changes rapidly. The forests are home to moose, roe deer, foxes, and wild boars. Some one hundred varieties of birds nest here, and up to a million birds migrate through the spit each year. There are 900 varieties of plants, and there are still many dunes, although they now occupy only 12 percent of the land.

Some of the sand dunes rise to 150 feet in height. Seeing nothing but sand and sky all around you is an unforgettable experience. As you climb, you see that some dunes have the classic parabolic form, sculptured by the wind. When you arrive at the knife-edged crest, where the windblown sand slides down the face to take the dune a step farther on its journey, you are presented with a breathtaking view. You see the narrow strip of land you are standing on stretching far into the distance, decorated by villages, forests, glades, and lighthouses. On one side are waves rolling in from the Baltic Sea; on the other, the calmer waters of the Curonian Lagoon.

Visitors find the crisp sea air invigorating. Many enjoy windsurfing and yachting; others take a quiet stroll through one of the old-style villages. The brightly painted houses with thatched or tiled roofs preserve the atmosphere of quieter times long past. The pungent smell of fish curing and the sight of

nets set out to dry remind vacationers that fishing was always the main occupation on the spit. Weather vanes are common, as fishermen are very interested in wind direction. The vanes became quite an art form here, and they make an interesting study. Adorning the mast of each sailing vessel, they served to identify its village of origin. Fascinating, too, are the pieces of amber that can sometimes be found washed up on the beach. Especially on cloudy days, tourists visit museums that display amber jewelry. Some pieces have fossilized plants and insects visible inside.

Little wonder, then, that Lithuania's representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization described the Curonian Spit as a paradise. It is a paradise reclaimed from land that had been ruined by mismanagement and war. Of course, earth wide there are many places that continue to be ruined. But the Bible assures us that under God's Kingdom our entire planet will soon be turned into a beautiful paradise for upright people to inhabit forever.—Isaiah 65:17, 21-25; 2 Peter 3:13, 14.

Top three photos: Gedimino Gražulevičiaus nuotrauka



**The Curonian Spit attracts thousands of tourists daily**

## Young People Ask . . .

# How Can I Cope With Failure?

**"I just got my report card, and I failed the same four classes again. I tried, but I just failed again."**

—Lauren, aged 15.

**"It's definitely a struggle to deal with failure. It's easy to start thinking negatively."**—Jessica, aged 19.

**F**AILURE. You may not even like to think of that word. But from time to time, we all face it. Whether it is failing a school test, experiencing a social embarrassment, disappointing someone we care about, or making a moral blunder, failure can be devastating.

Of course, all humans make mistakes. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," says the Bible. (Romans 3:23) Yet, some of us find it hard to pick ourselves up after a fall. A youth named Jason puts it this way: "I'm my own worst critic. If I make a mistake, people might laugh—but they usually forget about it. I don't forget, and I keep thinking about my mistake."

Giving some thought to one's failures is not necessarily a bad thing—especially if doing so moves you to make improvements. However, prolonged and unrelenting self-criticism is harmful and counterproductive. Says Proverbs 12:25: "Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down."

Consider a man in the Bible named Epaphroditus. He was sent to Rome to serve as the

apostle Paul's personal assistant. However, Epaphroditus got sick and was unable to fulfill that assignment. In fact, Paul ended up taking care of him! Paul arranged to send Epaphroditus home, informing the local congregation that this faithful man had also become depressed. The reason? "You heard he had fallen sick," explained Paul. (Philippians 2:25, 26) When Epaphroditus realized that others knew he was ill and unable to fulfill his duties, he may well have felt like a failure. No wonder he became depressed!

Is there any way to avoid the painful feelings of failure?

### Know Your Limits

One way to reduce the chance of failure is to set sensible, modest goals for yourself. "Wisdom is with the modest ones," says the Bible. (Proverbs 11:2; 16:18) And a modest person is aware of his or her limitations. True, it's good at times to challenge yourself so as to improve your skills and abilities. But be realistic. You may simply not be a whiz at math or have the grace and coordination of a

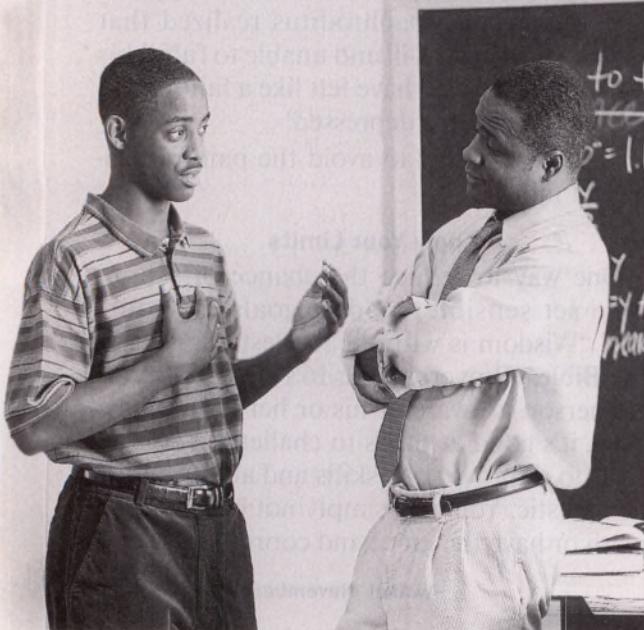


star athlete. A young man named Michael admits: "I know I'm not good in sports. So I play, but I do not set myself up for failure there." He explains: "You have to set goals that are within your means to accomplish."

Consider the attitude of 14-year-old Yvonne, who suffers from spina bifida and cerebral palsy. "I can't walk or dance or run like others," says Yvonne. "It makes me feel frustrated that I can't do what others do. Most people really don't understand. But I can deal with it." Her advice? "Don't stop. Just keep on trying. If you fail or do badly, don't give up. Just keep doing the best you can."

At the same time, don't torment yourself by making unfair comparisons with others. Andrew, aged 15, says, "I try to avoid comparing myself to someone else because we all have different strengths and abilities." Andrew's comments echo the Bible's words found at Galatians 6:4: "Let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person."

***If you feel overwhelmed by the demands placed upon you, find a respectful way to speak up***



## **High Expectations From Others**

Sometimes, though, high expectations are imposed upon you—by parents, teachers, and others. And you realize that, try as you may, you just can't please them. To make matters worse, such ones may express their disappointment in words that irritate or perhaps even crush you. (Job 19:2) Likely you realize that your parents and others are not deliberately trying to hurt you. As Jessica observes, "many times they don't even realize how they're affecting you. Sometimes it's just a misunderstanding."

On the other hand, is it possible that they see something you don't? For example, perhaps you really are selling yourself short and underestimating yourself. Instead of ignoring their urgings, you are wise to "listen to discipline." (Proverbs 8:33) Michael explains: "It's for your own good. They want you to do better, to improve yourself. Think of it as a challenge."

What, though, if you feel that the demands of parents and others are simply unreasonable—that you are being set up for failure? Then it would be wise to speak with them—respectfully, but candidly—and let them know how you feel. Together you may be able to set some goals that are more realistic.

## **"Failures" in Your Spiritual Life**

Among Jehovah's Witnesses, youths have the challenge of carrying out their assignments as ministers of God. (2 Timothy 4:5) If you are a young Christian, you may sometimes feel inadequate. Maybe you feel that you do not do very well in making comments at meetings. Or perhaps you have difficulty explaining the Bible's message to others. Jessica, for example, studied the Bible with another teenage girl. For a while her Bible student progressed well. Abruptly, though, the girl decided she did not want to serve God. Jessica recalls, "I felt like a failure."

How did Jessica cope with those feelings? First, she had to realize that her student

had rejected, not her, but God. She was also helped by meditating on the Biblical example of Peter, a godly man who had a number of shortcomings. She explains, "The Bible shows that Peter overcame his weaknesses, and he was used by Jehovah in many ways to advance Kingdom interests." (Luke 22:31-34, 60-62) Of course, if your skills as a teacher need improvement, why not apply yourself more in that regard? (1 Timothy 4:13) Avail yourself of the help of mature ones in the congregation who can teach and train you.

Perhaps, though, it is the door-to-door ministry that you find to be especially challenging. Jason admits, "Every door that closes feels like a small failure." How does he cope? "I have to remember that I have not really failed." Yes, he has succeeded in doing what God commanded him to do—to preach! And while rejection is admittedly hard to take, not all people will reject the Bible's message. "When I find a person who listens," says Jason, "then I know it's all worth it."

### Serious Errors

What if you make a serious error—or even commit a serious sin? Ana, who is 19 years old, made such a mistake.\* She admits, "I failed the congregation, my family, and especially Jehovah God." To recover, you need to repent and seek the help of spiritually older men in the congregation. (James 5:14-16) Ana recalls one elder's helpful words: "He said that despite all the negative things that King David did, Jehovah was still willing to forgive him, and David recovered. That helped me." (2 Samuel 12:9, 13; Psalm 32:5) You also need to do whatever you can to build yourself up spiritually. "I read the book of Psalms over and over," says Ana, "and I have a journal where I write down encouraging scriptures." In time, one can recover even from a serious fall. Says Proverbs 24:16: "The righteous one may fall even seven times, and he will certainly get up."

\* Her name has been changed.



**Working at things you do well can help dispel feelings of failure**

### Getting Past Failure

Of course, even relatively minor failures can still hurt. What can help you to get past them? First of all, face your mistakes realistically. Michael recommends: "Instead of just thinking of yourself as a general failure, pinpoint what you failed at and what caused it. This way you can do better next time."

Also, avoid taking yourself too seriously. There is "a time to laugh"—and that might include laughing at yourself! (Ecclesiastes 3:4) If you feel discouraged, turn your attention toward something that you do well, such as a hobby or a sport. Being "rich in fine works"—such as sharing your faith with others—can help you to feel more positive about yourself.—1 Timothy 6:18.

Finally, remember that "Jehovah is merciful and gracious . . . He will not for all time keep finding fault." (Psalm 103:8, 9) Says Jessica, "I feel that the closer I draw to Jehovah God, the more confident I can be about his support and help in anything that I go through." Yes, it is comforting to know that despite your failings, your heavenly Father values you.

# Man's Quest to HARNESS THE

**W**HAT do you think of when you look at the windmill on the following page? Are you reminded of a Dutch landscape? Or do you call to mind Don Quixote, a fictional Spanish nobleman who imagined windmills to be dangerous giants? Perhaps the picture makes you think of a restored windmill that is now a local landmark.

Although windmills still dot the countryside in many parts of the world, they may seem little more than quaint reminders of a bygone age. For centuries, however, windmills were at the cutting edge of technology. And recently, after decades of neglect, the windmill concept has enjoyed a revival that is benefiting people everywhere. You are invited to follow the history of the windmill as it has been adapted to changing winds and changing needs.

### Grinding Without the Grind

It all started with the basic need for bread. To obtain flour for bread, ancient peoples, such as the Israelites, ground edible grains by using "hand mills." (Numbers 11:7, 8) Grinding with one heavy stone above another by hand was an arduous task. In time, heavier millstones "turned by an ass" or some other draft animal became popular. (Matthew 18:6) But even animal-driven mills had their drawbacks.

### In Our Next Issue

- How to Make Real Friends
- The Internet—How to Avoid the Dangers
- Collecting—A Hobby That Requires Balance

Man had already learned to harness water power with the waterwheel and wind power with the sailboat. Possibly somewhere in the arid steppes of Asia or the Middle East about the seventh century C.E., the two concepts were combined to get the wind to turn a grindstone. The wind-driven sails of this new invention turned a vertical axle that was attached to a millstone.\* This type of rudimentary windmill served to grind wheat or barley as well as to pump underground water. How true that necessity is the mother of invention!

### Changing the Design to Catch the Wind

The early mills, with their sails revolving around a vertical axle, were not very efficient. But their efficiency greatly improved when it was discovered that more power could be produced when the sails or blades were attached to a horizontal shaft that jutted out of a tower. To turn the millstone below, the rotation of the horizontal shaft was transmitted to a vertical shaft through a series of gears. This modification enabled windmills to take greater advantage of the wind's energy. These new mills had enough power to drive heavy machinery, such as circular saws.

Whatever the task, however, windmills needed a constant energy supply. And wind has the inconvenient habit of changing direction frequently. How could the windmill's sails keep aligned with the wind? An early solution was the invention of a swiveling windmill, or post-mill. The mill was pivoted on a post, which permitted the whole structure, along with the main sails, to swivel directly into the wind.

\* These primitive windmills continued in use right down to the 20th century in parts of the Middle East.

# WIND

Spanish windmill  
with eight sails, named  
*El Molino Zabala*



Since such swiveling windmills had, of necessity, size limitations, other millwrights decided to keep the tower fixed and instead have a revolving roof. In these windmills the main axle protrudes from the roof, enabling roof and sails to face the wind irrespective of its direction. How could a miller move a roof complete with axle, sails, and a brake system? Take another look at the photograph on page 23 of a windmill in Cartagena, Spain. You will notice a beam that slides out of the roof behind the windmill and reaches down to the ground. Although it may look like a support post, it is actually a leverage arm. This pole can be pushed or pulled by human or animal power, turning the roof until the mill's blades face the wind.

Other windmills have what looks like a small propeller, or fantail, set behind the main sails. This fantail is designed to move the sails automatically in the right direction. How does it work? Imagine that the main sails of the windmill are facing the wind and revolving at full speed. Suddenly the wind shifts direction, and the sails slow down. The fantail, located at a right angle to the sails, now catches the wind and begins to spin. This motion turns a set of gears that automatically turn the roof and the sails back into alignment with the ever-shifting wind.

#### From Sails to Slats

Another factor that makes harnessing the wind difficult is its constant change of

strength. Early windmills, which had sails similar to those of a sailboat, could not easily adapt to variable wind speeds. If brakes were applied, the resulting heat produced by the friction could start a fire. And strong gusts of wind could cause sails to crash into each other or into the mill itself, causing untold damage. In some cases, when the brakes slipped while the miller was on a blade folding up the sails, he was flung into the air!

In 1772 this problem was overcome when a Scottish millwright replaced the sails with shutters that automatically opened and closed, somewhat resembling venetian blinds. The book *Windmills* explains: "When a strong gust comes, the pressure on the shutters overcomes the tension of the spring and the shutters open, spilling wind and slowing the sail. As the wind dies away, the tension of the spring overcomes the pressure of the wind and the shutters close, presenting a greater surface to the wind and maintaining the speed of the sail."

With rotating roofs and self-adjusting sails, windmills reached their zenith by the late 19th century, when it was estimated that European mills were churning out some 1,500 megawatts of power.\* But then the winds of technological change brought electricity, steam turbines, and the internal-combustion engine. Windmills could not compete with

\* One megawatt equals 1,000,000 watts. An average light bulb uses 60 watts.

**Modern wind turbines,**  
**Cádiz, Spain**

the efficiency and mobility of the new machines, and it seemed that the wind had been blown out of their sails forever. Then an unexpected need arose.

### Modern Successors to the Ancient Windmills

The fuel crisis of the 1970's led to the investigation of alternative energy not dependent on fossil fuels. At approximately the same time, a growing concern arose about emissions from fossil-based fuels polluting the atmosphere. The search began for "clean" energy. Suddenly, the windmill concept became an attractive option and wind turbines became a developing technology.

Modern "windmills" are much slimmer than their predecessors. This is because, unlike the traditional windmill, modern wind turbines do not normally drive a machine housed within the mill structure. Each turbine converts wind power into electrical energy, which often passes to the local electricity grid. By 1988 these new "windmills" were producing 1,500 megawatts of power in Europe, just as their predecessors had done a century earlier.

Looking like a line of huge, frost-covered trees on the crests of prominent hills, modern wind farms have begun to change the face of rural landscapes. Although these wind turbines may not look beautiful, most people feel that any negative visual impact is a small price to pay for the tens of thousands of megawatts of clean power that the wind turbines produce globally. These modern windmills make a significant contribution to the worldwide effort to reduce greenhouse gases, something that benefits everyone.

However, neither the traditional windmill nor the modern wind turbine could function if it were not for that never-ending supply of "clean" energy—the wind. How grateful we can be to "the Creator of the wind!"—Amos 4:13.

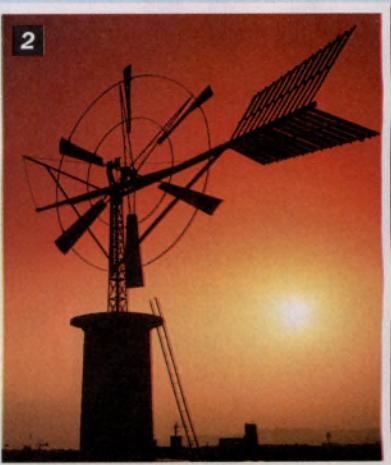
1. Consuegra, Spain

2. Majorca, Spain

3. Aruba, Lesser Antilles



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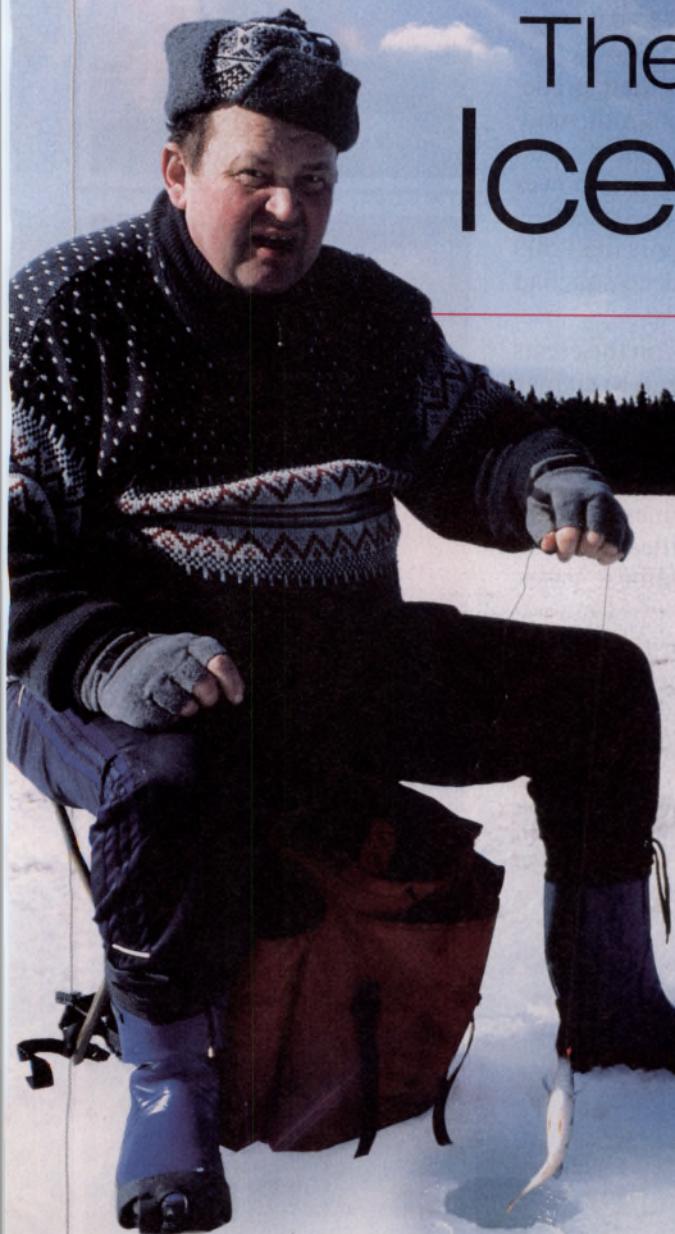


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# The Allure of Ice Fishing

By Awake! writer in **Finland**



**T**HE beautiful snowy winter days of the North provide numerous opportunities for outdoor activities.

To enjoy the glistening white scenery and cold fresh air, people head out to walk, ski, skate, or toboggan. Then there are those who prefer to fish through the ice. I have long wondered, 'What is so attractive about ice fishing?' So I asked my friend Martti, an experienced ice fisherman, to take me along on an ice-fishing excursion.

The day is dawning when I meet Martti in front of his home. He has already packed all the equipment: rods, lures, bait, seats, and the key tool—a big ice auger for drilling holes in the ice. The only thing I needed to provide was suitable clothing for myself. Clothes need to be both plentiful and warm. An ice fisherman stays seated for long periods of time, and in the wide-open spaces on seas and lakes, the wind may be frigid. Martti nearly always fishes on the sea because he lives near it. If he lived inland, he would probably enjoy ice fishing on a lake or a river.

When we arrive at the coast and step onto the ice, I think to myself, 'Is it safe to walk on the sea ice?' This time it is quite safe. Thanks to the freezing temperatures in the early winter, the ice is now exceptionally thick. Still, it is always necessary to be careful when on the ice. Even during severe winters, the ice may be thin in places. It is important to know the ice conditions and the risks involved and to be

properly equipped. After we walk a bit, Martti starts to drill a hole in the ice. It is like butter for the ice auger, and a 30-inch-deep hole is made in what seems like an instant. Using a skimmer, Martti cleans the hole of ice and slush. Then he sits down on his portable seat, sets his line, and drops the hook through the ice.

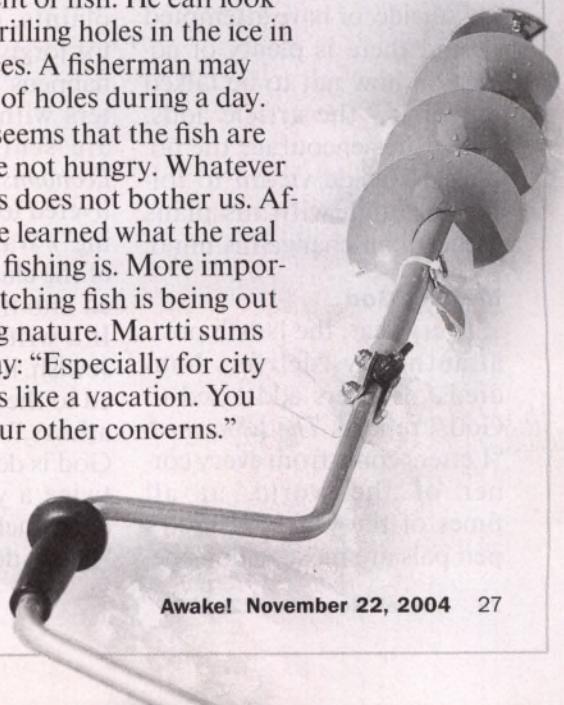
Although the basic idea of ice fishing is simple—drill a hole in the ice and start fishing—the process goes more smoothly with a little know-how. For example, choosing the right location is essential. Since fish use less energy to find food in the winter, it is important to know where the fish congregate. Martti pinpointed today's location on his earlier ice-fishing outings. If we had gone to strange waters, he would probably have made a careful survey on the map and planned beforehand where to look for fish. An ice fisherman also learns to observe the weather and its effects on the movement of fish. He can look for fish by drilling holes in the ice in various places. A fisherman may drill dozens of holes during a day.

Today, it seems that the fish are hiding or are not hungry. Whatever the case, this does not bother us. After all, I have learned what the real allure of ice fishing is. More important than catching fish is being out and enjoying nature. Martti sums it up this way: "Especially for city dwellers, it is like a vacation. You forget all your other concerns."



▲ Drilling through the ice

Ice auger ▼



# Watching the World

## Internet Suicides

Divorce, unemployment, and drug and alcohol abuse continue to be cited as the main factors contributing to a "large increase in suicides among young men" in England and Wales, according to an article in *The Times* of London. But Internet chat rooms where young people meet and arrange suicides are causing increasing concern. "The internet itself attracts those most prone to suicide: young men. Seventy-five per cent of suicides are by men and 80 per cent of those are committed by men aged 15 to 24," says the paper. There may be thousands of so-called death sites on the Internet. "Most participants in suicide websites feel unloved and already seem to be contemplating suicide, or have attempted it, and there is plenty of advice on how not to be talked out of it," the article adds. Some sites encourage the potential suicide victim to follow through with his plans rather than change his mind.

## Mail for God

Every year, the Israeli postal authority "delivers hundreds of letters addressed to God," reports *The Economist*. "Letters come from every corner of the world, at all times of the year, but God's pen pals are most zealous be-

## China's Great Wall Crumbling

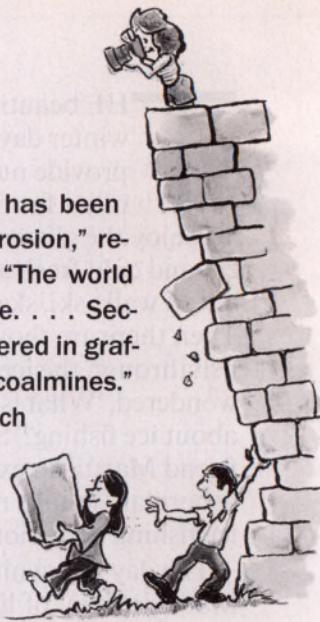
"Two-thirds of the Great Wall of China has been destroyed by sightseers, developers and erosion," reports London's newspaper *The Guardian*. "The world heritage site is crumbling out of existence. . . . Sections are said to have been vandalised, covered in graffiti and ripped up for use in pigsties and coalmines." Recently, the World Monuments Fund, which describes the wall as "one of the most extensive cultural landscapes on earth," placed it on its list of the world's most endangered architectural sites. Even those entrusted with the task of preservation have added to the wall's demise. In one instance, "hard-pressed and poorly trained conservation officials" apparently granted a developer permission to tear down a 45-foot section that was 600 years old. The wall's immense length—originally about 4,000 miles—makes it virtually impossible to maintain adequately.

fore religious holidays such as Christmas or Yom Kippur." The letters voice praise, complaints, or requests—often for forgiveness or help. What happens to the letters? "Letters with a sender's address are sent back," states *The Economist*. "The rest are delivered to the Western ("Wailing") Wall in Jerusalem, care of the chief rabbi, to be inserted into the holy wall's cracks. If a writer appears not to be Jewish, his missive is forwarded to the ministry of religious affairs." However, "mail to God is delivered only once or twice a year," says the article. Israel's telecom firm now "has a dedicated fax line to

God and has just opened an e-mail account for those wishing to speed up heavenly connections."

## Piracy Increases

According to the ICC International Maritime Bureau, "pirate attacks worldwide increased in frequency and violence last year, with a total of 445 incidents reported compared with 370 in 2002 . . . The number of attacks using guns rose to 100 from 68 in 2002 and hostages taken nearly doubled to 359 seafarers. Ships were boarded in 311 instances and a total of 19 ships were hijacked." Seventy-one crew and passengers were list-



ed as missing, while 21 seafarers were killed—11 more than the previous year. Indonesian waters, with 121 attacks, again proved to be the most prone to piracy, followed by Bangladeshi waters with 58 incidents and Nigerian waters with 39. “All hijackings reported were in two main categories,” notes the bureau. They were “military-style operations by militant groups seeking to hold crew members for ransom to raise funds for their cause and attacks against soft targets such as tugs and barges.”

### **Studies on Sex Abuse by Priests**

“Two long-awaited studies have found that the [U.S.]

Roman Catholic Church suffered an epidemic of child sexual abuse that involved at least 4 percent of priests over 52 years and peaked with the ordination class of 1970, in which one of every 10 priests was eventually accused of abuse,” reports *The New York Times*. “The human toll amounted to 10,667 children allegedly victimized by 4,392 priests from 1950 to 2002, but the studies caution that even these numbers represent an undercount,” as many cases have not been reported. One study, conducted at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, disclosed that “priests were accused of abuse in

more than 95 percent of dioceses and about 60 percent of religious orders.” The other study, by a Catholic national review board, pointed to a culture in Catholic seminaries that “tolerated moral laxity.”

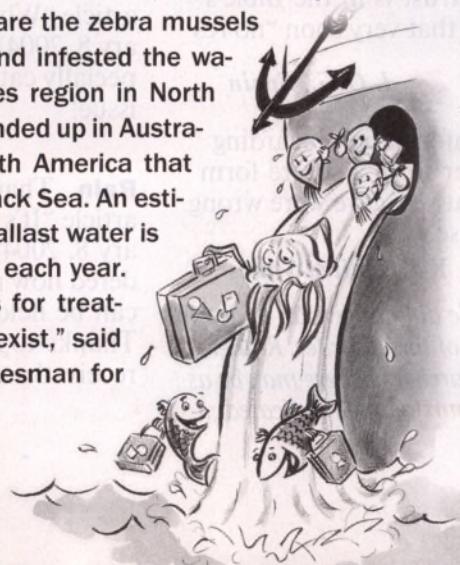
### **Moderate Exercise Recommended**

“Moderate amounts of exercise, such as walking 12 miles per week, may help prevent weight gain and can promote weight loss in non-dieting individuals,” reports *FDA Consumer*. An eight-month study involving “182 sedentary overweight men and women, ages 40-65 years,” confirmed “that there was a clear relationship between the amount of physical activity and amount of weight loss.” The participants were divided into four groups and maintained their regular diets. Three of the groups engaged in varying amounts of exercise. The fourth, a control group, did not exercise. “The control group gained weight over the study period,” states the article. “Compared with the control group, all exercise groups significantly decreased their waist and hip circumference measurements.” The findings suggest that weight can often be managed by modest amounts of exercise, such as walking for half an hour each day.

### **Alien Stowaways**

“Ballast water, carried by ships to provide balance and stability, is loaded with thousands of marine species that can invade new environments when released in ports,” warns the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) environmental group. The alien species, ranging from jellyfish to algae, “could be as damaging as oil spills” and wreck ecosystems, says a Reuters report. “Survivors of voyages can thrive in new habitats, freed from predators and parasites.” Examples are the zebra mussels that came from Europe and infested the waterways of the Great Lakes region in North America, Asian kelp that ended up in Australia, and jellyfish from North America that were transported to the Black Sea. An estimated ten billion tons of ballast water is released around the world each year.

“Good economic solutions for treating ballast water don’t yet exist,” said Andreas Tveteraas, a spokesman for the WWF.



## From Our Readers

**Sleep Debt** Thank you for the series "Sleep Debt—Are You a Victim?" (February 8, 2004) As always, *Awake!* readers received a wealth of educational information and comfort. I have suffered with sleep apnea for some two and a half years. At the beginning, I knew something was wrong, but I didn't know what. After my diagnosis, I learned just how serious sleep deprivation can be! This magazine will enable me to explain my situation to my friends.



W. M., United States

I work with computers and because of my schedule, my sleep habits have been irregular. Some time ago, in order to meet a deadline, I went several nights almost without sleep. Soon thereafter, I was making an announcement at a meeting at my local Kingdom Hall when I suffered a slight attack of disorientation. I said the exact opposite of what I was supposed to say! Reading this magazine and seeing what injury can result from lack of sleep has really scared me. Clearly the time has come for me to rethink my sleeping habits.

T. I., Japan

I suffer from restless legs syndrome, mentioned in the series. Although I have taken some positive steps to deal with my ailment, my trust is in the Bible's promise found at Isaiah 33:24 that very soon "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'"

L.O.G., Spain

Your article had some misinformation regarding restless legs syndrome. I suffer from a severe form of it, and the stated causes that you gave were wrong. This is a neuromuscular disease.

Y. J., United States

**"Awake!" responds:** Our article did not give an in-depth discussion of the medical causes of this disorder. Rather, it mentioned some things that researchers believe may be associated with it. At any rate, as our footnote indicated, a

more extensive discussion of restless legs syndrome appeared in the November 22, 2000, issue. That article stated: "Though experts recognize RLS to be a neurological disorder, its cause is difficult to pinpoint."

**Mexican Clothing** I read with much interest the article "We Appreciate the Clothes We Wear." (February 8, 2004) It pleased me very much that you made mention of the Chontal of Oaxaca, even though they are small in number when compared with other ethnic groups. My grandfather and great-grandfather were Chontal, and I feel that the information was presented with much dignity.

A. L., Mexico

Articles like this help us to become better acquainted with other cultures and races. Please continue to publish such fine information, as reading it is a way for us to visit people and places when we do not have the means to do so personally.

M.L.E., Mexico

**Feral Cats** I am 13 years old, and I really love reading *Awake!* I liked the article "When Cats Go Wild." (February 8, 2004) I love all animals but especially cats. I can't wait for the next issue!

Z. B., Russia

**Rain** Thank you very much for the article "It's Raining Again!" (February 8, 2004) For years I have wondered how millions of tons of water can be held in the atmosphere. Thanks to *Awake!* I have finally received an answer to my question.

G. D., France

# Is Living Together A Good Foundation for Marriage?

**T**WO people of the opposite sex living together without the benefit of marriage "has become a common phenomenon in industrialized societies across the world," says the *Journal of Marriage and Family*. And "about half of cohabiting individuals view living together as a way to assess compatibility prior to marriage." Seemingly, then, this arrangement "should eliminate poor matches and make subsequent marriages more stable," notes the *Journal*.

"The evidence, however, suggests the opposite conclusion," the *Journal* goes on to say. "Among married individuals, premarital cohabitation is related to lower marital satisfaction, less time spent together in shared activities, higher levels of marital disagreement, less supportive behavior, less positive problem solving, [and] more reports of marital problems . . . Furthermore, compared with couples who enter directly into marriage, couples who cohabit first have a higher risk of marital dissolution [divorce]."

As this study demonstrates, what might seem prudent from a human standpoint may in reality be very unwise. This fact underscores the truth of the words at Jeremiah 10: 23: "It does not belong to man . . . even to direct his step." How much wiser it is to look to God's Word, the Bible, which provides much fine counsel on the subject of marriage! (2 Timothy 3:16) For example, regarding the marital relationship, the Bible says:



"A man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh."—Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5.

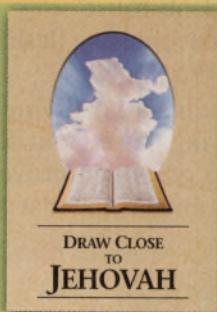
Heeding that divine directive, instead of following flawed and often fickle human reasoning, greatly improves prospects for a truly happy and lasting marriage.—Proverbs 3:5, 6.

# HOW TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

Many people have recommended reading the book *Draw Close to Jehovah*. Wrote one reader: "I just finished reading it, and never before have I been so moved. Thank you for all the reminders of what a loving, caring, kind, and concerned Father Jehovah really is."

Another person expressed how she felt, explaining: "The book gives me an opportunity to get to know my Father more intimately—his awesome thoughts and deep loving feelings for us all. It's like holding a precious diamond, brilliant and beautiful, and turning it slowly to examine each facet—each new chapter being even more exquisite than the last."

Still another woman observed: "I have just finished reading *Draw Close to Jehovah*. As I reached the last two paragraphs, I had to take breaks and pray because I was so overwhelmed with awe and love. My appreciation for Jehovah has been brought to such unfathomable depths!"



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