

Awake!

DECEMBER 2011



THE BOOK THAT COULD NOT BE DESTROYED

Awake!

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1513 B.C.E.
—c. 98 C.E.

Bible is penned in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek

100

Becomes more portable in codex form

405

Translated into Latin by Jerome



AN OUTSTANDING BOOK AND A SURVIVOR

“No *book* has excited so much opposition . . . , but it has survived every attack which power, talent, and eloquence have ever made on it.”

WHY should the Bible be worthy of your attention? For one thing, it claims to contain God’s message to humanity. (2 Timothy 3:16) If that claim is true, then you would surely be missing out by not reading it.

Another reason for paying attention to the Bible is that it is one of the oldest books in existence and is by far the most widely translated and distributed. It is the best-selling book of all time and continues to top the best-seller list every year.

The claims, age, and circulation of the Bible are even more impressive in the light of the numerous attempts that have been made throughout history to suppress it. “No *book* has excited so much opposition as this; but it has survived every attack which power, talent, and eloquence have ever made on it,” stated the 19th-century theologian Albert Barnes.

The same writer noted that people naturally take an interest in anything that has

withstood repeated onslaughts. “But no army ever survived so many battles as the Bible,” continued Barnes, “no ancient bulwark has endured so many sieges, and stood so firm amid the thunders of war and the ravages of time; and no rock has been swept by so many currents, and has still stood unmoved.”

Many ancient writings have been lost, destroyed, or just forgotten, but despite vicious attacks, the Bible has always survived. Some people have fought, at the risk of their life, to make it available to the masses. On the other hand, some have snatched it from the hands of yearning readers and have publicly burned Bibles and their owners.

Why has this book been so loved and so hated? What battles has it survived? Who tried to destroy it? More important, why has it survived? And why is its message important to you? The following pages will address these questions.

TIME LINE OF BIBLE PUBLISHING

1380

Translated from Latin into English by Wycliffe

1455

Gutenberg produces the first printed Bible

1525

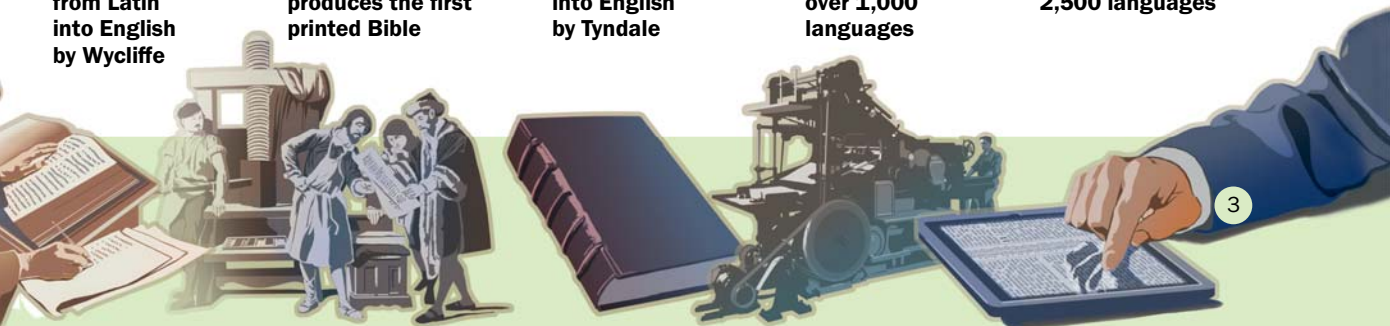
Translated into English by Tyndale

1938

Printed in over 1,000 languages

2011

Available in over 2,500 languages



THE BIBLE ATTACKED

THE collection of writings that we know as the Bible, or the Holy Scriptures, was recorded over a period of more than 1,600 years. The earliest part of this collection was penned by Moses; the last, by a disciple of Jesus Christ about a hundred years after His birth.

Efforts to silence the Scriptures have a long history extending from well before our Common Era, through the Middle Ages, and down to modern times. An early record of such efforts dates back to the time of God's prophet Jeremiah, who lived over 600 years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

An Unpopular Message Attacked

The prophet Jeremiah was directed by God to write in a scroll a message condemning the sinful inhabitants of ancient Judah and warning them that their capital city, Jerusalem, would be destroyed unless they changed their ways. Jeremiah's secretary, Baruch, read the message aloud, in public in Jerusalem's temple. He read it a second time in the hearing of Judah's princes, who took the scroll to King Jehoiakim. As the king listened to God's words, he did not like what he heard. So he cut the scroll into pieces and burned it.—Jeremiah 36:1-23.



Then God ordered Jeremiah: "Take again for yourself a roll, another one, and write on it all the first words that proved to be on the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah burned up." (Jeremiah 36:28) Some 17 years later, exactly as God's word through Jeremiah had foretold, Jerusalem was destroyed, many of its rulers were slain, and its inhabitants were taken into exile in Babylon. The message that scroll conveyed—and a record of the circumstances surrounding the attack made upon it—have survived until our day in the Bible book of Jeremiah.

Bible Burnings Continue

Jehoiakim was not the only person in pre-Christian times who attempted to burn God's Word. Following the breakup of the Greek Empire, Israel came under the influence of

Awake!®

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

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the Seleucid dynasty. The Seleucid King Antiochus Epiphanes, who ruled from 175 to 164 B.C.E., wanted to unite his empire in Greek, or Hellenistic, culture. To that end, he attempted to force Greek ways, customs, and religion on the Jews.

About 168 B.C.E., Antiochus plundered Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem. Atop the altar, he built another in honor of the Greek god Zeus. Antiochus also prohibited the observance of the Sabbath and commanded the Jews to leave their sons uncircumcised. The penalty for noncompliance was death.

An element of that religious purge was Antiochus' attempt to eliminate all scrolls of the Law. Although Antiochus pursued his campaign throughout Israel, he failed to destroy all copies of the Hebrew Scriptures. Some carefully-concealed scrolls may well have escaped the flames inside Israel, and copies of the Holy Scriptures were known to have been preserved by colonies of Jews living elsewhere.

Diocletian's Edict

Another prominent ruler who tried to destroy the Scriptures was the Roman Emperor Diocletian. In 303 C.E., Diocletian promulgated a series of increasingly harsh edicts against Christians. This resulted in what some historians have termed "The Great Persecution." His first edict ordered the burning of copies of the Scriptures and the demolition of Christian meeting places. Harry Y. Gamble, professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, wrote: "Diocletian took

it for granted that every Christian community, wherever it might be, had a collection of books and knew that those books were essential to its viability." Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea, Palestine, who lived during that period, reported: "We saw with our very eyes the houses of prayer cast down to their foundations from top to bottom, and the inspired and sacred Scriptures committed to the flames in the midst of the market-places."

Three months after Diocletian's edict, the mayor of the North African city of Cirta, which is now known as Constantine, is said to have ordered the Christians to hand over all their "writings of the law" and "copies of scripture." Accounts of the same period tell of Christians who preferred to be tortured and killed rather than to hand over copies of the Bible to be destroyed.

The Intent of the Attacks

The shared intent of Jehoiakim, Antiochus, and Diocletian was to wipe out—yes, to obliterate—God's Word. Yet the Bible survived all attempts to destroy it. Rulers of Rome after Diocletian began to profess a conversion to Christianity. However, attacks on the Bible continued. Why?

The rulers and the church leaders claimed that Bible burnings were not attempts to *destroy* the Bible. Rather, these men were simply trying to keep the Bible out of the hands of the common people. But why would church leaders want to do that? And to what lengths did the church go in their efforts to suppress Bible reading? Let us see.

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

⁺ CD also available.

^o MP3 CD-ROM also available.

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

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address. **America, United States of:** 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. **Australia:** PO Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. **Germany:** 65617 Selters. **Guam:** 143 Jehovah St, Barrigada, GU 96913. **Jamaica:** PO Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **Japan:** 4-7-1 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa-Pref, 243-0496. **Puerto Rico:** PO Box 3980, Guaynabo, PR 00970. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe.

THEY TRIED TO KEEP GOD'S WORD FROM THE MASSES

AS TIME passed, efforts were made to translate the Bible into the languages that people commonly spoke. Few could read the Bible in the Hebrew or Greek in which it was written. Most of us would have difficulty understanding God's Word if today it were available only in ancient forms of those languages.

Almost 300 years before Jesus lived on earth, work began on translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. That translation is known as the Greek Septuagint. Some 700 years later, Jerome produced a famous translation known as the Vulgate. This was a rendering of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures into Latin, which was the common tongue of the Roman Empire of that time.

Later, Latin began to fade as a common language. Only the well-educated maintained familiarity with Latin, and the Catholic Church resisted efforts to translate the Bible into other languages. Religious leaders

The common people were given severely limited access to the Bible, which afforded the clergy power over the masses

argued that Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were the only suitable Bible languages.*

Church Divisions and Bible Translation

In the ninth century C.E., Methodius and Cyril, Thessalonian missionaries acting on behalf of the Eastern Church in Byzantium,

* The idea seems to have come from the writings of the Spanish bishop Isidore of Seville (560-636 C.E.), who argued: "There are three sacred languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and they are supreme through all the world. For it was in these three languages that the charge against the Lord was written above the cross by Pilate." Of course, the decision to post the charge in those three languages was made by the pagan Romans. The decision was not directed by God.

TIME LINE OF BIBLE ATTACKS

c. 636 C.E.



Isidore of Seville contends that Hebrew, Greek, and Latin are "sacred" languages and therefore the only languages suitable for the Holy Bible

1079



Pope Gregory VII adamantly refuses Vratislav's request to use Slavonic in church, stating that the Scriptures should be inaccessible to those of "limited intelligence"

1199



Pope Innocent III views as heretics any who dare to translate and discuss the Bible. Those who defy the pope's order are often tortured and killed

promoted the use of Slavic as a church language. Their goal was to enable the Slavic peoples of Eastern Europe, who understood neither Greek nor Latin, to learn about God in their own language.

These missionaries, however, met with fierce opposition from German priests, who sought to impose Latin as a defense against the expanding influence of Byzantine Christianity. Clearly, politics were more important to them than people's religious education. Increasing tensions between the Western and Eastern branches of Christendom led to the division between Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy in 1054.

The Fight Against Bible Translation

Roman Catholicism eventually came to view Latin as a holy language. Thus, in response to the request made in 1079 by Vratislav, duke of Bohemia, seeking permission to use Slavonic in local church services, Pope Gregory VII wrote: "We cannot in any way grant this petition." Why not?

"It is evident to those who consider the matter carefully," said Gregory, "that it has pleased God to make Holy Scripture obscure in certain places lest, if it were perfectly clear to all, it might be vulgarized and subjected to disrespect or be so misunderstood by people of limited intelligence as to lead them into error."

The common people were given severely limited access to the Bible, and it had to stay that way. This stand afforded the clergy power over the masses. They did not want the common people dabbling in areas they considered to be their own domain.

In 1199, Pope Innocent III wrote concerning "heretics" who had translated the Bible into French and dared to discuss it among themselves. To them, Innocent applied Jesus' words: "Do not give what is holy to dogs, neither throw your pearls before swine." (Matthew 7:6) What was his reasoning in this matter? "That no simple and unlearned man presumes to concern himself with the sublimity of sacred Scripture, or to preach it to others." Those who resisted the pope's order were often delivered to inquisitors who had them tortured into making confessions. Those who refused to recant were burned alive.

During the long battle fought over possession of the Bible and the reading of it, Pope Innocent's letter was often appealed to for support in forbidding use of the Bible and its translation into other languages. Soon after his decree, the burning of Bibles in the vernacular began, as did the burning of some of their owners. In the centuries that followed, the bishops and rulers of Catholic Europe used all possible means to ensure that the ban imposed by Pope Innocent III was observed.

1546



By decree of the Council of Trent, any printing of Bible translations must first be approved by the Catholic Church

1559



Pope Paul IV forbids possession of Bibles in the common languages. Vernacular translations are confiscated and burned, and often their owners are burned with them



The Catholic hierarchy certainly knew that many of its teachings were based, not on the Bible, but on church tradition. Doubtless, this is one of the reasons for their reluctance to allow their faithful to have access to the Bible. By reading it, people would become aware of the incompatibility between their church doctrine and Scripture.

Effects of the Reformation

The arrival of Protestantism transformed Europe's religious landscape. Martin Luther's attempts to reform the Catholic Church and his eventual break with it in 1521 were based essentially on his understanding of Scripture. So when that break was complete, Luther, a gifted translator, endeavored to make the Bible available to the public.

Luther's translation into German and its wide distribution got the attention of the Roman Catholic Church, which felt that Luther's Bible ought to be offset by one accepted by the church. Two such translations in the German language soon appeared. But then, in 1546, less than 25 years later, the Roman Catholic Council of Trent, in effect, placed any printing of religious literature, including

When caught, people who dared to possess or distribute Bibles were burned at the stake or sentenced to life in prison

translations of the Bible, under the control of the church.

The Council of Trent decreed "that henceforth sacred Scripture . . . be printed in the most correct manner possible; and that it shall not be lawful for any one to print, or cause to be printed, any books whatever on sacred matters without the name of the author; or in future to sell them, or even to possess them, unless they shall have been first examined and approved of by the [local bishop]."

In 1559, Pope Paul IV published the first index of books prohibited by the Roman Catholic Church. It forbade possession of Bible translations in Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, as well as some in Latin. Any who wanted to read the Bible were told to obtain written permission from bishops or inquisitors—not an appealing prospect for those who wanted to remain above suspicion of heresy.

People who dared to possess or distribute Bibles in the common languages of their region had to contend with the ire of the Catholic Church. Many were arrested, burned at the stake, roasted on spits, sentenced to life in prison, or sent to the galleys. Confiscated Bibles were burned. Indeed, Catholic priests continued to confiscate and burn Bibles well into the 20th century.



This is not to say that Protestantism has been a real friend and defender of the Bible. In the 18th and 19th centuries, some Protestant theologians championed techniques of study that came to be known as higher criticism. In time, many people accepted teachings influenced by Darwinian theories that life was not created but somehow appeared by chance and evolved without a Creator.

Theologians, and even many clergymen, taught that the Bible is largely based on legend and myth. As a result, it is not uncommon today to hear Protestant clergymen, as well as many of their parishioners, disavow the Bible, saying it is unhistorical.

Perhaps you have noted attitudes critical of the Bible's authenticity, and maybe you are surprised at the attempts that were made to destroy it in centuries past. The attacks, however, failed. The Bible has survived them all!

Why It Has Survived

True, many have loved the Bible and have been willing to lay down their lives to defend it. The key to its survival, however, lies in a force greater than human love. The simple

reason for the survival of the Bible is that all those who contributed to the writings that make up the Bible wrote under inspiration by God.—Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:25.

Reading and applying what the Bible teaches will enable us to improve our lives, health, and family life. God wants the Bible to survive and to be translated into as many languages as possible so that all can have the opportunity to learn to love him, to serve him, and eventually to enjoy his eternal blessings. Surely, that is what we all want!

Jesus, in prayer to his heavenly Father, said: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) The Bible—the Scriptures Jesus read and taught—is God's means of providing answers to the questions that sincere people ask.

You are warmly encouraged to learn more about God's message to mankind as found in the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses, the distributors of this magazine, would be happy to help you.*

* You may contact them, without obligation, at one of the addresses found on page 5 of this magazine or at www.watchtower.org.



THE BIBLE'S ANSWERS

The Creator wants us to be able to answer these fundamental questions:

- Why are we here?
- Why is there so much suffering?
- Where are the dead?
- Where is mankind going?

The Bible provides answers to these questions as well as practical advice on how to find true happiness.

Does God Care About Animals?

ANIMAL life is in peril. Many scientists believe extinction of animal species is taking place at an accelerated rate. Animals are suffering the devastating consequences of human encroachment. Industrial food production, cruel blood sports, and callous abandonment of pets add to this grim picture.

Some feel, however, that such a picture is the inevitable price of human progress. But is that what God intended? Has he abandoned animal creation to suffer at the hands of humans? How do we know that God cares about animals?

Care Evident From the Start

After God's creation of fish, birds, and land animals, God was pleased. The Bible says that he "got to see that it was good." (Genesis 1:21, 25) All those creatures, from the smallest to the largest, had the Creator's loving concern. God not only created them "instinctively wise" but also made provisions for them to flourish in their environment. As a Bible writer aptly stated: "All of them—for you they keep waiting to give them their food in its season. What you give them they pick up. You open your hand—they get satisfied with good things."—Proverbs 30:24; Psalm 104:24, 25, 27, 28.

True, God made animals subject to the first man, Adam. They were not designed with reasoning ability or the capacity for spirituality. (2 Peter 2:12; Jude 19) In contrast, Adam was a higher life-form, created "in God's image." He was able to reflect the personality of his Creator, Jehovah. (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 83:18) But this did not give humans license to

exercise authority over animals independent of their Creator.

For example, Adam began naming the animals because Jehovah extended that privilege to him. Moreover, Jehovah assisted Adam by "bringing [the animals] to the man to see what he would call each one." (Genesis 2:19) Only by working under his Creator's direction could man be successful in caring for the animals.

God Really Does Care!

Sadly, Adam rebelled against his Creator. His rebellion brought devastating consequences to the human family and to all life on earth. The Creator, however, made clear how animals were to be treated. Although man was eventually permitted to use them for food and other practical purposes, God never sanctioned cruel treatment of them. The Bible says: "The righteous one is caring for the soul of his domestic animal, but the mercies of the wicked ones are cruel."—Proverbs 12:10.

God even gave the ancient nation of Israel laws that addressed the welfare of animals. The arrangement for a Sabbath, a day of complete rest each week, benefited the Israelites' animals in that they too could rest. (Exodus 23:12) Significantly, although no work was allowed on this sacred day, people were to come to the aid of a distressed animal. (Luke 14:5) God further directed that cattle were not to be deprived of food while they worked, and animals were not to be put under an extreme burden. (Exodus 23:5; Deuteronomy 25:4) Yoking a bull and a donkey together was

prohibited, preventing injury to either animal. (Deuteronomy 22:10) Clearly, the Bible teaches that animals were to be treated with propriety, respect, and compassion!

Though many people focus on their own concerns and ignore any consequences to animals, God compassionately considers them. When the prophet Jonah reacted unmercifully when the inhabitants of Nineveh repented and were spared God's judgment, Jehovah stated: "For my part, *ought I not to feel sorry* for Nineveh the great city, in which there exist more than one hundred and twenty thousand men who do not at all know the difference between their right hand and their left, *besides many domestic animals?*" (Jonah 4:11) Yes, the Creator felt pity even for the animals!

Future Care Is Assured

Clearly, God is not insensitive to how animals are treated. His beloved Son, Jesus, even said that a single sparrow does not fall to the ground without his Father's knowledge. (Matthew 10:29) In contrast, even with the best of intentions, humans do not fully understand how their actions influence the environment. Managing human society in a way that shows regard for wildlife requires a change in mankind's thinking.

Happily, the Bible describes the time when under God's Kingdom rule, "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah." (Isaiah 11:9) Such knowledge will provide obedient humans with the education and training they need to manage the earth properly. The Creator's influence will then ensure that harmony prevails between man and beast, thus restoring the conditions on earth that God originally purposed.



Showing regard for wildlife requires a change in mankind's thinking

The Bible describes the transformation that will then take place, explaining: "The wolf will actually reside for a while with the male lamb, and with the kid the leopard itself will lie down, and the calf and the maned young lion and the well-fed animal all together; and a mere little boy will be leader over them. And the cow and the bear themselves will feed; together their young ones will lie down. And even the lion will eat straw just like the bull. And the sucking child will certainly play upon the hole of the cobra; and upon the light aperture of a poisonous snake will a weaned child actually put his own hand." What a glorious prospect to contemplate!—Isaiah 11:6-8.

La Voz de Galicia/Fotógrafo: Víctor Mejuto

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- **Does God care how animals are treated?—Proverbs 12:10; Matthew 10:29.**
- **Is complete harmony between man and animals possible?—Isaiah 11:6-9.**



The Christmas Tree

Its Pre-Christian Origin

IN MANY parts of the world, the evergreen Christmas tree is a well-known symbol in holiday celebrations and commerce. The religious origin of the tree runs deep and stretches far back in human history.

This is evident in Bohuslän Province on the west coast of Sweden and in the nearby province of Østfold in Norway. In those areas, more than 75,000 individual rock carvings have been found at some 5,000 different sites. Archaeologists say that many of these rock carvings were made between about 1,800 and 500 B.C.E.*

Rock carvings suggest that pagan worship of the evergreen tree began before the time of Christ

These remarkable carvings reveal something about the beliefs of people who lived a very long time before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. For example, some researchers think that in early times in areas of present-day Sweden and Norway, evergreen trees, such as spruces, were used as sacred symbols.

Why was it that people living in these far northern coastal areas of the world made rock carvings of spruce trees? Some scholars

suggest it was partly because of the evident rarity of those trees during the pre-Christian times when the carvings were made. Understandably, a tree that stays permanently green, or “alive,” when other trees seemingly die in cold weather must have been somewhat of a mystery.

Trees have been symbols of life, survival, and immortality in many cultures worldwide. This fact may also help explain why tree images that clearly resemble evergreen spruces were carved into rocks in the area of Bohuslän and Østfold many centuries before that tree became a common sight there.

The book *Rock Carvings in the Borderlands*, published in cooperation with the Swedish National Heritage Board, says: “The images of trees in rock carvings illustrate that as early as the Bronze Age the southern Scandinavian region was part of a larger religious and cultural context that covered the whole of Europe and large parts of Asia. Religion and cosmology were adapted to people whose livelihoods were farming and animal husbandry. They largely worshipped the same gods, although the names of the gods varied.”

The Rock Carving Tour, a booklet published by the Bohusläns Museum, further explains: “It was not the everyday world the rock carvers wanted to portray. We believe that their images perhaps were a form of prayer and in-

* Some of the Bohuslän rock-carving sites are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

**Rock carvings
that depict trees
in (1) Torsbo,
(2) Backa, and
(3) Lökeberg, Sweden**



vocation to the gods.” The booklet adds: “Beliefs revolved around the eternal circle of life, fertility, death and re-birth.”

Describing a unique collection of symbolic art, created long before the art of writing was introduced into northern Europe, *Nationalencyklopedin*, the Swedish national reference encyclopedia, notes: “The marked presence of sexually charged depictions shows how important a fertility cult was in the religion of the Bronze Age people in the North.”

Evidently, customs involving evergreen trees spread and became part of life in many places. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states regarding the Christmas tree: “Tree worship was common among the pagan Europeans and survived their conversion to Christianity.” It did so in various rites and customs, including “the custom . . . of placing a Yule tree at an entrance or inside the house during the midwinter holidays.”

The broad way leading the evergreen tree to modern popularity was paved in 1841 when the British royal family used a decorated spruce for their Christmas celebrations. Today the Christmas tree is recognized all over the world, and the demand for countless millions of natural and artificial Christmas trees seems endless. Meanwhile, Scandinavian rock carvings provide silent testimony, literally set in stone, that the Christmas tree is not of Christian origin.

▼ Courtesy Stiftelsen för dokumentation av Bohusläns hällristningar





THE 2011 JAPAN TSUNAMI Survivors Tell Their Stories

Read first-person accounts about those who survived the earthquake in Japan and the tsunami that followed.

▲ Jiji Press/AFP/Getty Images

ON Friday, March 11, 2011, at 2:46 p.m., the fourth-strongest earthquake ever recorded anywhere in the world struck Japan. It triggered a massive tsunami and powerful aftershocks that continued to strike fear into people in the area for weeks. Some 20,000 people were killed or are missing. Thousands, however, survived. Here are some of the survivors' stories.

Tadayuki and his wife, Harumi, were at home in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, when they heard a rumbling and their house start-

ed shaking violently. "We rushed outside and were shocked to see fissures in the ground," said Tadayuki. "We watched as our house swung back and forth and dust gushed from the walls like smoke."

The quake's epicenter was 80 miles (129 km) off the coast of Miyagi. The tsunami created havoc for 420 miles (670 km) along the Pacific Coast of Japan. In some places the waves were 45 feet



**Harumi and
Tadayuki**



(15 m) high at the shoreline, crushing breakwaters and riverbanks and surging up to 25 miles (40 km) inland.

Sources of electricity, gas, and clean water were totally destroyed. Some 160,000 houses, shops, and factories were damaged or washed away. At one point, as many as 440,000 victims were living in some 2,500 temporary shelters, such as schools and local community centers. Many others were accommodated in the homes of family or friends. There were tens of thousands of ca-

sualties, but thousands of bodies have not been found.

Loss and Heartache

The tsunami killed far more people than did the earthquake. Yoichi, who lived in Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture, immediately suspected that a tsunami would follow the quake, so he took his parents to a nearby shelter. Then he went to check on neighbors. Still concerned about his parents, Yoichi along with his wife, Tatsuko, wanted to go back to see them but received news that a tsunami was approaching.

They rushed to another shelter but could not enter the building because the entrance was blocked by debris. Then they saw the pitch-black building of the neighboring sawmill rushing toward them. "Run!" Tatsuko cried.

They finally reached a schoolyard, which was on higher ground. From there they saw the tsunami swallow up the whole neighborhood. "My house is being washed away," someone said. Almost three quarters of Rikuzentakata was devastated, and Yoichi's parents were swept away. His father's body was never recovered; his mother's body was eventually found.

Toru was working at a factory near the coast in Ishinomaki. When the first tremor subsided, he rushed to his car to escape. He shouted for others to flee from the tsunami that he suspected would follow.

"First I headed toward my home, which was on high ground, but I was soon caught in a traffic jam," Toru explained. "I heard on the car radio that the tsunami had already reached a nearby city. I opened my car window so that I could escape if it hit my area. Soon a huge wall of black water over six feet (2 m) high came rushing toward me. The cars in front of me were hurled



**Yoichi and
Tatsuko**



Soma, Fukushima



Rikuzentakata, Iwate



Ishinomaki, Miyagi



Kamaishi, Iwate



Minamisanriku, Miyagi



back into mine, and we were all washed far inland.

“I barely got out through the window, but then I was swept away by the oily, smelly torrent. I was thrown into an auto repair shop, where I grabbed hold of a staircase and climbed onto the second floor. With great effort, I was able to pull three people to safety. A few of us survived the rising water and the cold, snowy night. But we were unable to save others who were calling for help.”

Before the quake, Midori in Kamaishi, Iwate, had spent some pleasant moments with her grandparents. She had just graduated from high school and had taken her diploma to show to her grandfather, who had been incapacitated for some time. He read the diploma aloud and commended Midori for all her effort. Five days after that happy occasion, the earthquake hit.

Midori and her mother, Yuko, urged the grandparents to take refuge, believing that a tsunami would follow. But the grandfather said: “No, I am not going. Tsunamis have never reached this far inland.” They tried to carry him out of the house, but they were not able to lift him, so they went to find help. By then, however, the tsunami had already reached the shore. “Hurry! Run!” shouted the men on a nearby hill. The tsunami was swallowing up one house after another. Midori’s frantic cries, “Grandpa! Grandma!” reverberated loudly. Her grandfather’s body was later found, but her grandmother was never located.



Yuko and Midori

Efforts to Provide Help

The Japanese government immediately dispatched firefighters, policemen, and self-defense forces from all over Japan. In a



Toru



The vehicle Toru was driving

short time, over 130,000 people were engaged in rescue-and-relief work. In time, help also came from foreign countries and international organizations. Dozens of rescue teams soon arrived as did medical staff. They searched for survivors, provided medical aid, and cleared debris.

Various organizations helped their members. Jehovah’s Witnesses were among them. Immediately after the Friday afternoon quake and tsunami, Witnesses checked on the safety of those with whom they regularly meet together for worship. Roads, however, were impassable in many places, and electricity and telephone services were cut off. Locating people over the huge affected area was very difficult.

Takayuki, one of the elders in the congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Soma, Fukushima Prefecture, could contact only a few families that horrible Friday afternoon. “I decided to look for others the next day,” he said. “As dawn broke, I started out



Takayuki

by car and then went on foot to find them and continued until evening. I went to 20 locations, including shelters, to search for congregation members. When I found them, I read



Shunji

scriptures and prayed with them.”

Shunji in Ishinomaki explains: “We set up teams to find fellow believers. When we entered the disaster area, words failed us. Cars were

hanging off electric poles, houses were piled one on top of the other, and the debris was piled up even higher than the houses. On the roof of a car, we saw a dead body, probably a person who was unable to survive the cold night. Another car was upside down and

hanging between houses. There was a body inside it.”

Shunji was relieved to find fellow worshippers in shelters. “When I met up with them,” he says, “I realized just how dear they are to me.”

“You Came So Quickly!”

Two young Witness women, Yui and Mizuki, lived near each other in Minamisanriku, Miyagi. When the first tremor subsided, they rushed outside and saw each other. Together they ran to higher ground. Less than ten

Photo by DigitalGlobe via Getty Images

NUCLEAR DISASTER FOLLOWS

Tsunami damage to reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant made headlines worldwide. Radioactive emissions spread over Japan and other countries. Thousands were evacuated because of possible lethal radiation.

“Our house was near the nuclear plant,” explains Megumi. “The day after the quake, we heard about the damage to the power plant and were told to flee.” Her sister Natsumi recalls, “Helicopters were hovering, sirens were wailing, and an announcer kept shouting that we must evacuate.” In the following weeks, they moved to nine different locations. Eventually, the two girls were allowed to return home for just two hours to pick up a few possessions.

Chikako, in her 60’s, was in Namie, Fukushima. “When the quake occurred, I went to a designated shelter nearby. There, my two children and I spent a sleepless night because of the strong aftershocks. At 7:00 a.m. the next day, we were told to move immediately to a shelter in another city.

“The roads were jammed with traffic, so it was about three o’clock in the afternoon when we got to the destination. There we learned of the explosion at the nuclear power plant. I thought that we would soon be returning home, so we had taken nothing with us.” She and her family moved from one place to another until they finally found an apartment far from their home.





Mizuki and Yui



Hideharu

minutes later, they watched as the whole town, including their homes, was washed away by one wave after another.

When Yui and Mizuki found Witness friends at a shelter, they prayed together. The next morning, members of their own congregation as well as neighboring ones crossed the mountain, bringing them food and supplies. Yui and Mizuki exclaimed, “We knew you would come, but you came so quickly!”

Hideharu, one of the Witness overseers from the Tome Congregation, visited the shelter. He explains: “All night long I tried to locate our friends living along the coast. Finally, at 4:00 a.m., I received information about a school where some had taken refuge. At 7:00 a.m., about ten of us gathered to prepare rice balls, and three of us set out by car with the food. Most roads were impassable. After much effort, we got through to the school. Even those who had lost their homes helped us give support to others.”

Filling the Spiritual Need

Jehovah’s Witnesses meet regularly to study the Bible, and some congregations do so on Friday nights. This was the case in Rikuzentakata; however, the Kingdom Hall—the Witnesses’ place of worship—had just been washed away by the tsunami. “Let’s have a meeting anyway,” a Witness suggested. So a home that had not been badly damaged was selected, and members of the congregation were informed.

Although the electricity had been cut off, an electric generator was available to provide light. Sixteen people were present. “We shed tears of joy,” recalls young Yasuyuki, who had lost his apartment in the tsunami. “It was the

best refuge for us.” Hideko noted: “Strong aftershocks often disturbed the meeting, but while we were together, I forgot the fears and anxieties that had been upsetting me.”

Since then, the congregation has never missed holding one of its regular meetings. Two days later, on Sunday, the subject of the discourse chosen for the occasion was “A Worldwide Brotherhood Saved From Calamity.”

Organized Relief Work

Various government agencies soon began relief work, as did the branch office of Jehovah’s Witnesses, located in Ebina, near Tokyo. By Saturday, the day after the earthquake, the branch had divided the vast area affected by the quake into three sections. On Monday, three days after the quake, representatives from the branch visited these areas.

Relief efforts continued in the weeks and months that followed. Many tons of supplies provided by the Witnesses have been distributed. At one time, 3 relief centers and 21 warehouses and relay stations were actively delivering relief supplies. During the first two months, hundreds of volunteers distributed over 250 tons of food, clothing, and other necessities. Many Witnesses have shared such supplies with their neighbors.

Members of the Rikuzentakata and the neighboring Ofunato congregations of

Relief workers in action



LESSONS FOR US ALL

Yoichi, from Rikuzentakata, who was mentioned earlier and who lost most of his material possessions, said, “I really can testify that material things do not bring security.” Such sentiments have long been expressed by servants of God, especially by those who have learned the lesson taught by Jesus. He explained the relative unimportance of material possessions when compared with having God’s favor and blessing.—Matthew 6:19, 20, 33, 34.

Another lesson is to take action when warnings are given. Doing so can make the difference between surviving and becoming a victim. Those in Japan who hurried to higher ground without hesitation often escaped.



**Rikuzentakata Kingdom Hall
after the tsunami**



Rebuilding work three months later



Completed Kingdom Hall



Jehovah’s Witnesses are using their reconstructed Kingdom Hall to strengthen people spiritually. This will help the local people to cope with the hardships they face in rebuilding their lives and recovering from the trauma caused by the devastating earthquake and tsunami. Of the more than 14,000 Witnesses in the disaster area, 12 are confirmed dead and 2 are still missing.

Many among Jehovah’s Witnesses who were victims of this horrific disaster made expressions similar to what one family said: “When we fled, we had one bag each. But all our needs were met by our fellow believers.” How grand it is that servants of the true God, Jehovah, can now enjoy the worldwide brotherhood of which Jesus and his apostles spoke! This bond cannot be washed away by tsunamis or any other natural disasters.—John 13: 34, 35; Hebrews 10:24, 25; 1 Peter 5:9.

1. The angel has six wings in one picture but four in the other. 2. The angel has tongs in one picture but a sword in the other. 3. The coal touches Isaiah’s lips in one picture but his hands in the other. 4. B. 5. 31,500. 6. B.



ATLANTIC OCEAN

Nicaragua

An Inquiring Mind That History Remembers

SOUTH AMERICA

● How would you like to be remembered? What will come to people's minds when they think of you? Driven by concerns over their legacy, many aspire to greatness in science, politics, sports, and the arts. But what if you were particularly remembered for questions you asked?

Five hundred years ago, a man in Central America asked many thought-provoking questions. He was a native chief called Nicarao, from which "Nicaragua" is evidently derived. His name came to identify the tribe of his people, the land in which he lived, and their large lake.

Nicarao's tribe lived on the strip of land between the Pacific Ocean and huge Lake Nicaragua. Shortly after Columbus discovered the New World, the Spanish set out to explore this area. Captain Gil González Dávila led his troops north from what is now Costa Rica and entered Nicarao's land in 1523 C.E.

Imagine the explorers' trepidation as they journeyed into unknown territory. How pleased they must have been on meeting Chief Nicarao! With generosity that continues to be a hallmark of Nicaraguan culture, the people welcomed the Spanish and gave them gifts, including a large amount of gold.

Nicarao wanted answers to questions he had long thought about. Other questions came up as a result of the visit of the Spaniards. Chroniclers report that he asked Captain González the following:

Have you heard of a great flood that destroyed all men and animals? Will God flood the earth again? What happens after death? How do the sun, the moon, and the stars move? How are they suspended in the sky? How far away are they? When will the sun, the moon, and the stars cease to shine? Where does the wind come from? What causes heat and cold, light and dark? Why do the days vary in length throughout the year?

Clearly, Nicarao was eager to know about the natural world around him. His questions indicate much about his religious beliefs. They reveal that he had interests and concerns similar to those many people have today. And the fact that Nicarao and his people knew about a great flood reminds us of what the Bible relates.—Genesis 7:17-19.

Even though Nicarao's culture was steeped in spiritism and ritual human sacrifice, he was concerned about the conduct and way of life of his people. His questions bear witness to the operation of conscience. In this regard, the apostle Paul wrote: "Their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused."—Romans 2:14, 15.

Today, a statue of Chief Nicarao stands as a memorial near the place where he is supposed to have first met the Spanish explorers. His inquiring mind, which moved him to think deeply about life and the world around him, may well serve as an example for us.—Romans 1:20.



The *King James* Version

How It Became Popular

1611



Art Resource, NY

MANY celebrations were held in England this year to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the King James version of the Bible, otherwise known as the *Authorized Version*. These included special TV and radio documentaries, as well as conferences, lectures, and seminars.

Prince Charles took a lead in celebrating the national treasure that bears the name of King James I of England. How, though, did the *King James Version*, published in May 1611, attain a unique place in the hearts of English-speaking people?

Translation Gains Momentum

By the middle of the 16th century, a longing for knowledge of the teachings of the Bible had begun to sweep across Europe. Nearly two centuries earlier, about 1380, John Wycliffe had whetted the appetite of English-speaking people with a translation of the Bible from Latin. In the following two centuries, his followers, the Lollards, circulated handwritten Bible texts countrywide.

Bible scholar William Tyndale's *New Testament* was another milestone. It was translated from the original Greek into English by 1525.

Shortly afterward, in 1535, Miles Coverdale produced his complete English Bible. A year before that, Henry VIII broke relations with Rome and also made a strategic move. To strengthen his position as head of the Church of England, Henry VIII authorized a translation of the Bible into English. It is known as the *Great Bible*. Printed in 1539, it was a large volume in heavy Gothic type.

Puritans and other Protestant exiles from all over Europe settled in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1560 the *Geneva Bible*, the first English Bible in easy-to-read type, was produced, with chapters divided into verses. It was imported to England from continental Europe and quickly became popular. Eventually, in 1576, the *Geneva Bible* was also printed in England. Maps and marginal notes helped clarify its text. But some of its readers were irritated by its notes because these spoke against the papacy.

Meeting a Challenge

Because the *Great Bible* failed to gain general acceptance and the *Geneva Bible* contained contentious footnotes, a revised Bible was decided upon. The *Great Bible* was

THE AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION

In 1901 the *American Standard Version* was published. It was based on the text of the *King James Version*. Its preface states: “We are not insensible to the justly lauded beauty and vigor of the style of the Authorized [King James] Version.” Yet, the *American Standard Version* made a significant adjustment.

The preface explains this: “The American Revisers, after a careful consideration, were brought to the unanimous conviction that a Jewish superstition, which regarded the Divine Name as too sacred to be uttered, ought no longer to dominate in the English or any other version of the Old Testament, as it fortunately does not in the numerous versions made by modern missionaries.”

It is not that the divine name, Jehovah, does not appear at all in the *King James Version*. It does appear in four places, namely Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; and Isaiah 26:4. The *American Standard Version* of 1901, however, restored the name to some 7,000 of its rightful places in the Bible.

1901



chosen as its basis. The task was entrusted to Church of England bishops, and in 1568 the *Bishops' Bible* was published. This was a large volume, replete with many engravings. But Calvinists, who repudiated religious titles, took exception to the word “bishops.” So the *Bishops' Bible* was not generally accepted in England.

King James I, after ascending the English throne in 1603,* endorsed the making of a fresh Bible translation. He stipulated that it should commend itself to all by omitting any offensive notes or comments.

King James promoted the project. Eventually, 47 scholars in six separate groups across the country prepared sections of the text. Making use of the work of both Tyndale and Coverdale, these Bible scholars basically revised the *Bishops' Bible*. However, they also drew from the *Geneva Bible* and the Roman Catholic Rheims *New Testament* of 1582.

James himself was a respected Bible scholar, and the translation's dedication to “the

most high and mighty prince, James” acknowledged his initiative. As head of the Church of England, James was seen to be exerting his authority to bring the nation together.

A Literary Masterpiece

The clergy were pleased to receive from the hand of their king a Bible “appointed to be read in Churches.” However, the question remained, How would the nation receive this new Bible translation?

The translators, in their original extended preface, revealed their apprehensions as to whether this new translation would be accepted. However, the *King James Version* fared well, even though it took some 30 years for it to supplant the *Geneva Bible* in the affections of the people.

“By that time,” says *The Bible and the Anglo-Saxon People*, “it was the Authorized Version, though its only authorization had been its own excellence.” *The Cambridge History of the Bible* concludes: “Its text acquired a sanctity properly ascribable only to the unmediated voice of God; to multitudes of English-speaking Christians it has seemed

* James was born in 1566 and was crowned in 1567 as James VI of Scotland. When he was crowned King James I of England in 1603, he became the ruler of both countries. In 1604, he took the title “King of Great Britain.”

MEETING A SPECIAL NEED

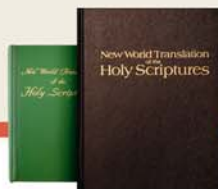
In 1907 a Bible Students Edition of the *King James Version* was published in the United States of America for the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. It included an extensive appendix called the “Berean Bible Teachers’ Manual.” Later, Jehovah’s Witnesses printed the *King James Version* on their own presses. By 1992 the Witnesses had produced 1,858,368 copies.



1907

A VALUABLE MODERN TRANSLATION

In the past half century, many Bible translations (some of them printed in numerous languages) have been provided. Considered especially valuable by many is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. More than 170 million copies have been distributed, in whole or in part, in 100 languages. The maps, alphabetical index, and appendix in its Reference Edition have helped readers to understand more clearly the Bible’s message for our day.



1961

little less than blasphemy to tamper with the words of the King James Version.”

To the Ends of the Earth

The early settlers from England who landed in North America brought with them the *Geneva Bible*. Later, however, the *King James Version* gained greater acceptance in America. As the British Empire expanded throughout the world, Protestant missionaries spread its use. Since many who translated the Bible into local languages were unfamiliar with Biblical Hebrew and Greek, the *King James Version* in English became the basis for these local translations.

Today, according to the British Library, “The King James, or Authorised, Version of the Bible remains the most widely published text in the English language.” Some estimates put the number of copies of the *King James Version* produced in print worldwide at over one billion!

Time for Change

Over the centuries, many have believed that the *King James Version* is the only “true” Bible. In 1870, work on a full revision of it started in England. Later a minor American

revision of the resulting *English Revised Version* was published as the *American Standard Version*.^{*} In a more recent revision, in 1982, the preface to the *Revised Authorised Version* says that effort was made “to maintain that lyrical quality which is so highly regarded in the Authorised Version” of 1611.

Although the Bible remains the world’s best seller—and the *King James Version* is the most popular one—Professor Richard G. Moulton observed: “We have done almost everything that is possible with these Hebrew and Greek writings. . . . We have translated them [and] revised the translations . . . There is yet one thing left to do with the Bible: simply to read it.”

Without question, the *King James Version* is a literary masterpiece, appreciated and valued for its unparalleled beauty of expression. But what about the importance of its message? The Bible’s inspired writings reveal the lasting remedy for the problems of our critical times. No matter which version or translation you choose to use, Jehovah’s Witnesses will be happy to help you in your study of the Bible.

^{*} See the accompanying box “The *American Standard Version*.”

YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

What makes a social event really fun?



Below, put a ✓ next to the activity that you look forward to most at a social event.

- ☐ eating
- ☐ dancing
- ☐ playing games
- ☐ making new friends
- ☐ connecting with old friends
- ☐ other

YOU'RE INVITED!

MOST young people *love* getting together, and there's nothing wrong with that. Social events are even mentioned favorably in the Bible.

Did you know?

- Job's sons held family gatherings.—Job 1:4.
- Jesus attended a sizable wedding celebration.—John 2:1-11.
- Christians in the first century socialized in private homes.—Acts 2:46, 47.

There's no denying that getting together with friends is fun. Sadly, however, some gatherings are anything but refreshing.

TRUE STORY

"I was invited to a party with an open invitation, meaning anyone could come, and it was to be held at the house of a boy whose parents were out of town. I decided not to go, and I'm glad! The next day, I heard that there was alcohol everywhere and that some people got intoxicated. Three boys even passed out. Also, a fight broke out, and the police had to come and shut down the party."—Janelle.

LESSON

Don't leave things up to chance! Whether you're organizing an event or you've been invited to one, be sure you know the answers to the questions on the following pages. That way you'll be much more likely to have great memories—and no regrets—once the party is over.

“There are people who are good associates, and there are those who enjoy living ‘on the edge.’ The secret to a good social event is to be selective in your choice of guests.”



Nicole



● Who will be there, and how large will the gathering be?

“I think you should invite people you actually *know* and you should not make it an open invitation or tell those who are coming to bring a friend.”—Renee.

“If the number of invitations isn’t monitored, a social event can get way out of hand. You invite 20 people, but then those 20 people invite another 10 people, and those 10 people invite more people . . . I’ve seen it happen!”—Colette.

“Big social events are prone to get out of hand. I think it’s smarter to be with small groups of people.”—Alexis.

“He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly.”

—PROVERBS 13:20



● What is likely to happen there?

“If it’s your party and bad things happen, it makes *you* look bad.”—Bridget.

“With proper precautions, a social gathering can be enjoyable for everyone. It all depends on the use of foresight.”—Seth.

TRUE STORY “I have a friend who told me that he doesn’t invite me to his gatherings because he knows my parents are going to ask him questions, such as, Who is going to be there? and How long will it last? He says he doesn’t like being monitored that way. That’s a big warning sign! If he doesn’t feel comfortable with questions, I don’t think his gatherings are the kind I want to attend!”—Ellen.

“Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God’s glory.”

—1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

SUCCESS STORIES

“When my friend had a gathering, her mom knew where everyone was. Even when I went to the car to grab a jacket, she asked where I was going. Was she overcautious? Maybe. But I wasn’t offended because I realize it’s better to be safe than sorry.”—Kim.

“I’ve been to good events, and I think the reason why they were a success is that there was a variety of age groups there. Plus, the people giving the gathering had fun activities planned, so nobody was left to wander off and do his own thing.”—Andrea.

“I’ve been to successful organized gatherings where rules were enforced so that potential problems would be avoided. That made those events stress free and much more enjoyable.”



Andrew



● What kind of supervision will there be?

“If mature people are there to make sure everything goes well, the gathering will most likely be a success.”—Mark.

“I used to be embarrassed to have my parents at a gathering. But now I realize that they’re there to make sure things don’t get out of hand. Just because your parents are there doesn’t mean you can’t have a good time.”—Laura.



● What will you do if the event makes you feel uncomfortable?

“I have an escape plan. When I go to a gathering, I always call my parents anyway to tell them what time I’ll be home. When I do that, they ask me if everything is OK. If I say no, that’s their cue to remind me of all the chores I need to do. After I get off the phone, I tell my friends that my parents want me home early and that I have to leave.”—Therese.

TRUE STORY “At one gathering, two boys who weren’t invited walked in, and one of them was known to be connected with drugs. It was really hard for me to make the decision, but I called my dad and asked him to come and get me.”—Mary.

“Sensible people will see trouble coming and avoid it, but an unthinking person will walk right into it and regret it later.”—PROVERBS 22:3, TODAY’S ENGLISH VERSION

“Hold a good conscience.”

—1 PETER 3:16

WHY NOT ASK YOUR PARENTS?

Find out what kind of gatherings your parents enjoyed when they were your age. What, if anything, would they do differently with regard to the social events that they organized or attended?

PLANNING A GATHERING?

Talk to your parents about it, and think carefully about . . .

1. Who will be invited
2. How many will attend
3. Where the gathering will take place
4. What type of supervision there will be
5. What activities are planned

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

Pope No Longer an Organ Donor

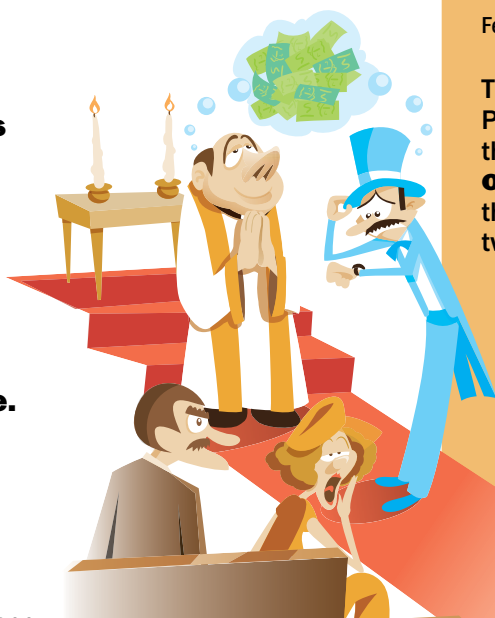
While Joseph Ratzinger was a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, he was an organ donor, says the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*. Yet, since being elected pope, Benedict XVI is no longer an organ donor. Why not? "The body of a Pontiff belongs to the entire Church," explains archbishop Zygmunt Zimowski, a member of the Vatican hierarchy. "It is therefore understandable that when a pope dies his body be preserved intact, since it is possible that in the future it will be venerated."

Life in Exchange for Money?

Would people be willing to trade a year of their life for a million euros? In Germany more than 1 in 4 men and 1 in 6 women would do so, says a survey conducted by the polling institute Emnid on behalf of *Reader's Digest Deutschland*. The younger the people polled, the more inclined they would be to accept such a deal—29 percent of the 14- to 29-year-olds and 25 percent of those aged 30 to 39 would make the exchange. The older people get, however, the more precious they consider life to be. Only 13 percent of the 50- to 59-year-olds and 11 percent of those over 60 years of age could imagine selling a year of their life.

A Catholic church in Brazil now fines brides \$300 (U.S.) if they arrive late for their wedding. Couples have to write a check before the ceremony, and it is returned only if they arrive on time.

—G1, BRAZIL.



Swab tests reveal that the numeric keypads of city center **cash machines** [ATMs] around England are contaminated with as much potentially harmful bacteria as the seats of public toilets.—*THE TELEGRAPH*, BRITAIN.

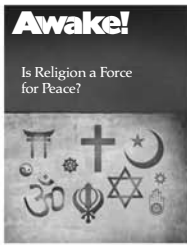
"Sometimes, scientists are blindsided by earthquakes [such as those in New Zealand this year and Haiti last year] because they occur along **undiscovered faults**. . . . That raises a worrisome question: How many major quakes are lurking in underestimated or unknown faults?"—*THE NEW YORK TIMES*, U.S.A.

"The world's four richest citizens . . . **control more wealth than the world's poorest 57 countries.**"

—*FOREIGN POLICY*, January/February 2011, U.S.A.

The owners of 90 percent of Polish businesses report that they have been the **victims of theft or deception** by their employees within the last two years.—*GAZETA PRACA*, POLAND.

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THE BIBLE'S VIEWPOINT

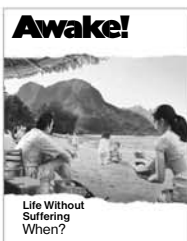
Bible Condone Slavery? 7/11
Faith and Reason Compatible? 1/11
God Care About Animals? 12/11
God Omnipresent? 4/11
God Support Wars Today? 8/11
How to Make Marriage Succeed, 11/11
Science and Bible Compatible? 2/11
Self-Inflicted Pain, 3/11
Weekly Holy Day Required? 9/11
What Is Parent's Goal? 10/11
Why Jesus' True Followers Hated? 5/11
Why Your Speech Matters, 6/11

WORLD AFFAIRS AND CONDITIONS

Climate Summits, 11/11
Terrorism, 6/11

YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

Addicted to Electronic Media? 1/11
Am I a Failure? 5/11
How Make Good First Impression? 6/11
Social Networking, 7/11, 8/11
What Makes Social Event Fun? 12/11
What Should I Know About Smoking? 3/11
Where Do I Fit In? 4/11
Where Find Good Entertainment? 11/11
Who Am I? 10/11
Who Are My True Friends? 9/11
Why Won't Parents Allow Fun? 2/11





A.



B.

What Is Different?

Can you identify the three differences between picture A and picture B? Write your answers on the lines below, and complete the pictures by coloring them. CLUE: Read Isaiah 6:1-8.

1.
2.
3.

4. Which picture is correct, picture A or picture B?

- "FOR FAMILY REVIEW" answers on page 20

FOR DISCUSSION: What good attitude did Isaiah have? How can you show that you have a humble and willing spirit? CLUE: Read Psalm 110:3; Matthew 28:19, 20.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: Have each family member research facts about the role of the angels. Then come together and report what you have learned. For example, what are some of the responsibilities of the angels? CLUE: Read Psalm 34:7; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 14:6, 7. Are the angels organized? CLUE: Read Psalm 103:19-21. Are angels humble and willing to help others? CLUE: Read Judges 13:17, 18; Luke 22:43; Revelation 22:8, 9.

Collect and Learn

Cut out, fold in half, and save



ISAIAH

BIBLE
CARD

12



QUESTIONS

- A.** Who went with Isaiah to deliver a message to King Ahaz?
- B.** When Jehovah asked, "Whom shall I send?" how did Isaiah reply?
- C.** Isaiah foretold: "The earth will certainly be filled . . ."

98 C.E.

Last Bible
book written

1 C.E.

Lived circa
700's B.C.E.

4026 B.C.E.

Adam
created



Lived in
Jerusalem

Jerusalem

ISAIAH

PROFILE A faithful prophet, who made the worship of God a family activity. He set a good example for them by the way he carried out his ministry. His wife was called "the prophetess." (Isaiah 7:3; 8:3, 18) Isaiah served God for at least 46 years. His name means "Salvation of Jehovah."

ANSWERS

- A.** His son, Shear-jashub.—Isaiah 7:3.
- B.** "Here I am! Send me."—Isaiah 6:8.
- C.** "... with the knowledge of Jehovah."—Isaiah 11:9.

Peoples and Lands

- 5.** Our names are Abigail, aged 9, and Jeriah, aged 7. We live in India. About how many of Jehovah's Witnesses live in India? Is it 31,500, 59,600, or 86,000?
- 6.** Which dot shows where we live? Circle it, draw a dot where you live, and see how close you are to India.



Children's Picture Search

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



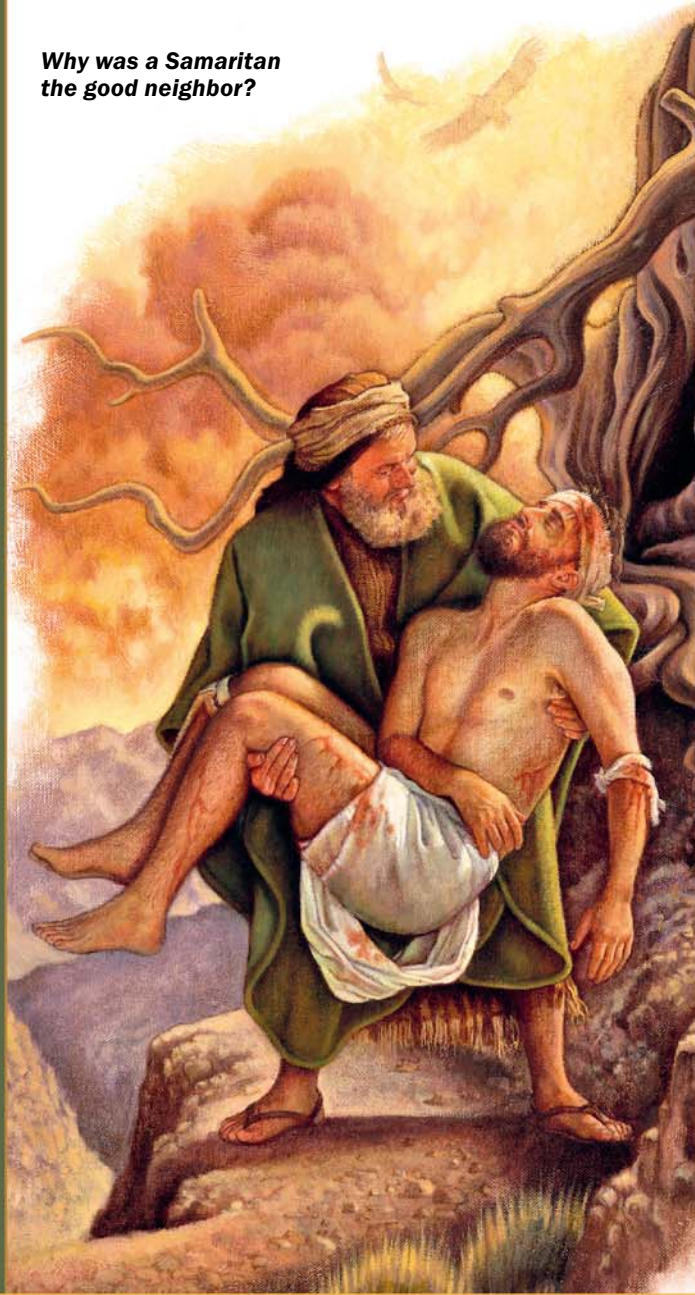
'A Blend of Depth and Simplicity'

● That is how a reader in Nebraska, U.S.A., described a book he had recently read. He wrote: "I am a 56-year-old single man who just finished reading *Learn From the Great Teacher*. Right away I began marveling at the ingenious blend of depth and simplicity of words that you brought together through a pen of love." He added: "The illustrations are nothing but marvelous. I think if I were a dad or grandpa, I would help my little ones spend as much time with the pictures as with the text."

A woman in Georgia, U.S.A., wrote regarding the same book: "My six-year-old niece, Avery, took it to school to share with her first-grade class. After Avery shared a story with the class, her teacher was so impressed that she arranged for Avery to read a story from the book every day." The aunt added, "What a great witness this has been for her classmates and her teacher!"

You may request a copy of this 256-page, beautifully illustrated book, which has the same page size as this magazine. Simply fill in the accompanying coupon and mail it to an appropriate address listed on page 5 of this magazine.

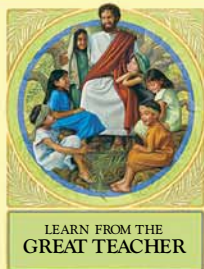
**Why was a Samaritan
the good neighbor?**



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