

BELIEVERS INTERNATIONAL

December, 2002

NEWS

Now, more than ever, the believers of Latin America need prayer, encouragement, and material support. Roman 12:13 places those needs directly into our hands, and we cannot afford to neglect this responsibility.

Distributing to the Necessity of Saints

by George Smith

Many years ago, a pastor from Ecuador called me with an unusual request. He had been making regular trips to the island of San Cristobal – one of many islands which make up the Galapagos archipelago – to minister to a growing congregation of believers that were meeting in one another's homes to worship.

They needed more room, but could barely afford food for their families, let alone the cost of renting a larger space. They had located 10 acres of land with a house, storage buildings, and several acres of coffee plants. If we could help with the purchase price of \$1,500, then they would willingly tend, harvest and market the coffee, and send us the proceeds until the loan was repaid.

I have often looked back at that leap of faith we made with the believers of San Cristobal as a mile marker of this ministry. It was one of the first occasions where we stepped outside the area of translation, printing, and distribution of the Message, to include financial assistance as a part of our ministry. At the time, the amount of money involved represented a real challenge, but by making payments over a period of several months we were able to purchase the small plantation, and soon the house became a sanctuary.

The following spring, I received another phone call from the pastor. The coffee had been harvested and the first payment was ready to be sent. I informed him we did not require any repayment, but instead he should put the money towards expanding the outreach of the Message in his country. He did, and supported in part by revenue



In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus told his disciples that at His Coming, the righteous of the earth will be separated from the wicked, "as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." On His right hand, He will place those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the stranger, clothing to the naked, comfort to the sick, and friendship to the imprisoned. They will be granted Eternal Life. On His left hand will be those who neglected to extend compassion to the needy, and they will be doomed to everlasting punishment. There will be no third category. No one is permitted another option.

FOR I WAS AN HUNGERED,
AND YE GAVE ME MEAT:



I WAS THIRSTY,
AND YE GAVE ME DRINK.



generated by those few acres of coffee plants, missionaries have gone forth and churches have been built, both on the islands and in the nation of Ecuador.

It is a work that continues to this day, in Ecuador, on the islands, and through Believers International.

almost immediate relief to the families that were hardest hit. We delivered thousands of dollars worth of water purification systems, medicines, shelter, and financial support within a few days. Seed to plant crops was purchased, and repairs to homes and churches began soon after.

We are often asked, “What is it that you do?” Our answer is simple: “We provide relief.” But providing relief where it is needed is a multi-faceted, continual task, and it is not simple.

When believers are faced with devastating natural disasters, medical emergencies, and food shortages – the most life-threatening situations – we need to be ready instantly, because every moment counts. That means that contacts must be in place, people who are able to access the needs so that the appropriate relief can be delivered.

Thirty years of ministry has allowed us to establish close, personal ties in every nation of Central and South America, including those in the most remote regions of the continent. And, we stay in touch, so that we can work directly with the local pastors to provide much of the supervision and follow-up that is a vital part of any relief effort. Above all, we endeavor to promote a spirit of cooperation amongst the brethren and to affirm the unity of the Body of Christ.

When disasters strike, such as happened in 1998 when Hurricane Mitch swept across Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, we were able to supply

A very important lesson that we have learned is that in order to work effectively in a country, one must understand the national culture: the language, the customs, and the protocols. And even then, it is impossible to have a single template that will work in each nation. We must remain versatile, and willing to cooperate and coordinate with the local brothers.

As the Lord provides, we give financial assistance to native pastors and missionaries who are taking the Word to





Mexico

We know brothers in each country that will be able to receive any shipment we send, and distribute to the various locations in their area. But the first step towards putting this plan into action is for us to secure the necessary paperwork from each country that will permit the believers to receive the relief materials we send *duty free*. We have already established legal status as a relief organization in several countries, but it is a lengthy (and sometimes expensive) process. In Peru, we had to hire a lawyer to file all the documents. It took several months and cost \$400, but once obtained, a permit does not expire.

Now more than ever we are being called on to be reflectors of God's love to His people, and to follow His example by being a servant to *the least* among us, those who are in greatest need.

When people ask us, "What do you do?" perhaps the best answer we can give is, "Whatever we see that needs doing." Whether we start the ball rolling on a particular project, or pitch in and help an effort that is already in progress, it doesn't matter. We're interested in results, not renown.

We are grateful for each of you who have been our partners, working together to provide relief and support to the saints of Latin America. We realize that the resources that you place at our disposal are not our own, but represent a commission from you to relieve the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

With His help, will do our utmost to uphold that trust.

their people, sometimes under the harshest of conditions. These are the front-line soldiers of His army– the Barnabus and Timothy of our day – and they need to be fully equipped and supported by all concerned citizens of the Kingdom. There is a constant need for supplies such as videos and players, power plants, solar panels, and vehicles. And we can't forget the most vital resource of all: Bibles in the various dialects of the people.

OUR MISSION:

"...BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER."

GALATIANS 5:13

Clothing is also an ongoing need in every country, and on several occasions we have had emergency clothing drives for specific areas. The collecting, sorting, and mailing is a *time-consuming* process, and in most instances *time is critical* because the need is urgent.

We have decided to establish a permanent warehouse where the saints in the US and Canada can send clothing for distribution throughout Latin America. This will enable us to respond immediately to any situation, whether the need is for a single family, a particular congregation, or an entire country.



AREAS NOW IN NEED:

HONDURAS: Four years after Hurricane Mitch, Central America is still suffering. The worst drought in 20 years is baking the countryside, and the collapse of the international coffee market has destroyed the main source of income for most farmers. The combined complications of economic recession and malnutrition are taking a huge toll, and there are many urgent needs among the believers.

MEXICO: Brother Roberto Murillo has been a tireless worker on the mission fields of Mexico, and has endured years of hardships as he traveled into the remote regions with the Gospel. Recently he has been suffering from the complications of diabetes, and is in need of our prayers, and our financial help with hospital expenses.

CUBA: We who live in a free world cannot even imagine what it would be like to live daily under such an oppressive and unjust system as that which has long governed the lives of our fellow believers in Cuba. Every necessity of life is rationed, and without the benefit of American dollars with which to supplement those rations, hunger and suffering are always present. For a few dollars a month we can make a tremendous difference in the lives of these brothers and sisters who are locked behind a wall of political deprivation.

ARGENTINA: This past year might have been one of the worst ever for Argentines. Currency was devalued by 70 percent against the dollar in January, leaving many unable to purchase food. There are daily riots for food, and circumstances for many of the believers are critical at this time.

Biotech Update: HOW ABOUT SOME DRUGS IN YOUR CORNFLAKES?

In the July issue of *Believers News*, we reported on the genetically modified products that are now a part of our food supply. "In the event this experimentation should go dangerously awry," we wrote, "there is no way to recall genetically engineered organisms once they are released."

In November, CNN announced: "The genie is out of the bottle," quoting a study by researchers at the University of North Carolina. There are no longer any doubts that genetically modified plants can and do pass on their genes, which dominate when they are crossbred with 'natural' plants. And these new crops are spreading rapidly. Canada's panel on biotechnology reports that GM superweeds have already invaded Canadian farms.¹

And that is only the tip of the iceberg!

It is now coming to light that the USDA has also allowed *drugs* and *industrial chemicals* to be engineered

into grain crops. Once again, there is no way to contain those crops, and now they have contaminated the clean food grain crops in adjoining fields.

A recent case involved a gene-altered crop produced in Nebraska. ProdiGene, a biotech company which makes pharmaceuticals and industrial products by altering the genetic makeup of corn, failed to completely remove its GM corn from fields before planting a crop of soybeans. Stray corn plants are now growing in the soybean fields. The problem is this: The soybeans are being produced for human consumption; the corn was not meant for consumption but for pharmaceutical ingredients!

ProdiGene officials are quick to point out that (in this instance) the DNA of that particular protein is not toxic, and is used to treat "persistent digestive health conditions." How does the idea of diarrhea medicine in your cereal sound to you?

This is only one instance of contamination, when in fact, more than 300 biotech field test have already been made, all under an extreme degree of secrecy regarding the locations of these fields. There is no way that anyone can determine the true degree of contamination. ProdiGene is simply the only *known* case that has

gained national attention so far.

All efforts to control the experimental "pharma-corn" (the term by which this new GM crop is known) have not been successful. Even the food industry associations (enthusiastic supporters of most GM products) are now confessing to be worried that the integrity of the food supply may be in jeopardy.²

Everywhere we look, it is evident that mankind is set on scientifically destroying itself. "Oh, we're so glad tonight to be under the Blood, safely protected, as was Israel in the days of old – putting the blood upon the lintel of the door, and upon the door posts, a sign of the cross. The death angel was sweeping the land, the dark wings bowed down, but when he seen the blood, it rose again, and 'I will pass over you.'"³

1. CNN.com, "GM Mutants As Toxic As Parent Plants," November 29, 2002.
2. MSNBC News, "Care For Some Drugs In Your Cereal?" November 15, 2002
3. ATTITUDE AND WHO IS GOD? 50-0815.

Believers International News is published by Believers International, Inc., a non-profit Christian ministry dedicated to the furtherance of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Message of His prophet, William Marrion Branham.

All Things Are Possible, Only Believe.

Believers International
PO Box 1000
Elizabethton, TN 37644-1000
(423) 474-6565, FAX (423) 474-3412
www.onlybelieve.com