

Awake!

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WHY ARE PEOPLE SO ANGRY?

ALSO: HOW CAN YOU MAKE PEACE WITH OTHERS? **PAGE 10**

Awake!

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The Problem With Anger

A man who ordered a sandwich at a fast-food restaurant became enraged when he thought it took too long for his meal to come. He entered the restaurant, threatened an employee, shoved him up against a counter, and slapped him. The angry man then grabbed his sandwich and walked out of the restaurant.



ALL of us get angry from time to time. After all, anger is as much a part of our emotional makeup as love, hope, anxiety, sadness, and fear. Anger that is controlled can be expressed in a proper way and can serve a useful purpose. For example, anger can be productive if it boosts one's determination to overcome certain obstacles or problems.

As illustrated by the account above, anger also has a dark side. Some people experience anger more quickly, more frequently, and more intensely than others. When provoked, they may lash out with verbal or physical attacks. Their anger, in effect, controls them, when it should be the other way around. Such unrestrained anger is dangerous, which is why it is sometimes referred to as "problem anger."*

Those with anger problems bring grief not only to themselves but also to everyone around them. For someone with anger issues, even seemingly trivial matters can spark a vio-

lent outburst that brings tragic consequences. Consider the following examples:

A man walking with a group of friends was shot in the neck after the sports bag of one of his friends brushed against another man on a busy street.

A 19-year-old male beat his fiancée's 11-month-old baby to death. The man had been playing a violent video game and lost his temper when the baby touched the game's control panel and thus caused the man to forfeit the game.

Similar reports from around the world indicate that an increasing number of people have anger problems. Why is anger on the rise?

Anger is part of our emotional makeup. Thus, there are times when expressing anger in a controlled fashion may be appropriate. However, these articles deal with unhealthy anger, which can harm us and others emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

* The brochure *Boiling Point—Problem Anger and What We Can Do About It* describes "problem anger" as "any dysfunctional way of relating to and managing anger that persistently causes significant difficulties in a person's life including their thinking, feeling, behaviour and relationships."

Why So Much Anger?

THE causes of anger are complex. Even scientists admit that anger is poorly understood. However, there is general agreement among mental-health professionals that all of us react to certain “anger triggers.”

An anger trigger can be something that frustrates or annoys someone. These triggers often result from injustice or unfairness. They can occur when we feel slighted, such as through insult or disrespect. An imagined threat to our authority or reputation can also stir up feelings of anger.

Of course, “anger triggers” vary from person to person. They differ with age and gender and even from one culture to another. Moreover, reactions to these triggers also vary. Some people seldom get angry and quickly get over an affront, while others are easily provoked and may hold on to anger for days, weeks, months, or longer.

Our environment is filled with potential triggers. Added to that, sensitivity to these triggers may be rising. Why? One reason is the thoughtless, me-first spirit that is ever-present in our day. The Bible explains: “In the last days . . . men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, . . . headstrong, puffed up with pride.” (2 Timo-

thy 3:1-5) Does that not accurately describe the attitudes of many people today?

Indeed, when self-centered people do not get their own way, anger is often the result. There are also a number of other reasons why anger may be a growing problem. Consider some of them.

Parental Example

One’s parents have a profound influence on personality development throughout childhood and adolescence. Psychologist Harry L. Mills explains: “From a very early age, people learn to express anger by copying the angry behavior they see modeled around them.”

If a child is raised in a hostile environment—a place where tempers flare over trivial matters—the child is, in effect, being trained to respond to life’s problems with anger. You could liken the child’s situation to a plant that has been nourished with tainted water. The plant may grow, but its development could be stunted, and it could perhaps suffer permanent damage. Likewise, anger is like tainted water, and children who have been exposed to it are more inclined to have anger problems as adults.

Cramped Cities

In the year 1800, about 3 percent of the world’s population lived in urban areas. In 2008, that number jumped to 50 percent, and by 2050, it is expected to reach 70 percent. As more and more people squeeze into crowded cities, the levels of anger and frustration are likely to rise. To cite one example, Mexico City is one of the largest and most congested cities on earth. Traffic jams are a major

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What effect can your outbursts of anger have on your children?

source of anxiety. Home to some 18 million people and six million cars, Mexico City “could well be the world’s most stressed-out capital,” reports one journalist. “The traffic is intense, rendering tempers highly combustible.”

Crowded cities bring other sources of stress, including air and noise pollution, scarce housing, cultural clashes, and high crime rates. As the sources of stress increase, people have a tendency to get frustrated, angry, and lose patience more easily.

Economic Despair

The world’s economic meltdown has sparked widespread stress and anxiety. A 2010 joint report by the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO) states: “Over 210 million people across the globe are estimated to be unemployed.” Sadly, most of those who have been laid off are without any kind of safety net.

YOU MAY HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IF . . .

- ▶ You get angry over waiting in line at the store.
- ▶ You frequently argue with coworkers.
- ▶ You occasionally stay awake at night brooding over things that upset you during the day.
- ▶ It is difficult for you to forgive those who have offended you.
- ▶ You lose control of your emotions frequently.
- ▶ Episodes of anger are often followed by shame or regret.*

* Based on information from MentalHelp.net.

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Does the entertainment industry shape your view of anger and aggression?

ANGER STATISTICS

The Mental Health Foundation of London, England, published a report entitled *Boiling Point—Problem Anger and What We Can Do About It*. Key findings from the report include the following statistics:

84% feel more stressed at work than five years ago.

65% of office workers have experienced office rage.

45% of staff regularly lose their temper at work.

Up to **60%** of all absences from work are caused by stress.

33% of Britons are not on speaking terms with their neighbors.

64% either strongly agree or agree that people in general are getting angrier.

32% say they have a close friend or family member who has trouble controlling [his or her] anger.

Those holding a job do not fare much better. According to ILO, work-related stress is a “global epidemic.” “People are afraid for their jobs and are quick to assume the worst,” says Lorne Curtis, a management consultant in Ontario, Canada, adding that as a result, “they’re defensive and more inclined to argue with their supervisor or other employees.”

Prejudice and Injustice

Imagine how you would feel if you entered a footrace and found that you were the only one required to compete in leg irons. Millions of people feel similarly when they face racial or other forms of prejudice. People get angry when they face barriers that limit their access to jobs, education, housing, and other basic necessities.

Other forms of injustice can likewise crush one’s spirit and bring great emotional pain. Sadly, most of us have felt the sting of injustice at one time or another. Over three thousand years ago, wise King Solomon declared: “Look! the tears of those being oppressed, but they had no comforter.” (Ecclesiastes 4:1) When injustice is rampant and comfort is scarce, anger can easily well up in one’s heart.

The Entertainment Industry

Over a thousand studies have been conducted to determine the impact television and other media violence have on children. James P. Steyer, founder of Common Sense Media, says: “A generation that’s been repeatedly exposed to intense, realistic violence grows up with more acceptance of aggression, less resistance to brutality, and less compassion.”

True, most youths who are routinely exposed to violent acts on television do not grow up to be vicious criminals. However, the entertainment media often portrays violent anger as an acceptable way to deal with adversity, and a new generation of people who are desensitized to violence has emerged.

Influence of Wicked Spirits

The Bible reveals that an unseen force is behind much of the harmful anger on earth today. How so? At the start of mankind’s history, a rebellious spirit creature turned against Almighty God. This wicked spirit creature is called Satan, which in Hebrew means “Resister,” or “Adversary.” (Genesis

3:1-13) Later, Satan induced other angels to join in the rebellion.

Those disobedient angels, known as demons or wicked spirits, are confined to the vicinity of the earth. (Revelation 12:9, 10, 12) Additionally, they have “great anger,” knowing that they have only a short period of time left. So even though we cannot see those wicked spirits, we feel the effects of their activities. How?

Satan and his demon hordes take advantage of our sinful tendencies by tempting us to engage in “enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, . . . revelries, and things like these.”—Galatians 5: 19-21.

Resist the Urge

Indeed, when we consider all these problems, pressures, and anxieties, we understand why people become frustrated as they try to manage their day-to-day responsibilities.

The urge to become angry and blow off steam can be overpowering! The next article will help us to see how to keep anger under control.

Keeping Anger Under Control

MORE than 2,000 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle used the term “catharsis” to describe the “purging” or release of emotional tension that results from viewing a tragic play or drama. The idea was that after one’s tension is released, a sense of psychological refreshment would emerge.

Early in the last century, the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud promoted a similar view. He claimed that if people bottled up or repressed their negative emotions, they would later resurface as a psychological disorder, such as hysteria. Thus, Freud maintained that you should express anger rather than restrain it.

In more recent years, researchers who tested the catharsis theory throughout the ’70’s and ’80’s found little or no support to back it up. These findings led psychologist Carol Tavris to write: “It is time to put a bullet,

once and for all, through [the] heart of the catharsis hypothesis. The belief that observing violence (or ‘ventilating it’) gets rid of hostilities has virtually never been supported by research.”

Another psychologist, Gary Hankins, said: “Research shows that ‘letting out’ all of your anger in a cathartic manner often leaves you feeling more uptight, not less.” Granted, mental-health experts may never reach agreement on the issue of catharsis. However, many people have benefited from another source of wisdom, the Bible.

“Let Anger Alone”

The idea of controlling your anger is beautifully expressed by the Bible psalmist David. He said: “Let anger alone and leave rage; do not show yourself heated up only to do evil.” (Psalm 37:8) The way to avoid saying or doing something that you may later regret is to keep from getting “heated up” in the first place. Of course, that is much easier said than done. But it can be done! Let’s consider three ways that you can get your anger under control.

Reduce Anger’s Intensity

To reduce anger, slow down and relax. Try to avoid saying the first thing that comes to mind. If you feel yourself getting overly excited and feel you are in danger of losing control of your emotions, apply the Bible’s counsel: “The beginning of contention is as one letting out waters; so before the quarrel has burst forth, take your leave.”—Proverbs 17:14.

That is what helped a man named Jack to gain mastery over his violent temper. Jack’s father was given to bouts of drunkenness and anger. While growing up, Jack developed a violent personality as well. He says: “When I became angry, I would feel as if I was on fire. And I would lash out violently with words and fists.”

However, things started to change when Jack began a study of the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses. He came to understand that

with God’s help, he could change and learn to control his anger. And change he did! Jack relates how he reacted when a fellow workmate swore at him in anger: “I felt the surge of anger blaze through my body. My first inclination was to grab him and throw him down.”

What eventually helped Jack to remain calm? He explains: “I remember praying, ‘Please Jehovah, help me to calm down!’ Then, for the very first time, I felt a peace come over me, and I was able to walk away.” Jack continued his study of the Bible. He spent much time in prayer and meditation on such scriptures as Proverbs 26:20, which states: “Where there is no wood the fire goes out.” Afterward, Jack was finally able to gain mastery over his anger.

Learn to Relax

“A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism.” (Proverbs 14:30) Applying this basic Bible truth can improve one’s emotional, physical, and spiritual health. Start by learning simple relaxation methods, which help to reduce feelings of anger. The following tech-

LEARN TO RELAX

Practice deep breathing



niques have proved to be effective in combating stress-related anger:

- Breathing deeply, which is one of the best—and fastest—ways to reduce the intensity of your anger.

- While breathing deeply, repeating a word or phrase that is calming to you, such as “relax,” “let it go,” or “take it easy.”

- Immersing yourself in something you enjoy—perhaps reading, listening to music, gardening, or some other type of activity you find relaxing.

- Getting regular exercise and eating a healthful diet.

Adjust Your Expectations

You may not be able completely to avoid the people or the things that act as anger triggers, but you can learn to control your reactions to them. This involves changing the way you think.

People with very high expectations tend to have greater problems with anger. Why? Because when someone or something does not measure up to their high standards, dis-

appointment and anger quickly follow. To combat this perfectionist mentality, it is good to keep in mind that “there is not a righteous man, not even one . . . All men have deflected, all of them.” (Romans 3:10, 12) Therefore, we set ourselves up for a sense of failure if we think that we or anyone else can be perfect.

We are wise not to expect too much of ourselves or others. The Bible says: “We all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man.” (James 3:2) Yes, “there is no man righteous in the earth that keeps doing good and does not sin.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20) So if we pretend to be something that we are not—perfect—it will lead to a life filled with frustration and anger.

As imperfect humans, we all get angry from time to time. But how we express our anger is a matter of choice. The apostle Paul cautioned fellow Christians: “Be wrathful, and yet do not sin; let the sun not set with you in a provoked state.” (Ephesians 4:26) Yes, by controlling our anger, we can express our feelings in a positive way, a way that works for the benefit of everyone involved.

Immerse yourself in something you enjoy



Exercise regularly



How Can You Make Peace With Others?

THE Bible says of humans: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Because the more than seven billion people on earth are imperfect, personal-ity conflicts are inevitable. How can we make peace under such circumstances?

The Bible offers good advice. It describes the Creator as “the God of peace,” whose name is Jehovah. (Hebrews 13:20; Psalm 83:18) God wants his earthly children to enjoy peaceful relations. And in this regard, he takes the lead. When the first human couple sinned against God, breaking off peaceful relations, he immediately took steps toward reconciliation with his human creation. (2 Corinthians 5:19) Consider three things you can do to make peace with others.

Forgive Freely

What does the Bible say? “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.

What is the challenge? Perhaps you have a valid “cause for complaint” and feel justified in breaking off relations with the offender. You may also reason that the offender should apologize first. But if the person is unaware of his offense, or believes that you are in the wrong, the conflict will likely remain at an impasse.

What can you do? Heed the Bible’s advice by forgiving the person freely, especially if the problem is minor. Remember, if God kept account of our mistakes, we could never stand before him. (Psalm 130:3) The Bible says that “Jehovah is merciful and gra-

cious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness. For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust.”—Psalm 103:8, 14.

Consider, too, the Bible proverb: “The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger, and it is beauty on his part to pass over transgression.” (Proverbs 19:11) Insight helps us to see beneath the surface, to discern why people speak or act as they do. So ask yourself, “Was the person who wronged me tired, ill, or under pressure?” Discerning others’ true motives, feelings, and circumstances may moderate your anger and help you to make allowances for their mistakes.

Talk It Out

What does the Bible say? “If your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.”—Matthew 18:15.

What is the challenge? Negative emotions such as fear, anger, and embarrassment may prevent you from approaching the person to resolve the problem. You may also be tempted to seek the support of others by telling them about the problem, potentially widening and inflaming the conflict.

What can you do? When a problem is serious and you feel you are unable to overlook it, approach the person to talk it out. Try handling the matter as follows:

(1) Promptly: Do not procrastinate. If you do, the problem may fester. Try applying the advice of Jesus, namely: “[If] you are bringing your gift to the altar and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar,



“The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger, and it is beauty on his part to pass over transgression.”

—PROVERBS 19:11

and go away; first make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift.”—Matthew 5:23, 24.

(2) Privately: Resist the temptation to gossip with others about the problem. “Plead your own cause with your fellowman, and do not reveal the confidential talk of another.”—Proverbs 25:9.

(3) Peacefully: Resist the tendency to analyze who is right and who is wrong. Your goal is to make peace, not to win the dispute. Try using the word “I” instead of “you.” Telling the person “I feel hurt because . . .” may be much more effective than saying: “You hurt me!” The Bible puts it this way: “Pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another.”—Romans 14:19.

Be Long-Suffering

What does the Bible say? “Return evil for evil to no one. . . . But, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.’”—Romans 12:17, 20.

What is the challenge? If your initial efforts to make peace are rebuffed, you may be tempted to give up.

What can you do? Be patient. People have different temperaments and levels of maturity. Some take more time to cool down; others are still learning to display godly qualities. Keep on showing them kindness and love. “Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil,



but keep conquering the evil with the good,” says the Bible.—Romans 12:21.

To make peace with others, we need to work to display humility, insight, patience, and love. But peaceful relations are surely worth it!

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- What will help you to forgive someone freely?—Colossians 3:13.
- What can help you to approach the person to talk the problem out?—Matthew 5:23, 24.
- What can you do if your efforts to make peace are rebuffed?—Romans 12:17-21.

Ain Jalut

A TURNING POINT IN WORLD HISTORY

FIERCE mounted warriors swept out of Mongolia, laying waste every city that refused to surrender. In February 1258, they unleashed their fury against Baghdad and breached its walls. They murdered and pillaged for a week. The whole Islamic world trembled in fear of the Mongols.*

In January 1260, as the Mongols moved westward, Aleppo, Syria, met the same fate as Baghdad. In March, Damascus opened its gates to the Mongols and surrendered. Shortly afterward, the Mongols took the Palestinian cities of Nablus (near the site of ancient Shechem) and Gaza.

* For more information on the Mongols and their conquests, see the May 2008 issue of *Awake!*

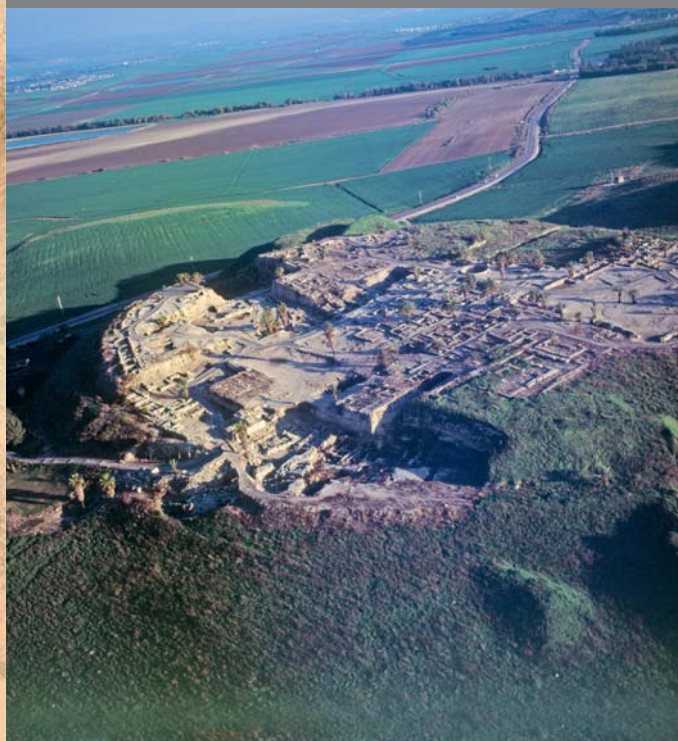
Hülegü, the Mongol general, demanded that Sultan al-Muzaffar Sayf al-Din Qutuz, the Muslim ruler of Egypt, also yield to them. Hülegü threatened that if he did not, Egypt would suffer dire consequences. Hülegü's forces outnumbered the Egyptian army of 20,000 by some 15 to 1. "The Muslim world stood face to face with extinction," says Professor Nazeer Ahmed, a historian of Islam. What was Sultan Qutuz to do?

Qutuz and the Mamluks

Qutuz was a Mamluk, a slave of Turkish origin. The Mamluks had served as soldier-slaves for the Ayyubid sultans of Cairo, Egypt. In 1250, however, those slaves overthrew their masters and became the rulers of



Site of the ancient city of Megiddo



Egypt. Qutuz, himself a former soldier-slave, subsequently seized power and became sultan in 1259. He was a skilled warrior who was not about to give up without a fight. His prospects for defeating the Mongols, however, seemed bleak. But then began a series of events that would shape history.

Word reached Hülegü that Möngke, the Mongol great khan, had died in distant Mongolia. Foreseeing a power struggle back home, Hülegü withdrew with most of his army. He left behind between 10,000 and 20,000 troops—sufficient, he thought, to complete the conquest of Egypt. Qutuz now perceived that the tide had turned in his favor. He determined that if he was to defeat the invaders, this was his opportunity to do so.

Lying between Egypt and the Mongols, however, was another enemy of the Muslims—the crusader forces that had come to Palestine to claim the “Holy Land” for Chris-

tendom. From them, Qutuz sought safe passage and the right to buy supplies in order to engage the Mongols in war in Palestine. The crusaders consented. Qutuz, after all, was the only hope the crusaders had of ridding the area of the Mongols, who were as much of a worry to them as they were to the Muslims.

As a result, the stage was set for a decisive clash between the Mamluks and the Mongols.

Ain Jalut in Palestine

The armies of the Mamluks and the Mongols met in September 1260 at Ain Jalut on the Plain of Esdraelon. It is believed that Ain Jalut lay near the ancient city of Megiddo.*

Historian Rashid al-Din says that the Mamluks drew the Mongols into an ambush

* Because many decisive battles were fought in this area, the word “Megiddo” became identified with the well-known battle called Armageddon—Hebrew *Har-Magedon*. The Bible associates Armageddon with “the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”—Revelation 16:14, 16, *Authorized Version*.

The armies of the Mamluks and the Mongols met in September 1260 at Ain Jalut, on the Plain of Esdraelon



at Megiddo. Qutuz hid most of his cavalry in the hills around the plain and ordered a small force forward in order to provoke a Mongol attack. The Mongols believed that they had the whole Mamluk army before them, so they charged. Qutuz then sprang his trap. He ordered reserve units to gallop out of their hiding places and attack the Mongol flanks. The invaders were defeated.

This was the first Mongol defeat since they had launched their westward thrust out of Mongolia 43 years earlier. Though the number of troops involved was relatively small, Ain Jalut is considered to be one of history's most significant battles. It spared Muslims from annihilation, broke the perception of Mongol invincibility, and allowed the Mamluk army to retake lost territories.

Ain Jalut's Aftermath

The Mongols returned to the area of Syria and Palestine a number of times, but never

again could they threaten Egypt. Hülegü's descendants settled in Persia, converted to Islam, and in time became patrons of Islamic culture. Their territories came to be known as the Persian ilkhate, that is, "subordinate khanate."

Qutuz did not enjoy his victory for long. He was killed by his rivals shortly afterward. Among such rivals was Baybars I, the first sultan of a reunited kingdom of Egypt and Syria. Many considered him the ruler who was the real founder of the Mamluk regime. His new state—well-run and wealthy—lasted two and a half centuries, until 1517.

During that period of approximately 250 years, the Mamluks ousted the crusaders from the Holy Land, encouraged trade and industry, patronized the arts, and built hospitals, mosques, and schools. Under their rule, Egypt became the unrivaled center of the Muslim world.

The battle of Ain Jalut affected more than the Middle East. It also set the course of Western civilization. "Had the Mongols succeeded in conquering Egypt, they might have been able, following the return of Hülegü, to carry on across North Africa to the Straits of Gibraltar," says the magazine *Saudi Aramco World*. Since, in the meantime, the Mongols had also reached Poland, they would have held Europe in a giant pincer.

"Under such circumstances, would the European Renaissance have occurred?" asks the same magazine. "The world today might have been a considerably different place."

The ruins of the ancient city of Shechem, with a portion of the modern city of Nablus in the background



Is it wrong to be popular?

Fill in the word that completes the following statement:

It is ____ good to be popular.

A. always

B. sometimes

C. never



THE correct answer is “**B.**” Why? Because to be popular simply means to be liked by a lot of people—and that’s not always wrong! The Bible foretold that Christians would be “a light of the nations” and that people would be drawn to them. (Isaiah 42:6; Acts 13:47) In that sense, it can be said that Christians are popular.

Did you know? Jesus was popular. Even as a young person, he gained “favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:52) And the Bible says that when Jesus became an adult, “great crowds followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from the other side of the Jordan.”—Matthew 4:25.

Why was that proper? Because Jesus wasn’t seeking glory or pursuing popularity, and he wasn’t desperate for others’ approval. Jesus simply did what was right—a stance that sometimes brought him favorable attention.

(John 8:29, 30) At the same time, Jesus realized that any approval he won from the often-fickle public would be temporary. He acknowledged that in time people would put him to death!—Luke 9:22.

The Bottom Line: Popularity is like wealth. *Having* it isn’t always wrong. The problem lies in what people do to obtain—or maintain—it.

Warning! Many young people will do anything to be popular. Some are people pleasers who follow the crowd. Others are bullies who try to *force* people to admire them—even if only out of fear.*

On the following pages, we will consider those two treacherous paths to popularity. Then we’ll look at a better route.

* The Bible speaks of bullies called “the Nephilim,” who are also referred to as “men of fame.” Their primary interest was in promoting their own glory.—Genesis 6:4.

PATHS TO POPULARITY

A
BETTER
ROUTE

THE PEOPLE
PLEASER

I need
others'
approval.

To get it, I
must imitate
their behavior.

THE
BULLY

I'm already well liked,
and I want to keep
things that way.

I will do whatever it
takes to stay on top
—even if it means
trampling on others.

1

Know your standards. The Bible says that mature people have been “trained to distinguish both right and wrong.” —Hebrews 5:14.

2

Stick to your beliefs. Be like Joshua, who confidently said: “Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah.” —Joshua 24:15.

WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY

Melissa —Sure, you can try to be just like every other kid walking down the school hallway. But that's so boring! Being a Christian makes you stand out in a good way. It doesn't make you weird. It makes you likable.



Ashley —I used to feel unpopular at school, but then I'd go to a Christian meeting and be with friends who loved me for who I was. At that point, any interest I had in winning the approval of my schoolmates would fade away.



"I tried to change my demeanor so I'd fit in with others. At first, it seemed to work. But later I came to realize that you should never change who you are just to be accepted."—Nicole.



Bible principle: "Don't do something just because everyone else is doing it. . . . You must not let those people persuade you to do wrong things."—Exodus 23:2, *Holy Bible—Easy to Read Version*.

"Kids are often mean, and because bullies are more popular, a shy kid will believe that whatever they say is right."—Raquel.



Bible principle: "Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them." —Luke 6:31.

3

Be confident about the path you have chosen. The apostle Paul reminded Timothy: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power." —2 Timothy 1:7.



By applying the three points to the left, you may lose some popularity—but you will be likable to the right kind of people!



Phillip—The key to being accepted by others is to take a personal interest in them. Recently I've been trying to do small things for my friends, and this has drawn me closer to them.

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



*Stamp depicting an
idyllic Terezín during
World War II*

Terezín Fortress



Unable to Prevent Suffering

HALFWAY between the central European cities of Dresden and Prague is the town of Theresienstadt (or Terezín). The town includes a vast fortress with massive ramparts. It was built to stop penetration of foreign armies into the country and provide protection for residents of the surrounding region.

Joseph II, king of Germany and Holy Roman emperor, ordered the construction of the fortress, and he was present both when the site was surveyed and later when the foundation stone was laid toward the end of 1780. The fortress was built to honor his mother, Empress Maria Theresa, and was therefore given the Czech name Terezín, meaning "Town of Theresa."* As many as 14,000 workers were said to have been on site at a time. Most of the work was completed within four years.

At its completion in 1784, Terezín was the largest fortress in the Hapsburg lands. The engineering techniques used there were the most advanced in the history of fortress building up till then. Even before it was completed,

however, military tactics and strategies had undergone striking changes.

Enemy forces no longer besieged a castle when they invaded a country. They surrounded nearby villages and plundered them. As a result, by 1888, Terezín lost its status as a military fortress. Its wide outer ramparts were transformed into charming parks with garden paths and benches.

The Fortress and the Town

Terezín Fortress had been designed as a fortified town. Behind its huge ramparts, there were accommodations for soldiers, their families, and other civilians.

Next to the main fortress, a smaller one was built that served as a military prison. In the early 1800's, political opposers of the Hapsburg Empire were kept there. About a hundred years later, prisoners included the youths who were involved in the 1914 assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo. They escaped the death penalty because they were under 20 years of age. Soon afterward, most of them died in prison. They were tortured, and some went insane. Gavrilo Princip, the actual assassin, died in that prison while World War I was still raging.

* The empress was also the mother of Marie Antoinette, who eventually became queen of France.



Newly arrived prisoners were led to the barracks. The sign reads in German: "Arbeit Macht Frei" (Work Makes Free)



Plank beds in the women's section of the fortress

The Small Fortress had the reputation for being one of the worst penitentiaries in Austria-Hungary. Often, prisoners were kept in heavy shackles in cold, damp dungeons. During World War II, the fortress was used for even more horrible purposes.

"Spa Terezín"—What It Really Was

After the Nazis invaded and occupied what is now the Czech Republic, they began taking Jews to the main fortress in 1941. The town of Theresienstadt was turned into a closed Jewish ghetto by the Nazis. They claimed that racial segregation was necessary to avoid conflicts between Jews and non-Jews. Although Theresienstadt was presented to the public as a closed spa town where Jews could receive treatment, the Nazis secretly planned to annihilate all Jews.

In the eastern part of Europe, the Nazis had already established death camps where Jews from Theresienstadt and similar locations were gradually transported and killed.* Although the existence of such camps had been widely known since the mid-1930's, Nazi propaganda portrayed them as simply correc-

tional facilities. However, reports about conditions in the camps were increasing. As a result, pressure was placed on Nazi officials to answer the charges. So the Nazis schemed to provide the international public with answers to the charges. How did they do that?

During World War II, in 1944 and 1945, representatives of the International Red Cross were invited to inspect the main fortress to see firsthand what was going on. However, to create the illusion that the fortress was simply a spa town, the Nazis did extensive beautification work.

Block numbers were replaced with nice-sounding street names. A fictitious bank, a kindergarten, and shops were created. Even a café was opened in the ghetto's center. Facades of houses were repaired, new greenery was planted in the central park, and a pavilion was built, where promenade music was played.

Afterward, Red Cross representatives were invited for a guided tour. They were allowed to talk with representatives of the Jewish "self-government." These people, however, were carefully selected residents who answered questions exactly as they had been

* For more information, see *Awake!* issues of August 22, 1995, pages 3-15, and April 8, 1989, pages 3-20.



**Main entrance to
the Small Fortress**

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN THE SMALL FORTRESS

Most of Jehovah's Witnesses incarcerated in Theresienstadt were first interrogated at the Prague headquarters of the Gestapo. After Theresienstadt, they were usually sent to concentration camps in Germany. How did they cope not only with harsh prison conditions but also with isolation?

A Witness woman who was imprisoned in Theresienstadt recalls: "Because I did not want to forget Bible teachings, I went over them again and again. In every prison where I was transferred, I searched for other Witnesses; and if I found them, I tried to contact them. At the same time, I made an effort to preach to others as much as circumstances permitted."

Her approach evidently worked. She remained faithful to God throughout the time of her imprisonment as well as through the years that followed.

taught to by the Nazis during rehearsals. On two separate inspection tours, the Nazis successfully deceived Red Cross delegates. In their reports, the delegates erroneously described Theresienstadt as a regular Jewish town with residents who were well cared for. When the International Red Cross delegates left Theresienstadt, the Jews behind ghetto walls continued to suffer, starve, and die. Few lived to see the end of World War II.

The Small Fortress

The Small Fortress was also used by the Nazis as a prison. The conditions there equaled those of concentration camps. For many of the tens of thousands of men and women imprisoned in it, the Small Fortress was only a transfer stop on their way to some of the larger camps located in the territory of the German Reich.

At least 20 of Jehovah's Witnesses, from Prague, Pilsen, and other parts of the country, were imprisoned in the Small Fortress. Their crime? Refusing to support the Nazis and maintaining their political neutrality. Despite the ban on their preaching work, the Witnesses continued to share with others the good news from the Bible. They suffered only because of their faith, some being executed or tortured to death.

A Lesson That Can Be Learned

The Bible says: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Psalm 146:3, 4) Terezin Fortress is a vivid example of this truth.



Fancy a Fungus?

IN ANCIENT Egypt the Pharaohs prized mushrooms as delicacies. They became the preserve of the royal family. The Romans called mushrooms food of the gods and served them only on special occasions. The ancient Greeks held mushroom feasts and believed that mushrooms empowered their warriors for battle.

Today, however, mushrooms are not just for the elite. People all over the world enjoy eating them! What about you? If you fancy mushrooms, do you know what you are eating? Are mushrooms animals, vegetables, or something else? How are they grown? Are they nutritious? And if you see mushrooms in the wild, what should you do?

Searching for answers, my wife and I drove from Sydney, Australia, to Mittagong, a picturesque town in the southern highlands of New South Wales. Our destination? Noel Arnold's mushroom farm.

Mushroom Cultivation

Noel, a burly Australian, is a microbiologist and mushroom expert. He studied mush-

room cultivation in several countries before returning to Australia to grow them commercially. "Mushrooms are fungi, a family of organisms that includes mildews and molds," he explains. "Biologists formerly thought that fungi were plants, but we now know that they are very different from plants."

"For example, fungi do not make their food through photosynthesis as do nearly all plants. They can grow in the dark. Their bodies secrete powerful enzymes that convert organic material into basic nutrients, which they absorb as food. This unique digestive process also distinguishes fungi from animals. Since fungi are neither plants nor animals, biologists now classify them in a realm of their own—the fungi kingdom."

Mushrooms are grown in this temperature-controlled incubation room



Some mushrooms resemble beautiful flowers



MUSHROOMS IN NATURE

Wild mushrooms grow mostly in cool, damp, dark forests, where they convert dead trees, vegetation, and animal droppings into soil-enriching organic matter. Some form symbiotic relationships with trees. Those mushrooms feed on organic compounds in the tree roots, while the trees are supplied with nutrients absorbed by the mushrooms.

“In the wild, mature mushrooms release millions of tiny spores that mix with other mushroom spores and germinate,” Noel continues. “If the . . . spores land in a cold, damp place with plenty of food, they can grow into new mushrooms. Commercial mushroom growers aim to replicate this process using controlled conditions to improve crop yields and quality.”

As we continue our tour, Noel explains that different mushroom varieties require different growing conditions. For example, white, or button, mushrooms, the world’s most popular variety, grow best on pasteurized farm compost. Other varieties flourish in bags of plant waste, bottles of cereal grains, whole wooden logs, or logs of compressed sawdust. Of the thousands of known mushroom species, only about 60 are commercially cultivated.

Noel allows his mushrooms to mature and fruit in an old abandoned railway tunnel near Mittagong. “It’s cool, damp, and perfect for growing mushrooms,” he tells us. There we see an array of bags, pots, and bottles sprouting thousands of mushrooms of all shapes and sizes. Some remind us of blooming roses; others resemble fluted lilies or look like floral bouquets or squat umbrellas. We are enthralled by the colorful display!

Tasty and Versatile

“Many people love the look of exotic mushrooms but may not know how to prepare them,” Noel explains. “Yet, they are easy to cook. Some people chop them up for stir-fries, soups, and salads, or they cook them

1. There is a goat in one picture but a cow in the other. 2. There is a daughter in one picture but not in the other. 3. There is a wineskin in one picture but a horn filled with oil in the other. 4. B. 5. 22,300. 6. D.

ANSWERS TO PAGES 30 AND 31

whole on a barbecue. Personally, I enjoy oyster mushrooms crumbed and fried in oil. And shiitake mushrooms have a rich, meaty flavor that tastes great in omelets.”

Edible mushrooms are highly nutritious and are a valuable source of fiber, protein, minerals, and vitamins. Some 2,000 varieties are also known to have medicinal properties. According to one medical review, mushroom extracts have more than 100 medicinal uses, including combating cancer, hepatitis, AIDS, Alzheimer’s disease, and high cholesterol.

It can be very dangerous to gather mushrooms in the wild, however. The death cap mushroom (*Amanita phalloides*), among others, closely resembles edible varieties yet is deadly. So follow the rule: *Never* eat mushrooms from the wild unless a mushroom expert identifies them as safe to eat! Of course, commercially grown varieties are safe to consume. They are, in fact, delicious treats that were once reserved for royalty!

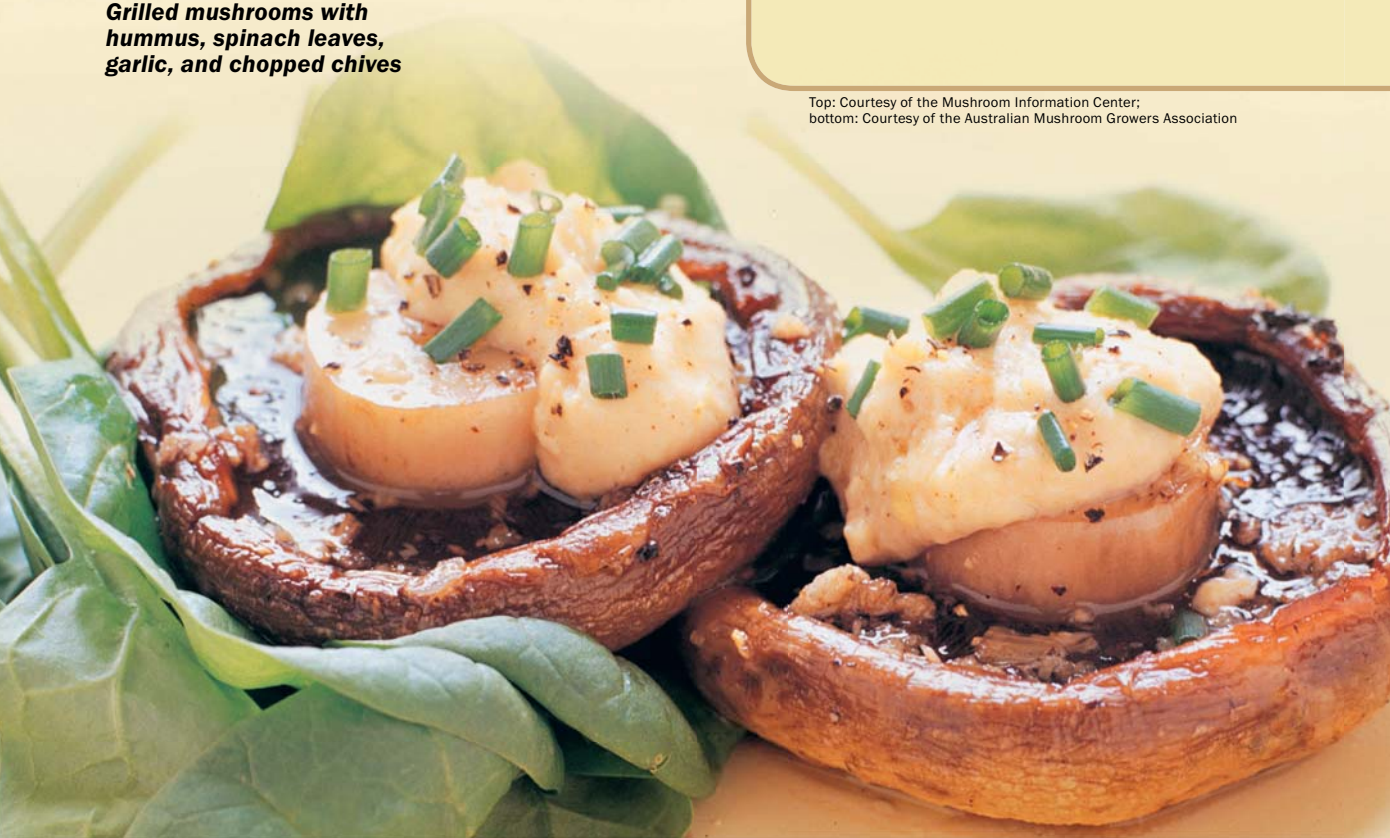
Grilled mushrooms with hummus, spinach leaves, garlic, and chopped chives



MUSHROOM TIPS

- Store fresh mushrooms in a paper or cloth bag in your refrigerator. Avoid placing them near pungent items, since they can absorb strong odors.
- If you are eating your mushrooms raw, wipe them clean with a damp cloth or quickly rinse them in water and pat them dry with a cloth. Do not soak mushrooms in water.
- If you are cooking mushrooms, simply use a soft brush to remove any surface dirt.
- Do not peel mushrooms—their skins are tasty and nutritious!

Top: Courtesy of the Mushroom Information Center;
bottom: Courtesy of the Australian Mushroom Growers Association

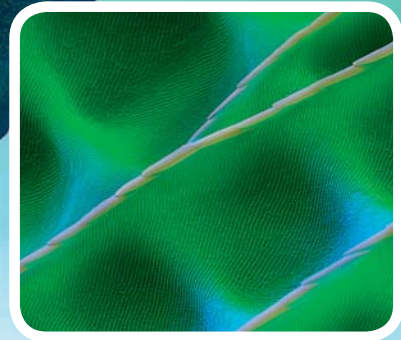


WAS IT DESIGNED?

The Surface of the Butterfly's Wing



Green swallowtail butterfly



Microscopic view of a butterfly's wing

● The striking metallic colors on the wings of some butterflies change depending on the angle from which they are viewed. The wing color of one species is so pure and intense that it can be seen from a half mile (805 m) away. What makes the butterfly's wing remarkable?

Consider: Rows of tiny concave surfaces on the wings of a green swallowtail butterfly (*Papilio blumei*) reflect light in various ways. For example, the center of each concavity reflects yellow-green light, while the edges reflect blue light. Also, light at the center of a concave surface is reflected directly, but light striking the sides first bounces through a surface of multiple layers, which amplifies and partially polarizes, or rotates, the light waves. The final mix is called structural color because of the complex way in which it is produced.

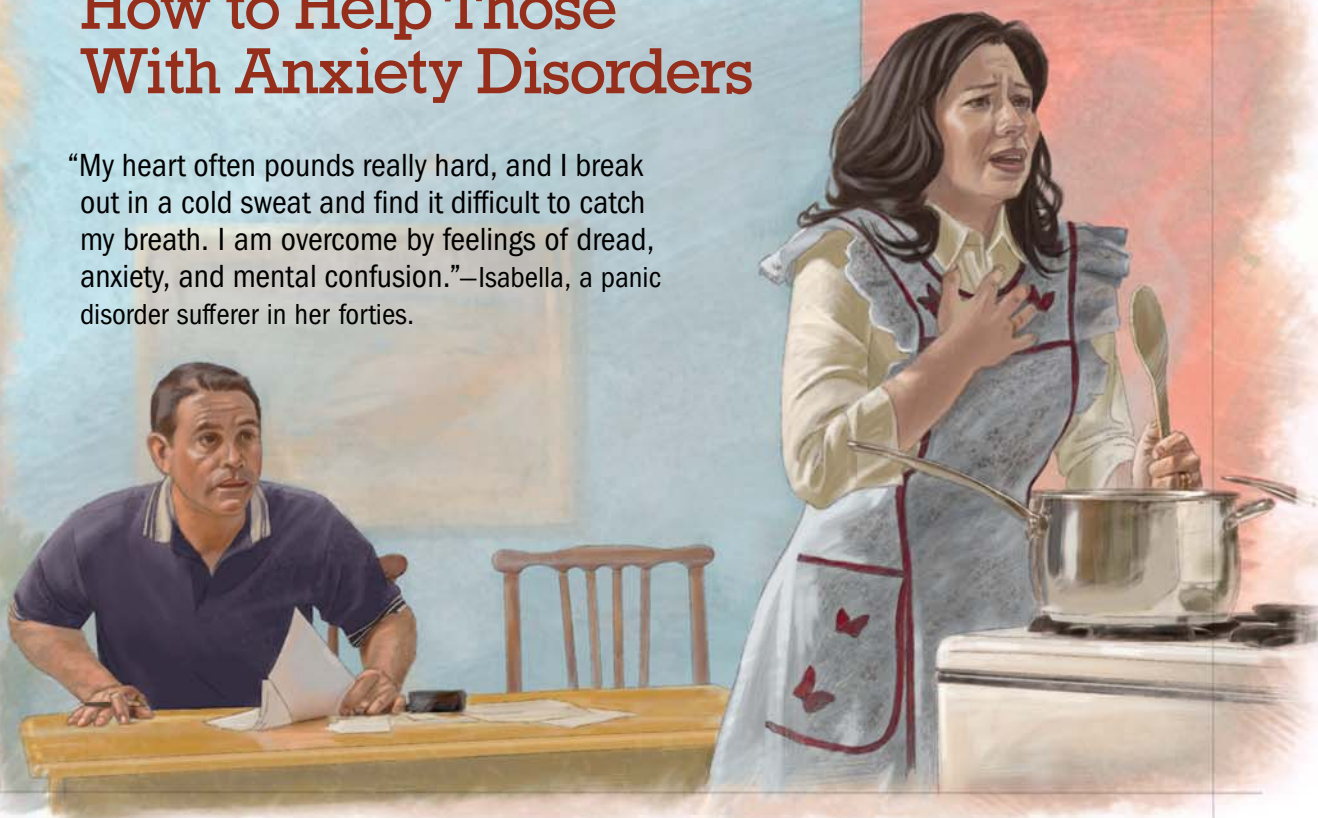
It took ten years for researchers to produce a simplified replica of the butterfly's wing surface. Such technology, they hope, will lead to bank notes and credit cards that are harder to forge and solar cells that are more efficient at collecting energy from the sun. However, duplicating the surface of a butterfly's wing is challenging. "Despite the detailed scientific understanding of optics," writes Professor Ullrich Steiner of Cambridge University's Nanoscience Centre, "the astonishingly varied colour palette found in nature often surpasses the optical effects that can be generated by technological means."

What do you think? Did the butterfly's wing surface come about by chance? Or was it designed?



How to Help Those With Anxiety Disorders

“My heart often pounds really hard, and I break out in a cold sweat and find it difficult to catch my breath. I am overcome by feelings of dread, anxiety, and mental confusion.”—Isabella, a panic disorder sufferer in her forties.



ANXIETY can be described as “a feeling of nervousness or worry.” Have you, for example, ever felt nervous when confronted by an angry dog? What happens when the dog goes away? The nervousness and worry do too, don’t they? What, though, is an anxiety disorder?

When anxiety becomes chronic, when it continues even after there is no more need to feel anxious, anxiety can become a disorder. According to the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), “anxiety disorders affect about 40 million American adults age

18 years and older . . . in a given year.” Consider Isabella, quoted in the introduction. Unrelenting anxiety, such as she experiences, can have serious consequences for the sufferer.

Not only that, but the immediate family may also be affected adversely. There is good news, though. An NIMH publication states: “Effective therapies for anxiety disorders are available, and research is uncovering new treatments that can help most people with anxiety disorders lead productive, fulfilling lives.”

Family and friends can also help one who is suffering from an anxiety disorder. How?

How to Help

Be supportive: Monica, who suffers from generalized anxiety disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, explains a difficulty she faces: “Most people find it hard to understand my emotional problems.”

As a result, anxiety disorder sufferers are often so afraid of being misunderstood that they try to hide their problem from others. This can result in feelings of guilt that worsen their emotional state. It is vitally important, therefore, for family and friends to be supportive.

Learn more about the disorder: This suggestion may be especially appropriate for those who deal closely with sufferers of anxiety disorders. This may include an immediate family member or a particularly close friend.

Keep comforting one another: The first-century missionary Paul urged friends in the Greek city of Thessalonica to “keep comforting one another and building one another

up.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11) We can do this both by our words and our tone of voice. We need to show that we deeply care for our friends, and we need to avoid hurtful insinuations.

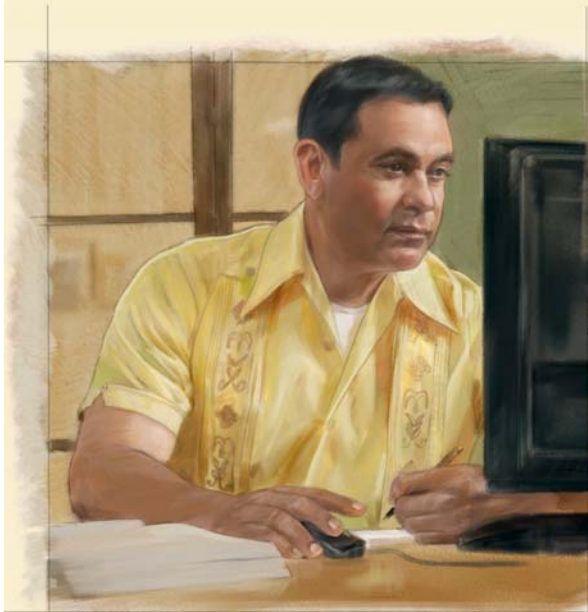
Consider the three professed friends of the man Job, after whom a book in the Bible is named. Those men, as you may remember, wrongly implied that Job was in some way covering over concealed sins and that his suffering was the result of his cover-up.

So, be sensitive to a sufferer’s feelings. Listen carefully. Try to view matters through the eyes of the one who is suffering, rather than through your own. Do not jump to conclusions while listening. Job’s professed friends did, and as a result, they were called “troublesome comforters.” They actually made him feel worse!—Job 16:2.

Remember to listen carefully to sufferers. Allow them to express freely how they feel. This may help you to understand better what they are going through. And think of the reward! You may be able to help sufferers enjoy a more full and meaningful life.

“Keep comforting one another”





Identifying Types of Anxiety Disorders

Understanding anxiety disorders is vital, especially when the people involved are immediate family members or close friends. Consider five types of such disorders.

Panic Disorders Recall Isabella, mentioned in the introduction of our article. It is not only the attacks of anxiety that she finds disabling. “In between them, there is the dread that an attack is going to happen again,” she says. As a result, sufferers tend to avoid places where they have had an attack. Some become so restricted that they are housebound or are able to confront a feared situation only when accompanied by someone they trust. Isabella explained: “Merely being alone is enough to trigger an attack. Mother gives me security; I can’t stand it if she is not nearby.”

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder A person obsessed with germs or dirt may develop a compulsion to wash his hands over and over again.

Regarding a similar compulsion, Renan says: “My mind is in constant turmoil as I go over and over past mistakes, reanalyzing them and looking at them from every possible angle.” The result is an obsession to confess past mistakes to others. Renan is in constant need of reassurance. But medication has been of help in controlling his obsession.*

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD) In recent times this term has been used to describe a range of psychological symptoms people may experience following an extremely traumatic event that involved physical harm or the threat of such. PTSD sufferers may startle easily, be irritable, become emotionally numb, lose interest in things they once enjoyed, and have trouble feeling affection for others—especially those with whom they used to be close. Some become aggressive, even violent, and tend to avoid situations that remind them of the original traumatic incident.

Social Phobia, or Social Anxiety Disorder This is a term used to identify people who are overwhelmingly anxious and excessively self-conscious in everyday social situations. Some sufferers have an intense, persistent fear of being watched and judged by others. They may worry for days or weeks before attending an event. Their fear may become so severe that it interferes with work, school, or other ordinary activities and makes it hard for them to make and keep friends.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Monica, mentioned earlier, suffers from this disorder. She goes through the day filled with “exaggerated worries,” even though there is little or nothing to provoke them. Sufferers tend to anticipate disaster and are overly concerned with health issues, money, family problems, or difficulties at work. Just the thought of getting through the day may produce anxiety.†

* *Awake!* does not endorse any specific medical treatment.

† The above material is based on a publication of the National Institute of Mental Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Marketing Strategies in the Gambling Industry

In Germany an addicted gambler loses, on average, more than ten times the money lost by a non-addict. Addicted players are thus the “foundation for this line of business,” says the daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. To maximize profits, the gambling industry structures its games and designs its machines to foster and exploit addiction. The faster the machines become, the faster the player loses self-control and becomes addicted. These marketing strategies are working—56 percent of the income from slot machines is said to be derived from addicts. In casinos the rate is 38 percent; and in online games, 60 percent.

A Good Time to See a Judge?

Can irrelevant factors influence judicial decision making? One study suggests that they can. A team of researchers analyzed more than 1,000 parole rulings handed down by experienced judges in Israel. The study found that in the work sessions following the judges’ lunch and snack breaks, favorable rulings gradually went from about 65 percent to nearly zero and then abruptly returned to 65 percent after the next break. The researchers concluded that rulings are not always based solely on fact and law but “can be swayed by extraneous variables that should have no bearing on legal decisions.”



“Marriage rates in England and Wales have fallen to the lowest level since records began,” in 1862.—OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS, BRITAIN.

Over half the executives of small, privately owned companies in the United States **“expect employees to steal something of value** [from the company] within the next year.”—REUTERS NEWS SERVICE, U.S.A.

Within less than a year after launching an Internet “crack-down,” Chinese authorities had already **“shut down more than 60,000 pornographic websites,”** stated the National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications.—CHINA DAILY, CHINA.

“More than 215 million people—or three per cent of the world’s population—now [live] outside their home countries.”—UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, ITALY.

“Of the 19 students who commit suicide each day in India, six [do so] fearing failure in examinations.”—INDIA TODAY INTERNATIONAL, INDIA.



Armenia's Golden Fruit

● Apricots have been cultivated for thousands of years in Asia and Europe. Europeans believed the apricot originated in Armenia and thus began to call it the Armenian apple.

Today about 50 different varieties of apricots are grown in Armenia. They are enjoyed from the middle of June till late August. The rich volcanic soil and the abundance of sunshine in Armenia give apricots grown there a distinct sweetness that causes many people to consider them among the tastiest in the world.

Common varieties are about the size of a small plum and can vary in color from light gold to deep orange. They have a velvety skin and firm flesh, they are not too juicy, and they can range in taste from sweet to tart. Some describe the taste of the more popular varieties as somewhere between that of a peach and a plum.

Apricot cultivators have produced a "black" apricot, but it is not a true apricot. Rather, it is a cross between an apricot and a plum. It has a deep-purple—almost black—furry skin and yellow flesh inside. This fruit is variously called pluot, plumcot, or aprium.

Apricot trees bloom before the leaves emerge, producing fragrant, white self-

pollinating flowers. The flowers are similar to those of peach, plum, and cherry trees. The trees generally grow best where there are cold winters and warm summers, since they require a chilling period to flower and fruit properly. Armenia's climate is therefore just right for them!

Fresh apricots have many health benefits. For example, they are an excellent source of beta-carotene and vitamin C. Many people are familiar with apricots in their dried state. This is because fresh ones are very fragile and perishable. As a result, in some parts of the world, dried apricots are more popular than fresh ones. Happily, dried apricots are also nutritious and are a good source of fiber and iron. In addition, they are used to make brandy, jam, and juice.

Moreover, beautiful wood carvings are made from the wood of the apricot tree, as is the *duduk*, a popular Armenian wind instrument, sometimes called the apricot pipe. In shops and markets around Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia, tourists can also find lovely hand-carved souvenirs of apricot wood.

If you live in a part of the world where you can sample a fresh apricot, give it a try. No doubt you will not be disappointed by this tasty golden fruit.

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 1 Samuel 16:1-3, 6-13.

1.

2.

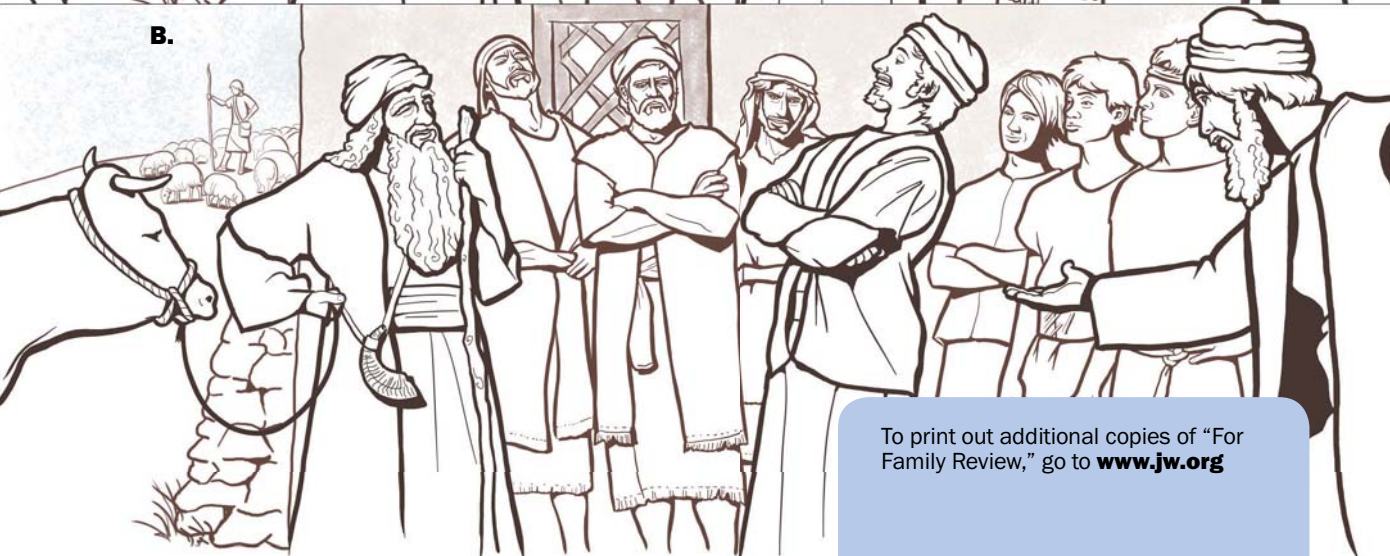
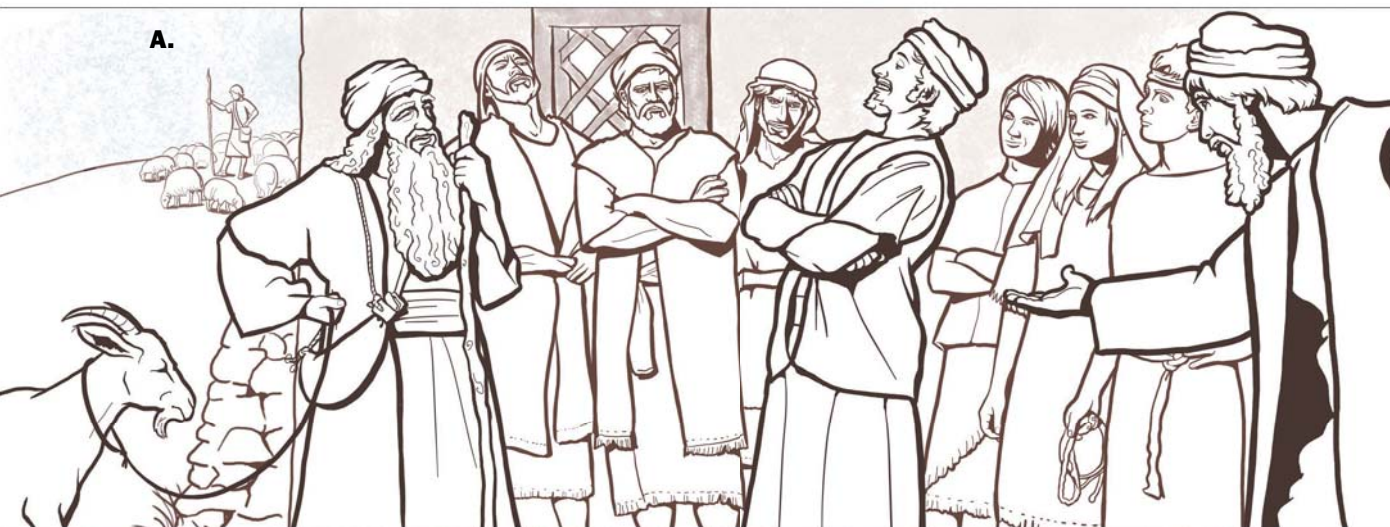
3.

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

FOR DISCUSSION: What does Jehovah see when he looks at a person? What does the Bible mean when it says 'Jehovah sees the heart'? CLUE: Read Jeremiah 17: 10. How important is a person's outward appearance to Jehovah? CLUE: Read Proverbs 11:22; 31:30; 1 Peter 3: 3, 4. What qualities will make you beautiful in God's eyes? CLUE: Read Luke 10:27; 2 Peter 1:5-8.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: Read Galatians 5:22, 23. Write out each of the nine qualities on a separate slip of paper. Choose one family member and, using tape, stick one quality on his or her back. Do not let that person see what quality it is. Have that person try to guess the quality by asking questions about it. The rest of the family can give only yes or no answers to the questions.

● "FOR FAMILY REVIEW" answers on page 22



Collect and Learn

Cut out, fold in half, and save



DAVID

BIBLE
CARD

15



QUESTIONS

- A.** Both David and Jesus were born in what city?
- B.** As a boy, David was a _____ who courageously killed a _____ and a _____.
- C.** Complete David's statement: "And you, Solomon my son, know the . . ."

98 C.E.

Last Bible book written

1 C.E.

Lived about 1000 B.C.E.

4026 B.C.E.

Adam created



Moved from Bethlehem to Jerusalem

Jerusalem
Low plain of Elah
Bethlehem

Fought Goliath at the low plain of Elah.—1 Samuel 17:2

DAVID

PROFILE Son of Jesse, and the second King of Israel. A skilled poet and musician, David wrote more than 73 of the psalms. He humbly sought Jehovah's direction in his life. (1 Samuel 23:2; 30:8; 2 Samuel 2:1) Jehovah called David "a man agreeable to my heart."—Acts 13:22.

ANSWERS

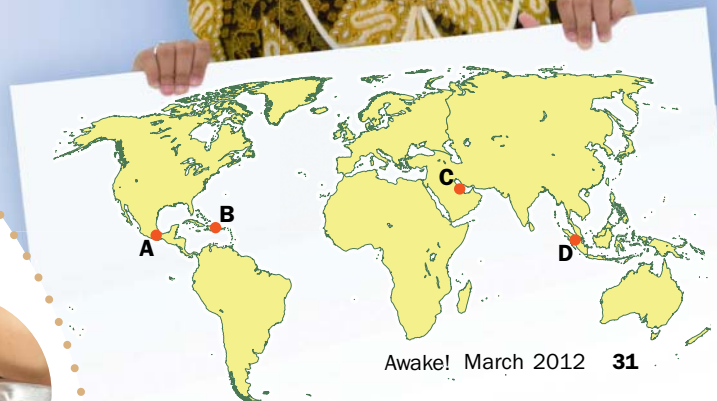
- A.** Bethlehem (in Judea).—John 7:42.
- B.** shepherd, lion, bear.
—1 Samuel 17:34, 35; Psalm 78:70, 71.
- C.** "... God of your father and serve him with a complete heart."
—1 Chronicles 28:9.

Peoples and Lands

- 5.** My name is Olivia. I am six years old, and I live in Indonesia. About how many of Jehovah's Witnesses live in Indonesia? Is it 22,300, 42,800, 63,900?
- 6.** Which dot shows where I live? Circle it, draw a dot where you live, and see how close you are to Indonesia.

Children's Picture Search

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



Awake! March 2012 31

HOW DO YOU VIEW JESUS?



Are you more inclined to think of Jesus as
a newborn baby, a dying man, or an exalted King?

The Bible reveals that Jesus *is* a powerful King. But what does this mean for you?

Many believe that Jesus died for them. Yet, how can one man's death almost 2,000 years ago mean life for others today?

You are cordially invited to listen to Scriptural answers to these questions. This information will be presented when Jehovah's Witnesses gather to commemorate Jesus' death. This year the anniversary falls on **Thursday, April 5**, after sundown.

Please check with Jehovah's Witnesses locally for the exact time and place.