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THE CRY FOR JUSTICE

Will It Be Heard?



Awake!

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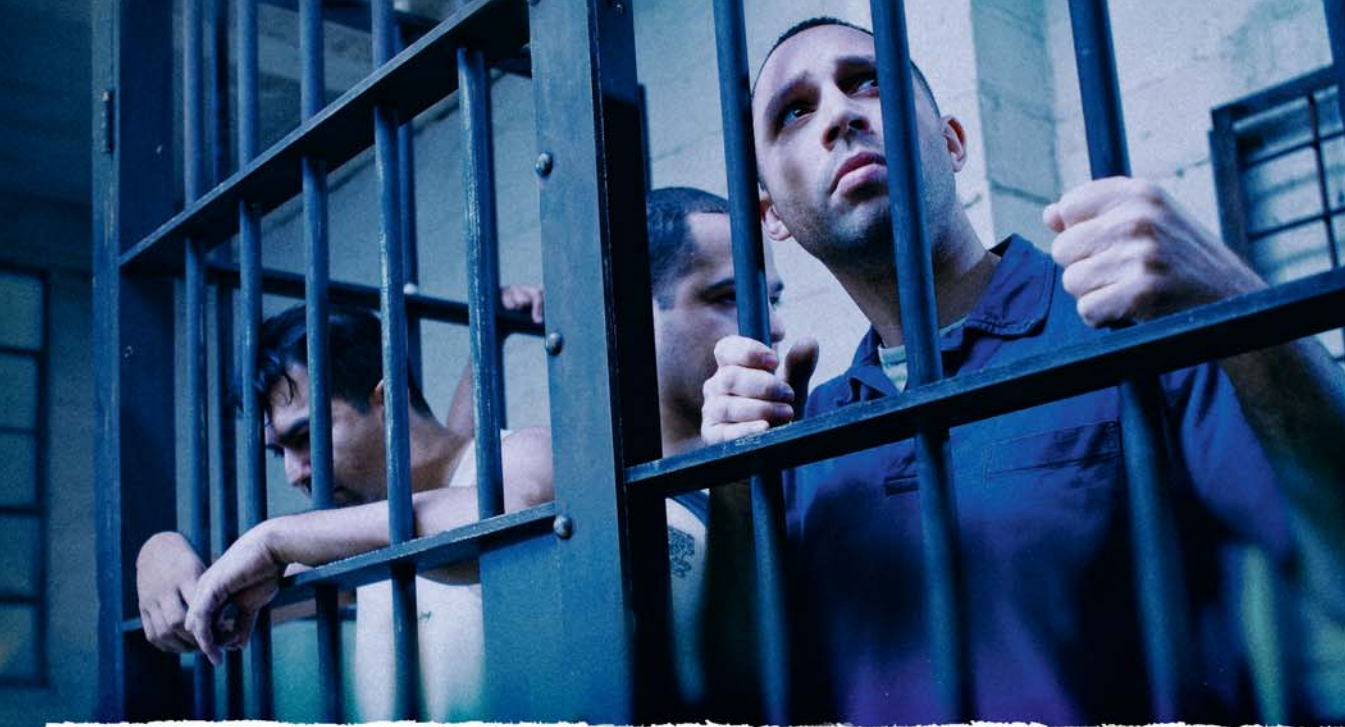
THE CRY FOR JUSTICE

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INJUSTICE HURTS!

IN 2010, Michael was released from jail in Texas, U.S.A., after serving 27 years for rape—a crime he did not commit. He was freed when DNA tests—not available at the time of his conviction—proved his innocence. The authorities later identified those responsible for the crime, but prosecution was impossible, since the statute of limitations on the crime had expired.

Many felons evade justice. In Britain, for example, “unsolved murders have doubled over the past decade, raising fears that police and courts are unable to tackle violent crime,” said a report in *The Telegraph*.

In August 2011, British police struggled to contain another form of crime—rioting in Birmingham, Liverpool, London, and other areas. Rampaging mobs set fires, smashed store windows, and looted, thus destroy-

ing not only businesses, homes, and vehicles but also livelihoods. The motive? For many it was sheer greed. For some, though, the acts appeared to be a response to perceived injustices. Those rioters, said some commentators, may have been frustrated, “marginalized” young people growing up in deprived neighborhoods and lacking a future.

The Bible character Job said: “I keep crying for help, but there is no justice.” (Job 19:7) Likewise today, many are crying out for justice, but all too often, their cries go unheard. Really, is it within anyone’s power to eliminate injustice? Or is the hope that there will be a more just tomorrow simply an ideal entertained by the naive? In order to get a satisfactory answer, we must examine some of the root causes of injustice.

Roots of INJUSTICE

NEARLY two thousand years ago, the Bible set out a remarkably accurate social profile of our time. It stated: “In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, . . . without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.”—2 Timothy 3:1-4.

Few would deny that those negative traits have become more common in our time. They become manifest in many ways, including greed, prejudice, antisocial attitudes, corruption, and extreme financial inequality. Consider these individually.

GREED. “Greed is healthy” and “Greed is good” are catchphrases we may sometimes hear. But they are lies. Greed hurts! For example, greed often underlies accounting fraud, Ponzi schemes, and reckless lending and borrowing. The results, such as financial collapse, have hurt many people. Granted, some of the victims are greedy themselves. But their number also includes hardworking people, some of whom have lost homes and pensions.



PREJUDICE. Prejudiced people judge others unfairly and even discriminate against them on the basis of ethnicity, skin color, sex, social status, or religion. For example, a United Nations committee found that in one South American country, a pregnant woman died in a hospital because she had been discriminated against in another facility on the basis of her ethnicity and socio-economic background. Taken to its extreme, prejudice has even led to the gross injustices of ethnic cleansing and genocide.

ANTISOCIAL ATTITUDES. A synopsis of the *Handbook of Antisocial Behavior* stated: “Each year tens of thousands of families are torn apart, hundreds of thousands of lives are ruined, and millions of dollars’ worth of property is destroyed as a result of antisocial behavior. So endemic are violence and aggression to our society that it isn’t hard to imagine future historians categorizing the late twentieth century, not as the ‘Space Age’ or the ‘Information Age,’ but as the ‘Antisocial Age’—the time when society went to war against itself.” Since that book was published in 1997, there

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- A.** Police in China arresting a man for taking part in ethnic violence
B. Looting and destruction of property in London, England
C. Abject poverty in a Rwandan refugee camp

has been no improvement in attitudes and behavior.

CORRUPTION. A report on corruption in South Africa mentioned that over a seven-year period, more than 81 percent of the 25.2 billion rand (then \$4 billion, U.S.) provided to a provincial health department was improperly accounted for. Money that “should have gone towards maintenance of hospitals, clinics, and health centers in the province,” was unspent, said the journal *The Public Manager*.

EXTREME FINANCIAL INEQUALITY. In 2005, nearly 30 percent of Britain’s annual income “went to the top 5% of earners,” according to a report in *Time* magazine. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, “more than 33% of American income goes to the top 5% of earners,” said *Time*. Worldwide, about 1.4 billion people live on \$1.25 (U.S) or less a day, and 25,000 children die daily because of poverty.

Is There a Solution to Injustice?

In 1987, the then prime minister of Australia set the goal that by 1990 no Australian

child would be living in poverty. That never happened. In fact, the prime minister later regretted having fixed that objective.

Yes, no matter how powerful, rich, or influential a person may be, he is still a human and cannot eliminate injustice. Indeed, even the powerful suffer injustices, grow old, and die. Those realities call to mind the following two passages from the Bible:

“It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.”—Jeremiah 10:23.

“Do not put your trust in nobles, . . . to whom no salvation belongs.”—Psalm 146:3.

If we take that wisdom to heart, we will not be disillusioned when human efforts fail to get results. So, should we just give up? No! As we shall see in the final article of this series, a truly just world is on the horizon. In the meantime, though, we can do something. We can look at ourselves. Ask yourself: ‘Can I be more just in my dealings with others? Are there certain areas in which I can improve?’ Those questions are addressed in the following article.

LANGUAGES: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional)[°] (audio Mandarin only), Chitonga, Cibemba, Croatian, Czech,[°] Danish,[°] Dutch,[°] English,[°] Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,[°] 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,[°] Tagalog,[°] Tamil, Thai, Tok Pisin, Tongan, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

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⁺ CD also available. [°] MP3 CD-ROM also available.

[°] Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

Keys to Becoming MORE JUST

OUR Creator wants us to be happy, to enjoy inner peace, and to contribute to the happiness of others. Hence, he asks us “to *exercise justice* and to *love kindness*.” (Micah 6:8) How can we do so? We need to cultivate qualities that will dispel the traits that foster injustice. Consider how the Bible can help us do that.

OVERCOMING GREED. The most powerful weapon against greed is love—not mere sentiment or romantic attraction—but self-sacrificing love for others. Such “love is . . . kind,” and it “does not look for its own interests,” says 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5. Moreover, this love does not limit itself to family and friends. “If you love those loving you, what reward do you have?” asked Jesus, adding that even the ungodly love those who love them. —Matthew 5:46.

OVERCOMING PREJUDICE. Acts 10:34, 35 reads: “God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him.” God does not provide salvation on the basis of race, social status, or gender. In his eyes, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female.” (Galatians 3:28) When we imitate God, we overcome prejudice. Consider the example of Dorothy, who lived in the United States.

Dorothy became so disturbed by racial prejudice that she wanted to take part in an armed insurrection to relieve the suffering of oppressed black people. During that time, however, she attended a Christian meet-



Prejudice is conquered when we imitate God's love

ing of Jehovah's Witnesses and was deeply impressed by the warm welcome she received from both blacks and whites. Before long, she came to realize that only God can change people on the inside. When she experienced the genuine love of white Witnesses—people she said that she “would have killed without hesitation to further the cause of a revolution”—her heart “was warmed” to the point that she cried uncontrollably.

Firuddin with his wife, Zahra



OVERCOMING ANTISOCIAL ATTITUDES. Before becoming Christians, some of Jesus' early followers had been drunkards, extortioners, revellers, and revilers. Yet, with God's help they replaced those negative traits with love, kindness, and goodness. (1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:9-11; Galatians 5:22) Likewise today, millions of people have made wholesome changes in their lives by turning to God. An example is Firuddin, who lives in Azerbaijan.

Firuddin was raised in an orphanage, where he often fought other boys. As an adult, he became an instructor in hand-to-hand combat. "I was rude, cruel, and violent," he says. "If during mealtime my wife, Zahra, forgot anything—even a toothpick—I would beat her. And if anyone looked at her as we walked together, I would do the same to him!"

One day, Firuddin's heart was touched when he learned that Jesus asked God to forgive the soldiers who impaled him. (Luke 23:34) 'Only the Son of God could act that way,' he thought. Thereafter, he began to search for God. When Jehovah's Witnesses offered to help him, he readily accepted a free Bible study. Before long, his personality began to improve. Indeed, he became so kind to Zahra that she too began to study the Bible. Today both are peacefully united in true worship.

Of course, changes that we may personally make will not revolutionize the entire world! What, though, if God purposes to bring about a new, truly just world? After all, he surely has the power! And consider this: At 2 Timothy 3:1-4, quoted at the start of the preceding article, we saw that the Bible clearly foretold what people in general would be like during our time. That prediction has been fulfilled to the letter—as have many other Bible prophecies. We are not casting good sense aside, therefore, when we take seriously God's promise to end all injustice. Indeed, God will achieve that purpose. How?



HEIDE'S QUEST FOR JUSTICE

"I was upset with racism, wars, poverty, and other injustices, and I was looking for a solution," recalls Heide, who lives in the United States. "I tried to work with the civil rights movement and eventually joined a political party, but these seemed unable to effect meaningful change.

"I felt that a more radical change was needed, and the hippie movement seemed promising. Yet, that too proved disappointing. I observed that many hippies were more interested in sex, drugs, and rock and roll than in changing the system—a realization that threw me into a deep depression. Then I met one of Jehovah's Witnesses. She showed me from the Bible the changes that God purposes. For example, she pointed to such scriptures as Revelation 21:3, 4, which says that God will wipe the tears from all faces and eliminate mourning, outcry, and pain—often the results of injustice. 'Could those promises really be true?' I asked myself.

"My doubts cleared up when I read what the Scriptures say about God's power and love and when I experienced the love among Jehovah's Witnesses. I now eagerly await the fulfillment of God's promises."

TRUE JUSTICE

Under God's Government

BIBLE prophecy reveals that the present world is about to be replaced by a new one of God's making. Moreover, that new world will have just one government—God's Kingdom, of which Jesus Christ is King. (Revelation 11:15) How will God's Kingdom eradicate injustice? It will act on two levels.

1. God's Kingdom will eliminate unjust, inept human rulership. Daniel 2:44 states: "In the days of those kings [governments] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom . . . It will crush and put an end to all these [man-made] kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."

2. God's Kingdom will destroy the wicked and preserve the just. Says Psalm 37:10: "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more." Verse 28 reads: "Jehovah is a lover of justice, and he will not leave his loyal ones. To time indefinite they will certainly be guarded."

Those "loyal ones" will experience the fulfillment of a statement Jesus made in his model prayer. He said: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, *also upon earth*." (Matthew 6:10) What is God's will for the earth?

When God's Kingdom Rules the Earth . . .

Corruption and oppression will cease. Concerning Jesus Christ, Hebrews 1:9 says: "You loved righteousness, and you hated lawless-



ness." As a truly just Ruler, Jesus "will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. . . . From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul, and their blood will be precious in his eyes."—Psalm 72:12-14.

All will have an abundance. "The earth itself will certainly give its produce; God, our God, will bless us." (Psalm 67:6) "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow." (Psalm 72:16) Jesus miraculously fed thousands at a time—a foregleam of what he will accomplish through God's Kingdom.—Matthew 14:15-21; 15:32-38.

Justice will not be hampered by human limitations. "There is not a creation that is not manifest to [God's] sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting." (Hebrews 4:13) Concerning Christ, we read: "He will not judge by any mere appearance to his eyes, nor reprove simply according to the thing heard by his ears. And with righteousness he must judge the lowly ones, and with uprightness he must give reproof in behalf of the meek ones of the earth."—Isaiah 11:3, 4.



Under God's Kingdom, all mankind will enjoy an abundance of food, as well as true justice and life without prejudice

Kingdom Rule Is Near!

The deteriorating state of the world testifies to its imminent end. "When the wicked ones sprout as the vegetation and all the practitioners of what is hurtful blossom forth, it is that they may be annihilated forever," says Psalm 92:7. How can you avoid deserving God's disapproval and be among those whom he preserves? Jesus Christ said: "This means

everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

Do you desire that precious knowledge? If so, like Heide, Dorothy, and Firuddin, mentioned earlier, why not discuss the matter with Jehovah's Witnesses? They will be pleased to answer your questions without charge or obligation.



WHEN LIFE ITSELF SEEMS UNFAIR

Emily, who lives in the United States, was diagnosed with leukemia when she was seven years old. While her friends have dealt with the occasional cold or flu, Emily has endured years

of intense medical treatment, including chemotherapy. "Leukemia is scary!" she says.

Even though life has dealt her a hard blow, Emily has not withdrawn into despair. Rather, she awaits the time when, under God's Kingdom, "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isaiah 33:24) "My favorite scripture," says Emily, "is Mark 12:30: 'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.' When I pray to Jehovah, he makes me strong. I thank Jehovah for giving me my family, my congregation, and the hope of everlasting life in the Paradise new world. This hope has helped me very much."

“The Truth Will Set You Free”—How?

MILLIONS of people feel that they are free when, in fact, they are not. Many, for example, are enslaved to superstitions. Others fear the dead, whom they may try to appease with expensive offerings. Still others, unsure of what happens when a person dies, have an inordinate fear of death itself. Can such ones be set free from these mental, emotional, and even financial burdens? Yes! As the words of Jesus Christ quoted above show, the key to freedom is the truth. But what truth? Truth in general or truth of a specific kind?

Jesus did not leave us in doubt. “If you remain in *my word*,” he said, “you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8: 31, 32) Jesus’ “word,” his teachings, are found in the Bible.

When Jesus said “the truth will set you free,” he was primarily referring to being set free from sin and death. Nevertheless, knowing the truth about God’s Word also sets us free from such things as superstition, fear of the dead, and the inordinate fear of dying. How?

1. Freedom from superstition. Many believe that certain objects or certain numbers will bring bad luck. Others refrain from making important decisions unless they first look for a good omen or consult a horoscope or spirit medium.

How Bible truth sets free: In Bible times, some of God’s own people became superstitious, even to the point of worshipping “the god of Good Luck” and “the god of Destiny”!

How did Jehovah God view this? “You kept doing what was bad in my eyes,” he said. (Isaiah 65:11, 12) God felt the same way about people consulting spirit mediums for guidance in life: “Anyone who consults a spirit medium . . . is something detestable to Jehovah.” —Deuteronomy 18:11, 12.

Superstitions and spirit mediums are harmful because they are “machinations of the Devil,” the one whom Jesus called “the father of the lie.” (Ephesians 6:11; John 8:44) If you wanted guidance on an important matter, would you consult a liar? Of course not! You are wise, therefore, to avoid anything connected with “the father of the lie.”

The key to making sound decisions in life is wisdom based on an accurate knowledge of Bible principles and God’s purpose for mankind. “Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment,” says Proverbs 2:6.

2. Freedom from fear of the dead. Many people believe that the “spirits” of dead ancestors can influence the living. These “spirits,” they feel, must be appeased with various sacrifices, lest they become angry. As a result, some people go deeply into debt to pay for sacrifices and lavish ceremonies.

How Bible truth sets free: The Bible tells us the truth about the state of the dead. Jesus, for instance, said that the dead are ‘asleep.’ (John 11:11, 14) What did he mean? The answer is found at Ecclesiastes 9:5: “The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing at all.*” Yes,



Bible truth sets people free from superstition, fear of the dead, and the inordinate fear of dying

the dead are as if in a deep sleep, fully unconscious. In fact, they have ceased to exist and therefore can neither do us good nor cause us harm.

Some people, though, claim to have had contact with the dead. How could this be? Again, the Bible answers. It tells us that early in human history, a number of angels rebelled against God. (2 Peter 2:4) Called demons, these wicked spirits try to deceive mankind. (1 Timothy 4:1) One way they do that is by masquerading as the dead, thus fostering the lie that the dead are alive in another form or realm.

3. Freedom from inordinate fear of death. Death truly is an enemy, just as the Bible says. (1 Corinthians 15:26) Hence, we rightly fear

death and try to put it off. Still, we need not have undue fear of death.

How Bible truth sets free: Besides revealing the truth about the state of the dead, the Bible also shows that God has purposed to restore the dead to life by means of a resurrection. “The hour is coming,” said Jesus, “in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his [Christ’s] voice and come out.”—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

In what form will they “come out”? Jesus gave us a preview when he resurrected a number of people from the dead. In each case, the person returned in human form—as his or her previous self. (Mark 5:35-42; Luke 7:11-17; John 11:43, 44) This fact harmonizes with the word “resurrection,” which means “standing up.” When speaking to his aged servant Daniel, God said: “You will rest [or sleep in death], but you will *stand up* for your lot at the end of the days.” (Daniel 12:13) How those words must have comforted Daniel, enabling him to face death with courage and dignity!

Jesus’ commission, in part, was “to preach a release to the captives”—those in bondage to false beliefs. (Luke 4:18) Because his teachings are found in the Bible, they continue to liberate people every day. We sincerely hope that Bible truth will bring you lasting freedom.

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

How does Bible truth set us free from

- **superstition?—Isaiah 8:19, 20; 65:11, 12.**
- **fear of the dead?—Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 11:11, 14.**
- **fear of death?—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.**



Proboscis monkeys have a distinct nose and potbelly

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“What a Nose!”

THAT reaction is common when people first see a male proboscis monkey with his pendulous, fleshy nose.* In some males, this appendage can grow to be almost seven inches (18 cm) long—about one quarter the animal’s body length. Because the proboscis droops over the male’s mouth and chin, he has to push it aside when he eats! If your nose were similarly proportioned, it would hang almost halfway down your chest.

Of what benefit is this nose to the male proboscis monkey?# Theories vary. Perhaps his nose radiates excess body heat or adds resonance to his voice. Or it may serve as a visual warning to other males. Indeed, the dominant male’s nose swells and turns red when he becomes angry or gets excited. Another possibility is that the nose has a role in sexual attraction, setting the female heart aflutter! Most likely, though, the proboscis fulfills more than one function, perhaps including some we know little or nothing about.

Bulging Bellies

Proboscis monkeys—male and female—also have a distinct potbelly. In fact, their stomach contents may amount to a quarter of their body weight. As a result, both males and females tend to look permanently pregnant! Why the bulging belly?

The proboscis monkey’s stomach, like that of a cow, is filled with a soupy mixture of vegetation and bacteria. The bacteria ferment the food and break down cellulose, as well as

* The island of Borneo is home to the proboscis monkey. Local people call the animal *orang belanda*, or “Dutchman.”

Females also have an enlarged nose, although it is not as big as that of the male.

certain plant toxins that would kill other animals. Thanks to their amazing digestive system, proboscis monkeys are able to thrive on leaves and the nonsweet fruits and seeds of legumes, palms, and other plants—foods on which primates with different stomachs could not survive.

The proboscis monkey's strong digestive system, however, has a downside. The animal has to abstain from sugary fruits, which ferment rapidly. Such sweet fruits would make the monkey's belly bloat, perhaps even to the point of causing a painful death.

Because of their cellulose-rich diet and complex stomach, proboscis monkeys need lots of time to digest their meals. So, after a hearty breakfast, they take a siesta—sometimes for many hours—before eating again.

A Social Animal

Whether eating or resting, proboscis monkeys are rarely alone. Dominant males preside over harems of up to eight females and their offspring. Males born into the group are evicted when they are old enough to care for themselves. These juveniles team up with other young males, forming groups that also have one or two larger males. To the untrained eye, such groups may appear to be a harem.

Proboscis monkeys have an unusual social trait—harems often intermingle, especially

in the evenings when they gather at rivers. At such times, a male will put on a show of strength if he feels that another male is taking an interest in his females. Usually the protective male—who may weigh about 45 pounds (20 kg)—will lean forward on all fours with his mouth wide open and stare at his rival. “If that does not have the desired effect,” says the book *Proboscis Monkeys of Borneo*, “the male then suddenly and unpredictably leaps through the trees, often with a loud roar, and frequently landing on dead branches which break with a sharp crack, adding to the general uproar.” Fights do occur, but they appear to be rare.

“Not only are proboscis monkeys unusual to look at; they also make the most bizarre range of noises,” says the book quoted above. The animals grunt, honk, roar, and squeal, especially in the evening, when they gather near rivers. In the midst of this cacophony, mothers may be quietly preoccupied with feeding and grooming their bluish-faced infants. Finally, by the time dusk envelops the forest, the animals will have found comfortable spots in trees—usually tall trees by a river—where they settle down to sleep.

Monkeys With Webbed Feet!

Besides their nose, proboscis monkeys have another oddity—partially webbed feet. The webbing enables the animals not only to



The male's nose droops over his mouth. He has to push it aside when he eats



Whether eating or resting, proboscis monkeys are rarely alone

© Peter Lilja/age fotostock

swim well but also to walk safely on mangrove mud. Of course, thinking of tropical mangroves, you would likely also think of crocodiles. Crocodiles abound in the proboscis monkey's domain. How do these aquatic monkeys avoid getting eaten?

One strategy they employ is to slip silently into a river and dog-paddle across single file, barely raising a ripple. When the river is narrow, however, they have been seen to use a different strategy. They climb high up in a tree, take a running leap from a branch, perhaps 30 feet (9 m) above the water, belly flop into the river, and then swim as fast as they can across the remaining stretch of water. Even mothers carrying infants use this tactic. Sometimes an entire troop will plunge into the water and make a mad dash for the other side! Their greatest enemy, however, is not the crocodile.

An Endangered Species

Officially listed as endangered, proboscis monkeys may number just a few thousand in their native habitat, and their numbers continue to decline—largely because of humans. The man-made causes include fire, logging,

unmanaged tourism, and the clearing of forests for oil-palm plantations. Another factor is hunting. Some people kill proboscis monkeys simply for sport. Others kill them for food or for use in traditional medicine. Because the animals often sleep conspicuously in trees next to rivers, they are especially vulnerable. Indeed, in one area frequented by hunters in speedboats, the number of monkeys fell by 50 percent in five years!

Conservationists are trying to raise awareness of the animals' plight, and proboscis monkeys are protected by law in Borneo. But will these measures suffice? Time will tell. If this creature were to disappear from the wild, what a tragedy that would be, for the proboscis monkey is a study in oddities! What is more, the animal tends to fare badly in captivity.

The proboscis monkey is, of course, just one of many creatures whose future looks grim. Countless other species have already vanished. On the positive side, God has purposed to take full control of the earth, remove the wicked, and teach his people the right way to manage their terrestrial home. (Proverbs 2: 21, 22) "They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain," Jehovah God promises, "because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isaiah 11:9.

ANSWERS TO PAGES 30 AND 31
1. Tent covering the Ark. **2.** Harp. **3.** Trumpet.
4. 91,000. **5.** C.



“I Shall Make a Great Nation Out of You”

In this eight-part series, “Awake!” will discuss an outstanding feature of the Bible—its prophecies, or predictions. The articles will help you to answer these questions: Are Bible prophecies merely the work of clever humans? Do these predictions bear the hallmark of divine inspiration? We invite you to weigh the evidence.

DOUBT and skepticism—these attitudes mark our times and reflect the view that some people have of the Bible. Sadly, many have never taken the time to make an honest examination of it. They base their opinion largely on hearsay. We hope you feel differently. If so, please join us on a journey back through time that will help to shed light on facts that testify to the Bible’s authenticity.

Our journey begins with a man who is still honored by Christians, Jews, and Muslims. He was a Hebrew and lived from 2188 to 1843 B.C.E.* His name was Abraham.#

Abraham was the focus of some of the earliest prophecies recorded in the Bible—prophecies that even involve us today. (See the box “A Blessing for ‘All Nations.’”) According to the Bible book of Genesis, these predictions include the following: **(1)** Abraham’s

offspring would become a mighty nation. **(2)** In the process of becoming such, they would be enslaved in a foreign land. **(3)** They would be delivered and would take possession of the land of Canaan. Let us now consider these statements in more detail.

Three Outstanding Prophecies

Prophecy 1: “I shall make a great nation out of you [Abraham].”—Genesis 12:2.

Fulfillment: Abraham’s descendants through Isaac and Jacob (also called Israel) became the ancient nation of Israel—a sovereign state with its own kings.

What history reveals:

● The Bible sets out in some detail Abraham’s family tree, including his descendants through Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s 12 sons. The genealogy also includes the

* “B.C.E.” means “Before the Common Era.”

Abraham was first named Abram.

many kings who ruled in Israel or Judah. Of those rulers, 17 are mentioned in independent, non-Biblical sources, harmonizing with the Bible record of how Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob became a nation.*

Prophecy 2: *"Your [Abraham's] seed will become an alien resident in a land not theirs, and they will have to serve them . . . But in the fourth generation they will return here."*
—Genesis 15:13, 16.

Fulfillment: Because of a famine in Canaan, four generations of Abraham's descendants lived in Egypt, first as aliens but later as slaves assigned to make bricks out of clay and

* See 1 Chronicles 1:27-34; 2:1-15; 3:1-24. During the reign of Rehoboam, son of King Solomon, the nation of Israel split into a northern kingdom and a southern kingdom. Thereafter, two kings ruled in Israel simultaneously.—1 Kings 12:1-24.

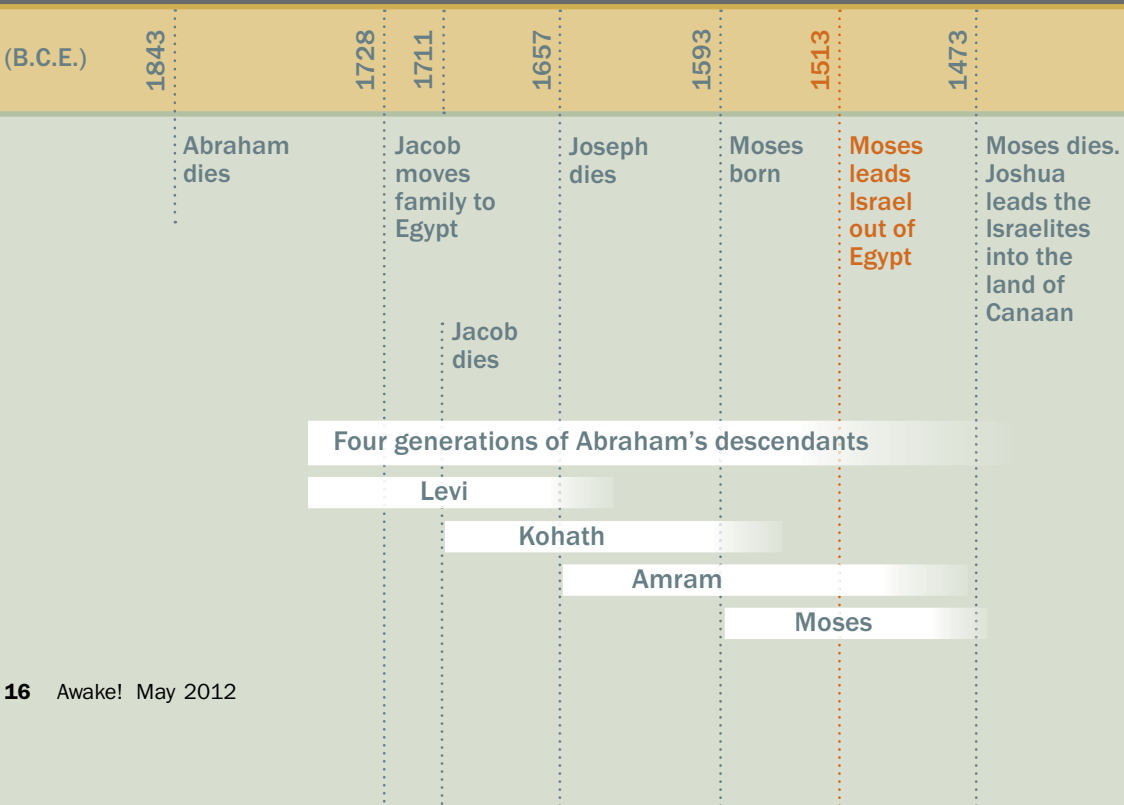
straw. Taking into account just one family line—that of Abraham's great-grandson Levi, who moved to Egypt with his aged father—the four generations are (1) Levi, (2) his son Kohath, (3) his grandson Amram, and (4) his great-grandson Moses. (Exodus 6:16, 18, 20) In the year 1513 B.C.E., Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt.—See the time line below and the box "Precise Timekeeping."

What history reveals:

● According to James K. Hoffmeier, professor of Old Testament and Near Eastern Archaeology, both Egyptian writings and archaeological evidence indicate that Semites (such as the ancient Hebrews) were allowed to enter Egypt with their herds during times of famine. But did the Israelites become slaves there, assigned to make bricks?

● Although Egyptian records do not specifically mention the Israelites, Egyptian

TIME LINE OF ABRAHAM'S SEED



tomb paintings and scrolls confirm that the Egyptians used foreigners to make bricks out of mud and straw. In harmony with the Bible, Egyptian records also show that taskmasters kept written quotas for brick production. (Exodus 5:14, 19) “Egyptian sources,” says Hoffmeier, “confirm that forced labor was imposed on foreigners . . . during the general period when the oppression of the Israelites occurred. In sum, the entry of the ancient Hebrews into Egypt . . . during famine and their subsequent enslavement seems authentic.”

Prophecy 3: *“I will give to . . . your seed . . . the entire land of Canaan.”—Genesis 17:8.*

Fulfillment: Although Moses led the fledgling nation of Israel out of Egypt, Joshua, the son of Nun, led the people into the land of Canaan in 1473 B.C.E.

A BLESSING FOR “ALL NATIONS”

God promised that people of “*all nations*” would bless themselves by means of Abraham’s seed. (Genesis 22:18) The primary reason God formed Abraham’s offspring into a nation was to produce the Messiah, who would give his life *for all mankind*.^{*} Therefore, God’s promise to Abraham involves you! John 3:16 says: “God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.”

^{*} Prophecies specifically relating to the identity of the Messiah will be considered in Parts 3 and 4 of this series.

AND ISRAEL’S EXODUS

Time of Judges	1117	1107	1070	1034
		Samuel anoints Saul as Israel’s first king		Solomon begins temple construction
		David born	David becomes king of Israel	



This victory stela, with the inscription “House of David,” is one of the sources that mention kings who descended from Abraham and ruled in Israel or Judah

PRECISE TIMEKEEPING

An example of the value of the Bible’s precise timekeeping is demonstrated at 1 Kings 6:1, which points to the time when King Solomon commenced work on the temple in Jerusalem. We read: *“It came about in the four hundred and eightieth year [479 full years] after the sons of Israel came out from the land of*

Egypt, in the fourth year [of Solomon’s reign], in the month of Ziv, that is, the second month, after Solomon became king over Israel, that he proceeded to build the house to Jehovah.”

Bible chronology places the fourth year of Solomon’s reign at 1034 B.C.E. Counting back from that date 479 full years brings us to 1513 B.C.E. as the year of Israel’s Exodus.

What history reveals:

- While archaeologists may differ on dates, “we should speak of an Israelite entry into Canaan, and settlement,” writes K. A. Kitchen, professor emeritus of Egyptology.

- The Bible states that Joshua “burned [the Canaanite city of] Hazor in the fire.” (Joshua 11:10, 11) In the ruins of the city, archaeologists excavated three Canaanite temples that had been completely destroyed. They also found evidence that the city was burned in the 1400’s B.C.E. These facts harmonize with the Bible.

- Another Canaanite city of interest is Gibeon, located about six miles (9.6 km) from Jerusalem. Archaeologists identified the city when they discovered about 30 jar handles engraved with the city’s name. The ancient Gibeonites, unlike the inhabitants of Hazor, made peace with Joshua. He, in turn, put them to work as “drawers of water.” (Joshua 9:3-7, 23) Why this assignment? The descriptions found at 2 Samuel 2:13 and Jer-

emiah 41:12 show that Gibeon was blessed with plenty of water. Thus, in harmony with the Bible account, *Archaeological Study Bible, New International Version* states: “The most conspicuous feature of Gibeon is in fact its abundant water supply: one major and seven minor springs.”

- Literally dozens of people mentioned in the Bible have been corroborated by independent sources. This list, as stated earlier, includes the names of 17 kings who descended from Abraham and ruled in Israel or Judah. Among them are Ahab, Ahaz, David, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Uzziah. Clearly, the presence of royal dynasties argues powerfully that a nation called Israel both entered the land of Canaan and occupied it.

- In 1896, researchers found the Merneptah Stele in Thebes, Egypt. This relief boasts of Pharaoh Merneptah’s military campaign into Canaan about 1210 B.C.E. The relief provides the first known non-Biblical reference to Israel, further supporting the existence of this nation.

The Advantage of Specifics

As we have seen, the Bible is rich in specific details about people, places, and events. Those specifics enable us to cross-check the Bible against non-Biblical sources, thus helping us to confirm the fulfillment of Bible prophecies. In regard to Abraham and his seed, the facts show us that God’s promises were fulfilled—Abraham’s seed did become a nation, they were enslaved in Egypt, and they later occupied the land of Canaan. All this calls to mind the words of the Bible writer Peter, who humbly acknowledged: “Prophecy was at no time brought by man’s will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit.”—2 Peter 1:21.

In the centuries that followed Israel’s occupation of Canaan, the nation’s history took a drastic turn, leading to tragic consequences. These consequences too were foretold by Bible writers, as our next issue will show.

ABRAHAM—A HISTORICAL PERSON

- Clay tablets from the early second millennium B.C.E. list cities that match the names of Abraham’s relatives. These cities include Peleg, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Haran.—Genesis 11:17-32.

- At Genesis 11:31, we read that Abraham and his family emigrated from “Ur of the Chaldeans.” The ruins of this city were discovered in southeastern Iraq. The Bible also states that Abraham’s father, Terah, died in the city of Haran, which probably now lies in Turkey, and that Abraham’s wife, Sarah, died in Hebron, one of the oldest still-inhabited cities of the Middle East.—Genesis 11:32; 23:2.

Why don't my parents understand?



CONSIDER THIS IMAGINARY SITUATION.

It's six o'clock on a Friday night, and 17-year-old Jim is dashing toward the front door. **"See you later!"** he calls out to his parents, hoping they'll forget to ask the inevitable question.

He should have known better.

"What time will you be back, Jimmy?" his mom asks.

Jim stops in his tracks. **"Um . . . uh . . .,"** he stammers, **"no need to wait up for me, OK?"** Jim swings open the door and nearly makes his escape. But then his dad calls out, **"Hold it, James!"**

Again, Jim freezes, and then he hears his dad's stern voice: **"You know the rule. Ten o'clock sharp—and no exceptions!"**

"Aw, Dad," Jim groans as he turns toward his father, **"do you know how embarrassing it is to tell my friends that I have to be home so early?"**

Dad shows no mercy. **"Ten o'clock sharp,"** he repeats, **"and no exceptions!"**

PERHAPS you've been in a similar plight. Whether the issue was your curfew, your music, your friends, or your clothes, your parents laid down the law, and they just wouldn't budge. For example:

"After he married my mom, my stepdad cracked down on every kind of music I enjoyed. I ended up having to throw out all my CDs!"
—Brandon.*

* Some names in this article have been changed.

COMMUNICATION TIPS

“Listening will get you a lot further than yelling. If you listen to your parents and try to understand their viewpoint, they’ll likely do the same for you.”—Rianne.

Read Philippians 2:3, 4.

“Don’t talk back! I did that repeatedly until I finally realized that an argument (and punishment) could have been avoided if I had just controlled my tongue!”—Danielle.

Read Proverbs 17:27; 21:23.

“Wait until things are calm, when you know that your parents will be willing to listen.”—Collette.

Read Proverbs 25:11.

“Your parents need to know that you respect them and that you’re really listening to what they’re saying. So before you tell them how you feel, assure them that you heard what they said and that you understand it.”—Emily.

Read Proverbs 23:22;

James 1:19.

“My mom criticizes me for not having friends. But then when I ask her if I can hang out with someone, she says no because she doesn’t know that person. It’s so frustrating!”—Carol.

“My dad and stepmom won’t let me wear a T-shirt unless it’s a size too big. And my dad insists that shorts are too short if they’re above the knee!”—Serena.

What can you do if you and your parents don’t see eye to eye? Could you discuss the issue with them? “My parents usually don’t want to listen,” says Joanne, 17. Amy, 15, says, “When I feel that my parents don’t understand me, I just keep my mouth shut.”

But don’t give up so quickly! Your parents may be more willing to listen than you think.

Consider: Even God listens when humans present their case to him. For example, Jehovah listened to Moses when he spoke in behalf of the wayward Israelites.—Exodus 32:7-14; Deuteronomy 9:14, 19.

You may feel that your parents aren’t as reasonable as God. And admittedly there’s a big difference between Moses’ talking to Jehovah about the fate of an entire nation and your talking to Dad or Mom about staying out a little late. Still, there’s a principle in common:

If you have a legitimate point to make, people in authority—in this case, your parents—might be willing to hear you out.

The secret to success is *how you present your case!* The following steps will help you to do so more effectively:

1. Identify the problem. Below, write the issue that you and your parents can’t seem to agree on.

.....

FACT OF LIFE

Not *all* disagreements need to be discussed. In some cases, you can “have your say in your heart . . . and keep silent.” (Psalm 4:4) A young girl named Beatrice says: “Sometimes if I think about how little the problem will matter tomorrow, it doesn’t seem like a big deal anymore. I can just let it go.”

2. Identify the feeling. Below, write a word that describes how your parents' stand on the issue makes you feel—whether hurt, sad, embarrassed, distrusted, or other. (Example: In the scenario that opened this article, Jim indicates that his parents' strict curfew leaves him feeling **embarrassed** in front of his friends.)

.....

3. Think like a parent. Imagine that you have a teenager who is facing the same issue that you named in Step 1. Assuming the role of a parent, what would be your biggest concern, and why? (Example: In the opening scenario, Jim's parents might feel **fear** for Jim's safety.)

.....

.....

4. Reassess the issue. Answer the following questions:

What merit can you see in your parents' point of view?

.....

What can you do to address their concerns?

.....

5. Discuss the matter with your parents and brainstorm solutions. By applying the steps outlined above—and considering the suggestions in the box “Communication Tips”—you might find that you can communicate with your parents on a more mature level. Kellie enjoys that kind of relationship with her dad and mom. “Arguing gets you nowhere, plus you’re guaranteed to lose,” she says. “My secret is to talk it out with my parents. We almost always meet each other in the middle so that all of us are satisfied.”

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

WHY NOT ASK YOUR PARENTS?

How did you resolve conflicts with *your* parents? If you could go back in time, would you do anything different? If so, what?

WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY



Wyndia—*I try to think before I speak. I consider my parents' viewpoint, and I pray before I say anything. If I know that what I'm about to say will start a fight, I keep quiet until I can express myself without arguing.*



Ross—*When I feel the pressure building, I try to tell myself that I could ruin the rest of my day over an argument that didn't really need to happen. As a result, I find that I'm less likely to get angry now compared to when I was younger.*



Ramona—*I find that it's always smart to listen to my parents' viewpoint. Perhaps their opinion isn't as far away from mine after all, and the disagreement might not be as big as I expected.*

The Hydrophilic Wing Cover of the Namib Beetle



Water droplets form and run into the beetle's mouth



● Some 900 million people worldwide have no access to safe drinking water. In many areas, it is women and children who trek long distances to find water and then carry it back to their homes. “I think it’s terrible that the poor have to spend hours a day walking just to obtain a basic necessity,” says Shreerang Chhatre, an engineer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. To provide relief, Chhatre and his colleagues are exploring the science of fog harvesting, and for inspiration they are looking to the Namib beetle.

Consider: Each morning, a fog drifts through Africa’s Namib desert. The Namib beetle takes advantage of this brief opportunity and faces the wind at just the right angle.*

* Other species of beetles have been observed collecting water in a similar fashion.

Bumps on the wing covers are composed of a hydrophilic substance that attracts moisture. The moisture builds up, forming ever larger droplets. Gravity then takes over, and aided by water-repellent troughs between the bumps, the droplets run down the wing covers and into the beetle’s mouth.

Chhatre and his associates want to use a similar principle to harvest drinking water for humans. Of course, humans need more water to survive than does the Namib beetle. And financing such an endeavor is a daunting challenge. For now, fog harvesting for humans remains “a work in progress,” Chhatre says.

What do you think? Did the hydrophilic wing cover of the Namib beetle come about by evolution? Or was it designed?



Photo: Chris Mattison
Photography/photographersdirect.com



1,000

A MILESTONE IN MALAWI 1,000 Kingdom Halls!

“I NEVER thought it would be possible in Malawi,” exclaimed Augustine. He was referring to the construction of large numbers of Kingdom Halls, as Jehovah’s Witnesses call their places of worship. In 1993, the then 30,000 Witnesses in Malawi, a small country in southeastern Africa, had no suitable places in which to worship and study the Bible.

Now, however, the situation is very different. In Blantyre in September 2010, the Witnesses in Malawi completed their thousandth Kingdom Hall!* Why did the Witnesses grow to 30,000 before they started to build places for worship? And once they started, how were they able to erect 1,000 halls in a relatively short period in a land with limited resources? Finally, what effect has this amazing construction program had on the Witnesses and their neighbors?

Testing Times

In the early 1900’s, Jehovah’s Witnesses, then known as Bible Students, began teaching Bible truth in Malawi. By 1967, the number of Witnesses had grown to about 17,000. Like first-century Christians, they were known for being law-abiding and respectful of government officials. Also like the early Christians, they remained resolutely neutral with regard to political affairs.—John 18:36; Acts 5:29.

Sadly, by the mid-1960’s, their Bible-based

stand had brought the Witnesses into conflict with the government, and in 1967, they were banned. Before long, many were arbitrarily dismissed from their places of employment, and lawless elements confiscated or destroyed their properties. Because of intense persecution and the fear of possible genocide, thousands of Witnesses fled to neighboring Mozambique and Zambia.

Eventually, though, things began to improve for Jehovah’s Witnesses in Malawi, most of whom were repatriated by the early 1990’s. How they rejoiced when on August 12, 1993, the 26-year-long ban on their activity was lifted! However, they faced a new dilemma. Numbering more than 30,000 in 583 congregations, they had no suitable places to meet for worship! What should they do?

Love in Action!

For the first six years after the ban, local Witnesses did commendable work building Kingdom Halls with their limited finances. But it was not an easy task because the annual increase in Witnesses outpaced the growth in the number of halls. The solution? The application of the Bible principle found at 2 Corinthians 8:14. “By means of an equalizing,” the financial surplus in other countries “offset [the] deficiency” in lands such as Malawi. To that end, in 1999 the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses introduced a special program to help build places of worship in lands

* The number of Kingdom Halls has now exceeded 1,030.



Before the Kingdom Hall construction program began, meeting places were often no more than grass-covered shelters

Now congregations meet in Kingdom Halls such as this one ▶



with limited resources. With this loving assistance, the Witnesses in Malawi greatly accelerated their Kingdom Hall construction program.*

Previously, congregations in Malawi held Christian meetings in school classrooms, in temporary shelters, or even under trees. Now, the 1,230 congregations are able to meet for worship and Bible instruction in dignified buildings dedicated to the advancement of true worship. As you can imagine, the more than 75,000 Witnesses in Malawi deeply appreciate the support of their spiritual brothers and sisters around the world.

Another factor that helped the Witnesses to build so many places of worship in such a short time was their desire for modest, functional halls. They did not want ostentatious structures. Rather, they wanted simple, dignified buildings that bring honor to God and provide a comfortable environment for Bible discussion and study.

Local Communities Benefit

Previously, Jehovah's Witnesses were ridiculed in Malawi as the religion without places of worship. As a result, some Witnesses were

at times embarrassed to invite interested ones to the meetings. So, imagine how they felt when they had their own attractive Kingdom Hall. Now they were delighted to invite neighbors and interested people to Christian meetings. Indeed, in one area, the local congregation was thrilled to see 698 people attend a meeting at a newly built Kingdom Hall!

Many Witnesses and others commented that they never thought they would have such a beautiful and sturdy hall in their area. Augustine, mentioned at the outset, can remember one congregation that held its meetings under a tree. "It was very pleasant in the dry season," says Augustine. "But in the wet season—problems!" If you have ever been caught in a tropical downpour, you know what problems Augustine is referring to.

Augustine recalls one of his visits to the Chimwanje Congregation. "We held the meeting in a small shelter made of wooden poles with a grass roof," he explains. "We did not realize, though, that the grass roof had become the home of a large, poisonous spider. Suddenly, in the middle of my talk, the creature dropped down and landed next to my foot! I heard a startled member of the audience shout, 'Crush it, Augustine, crush it!' Needless to say, I did. As you can see, I am

* Since 1999, worldwide, Jehovah's Witnesses have built 23,786 Kingdom Halls in 151 lands that have limited resources.

still alive.” Now that the congregation has a new Kingdom Hall, they no longer have such disturbances.

“A Jewel in the Community”

The exciting Kingdom Hall construction program has won Jehovah’s Witnesses the admiration and respect of many communities and local chiefs, as the following comments show:

✓ “The construction of a new place of worship, along with the love and unity shown by Jehovah’s Witnesses, is a jewel in the community, worthy of imitation by other churches.”—The local chief in Chabwenzi.

✓ “What I admire most about the Witnesses is their unity. We started building our church ten years ago, but it is still under construction—and its completion is nowhere in sight. I would like to thank you for erecting such a beautiful facility in our area.”—The village headman in Chigwenembe.

✓ “It’s amazing to see the way you work. You are so quick and yet so neat! You must be very united.”—The local chief in Chiuzira.

The Kingdom Hall construction program has been so noteworthy that it has even come to the attention of the editors of the *Chichewa/Chinyanja–English Dictionary*, which states regarding the Witnesses: “Jehovah’s Witnesses have built many [Kingdom Halls].”

“This Kingdom Hall is a Miracle”

On January 30, 2011, the Manyowe Congregation in Blantyre, mentioned earlier, dedicated their new Kingdom Hall—the thousandth to be built in Malawi. “To have this Kingdom Hall is a miracle,” said one member of the congregation. “It is like a dream come true.”

“I did not miss a single day of the construction project,” recounts a young girl in the Manyowe Congregation. “I am very happy I could have a share in building a suitable place of worship in our territory.”

“We had difficulty getting approval from local authorities to build our Kingdom Hall,” explained one of the congregation elders. “Several times, city officials refused to sign the needed permits. However, Mrs. Liness Chikaoneka, the local headwoman, worked very hard to convince officials to sign the permits.”

One day, Mrs. Chikaoneka accompanied an elder to get a permit signed. “I want the Witnesses to build their Kingdom Hall in my village,” she told the official. “They are good people. I have never had to solve any difficulties involving them in my traditional court.” The official duly signed the papers.

Mrs. Chikaoneka was elated when the Kingdom Hall was dedicated. “I am very happy and proud,” she said, “to have this beautiful building in my village!”

Throughout Malawi, Jehovah’s Witnesses and their neighbors continue to express appreciation for the Kingdom Hall construction program. As a result of their exemplary spirit of self-sacrifice and hard work, in this country Jehovah’s Witnesses no longer have a huge backlog of places where Kingdom Halls are needed, as they did in 1993. True, they will have an ongoing need for more Kingdom Halls as people respond to the “good news of [God’s] kingdom” and as new congregations are formed. (Matthew 24:14) Hence, the Witnesses deeply appreciate the kind support and generous donations of their fellow Witnesses throughout the world.*

But, most of all, the Witnesses express gratitude to their God, Jehovah. Their sentiments are similar to those of the psalmist, who said: “All the nations whom you have made will themselves come, and they will bow down before you, O Jehovah, and will give glory to your name. For you are great and are doing wondrous things.”—Psalm 86:9, 10.

* Worldwide, the work of Jehovah’s Witnesses is supported entirely by voluntary contributions.

CYBERATTACK!



Criminal hackers have assembled vast armies of hijacked computers

IMAGINE a platoon of expert computer criminals using the Internet to operate networks of hijacked computers. This army of computers, known as botnets (robot networks), unleashes a barrage of malicious computer code targeting a specific nation. Within minutes, that nation's military, financial, and commercial Web sites crash. ATMs and phone networks fail. Airplanes are grounded, and computer and safety systems at a nuclear power plant are disrupted. How would people react? What would they do? What would *you* do?

Perhaps the above scenario seems far-fetched. But according to Richard A. Clarke, the former U.S. National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counterterrorism, something similar could happen in real life. In fact, there have already been cyberattacks.* Perhaps you have even been a victim.

Why would anyone want to launch a cyberattack? How are cyberattacks carried

out? And since cybercrime against individuals is common, how can you protect yourself online?

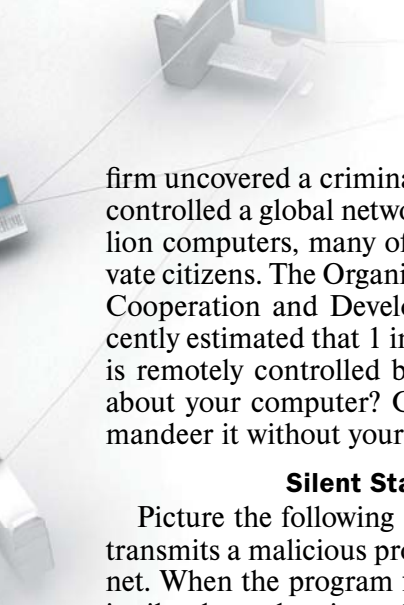
The Digital Battlefield

People launch cyberattacks for various reasons. Terrorists or governments, for instance, may try to infiltrate the computer networks of their enemies to steal secrets or to sabotage the equipment that those computer networks control. In 2010, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense William J. Lynn III admitted that foreign “adversaries” had repeatedly attacked and penetrated classified U.S. computer networks and stolen “thousands of files . . . including weapons blueprints, operational plans, and surveillance data.”—See the box “Some Recent Cyberattacks.”

Computer criminals use similar methods to steal intellectual property or financial information from corporate networks and personal computers. Criminals reportedly rake in billions of dollars each year by means of fraudulent network transactions.

Criminal hackers have assembled vast armies of hijacked computers to carry out their online attacks. In 2009, an Internet security

* Cyberattacks are deliberate attempts to alter, disrupt, or destroy computer systems or networks or the information or programs that they store or transmit.—U.S. National Research Council.



firm uncovered a criminal gang that remotely controlled a global network of nearly two million computers, many of them owned by private citizens. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently estimated that 1 in 3 online computers is remotely controlled by an intruder. What about your computer? Could someone commandeer it without your knowledge?

Silent Stalkers

Picture the following scenario. A criminal transmits a malicious program over the Internet. When the program finds your computer, it silently probes its online defenses. When it finds an unguarded door, it burrows deep into your computer and rummages around for useful information.* The malicious program may then change or delete your computer files, e-mail itself to other computers,

According to the OECD, 1 in 3 online computers is remotely controlled by an intruder

or send passwords, financial details, or other confidential information back to the intruder.

Computer criminals could even trick you into infecting your computer yourself! How? You may infect your own computer by opening an innocent-looking e-mail attachment, clicking on a Web page link, downloading and installing a free computer program, plugging an infected memory device into your computer, or simply visiting a questionable Web site. Each of these actions can install malicious software on your computer and bring it under the control of a remote intruder.

How can you know if your computer has been infected? It can be very difficult to de-

tect. Your computer or Internet connection may seem very slow, your applications may not run, pop-up boxes may prompt you to install certain programs, or your computer may operate in an unusual way. If you note any of these symptoms, have a reputable technician check your computer.

‘Consider Your Steps’

As nations and individuals become more reliant on computer technology, cyberattacks will likely become more common.

SOME RECENT CYBERATTACKS


2003: The Slammer computer worm spread rapidly through the Internet, infecting approximately 75,000 computers in ten minutes.* Regular Internet traffic slowed to a crawl, Web sites crashed, ATMs failed, airline flights were grounded, and computer and safety systems at a nuclear power plant were disrupted.

2007: A series of cyberattacks targeted Estonia, affecting the government, the media, and banks. Most of the attacks stemmed from hijacked computer networks (botnets), which caused more than one million computers in 75 countries to swamp their targets with bogus requests for information.

2010: The highly sophisticated Stuxnet computer worm infected industrial-control systems at a nuclear plant in Iran.

* Computer worms are malicious programs that automatically copy themselves from computer to computer via the Internet. Like other types of malicious software, computer worms are usually assigned individual names, such as Slammer.

* In 2011, hackers could reportedly target over 45,000 *known* computer weaknesses. Exploiting those weaknesses, they usually try to install malicious software (malware) on people's computers without their knowledge.



***Do what you can to protect
your online security***

Accordingly, many nations are scrambling to beef up their digital defenses, and some are conducting large-scale exercises to test the resilience of their computer networks to attack. Still, “given enough time, motivation and funding,” admits Steven Chabinsky, a senior U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation computer security expert, “a determined adversary will always—always—be able to penetrate a targeted system.”

What can you do to protect yourself online? While complete online security may not be possible, you can take practical steps to make your computer more secure. (See the box “Protect Yourself!”) The Bible states: “The shrewd one considers his steps.” (Proverbs 14:15) Surely wise advice when you go online!

PROTECT YOURSELF!

- 1.** Install antivirus, spyware-detection, and firewall software on your computer. Keep that software and your operating system updated with all security updates.
- 2.** Think before you click on links or open attachments in e-mails or instant messages—even from friends. Be especially cautious if the mail is unsolicited and asks for personal information or passwords.
- 3.** Never copy or run software from unknown sources.
- 4.** Use passwords that have at least eight characters and include numbers and symbols, and change them regularly. Use different passwords for different accounts.
- 5.** Do business online only with reputable companies that use secure connections.*
- 6.** Do not give out confidential information about yourself or your accounts when using unsecured Wi-Fi connections, such as in public places.
- 7.** Switch your computer off when it is not in use.
- 8.** Regularly back up your files, and store copies securely.

* Secure Web pages on Web browsers display a lock symbol and “https://” in the address bar. The “s” means secure.

Ready for Apocalypse?

“A Legal Manual for an Apocalyptic New York” is the title of a *New York Times* article. It reports the publication of an official manual to help judges and lawyers deal with thorny legal questions that could potentially be raised by “another terrorist attack, a major radiological or chemical contamination or a widespread epidemic.” The manual, published by the New York State court system and the state bar association, sets out for ready reference how existing law regulates such matters as quarantine, mass evacuation, search without warrant, slaughter of infected animals, and suspension of law.

Inside Old Pillows

Clean pillow cases may be “wrapping up something really nasty,” says Art Tucker, principal clinical scientist at St. Barts Hospital, London. *The Times* of London, which reported on his research, states that after two years’ use, more than one third of a pillow’s weight is “made up of living and dead dust mites, dust mite faeces, dead skin and bacteria.” Pillows are good incubators for allergens, germs, and mites. A solution? “Mites . . . dry out and die when exposed to sunlight,” says *The Times*, “meaning the old fashioned practice of airing bedding helps control mites.” Soaps do not kill mites, but washing pillows at more than 60 degrees Celsius [140 degrees Fahrenheit] will do so, and will rinse most of them out.



New York City enacted legislation that prohibits smoking on beaches, in parks, and in pedestrian plazas. Offenders will be subject to a fine of \$50 per violation. Officials hope that the ban will be “self-enforcing.”—*THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*, U.S.A.

“Selective abortion of girls [girl babies], especially for pregnancies after a firstborn girl, has increased substantially in India.” In families that already had a firstborn girl, the number of girls born per 1,000 boys fell from 906 in 1990 to 836 in 2005.
—*THE LANCET*, BRITAIN.

The World Health Organization has classified radio-frequency electromagnetic fields, “such as those emitted by wireless communication devices,” as **“possibly carcinogenic to humans.”**—INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH ON CANCER, FRANCE.

The United Nations has celebrated the defeat of rinderpest, or cattle plague. This is “the first animal disease to be eliminated from its natural setting thanks to human efforts . . . and only the second disease of any kind to be eradicated, after smallpox in humans.”
—FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS, ITALY.

What Is Missing From This Picture?

Read 1 Chronicles 16:1, 2, 4-10. Now look at the picture. What features are missing? Write your answers on the lines below. Connect the dots to complete the picture, then color in the drawing.

1.....

2.....

3.....

● "FOR FAMILY REVIEW" answers on page 14

FOR DISCUSSION: Does Jehovah God appreciate it when music and singing are part of our worship? Why do you so answer? **CLUE:** Read 2 Chronicles 5:13, 14; Ephesians 5:19. Can you name other accounts in the Bible where singing was used in true worship? **CLUE:** Read Exodus 15:1-20; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25. What attitude can help you sing to Jehovah even if you are shy or feel that others sing better than you do? **CLUE:** Read Psalm 33:1-3.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: Have each family member choose a favorite song of praise to Jehovah. As a family, practice singing those songs until you become familiar with them.



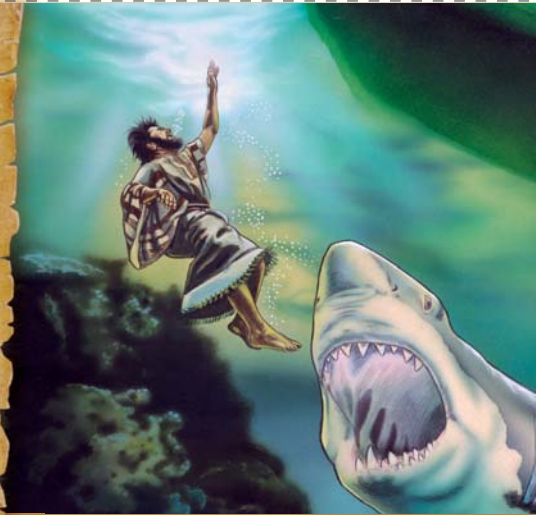
To print out additional copies of "For Family Review," go to www.jw.org



JONAH

BIBLE
CARD

17



QUESTIONS

- Jonah was sent to preach to _____, where over _____ men lived.
- Although Jonah at first ran from his assignment, what brave thing did he do to save others?
- Complete the Bible's statement: "Jonah came to be in the inward . . ."

98 C.E.

Last Bible book written

Lived about 840 B.C.E.

4026 B.C.E.

Adam created



TARSHISH

Nineveh

Gath-hepher

Fled from Gath-hepher to Tarshish

JONAH

PROFILE A prophet of Jehovah who served during the reign of King Jeroboam II. (2 Kings 14:23-25) Jehovah taught Jonah not to focus on himself but to care about the needs of others. (Jonah 4:6-11) Jonah's experiences teach us that Jehovah is extremely patient, merciful, and kind to sinful humans.

ANSWERS

- Nineveh, 120,000.—Jonah 1:1, 2; 4:11.
- He told the sailors to throw him overboard to calm the sea.—Jonah 1:3, 9-16.
- " . . . parts of the fish three days and three nights."—Jonah 1:17.


Peoples and Lands

- Our names are Melissa, aged 9, and Edilo, aged 7. We live in Cuba. About how many of Jehovah's Witnesses live in Cuba? Is it 51,000, 91,000, or 131,000?
- Which dot shows where we live? Circle it, draw a dot where you live, and see how close you are to Cuba.

Children's Picture Search

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





“The former things will not . . . come up into the heart”

Our Creator has revealed what he will do in the near future.
He states:

“Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart.”—ISAIAH 65:17.

What are “the former things” that will not “come up into the heart”? The context shows that they are the injustice, sickness, suffering, and many other woes that plague humankind. How will those woes cease? The secret lies in the foretold “new heavens” and “new earth.”

Those intriguing terms and their significance will be explained in the public talk “The Former Things Will Not . . . Come Up Into the Heart.” The discourse will be delivered at the “Safeguard Your Heart!” District Conventions of Jehovah’s Witnesses, beginning in May in the United States and continuing around the world.

You are cordially invited to attend the convention nearest you. For specific details, please contact Jehovah’s Witnesses in your area or write to the publishers of this magazine. The Web site **www.jw.org** lists the convention locations in Canada and the United States.