


# BELIEVERS INTERNATIONAL

June, 2000

# NEWS



Everywhere we went, preparations were being made for a momentous event. Pope John Paul's visit was just a few days away, and we could see that platforms were being constructed, and parking facilities expanded in order to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of spectators that would be following him from site to site. Before leaving home I had noted that on the cover of my latest copy of *The Jerusalem Report* (March 27) the question was being asked: "Can Israel and the Palestinians Give a Remarkable Pope the Welcome He Deserves?" After being there for a few days, I could see that they were certainly going to try.

This was my 9th trip to Israel, and for several of the 45 believers traveling with me it was their third or fourth trip. Like me, they feel drawn to this little spot on the map, a spot that God has had His eye on for thousands of years. Standing on the Temple Mount, I am always awed when I consider that I am standing at the very spot where Abraham paid his tithe to Melchizedek, and they took communion.<sup>1</sup> Looking around, I try to imagine what it must have looked like nine hundred years later when David bought these fields from Ornan the Jebusite, and the Angel stood by with his sword drawn and his hand stretched over Jerusalem. But most important to me is the fact that this little spot – the most fought-over piece of real estate on earth – is the site of my future home.

## *Thoughts From Israel* A report on the Spring 2000 tour

George Smith

Each trip we've made to Israel has been exciting and unique. Invariably, something special will happen that sets one trip apart from the rest. This time, the 'special' was particularly meaningful to me. When we arrived in Tel Aviv, Ruben Finkelstein, our Israeli tour guide, told me that we would be able to visit a site that I have wanted to see for many, many years.

There is one scene from the Scriptures that Brother Branham related over and over again, and listening to him I could almost feel like I was there and seeing it for myself. The place is now called Nablus, an area of the country that used to be the land of Samaria. As you will recall, one day Jesus had need to go by there, and he met a woman at Jacob's well.

In the past, every time I'd tried to visit Nablus I had failed. It is a very restricted area inside Palestinian-controlled territory, where daily hostilities are to be expected. Ruben told me that he had been watching the conditions there on a daily basis, and this time he felt that it would be safe for us to make a stop at the well.

The Greek Orthodox have built a church over the actual well, and they even sell small bottles of the water.

This is where the redeemed will live some day in the New Jerusalem, when the Mount of Olives is split and the holy Mountain of the Lord will break up through the earth, and the capstone comes down from Heaven to meet it. Oh what Glory that will be!

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special will happen that sets one trip apart from the rest. This time, the 'special' was particularly meaningful to me. When we arrived in Tel Aviv, Ruben Finkelstein, our Israeli tour guide, told me that we would be able to visit a site that I have wanted to see for many, many years.

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Sometimes it's hard not to be discouraged by the commercialism, but the fact that some of the sites, through the centuries, have been commercialized (or covered by a church or mosque) has helped to insure their preservation, and even their location.

As for Jacob's well, it was inspiring to be in the very place where the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman took place. And I know that believers are more fortunate than everyone else that visits the site. From the Message, we know exactly what it looked like when Jesus, who was sitting next to the well, against the wall and in a shaded, vine-covered area, spoke to the young woman who had come to draw water and said to her, "Give me to drink."

That is what I saw in my heart as we stood next to the little covered well inside the church to have our picture taken. And just think, we have also seen the same sign in our day that the woman saw that day, as Jesus revealed to her the secrets of her heart. What a revelation God has blessed us with!

Israel is God's timepiece, and we need to keep an eye on what is happening there. That is why, for the

past several years, we have included a stop at the Temple Institute in our tour of Jerusalem. It is here that the vessels and other accouterments are being assembled in preparation for the rebuilding of the Third Temple.

As recipients of the Message of the fourth Elijah, we know that it is not our place to try and convert the Jews. The only way that they will receive the Messiah is under the ministry of Moses and the fifth Elijah, the two olive trees of Revelation 11. But before they arrive on the scene, the Temple must be rebuilt, and observing the readiness of the Jews for this prophetic event that is drawing near can be both an inspiration and a reminder to us of just how short the time remaining to the Gentile Bride really is.

On this trip, as we were listening to the presentation (which is mostly an appeal for financial support) at the Temple Institute, I began to think about how strange it will be for these Jews that are zealously pressing for the rebuilding of the Temple (and will, undoubtedly, see it completed) when Moses and Elijah begin their ministry.

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## *The Pope's Visit*

On January 5, 1964, Pope Paul VI became the first pontiff in history to ever set foot in the Holy Land. He spent a total of 12 hours there, and during that time he refused to call on any of the government officials (who were his hosts), and never once did he mention the name 'Israel.' The Israeli government was both disappointed and humiliated. They were hoping that the pope's visit would signify that the Vatican was, at last, willing to recognize the Jewish state. Actually, an event of far greater consequence was taking place.

Instead of using his visit to promote a political alliance between nations as the Jews had hoped, the pope met with the Greek Orthodox hierarchy! Brother Branham had this to say about that occasion:

"And what does that reflect? Fellowship. They're wanting Protestants and Catholicism joining together, which they are doing and will completely do. And God reflected this to us in the moon, of a total blackout." 64-0112 SHALOM

"And when he [Pope Paul VI] went to Jerusalem, the moon (or the church) went into total darkness. This is it. This is the end. This generation shall not pass away until all be fulfilled." Laodicean Church Age, chapter 9.

Although at the Second Vatican Council, which took

place one year later, in 1965, Pope Paul VI did set aside some of the previously held Catholic doctrines that were disparaging of the Jewish people, the issue of Israel largely was ignored until John Paul II became pope in 1978. Immediately upon taking office, he announced that one of his goals of his papacy was to reconcile Christians and Jews. Since then he has: become the first pontiff to recognize the Jewish state; the first to visit a synagogue; the first to acknowledge the right of the Jews to return to Israel, and the first to include Jewish leaders in his diplomatic meetings around the world. And now, he has been to Jerusalem (in his words) "to encourage ecumenism among Christian denominations, and to promote interfaith dialogue with Judaism and Islam." (pg. 16)

Of great interest also is the manner in which the Orthodox Jewish leadership has accepted this hand of reconciliation that is being offered. Here is how one rabbi expressed his feelings on the subject: "For the past 35 years, the church has engaged in a systematic reexamination of its attitude to Judaism," he says. "The time has come for Jewish thinkers and rabbis to undertake a parallel task." (pg. 21)

The process, which Paul VI began in 1964, has come to maturity. It appears that groundwork has been put in place. Now we can watch as the dialogue begins to unfold that will lead to the covenant we know is to come.



# Eagle Computing Has Good News

Neil Halava

When Brother Branham was called Home in 1965, I wonder what the followers of the Message would have said if someone had told them that someday they would be able to perform a word-by-word search through every one of his recorded sermons in a matter of seconds? Their response would probably have gone something like this: "I'll believe it when I see it."

You'd better believe it! Today we are able to not only perform a search, but we can also hear the prophet preach any quote resulting from the search. We can read the Bible and the Church Age book, and a multitude of other books and research materials as well. All we need is a small device that we can easily carry with us wherever we go – a computer. If you stop to think about it, this has been a truly astonishing achievement in a relatively short time (considering that when the prophet was here, the tapes were still being duplicated on seven-inch reels, and it took an entire room to hold a complete library of his sermons.)

Of course, all of this didn't happen overnight. It has taken 15 years, and is still a work in progress [see our timeline].

To me, the preeminent use of the latest technology as it comes available is to put it to use broadcasting the Message of the Hour to the ends of the earth. As the cost of both home computer systems and the Message software become more affordable, greater numbers of believers (especially here in the states) have benefited by having the entire Message at their fingertips.

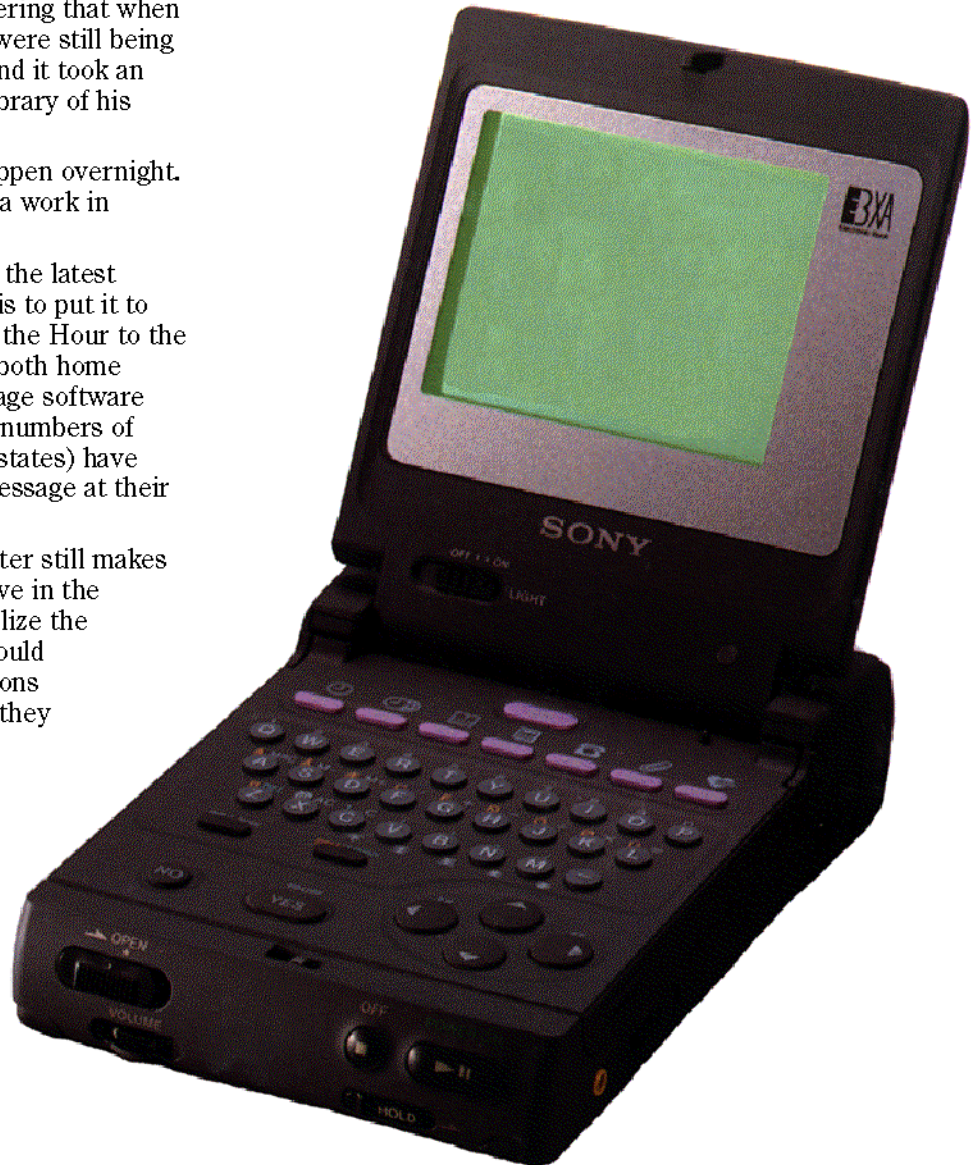
However, the cost of a computer still makes it impossible for believers who live in the poorer nations of the world to utilize the Message in this format, which would instantly make hundreds of sermons available to them that otherwise they may never have access to.

But there is a solution. In 1994 we introduced the EBOOK – a hand-held computer that measures 2 x 4 x 6 inches. It contains 1,120 sermons, the Church Age Book, plus the Bible. With it you can search the entire Message, or you can read the individual sermons.

The original price for one of these miniature computers was \$325. If it was shipped overseas, then it was necessary to add a 220volt adapter (\$25), mailing costs (\$50), plus duty and taxes (up to \$100). That made the total cost to get one EBOOK in the hands of a brother in a foreign land \$500!

Now, here is the best news. I currently have 5,500 EBOOKs, which I have obtained at an incredibly low price, on consignment from a dealer. That price is only \$50, and that includes a 220volt adapter.

In addition, Voice of God Recordings in Jeffersonville has offered to provide free shipping, by including the EBOOKs in the crates of books and tapes, which they send to the lending libraries around the world several



times a year. And they will also pay all the duty charges and taxes necessary to get the computers into the various countries!

That's it. Total cost: \$50, for the EBOOK computer, adapter, shipping, duty, and taxes.

Once they reach the library, depending on the number of computers that are in the shipment, they will primarily be distributed among the ministry of that country. But we would also like to have at least one EBOOK that will remain in the tape library for everyone to use.

Here is how you may sponsor one or more of these computers for the saints overseas:

Mail your donation (\$50 for each EBOOK you wish to donate) directly to:

Voice of God Recordings  
PO Box 950  
Jeffersonville IN 47131

(This is a tax-deductible donation that you will be receipted for.) Be sure to indicate that the funds are for the "EBOOK project".

If you have any questions, you may contact me by one of the following means:

Phone: (423) 543-2109  
Fax: (423) 543-3677  
Email: neil@themessage.com

*"This morning where ministers are standing in the pulpit, I pray that you'll pour out your Spirit, Lord, in a miraculous way upon every faithful pastor at his post of duty, on the evangelists, upon the missionaries. Oh God, when I think of them out there, some of them without a pair of shoes on, old ragged pair of trousers wrapped around them, going through the jungle, to bring peace and deliverance to those who are away from Christ."*

PERSEVERANCE, 62-0218

We thank the Lord that today we don't know of one missionary that is on the field without shoes on his feet, but we do know that for the price of a pair of shoes, today you can put the entire Message of the Hour into his hands. Be a blessing to a brother in a foreign land today. ☐

## EAGLE COMPUTING TIMELINE

- 1985 – An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages, plus all the sermons Brother Branham preached in 1965 were entered into the computer. It took 35 minutes for the computer to perform a search for a specific word or phrase.
- 1987 – 450 sermons then in print were scanned into computer. The search time was reduced to seven minutes.
- 1988 – New software program made it possible to search 218 sermons (total of messages preached in '63, '64, and '65) in three seconds.
- 1989 – 450 sermons were made available on 80 floppy diskettes at a cost of \$1,000.
- 1990 – A new program, Folio VIEWS, made searching much easier and more accurate.
- 1991 – The remaining 650 sermons available at that time were entered into the computer. It took 41 workers a year to complete the project.
- 1992 – 1,111 sermons on 46 floppy diskettes were released.
- 1994 – Began the task of adding Brother Branham's voice to the search program, a recording project that took one year to complete. Also EBOOK computers became available.
- 1995 – 1,117 sermons on 1 CD-ROM disc were offered in a Windows version. Cost: \$100
- 1995 – Entire Message placed on internet in searchable format.
- 1996 – 11 CD-ROM disc set of 1,120 sermons with the voice for each quote made available.
- 1999 – the latest release, a 12 CD-ROM disc set that includes 1,124 sermons, plus audio of entire Message and the Bible. [Cost: \$100]
- Present – Work in progress on a multi-language disc.



## The New Faces of Nicaragua

My first trip to Nicaragua was in 1972, just a few weeks before an earthquake nearly leveled the capital city of Managua. It has never recovered. Instead of re-building many of the structures that were damaged or destroyed, the city expanded into what is today known as New Managua, while much of the old Managua's derelict buildings have become shelters for the homeless. Even after nearly thirty years, it is still a broken city.

For me, the city of Managua had come to symbolize the division that has infected the ranks of the believers of that country ever since the Message was first presented there in the late 1960s. Through the years, there has been very little fellowship among the numerous small groups, and sadly there has never been enough cooperation among them to hold a country-wide meeting where everyone could come together.

All that started to change in 1998 when the hurricane Mitch churned its way across the country, changing the lives of everyone in its path. When I visited there immediately after the storm, I could already see that differences were being set aside, and fellowship was being restored. During one of my follow-up trips, in February of 1999, I saw such a change that I commented on it to the brethren. "It's just like Brother Branham said," they told me, "when the storms come and the water rises, all the ducks float out of their pens!"

We certainly thank the Lord for that.

Several months ago, various pastors from all parts of Nicaragua began inquiring about the possibility of a meeting in Managua. They invited Brother Donny Reagan, our

pastor in Johnson City, Tennessee, to be the main speaker, and I was to translate for him. The services were set for May 12-14, but on the morning that Brother Reagan and I were to leave for Managua, he became very ill and was unable to travel. I continued on my own, rather nervously, I'll admit, because I didn't feel that I was prepared to take all four services.

But even though I may not have been prepared, He was. Mercifully the Lord came on the scene and blessed the estimated 1,100 people that had gathered with an abundance of His anointing.

The faces that I looked out on from the pulpit looked so different from those I was accustomed to seeing in Nicaragua. Everyone was happy and rejoicing, and respect for one another was demonstrated on every hand.

The believers of Nicaragua are so thankful for the support from the saints here at home that helped them get through the extreme physical hardships that they were faced with in the aftermath of the hurricane. Often as they would try put their gratitude into words that I could convey to you, they could only stand and cry. I know that they would want me to take this opportunity to once again say, "Thank you and God Bless you," from the saints of Central America that were touched by your brotherly kindness.

On my way home from Managua, I had a layover of several hours in Houston, Texas, so I decided to rent a car and look up someone that I had spoken to by phone, but never met – Mr. Ted Kipperman. It was an interesting visit [see sidebar at right], and a pleasant ending to my journey. □

### *Ted Kipperman*

He took the most astounding picture in the history of the world. Ted Kipperman was only 22 years old at the time, and was working with his brother-in-law, Jim Ayers. Together, they owned Douglas Studios in Houston, Texas.

After the night of January 25, 1950, when he pointed the camera and took the photo that provided scientific evidence of the Presence of the Pillar of Fire, Mr. Kipperman traveled a great deal in the healing campaigns for the remainder of 1950. With Brother Branham's permission, Mr. Ayers had obtained a copyright on the picture, and he and Mr. Kipperman were allowed to sell the photo and keep all the proceeds.

Brother Branham consistently refused to accept any money from the sale of the photo, requesting only that the price they charged the public be kept reasonable. Mr. Kipperman said that they began by charging \$1 for the 8 ½ x 11 print, but after a year they

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**Kipperman, *continued***

raised the price to \$1.25. Brother Branham considered that price to be excessive, and when they wouldn't reduce it, they were no longer permitted to sell it in the campaigns. They then turned the copyright over to Gordon Lindsey and *The Voice of Healing* magazine.

Mr. Kipperman has lived in Houston his entire life, and operates a business there. His has no knowledge of what transpired in the ministry of

Brother Branham after the early 1950s. I asked him, "Did you ever see a miracle?"

He replied, "Several. The most memorable to me was one evening when I was standing near and a woman who had a large goiter hanging on her neck came through the prayer line. I watched as Reverend Branham prayed, and the goiter began to quiver, then right before my eyes, it shrank away and her neck was perfectly normal." (The next day, his brother-in-law, Mr.

Ayers, tried to claim to a newspaper reporter that the woman never had a goiter to start with.)

It was Mr. Kipperman's nephew (Mr. Ayers' stepson) that was convicted of murder and sentenced to be executed in Houston when Brother Branham went there to speak on his behalf in March of 1963. His sentence was reduced to life in prison, and after 15 years, he was released on parole. □

**Israel, *continued***

Without a revelation, they will not want to hear what these two prophets have to say!

For nineteen hundred years, three times a day the devout have prayed "May it be Thy will that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our days..." But Moses and Elijah are going to tell them, "You don't need this temple; stay away from that place because the antichrist is in there! You don't need a red heifer; you don't need that sacrificial blood of animals. The true Lamb of God is Jesus Christ."

We know that Moses and Elijah will be hated by the majority of the Jews, and they will be called blasphemers. But just as the seventh angel's Message called the Bride out of Pentecostal traditions and back to the faith of the apostolic fathers, there will be 144,000 in Israel whose hearts will be turned back to the real Atonement that they should have received 2,000 years ago.

There is a spot on the banks of the Jordan River where we usually stop, a place that has been prepared for baptismal services. It is a lovely setting, but we've always known that it is not the actual site that is believed to be the place of Jesus' baptism, as well as the place where the children of Israel first crossed over into the promised land. That location is inside the boundaries of two military compounds, one on the Israeli side of the Jordan River, and the other on the Jordanian side. Two days each year, the Israeli government opens the grounds to the general public, but we have never been there on those dates. This time, Ruben was able to obtain special permission for us to

visit the site. (It was also to be one of the stops on the pope's tour, a few days later.)

The Jordan was slow-moving, and very muddy at the place where we stopped. Tall grasses grew on both banks, and looking toward the Jordanian side, we could see jeep-mounted artillery pointed toward Israel (and us!). We were not allowed to get into the water, but we did have a time of prayer. Then we released a white dove, in remembrance of the day when the heavens opened at that spot, "*And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him.*" ST JOHN 1:32

We will be returning to Israel and Egypt in the fall of this year. The dates are November 5-16. If you are interested in joining Rebekah and myself on this 11-day tour, please contact me at 423-474-6565. □

1. "*Abraham met him [Melchizedek] and they took communion right on the literal spot where the city will be raised up, the holy Mountain of the Lord where the redeemed will live.*" 64-0802

**We are pleased to announce that our new office is nearing completion. There is still much work to do, but our new phone numbers are effective immediately; (423) 474-6565, FAX (423) 474-3412**

Believers International News is published by Believers International, Inc., an 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.*

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