

Awake!

MARCH 2006



*What has happened
to Love?*

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 32,412,000
PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

Courtesy of Tourism Queensland



- 3 The Desire to Be Loved
- 4 Why True Love Is Hard to Find
- 8 How You Can Find True Love
- 10 Emergency Call—London
- 12 The Bible's Viewpoint
Was Jesus Really the Son of God?
- 18 A Bean That Traveled the World
- 24 In Search of the Mouflon
- 26 Young People Ask . . .
How Can I Say No to Sex at School?
- 29 Watching the World
- 30 From Our Readers
- 31 How Would You Answer?
- 32 The Most Important Date in History

An Island Paradise of Sand 14

Join us as we visit a beautiful subtropical island at the southern end of Australia's Great Barrier Reef.

'I Want to Serve God Before I Die' 21

Twelve-year-old Mamie fled her burning home during a civil war. She was hit by a bullet and expected to die. Read her touching story.



What has happened to Love? 3-9

In today's world many people feel unloved. Yet, love is vital for our happiness and well-being.

Learn how you can cultivate this special quality.



The desire to be loved

Long ago in a city located in what is today the land of Turkey, there lived a girl named Leah. Leah was plain in appearance, but her younger sister, Rachel, was beautiful.

RACHEL met a man who loved her so much that he agreed to work for her father for seven years to gain her hand in marriage. On the wedding night, however, the father of the girls substituted Leah for her sister. We do not know how Leah felt about her father's scheme, but she must have known that this was hardly an ideal entry into marriage.

Upon discovering what had happened, the new husband protested. The father explained that it was customary to give the older daughter first in marriage. Hence, Leah now found herself married by deceit to a man whose first love was for her younger sister, whom he also married. How sad Leah must have felt when she saw her sister receive most of the affection! Leah had no romantic tales to tell of her courtship and few, if any, happy memories of her wedding day. How she must have yearned to be loved as Rachel was! Thus, partly because of circumstances over which she had little control, Leah may have often felt unloved and unwanted.*

* This account is found in chapters 29 and 30 of the Bible book of Genesis.

To some extent, many today can relate to Leah. We all have a deep-rooted need to love and to be loved. Perhaps we yearn for a mate who will love us. We also want the affection of our parents, our children, our siblings, and our friends. Like Leah, we may see others who find love, whereas we do not.

From infancy we hear romantic tales of beautiful people who fall in love and live happily ever after. Singers croon about love; poets extol it. However, a researcher on the subject wrote: "There is hardly any activity, any enterprise, which is started with such tremendous hopes and expectations, and yet, which fails so regularly, as love." Indeed, it is often our closest relationships that are the most troubling —bringing us anguish instead of lasting joy. In a number of countries, about 40 percent of all marriages now end in divorce, and many couples who do not divorce are far from happy.

Many lands have also seen an increase in both single-parent and dysfunctional families, in which children have also become victims. Yet, children especially need the emotional security of a warm, loving family environment. So, what has happened to love? Where can we turn in order to learn about this precious quality? The following articles will examine these questions.

Why true love is hard to find

There is no shortage of advice on romantic love. Therapists and counselors offer guidance. Talk shows on television often consider the subject.



ON THE Internet numerous Web sites claim to offer enlightenment on how to find love. You might be told that you will discover “fascinating and incredible secrets” and will learn from “professional matchmakers,” “relationship experts,” and “love doctors,” not to mention psychotherapists, psychologists, and astrologers.

The topic of love also sells books and magazines, some of which make extravagant promises. For example, one book claims to show you “how to make anyone fall in love with you.” Another offers to reveal how you can find “the perfect partner in just one month.” Is a month too long? Then another divulges how “in 90 minutes or less,” you can make someone love you forever.

Much of the advice comes at a price. And many people pay twice. They pay money to receive counsel. Then, when the guidance turns out to be flawed, as it often does, they pay emotionally when things don’t work out as expected.

There is, however, one source of advice that when applied never fails. Moreover, it discusses the subject truthfully, without making wild claims and unrealistic promises. Though it was written long ago, its counsel is never outdated. Its Author is both peerless in wisdom and matchless in love. Perhaps you already own a copy of this special gift—the Holy Bible. No matter what our circumstances or background, the Bible teaches us what we need to know about love. And its counsel is free.

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.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589. © 2006 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Will the Bible enable us to have a good relationship with everyone? No. Some people will not warm to us, no matter how hard we try. And genuine love cannot be forced. (Song of Solomon 8:4) However, by applying the Bible's guidance, we will increase our opportunities of cultivating loving relationships with others, even though this may take time and effort. This aspect of love will be discussed in the next article, but first, consider why true love is becoming harder to find these days.

Love "Will Cool Off"

In his great prophecy on "the conclusion of the system of things," Jesus accurately foretold the conditions and trends of our day. He said that the world would be marked by lawlessness and wars—the very opposite of love! He also said that "many . . . will betray one another and will hate one another" and that "the love of the greater number will cool off." (Matthew 24:3-12) Do you not agree that the world has grown colder and that genuine love is lacking, even within families?

In addition to Jesus' words, the apostle Paul gave a detailed social profile, as it were, of "the last days." He wrote that people would be "lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Timothy



People who love less are less lovable

3:1-4) In many lands those traits have become very common.

Think: Are you drawn to proud, unthankful people, to those who are disloyal, who will slander or betray you? Do you warm to individuals who are in love with themselves, with money, or with pleasures? Because self-centered people allow greed and personal desires to define and govern their relationships, any interest they show in others is likely to be selfish. Wisely, the Scriptures counsel: "From these turn away."—2 Timothy 3:5.

Note, too, the statement that people living in the last days would have "no natural affection" or that, as another translation puts it, they would "lack normal affection for their families." Sadly, an increasing number of children are growing up in homes like that. Often, what these young ones learn about love they pick up from the media. But do the media paint an accurate picture of love, one that will really produce better relationships?

Fantasy Love or the Real Thing?

To some degree most of us are influenced by the media. One researcher wrote: "From the time we're very young, we're barraged with fairy-tale depictions and hard-to-break stereotypes of sex, love, and romance in the popular culture—movies and television, books and magazines, radio and recorded music, advertising, and even the news." She

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified), Croatian, Czech,[#] Danish,[#] Dutch,[#] English,[#]+[○] Estonian, Finnish,[#] French,[#] Georgian, German,[#] Greek, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hungarian, Igbo, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,[#] Japanese,[#] Korean,[#] Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Myanmar, Nepali, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese,[#] Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Sesotho, Sinhala, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,[#] Swahili, Swedish,[#] Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Ukrainian, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

[#] Audiocassettes also available.

[○] CD also available.

[○] MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Publication of *Awake!* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*.

Would you welcome more information? Write Jehovah's Witnesses at the appropriate address: **America, United States of:** Wallkill, NY 12589. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4. **Ghana:** P. O. Box GP 760, Accra. **Jamaica:** P. O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **New Zealand:** P. O. Box 75-142, Manurewa. **Nigeria:** P.M.B. 1090, Benin City 300001, Edo State. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Zambia:** Box 33459, Lusaka 10101. **Zimbabwe:** Private Bag WG-5001, Westgate.

Heroes and Heroines of Romance

In the United States, romance novels annually generate more than a billion dollars in sales. About half the paperback fiction sold in that country is romance. According to statistics published by Romance Writers of America, the three primary traits that readers, some 90 percent of whom are women, look for in heroes are muscles, handsomeness, and intelligence. The three most popular traits in heroines are intelligence, strength of character, and attractiveness.

also explained: "Most mass media portrayals of sex, love, and romance shape or reinforce unrealistic expectations that most of us can't dismiss completely. They make us dissatisfied with our real partners as well as with ourselves."

Yes, books, movies, and songs rarely present an accurate picture of love. After all, their purpose is primarily to entertain, not to educate. Thus, writers churn out blends of fantasy and romance that will bring in the money. Sadly, though, it is easy to confuse such fiction with reality. Hence, people are often disappointed when their relationships do not match those of fictional characters. So how can we distinguish between fantasy and reality, between media romance and genuine love? Consider the following comparisons.

Storybook Love Versus Real Love

Whether in books, movies, or plays, love stories may vary, but their essential structure, or formula, changes little. The *Writer* magazine states: "Much of romance writing continues to be formulaic. There's a reason for that. The boy-meets-girl/boy-loses-girl/boy-gets-girl-back formula is a tried-and-true blueprint that readers return to time and again, no matter the setting or era." Let us have a closer look at this popular formula.

Boy meets girl: A handsome prince meets a beautiful woman, and love is born. A successful author advises would-be romance writers that "it should be apparent to your

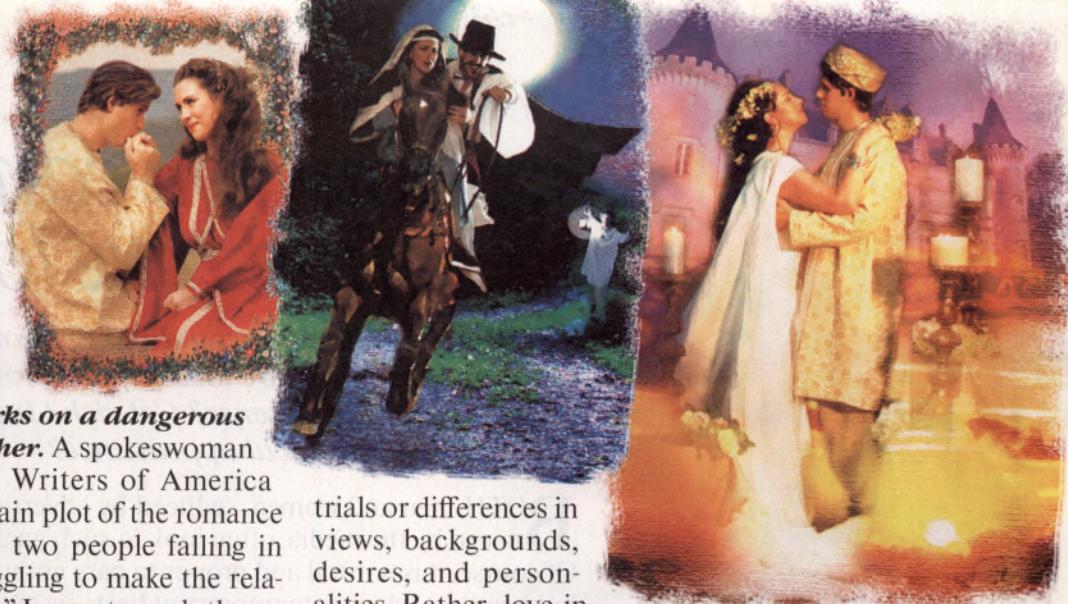
reader from [the couple's] very first glance that these two souls belong together."

The love-at-first-sight notion implies that true love is just a feeling—an overpowering emotion that grips you when you meet the right someone—that such love just happens, and that it requires little effort or knowledge of the other person. Real love, however, is much more than a feeling. Granted, feelings are involved, but love is a profound human bond that also includes principles and values and that never ceases to grow, providing it is properly nurtured and maintained.
—Colossians 3:14.

Moreover, it takes time to get to know another person. To assume that at first sight you have found the perfect partner smacks of fantasy and usually leads to disappointment. Additionally, in quickly assuming that you have found true love, you may shut your mind to evidence to the contrary. Choosing a suitable mate requires more than a strong impression influenced by a flush of infatuation. So take your time. Indeed, numerous studies have shown that the poor choice of a mate can negatively affect job performance, mental and physical health, and even life span.

Boy loses girl: An evil count kidnaps the beautiful woman and flees the castle. The

Storybook love is relatively easy; real love requires effort



prince embarks on a dangerous quest to find her. A spokeswoman for Romance Writers of America notes: "The main plot of the romance must concern two people falling in love and struggling to make the relationship work." In most novels the relationship *will* work—readers know that. Obstacles, often of an external kind, are overcome.

In real life there are usually problems of an external kind and of an internal kind. They may involve money, work, relatives, and friends. Problems also emerge when one person does not meet the other's expectations. In fictional characters, flaws are usually minor, but this is not always the case in real life. Further, real love does not carry us effortlessly through

trials or differences in views, backgrounds, desires, and personalities. Rather, love involves cooperation, humility, mildness, patience, and long-suffering—qualities that do not always come naturally or easily.—1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

Boy gets girl: The prince rescues the beautiful woman and banishes the count. The couple marry and live happily ever after. An editor of romance novels advises would-be writers: "You need that happily-ever-after ending. . . . The reader should be satisfied that the couple is together and happy." Romance novels rarely portray their characters after years of marriage. During that time disagreements and a host of other challenges and difficulties may have tested the relationship. As divorce statistics show, in time many marriages fail the test.

Yes, storybook love is relatively easy; real love requires effort. Understanding the differences between the two will safeguard you against naive, unrealistic expectations. It will also prevent you from making hasty commitments that you may later regret. The next article will discuss how you can cultivate true unselfish love and how you can become a more lovable person.



The media rarely present an accurate picture of love



How you can find true love

What can you do to find love and to become more lovable, and not just in a romantic sense? Get rich? Improve your physical appearance?

BOTH men and women, seduced by advertising and influenced by the media, often look to such goals as solutions. Of course, it is natural and proper to care about how we look, but beauty—which is temporary at best—is not the cement of lasting bonds. Neither is wealth. What does help is showing unselfish love to others. “Practice giving, and people will give to you,” Jesus taught. (Luke 6:38) Simply put, if you want to be loved, show love.

“There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.”
—Acts 20:35

How can we do that? Writing under the guidance of God’s holy spirit, the apostle Paul answered that question. He revealed that love is dynamic, that it is defined, not by emotions, but primarily by what it does for others and by what it refrains from doing. Note Paul’s words: “Love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”—1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

How do you feel when someone is kind to you or when he or she accepts you despite the little irritating things you may say or do? Are you not drawn to a person who is sincerely concerned about you, who is not easily angered, and who is forgiving and truthful even when forgiveness and honesty are not easy?

So, act that way toward others. Jesus said: “All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.” (Matthew 7:12) It is not always easy to show love, yet the effort is worth it. For one thing, you will be more loved by your family, friends, marriage mate, or prospective marriage mate. Also,



If you want to be loved, show love



you will experience happiness in doing the right thing, in giving of yourself for others. Yes, “there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.”—Acts 20:35.

Learn Love From the Highest Authority

Jehovah is the God of love, the highest authority on the subject. (1 John 4:8) His love moves him to teach this quality to all who are willing to learn. Consider a few examples of Bible principles that help us to love and be loved.

“Be swift about hearing, slow about speaking.” (James 1:19) A survey of more than 20,000 couples showed that the happiest people were those whose partners were good listeners. Good communication is vital in a relationship. A professor of sociology wrote: “If you want to feel alone in a relationship, be with someone who hasn’t a clue about what you are going through. Or worse, someone who does have a clue but cannot understand why your pain is a big deal.” She adds that even if two people are different in various ways, “if a partner is sensitive to how you see the world and experience life, then those differences are unimportant.”

“You are cramped for room in your own tender affections. . . . Widen out.” (2 Corinthians 6:12, 13) We benefit when we widen out in our love for others. A publication from Harvard Medical School states: “Dozens of studies have shown that people who have social support—that is, satisfying relationships with family, friends, and their community—are happier, have fewer health problems, and live longer.”

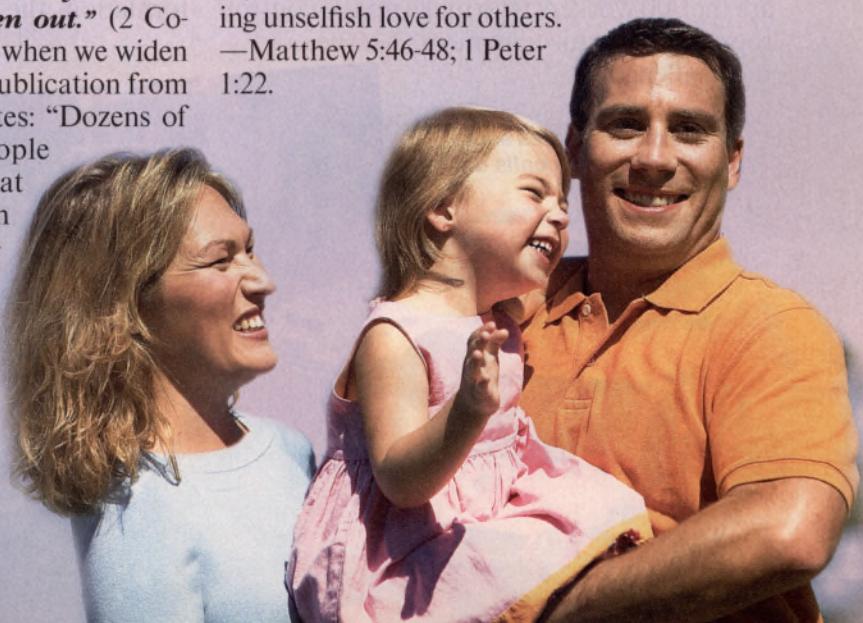
“Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works.” (Hebrews 10:24, 25) We are influenced by

our associates. By spending time with those who show genuine Christian love, you will experience this quality firsthand and learn how you can demonstrate it in your life. Jehovah’s Witnesses strive to display such love among themselves, knowing that it is an identifying mark of Jesus’ true disciples. (John 13:35) You are most welcome to attend their Christian meetings.

If you feel unloved, do not be discouraged or judge yourself harshly. Keep in mind that Jehovah sees your situation. Do you recall Leah, mentioned in the first article of this series? Jehovah took note of her situation, and she came to be the mother of six sons and one daughter—a rich blessing in an era when children were considered such a precious asset! Furthermore, all of Leah’s sons became forefathers of tribes in Israel. (Genesis 29:30-35; 30:16-21) How comforting God’s loving concern must have been to Leah!

In the new world promised in the Scriptures, no one will feel unloved. Instead, true love will permeate human society. (Isaiah 11:9; 1 John 4:7-12) So let us demonstrate now that we want to be there, by cultivating the love that is taught in the Bible and that has been demonstrated by its Author. Yes, real joy lies not just in being loved but in showing unselfish love for others.

—Matthew 5:46-48; 1 Peter 1:22.





EMERGENCY CALL LONDON

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN BRITAIN

WE AIM to reach seriously ill and injured patients within eight minutes anywhere in London's 620 square miles," explained ambulance operations manager Rob Ashford, of the London Ambulance Service. "We manage this in over 75 percent of the cases, despite an annual rise in the number of incidents."

I was invited to visit London's Central Ambulance Control at Waterloo on the south bank of the river Thames. The largest of its kind in Europe, the center handles some 3,000 emergency calls daily. These calls come from a population of about seven million people, who speak over 300 languages. How are the 300 workers who make up the control-room staff organized to meet the challenge?

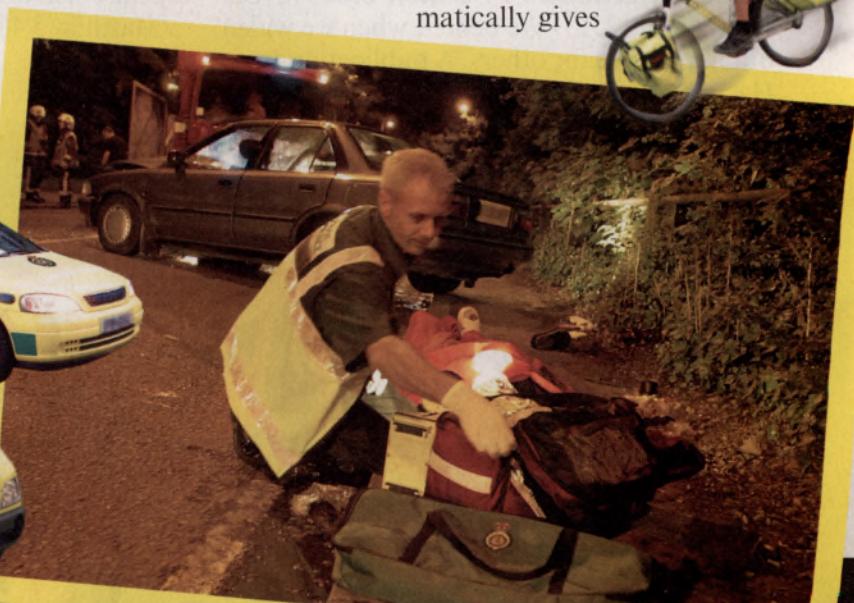
The center handles some 3,000 emergency calls daily

Grading the Calls

I observed an operator responding to incoming "999 emergency calls," as they are termed in Britain—999 being the emergency telephone number. Quickly the operator identified the location of a problem and the nearest street intersection. Immediately a road map flashed onto her computer screen. To determine the level of priority, she asked a series of questions: How many people need help? What is their age and gender? Are they conscious? Are they breathing? Do they have chest pains? Are they bleeding?

As an operator enters this information, the computer automatically gives

All photos: Courtesy of London Ambulance Service NHS Trust



the incident a rating: red—immediately life threatening, amber—serious but not immediately life threatening, or green—neither immediately life threatening nor serious. The operator then transfers this assessment to a colleague who gets help to the victim.

On-Site Assistance

The service has 395 ambulances and 60 fast-response cars. When an emergency is reported, the nearest appropriate vehicle is directed to the scene. Motorcycle paramedics are also on call, for they can more easily weave their way through traffic in congested areas. Additionally, 12 doctors are on call 24 hours a day to help the paramedics.

While I was at the center, local police reported a serious accident on a busy highway. An ambulance was already on hand, but the police called the ambulance headquarters anyway. Why? To alert the staff there to the possible need for their helicopter service. This distinctive red aircraft flies approximately 1,000 missions a year. It is manned by a paramedic and a doctor, who usually transfer the seriously injured to the Royal London Hospital, where they receive prompt attention.

In 2004, yet another initiative was introduced—a trial bicycle ambulance unit at London's Heathrow Airport, an extension of a service already working in the city's West End. A team of emergency medical technicians and paramedics share this responsibility, thereby releasing ambulances for other duties. Each bike, fitted with a blue light and a siren, has panniers carrying 77 pounds of equipment, including a defibrillator, oxygen, and analgesics.

Within a few days of its creation, the bicycle unit proved its worth. A 35-year-old woman became ill in Heathrow's Terminal 4 and stopped breathing. Two paramedics responded to the 999 call within seconds, gave her oxygen, and immediately started resuscitation. An ambulance rushed her to the nearest hospital. After convalescing, she thanked the paramedics in person for saving her life.

An Expanding Service

When 999 callers do not speak English, they are transferred to an interpreter. Determining a caller's language can, of course, be a challenge, especially when the person is talking fast because of anxiety or stress!

To promote public education in emergency health care, a short film with English subtitles has been made available on DVD. The goal is to encourage Londoners from communities in South Asia "to learn how to perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation," says *LAS News*, a publication of the London Ambulance Service. The DVD also shows what happens when a 999 call is received.

The citizens of England's cosmopolitan capital are grateful for the prompt response provided for their medical emergencies, whether these involve just one person or many and whether they occur underground or high up in a skyscraper. Concerning the men and women of the London Ambulance Service, a volunteer doctor commented: "They are some of the best medical professionals I've worked with." This is fine commendation for the staff of the largest free ambulance service in the world.

Problems and Frustrations Inappropriate calls for personal information and calls about minor illnesses and injuries, as well as calls resulting from people dialing 999 accidentally or just for fun, cause problems for the emergency services. Worse still, some patients and others, including their family members, have abused and even assaulted medical personnel coming to help! The anger these individuals feel may be caused by stress or drug abuse or impatience because they think that aid took too long to arrive. There is no simple solution to these problems, but public education has helped.

Was Jesus Really the Son of God?

WITH deep conviction the apostle Peter said to Jesus: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:16) This is but one of many references in the Bible to Jesus as the Son of God, an expression that has stirred a wide range of responses among the religiously inclined.

Many who believe that Jesus Christ is God have difficulty explaining why he is called the Son of God. Logic suggests that he cannot be both. Others think of Jesus as an important historical character, a wise man, or perhaps even a bona fide prophet of God, but nothing more. What does the Bible really teach? Does it matter what you believe?

God's Firstborn

The Bible indicates that there was a time when God was alone. In his love he decided to share the gift of life by becoming a father—but not in the human sense. Rather, Jehovah used his unfathomable creative power to form a living, intelligent spirit person—“the beginning of the creation by God,” whom we now know as Jesus Christ. (Revelation 3:14; Proverbs 8:22) Because Jesus was directly created by God when God was all alone, Jesus is rightly called the “only-begotten son” and “the firstborn of all creation.”—John 1:14; Colossians 1:15.

Clearly, then, as the very first of God’s creations, Jesus could not be the Creator, “the only God.” (1 Timothy 1:17) On the other hand, God granted his Son many privileges. For example, through Jesus, God created “all other things,” including even the angels. These angels are referred to as “sons of

**Jesus' wise
teachings and
powerful miracles
proved that he was
no ordinary man**

God”—Jehovah being their Life-Giver as well.—Colossians 1:16; Job 1:6; 38:7.

After preparing the earth for human habitation, God, apparently speaking to his first-born Son, said: “Let us make man in our image.” (Genesis 1:26; Proverbs 8:22-31) Thus, Jehovah also created the first human son of God, Adam, through the spirit creature who would become Jesus.—Luke 3:38.

Jesus Becomes a Human Son of God

The apostle John reveals that at the appointed time, God’s spirit Son “became flesh and resided among us.” (John 1:14) In order to accomplish this change in Jesus’ nature, God miraculously transferred Jesus’ life from heaven into the womb of the Jewish virgin girl Mary. In that way Jesus remained God’s Son, even though a human. Furthermore, since God, not any man, gave Jesus life, Jesus was born perfect, without sin. “What is born will be called holy, God’s Son,” said the angel Gabriel to Mary.—Luke 1:35; Hebrews 7:26.

A confirmation of Jesus’ sonship while in the flesh came from the Father himself. At the time of Jesus’ baptism, John the Baptizer witnessed the heavens open up and heard a voice from heaven say: “This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.” (Matthew 3:16, 17) No wonder John told his disciples: “I have seen it, and I have borne witness that this one is the Son of God.”—John 1:34.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus did not trumpet the fact that he was the Messiah, the Son of God. (Mark 8:29, 30) He often allowed people to draw that conclusion for themselves by listening to his teachings, by observing his way of life, and by witnessing his many miracles, most of which were performed in public view. For example, he cured “all those faring

badly, distressed with various diseases and torments.” (Matthew 4:24, 25; 7:28, 29; 12:15) The blind, the deaf, the lame, and the diseased all came to Jesus, and he healed them. He even raised the dead! (Matthew 11:4-6) Before the eyes of his disciples, Jesus miraculously walked on water and calmed the winds and waves during a fierce storm. This display of power moved the disciples to say: “You are really God’s Son.”—Matthew 14:24-33.

How God’s Son Can Benefit You

Why did God transfer his only-begotten Son from heaven to earth, there ultimately to die a cruel death? “In order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Yes, only by dying could Jesus “give his soul a ransom in exchange for many.” (Matthew 20:28) Truly, in all history, no one has shown greater love for humankind than Jehovah and his firstborn Son.—Romans 8:32.

Following his death Jesus “was declared God’s Son” in a very special and powerful way, “by means of resurrection from the dead” back to life as a spirit Son of God. (Romans 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18) Then, after waiting patiently at his Father’s side for almost 19 centuries, Jesus was enthroned as King of God’s Kingdom—a heavenly government that will soon rule over the entire earth.—Psalm 2:7, 8; Daniel 7:13, 14.

Do you want to gain the favor of this mighty Son of God? If so, then we encourage you to look into his teachings and apply them in your life. Jesus himself said: “This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.” (John 17:3) Yes, what one believes about the Son of God really does matter!—John 3:18; 14:6; 1 Timothy 6:19.

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- How is Jesus the only-begotten Son of God?—John 1:3, 14; Revelation 3:14.
- Why can you believe that Jesus is the Son of God?—Matthew 3:16, 17.
- How can you benefit from believing in Jesus as the Son of God?—John 3:16; John 14:6; 17:3.

BY AWAKE! WRITER
IN AUSTRALIA

An Island Paradise of Sand

IN 1770, British explorer Captain James Cook sailed up the east coast of Australia. A little over a hundred miles north of the present-day city of Brisbane, he passed a large, sandy coastal island that would, in time, attract 300,000 visitors annually. Cook, however, paid little attention to it. In fact, he and others assumed that it was a peninsula, not an island. A few years later, explorer Matthew Flinders actually came ashore. "Nothing [could be] more barren than this peninsula," he wrote.

Had Cook and Flinders ventured beyond the miles of golden beaches and dunes, they would have formed a very different opinion. They would have encountered a world of pristine rain forests, crystal-clear freshwater lakes, cliffs of spectacularly colored sands, and hundreds of species of animals. Now called Fraser Island, this largest sand island in the world is so remarkable that it was placed on the World Heritage List in 1992.*

Born in the Mountains

Fraser Island is 75 miles long and up to 15 miles wide. It covers an area of 395,200 acres. Massive sand hills rise almost 790 feet above sea level, making the island the tallest of its kind in the world. What forces formed this remarkable landmass?

Evidence suggests that the countless tons of sand that formed the island came from

the Great Dividing Range, a mountain system that extends the full length of Australia's east coast. Over time, heavy rains scoured rock fragments from these mountains and washed them into rivers and out to sea. Oceanic currents churned the fragments into fine sand, which was gradually swept north along the seabed. Blocked by headlands and rocky outcrops rising from the ocean floor, the grains accumulated, and Fraser Island was born.

Since then, the Pacific Ocean has continued to dump fresh sand along the beaches. There, wind blows the sand inland, forming dunes. The dunes, in turn, creep along at the rate of three feet a year, engulfing everything in their path.

Freshwater Lakes and Rare Forests

Surprisingly, 40 freshwater lakes are captured in the hollows of sand dunes across the island. Some of these bodies of water are known as perched lakes because they sit in large depressions *on top* of towering sand dunes. What prevents the water from seeping away? An organic liner, or peat caulking, in the form of partially decomposed leaves, bark, and branches.

The island also has window lakes, which form when depressions in the sand dip below the level of the groundwater table. Fresh water seeps into the hollows, creating crystal-clear, sand-filtered pools that are, in effect, windows in the water table.

The island's lakes are replenished by 60 inches of rain a year. Water not trapped by lakes or soaked up by sand forms creeks that

* The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization adds to its World Heritage list cultural and natural sites that are physically, biologically, geologically, or scientifically of outstanding value.

All photos: Courtesy of Tourism Queensland

At right, top to bottom:

The mouth of Kurrnung Creek

*Forty freshwater lakes, including
perched and window lakes,
dot Fraser Island*

*A rare phenomenon—rain forests
that grow in sand*



run into the sea. One stream is estimated to empty well over a million gallons of water an hour into the Pacific Ocean.

The abundance of water makes Fraser Island verdant. Normally, rain forests will not form in nutrient-deficient sand. But Fraser Island is one of the few places on earth where rain forests flourish on a sand base. Indeed, at one time the forest was so dense that for more than 100 years, it echoed to the chop of the lumberjack's ax. Blackbutt, kauri, and tallowwood trees appealed to woodsmen. Said one in 1929: "The traveller strikes a living wall of giant timber trees up to 150 [feet] high . . . These great monarchs of the forest are from six to ten feet in diameter." Some trees, such as the satinay tree and the turpentine tree, ended up in the pile walls of the Suez Canal. Today, however, the trees of Fraser Island grow old in peace.

Paradise With a Tragic Past

The island's name is born of tragedy. In 1836, Captain James Fraser and his wife, Eliza, survived the shipwreck of the brig *Stirling Castle* and were cast ashore on the island. An indigenous tribe apparently killed the captain, but Eliza was later rescued. Marking the tragedy, the island's name was changed from Great Sandy Island to Fraser Island.

Tragedy also befell the native peoples. At one time, up to 2,000 Aborigines lived on Fraser Island. They were described as well built and strong. They called their home K'gari, or Paradise. An Aboriginal legend about the creation of this island describes it as the most beautiful place ever made. Sadly, European diseases decimated the people. In addition, by the start of the 20th century, most of the remaining Aborigines had been relocated to settlements on the mainland.

A Welcome Haven

Today the island is a haven for wildlife. Among its most famous inhabitants are dingoes—Australia's wild dogs. Isolated from

domestic dogs on the mainland, the dingoes on Fraser Island are considered to be the purest strain in eastern Australia. They may look like domestic dogs, but they are not and thus should be treated with caution and respect.

More than 300 kinds of birds have been observed on the island. Brahminy kites and white-bellied sea eagles patrol the beaches, while iridescent-blue forest kingfishers dart about the lakes. Migratory visitors include Mongolian sand plovers that breed in Siberia and fly south for the winter. They rest briefly on Fraser Island before completing their journey. Additionally, 30,000 or more gray-headed flying foxes, really bats about the size of a raven, seasonally descend on the island, hungry for the nectar of eucalyptus blossoms.

The waters around Fraser Island also swarm with life, including humpback whales en route from the icy Antarctic to the Great Barrier Reef, where they calve and mate. On their return journey, the whales put on a spectacular show by launching their great bulk into the air and crashing down in an explosion of spray that

can be seen for miles—a truly majestic salute to an amazing island!



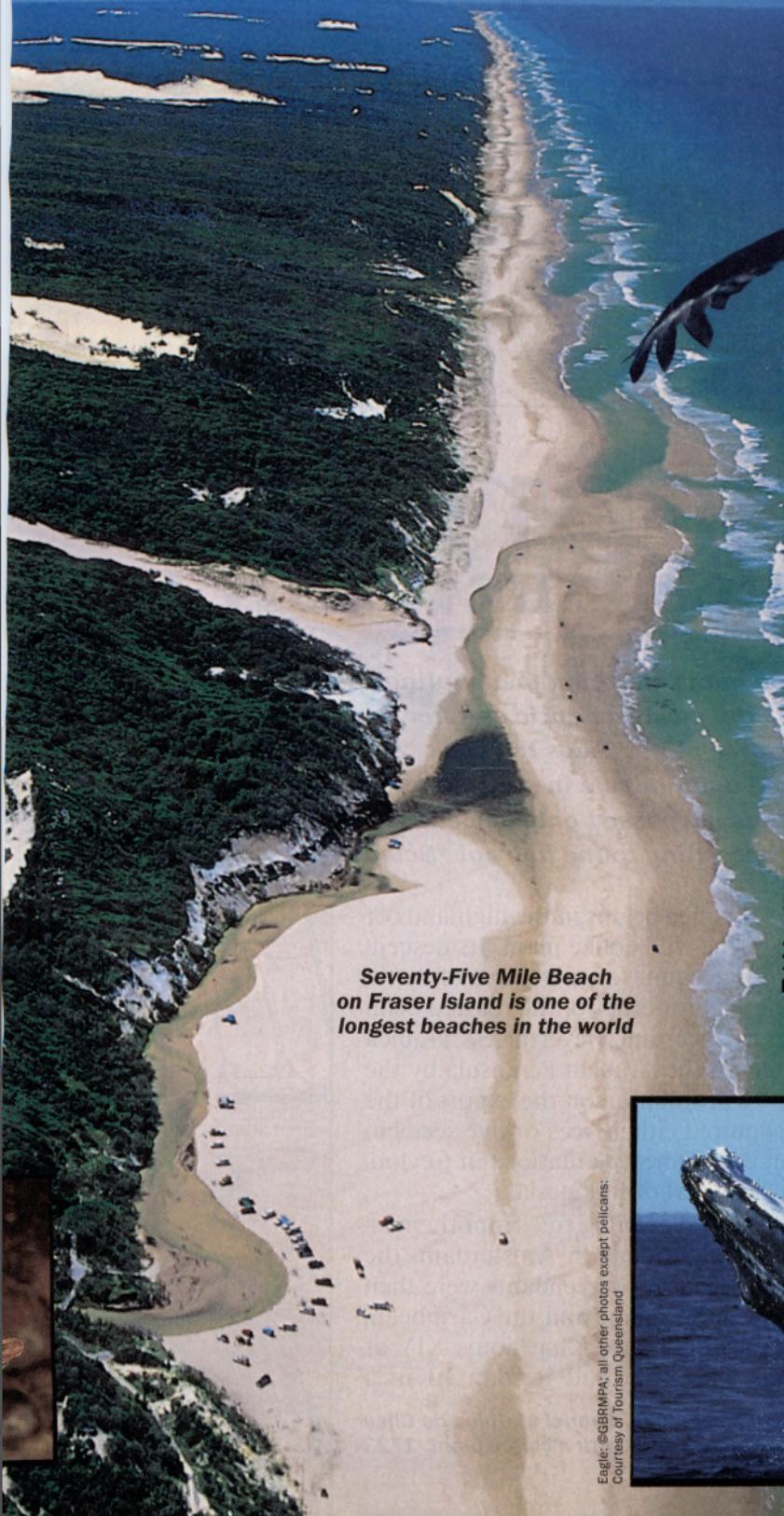
Dingo and koala

Courtesy of Tourism Queensland

White-bellied sea eagle



**Seventy-Five Mile Beach
on Fraser Island is one of the
longest beaches in the world**

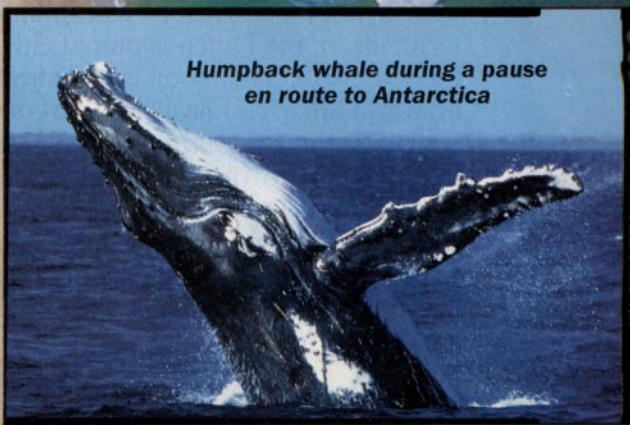


Eagle: ©GBRMPA; all other photos except pelicans:
Courtesy of Tourism Queensland

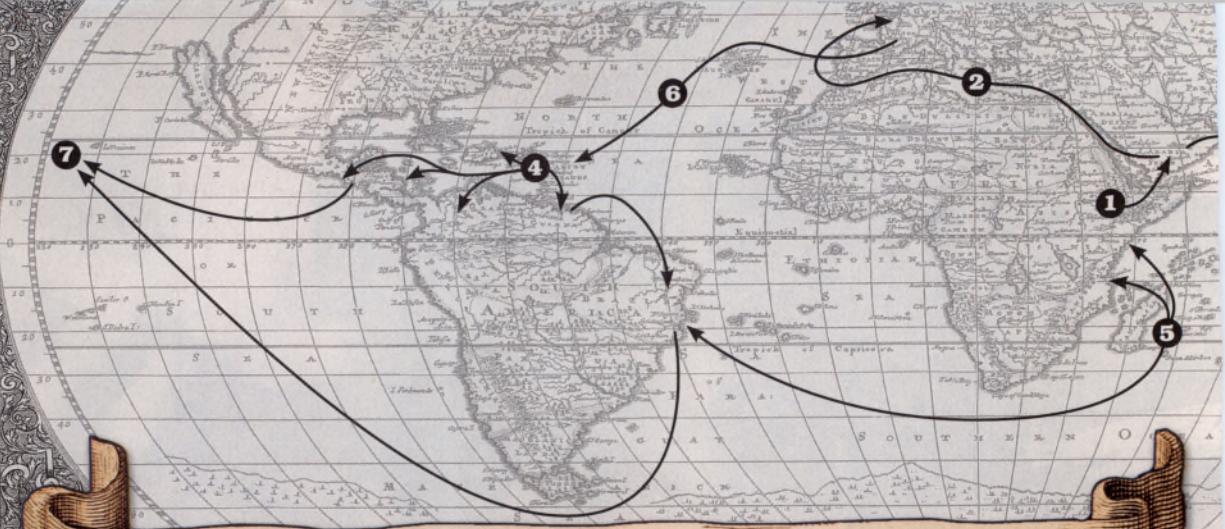


▲ Kookaburras

Pelicans ▼



Humpback whale during a pause
en route to Antarctica



A Bean THAT TRAVELED THE WORLD

The story of one man's devotion to a sapling coffee tree has been described as "the most romantic chapter in the history of the propagation of the coffee plant," says the book "All About Coffee." That one small plant played a major role in seeding today's \$70-billion-a-year coffee industry, which is surpassed only by petroleum in terms of dollars traded globally, according to the journal "Scientific American."

THE fascinating story of coffee begins in the highlands of Ethiopia, the home of the wild coffee plant. Its descendants, named *Coffea arabica*, account for two thirds of world production. Exactly when the properties of the roasted bean were discovered, however, is uncertain. Nevertheless, arabica coffee was being cultivated on the Arabian Peninsula by the 15th century C.E. Despite a prohibition on the export of the fertile bean, the Dutch acquired either trees or live seeds in the year 1616. They soon established plantations in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, and Java, now part of Indonesia.

In 1706 the Dutch transported a young tree from their estates in Java to the botanical gardens in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The tree flourished. Its descendants were then shipped to Dutch colonies in Suriname and the Caribbean. In 1714 the mayor of Amsterdam gave King Louis XIV of France one descendant. The king had it planted in a

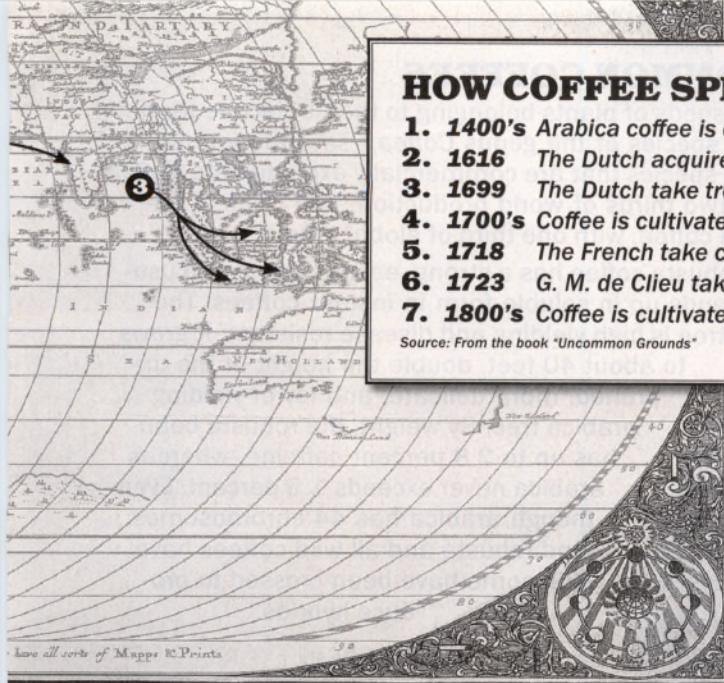
En route to Martinique, Gabriel Mathieu de Clieu shares his drinking water with a coffee plant, 1723



HOW COFFEE SPREAD

1. 1400's Arabica coffee is cultivated on the Arabian Peninsula
2. 1616 The Dutch acquire coffee trees or live seeds
3. 1699 The Dutch take trees to Java and other islands in the East Indies
4. 1700's Coffee is cultivated in Central America and the Caribbean
5. 1718 The French take coffee to Réunion
6. 1723 G. M. de Clieu takes a coffee tree from France to Martinique
7. 1800's Coffee is cultivated in Hawaii

Source: From the book "Uncommon Grounds"



greenhouse at the Jardin des Plantes, the Royal Garden, in Paris.

The French were eager to enter the coffee trade. They purchased seeds and trees and shipped them to the island of Réunion. The seeds failed to grow, and according to some authorities, all but one of the trees eventually died. Nevertheless, 15,000 seeds from that one tree were planted in 1720, and a plantation was finally established. So valuable were these trees that anyone found destroying one was subject to the death penalty! The French also hoped to establish plantations in the Caribbean, but their first two attempts failed.

Gabriel Mathieu de Clieu, a French naval officer on leave in Paris, made it his personal mission to take a tree to his estate on Martinique on his return voyage from France. He sailed for the island in May 1723 with a descendant of the Paris tree.

For the trip, de Clieu placed his precious plant in a box made partly of glass so that the tree could absorb sunlight and remain warm on cloudy days, explains *All About Coffee*. A fellow passenger, who may have been envious of de Clieu and who did not want him

to enjoy the glory of success, tried to wrest the plant from him but failed. The tree survived. It also survived the ship's encounter with Tunisian pirates, a violent storm and, worst of all, a shortage of fresh water when the ship became becalmed in the Doldrums. "Water was lacking to such an extent," wrote de Clieu, "that for more than a month I was obliged to share my scanty ration with the plant upon which my happiest hopes were founded and which was the source of my delight."

De Clieu's devotion was rewarded. His charge arrived in Martinique in good health, and it thrived and multiplied in the tropical environment. "From this single plant, Martinique supplied seed directly or indirectly to all the countries of the Americas except Brazil, French Guiana and Surinam[e]," states Gordon Wrigley in his book *Coffee*.

Meanwhile, Brazil and French Guiana also wanted coffee trees. In Suriname, the Dutch still possessed descendants of the Amsterdam tree but kept them closely guarded. In 1722, however, French Guiana obtained seeds from a felon who had escaped into Suriname and stole some seeds. In exchange for his seeds, the authorities in French Guiana agreed to give him freedom, and they repatriated him.

Initial, furtive attempts to get viable seeds or seedlings into Brazil failed. Then Suriname and French Guiana became involved in a border dispute and asked Brazil to provide an arbitrator. Brazil dispatched Francisco de Melo

THE TWO MOST COMMON COFFEES

"Raw coffee beans are the seeds of plants belonging to the Rubiaceae family, which comprises at least 66 species of the genus *Coffea*," says the journal *Scientific American*. "The two species that are commercially exploited are *Coffea arabica*, which accounts for two thirds of world production, and *C[offea] canephora*, often called robusta coffee, with one third of global output."

Robusta coffee has a strong, earthy aroma and usually ends up in soluble form in instant coffees. The tree is high yielding and disease resistant. It grows to about 40 feet, double the height of the unpruned, more delicate, and lower-yielding arabica tree. By weight, the robusta bean has up to 2.8 percent caffeine, whereas arabica never exceeds 1.5 percent. Even though arabica has 44 chromosomes and robusta and all wild coffees have 22, some have been crossed to produce hybrids.

"BAPTIZING" THE BREW

When coffee first arrived in Europe in the 17th century, some Catholic priests branded it a concoction of Satan. They saw it as a potential substitute for wine, which, in their view, had been sanctified by Christ. Pope Clement VIII, though, allegedly tasted the beverage and became an instant convert, notes the book *Coffee*. He resolved the religious dilemma by symbolically baptizing the brew, thereby making it acceptable for Catholics.

Palheta, an army officer, to French Guiana, instructing him to settle the dispute *and* to bring home some coffee plants.

The hearings were a success, and the governor gave Palheta a farewell banquet. As a gesture of appreciation for this guest of honor, the governor's wife presented Palheta with a beautiful bouquet. Hidden among the flowers, however, were viable coffee seeds and seedlings. Hence, it could be said that in 1727, Brazil's now billion-dollar coffee industry was born in a bouquet.

Thus, the young tree that went from Java to Amsterdam in 1706, together with its offspring in Paris, furnished all the planting material for Central and South America. Explains Wrigley: "Consequently the whole

genetic base of the arabica coffee industry is very narrow."

Today, over 25 million family farms in some 80 countries grow an estimated 15 billion coffee trees. Their product ends up in the 2.25 billion cups of coffee that are consumed each day.

Ironically, the problem nowadays is over-production of coffee. The picture is complicated by politics, economics, and powerful cartels, all of which have left growers in many lands poor or even destitute. This situation is amazing, especially when we picture de Clieu sharing his precious ration of water with one little tree nearly 300 years ago.

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

- 23:20-24:1.
- 4:12-17; 8:3-8. 6. JeHoAsH.—2 ChroniCles 22:11, 12; Lied, chap. 17. 5. EsTHER—EsTHER 2:7, 17; 3:12, 13;
- chap. 29. 4. 30 C.E.—The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived, chap. 11. 3. 31 C.E.—The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived,
- 2. 29 C.E.—The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived.*
- 2. a firstborn son.—The Watchtower, 11/1/03, p. 31.
- heavens.—The Watchtower, 8/1/05, p. 9. ♦ He was evidently claiming a double portion such as that given to
- 1. JeRicho.—2 Kings 2:4-11. ♦ The atmospheric

'I want to serve God before I die'

THE STORY OF MAMIE FREE

IN 1990 civil war erupted in Liberia. As the fighting intensified, Mamie, a 12-year-old Krahn girl, and her family were trapped in their house in Monrovia, the capital. "We heard an explosion next door," says Mamie. "A missile had slammed into the neighbor's house and set it on fire. Flames leaped at our house and ignited it too." Amid heavy fighting, Mamie, her mother, and her mother's younger brother fled.

"Suddenly, something hit me," recalls Mamie.

"My mother then asked, 'What's wrong?'"

"Something hit me! I think it's a bullet," I replied.

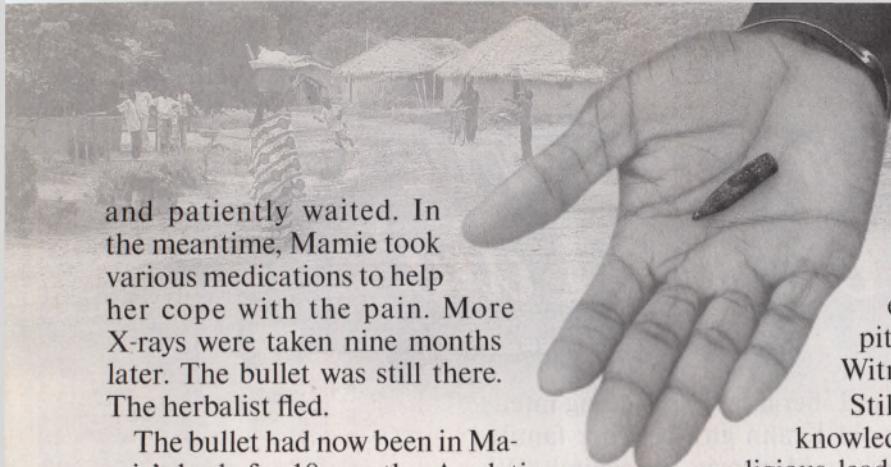
Mamie fell to the ground in agony and prayed: "Please hear me, God. I think I'm about to die, but I want to serve you before I die." Then she fell unconscious.

Taking Mamie for dead, neighbors wanted to bury her at a nearby beach. Her mother, however, insisted that she be taken to the local hospital. Sadly, the hospital was ill equipped to handle the influx of wounded men, women, and children. Mamie's uncle, who had also been wounded, died that night, but Mamie survived, paralyzed from the waist down.

She continued to bleed internally and to suffer extreme pain. Four months later the doctors finally took X-rays to locate the bullet. It was lodged between her heart and her lungs. An operation would be very risky, so Mamie's mother took her to a traditional herbalist. "He cut me with a razor blade," recalls Mamie, "after which he put his mouth to the wound and tried to suck out the bullet. 'This is it,' he said, taking a bullet from his mouth. We paid him and left."

But the man had lied. Further X-rays revealed that the bullet was still there. So Mamie and her mother returned to the herbalist, who convinced them that it would take another nine months before the X-rays would register the removal. They returned home





The bullet that was removed from Mamie's body

and patiently waited. In the meantime, Mamie took various medications to help her cope with the pain. More X-rays were taken nine months later. The bullet was still there. The herbalist fled.

The bullet had now been in Mamie's body for 18 months. A relative took her to a female witch doctor. Instead of helping, she said that either Mamie or her mother would die on a certain day. Mamie was now 13 years old. "I just cried and cried," Mamie says. "However, when the designated date arrived, no one died."

An uncle then took Mamie to a church leader who claimed to have had a vision indicating that Mamie's paralysis was caused by a magic spell, not by a bullet. He promised that if Mamie followed his prescribed rituals, she would walk again in one week. Mamie explains: "I took many holy baths with ocean water, I fasted, and I rolled on the ground every night at midnight for what must have amounted to many hours. But all these efforts proved futile, and my condition stayed the same."

Eventually, though, more medical facilities began functioning, and Mamie was at long last able to get the bullet removed. She had suffered more than two years of unrelenting pain. "After the surgery," she recalls, "the pain all but went away, and breathing became much easier. Although I remained partially paralyzed, I could stand with the aid of a walker."

Mamie Meets Jehovah's Witnesses

A few weeks after the operation, Mamie's mother met two of Jehovah's Witnesses. Knowing that her daughter enjoyed reading the Bible, she invited the Witnesses to her

home. Mamie immediately accepted a Bible study. After several months, however, she returned to the hospital and lost contact with the Witnesses.

Still, Mamie's thirst for Bible knowledge remained. So when a religious leader from a church offered to help her, she accepted the offer. During a Sunday school class, a fellow student asked the teacher, "Is Jesus equal to God?"

"Yes," the teacher said. "They are equal. But Jesus is not equally equal to God."

'Not equally equal?' Mamie thought. 'That does not make sense. Something is wrong here.' Not satisfied that she was learning Bible truth, Mamie eventually stopped associating with that church.

In 1996 violence again broke out in Monrovia. Mamie lost two more family members, and her home was set on fire a second time. A few months later, two Witnesses met Mamie while they were in the house-to-house ministry. Mamie resumed her Bible study. When she attended her first meeting, she was surprised to see that everyone—including the congregation elders—helped to clean the Kingdom Hall. Later that year, she was thrilled to attend one of the "Messengers of Godly Peace" District Conventions, the first large gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses she had ever attended.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

■ **How Can You Find Real Happiness?**

■ **Did Jesus Really Die on a Cross?**

■ **Raising Children With Special Needs**

**Mamie being carried into
a creek to be baptized**

"I was most impressed," says Mamie. "The Witnesses had genuine love for one another, even though they were from different tribes. And everything was well organized."

Realizing Her Desire to Serve God

In 1998 renewed fighting forced Mamie and her mother to flee to neighboring Côte d'Ivoire, where they took up residence in the Peace Town Refugee Camp along with some 6,000 other Liberians. Mamie continued her study of the Bible with the Witnesses and made rapid progress. Soon, she wanted to share her faith with others. So that she could engage in the public ministry, her spiritual brothers and sisters helped her along in her wheelchair. In this way Mamie was able to give a fine witness to many other refugees.

Even though her physical limitations made it hard for her to get to the Kingdom Hall, which was located four miles away from where she lived, Mamie attended all the meetings. On May 14, 2000, she traveled more than 120 miles to attend a special assembly day and to symbolize her dedication to God by water baptism. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Before many teary eyes, Mamie was carried into a creek, where she was immersed. Her face beamed as she rose from the water.

Now in a refugee camp in Ghana, Mamie's goal is to become a regular pioneer, or full-time evangelizer. Her mother too has commenced a study of the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses and is now sharing with others what she has learned. Both eagerly look forward to the time promised in God's Word when "the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."

—Isaiah 35:5-7.



*Conducting
a Bible study
with her
mother, Emma*





In Search of the Mouflon

Armed with maps, cameras, hats, and sturdy boots, we climb into our all-terrain vehicle and set off early one fine spring morning. Our destination is the Paphos Forest, high in the Troodos mountain range on the island of Cyprus, where we hope to find the elusive mouflon. What is this animal?

MOUFLONS are a species of wild sheep, relatives of which can be found throughout the Mediterranean region. The particular mouflon that has fired our curiosity is indigenous to Cyprus and is said to combine the beauty of a deer with the agility of a goat. Zoologists call it *Ovis gmelini ophion*, while Cypriots call it *agrinó*. It can be found only in remote mountain areas.

We turn off the highway, driving into the foothills and then through a beautiful valley. Villages cling to the hillsides, and orchards line the vale. Soon, however, the going gets rough, and in places our vehicle comes precariously close to the edge of steep ridges. Finally, we reach our destination—the forest station. We are now deep in the Paphos Forest with its 150,000 acres of pines and cedars.

We order coffee and chat with Andreas, a green-uniformed forester who speaks passionately about mouflons.

The mouflon, he says, is the largest wild mammal in Cyprus. In the past great numbers roamed the island. Many Greco-Roman mosaics depict this wild sheep, and medieval writings describe how the gentry enjoyed hunting it in the Paphos Forest.

While leading us to an enclosure, Andreas tells us more about the mouflon's history. We learn, for example, that the animal experienced a drastic decline in numbers with the advent of the hunting rifle. Not until 1938 were the hunting laws of Cyprus revised to protect this creature. Foresters and police cooperated to curb poaching. A year later the forest was declared off-limits to hunters. These changes, along with additional measures taken since the 1960's, have resulted in a mouflon population boom.

Our First Encounter

We follow Andreas to a fenced enclosure and peer through the bushes and trees. Signaling us to be quiet, Andreas leads us a short distance up a slope. There we see three adult females and two newborns grazing in a sunny



glade. The adults are about three feet tall, and their coats are light brown, becoming pale on the belly.

The wild plants they eat are plentiful this time of year, and the adults are too busy browsing to pay much attention to us. The newborns, however, stop gamboling about and take a few tentative steps toward us. We are delighted! But the mere click of one of our cameras startles them, and in the blink of an eye, the whole group disappears into the woods.

Elated at the sighting, we make plans to explore the forest on foot in hopes of seeing mouflons in the wild. Andreas suggests that we try at dawn, when the animals sometimes venture to the fringe of the forest in search of food. Since we plan to camp in the valley overnight, the mountain overlooking the valley might be a good

place to search. Mouflons, we learn, frequent the higher slopes during the warmer months, but in winter, when the peaks are covered with snow, they search for edible plants at a lower elevation, even venturing out into the open.

Mating takes place in autumn. During winter, mouflons move around in flocks of between 10 and 20 animals. When lambing begins in April or May, the flocks split into smaller groups, such as the one we saw in the enclosure. Adult males usually forage alone.

A Ram in the Wild!

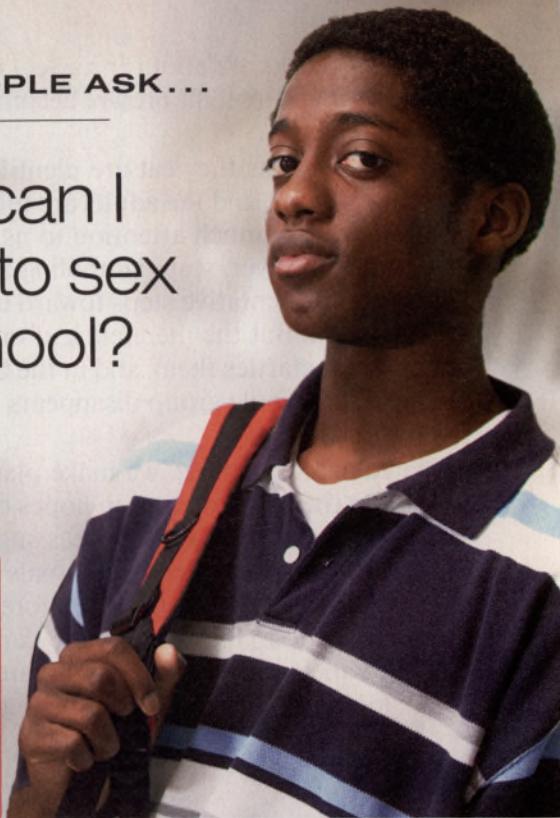
Early the next morning, we drive uphill again, park in a glade, and hike into the forest before the sun rises too high. The forest is still quiet, and a mist drifts through the trees. While we stop to savor the silence, we see him—a magnificent, muscular male, his thick winter coat almost shed. Dark hair covers his lower throat. With a proud tilt of his head, he gazes at us through dark lashes and tests the air for our scent. Each of his thick, curved horns must be at least 18 inches long! He is heavier than the females we saw yesterday and must weigh about 80 pounds.

We freeze, barely daring to breathe. Nevertheless, this wary creature seems to have caught our scent, for he tosses his head up and down and flees. What we have seen and learned in two days has truly impressed us. We have also grown in appreciation for the Creator, who said: “To me belongs every wild animal of the forest, the beasts upon a thousand mountains.”—Psalm 50:10.

A Cyprus mouflon (background) and a European mouflon



How can I say no to sex at school?



"Every day, kids are talking about sex. Girls even approach guys, and they have sex right there at school."—Eileen, 16.

"At my school, homosexuals do immoral things in full view of other kids and think nothing of it."—Michael, 15.*

ARE your classmates constantly talking about sex? Do some of them go beyond talk? If so, you might feel similar to one teenage girl who compared being at school to "working on the set of an X-rated movie." The fact is, at school many youths are regularly bombarded with opportunities to discuss—or even engage in—sex.

You might hear your classmates talk about "hooking up"—a term that means having sex with no emotional strings attached. In some cases kids hook up with casual acquaintances. In other cases they meet for sex with total strangers they have met online. In either scenario the goal of hooking up is to keep love out of the equation. "It doesn't mean anything besides two people giving into their physical desires," says 19-year-old Danielle.

Not surprisingly, hooking up has become a hot topic in many schools. "After every weekend, the halls seem to buzz with news of the latest hookup, of which the explicit details are shared between friends," wrote a 17-year-old girl in her school newspaper.

If you are trying to live by Bible standards, being surrounded by people who seem to talk only about sex can make you feel left out. And if you do not join the crowd, you may become easy prey for ridicule. To some degree this is to be expected, for the Bible says that when others do not understand your course, they may react by "speaking abusively of you." (1 Peter 4:3, 4) Still, no one likes to be made fun of. So how can you say no to sex at school and maintain a proper sense of pride about your stand? First, it is important to understand why sexual temptation is so powerful.

* Some names have been changed.

Know Yourself

During adolescence, you undergo rapid changes, both physically and emotionally. As you go through this period, you experience intense sexual urges. Be assured that this is entirely normal. So if you feel strongly attracted to members of the opposite sex at school, do not conclude that you are inherently bad or that you are just not cut out for moral cleanliness. You can be chaste if you choose to be!

Besides the inner struggle that is part of adolescence, there is something else you need to be aware of. Being imperfect, *all* humans are inclined toward badness. Even the apostle Paul admitted: "I behold in my members another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my members." Paul said that his imperfections made him feel "miserable." (Romans 7:23, 24) But he won the battle, and so can you!

Understand Your Classmates

As pointed out earlier, your classmates may talk about sex all the time or make boasts about their alleged encounters. You should beware of their unwholesome influence. (1 Corinthians 15:33) But you need not view your classmates as your enemies. Why not?

Your classmates have the same desires that you have. They also have an inclination to practice what is bad. But different from you, some of them may be "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." Or they might come from homes where there is "no natural affection" among family members. (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Some of your classmates may lack the loving discipline and moral training that good parents provide.—Ephesians 6:4.

Without the higher source of wisdom that you have at your fingertips—God's Word, the Bible—your classmates may be unaware of the damage that results

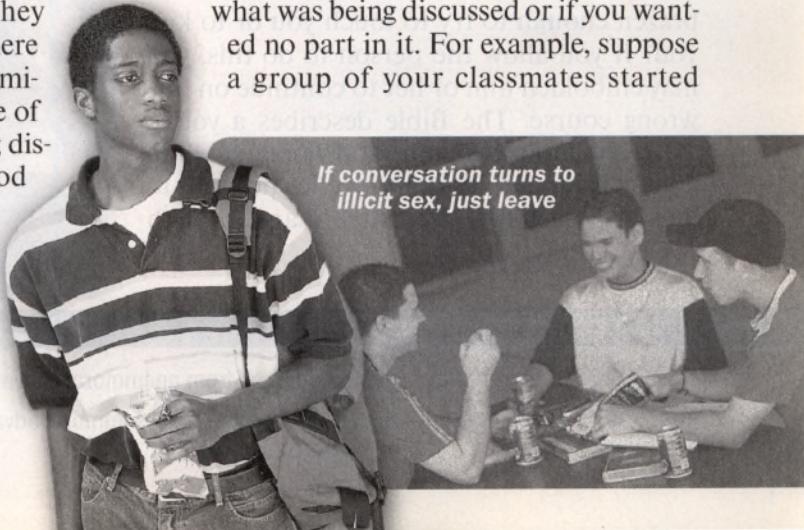
from giving free rein to desire. (Romans 1:26, 27) It is as if their parents have given them a powerful car and have sent them onto a busy highway—but have not taught them how to drive. The ride might provide a momentary thrill, but disaster is sure to follow. So, what can you do if your classmates start talking about sex in your presence or if they try to coerce you to join them in their immoral conduct?

Reject Immoral Talk

If your classmates start to talk about immoral sex, you might be tempted to listen and even to join in—just so you do not stand out as different. But think of the message that would send them. Would your interest in their talk reflect the type of person you really are or that you want to be?

What should you do, then, when you find yourself involved in a discussion that turns to immoral sex? Should you just get up and leave? Certainly! (Ephesians 5:3, 4) The Bible states: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself." (Proverbs 22:3) So by leaving the conversation, you are not being rude—you are being shrewd.

Really, you need not feel awkward about excusing yourself from an immoral discussion. Surely, there are other types of conversations you would walk away from without shame, especially if you had no interest in what was being discussed or if you wanted no part in it. For example, suppose a group of your classmates started



If conversation turns to illicit sex, just leave

talking about committing an armed robbery. Would you stay around and listen to the plan? If you did, you could be viewed as an accomplice. Wisely, therefore, you would choose to walk away. Do the same when a conversation turns to immoral sex. Often, you can find a way to leave without appearing self-righteous and inviting ridicule.

Granted, it may not always be possible to remove yourself from a situation. For example, the youths assigned to sit near you in class might try to involve you in conversation about sex. In that case you could firmly but politely tell them to stop distracting you. If that does not work, you could do what Brenda did. "I discreetly asked the teacher to move me," she says.

Be Discerning

Sooner or later, some of your classmates will express curiosity as to why you do not join in their sordid conversations. If they ask about your morals, be discerning about how you answer. Admittedly, some may ask merely to mock you rather than to understand your view. But if the motive of the one questioning you seems genuine, speak up proudly about your beliefs. Many youths have used the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work* to help their classmates appreciate the benefits of living by Bible standards.*

Be Determined

What should you do if a fellow student is brazen enough to try to touch you or to kiss you? If you allow the person to do this, you may embolden him or her to continue on this wrong course. The Bible describes a young man who allowed an immoral woman to grab hold of him and kiss him. He let her talk to him in a sexually suggestive manner. With

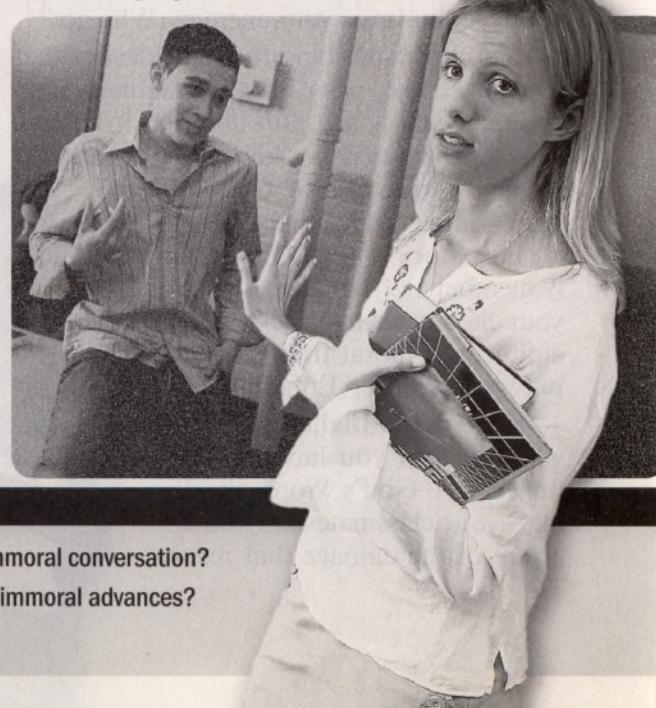
what result? "All of a sudden he is going after her, like a bull that comes even to the slaughter."—Proverbs 7:13-23.

In contrast, consider how Joseph dealt with a similar situation. His master's wife persistently attempted to seduce him, but he firmly rejected her offers. When she eventually tried to grab him, he took decisive action and ran.—Genesis 39:7-12.

Like Joseph, you may need to take strong measures if a classmate or some other acquaintance tries to touch you in an improper manner. "If a guy tries to touch me, I tell him to stop," says Eileen. "If he doesn't get the message, I yell at him to keep his hands off me." Regarding the young men at her school, Eileen adds: "They will not respect you unless you make them respect you."

You too will gain the respect of your classmates if you refuse to listen to immoral talk, respectfully explain your moral stand when appropriate, and firmly reject immoral advances. An added benefit is that you will feel good about yourself. Most important, Jehovah will approve of you!—Proverbs 27:11.

Firmly reject immoral advances



* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

TO THINK ABOUT

- What can you say to excuse yourself from an immoral conversation?
- What will you say and do if a classmate makes immoral advances?



Combating Boredom

Researchers studying boredom call it "one of the major diseases of our era," reports *The Vancouver Sun*. One survey found that "almost three out of four North Americans say they crave more novelty in their lives." Among the newspaper's suggestions to combat boredom are: "Make changes to break out of your rut," "learn something new," do "meaningful volunteer work," "engage in motor activities, like . . . taking a walk," and "practice gratitude."

Modern Slavery

"At least 12.3 million people are victims of forced labour worldwide," reports a United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO) study. It is estimated that of these, more than 2.4 million are victims of human trafficking. Examples of forced labor—involuntary work or services performed under compulsion by threat—are prostitution, military service, and bonded labor for which workers earn little or nothing, since their wages are retained to pay off a debt. According to ILO Director General Juan Somavia, such labor "denies people their basic rights and dignity."

First Complete Kriol Bible

"Australia's first translation of the Bible from Genesis through to Revelation into an indigenous language has been completed," reports *The Sydney Morning Herald*. The new Kriol translation, due for release in 2007, will benefit some 30,000 Aborigines from remote regions of Northern Australia. "The project has been 27 years in the making," says the newspaper. According to the United Bible Societies, "22 new translations of the New Testament were registered in 2004." The Bible can now be read in whole or in part in 2,377 languages and dialects.

■ An estimated 200 million people, 5 percent of the world's population between the ages of 15 and 64, have consumed illegal drugs in the last year.—2005

WORLD DRUG REPORT, UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME.

■ An adolescent who witnesses firearm violence, studies indicate, is approximately twice as likely to perpetrate violence within the next two years.—*SCIENCE MAGAZINE, U.S.A.*

■ In São Paulo, Brazil, 16.8 percent of breast cancer cases diagnosed at one hospital during a one-year period occurred in women under age 35. If diagnosed early, there is a 90 percent chance of recovery.

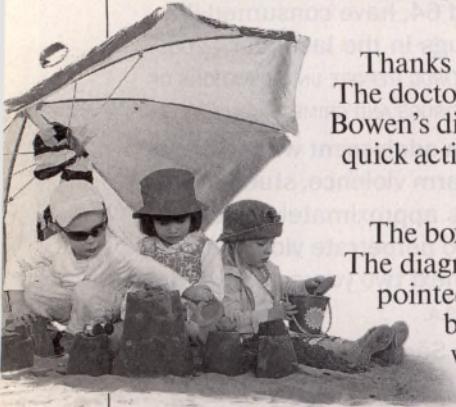
—*FOLHA ONLINE, BRAZIL.*

Temperatures in Parked Cars

During 2004, 35 children died of heat stroke in the United States after being left in parked vehicles, says *Pediatrics* magazine. Studies show that when outside temperatures exceed 86 degrees Fahrenheit, temperatures inside a vehicle can quickly reach 134 to 154 degrees. Even with an outside temperature of 72 degrees, the temperature in a car can still rise by about 40 degrees, with most of the increase taking place within 15 to 30 minutes after parking. Leaving the windows one and a half inches open made little difference, as did running air-conditioning before turning the car off. The authors of the article believe that public awareness of the risks could save lives.

Skin Cancer—How to Protect Yourself (June 8, 2005) The information in this series is excellent. I am a chief physician at a dermatology clinic. I would like to receive some extra copies so that I can distribute them.

K. W., Denmark



Thanks to this article, I decided to have a growth on my back checked. The doctor told me that it could have turned into a form of cancer called Bowen's disease. I had surgery immediately. This series helped me to take quick action.

S. M., Japan

The box on page 7 moved me to have a mole examined by my doctor. The diagnosis—malignant melanoma in its earliest stage. As the article pointed out, if the melanoma had not been treated early, it could have been fatal. I am grateful to my doctor and to this *Awake!* series, which just may have saved my life!

L. S., United States

For Family Review (May 8, 2005) I used to read only the articles that appealed to me, but after seeing "For Family Review," I read the whole magazine so that I could answer the questions. It wasn't long before reading the entire magazine became a habit!

Y. Z., Russia

I was delighted with this page. Besides being fun, it made me realize that I need to pay more attention to what I read!

D. S., Britain

Young People Ask . . . Why Am I Drawn to the Wrong People? (July 22, 2005) It seems that after ten years of "always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord," I still did not know how to fix this flaw in my character. (1 Corinthians 15:58) I realized that I was not being emotionally mature, but I did not know how to address the problem. I thank Jehovah for articles like this, which help us to function in this present system.

J. F., United States

In this article mention is made of 'not completely shunning those who are unacquainted with Bible truths.' Could you explain more

on this? What if a Christian is pursuing a close relationship with a nonbeliever? Should this not be a cause for concern?

D. P., United States

"Awake!" responds: The article was not encouraging Christians to pursue close relationships with nonbelievers. Really, in any circumstance the Bible principle applies: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Corinthians 15:33) This does not mean, though, that we completely shun nonbelievers. As pointed out in the article, the Bible urges us to "work what is good toward all"—not just toward those who share our faith. (Galatians 6:10) Indeed, the very nature of our Christian ministry requires that we take genuine interest in people, treating them with dignity and respect. Jesus set a fine example in this regard. In no way did he forge close bonds with those who had no interest in doing God's will. (John 15:14) At the same time, he approached people and knew how to converse with them and relate to them. As a result, Jesus had opportunity to give an effective witness. (See, for example, the account at Luke 7:36-50.) Like Jesus, we can maintain a respectful attitude toward nonbelievers. Our aim is "to be reasonable, exhibiting all mildness toward all men."—Titus 3:2.



WHERE DID IT HAPPEN?

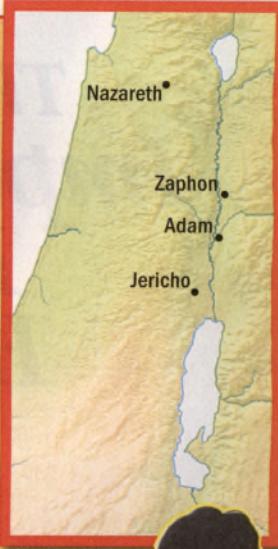
1. Near what city did this miracle take place? Circle your answer on the map.

◆ What "heavens" did Elijah ascend to?

◆ Why did Elisha request two portions of Elijah's spirit?

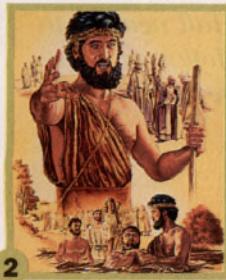
■ For Discussion:

What does Elisha's request teach you?



WHEN IN HISTORY?

Draw a line from the picture to the correct date.



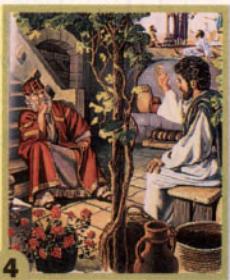
2

Luke 3:1, 2



3

John 5:1-9



4

John 2:13; 3:1-21

29 C.E.

30

31

32

33

36

Top circle: Courtesy of London Ambulance Service NHS Trust;
third circle from top: Courtesy of Tourism Queensland

(Answers on page 20)



FROM THIS ISSUE

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

Page 5 Can you make someone love you? (Song of Solomon 8:____)

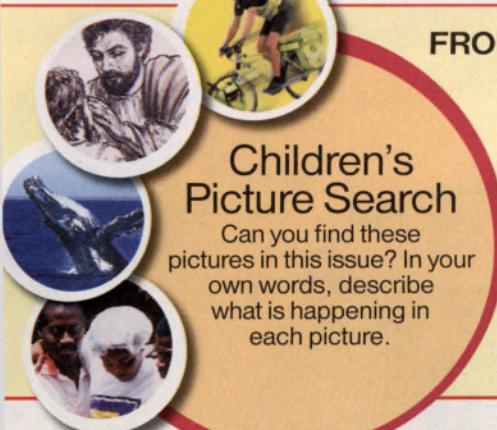
Page 6 What does true love include? (Colossians 3:____)

Page 13 When was Jesus declared God's Son in a special and powerful way? (Romans 1:____)

Page 27 What damage results from giving free rein to desire? (Romans 1:____)

Children's Picture Search

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



The Most Important Date in History



It is the date on which Jesus Christ died. Why was Jesus' death so important? For a number of reasons.

Jesus' faithfulness until death proved that a human could maintain integrity to God.

Christ's death also provided an opportunity for some from mankind to become co-rulers with him in heaven. Additionally, it opened the way for many more to enjoy everlasting life in an earthly paradise.

On the evening before he died, Jesus used unleavened bread and red wine as symbols of his loving human sacrifice. And he told his disciples: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19) Will you remember this important event?

*Jehovah's Witnesses warmly invite you to join them in observing the Memorial of Jesus' death. This year the date for the observance is **Wednesday, April 12**, after sundown. You may attend at the Kingdom Hall nearest to your home. Please check with Jehovah's Witnesses locally for the exact time and place.*

www.watchtower.org

g-E 3/06