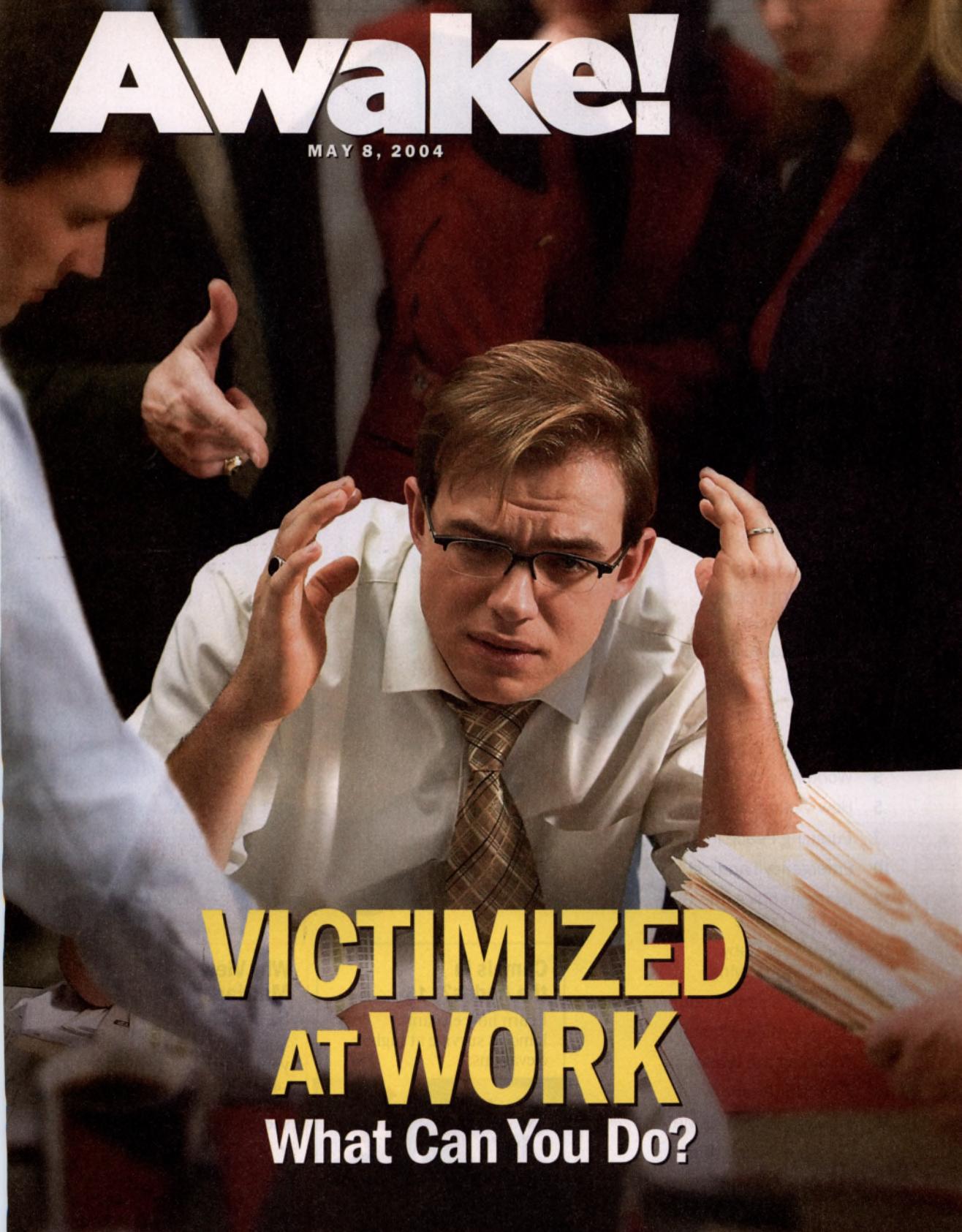


# Awake!

MAY 8, 2004

## VICTIMIZED AT WORK

What Can You Do?



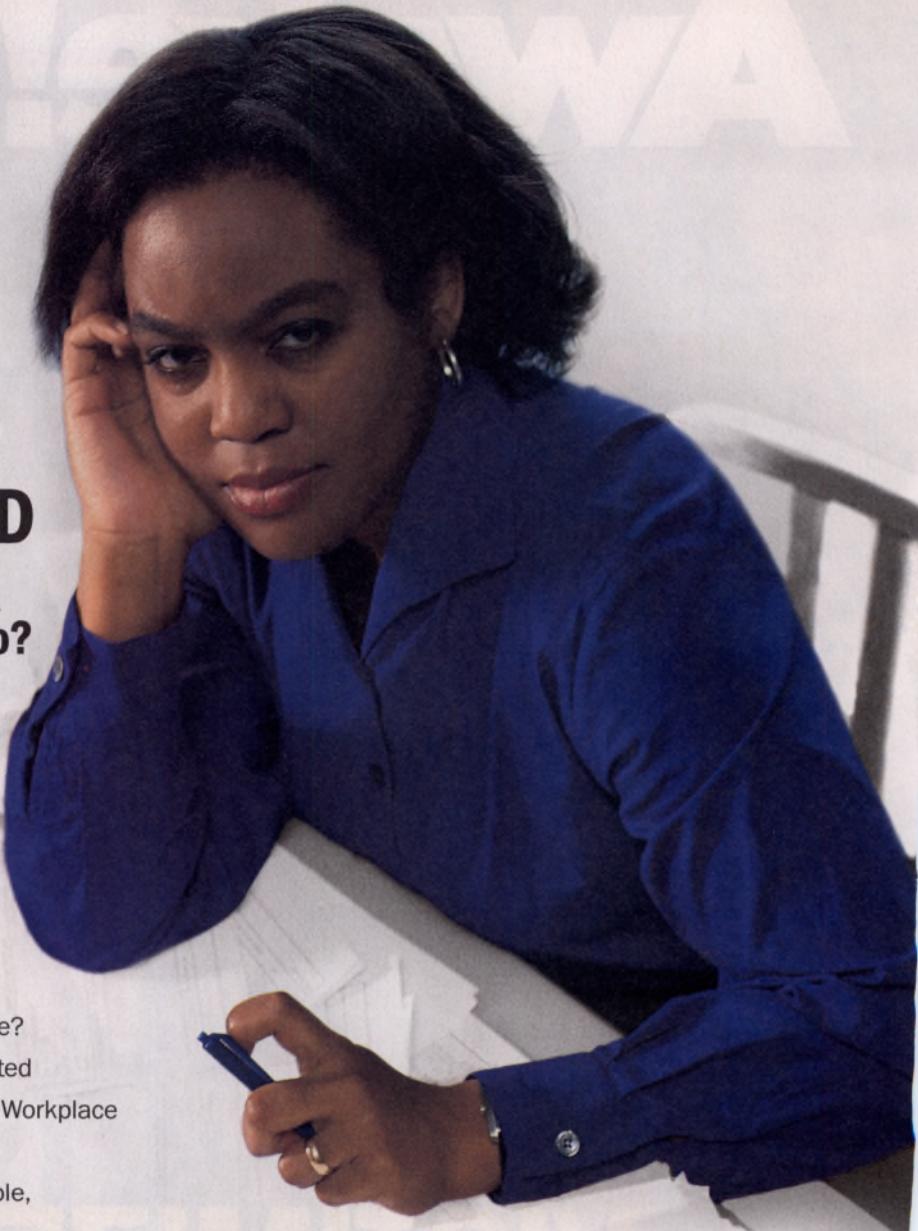
## VICTIMIZED AT WORK

### What Can You Do?

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Bible principles can help you cope with—and even prevent—harassment on the job.

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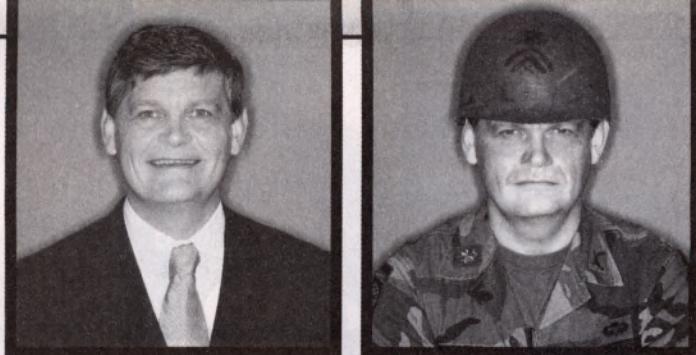


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# WORKPLACE OR WAR ZONE?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN GERMANY

"I just couldn't take it anymore. I was with the company for more than 30 years. I had reached the level of supervisor. Then came the new boss. He was young, dynamic, and full of ideas. He thought I was in the way, so he started picking on me. After months of insults, lies, and humiliation, my nerves were shot. When the company offered me a retirement package, I agreed to leave."—Peter.\*

PETER was a victim of workplace bullying. To use another word that has become common in Europe, he was "mobbed." In Germany, where Peter lives, an estimated 1.2 million people suffer from mobbing at the workplace. In the Netherlands, 1 in 4 people will face it at some point in their working life. And a report by the International Labour Organization says that mobbing is an increasing problem in Australia, Austria, Britain, Denmark, Sweden, and the United States. But just what is mobbing?

## A "War of Nerves"

According to the German news-magazine *Focus*, mobbing is "fre-

quent, repeated, and systematic harassment." More than workplace banter—which might include sarcasm, criticism, teasing, and practical jokes—mobbing is a campaign of psychological terror. The goal is to make the victim an outcast.\*

The tactics of harassment range from childish antagonism to criminal injury. The target is subjected to character assassination, verbal abuse, aggressive behavior, and the cold-shoulder treatment. Some victims are deliberately overworked or are regularly singled out to do the most unpleasant tasks that no one else wants to perform. Colleagues may sabotage

\* Names in this series of articles have been changed.

\* Statistics suggest that more women than men are victims of harassment on the job, although this may be because women are more likely to talk about the problem and to seek help.



## Harassment turns work into a war of nerves



the victim's efforts to work productively, perhaps by withholding information. In some cases, perpetrators have slashed a victim's tires or hacked into his computer.

Some victims of harassment are targeted by one person. But more often, the victim is subjected to the assault of an alliance of colleagues. Hence, the term "mobbing" is appropriate, since it implies that a group is putting an individual under pressure by deliberately annoying or attacking him.

Perhaps most astonishing is the fact that in many cases harassment occurs with the boss's consent. In some European studies, the supervisor played an active role in about 50 percent of the cases, and quite often he or she proved to be the sole perpetrator. All

of this turns the work experience into what the German daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* termed as "a long, trying war of nerves."

### Effects Beyond the Workplace

Often, the effects of harassment reach far beyond the workplace. Many victims suffer serious health problems as a result of cruel treatment. Depression, sleeping disorders, and panic attacks are among the consequences of harassment. What about Peter, mentioned at the outset? His self-worth hit rock bottom. A woman named Margaret, also from Germany,

## Awake!®

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was advised by her doctor to seek treatment at a mental-health clinic. The cause? Harassment on the job. Mobbing can also adversely affect one's marriage or family life.

In Germany, harassment at work has become so common that one health insurance company has established a help line for victims. The company found that more than half of those who called were unable to work

for up to six weeks, about a third for up to three months, and over 10 percent for more than three months. A German medical journal estimates that "up to 20 percent of all suicides are a result of mobbing."

Clearly, harassment can turn the work experience into a nightmare. Is there any way that it can be prevented? How can peace be pursued in the workplace?



## HOW VICTIMS ARE TARGETED

Monika was just out of school when she began working as a clerical trainee in the legal profession. Monika looked forward to a smooth transition into working life.

Horst was a medical doctor in his mid-30's. He had a wife and children, and all indications were that he would attain recognition and a high income.

Both Monika and Horst became victims of harassment.

**T**HE cases of Monika and Horst teach us a valuable lesson: Victims of mobbing do not fit a predictable profile. Indeed, anyone in any occupation is a potential target for harassment. How, then, can you protect yourself? Part of the answer lies in learning how to pursue peace in the workplace, even with difficult coworkers.

**Semimonthly Languages:** Afrikaans, Albanian, Arabic, Cebuano, Croatian, Czech,<sup>#</sup> Danish,<sup>#</sup> Dutch, English,<sup>#</sup> Estonian, Finnish,<sup>#</sup> French,<sup>#</sup> German,<sup>#</sup> Greek, Hungarian, Iloko, Indonesian, Italian,<sup>#</sup> Japanese,<sup>#</sup> Korean,<sup>#</sup> Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese,<sup>#</sup> Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish,<sup>#</sup> Swahili, Swedish,<sup>#</sup> Tagalog, Ukrainian  
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### Fitting In at Work

For many, having a job requires fitting in with a team of coworkers and helping that team to function smoothly as a unit. If colleagues get along well with one another, the work benefits. If they do not, the work suffers and the risk of harassment increases.

What can interfere with the smooth running of a team of workers? For one thing, there may be frequent changes in personnel. In such a situation, bonds are difficult to form. In addition, new colleagues are unfamiliar with the routine, which slows down the performance of all. If the work load is



### The goal of harassment is to make its victim an outcast

growing, the group is likely to be under constant stress.

Moreover, if a team lacks clear goals, there will be little sense of unity. This may be the case, for instance, when an insecure boss spends more time in defending his position than in leading. He might even try to keep the upper hand by pitting colleagues against one another. To make matters worse, the structure of the group may be so loosely defined that certain colleagues do not understand where their responsibility begins and where it ends. For example, conflicts may arise when two employees both think that they have the responsibility of countersigning invoices.

In such a situation, communication becomes strained and hurt feelings are often left unattended. Envy poisons the working atmosphere, and colleagues compete with one

another to be in good standing with the boss. Minor misunderstandings are viewed as major insults. In effect, molehills become mountains. The groundwork has been laid for harassment.

### The Making of a Scapegoat

Over a period of time, one employee might be singled out as a scapegoat. What sort of person is likely to be treated that way? Probably someone who stands out as different. For example, it could be the only male in a female environment or a female working in a male domain. A confident person might be seen as the pushy sort, while a reserved individual might be perceived as shifty. The potential victim may also be different in the sense that he or she is older or younger than the rest or even better qualified for the job.

Whoever the scapegoat might be, the colleagues "become nasty and brazen toward their chosen victim and thereby sense a feeling of relief from their own personal stress," reports the German medical journal *mta*. Attempts by the scapegoat to remedy the situation achieve little success and might even make matters worse. As the intimidation becomes more frequent and systematic, the scapegoat becomes more isolated. At this point, the victim of harassment is likely unable to cope with the situation alone.

Of course, the workplace has always held a potential for mistreatment. But many can remember a time when there seemed to be more goodwill among colleagues. Organized harassment rarely developed. But over the years there has been what one doctor described as "a generally diminishing spirit of solidarity and a broad erosion in the sense of personal shame." People now have fewer scruples about engaging in open combat at work.

Thus, all who are employed are rightly concerned with the answers to the questions: Can harassment be prevented? How can peace be pursued in the workplace?

# PURSUING PEACE IN THE WORKPLACE

**W**HY do some people pick on others? The Bible provides insight into the matter. It explains that we are living in “the last days” of this system of things and that this is why we are experiencing “critical times hard to deal with.” Many people are “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.” (2 Timothy 3:1-5) In these turbulent times, such behavior is widespread, and

mobbing is one of the unsavory results. How, then, can you pursue peace in the workplace?

## Resolving Conflicts

Harassment often begins with an unresolved conflict between workmates. Hence, without being a busybody in the affairs of others, give prompt attention to misunderstandings in which you are personally involved. Calm hurt feelings with tact and respect. Deal with your colleagues as individuals, not as a group. If someone appears to have something against you, try to sort out matters. Keep in mind Jesus’ admonition: “Be about settling matters quickly with the one complaining against you.”—Matthew 5:25.

Furthermore, everyone benefits by keeping the lines of communication open. Try, then, to communicate well with your supervisor without giving the impression that you are merely attempting to curry his favor.

Remember, too, that good



communication with your peers and subordinates will act as an antidote to stress. King Solomon wrote: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment."—Proverbs 15:22.

Make every effort, therefore, to get along with your workmates. This does not mean being a "people pleaser," weakly agreeing to everything that is demanded of you and compromising your principles just to maintain peace. But a warm and friendly manner can melt an icy atmosphere. Be careful not only of *what* you say to others but of *how* you say it. Again, the Bible offers sensible advice: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage." (Proverbs 15:1) "The calmness of the tongue is a tree of life." (Proverbs 15:4) "By patience a commander is induced." (Proverbs 25:15) "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one."

—Colossians 4:6.

#### **Let Your Reasonableness Become Known"**

The apostle Paul advised Christians in Philippi: "Let your reasonableness become known to all men." (Philippians 4:5) Following this principle, set reasonable standards of conduct for yourself. Avoid being either overconfident or too shy. If colleagues tease you,

### **A friendly manner can melt an icy atmosphere**

do not try to match them by doing the same. You gain nothing by blurring the boundary between good and bad behavior. Treat others with respect and dignity, and you are more likely to receive the same from them.

Give thought not only to your conduct but also to your dress. Ask yourself: 'What impression do my clothes give? Is my appearance provocative? Do I present an unkempt



**Give prompt attention to personal misunderstandings**

appearance? Would I do well to adopt a sensible dress code for work?"

In most cultures, industrious and conscientious workers are respected and highly valued. Hence, try to earn respect by performing high-quality work. Be reliable and trustworthy. This does not mean fretting over every task. One woman who fell victim to harassment later admitted that she had contributed to her own downfall. "I wanted to be perfect," she says. This woman came to realize that perfection is an impossible goal: "I'm a good worker, but I don't have to do everything perfectly."

Do not be oversensitive to negative remarks. Not every unfair criticism is tantamount to harassment. In the Bible, King Solomon wrote: "Do not hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended . . . Also, do not give your heart to all the words that people may speak, . . . for your own heart well knows even many times that you, even you,



have called down evil upon others.”  
—Ecclesiastes 7:9, 21, 22.

Granted, following such sound principles does not *guarantee* that you will never be the victim of harassment. Despite your best efforts, some colleagues might still pick on you. What then?

### Seek Support

“When I got the cold-shoulder treatment for several months, I went through emotional turmoil,” admits Gregory. His experience is typical of victims, who endure a wide range of painful emotions—anger, guilt, shame, confusion, along with feelings of worthlessness. The pressure of being harassed can drive even a normally stable person to despair. Indeed, the Bible states that “mere oppression may make a wise one act crazy.” (Ecclesiastes 7:7) So, what can be done?

Studies indicate that it is best not to try to deal with harassment on your own. Where can a victim find support? Some larger companies have established a means for assisting their employees who feel that they are being intimidated. Such companies know that it is in their own best interests to eradicate harassment. According to one estimate, workers who harass a victim are distracted for up to 10 percent of their working time. Whenever such an arrangement is available, a victim could seek help. A neutral counselor—either from within the employer’s organization or from outside—might open the way for all parties to discuss the situation and lay down rules of conduct at work.

### No Guaranteed Remedy

Of course, it must be acknowledged that there is no guaranteed remedy for harassment. Even those who apply the Bible principles outlined in this article may find that mistreatment on the job persists. Such ones

can be certain that their endurance and their efforts to display godly qualities amid adversity do not go unnoticed by Jehovah God. —2 Chronicles 16:9; Jeremiah 17:10.

Depending upon the level and frequency of the mistreatment, some in this situation choose to look for other employment. Others have little choice, as jobs may be scarce and resources that could provide help may be few. Monika, mentioned in the preceding article, found that, in time, the problem was taken care of when one of the main harassers left the job. As a result, the work atmosphere entered a period of relative calm, and she was able to complete her training before deciding to find work elsewhere.

For Peter, mentioned in the first article, complete relief came through early retirement. Even when enduring the harassment, however, Peter benefited from the support of his wife. “She knew what I was going through, and she was a tower of strength,” he says.

**“If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men.”**

—ROMANS 12:18

While enduring their trials, Monika and Peter drew particular comfort from their faith as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Engaging in the public ministry strengthened their feelings of self-respect, while association with fellow believers reaffirmed their stable friendships.

Whatever your situation, do your best to pursue good relations in the workplace. If you are harassed, strive to follow the apostle Paul’s admonition: “Return evil for evil to no one. . . . If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men. . . . Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good.” —Romans 12:17-21.

*After enjoying a pleasant vacation visiting my family in the city of Monterrey, Mexico, I was ready to return to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico City, where I have the privilege of serving. It was Sunday, December 1, 2002. I boarded Flight 190, and we took off at 7:00 p.m.*

# EMERGENCY LANDING!

AS TOLD BY  
CESAR MUÑOZ



**A**FTER a peaceful flight of a little less than an hour and a half, the plane began its descent. Suddenly, it rose sharply, and we were all startled by a terrible noise from below. Next, the captain announced that the doors of the landing gear had failed to open. They were stuck! Very frightened, some of the passengers began to cry. Others prayed aloud. I wondered what was going to happen.

The captain informed us that he would have to take measures to shake the doors of the landing gear loose. So while we flew over Mexico City, he made the plane buck up and down and from side to side for about an hour. That was worse than any amusement-park

ride I have ever been on.

Certainly it was no fun! Then the captain announced: "We regret to inform you that the doors did not open. The only thing we can do is make an emergency landing without landing gear." We all looked anxiously at one another, imagining the worst.

Instructions for an emergency landing were given. We took off our shoes, removed anything that could cause injury, and assumed the posture they suggested. I thought that we were sure to crash on the runway! At that moment, I prayed to Jehovah God and a deep calm came over me.—Philippians 4:6, 7.

I had always heard that when a person is about to die, he has flashbacks of his life and thoughts of if only I had done this or that. I was sorry that I had not spoken about the

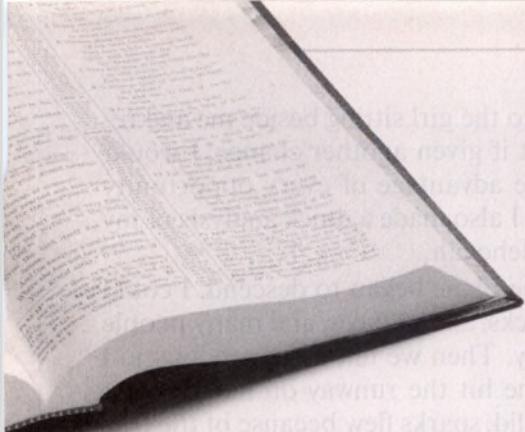
Kingdom to the girl sitting beside me and resolved that if given another chance, I would always take advantage of every opportunity to witness. I also made a quick analysis of my service to Jehovah.

When the plane began to descend, I could see fire trucks, ambulances, and many people standing by. Then we felt a tremendous jolt as the plane hit the runway on its belly. As the plane slid, sparks flew because of the friction of the metal against the pavement. Fire trucks on both sides of the runway immediately sprayed the plane with streams of water to cool it down.

Finally, after some very anxious moments, the plane came to a halt. We broke out in applause, so happy and relieved that the pilot had been able to handle this emergency successfully. Then we were told to evacuate the plane immediately. We quickly went to the exits and slid down the steep slides to safety on the grassy medians.

Standing at a discreet distance and shivering from the aftermath of the experience, I observed the downed plane sprawled sideways across the runway. Fortunately, only a few of the passengers were injured, and that only slightly. In the ambulances nearby, others received medical attention for emotional shock.

My plans had been to get home about 9:00 p.m., but I arrived four hours later. All things considered, I was grateful to be alive! This experience has made me reflect. I had to face up to the precariousness of life. It is humbling to realize that everything can be lost in a matter of minutes. When it seems doubtful that one will survive, it may be too late to rectify one's way of life or add good deeds to one's record with God. Now I appreciate much more the opportunity I have to use my life wisely and to make each day count in the service of my God, Jehovah.—Psalm 90:12.



# Demographics, the Bible, and the Future

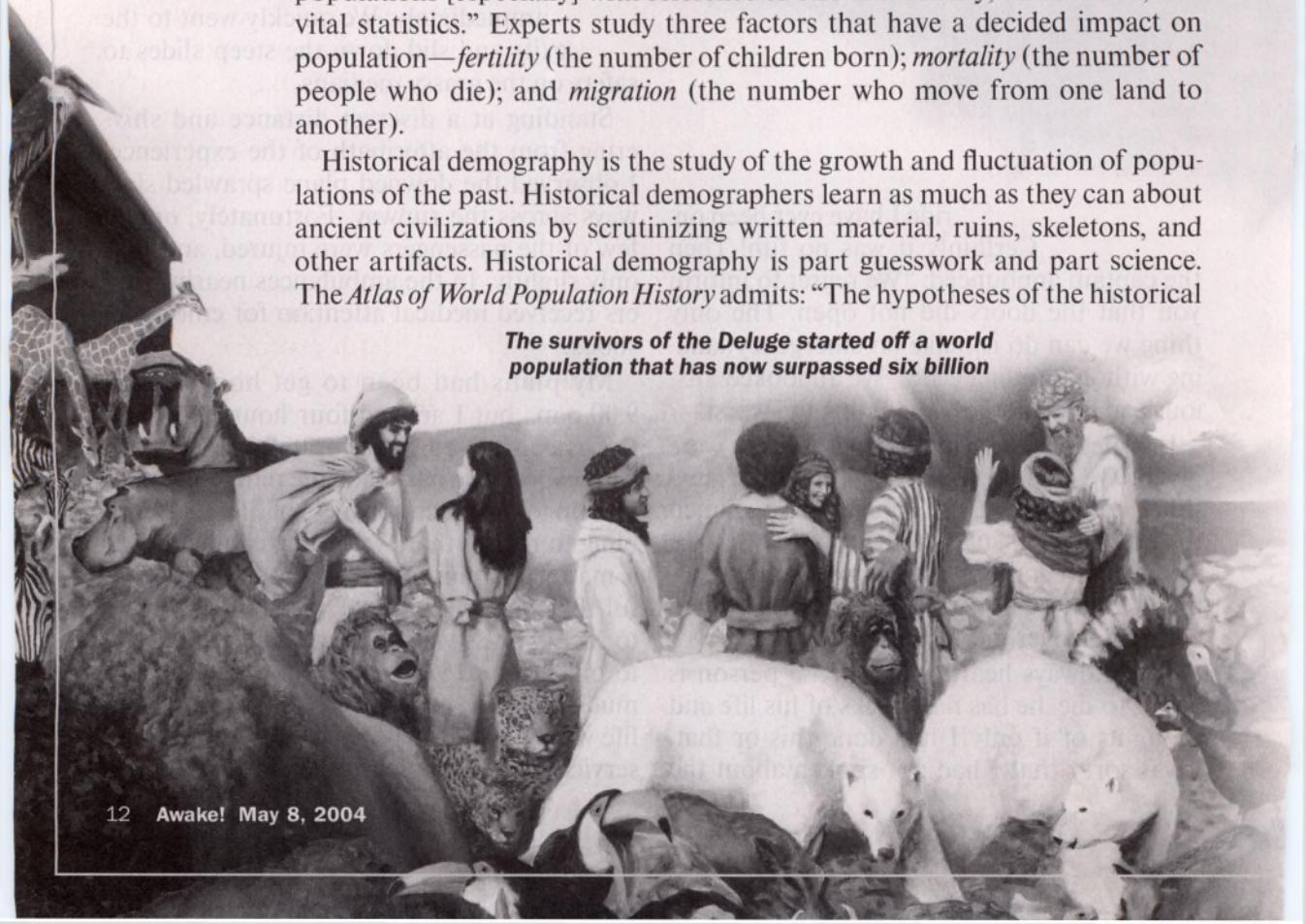
BY AWAKE! WRITER IN SWEDEN

**T**HE human family has grown from 1.65 billion at the beginning of the 20th century to a staggering 6 billion by the century's end. Will earth's population continue growing at this astounding rate? Will this millennium witness a population explosion? The experts who grapple with such complex questions are called demographers; their field of study is demography.

*Webster's Dictionary* defines demography as "the statistical study of human populations [especially] with reference to size and density, distribution, and vital statistics." Experts study three factors that have a decided impact on population—*fertility* (the number of children born); *mortality* (the number of people who die); and *migration* (the number who move from one land to another).

Historical demography is the study of the growth and fluctuation of populations of the past. Historical demographers learn as much as they can about ancient civilizations by scrutinizing written material, ruins, skeletons, and other artifacts. Historical demography is part guesswork and part science. The *Atlas of World Population History* admits: "The hypotheses of the historical

***The survivors of the Deluge started off a world population that has now surpassed six billion***



demographer are not, in the current state of the art, testable and consequently the idea of their being reliable in the statistician's sense is out of the question." Still, demographic assumptions are of interest to Bible students. Indeed, they are often in harmony with Bible accounts.

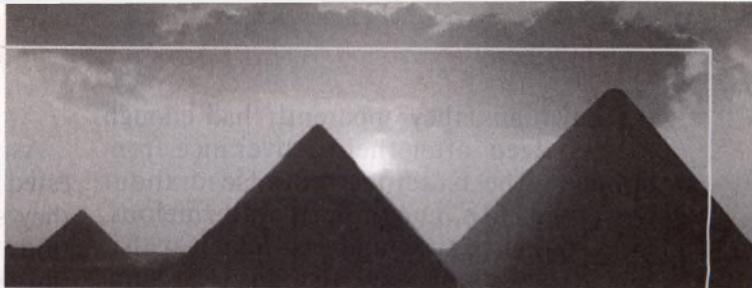
### Population Growth After the Deluge

The Bible says that only eight humans survived the Deluge of Noah's day. Some demographers speculate that by about 1,400 years later, the earth's population may have reached 50 million. Is an increase from 8 persons to about 50 million in 1,400 years out of the question?

First of all, the estimate of 50 million is just that—an estimate. However, it is interesting to note what is stated in the Bible at Genesis 9:1: "God went on to bless Noah and his sons and to say to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth.'" Then, in chapters 10 and 11, we read of 70 families that descended from Noah's sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Reading on, we come to the genealogy of men from Shem to Abraham, who 'became fathers to sons and daughters.' This may have been a time of high fertility, consistent with God's command to "fill the earth."

What about the mortality rate? The same chapters of Genesis describe man's extremely long life span during the first several hundred years after the Deluge.\* When a high birth-rate is coupled with a low mortality rate, the result is rapid population growth.

\* Later, the human life span decreased to 70 or 80 years, as indicated by Moses about the year 1500 B.C.E.—Psalm 90:10.



**In 215 years, a small number of Israelites in Egypt increased to as many as three million**

### The Israelites' Sojourn in Egypt

Some researchers view with skepticism the Bible's account of the rapid population growth that took place among the Israelites when they were living in the land of Egypt. The Bible states that aside from the wives of Jacob's sons, "all the souls of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy." (Genesis 46:26, 27) Yet, when the Israelites left Egypt 215 years later, there were an astounding "six hundred thousand able-bodied men on foot, besides little ones." (Exodus 12:37) When we count the women and the little ones, there may have been as many as three million Israelites in all! Is such an increase possible?

To answer that question, note carefully what the Bible says about the growth of the Israelite population in Egypt: "The sons of Israel became fruitful and began to swarm; and they kept on multiplying and growing mightier at a very extraordinary rate, so that the land got to be filled with them." The Israelites' growth at that time was exceptional.—Exodus 1:7.

Interestingly, similar growth has been seen in modern-day nations, such as Kenya during the 1980's. What made the Israelites' growth exceptional, however, was that the increase was sustained over a long period of time.

The Bible itself provides another reason for Israel's rapid growth. There was no food shortage while the Israelites were in Egypt. Obviously, when famine strikes, many people are cut off in their prime. As a result, fewer children are produced during that period. However, the Bible indicates that the Israelites had plenty of food to eat. When Joseph's family came to Egypt, Pharaoh told Joseph: "Have your father and your brothers dwell in the very best of the land. Let them dwell in the land of Goshen." (Genesis 47:6) Even after the Israelites became slaves to

the Egyptians, they apparently had enough food. Indeed, after their deliverance from bondage, the Israelites reminisced about the bread, fish, cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, garlic, and pots of meat that they ate while in slavery.—Exodus 16:3; Numbers 11:5.

### **During the First Century C.E.**

Demography can also shed light on our understanding of the Christian Greek Scriptures. For example, when we read Jesus' command to his followers to "make disciples of people of all the nations," we might wonder, 'How extensive was that preaching assignment?' (Matthew 28:19) How many people lived in the Roman Empire in the first century? Some estimate that the population was between 50 and 60 million. If that was so, those early Christian evangelizers had their work cut out for them!

Reading on in the Christian Greek Scriptures, we learn that the apostle Peter visited distant Babylon to preach the good news there. (1 Peter 5:13) Why Babylon? A comment in *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* is enlightening: "The chief centres of Jewish population outside Palestine were in Syria, Asia Minor, Babylonia, and Egypt, each of which is estimated to have had at least 1,000,000 Jews." Since Peter was assigned to preach particularly to the Jews, it was reasonable for him to travel to an enclave of Judaism—Babylon. (Galatians 2:9) And given the Jewish population there, it is not likely that he ran out of territory!

## **In Our Next Issue**

- **Are We Winning the Battle Against Disease?**
- **A Visit to the Glass Island**
- **Why Does He Treat Me So Badly?**

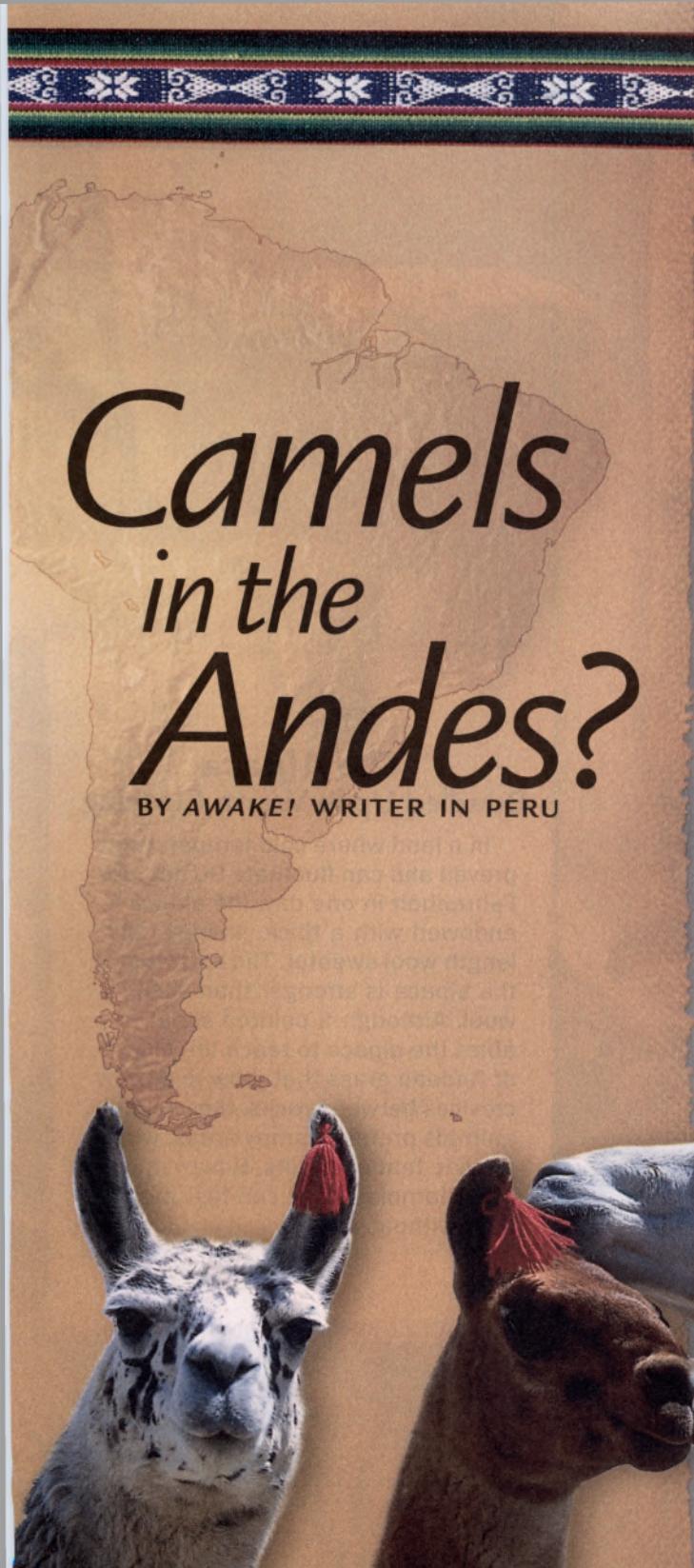
### **What Does the Future Hold?**

As we have seen, demographers are interested in certain details of man's past. What do they say about the future? Important questions are looming. Will there be a population explosion during this millennium? No one knows for sure. Noting that birthrates are declining in a number of countries, some researchers forecast a leveling off of the world population.

However, not all experts agree. The publication *Population Today* states: "Today, there are two distinct 'worlds' of population growth: those countries with fertility rates at or below two children per couple and those with higher fertility rates. The 'two-children-or-fewer world' includes Europe, the United States, Canada, Japan, and a few rapidly industrializing countries . . . By contrast, the 'rapid growth world' comprises most of the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where fertility is greater than two children per couple. In these countries, which are home to more than one-half of the world's population, women average four children each."

So while population growth has leveled off in some countries, it has increased or remained about the same in others. *Population Today* sums up future prospects: "For most developing countries, rapid population growth is not over. The real, not the imagined, end of the 'population explosion' worldwide will be determined by how quickly and how much countries invest in programs to reduce infant mortality, educate women, and provide family planning."

Will earth greatly surpass its present six billion inhabitants? Time will tell. But we do know that God's purpose is that the earth be filled—not overpopulated. (Genesis 1:28) And we have every reason to be confident that under God's Kingdom, this will occur. —Isaiah 55:10, 11.



# Camels in the Andes?

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN PERU

CAMELS in South America? The very idea may seem strange, since this desert animal is usually associated with Africa or Asia. Yet, the species of camels found in Africa and Asia are closely related to the lamoids found in South America.\* Unlike their distant relatives, though, South American lamoids have no hump. Furthermore, they are only as tall as an average human and do not reach even the shoulder height of a dromedary or a Bactrian camel.

The best place to catch a glimpse of the South American lamoid is in the Andes Mountains, mainly in Bolivia and Peru. They are also found in other regions of South America, including Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, in Argentina and Chile.

Particularly fascinating are the elegant gait and the speed of these creatures. Just as impressive is the ease with which South American lamoids can climb rocky slopes. Each step is cushioned by special pads, which are superior to state-of-the-art hiking footwear.

\* Four types of lamoids reside in South America: alpacas, guanacos, llamas, and vicuñas. They can crossbreed and produce hybrid offspring.

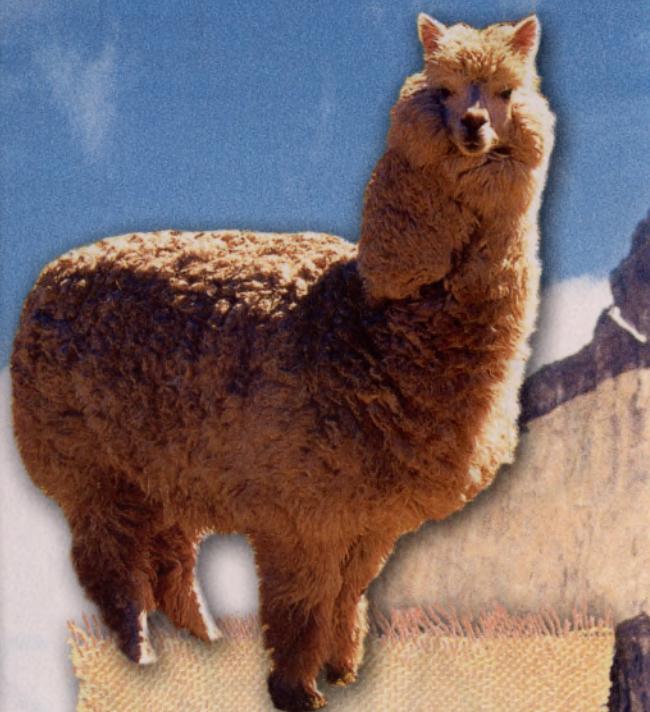
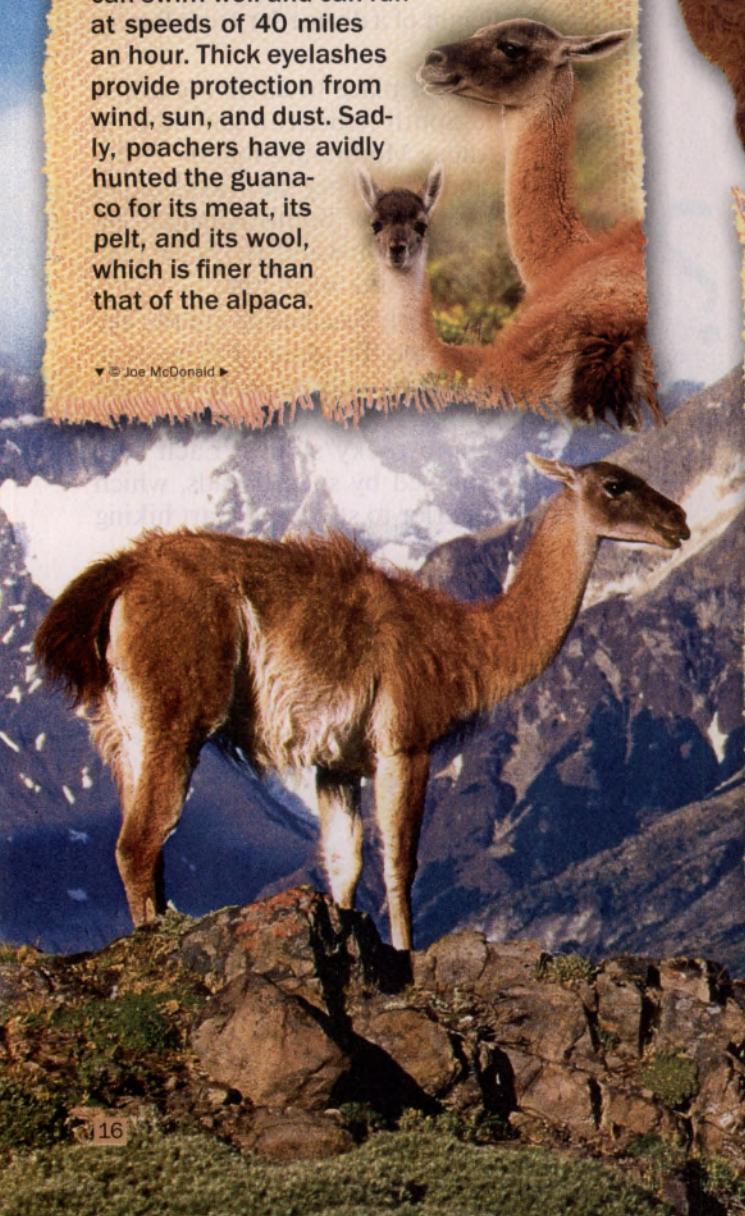
(Continued on page 18)

## *The Guanaco*

### A Resilient and Tenacious Beauty

It might seem that such a beautiful creature of delicate features would need pampering. But guanacos are usually seen in the harshest of lands, from the high Andes to Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, in southern Argentina and Chile. In such inhospitable territory, the guanaco eats stems and roots and drinks the water, even if it is of poor quality. The guanaco can swim well and can run at speeds of 40 miles an hour. Thick eyelashes provide protection from wind, sun, and dust. Sadly, poachers have avidly hunted the guanaco for its meat, its pelt, and its wool, which is finer than that of the alpaca.

▼ © Joe McDonald ▶



## *The Alpaca*

### Bundled Up in Warm Clothing

In a land where cold temperatures prevail and can fluctuate 90 degrees Fahrenheit in one day, the alpaca is endowed with a thick, shaggy full-length wool sweater. The soft wool of the alpaca is stronger than sheep's wool. Although a pointed snout enables the alpaca to reach the blades of Andean grass that grow in narrow crevices between rocks, these cuddly animals prefer swampy areas, which provide tender shoots. However, like other lamoids, they can last many days without water.



### The Vicuña Luxuriously Clothed

Although the vicuña lives in the high Andes where near-freezing temperatures prevail, it is comfortably dressed in a short, lightweight coat of what is considered to be the finest animal fiber on earth. Its outfit has a tuft of wool at the front of its chest, which serves as a scarf. An adult vicuña may yield less than two pounds of fleece every two years, so this luxurious fiber is scarce—and expensive. One yard of fine vicuña fabric can cost more than \$3,000.

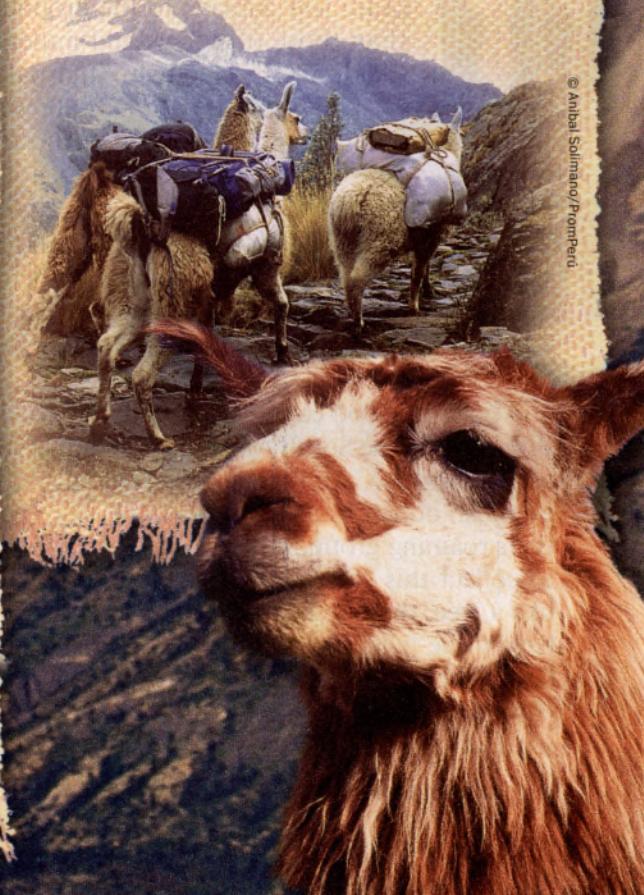
Under the Inca Empire, laws were made to protect the vicuña. A shearing festival, known as *chaccu*, was established, and only the royalty had the privilege of wearing garments made with vicuña fiber. The *chaccu* festival has been reinstated in recent years, and once again laws have been enacted to protect this species from poachers.

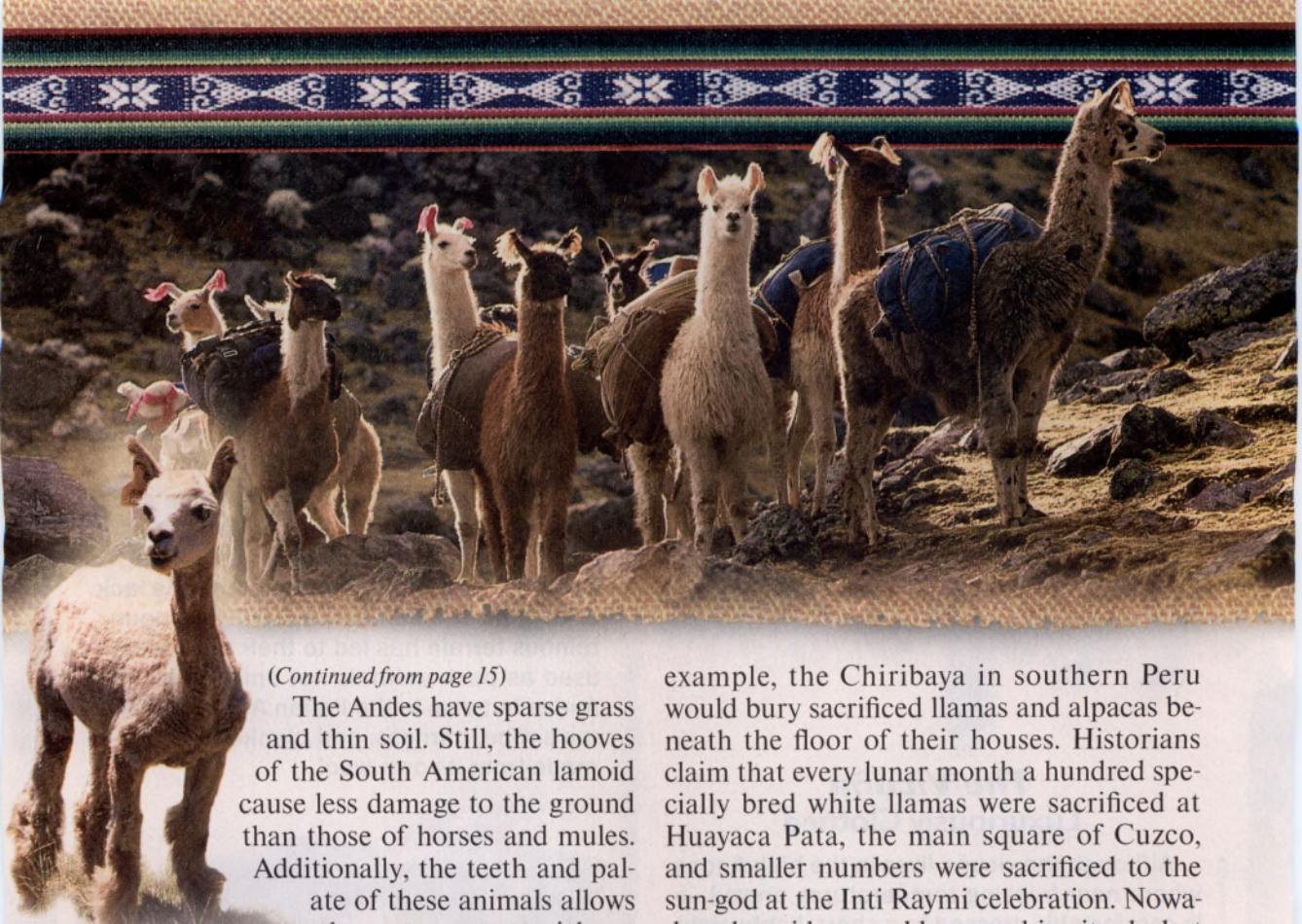
As an important part of this festival, wild vicuñas are caught in large funnellike traps 1,000 feet wide at the opening. After this the vicuñas are sheared and promptly released.

### The Llama Workhorse of the Andes

It is neither as strong as an ass nor as fast as a horse. Still, the llama outshines them both as a valuable pack animal. Indeed, it can carry up to 130 pounds on its back. If it feels that its load is too heavy, the llama will simply sit and won't budge until the load is lightened to its liking. If you try to coerce it, the llama may regurgitate food from the first of its three stomachs and spit it out with amazing precision and force.

Yet, llamas are generally docile, and a gentle handler can guide a long train of llamas through inhospitable high plateaus where other pack animals cannot endure the lack of oxygen. The llamas' capability in mountainous terrain has led to their now being used as pack animals not only in the Andes but also in the Italian Alps. The llama's rope, harness, and blanket may be made from its own wool.





**A recently sheared alpaca**

(Continued from page 15)

The Andes have sparse grass and thin soil. Still, the hooves of the South American lamoid cause less damage to the ground than those of horses and mules. Additionally, the teeth and palate of these animals allows them to graze without damaging the roots of the grass.

Most animals do not fare well at high elevations. Yet, because of their abundance of red blood cells, South American lamoids can live comfortably even high in the Andes.

Where firewood cannot be found, the dried droppings of the South American lamoid serve as a substitute. And since wild lamoids establish dunghills at the borders of their roaming grounds, it is easy to collect this "firedung." Unlike a tree, the dung does not have to be felled, and it dries fast in the dry Andean air.

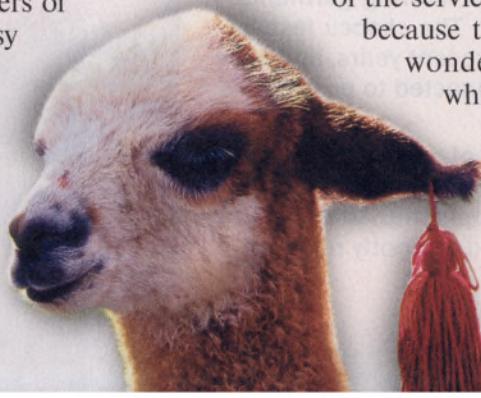
At one time lamoids were used in religious rituals. For

example, the Chiribaya in southern Peru would bury sacrificed llamas and alpacas beneath the floor of their houses. Historians claim that every lunar month a hundred specially bred white llamas were sacrificed at Huayaca Pata, the main square of Cuzco, and smaller numbers were sacrificed to the sun-god at the Inti Raymi celebration. Nowadays, lamoids are seldom used in rituals, but their meat—which tastes like lamb—is highly valued.

Long before refrigerators came on the scene, the Inca preserved lamoid meat by freeze-drying it, taking advantage of the cold temperature and low air pressure high in the Andes. They called this dry meat *ch'arki*. In English it is referred to as jerky.

Of course, we should appreciate these beautiful creatures not only because of the services they render but also because they are part of God's wonderful creation, all of which gives praise to him!

—Psalm 148:10, 13.



**A baby llama tagged with a tassel**

# WHEN YOUR BABY WON'T STOP CRYING

BY AWAKE! WRITER IN CANADA

THE doctor confirmed what the mother already suspected. Her baby had a classic case of colic. This syndrome affects "as many as one in four children," says the *Globe and Mail* newspaper of Canada. Symptoms of the condition include several hours of crying for at least three days a week. What can an anxious parent do? Pediatricians say that in many cases the parents—and child—may simply have to wait it out. But for how long?

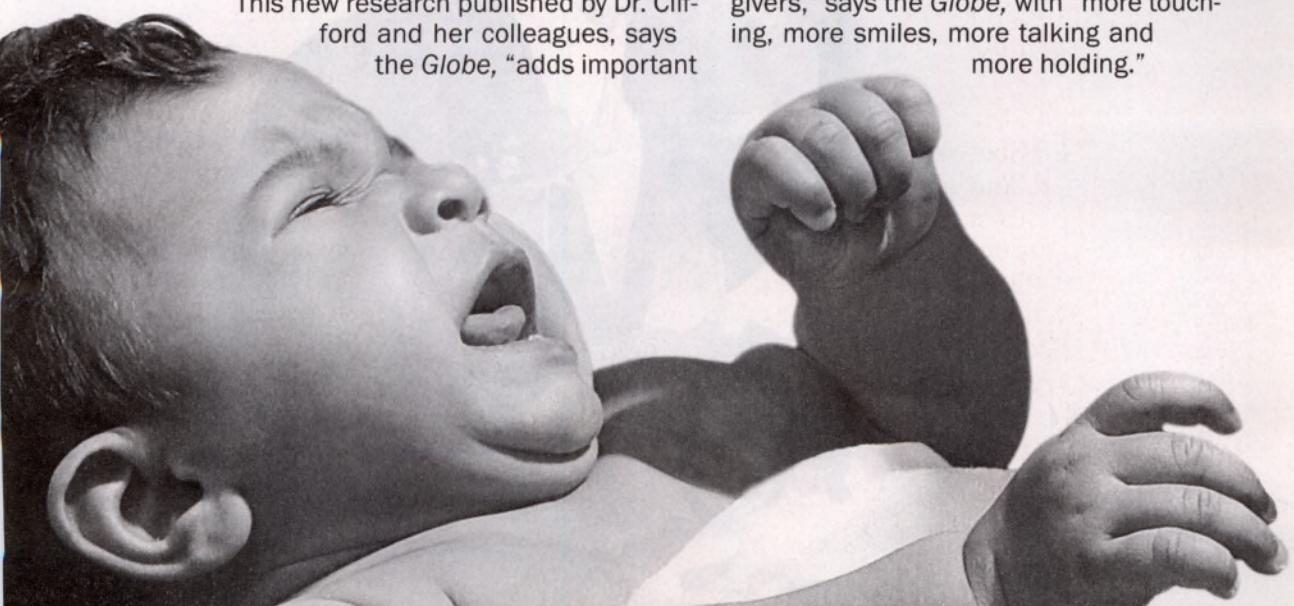
A new Canadian study of mothers with colicky babies reveals that more than 85 percent of colic cases abated by the time babies were three months old. The research, authored by Dr. Tammy Clifford, director of epidemiology at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute, also revealed that having a colicky baby leaves no lasting effect on mothers' mental health. "By six months postpartum, they're exactly like Moms without colicky babies," says Dr. Clifford. "It's almost like amnesia sets in after the crying stops."

This new research published by Dr. Clifford and her colleagues, says the *Globe*, "adds important

details to the scientific knowledge about colic because it shows there are three distinct classes of colicky babies: those whose condition appears and clears up some time within the three-month period; those who have persistent colic that lasts for several months without letting up; and a small group who develop colic relatively late, a few months after birth." A follow-up study is being done to chart the development of colicky children as they grow up, and it is the latter group that is particularly intriguing.

Incessant crying is believed to be a trigger in cases of shaken baby syndrome. As reported in the *Globe*, "the crying itself will not harm the child, but shaking a baby violently, even for a short period of time, can cause lasting neurological damage, and even death."

On the other hand, there may be a bright side to an infant's crying, even if it is incessant. "Research has demonstrated that infants who cry a lot actually get a lot more attention from their caregivers," says the *Globe*, with "more touching, more smiles, more talking and more holding."



## WHY VIEW MARRIAGE AS SACRED?

**M**OST people today would likely claim that they believe in the sanctity of marriage. Why, then, do so many unions end in divorce? For some, marriage is little more than a romantic promise and a legal agreement. But promises can be broken. People who view marriage this way find it quite easy to give up on their marriage when things go wrong.

How does God view the marital arrangement? The answer is found in his Word, the Bible, at Hebrews 13:4: "Let marriage be honorable among all." The Greek word translated "honorable" carries the thought of something that is precious and highly esteemed. When we value something, we take care to preserve it and not to lose it, even accidentally. The same

should be true of the marriage arrangement. Christians are to view it as honorable—as something precious that they want to protect.

Obviously, Jehovah God created marriage as a sacred arrangement between a husband and wife. But how can we show that we share his view of marriage?

### Love and Respect

Honoring the marital arrangement requires that marriage mates honor each other. (Romans 12:10) The apostle Paul wrote to first-century Christians: "Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband."—Ephesians 5:33.



Granted, at times a spouse may not act in the most lovable or respectable manner. Still, Christians must show such love and respect. Paul wrote: "Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also."—Colossians 3:13.

#### Time and Attention

Married couples who view their union as sacred take time to fulfill each other's physical and emotional needs. This includes sexual intimacy. The Bible says: "Let the husband render to his wife her due; but let the wife also do likewise to her husband."—1 Corinthians 7:3.

However, some married couples have felt the need for the husband to move away temporarily in order to earn more income. At times, the separation has become unexpectedly prolonged. Often, such separations have put a strain on the marriage, sometimes leading to adultery and divorce. (1 Corinthians 7:2, 5) For that reason, many Christian couples have decided to forgo material advantages rather than put at risk the marriage they hold sacred.

#### When Problems Arise

When difficulties arise, Christians who honor their marriage do not hastily separate or divorce. (Malachi 2:16; 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11) Jesus stated: "Everyone divorcing his wife, except on account of fornication, makes her a subject for adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." (Matthew 5:32) Opting for divorce or separation when a couple has no Scriptural grounds dishonors marriage.

Our view of marriage is also shown by the advice we offer to those with serious marital problems. Are we quick to recommend separation or divorce? True, there may be times when valid grounds for a separation exist,

such as when there is extreme physical abuse or willful nonsupport.\* Also, as noted above, the Bible allows for divorce only when one's mate is guilty of fornication. Still, Christians should not unduly influence the decision of others in such situations. After all, it is the person with the marital problem—not the one giving the advice—who will live with the consequences of the decision.—Galatians 6:5, 7.

#### Avoid a Casual View

In some areas it has become common for people to use marriage to gain legal residency in another country. Usually such individuals make an agreement to pay a citizen of that country to marry them. Often these couples, although married, remain separate, perhaps not even maintaining a friendly relationship. Soon after obtaining the desired legal residency, they divorce. They view their marriage strictly as a business agreement.

The Bible does not endorse such a casual view. Regardless of their motives, people who marry enter into a sacred arrangement that God considers binding. The parties of such agreements remain bound as husband and wife, and the Bible requirements for a valid divorce with the possibility of marrying someone else apply.—Matthew 19:5, 6, 9.

As is true of any worthwhile endeavor, a good marriage requires effort and perseverance. Those who fail to appreciate its sacredness give up more easily. Or they may resign themselves to living in an unhappy marriage. On the other hand, those who acknowledge the sacredness of marriage know that God expects them to stay together. (Genesis 2:24) They also realize that by making their marriage work harmoniously, they honor him as the Designer of the marital arrangement. (1 Corinthians 10:31) Having this viewpoint gives them the motivation to persevere and work at making a success of their marriage.

\* See *The Watchtower*, November 1, 1988, pages 22-3.

# A Family's Faith Under Adversity

INDIA, a charming nine-year-old girl from Wisconsin, U.S.A., is no stranger to illness. Indeed, she has already undergone three major surgeries and countless smaller procedures. "For six years," says her mother, Lori, "India's life revolved around emergency rooms, hospital stays, and visits to the doctor."

**India Erickson**



It all began when India was 18 months of age. She started having unusual symptoms, including chronic diarrhea, high fevers, distended stomach, and abnormal weight loss. She also had pain in her abdomen. Every night for two years, little India repeatedly woke up whimpering, moaning, and sometimes even screaming in agony.

While the doctors tried to determine what was wrong, India continued to suffer terribly. "Our baby was basically starving to death," says Lori. "For more than a year," adds Mark, India's father, "we watched our little girl wasting away and didn't know how to help her. I remember feeling totally helpless one night as Lori and I talked about India's funeral, which at that point we thought was inevitable."

In time, it was determined that India had ulcerative colitis—a disease that attacks the lining of the large intestine. She also had primary sclerosing cholangitis, which affects the bile ducts in the liver. These ailments were treatable. However, surgery would be required, and for the ulcerative colitis, drug treatment would be needed. Both conditions require constant monitoring and care during recovery.

It is now more than seven years since India first became ill. Thanks to the care of conscientious physicians, she is well on the road to recovery. As Jehovah's Witnesses, Mark and Lori feel that their faith in God's Word—in particular what it says about sick-

ness, death, and the hope of a future resurrection—has helped them to endure. It has done the same for India. “India has always talked freely about the resurrection hope as described in the Bible,” says Lori. “It is very real to her.”

On one occasion when India was in the playroom at a hospital, she met a young girl whose sister had leukemia. Lori relates what followed: “The girl told India that she was afraid her sister might die. India then told her what death is according to the Bible and that she was not afraid of dying. The next day the girl’s mother came to me with questions. She was amazed that India could speak so freely and fearlessly about such things.”

Mark and Lori have found that the prayers of fellow believers have been an enormous support. “In the past,” Mark says, “when I told people that they would be in my prayers or when I prayed with them, I always wished that there were more I could do. Now I realize how important those prayers with and for others are. Prayer was the single most important thing that could



**San Diego Children's Hospital**

have been done for us in our difficult times. What a loving brotherhood we have!”

Mark also feels that India’s illness has helped them to examine their priorities. “Our outlook on material things has definitely changed,” he says. “How worthless they seem when your child is sick! The worthwhile things in life were—and are—our relationship with Jehovah God and our loving brotherhood.”

Mark and Lori as well as India and her siblings look forward to the time foretold by the prophet Isaiah when “no resident will say: ‘I am sick.’”  
—Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:4.



**India with her family**



# DANGER-

By Awake! writer in Britain

**I**T IS commonly known that animals feed on plants. But did you know that some plants feed on animals? There are some 550 identified species of these carnivorous, or insectivorous, plants, and more are being discovered. These extraordinary plants can photosynthesize, but those that grow in poor soil lack essential nutrients, such as nitrates. Insects provide important food supplements for these hungry plants.

Each plant has its own method of snaring prey. Some have traps or trapdoors, while others lure their victims into slippery pitfalls or onto sticky pads from which escape is impossible. Let us take a closer look at carnivorous plants.

### Traps and Trapdoors

Probably the best-known carnivorous plant is the **Venus flytrap**, which grows to a height of about 12 inches. Found in peat bogs in the Carolinas of North America, the Venus flytrap has shiny, brightly colored leaves that are edged with nectar-producing glands—a temptation that is difficult for insects to resist! Therein lies the danger, for the Venus flytrap contains three trigger hairs in the middle of each leaf lobe. When an unwary creature touches them, the leaves close. Like the jaws of a steel trap, spines around the

edge of the leaves interlock to prevent the prey from escaping.

If the trap closes on something that was blown into it by the wind—a piece of dry twig, for example—the plant will release it in a couple of days. But when the sensory organs on the leaf detect the presence of nitrogenous substances, enzymes are released to break down the captured insect's body so that the plant can absorb the nutrients. This process takes from 10 to 35 days, depending on the size of the prey.

Interestingly, if just one trigger hair is disturbed, perhaps by a raindrop, the trap will not close. It is only when two or more trigger hairs are touched—even after an interval of up to 20 seconds—that

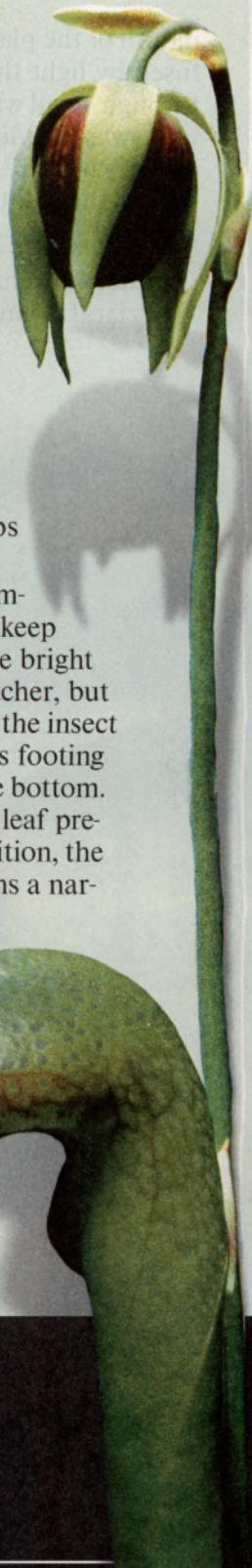


Hanging pitcher-plant leaf

**Venus flytrap**  
Leaf on left shows  
a trapped fly;  
leaf on right shows  
trigger hairs

Plants: Copyright Chris Heath,  
Kentish Town City Farm, London

# -Killer Plants!



the plant reacts. The speed at which the trap closes is dependent on temperature and sunlight. In certain conditions it closes at a speed of a thirtieth of a second.

The snares of some plants move even faster than that. Consider the bladderwort, primarily an aquatic plant, with underwater leaves. The leaves contain numerous bladders, each of which is equipped with a trapdoor and several long hairs. When a small creature, such as a water flea, touches the hairs, the trapdoor opens. Because the water pressure inside the bladder is lower than that outside, the tiny victim is sucked in and the trapdoor closes behind it. This can happen in as little as a thirty-fifth of a second!

## Slippery Pitfalls

Among the largest of the carnivorous plants are the **hanging pitcher plants**. Some, such as those found in Southeast Asia, are vines that grow to the tops of trees. These contain traps that can hold up to two quarts of liquid to catch creatures as large as frogs. Some are even reputed to have caught rats. But how do the traps work?

Each leaf of the pitcher plant resembles a jug, or pitcher, and has a lid to keep out the rain. An insect is lured by the bright color and abundant nectar of the pitcher, but the rim has a slippery surface. When the insect attempts to get the nectar, it loses its footing and slides into the pool of fluid at the bottom. Downward-pointing hairs inside the leaf prevent the insect from escaping. In addition, the nectar of some pitcher plants contains a narcotic that stupefies the prey.

The pitcher plant with the most striking appearance is surely the **cobra plant**, which grows in the mountains of California and Oregon in the United States. The pitcher closely resembles a cobra rearing up to strike. An insect finds its way into the

Flower and immature pitcher leaf of cobra plant

Copyright Chris Heath, Kentish Town City Farm, London



mouth of the plant but then becomes confused by light that seems to be shining through small windows. The insect keeps flying toward the light in a futile attempt to escape. Exhausted, it falls into the liquid at the base of the plant and drowns.

#### Domestic and Commercial Value

**Butterworts** have sticky leaves that attract the sciarid fly and the whitefly. These insects

are pests affecting both commercial greenhouse plants and domestic houseplants. Man-made flytraps are effective but indiscriminate, as they also entrap bees and hover flies. The butterworts' stickiness is superior. It holds only the tiny pests.

#### North American pitcher plant

Its flower is about the size of an orange

#### Butterwort

Sciarid flies and whiteflies are trapped on its sticky leaves

#### Leaves of the North American pitcher plant

Inset: A fly feeds on nectar that causes it to become drowsy

#### Fork leaf sundew

An insect is trapped by the leaf's sticky hairs

Plants: Copyright Chris Heath,  
Kentish Town City Farm, London

**North American pitcher plants** are now gaining popularity with gardeners. Their beautiful flowers and elegant leaf shapes compare favorably with other plants, and they are easy to cultivate. They also consume flies in enormous numbers. Indeed, each clump of leaves can trap thousands of flies in a season. Bees are not at risk, as it appears that they are not attracted by the plants. But how are the flowers fertilized without trapping the insects that pollinate them? The flowers appear first, while the pitchers are still growing. By the time the pitchers come to maturity, the flowers have died and the pollinators have moved on.

An easy-to-grow plant, which can tolerate a wide range of temperatures, is **Australia's fork leaf sundew**. "It is an ideal plant to have if mosquitoes prevent you from sitting outside in the evening," says Chris Heath, carnivorous plant specialist at the Walworth Garden Farm Environmental Education Centre in London. "Plant it in a hanging basket where its shiny droplets of sticky fluid will attract mosquitoes." Any that brush against a leaf

are held fast by its sticky hairs, which curve inward and press the insect against the surface of the leaf.

### Preserving Predator Plants

Sad to say, many carnivorous plants grow in habitats that are being destroyed by man. For example, the hanging pitcher plant of Southeast Asia is endangered because of slash-and-burn agriculture. Wetlands in other areas are being drained for development. Some species have already become extinct.\*

Would you like to grow a carnivorous plant? There is no need to take them from the wild, for many can readily be obtained from suppliers who propagate them from seed or from tissue cultures. Instructions for growing them are simple: Keep the plant wet at all times with rainwater. Also, carnivorous plants thrive in sunshine, but species from temperate zones are best kept cool during the winter season. Patience is required, as it may take up to three years for some plants to reach maturity. At least there is no need to supply them with food. After all, they find their own!

\* Some insectivorous plants are protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

## ■ Fungi Food

The tiniest carnivorous plants are fungi that snare microscopic soil-dwelling nematode worms. Some of these fungi have sticky knobs on stalks, but others have three-celled nooses only a thousandth of an inch thick, which tighten around any nematode worm that unwittingly crawls through them. As soon as the worm is trapped, it is invaded by fungus filaments, and death quickly follows. These fungi are being studied for their pest control potential, since nematodes cause hundreds of millions of dollars of crop damage every year.

## ■ Insects Fight Back!

Not all insects succumb to the wiles of insectivorous plants. The blowfly, for example, has an appendage on each foot. Like a climber's grappling iron, these enable the insect to clamber up the down-curved hairs of the pitcher plant. When the blowfly's eggs hatch, the maggots feed on the decaying insects. Then, as soon as they are ready to pupate, they cut holes in the pitcher and escape. Caterpillars of a small moth, in their turn, cover offending pitcher-plant hairs with a web. Some spiders craftily spin their webs in the upper part of pitcher plants so as to have first call on any inquisitive insects, and at least one kind of spider has a special skin that allows it to seek shelter in the plant's digestive juices if it is threatened.

# Watching the World



## Plastic Ducks Ply the Waves

In January 1992 a ship sailing from Hong Kong to the United States encountered a heavy storm and lost a shipment of 29,000 plastic ducks, explains Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. The first ducks to make landfall arrived on Baranof Island, Alaska, in November 1992. Others were found two years after the storm "in sea ice north of the Bering Strait." It is expected that these remarkably robust toys will also turn up on the New England coast of North America. Interestingly, the mishap has been a help to scientists, verifying their theory that seawater flows "from the Pacific right through to the Arctic Ocean and into the Atlantic," says the paper.

## Gambling Housewives

In Britain "housewives in growing numbers are becoming hooked on internet gambling sites, spending hours every day running up thousands of pounds in debt," reports London's *Sunday Telegraph*. Women who would hesitate to enter a betting shop find the Internet far less intimidating. What is more, they can fit gambling into their daily routine at home. Many are becoming addicted, but because of the stigma usually attached to female gambling, often they do not admit to having a problem. According to the paper, Professor Mark Griffiths, of the University of Nottingham, said that the trend reflects a "mass cultural shift that is taking gambling out of the casino and into the home or workplace." He also observed: "If you are a problem gambler, . . . the chances are that you will get barred from casinos or betting shops.

With the internet, there is no gatekeeper."

## More Youths Living on the Streets

"The number of teens living on the streets of Madrid is on the rise," reports the English edition of *El País*, a Spanish daily newspaper. According to a university study, "approximately 1,250 of Madrid's 5,000 homeless people were under the age of 20 when they found themselves without a place to call home." Research revealed that "the vast majority of the homeless youth come from broken homes and their lives are clearly marked by trauma." In fact, "two of every three of the youth are children of alcoholics or drug abusers and a similar number suffered abuse in the home." Manuel Muñoz, an author of the report, said that "the traditional family ties typical to Mediterranean cultures are beginning to fail."

## Gonorrhea Rising in Canada

"After 20 years of constant decline, gonorrhea rates have jumped more than 40 per cent over the past five years," says Canada's *Vancouver Sun*. Gonorrhea is a sexually transmitted disease that can cause infertility and "can spread through the blood stream into the joints, causing inflammation and swelling, or 'gonococcal arthritis.'" What is more, the bacterium that causes gonorrhea is becoming resistant "to whatever drug it encounters," says the *Sun*. Another fear is that "the increase in gonorrhea could lead to more cases of HIV, because having any sexually transmitted infection increases the risk of acquiring, or spreading, the virus linked to AIDS." In fact, doctors attribute the rise in gonorrhea to a diminishing fear of HIV. "People are becoming less cautious about who they sleep with,

and how many people they sleep with," says Dr. David Fisman, an expert in sexually transmitted infections.

### Rent-a-Grandparent

"More than 1,000 single mothers and fathers with children up to ten years of age have been able to choose grandparents for their children," reports Germany's newspaper *Nassauische Neue Presse*. "My real grandparents live a long way from Berlin," says seven-year-old Melanie. "Granny Klara lives just round the corner. She picks me up from school and goes with me to the zoo, to the playground, and to the swimming baths. She cooks, too, and eats with me and my mum at home." Granny Klara was sent by a "grandparent" service that makes senior citizens available to single parents for an hourly fee

ranging from \$3 to \$5. "The project is just the right solution for single parents on a tight budget," says the report.

### A Beach for "Chubbies"

In Mexico a hotel has set aside an area for those who are embarrassed to step onto a beach that is packed with slender people, reports *El Economista* newspaper. The beach hotel in Cancún has adopted the slogan "Be Fat and Be Happy." The hotel aims "to attract those individuals who are afraid of going to the sand in their bathing suits because of their excessive weight." The hotel staff, which includes people of all weight levels, is trained to treat hefty vacationers without discrimination, says the report, "since they are already extremely discriminated against in their daily routine of life."

### Mediterranean Sea Warming Up

"For ten years we have been registering . . . the tropicalization of the Mediterranean," says Maurizio Wurtz, marine biologist at Genoa University in Italy. The report, contained in the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*, says that the warmer waters are attracting new aquatic plants and animals. "Numerous species," says Wurtz, "are moving from the African coast to the north of the Mediterranean." The immigrants include parrot fish, originally from tropical waters; damselfish from tropical latitudes of the Atlantic; triggerfish, which normally live in the Indian and Pacific oceans; and an alga that has made its way into the Mediterranean by way of the Suez Canal.

### Beetles to the Rescue!

"Two species of beetle are credited with saving the economy of Benin in West Africa \$260 million over 20 years," says *New Scientist* magazine. "Between them, they have overpowered an aquatic superweed [water hyacinth] that kills fish, interferes with boats and changes the ecology of lakes."

The report adds that "floating mats of the weed can double in size in less than two weeks, with the sheer density of its foliage making fishing and boating all but impossible." The plant removes oxygen from the water, raises its acidity, and slows down its flow, increasing silt deposits. The weed also provides cover for crocodiles, and this poses a danger for people collecting water. The saviors—two species of weevil that eat water hyacinth and nothing else—have succeeded where machinery has failed and where chemicals would pollute the water and kill other plants, explains *New Scientist*.



## From Our Readers

**Cities** I am 13 years old, and I was delighted to read the articles "Madrid—A Capital Built for a King" (June 22, 2003), "Barcelona—An Outdoor Museum of Color and Style" (July 8, 2003), and "Seville—A Gateway to the Americas" (July 22, 2003). As a Spaniard living in Germany, I was happy to read something about my home country. Please keep writing such articles.

*C.G.R., Germany*

It is always a pleasure for me to read *Awake!* but I like the articles about different countries and cities the most. I was thrilled to read the articles on the cities of Spain. Then I was overjoyed to see the article "St. Petersburg—Russia's 'Window on Europe.'" (August 22, 2003) I really want to see its sights and white nights. Thanks to this article, I got to "visit" there.

*O.A.V., Russia*

**Insects** I am grateful for the series "When Insects Spread Disease," which contained the box "Do Insects Spread HIV?" (May 22, 2003) For some years now, I have lived in a city that has a lot of mosquitoes during the summer. I've lived with the fear that I was going to be infected with the HIV virus. Thanks to your article, I won't be so anxious this summer!

*J. L., Albania*

**From Our Readers** I love to read the column "From Our Readers." Sometimes I use comments from readers to motivate those with whom I'm studying the Bible to pay special attention to certain articles. The column shows that your efforts to reach people's hearts are not in vain.

*S. A., Russia*

**Sleep** Once I started reading the series "Are You Getting Enough Sleep?" (March 22, 2003), I could not put the magazine down. Since my teens, I have often slept only two or three hours a night. This magazine has helped me to understand the need to seek medical help.

*W. A., Taiwan*

**Water** I work in the field of nutrition and weight control, and the article "Life's Precious Liquid—Wa-



ter" was exactly what I needed. (June 8, 2003) In just one article, you managed to sum up everything that I learned in a 30-hour course on nutrition. I intend to use this information to help my clients.

*J.F.S.F., Brazil*

**Postpartum Depression** In April my husband and I became parents. After the birth of our son, I began to experience the things described in the article "Understanding Postpartum Depression." (June 8, 2003) Everybody told me how beautiful our child was, but I didn't even want to see him. I stayed home and cried. After I read the article, I hugged my husband and opened up to him, explaining how I felt. He was happy to understand what had caused the changes he had seen in me. I am grateful to you for writing about this subject with appropriate tact. You touched my heart.

*S. V., Italy*

**Tour de France** For a school project, I chose the subject bicycles. The article "The Tour de France—100 Years of Cycling's Supreme Test" (July 8, 2003) came at just the right time! I was even able to read my essay before the class. I have used many articles from *Awake!* for my schoolwork. Thank you.

*N. K., Germany*

# SMOKING IS NOT FOR ME!

**T**HAT topic was provided to hundreds of students participating in a statewide writing contest sponsored by the Missouri State Medical Association (MSMA) in the United States. Some 675 students from 42 schools submitted entries. The award went to 12-year-old Breanna, and her winning poem was printed in the MSMA journal *Missouri Medicine*. Breanna also had opportunity to read her poem to delegates attending the annual convention of the MSMA. Before doing so, Breanna told her audience:

"I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and all the facts in the poem came from Awake! magazine.

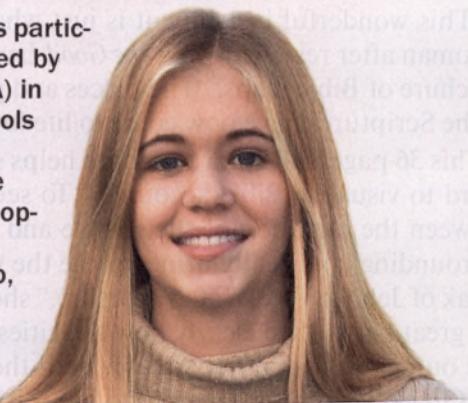
As a matter of fact, the idea for one of my favorite lines of the poem came from the front cover of this issue. It shows a skull with a cigarette hanging out of its mouth and says: 'Death for Sale.' Over the years Awake! magazine has pub-

lished many articles about the dangers of smoking."

Jehovah's Witnesses shun the use of tobacco. They believe that deliberately using any product that pollutes the body shows disrespect for the gift of life as well as for the Creator. (Acts 17:24, 25) Hence, they follow the Scriptural admonition: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." —2 Corinthians 7:1.

Like other Witness youths, Breanna strives to live by Bible principles. Certainly all such young ones make the heart of their Creator rejoice.—Proverbs 27:11.

Breanna (now 14 years old)  
holding her poem



YPS/Alliance  
**"SMOKING IS NOT FOR ME!"**  
Contest

1<sup>ST</sup> Place winner of \$300  
**Breanna Weed**  
Age 12, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Jefferson City

## "Smoking is NOT for Me"

There are many reasons why smoking is not for me.  
The reasons are simple and easy to see.

I want to live a longer life...that's one reason why  
I want to be healthy and not prematurely die.

There are 3,800 chemicals found in tobacco smoke.  
Now you can see why smoking causes people to choke.

Forty-three of these chemicals are known to cause cancer  
So if you want to be healthy, smoking isn't the answer.

Smoking isn't glamorous...cigarette companies have lied  
I'm not poisoning my body with benzene, arsenic, or cyanide.

I don't want nicotine to be my master.  
I don't want my heart to work harder or pump faster.

My life is precious...I have no desire to wheeze.  
I don't want to risk dying of heart disease.

Cigarette smoking kills three million people a year.  
I don't want to be a statistic...I'll make that clear.

Second hand smoke causes many people to die.  
I don't want to kill my family or myself and cause them to cry.

I don't want to smoke or cause anyone to mourn.  
Because smoking can cause babies to be stillborn.

I don't want smoker's cough or shortness of breath.  
As I said before, I don't want to die a premature death.

Smoking might be in...it might be the latest fad.  
But I don't want to spend my money to make myself smell bad.

I don't want to smoke and pollute other people's air.  
I want to be a good example and show I truly care.

Smoking cigarettes is damaging and sure to make you frail.  
You see, the packs should really say...DEATH FOR SALE.

Reasons for smoking are many, not few.  
Smoking isn't for me, and I hope it's not for you!

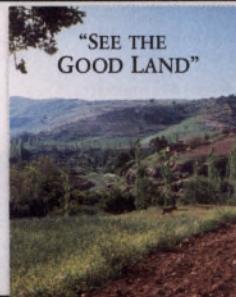


# "SEE THE GOOD LAND"

"This wonderful instrument is just what I needed," wrote a woman after reviewing "*See the Good Land*," a recently published brochure of Bible maps. "The places and people and situations in the Scriptures have now come to life for me."

This 36-page, full-color brochure helps students of God's Word to visualize Bible accounts. "To see the contrast between the elevation of the temple and that of the surrounding land really brings home the scriptures that speak of Jehovah's 'elevated' worship," she continues. "It is a great help to see clearly how the cities of refuge were laid out, as well as other sites in both the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures. I started to use this lovely brochure in studying the Bible book of Acts."

This woman concluded: "I can see myself using this beautiful gift constantly as I travel through God's Word."



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