

Meeting on Computers

The following brothers gathered in Bellows Falls to discuss the issues raised in a letter from David Zerubbabel to Yoneq: Aharon Gregoire, Qatan, Ayil, David Zerubbabel, Keli, Yadutan, Shores, Daniel, Yonah, and Racham. To a lesser extent, we also discussed a letter about computers from Yadutan to Shores. We opened with a time of greetings, fellowship, and prayer.

Daniel spoke about being faithful in small things. That morning he had read ha-emeq's letter to Yasha to his household and been very affected by it himself. Daniel went on to say we need faith to get up in the morning, we need faith to exercise and drink our water. We need the power faith brings to obey. How can we gather at a meeting like this if we haven't had the faith to do these things?

David Zerubbabel said he had been wanting to have a meeting like this for some time. Yoneq and ha-emeq wanted him to write them about the cautions he was feeling about our use of computers. He captured his concerns in this letter, but since then he has heard things that have caused him to have more to say. As we were reading the condensed version of his February 17 letter (only the parts that specifically dealt with computers), Keli told us that ha-emeq had written and said we needed to have a computer meeting about this letter to come to a common mind about these things here in Judah.

David Zerubbabel's Letter to Yoneq and ha-emeq

February 17, 1995

Dear Yoneq and ha-emeq,

It was interesting that you wrote about computers, because I was in Island Pond for the purpose of fixing some problems on the computer in the Candle Shop. As the number and use of computers increase in the tribe, so do the number of calls for help, both to service the existing ones and to decide on buying new ones. This often leads me to wonder about where this is going to take us. I will try to articulate my concerns on the subject.

In my experience, there are relatively few areas in which a computer offers a significant increase in productivity without so many bad side effects as to negate its advantages. Word processing and typesetting is the biggest benefit, but even there we have to be careful, I think. The ease of revising and refining what we write with a computer can have the effect of homogenizing everything or obscuring what is really coming fresh from our heart, the good with the bad. I can speak for myself in this, that I am almost incapable of just sitting down and writing a letter with a pen and paper, because I am so practiced on my keyboard and accustomed to the power and flexibility it gives me. On the Sabbath I force myself to write letters by hand. There is also the danger of making things look so polished and "professional" that it loses warmth and aliveness. We may have drifted this way in some of our Freepapers. But it is hard to imagine producing our papers in the time frame we usually have without computers. I even find myself wishing for more powerful computers than we currently have because of the time it would save us, but I want to guard myself from "techno-lust" — attraction to greater and greater technology.

The Candle Shop is using a computer to keep track of orders, and to print invoices and packing slips, and the Soap Shop is using a computer to maintain their customer list for mailings. I think Aharon Gregoire also uses the Candle Shop computer to do some financial things, but I'm not sure to what extent he uses it. Boston has been using a computer to print the teachings and for other word processing. In the past they have used it to do estimates for construction jobs, but it has not proved very effective for that purpose, mostly due to a lack of the right software for the kind of work we do. Hushai uses a computer to compile and maintain a songbook, and to make magnetic signs (the kind that stick to metal doors). A number of writers also have laptop computers — Qatan, Racham, Kharash, and Aharon Cohen. Regularly other people call me asking for advice on getting a computer.

My main concern about computers is whether those who have or will get them have sufficient fear of their potential danger. The first time I recognized what seemed to me their negative effect upon our life was when I still lived in Boston. I had made a phone-number list to post by our telephones, and of course it was very neat and precise. One Sabbath morning I was admiring the beautiful Sabbath Pie sign that Miriam, wife of

Racham, had drawn and colored by hand. Then my eyes wandered over to the phone list a few feet away and something went off inside of me. I imagined what it would be like to come downstairs on the Sabbath and see a computer generated Sabbath Pie sign, and the idea was so revolting. During the next week Ethan came to see me at the office, asking me if I would make a chart on the computer of the Israeli dance songs that we do, with their Hebrew names and English meanings. At first I said yes, and then I went back to him and shared the above experience with him, and how I wished we would avoid computer-generated signs and charts unless there was a real need for them. I think that there is a significant advantage to maintaining the phone and address list on the computer, because of how frequently it changes and grows, although I may be wrong about that. But I love our tradition of beautiful, hand-drawn signs (when signs are necessary), that show warmth and care.

The crowning blow came when I moved to Island Pond and within the next year, as computers came into more use, I began to see computer-generated welcome/resting signs appear on bedroom doors (this happened only twice to my knowledge). I was horrified. I expressed my heart to my brothers, and I hope to never see such a thing again.

Also in Island Pond I was disturbed to notice various computer programs begin to appear on some of the computers — games, so-called educational programs, and other electronic novelties that didn't seem to me to be helpful to our purpose. I noticed how some brothers would allow their children to use the computers, to practice typing, and even to play computer games. Even the programs meant to teach typing were rather like video games. I have expressed my concerns about this also, and I don't think it's still going on here in Judah. But the fact that it was some very responsible brothers who were drifting in this direction causes me to lack confidence that we have the grace to sufficiently rule over the use of computers as they multiply in our communities. Children are almost irresistibly attracted to them, and even adults have difficulty judging themselves and are inclined to think they need them when they really don't.

With regard to using computers for bookkeeping and accounting, I am not sure whether it will prove to be an advantage for us. It may be, if we are careful. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that a computer will help you keep order in you accounts when you are not able to do so manually. I have told everyone who has asked me that if their books are not consistently in good order when doing them manually, then switching to computer will only add a new dimension to their disorderliness. But a good bookkeeper may become much more efficient and productive by using a computer with the right software. I think it is worth a try for such bookkeepers. Others should learn to be more diligent and orderly on paper first.

I wish that wherever we have computers it would be understood that no one should touch them without being covered, meaning covered by someone who has been given the authority to rule over the use of computers because he has a healthy fear of them and knows what they should and shouldn't be used for. And I wish that no one would acquire a computer (like an industry head) without it first being judged by a council of responsible brothers. As far as the kind of computers and software that we use, I can provide some simple guidelines so that they will be compatible. Anyone can write me for that kind of information (although it has happened that I have given that kind of information and found out later, to my dismay, that the person leaned on it as a kind of covering — “David Zerubbabel said that this would be a good buy...”).

I think that distributing the teachings on diskette is a very efficient and inexpensive way, for those clans that have a computer and a reasonable good printer. I have wondered to what extent we want people to have access to them on a computer (as opposed to in printed form). The other day a brother called me and asked if I could remember what teaching discussed a certain topic or incident. I couldn't remember the specific teaching, but in a few seconds I located it on my computer by telling it to search for every occurrence of a particular phrase in all of the teachings. Is this a useful power, or would our Father want us to depend only upon our memory, or would a manual search through a file of teachings, though it took more time, cause us to notice things in passing that our Father wants us to see? I don't know, and I don't want to be complicated or paranoid either. I just want to be careful. Sometimes I have thought how convenient it would be to be able to quickly find every place in every teaching that refers to a particular scripture verse. This would be easy for me to do by computer. I would be glad to hear what you think about these things.

One more thing in this vein: Recently I have noticed that a couple of brothers are using pocket computers or electronic “address books” to keep track of phone numbers and addresses. I’ve also noticed some brothers wearing modern electronic watches on their wrists. I am one who has always found gadgets appealing and can understand their attraction. But during the meeting last week one of the things we talked about was our children’s attraction to things of the world — especially among the boys — and then I started to make a connection. Our children notice the things that appeal to us. Eze 20:24 (“their eyes were on the idols of their fathers”) was quoted in the meeting. I’m not saying that these brothers have made idols of these things, but I just wonder how they appear to our sons. A little pocket notebook or address book seems sufficient to keep track of phone numbers, and a simple watch kept in the pocket is not distracting. But these little marvels of technology, I’m afraid, can’t help but be a stumbling block to our boys.

March 1, 1995

... I also wonder, for our brothers who are trying to raise up new clans or tribes (or even when they are shepherding an established one for that matter), whether their time is best spent in learning to use computers and sophisticated desktop-publishing software.

Right now I get so many calls for help that I can hardly respond to those who already have computers. Now that I am in training, I have only half a day at the Print Shop to try to accomplish all that I was never quite able to accomplish in a whole day before. I am not complaining — I love living where I’m living and doing what I am doing. I just feel frustrated sometimes because I would like to adequately help everyone who calls me, but I am unable to do it. Maybe I just need to pray that our Father will save more people with computer experience. I’m sure that will happen, but in a way I fear it. I don’t want them to come into chaos as far as our use of computers goes, but into a life where computers have already been relegated to their proper place (whatever that is) and we have some confidence that we are ruling over them.

March 12, 1995

Dear Caleb David,

.... One concern that I did not mention in my letter to Yoneq, but which your request brings up, is that of copying software. The idea of it makes me very uncomfortable since it is illegal and if pursued, could lead us into a very severe and very expensive legal mess. I wonder if it wouldn’t be wisdom for each clan that must use computers to purchase a licensed copy of all the major software packages it intends to use.

Yadutan’s Letter to Shores

...I have heard some people talking about us getting into the “Internet” computer network because it is really cheap (just \$20 per month for each community involved). They say we can send whatever we want, and it is much faster, and we can send Freepaper articles over the NET to some Christian section and see if some of them would respond, and we can have access to all kinds of useful information, and we can send and read bulletins, and on and on...

But I think that those who are bringing those ideas and good reasoning for the use of the NET, are people who don’t know much about computers. Because they don’t understand how dangerous it can be, especially having them connected to the NET.

Over the NET we can have access to all kinds of perverted things, and even receive mail that is totally defiling. Like Playboy girl pictures sent by some one who just wants to be friendly. And the worse part of it is, that this can lead us into a really comfortable direction of sending mail through this environment where all kinds of perverted and crazy people have access. They can duplicate all our mail and do whatever they want with it, without our even taking a hint of notice. And besides that I think that this can be a great door for dissipation, and a stumbling block for many. Even myself, I don’t know if I could work with the NET without falling into the temptation of taking a peek, and looking through it, “Because maybe I could find some really useful and interesting information (Good reason for the flesh). The world is at your fingertips, it’s so easy and cheap, and fast, and goooooo.”

There are many people who live in front of computers; they become their life, they become the environment where they can have all their intellectual satisfaction fulfilled. They lose their wives for those machines, they suck their time away. They turn themselves into heroes; heroes in their own crazy minds.

I think that computers are good tools if they are used in a proper way. Those who know what they are doing should help judge if it's really a need, with the local government, when a person or industry makes a request for a computer. And then if it is decided that the industry or person needs a computer, those who know what they are doing should set up the software in accordance with the needs that the industry or person had. But not like it is now, some one starts to use a computer and all of a sudden they need to become skillful computer software users. They end up wasting their time trying to learn how to use this for this or that, and they say, "You know maybe we are going to need this or that, who knows? It is always better to be prepared and not need to depend upon someone else because they are always so busy. And look, I can make my machine work faster, and if I hadn't of spent the last four hours playing around with the computer, I would never have learned about this new thing. And this is not talking about the hours spent reading the tutorial programs to learn how to use the program better, and then I can do this, and that and look everything goes so much faster now!... I think we are all going to use this, and I'm starting to understand now, hum...I probably need to give up my soul, my left-over time, the time that I could be with my family, the time that I could be sharing the Good News with someone in the town, the time that I could be taking a walk and praying for grace, the time that I could be reading the teachings and my Bible; so I can learn more."

"I know in the future we are going to have a return from all my efforts. And anyway, I can read the teachings in the computer and even make them look nicer, if I just highlight this and take off the bold letters here... And also I have this Bible verse program with all the good translations on it, and I have Quick Verse. Now I don't need to carry my concordance around, when I need to find something I just call Quick Verse and it's there! Ready, waiting for me...I love my computer...It's so great and fun, and you can't believe how this machine can make things faster..."

I wrote these thoughts in a sarcastic way, but believe it or not, I can almost hear them when I talk to some people....

I personally think that we should not connect our computers to the phone line, and much less to the NET. Once we start to use our computers connected to the phone line we put ourselves in a position of not much defense from crazy people or whoever wants to come in our computers and do whatever they want to with all the information that is stored on it. And also those who use computers should be sent to do it and not be doing it on their own initiative. And they should be ruled by the local government. It is so hard to rule over those who use those machines, because those in the government of many clans don't understand much about computers, and they can be sold really easily about the idea of having a bigger machine, and the newest and the most software, and have more time dedicated to learn more about the computer.

My other subject is related to this: It is about the brother coordinating the Grateful Dead Tour. To me the choice is almost funny. I was going to write to you because in my time here, I have been amazed about the amount of time and effort that he put into the computer...It's funny that he prayed so much for a house here, but if we could put into a scale how much time he dedicates to his family, to the teachings, to going out and tal king to people in our own backyard; and to the outrageous amount of time and effort that he gives this machine, you wouldn't believe by how much the computer side would win.

He comes home from the job and he jumps into the computer. Weekends, days off the job, all this means more time for the computer. Sounds funny that he doesn't have more time to go look for sheep in his back yard, but he is going to look for them far away from here.... Maybe it is all right for him to be doing this, but it really puzzles my brain! And honestly I don't know how much is his fault, if there is any, because the government knows about it and no one is telling him to stop, so he is still giving a lot of his late hours in the night, and free times to increase his knowledge of how to use programs and tools that the computer offers. To me it seems like someone who buys a tool, and then tries to think of the many ways that he can use that tool, and also the many wonderful futures that the tool offers, is doing this so he can justify to himself, to his conscience, and to others, the reason he needs to have that tool.

My time here has brought me more clarity about how to write about computers...

Sin Against the New Covenant

We saw we need to have a mind in us to be able to judge in our communities whether a person or an industry

needs to use or have a computer. It is a dangerous thing to find yourself spending all your spare time on the computer. If a man buries his gifting as an evangelist, for instance, to become a computer programmer, he will not hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," at the judgment seat of Messiah. He who is slack in the work prepared for him to do will end up destroying, not building (Pr 18:9 and Eph 2:10). The brother described above is an excellent illustration of the need for government in the realm of computers. The people who are drawn to computers have the intellectual power to come up with the greatest justifications to use them. An example of this are the unusual programs on the Candle Shop computer. A disciple who didn't know very much about computers except how to type had excitedly shown Yadutan different programs someone had put on it, like a road map of the United States, and star charts of the night sky. Someone had persuaded the Candle Shop to put (or buy) such things on their computer, and left them there when he left.

Quick Verse — Insensitive to Our Disobedience

Then there are the concordance type programs like Quick Verse. Some of the brothers wondered what we thought about them. Shoresch said these programs makes him think of Jn 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."

What precedes this verse is Jn 14:21,23 — He resides in those who obey and please Him. It would be a great sin against the New Covenant to rely on a computer program to bring to mind what the Holy Spirit can't because of the where our heart has been. It should be a check to us that we can't remember something, that the Holy Spirit can't bring something we need back to us. As we look for a verse through the Scriptures, or even the concordance (remember the teaching, *Ye Olde Concordance*, however), the labor helps write it on our heart and mind. Pouring through the teachings looking for the oil we need for a situation brings us near to the place Yoneq functions from. Is our spiritual address in the sweatless modern world? These programs make everything so easy, searching every word in the entire Bible *in seconds*.

The New Covenant is totally related to our obedience. That machine is not related, nor is it hindered in responding to us, by our obedience or disobedience. Do we really need to use computers so much in our writing? Yoneq writes his thoughts down longhand, laboring over it. What if we were to bring corruption into the Body through computers into the realm of teachings? (Through the programs, altering the teachings to suit our printer, and then our style, and then our thoughts...) It would be like severing the jugular vein to our head.

Respect for the Teachings

So, we asked the question, is it best to send out the teachings to the communities on disk, or should we go back to sending them out on paper? Shoresch asked us what the basic issue was here. He sensed it was government and related how when he came into the Body there was a real respect for the teachings. They were only in the hands of those men who were approved to bring them to the Body. You wouldn't dream of going to the filing cabinet where they were kept and just taking one out for yourself. It was a great honor to be given a copy of the teachings, to be trusted not to misrepresent what the anointing was saying.

It was a sacred trust to take the anointing in and put it back out for the Body as you received it. It can't be any different today.

The people who handle the teachings for Yoneq are trusted to do so because of the fellowship they have with him, and the accountability towards him and the Body. They have been put into that position and to fail to carry out their tasks in the Spirit and therefore cause harm would be a matter of deep personal sorrow because of the trust given them. Yoneq put it this way about Bahirah in the *New Age Movement Teaching*, "Even if I make sure that my teaching is by the Spirit, if Bahirah was to write it by her own strength, then that is as far as it would go."

He also said about her in that teaching, and this is one of the main things we saw about computers — that anyone on them should have the confidence this is one of the works they were saved to do: "I heard from a teacher in Judah that as he was teaching about mercy from a teaching I taught here a few months ago, which Bahirah had typed up, a young 18 year old woman began weeping and cried out for salvation. Now that is one of the good works that Bahirah was saved for. She was saved *for* that, but not *by* it. It is not the good works she does

that she is saved *by*— for we are saved by grace through faith. But in the Body, there are good works that we are saved to do. We are to carefully devote ourselves in doing those good works. Titus 2:14 says we are zealous for good works, but Titus 3:8 tells us what *zealous* is — carefully devoting yourself to the good works you are saved to spend (pour out) your life in doing (Titus 3:4-8)."

If any of us are not doing those works, we are devoting ourselves to things that are taking our glory away, to things that are actually decreasing our stature. This affects everyone around us, beginning with our wives and children (Pr 18:9).

There should be clear reins of government over computers and their use in the community. Yonah felt strongly that touching the teachings for the sake of expediency (my printer works better when I take out all the emphasis — the bold and italic letters and the underlinings), shows a lack of spiritual understanding. He said he depends on these things to help him understand and teach the teachings. He knows these are things Yoneq has emphasized.

Befuddlement

Shores said his concern was that it is possible for a spiritual brother who is walking in the light to listen to a brother with a powerful intellect (since we always think the best of one another) and end up getting a computer when he doesn't really need one, nor does anyone in his community. He saw this subtle process of befuddlement ends up in the spiritual brother tearing down the very life he is trying to build up. One brother at the meeting related how he had always resisted computers coming into the business he covered until, at a lengthy meeting, the brother who wanted one said, "Look, if we get a computer I will spend half the time I do in the office and more time out doing the things you want me to be doing, like meeting people."

That clinched it for us, we finally listened to him. We went out and spent \$2,500 getting a 386 computer which this brother was regularly on until 1 or 2 in the morning. He had drawing programs on it, all kinds of stuff, yet we never used it for much more than typing up invoices. Not only did this cost us a lot of money, it did the opposite of what we intended it to do. The same thing just happened, or is happening, in another community.

Order over Computers

One brother brought up how another brother had come to his community, took a copy of all the teachings off the computer there without asking, and was disturbed when he received a letter asking him to delete them off his hard drive and send the disks back. In response to this, Keli said a lot of people are going to be disturbed when government starts coming in the realm of computers. {Not only that, someone had put a compression program — on his own initiative — on that computer which not only compressed the teachings but ate quite a few of them as well. (Zerubbabel — They were already compressed on that computer's hard drive anyway.) It has taken a while to restore the files back to what they hopefully were before.}

A computer belongs to the community that purchased and governs it, just like any other piece of equipment. Would people hop on the bobcat in Boston, just because they knew how to drive it, without asking Shaul? Of course not, they would respect the private property and the potential harm their lawless actions could bring on the Boston community. It is no different with computers.

A Common Mind

Yadutan felt we have to get rid of useless software on our computers. Not only are they a distraction, this kind of software is often a source of destructive viruses. (Not to mention buying uncovered and unneeded software. This always leads to creating needs for it to be used for.) There is something powerful about computers. An older brother in the mechanical trades suddenly decided he needed a computer. It was only with much patient labor that another brother was able to convince him a word processor was all he needed. It is not only the difference between \$220 and several thousand dollars, it is all the time that goes into learning and refining both the programs and what they produce for us. Most of what most of us need is already programmed into newer word processors.

After we come to some kind of mind here, and then in the particular situations each eldership applies it to,

we can assist in the choice of the kinds of equipment and programs they really need. It has to be like the Cook's Meeting. The women in the community have respect for the kinds of food and the kinds of food preparation they bring into the communities because they have been raised up to have respect for what the anointing teaches. (The woman who abandons that because of the damaged goods store where she can get unhealthy foods cheap is bringing harm to her community and household beyond what the food does. The basic respect for our Father's word is being broken down.)

There has to be the same respect in this realm. We have to establish a mind about word processing, desktop publishing, and business programs. This council won't be telling the individual communities what to do, but we can call them to account if they are not upholding the things our Father has communicated to us. To be competent in this realm to where it can be truly helpful almost requires setting people apart to do it, like David Zerubbabel in the realm of Freepapers. Then there has to be judgment as to the fruit in their lives, the lives of their families, and the work they are producing. The real problem has been people setting themselves apart. Often they don't do, or barely do the things like music instruction or evangelism that they are really set apart for.

An example of someone who has resisted that power is Ayil. Instead, he worked with Zerubbabel, who was already knowledgeable in the area of desktop publishing, and preserved his gifting as an editor of Freepapers. Another brother, who has marvelous fruit in his gifting in the Body, has not. He is wasting his life away before that computer screen.

Spontaneous Literature

We briefly discussed the idea of spontaneous Freepapers, where a community has some evangelistic event come up at the last minute in their city and they don't have time to have the Print Shop get something together for them. They, using their computers, pull something together from old articles and maybe something new they write, and get some company in their city to print it.

We had a real check on this because literature goes all over the place. We felt at this time the least that should happen is that such spontaneous literature should only have the name of the community that printed it on it. (But see what was said later about this, page 15.) Ayil noted that someone could write an impassioned article about sodomites, prints it up with all the addresses on it, and someone in Providence could come and bomb his house. It is not so far fetched an occurrence. We saw we have to be careful in handling computers for there is a snake in them. We are still so green in producing Freepapers in council even, how can we let it happen away from the apostolic covering of the whole tribe?

The Three Principle Uses of Computers in the Community

- 1) Publishing — Freepapers and Curriculum
- 2) Cottage Industry — Bookkeeping and Estimating
- 3) Word Processing — Teachings and Curriculum

Publishing

How are we going to govern this realm of our lives? We usually get a call of some kind, either for a Grateful Dead paper, a paper to Christianity because of some event, or a special event like Woodstock or the conference in Israel. Often we receive some teaching from Yoneq and then we gather a council of people to go over it, read it and digest it. Then there is a time of writing, followed by the regathering of the council to review what has come forth, then we edit and rewrite to strengthen and clarify what has been written, then we get to layout, review of the layout, and finally printing. All of these steps occur under a high or strict level of control. The whole process is watched over, with changes being made because of things Hakam or others see right up until the last moment. It is a good thing that we have understanding printers.

All upgrading of programs and tools we purchase at the Print Shop are to make possible the quick and thorough production of papers. This last one about community for the Billy Graham crusade was essentially done in 48 hours. We want to be able to do what we want to do without the computer interfering. We have just entered into the realm of using a scanner to replace hours and hours of late night darkroom work to get the kind of layouts we want.

Master or Servant?

Shoresh interjected at this point that what scares him is someone who can come in and tell us what a computer can do, and then persuade us to do it. What we want to do instead is to know who we are and how we want to present ourselves, and then judge whether this tool can help us; and whether we are really comfortable with it. The first approach to technology is on the broad road. Yadutan added at that point the computer is no longer a servant, it has become a master.

Another example would be the use of computer generated signs in our Strictly Vermont stores. We want to have people running the stores who know how they should look and have a mind about the kind of things we want in them. What we don't want is someone who says, I have a computer which makes signs, how can we use them to make our products more noticeable (more effective advertising to make more money for the store — which helps to justify having it). The end results of such an approach are nauseating.

The artistic glory of a community is in its artists, not its computers. We don't want to create needs for the tools we have or would like to buy, we want to meet the needs we have (Titus 3:16).

David Zerubbabel brought up something he has struggled with. In the area he functions in, a slower, less powerful computer can mean hours of delay while the computer performs each new, but repetitious task as idea after idea is tried in the layout of an article. Faster computers would help us out a lot, but it is a hard matter for him to judge. Shoresh said what do we want in the machines we put to work in this way? Do we have what we need? If we do, let's be content. This way of thinking will bring such peace in the realms of cars, cameras, tools, as well.

Hyannis recently received a computer from the father of one of the disciples there. One thing we often assume is that it is our Father who gives us everything we receive. But it is not only Him who can give things to us. We have to put this concept into the sheep. People have to be able to judge these things.

Maybe they should have said, "What do we need a computer for?"

Yadutan related how he had been a manager over three computer salesmen at a store. He taught them how to create need in people's minds. They would come into his store and just by asking the customers a few simple questions, *and supplying the answers*, we created their need for a computer. In the face of these internal and external pressures, each government has got to be able to have the same mind. We are here to hear from our Father and present this to Judah.

What We Publish

Ayil asked whether we wanted to have several print shops in New England or just one big one. Shoresh told him, "You need to tell us what the needs are."

Ayil thought we might need to have several print shops, one devoted to industry (all the printing our cottage industries will need), one for curriculum, and one for Freepapers. There will always have to be apostolic counsel over the final product (the Freepaper) that expresses who we are (or anything else that attempts to do that). But that council need not be concerned over the tools used to produce it. We need to raise up people even to Ayil's stature. Yet it would be really foolish to have people in each clan having to be their own Print Shop.

Shoresh expressed he hated the look of desktop publishing, that crisp, lifeless look. Ayil has a gift, he has not buried it to become proficient in computer programming. We discussed different ways our Freepapers can look, how they started out, the Spanish "Who We Are" that was hand lettered and printed that way, etc. One of the things we need to make our Freepapers warmer to release people like Gilah to come and work on the papers. She contributed so much to the one paper she worked on (the Woodstock paper). With the scanner technology we now have, we can accumulate a stock of our own artwork and borders instead of using other peoples from books. People like Sekel could come down and letter introductions to articles which we could incorporate right into our layout. It is not beyond us to have scribes writing out our articles which could then be made into photo ready copy. We have to be all things to all men, that somehow we might win some of them. Maybe someday we will toss the computers out in our printing of Freepapers, but for now we need them.

As we talked we came to the clear understanding that we do not want independent publishing going on in

the realm of the gospel. There are other things the Print Shop could help on, like catalogues for our stores, but not oversee the contents of as they do our literature.

Yadutan felt the situation has reached such a point that each community ought to consider purging their computers of all unneeded (or all) programs and seek counsel as to what should be restored after they are cleansed. Along this line of thinking we wondered why a number of community would need to have the teachings on computer disk. We felt that they didn't need to, but that we would continue sending the teachings on disk to the tribes. We will distribute the teachings from Providence from now on, so everyone can get their copies from them, or the community that normally supplies them with teachings.

Individual communities are going to have to govern what they do in the area of computers. We have to remember that the world-wide identification system of the beast is going to come in through computers.

Cottage Industries

With the printing needs each industry faces, our vision has always been to support the Print Shop by giving them our business. Since the ability exists with computers to meet our own printing needs, is that what we should do instead? Someone compared this to a brother having a job to dig a huge ditch. After buying a big backhoe to dig it, he then has to get a crew of guys functioning just to make the payments on the backhoe. (That is the real, but unspoken purpose for that crew.) Then people start grumbling about the backhoe and what a lousy industry it is anyway. Computers are all too often like that backhoe, draining either cash or people's time in a way that bears no fruit.

The trading or selling of computers to meet a need somewhere must be done with great integrity or our Father will not be able to bless what results. There are years of musical trades involving thousands of dollars in cash and instruments which have left nothing but a bad taste in people's mouth. Either we all have the same mind about computers, coming from the same Spirit — which we are able to pass on to others, or we deserve to be destroyed. The minute we pass beyond our local realm and demand things of others, we have gone beyond the spiritual realm our Father is in. We have to stay in the realm of faith. Those in each area we are touching on here today will have to pass on vision so each community can judge themselves and take on the vision we have and not waste valuable people's time.

Bookkeeping

Aharon said accounting programs require someone with accounting training to maintain integrity in the numbers. The program itself will not ensure the integrity we have to have. In the Candle Shop the computer and the programs it had were used in a pretty simple way to prepare invoices and for tracking sales. It wasn't used for bookkeeping and tracking expenses so you could see just how profitable each product you sold was and just how expensive each process you used was. As a tool, a computer used by someone without business and financial knowledge, can mess things up quite easily. Manufacturing as a cottage industry is far different than service industries.

In Gad the Candle Shop went on computer with the program M.Y.O.B., and the cafe is going on. Gad presents an interesting situation with regards to their taxes. If you are late in filing there, you lose all benefits of filing as a group of people who share their income. It is considered to be individual income then. The difference recently would have been an increase in tax liability of \$65,000.

In Judah there are some 30 industries. In about 80% of them the bookkeeping is pretty pitiful. There is a great lack in this area, especially as we go into smaller communities. People need training in order to do what is right. We have to consider how we use people who have this kind of training when they come into the community. With government, we should seriously consider whether they can help us here. It is a need

Because of all Aharon is doing in the way we are set up in the tax realm, Tovah of Hamburg, a new disciple, is finishing the books for me in Island Pond. She is the best bookkeeper we have in Judah. Yael is good in that community too.

Aharon is looking into accounting programs in order to evaluate their effectiveness. I understand the numbers they spit out, but he is trying to find out how useful they will be for us. There are accounting programs for as little as \$19, and a good, simple program for keeping track of your books is Quicken, available for only \$30 (for communities which are not invoicing). If our businesses are small the way they

are supposed to be, our bookkeeping needs should be simple too.

Yet if we are depending on the knowledge computer programs give us to make our decisions we'll go off. We'll end up making decisions on the basis of expediency, not so as to best represent our Master (see the teaching of June, 1995, "Whatever We Do").

Word Processing

Who needs computers? Qatan could use typists to help him prepare material for editing. We have to learn to delegate the tasks we do, so we are using our time wisely. Qatan doesn't need to be typing the teachings in. We have to understand how we are to be. One time an aggressive brother wanted Yoneq to come to a meeting about some aspect of industry. Yoneq told him, "I don't know if my Father wants me to give my strength to that."

The Pruning teaching tells us pruning comes to us in order that we would become self-pruning. Then we won't have many little branches growing out of us, weak and bearing little fruit. Instead we'll have a few healthy, fruit laden branches. It can't be the writers in the Body can't write without using computers.

Otherwise, people with developing gifting as writers will think they need a computer to write, and that is just not so. Writers do not have to know how to type in the Body. We need one another to complete each other, we don't need to learn to do everything. We need to depend on others.

It would be such an honor for people skilled in typing to get an article from Yonah and be asked to type it up. Then Yonah could go on to work with it after it is typed up. Let's not get bogged down and stifled in our gifts because of technology. Qatan wondered if Yoneq was going to be with us until the end of the age, or is there going to have to be a number of people, faithful men who have internalized these things so that the Holy Spirit can bring them to their minds (2 Tim 2:2).

It is an awesome thing to have a teaching, to be entrusted with that responsibility. We should be leery of how easy we make it for the teachings to be duplicated. Shoresh cautioned us from getting too concerned about this in the wrong way. When he was in court for Hemlah's child custody case, Stuart's lawyers had gotten a hold of several of the child training teachings. When they brought them out in court, he read right from them, unashamed, because they are the truth. Our care over the teachings had to be that those entrusted with them would be able to pass on the Spirit, not the letter. Therefore, it is the shepherds in each community who decide who should get the teachings.

The reason people would have word processors in the realm of teachings is to type them up so others can edit them. (They are also useful for volumes of correspondence like sometimes arises in business.)

To Sum Up

There has to be a barrier in people's consciences about touching computers or letting their children do so. Computers, through their marvelously clever software and *powerful, slick advertising*, appeal to both the sense and the mind, seeming to offer many potentially practical ways of solving our problems — if only we will devote the time and expense necessary to mastering the software (Gen 3:6).

We all need covering, but some people don't sense their need of it, their need of His approval in the things they are giving themselves to. The challenging, often intense intellectual satisfaction that computers can give certain types of people may come to substitute for this approval, in a way no different than the "diesel demon" does. If we don't sense our need we may well be subtle are loving, our love never fails. We are to live by love continually, perfectly. We fail if we are in the flesh. The way this house will never fall, when His house is fully built — the 12 tribes fully developed — is Heb 3:6.

YAHSHUA had human nature for divine nature to dwell in permanently, inseparably. That's why human nature was created. They are totally compatible. Human nature is created — that is why it is secondary, a little lower. That is why divine nature has to be in command. YAHSHUA had many human brothers. Our Father has many human sons.

We have to have outspokenness to declare and confess to our Father what is wrong with us, seeing our condition, judging ourselves.

Eph 3:12; Heb 10:35 — confidence — outspokenness.

We have to have boldness to come before Him and express what is going on in us, what is wrong with us, so that

He can do something about it. That is judging ourselves. We might say, "I am not able to deal with my children; I can't turn my heart towards them." Then He says, "I can do something about it." We express our inadequacies, our failures. Then He can do something about it.

Do you know in which ways you are not measuring up to the Son of God when He was here on earth? Well, that's what you have to confess. That's your outspokenness. That's what judging yourself is. It took Abraham 24 years to come into that. 1 Cor 11:27-29 — Unless we can judge ourselves we will be judged. God doesn't have to judge us if we can judge ourselves. Sometimes we don't see our true condition; we are dull and so we need our brothers and sisters to help us to see these things that we don't see so well.

Eph 3:12 — We go in the faith of Him, not our faith. That's how we go before Him. In the sacrifice, we come before Him and ask Him for the things we need or else we will fall. 1 Tim 2 tells us what we need. First of all there cannot be any wrath or dissension. Also Mt 6:9-13 (in our closet or when we take walks we can pray for what we need personally). This is already prayed for in the day. 1000 years is like a day to our Father. He remembers our heartfelt prayer. Sometimes we don't ask for grace and so we fall. We fall because we don't have grace. We don't have grace because we don't ask. The reason we don't have is because we don't ask.

Heb 3:6, confidence — the Greek word means *outspokenness*.

Our Master had outspokenness, boldness, confidence. That is what we need. The dead cannot praise YAHSHUA; they go down to silence. Many places in the Bible speak about that. They had a reputation of being alive, but they were dead. We need to strengthen what is weak.

It may not take as long for us to come into self-judgment as it took Abraham because we have the indwelling personal Holy Spirit.