

Awake!

No. 6 2017



IS THE WORLD OUT OF CONTROL?



3 COVER SUBJECT Is the World out of Control?

Why does the world seem to be spinning out of control?

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

This issue of “Awake!” explains why many believe in a better future for our world.

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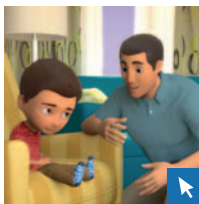
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COVER SUBJECT

IS THE WORLD OUT OF CONTROL OR NOT?

THE year 2017 began with a dismal proclamation by the scientific community. In January a group of scientists declared that the world just got closer to the worst catastrophe ever. Using the symbolic Doomsday Clock to illustrate mankind's proximity to a global disaster, scientists moved the clock's minute hand forward by 30 seconds. The Doomsday Clock is now set at merely two and a half minutes to midnight—nearer to a global catastrophe than at any time in over 60 years!

In 2018, scientists plan to evaluate again how close we are to the end of the world as we know it. Will the Doomsday

Clock still signal an impending and unprecedented catastrophe? What do you think? Is the world out of control? You might find the question somewhat difficult to answer. After all, even experts are divided on this subject. Not everyone believes in an inevitable doomsday.

In fact, millions of people believe in a bright future. They profess to have evidence showing that mankind and our planet will survive indefinitely and that our quality of life will improve. Is that evidence credible? Is the world out of control or not?

"The Doomsday Clock is an internationally recognized design that conveys how close we are to destroying our civilization with dangerous technologies of our own

making. First and foremost among these are nuclear weapons, but the dangers include climate-changing technologies, emerging biotechnologies, and cybertech-

nology that could inflict irrevocable harm, whether by intention, miscalculation, or by accident, to our way of life and to the planet."
—*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.*

IS THE WORLD OUT OF CONTROL?

Searching for Answers

IF YOU are apprehensive or scared outright by the barrage of bad news, you are not alone. In 2014, Barack Obama, who was then president of the United States, suggested that because of all the bad things reported in the press, many conclude “that the world is spinning . . . fast and nobody is able to control it.”

Yet, shortly after making that statement, he spoke passionately about current strategies to fix many of the world’s problems. He called certain government initiatives “good news” and said he was “fundamentally hopeful” and “profoundly optimistic.” In other words, he pointed to noble human endeavors as the means to control the world and avert a global catastrophe.

Many share his optimism. For instance, some put their trust in science, predicting rapid advancements in technologies that promise to fix the world. One expert in digital technology and innovation confidently predicted that by the year 2030, “our technology will be a thousand times more powerful and by 2045, it will be a million times more powerful.” He added: “We’re doing pretty well. While the problems we face have never been greater, our capacity to meet challenges is outpacing them.”

Exactly how bad are world conditions? Are we really at the brink of a great global disaster? Although some scientists and politicians preach a hopeful message, many people still feel uncertain about the future. Why?



WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. Despite their best efforts, the United Nations and other organizations have failed to bring about nuclear disarmament. Instead, defiant leaders scoff at arms-control laws. Countries with a history of nuclear weap-

onry are frantically upgrading their old bombs and creating new deadlier ones. Countries that once had no mass-destruction capabilities are now able to destroy huge swaths of humanity.

This unprecedented nuclear preparedness makes the world a very dangerous

place, even in times of “peace.” “Lethal autonomous weapons systems that make ‘kill’ decisions without human input or supervision, for example, would be particularly worrisome,” warns the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

OUR HEALTH UNDER SIEGE.

Science can take us only so far when it comes to good health. High blood pressure, obesity, air pollution, and drug abuse—all risk factors for disease—are increasing.

More people are dying from an array of noncommunicable diseases, such as cancer, cardiovascular disorders, and diabetes. Growing numbers are disabled by other diseases, including mental illness. And

recent years have witnessed the unpredictable outbreaks of such dangerous epidemics as the Ebola virus and the Zika virus. The bottom line: Sickness is out of the control of humans, and the end of it seems to be nowhere in sight!



HUMAN ATTACKS ON NATURE.

Factories continue to pollute earth's atmosphere. Millions of people die every year from breathing contaminated air.

Individuals, communities, and government agencies continue to dump sewage, medical and

agricultural waste, plastics, and other pollutants into the oceans. "These toxic pollutants poison marine animals and plants, as well as humans who eat contaminated sea life," explains the *Encyclopedia of Marine Science*.

And we are running out of fresh water. British science author Robin McKie aptly warns: "The world faces a water crisis that will touch every part of the globe." Politicians admit that water scarcity is largely a man-made problem and that it poses a grave danger.

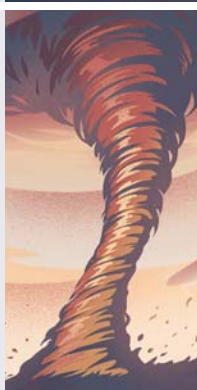


NATURE'S ATTACKS ON HUMANS.

Storms, hurricanes, tornadoes, typhoons, and earthquakes bring about devastating floods, crushing landslides, and other types of de-

struction. More people than ever are killed or are otherwise adversely affected by these forces of nature. A study published by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administra-

tion points to a greater potential for "more intense storms, deadly heat waves, and more extreme flood-drought cycles." Will nature deal humankind a death-blow?



Surely you can think of other grave threats to our survival. Yet, you will not find satisfying answers about the future by analyzing all the bad things happening today. Some may say the same about listening to politicians and scientists. As men-

tioned in the preceding article, many have, however, found convincing answers to questions about world conditions and the future. Where are such answers to be found?

IS THE WORLD OUT OF CONTROL?

What Does the Bible Say?

THE dire state of the world today was foretold in the Bible many centuries ago. And what is more, the Bible specifically predicted a bright future for mankind. **What the Bible says should not be quickly dismissed in view of the fact that so much of what it foretells has actually been fulfilled in amazing detail.**

For instance, consider the following Bible prophecies:

- “Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another.”—Matthew 24:7.
- “In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.”—2 Timothy 3:1-4.

Those prophecies describe a world that some might say is spiraling out of control. In a sense, our world is indeed out of control—out of the control of humans. **According to the Bible, humans simply do not have the wisdom and power to bring about a permanent solution.** This is highlighted in the following scriptures:

- “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”—Proverbs 14:12.
- “Man has dominated man to his harm.”—Ecclesiastes 8:9.
- “It does not belong to man . . . even to direct his step.”—Jeremiah 10:23.

Left to its own devices, the world could very likely face a global catastrophe. But that is not going to happen! Why? This is what the Bible says:

- God “has established the earth on its foundations; it will not be moved from its place forever and ever.”—Psalm 104:5.
- “A generation is going, and a generation is coming, but the earth remains forever.”—Ecclesiastes 1:4.
- “The righteous will possess the earth, and they will live forever on it.”—Psalm 37:29.
- “There will be an abundance of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains it will overflow.”—Psalm 72:16.



The predictions of the Domsday Clock will not be fulfilled, because God promises a bright future for mankind and the earth

These Bible teachings provide clear answers. Mankind will not die off from pollution, lack of food and water, or a global pandemic. The world will not be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust. Why not? God is in control of our planet's future. Granted, God has allowed humans to exercise free will. However, they will reap the consequences for their decisions. (Galatians 6:7) The world is not like a runaway train, completely out of control and heading to a catastrophic end. God has established boundaries, or limits, on how much damage humans can inflict on themselves. —Psalm 83:18; Hebrews 4:13.

But God will do more. He will bring about an “abundance of peace.” (Psalm

37:11) The positive outlook explained in this article is just a glimpse of the bright future that millions of Jehovah's Witnesses have learned about by studying the Bible.

Jehovah's Witnesses are a global community of men and women of all ages and of every ethnic background. They worship the one true God, whose name is Jehovah, as revealed in the Bible. They are not afraid of the future because the Bible says: “This is what Jehovah says, the Creator of the heavens, the true God, the One who formed the earth, its Maker who firmly established it, who did not create it simply for nothing, but formed it to be inhabited: ‘I am Jehovah, and there is no one else.’”—Isaiah 45:18. ■



This article examined some of the Bible teachings regarding the future of the earth and humankind. For more information, see lesson 5 of the brochure *Good News From God!* published by Jehovah's Witnesses and available at www.jw.org

You may also watch the video *Why Did God Create the Earth?* available at www.jw.org. (Look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS)





Teaching Children Humility



THE CHALLENGE

- Your son is behaving arrogantly—and he is only ten!
- He expects everyone to treat him as special.

‘What has got into him?’ you wonder. ‘I want him to feel good about himself—but not to think that he is better than everyone else!’

Is it possible to teach a child humility without damaging his or her self-worth?



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

In recent decades, parents have been encouraged to yield to their children’s desires; to praise them generously, even if they did nothing praiseworthy; to withhold correction and discipline. It was thought that if children were made to feel special, they would grow up with healthy self-esteem. But what have the results shown? The book *Generation Me* states: “Instead of creating well-adjusted, happy children, the self-esteem movement has created an army of little narcissists.”

Many children raised with unconditional praise have grown up unprepared for disappointments, criticism, and occasional failure. Because of being taught to focus on their own desires, they find it hard as adults to form lasting relationships. As a result, many of them suffer from anxiety and depression.

Children develop *real* self-worth, not by being constantly told that they are special, but through genuine accomplishments. That requires more than just believing in themselves. They need to learn, practice, and refine chosen skills carefully. (Proverbs 22:29) They also need to care about other people’s needs. (1 Corinthians 10:24) All of this requires humility.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Give praise when it is truly deserved. If your daughter scores well on a school test, commend her. If she gets a low grade, do not automatically blame the teacher. That would hardly help your daughter learn humility. Instead, help her to see how she may do better next time. Reserve praise for actual accomplishments.

Give correction when necessary. This does not mean that you should criticize your child for every mistake. (Colossians 3:21) But serious errors should be corrected. The same can be said about wrong attitudes. Otherwise, these may become more deeply ingrained.

For example, suppose your son is showing a tendency to brag. Uncorrected, he could become conceited and begin to alienate others. So explain to your child that boasting makes him look bad and that it could set him up for embarrassment. (Proverbs 27:2) Explain, too, that a person with a balanced view of himself does not feel the need to broadcast his abilities to others. By giving such correction in the spirit of love, you will teach him humility without hurting his self-respect.—*Bible principle: Matthew 23:12.*

Prepare your child for life's realities. Indulging a child's every wish can cause him to feel entitled. So, for example, if your child wants something you cannot afford, explain why it is necessary to live within a budget. If you have to cancel an outing or a vacation, you could explain that disappointments are part of life and perhaps discuss how you deal with such disappointments. Rather than shield your children from every hardship, prepare them for the challenges they will face as adults.—*Bible principle: Proverbs 29:21.*

Encourage giving. Prove to your child that “there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) How? Together you might prepare a list of people in need of help with shopping, transportation, or repair work. Then take your child along as you assist some of them. Allow your child to see *your* joy and satisfaction as you care for the needs of others. That way you will teach your child humility in the most powerful way—by example.—*Bible principle: Luke 6:38.* ■

KEY SCRIPTURES

“Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”
—Matthew 23:12.

“If a servant is pampered from his youth, he will become thankless later on.”—Proverbs 29:21.

“Practice giving.”—Luke 6:38.

CONSIDER OTHERS SUPERIOR

The Bible says: “Do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with humility consider others superior to you, as you look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.”
—Philippians 2:3, 4.

A child who is raised to embrace that principle is more likely to realize that everyone is superior to him in one way or another. In the end, humility will help your child to avoid being contaminated by the self-absorbed culture of today's world.

For more information, scan the code or go to our website, jw.org, and search for “Raising Considerate Children in a Me-First World.”





A Visit to NEW ZEALAND



Milford Sound

POPULATION: 4.7 MILLION CAPITAL: WELLINGTON

LAND: THE NORTH ISLAND IS CHARACTERIZED BY VOLCANIC AND THERMAL ACTIVITY. THE SOUTH ISLAND HAS THOUSANDS OF GLACIERS



IT WAS likely about 800 years ago that Maori tribes traveled across thousands of miles of ocean and settled in New Zealand. There they discovered a terrain that was totally unlike the tropical islands of Polynesia that they had left behind. Here was a land of mountains and glaciers, thermal springs and snow. Another race of settlers arrived about five centuries later, this time from distant Europe. Today most New Zealanders acknowledge traditions of both Anglo-Saxon and Polynesian origin. Almost 90 percent of the population are city dwellers. The city of Wellington has the distinction of being the southernmost capital in the world.

Boiling mud pools on the North Island

DID YOU KNOW?

The name New Zealand is derived from Zeeland, a region in the Netherlands. The Maori name *Aotearoa* means “Land of the Long White Cloud.”

While most New Zealanders speak English, the native language, Maori, has enjoyed a resurgence and is now taught in schools. The official website of Jehovah’s Witnesses, jw.org, is available in Maori.

Maori performing a choreographed song in traditional dress



Until 1948 the flightless takahe was thought to be extinct



With diverse and spectacular scenic beauty, it is no surprise that, despite its relative isolation, New Zealand attracts up to three million tourists yearly.

New Zealand boasts an odd assortment of wildlife, with more species of flightless birds than anywhere else in the world. It is also home to the tuatara, a lizardlike reptile that can live for up to 100 years! The only indigenous mammals are a few species of bats and some large marine mammals, including whales and dolphins.

Jehovah’s Witnesses have been active in New Zealand for almost 120 years. They teach the Bible in at least 19 languages, including the Polynesian tongues Niuean, Rarotongan, Samoan, and Tongan. ■

The silver tree fern can grow to more than 30 feet (10 m) tall





ALHAZEN

Alhazen was born in Basra, now in Iraq, about 965 C.E. His interests included astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, music, optics, physics, and poetry. What in particular do we have to thank him for?

A DAM ON THE NILE

A story about Alhazen has circulated for a long time. It concerns his plan to regulate the flow of the Nile River almost 1,000 years before the project was actually carried out at Aswân in 1902.

As the story goes, Alhazen laid out ambitious plans to alleviate the cycle of floods and droughts in Egypt by damming the Nile. When Cairo's ruler, Caliph al-Hakim, heard of the idea, he invited Alhazen to Egypt to build the dam. Yet, on seeing the river with his own eyes, Alhazen knew that the project was beyond him. Fearing punishment from this notoriously unstable ruler, Alhazen pretended to be insane until the caliph died some 11 years later, in 1021. In the meantime, Alhazen had plenty of leisure time to pursue other interests while confined for his feigned mental illness.

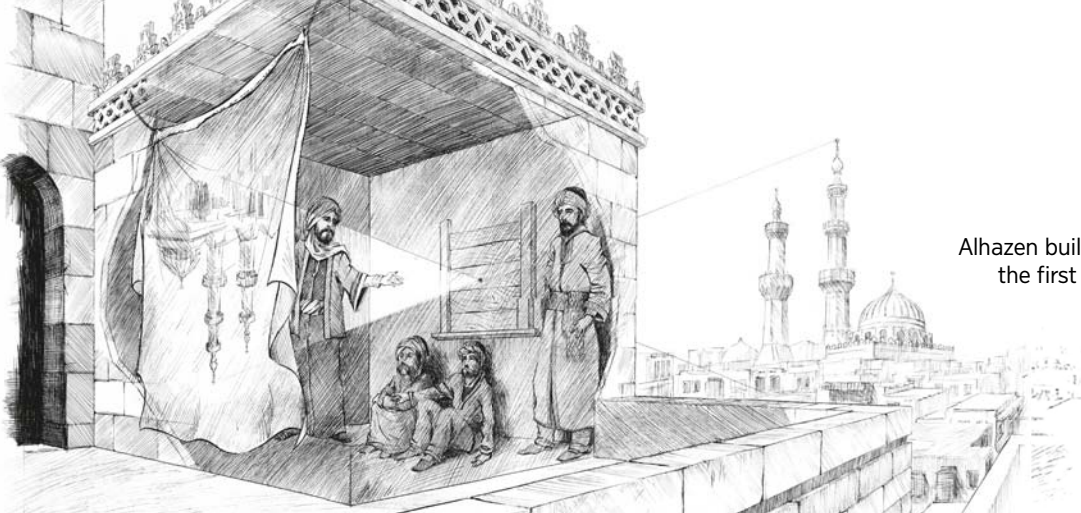
THE BOOK OF OPTICS

By the time of his release, Alhazen had written most of his seven-volume *Book of Optics*, considered to be “one of the most important books in the history of physics.” In it he discussed experiments into the nature of light, including how light splits into its constituent colors, reflects off mirrors, and bends when passing from one medium into another. He also studied visual

YOU may not have heard of Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan ibn al-Haytham. In the West he is known as Alhazen, a Latinized form of his Arabic first name, al-Ḥasan. In all likelihood, though, you benefit from his lifework. He has been described as “one of the most important and influential figures in the history of science.”

QUICK FACTS

- Because of his rigorous methods of experimentation, Alhazen has been called the “world’s first true scientist.”
- He identified the basic principles underlying modern photography.
- His work with lenses led to the development and production of early eyeglasses, microscopes, and telescopes.



Alhazen built what was likely the first camera obscura

© 1001 Inventions

perception and the anatomy and mechanics of the eye.

By the 13th century, Alhazen's work had been translated from Arabic into Latin, and for centuries thereafter, European scholars cited it as an authority. Alhazen's writings on the properties of lenses thus laid essential groundwork for European eyeglass makers who, by holding lenses one in front of another, invented the telescope and the microscope.

THE CAMERA OBSCURA

Alhazen identified the principles that underpin photography when he built what could amount to the first camera obscura on record. This enclosure consisted of a "dark room" into which light entered through a pinhole-size aperture, projecting an inverted image of what lay outside onto a wall inside the chamber.

In the 1800's, photographic plates were added to the camera obscura to capture images permanently. The result? The camera. All modern cameras—and indeed the eye itself—use the same physical principles as the camera obscura.*

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

An outstanding aspect of Alhazen's

* The similarity between the camera obscura and the eye was not well understood in the West until it was explained by Johannes Kepler in the 17th century.

work was his meticulous and systematic research into natural phenomena. His approach was most unusual for his day. He was one of the first investigators to test theories by experimentation, and he was not afraid to question accepted wisdom if the evidence did not back it up.

A tenet of modern science can be summed up by the dictum: "Prove what you believe!" Some consider Alhazen to be "the father of the modern scientific method." On that basis, we have much to thank him for. ■

"He Taught Us How to 'Do' Science"

According to author Jim Al-Khalili, Alhazen's greatness is "not so much a consequence of any single revolutionary discovery . . . Rather, it is the way he taught us how to 'do' science." His *Book of Optics* is described as "a real science textbook," complete with precise descriptions of experiments, apparatuses, measurements taken, and results obtained.



GOD'S NAME

Millions of people address God using respectful titles, such as Lord, the Eternal, Allah, or simply God. However, God has a personal name. Should you use it?

What is God's name?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY Many professed Christians believe that God's name is Jesus. Others claim that since there is only one Almighty God, using a personal name for him is unnecessary. Still others argue that using a proper name for God is inappropriate.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Almighty God's name is not Jesus, since Jesus is not God Almighty. In fact, Jesus taught fellow worshippers to pray to God saying: "Father, let *your* name be sanctified." (Luke 11:2) Jesus himself prayed to God: "Father, glorify *your* name."—John 12:28.

In the Bible, God declares: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; I give my glory to no one else." (Isaiah 42:8) "Jehovah" is an English translation of the four Hebrew consonants YHWH, which constitute the divine name. That name appears some 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.* It is used more often than any title, such as "God," "Almighty," or "Lord," and more frequently than any other name, such as Abraham, Moses, or David.

* Many Bible translations omit God's name and replace it with the title "LORD" in capital letters, while others include God's name only in select verses or footnotes. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* uses the divine name extensively throughout the text.

Nowhere in the Bible does Jehovah prohibit the respectful use of his name. Instead, the Scriptures reveal that the divine name was freely used by God's servants. They included it in the names they gave their children, such as Elijah, which means "My God Is Jehovah," and Zechariah, which means "Jehovah Has Remembered." And they did not hesitate to use God's name in daily conversations.—Ruth 2:4.

God wants us to use his name. We are encouraged to "give thanks to Jehovah, call on his name." (Psalm 105:1) He even takes favorable note of those "meditating on his name."—Malachi 3:16.

"May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."—Psalm 83:18.



What does God's name mean?

Some scholars believe that in Hebrew the name Jehovah means “He Causes to Become.” That definition implies that God can cause himself or his creation to become whatever is needed to accomplish his will. Only the almighty Creator could live up to such a name.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU Knowing God's name will change the way you think about him. You will find it easier to draw close to him. After all, how can you be close to someone whose name you do not know? Why, the very fact that God has revealed his name to you shows that he *wants* you to draw close to him.—James 4:8.

You can be certain that Jehovah will always live up to his name as a God who makes things happen. That is why the Bible states: “Those knowing your name will

trust in you.” (Psalm 9:10) You develop that trust as you learn that Jehovah's name is inseparably linked to his qualities, such as loyal love, mercy, compassion, and justice. (Exodus 34:5-7) How reassuring to know that while Jehovah will always keep his promises, he will never act contrary to his qualities.

Clearly, to know Almighty God by name is a privilege. It can open up blessings for you now and in the future. God promises: “I will protect him because he knows my name.”—Psalm 91:14. ■

“Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.”—Joel 2:32.

The personal name of God written in ancient Hebrew characters appears abundantly in early manuscripts of the Bible



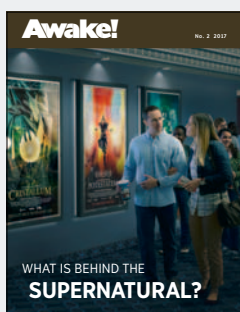
God's name rendered in various languages

Jehovah	Ziova
יהוה	Xehová
Yehuwa	Jiova
Yihowa	Jeová
Joova	여호와
Jehová	エホバ
יהוה	Yawe

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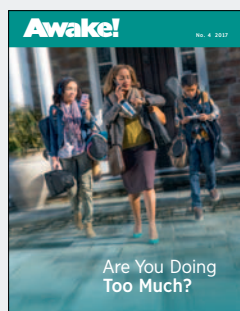
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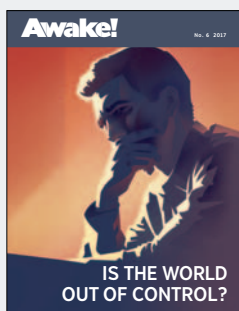
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