

Sabino Canyon

Down through the ages God has performed His mighty works through selected men in selected places. Thus it is that to the believer, the wonder of the works is inseparable from the locations themselves. With Moses it was Mount Sinai, a place revered and dear to the hearts of even the modern-day Jewish nation. David brings to mind the City of David, the Holy City of Jerusalem, cradle of Christianity actually trod by the feet of Jesus. Here the selection of many of His disciples took place; here also He initiated the last supper. Just across the valley is the quiet Garden of Gethsemane, where He prayed, "Not my will but thine be done." Just to the north of this city is the infamous Golgotha Hill, place of agony and death for Jesus, the sacrificed Lamb.

The Isle of Patmos is remembered among Christians for being the site of John's wondrous revelation. Here it was that God visited a man and showed him all that would come upon the earth from that day until the end time,

So it was that God, dealing with the hearts of men as He has always done through the ages, chose as one of His meeting places with His prophet of this generation the great, rugged range of the Catalina Mountains and, within this range, a canyon known as Sabino Canyon. Tucson lies at the base of this range and may be seen as a glittering jewel from the Sabino Canyon trail at night.

From early in his life. Brother Branham had heard the beckoning call of the west. In 1928 he did heed this call, but returned back east when his brother died. It was thirty years later that he spoke again of the west, while in meetings in Waterloo, Iowa, with some very dear friends, the Norman family. Brother Norman had just expressed a desire to move from Iowa and Brother Branham told him that, if it were him, he believed that he would go west. Greatly influenced by anything their friend the prophet said, the Normans moved to Tucson. This placed them in a strategic location, the gateway to Sabino Canyon.

The first I knew of Brother Branham's interest in Tucson was in January, 1961, when he came the second time to Beaumont, Texas, for a meeting. I remember him saying that he was headed on out to visit the Normans and go Javelina hunting, and how I marvelled that he had only brought seven bullets with him. He declined my offer to sight his rifle at the range where I was a member, saying that he would be sighting it in at Tucson with six of the bullets and that the seventh bullet would be used to kill his pig. It was then I realized that here was an extraordinary hunter, one who would hunt that far away from home with only seven bullets. Later I found out how really well he did handle this rifle he called "Blondy," a Remington Model 721, in the 270 Winchester caliber, which he had used to kill fifty-five head of game without missing a shot.

In front of the parsonage at Jeffersonville, which had been built with funds donated by the people of Calgary, Canada, was a stone entrance to the driveway. A neighbor and friend, Brother Banks Wood, had purchased a lot next to the parsonage property and was intent upon building a stone house on it. Brother Branham advised him not to do this, because he felt that the location would be taken up when a bridge across the Ohio river from Louisville was built someday. Then in 1957, Brother Branham received a vision from the Lord which was pertinent to this property- He saw stones lying around on his front yard, road building equipment, and stakes like surveyor's stakes driven down in his front yard. A young man, described by Brother Branham as a "Ricky," a smart aleck bulldozer driver, was tearing up his front yard as he

worked on the road. In the vision, Brother Branham was upset with this boy and he found himself striking the boy three times before he caught himself, realizing that this was conduct unbecoming to a minister of the Gospel. At this, he thought to himself how he hadn't hit anybody like that since he was a boxer. Then the Spirit of the Lord spoke to him and said, "Bypass this. When you see these stakes driven down in your front yard, you bypass this." He looked, and there sitting at his front gate was a "prairie schooner," a covered wagon such as the pioneers used when they headed west. His wife sat up next to the driver's place, a team had been hitched, and his children were all loaded and ready to go. He climbed up, picked up the reins, and headed west when suddenly the prairie schooner became his own station wagon. This was the end of the vision and he recorded it in his book of visions.

One day in late 1962, as Brother Branham was about to enter his driveway, he noticed that the gate and fence had been marked as if by a contractor's crew for removal. The street was to be widened. In his front yard were those stakes he had seen in the vision, driven down. The thing quickened his memory; he looked in the vision book, and there it was: "When these things come to pass, turn westward." He told his congregation of this fulfillment in his message to them *Sirs, Is This The Time?* in December of 1962. This was the time for him to move west. In January of 1963, he moved to Tucson.

In July, 1965, while I was visiting with Brother Branham, he told me of how he had asked the brothers to tear the gate down in front of the parsonage in Jeffersonville, so that the stones could be stored and later reassembled after the proposed street widening had taken place. I had seen Brother Banks and some of the other brothers out there working with sledge and chisel trying diligently to remove the stones. Brother Branham told me about this and related how the brothers had worked all day long and succeeded in removing only two or three of the stones. He said that Brother Banks had told him that they must have made the thing out of solid concrete and that it was impossible for them to tear it down. At this Brother Branham remembered the old vision again and went to the book. There it was in the vision that he had seen that boy on a bulldozer tearing that gate down. Now it was clear that the gate couldn't be removed until that boy and that bulldozer arrived on the scene. The gate was left intact at that time.

Finally the day arrived. Brother Banks Wood was a witness that the day they came to move the gate, sure enough, there was a smart aleck "Ricky" kid on a bulldozer spinning around, tearing the yard up, and running up against the trees, just as Brother Branham had seen it in the vision. This proved that the vision was of God, and could only be brought about in the way that God had decreed.

In the Book of Zechariah is recorded, "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; . . . like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: . . . And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Now, is not this message which Brother Branham brought "light in the evening time"? Does it not come at a time of cold, dead, spiritual darkness? Look at the city of Tucson. It lies spread out at twenty-seven hundred -feet above sea level, yet it is in a valley surrounded by mountains whose names spell- out C-H-R-I-S-T, as taken from the first letters of the names. From what we know now, it was a place anointed of God.

According to National Geographic, November, 1965, neither the Papago nor the Apache Indians had ever occupied the Tucson Valley. The Papagos, the largest friendly tribe, and the

Apaches, the most warlike tribe, dwelt just one mountain range apart in this area, and they both came to the Tucson Valley to worship. The Indians said that God dwelled in the Catalina Mountains. They had some revelation of God, for they believed in the Happy Hunting Ground and the Great Spirit—the one God of the Universe.

Soon after Brother Branham moved to Tucson, it became apparent to those of us who followed his message that strange things were in store. There was the time when the highway patrolman stopped him as he was on the road from Phoenix to Tucson, asking him where he was headed.

"Jerusalem!" said Brother Branham.

"Where did you come from?" questioned the officer.

"Jericho!" came the answer.

His answers might seem strange to some, but an examination of a world globe shows the marked similarity in latitude of the two Arizona cities and their Israeli counterparts. In addition, the altitude of Jerusalem is twenty-four hundred feet which compares with Tucson's twenty-seven hundred feet.

As we have seen in previous chapters, Brother Branham arrived in Tucson in January of 1963 with the vision of the angels and the terrific explosion very much on his mind. The vision had greatly disturbed him, and though not afraid to die, yet he was concerned for his family as any man would be. It was in this state of agitation and while beseeching the Lord for an answer that he woke up one morning, looked out the window of his apartment toward a distant spot in the Catalinas, and heard the Angel of the Lord say to him, "Go there." At that time he saw a vision that he had seen before, something that attracted him to that place in the mountains. The spot that his gaze had settled upon was Sabino Canyon.

At about 8:30 that morning he entered the canyon, drove up as far as he could, and set out on foot. The great, massive bluffs of the eastern canyon wall rose vertically at his right side, higher and higher, up where the eagles fly. Climbing up along an abandoned road and then straight up the side of a sloping bluff, he found himself "up where the eagles were flying," then in the midst of some jagged rocks. Here he felt the presence of the Lord and knelt to pray. He told me personally one time, in August of 1965, that he was asking God to show him the meaning of all of this, to give him an answer for himself. He went on to tell me of the times when he had been so sick to his stomach that he would throw up this greasy, water-like substance, have to be helped to the platform, and yet place his hands on cancer-ridden people and have the cancer disappear.

The gift seemed to be for anyone but himself. For as long as a year, he related, God would turn His face from His prophet, testing and trying him. So here he was that morning, up high in Sabino Canyon, desperately seeking God for an answer for himself with his hands raised to God Almighty when the sun just crested through a saddle between the peaks and suddenly, the handle of a sword struck in his hand.

Brother Branham told of the sword appearing many times, but I would like to tell it as he told me personally. We were sitting in the Holiday Inn coffee shop. I remember that above us on the wall was a shield with two swords crossed on it. Brother Branham picked up his knife, held it up and said, "Brother Peary, it was just as real as this knife I hold in my hand." He told how the handle was pearl and the guard was of gold. He drew me a diagram on a napkin that seemed to indicate the blade was from eighteen to twenty inches in length. It was sharp.

"There it was glistening in the sun," he said, "when that voice spoke."

"It's the King's Sword," said the voice.

"Oh," he said, "a sword like a king knights a man with."

"Not a king's sword," exclaimed the voice, "The King's Sword!"

In telling this, he said to me, "Brother Pearry, it wasn't a dream; it wasn't a vision; it was a literal sword in my hand. The sun was reflecting off from it." He told how he rubbed his eyes to see if he was asleep, but that it simply was no dream or vision—it was real.

It was then that the voice spoke to him and said, "This is the Third Pull."

After this fantastic experience in Sabino Canyon, Brother Branham was attracted many times to return to the canyon. The jagged rocks way up high held a particular attraction for him. Here he stood looking out and downward to Tucson.

As background to the next experience in Sabino, let us return to a time in 1923 when his mother, who was not given to dreaming, was about to tell him a dream she had concerning him. He stopped her and told her the dream himself, just as Daniel had recalled the king's dream for him. (He often did this later in his ministry, actually recalling for people who brought their dreams to him, details that they had left out. Yet some said he told their dreams wrong, forgetting that it was they who had brought the dreams to him, having confidence that he could tell them the interpretations.) In his mother's dream he was out west building a house up on a hill when six snow-white doves flew to him, lit upon his chest, placed their beaks against his cheek, and cooed. The arrival of the six doves had been in an "S" formation and they departed in the same manner.

One other bit of background is required. The setting is the Mayo Clinic sometime in the 1950's. Brother Branham had gone there out of a desperate need to know how he could be cured of his stomach ailment that had plagued him every seven years of his life. The doctors of the famous clinic had conducted all their tests and he was waiting for the outcome—perhaps at long last an answer to this affliction that robbed him of strength and made life so miserable for him. That morning as he awoke, he went into a vision. He saw himself as a seven-year-old boy, standing near the hollow stump of a tree. Then it seemed that he was no longer seven, but a man of about thirty-eight. Some type of a strange little animal that looked like a squirrel had gone into the hollow of the stump and he was rubbing a stick on the stump to bring it out. Suddenly the animal flew out of the stump, landed on his shoulder, and ran from shoulder to shoulder. In his vision he had a knife with which he was trying to kill the animal, but he couldn't do it. He opened his mouth to exclaim, "Wha . . . !" and the furry little animal jumped into his mouth, went into his stomach and began turning over and over.

He came out of the vision screaming, "Oh Lord! Help me! Help me! ..." A voice spoke to him quietly saying, "Remember, it's only six inches long." The voice repeated, "Remember, it's only six inches long." In the book *A Man Sent From God* Brother Branham wondered whether this meant that the nervous stomach condition would only be six more months, or could it be that he would have it six times in his life? The real answer was to be found in Sabino Canyon.

On September 11, 1965, Brother Branham brought his message *God's Power To Transform* in Phoenix, Arizona. He and I were together a little while that day. It was then that I told him I would sell my business in Texas, move to Tucson, and open a place of worship there for those who followed his message in that city. The following week on September 18, while in Tucson, Brother Branham called to ask whether I would have breakfast with him. I readily agreed, and

we met in the coffee shop of the Ramada Inn, where I was staying. He told me of how nervous he had been the past few weeks. The problems of the people moving to the city with no place of worship began to weigh heavily upon him. He expressed his joy that I would be coming to remedy that situation. Again he told me of the experiences of the sword in Sabino and of the cloud over the mountain which descended three times. He asked me if I had seen his new home which he was building at the end of the Catalinas. We were in the coffee shop so long that day that we ordered lunch. It bothered me that I was taking so much of his time. I thought of how, since the day in February, 1964, when I had first told him that I perceived him to be a prophet, I had never gone to a city where he was present but that he would contact me in some manner even though I never asked for an interview. Each time we talked he would go over these same experiences. It was so puzzling to me, I asked him why this should be necessary, especially when so many other people wanted to see him. This day at the Ramada Inn, I asked him again why he was spending the time with me when a hundred other people would have liked to have seen him. He simply said, "Brother Pearry, it's meant to be." Now I knew that it surely was meant to be because, from his description of the happenings in Sabino Canyon, I have been able to locate the very places where they occurred.

On September 19, the next day, Brother Branham preached in Grantway Assembly of God Church, Tucson, his sermon *Thirst*. The message was broadcast via telephone hookup. Then, on September 20, God called him back again to Sabino Canyon. In *What Is The Attraction On The Mountain* he tells how he rose early in the morning, felt to look out the window, and was again reminded by God of that vision of the little squirrel-like creature. "There's that squirrel," he told his wife, as he took his Bible and again headed for the canyon.

It was later in the day, on September 20, that Brother George Smith and I stopped at Brother Branham's apartment. We were on our way to Beaumont where I was, according to Brother Branham's instructions, to "pray George through" to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Brother George had stopped to say good-bye to Becky before we left. Brother Branham came to the front door holding his Bible. I could see that he had been crying.

"Brother Green," he said, "do you remember what I told you Saturday about being so nervous?"

I replied that I remembered.

"Well, I won't tell you now," he went on, "you'll learn of it later. Something happened this morning that lets me know that God said I'd be OK!"

Brother George joined us about chat time and Brother Branham, standing facing the west, his right hand to the north, motioned over his head and said, "I went up in Sabino this morning. I went up the trail, made that curve and came back around where those jagged rocks are up there, right underneath that saddle, where the sword appeared. But before I got up there, the Lord paid me a visit."

He did not elaborate at that time, so Brother George and I didn't know what had happened, but we left rejoicing anyway.

Brother Branham returned to Sabino each day for the next two days, but it was not until October 2, when I came to Tucson with Brother Marconda to examine some property that he had located and felt would be appropriate for a church, that I was to learn more. We were at Brother Evans' service station when Brother Branham came by. When we told him about the property, he asked to see it also. Brother Marconda and I got in Brother Branham's station wagon and set

out toward the Sabino Canyon area. I remember that he drove very slowly and that it took us forty-five minutes to drive from the service station out to the junction of River Road and Sabino Canyon Road. Brother Marconda sat in front, I sat in the back, and it was during this ride that Brother Branham told me how the men who were to be the deacons of the church I was planning would automatically come in and start doing the jobs without any worry or prompting on my part. I was not to be anxious, he told me, for God would bring it to pass. But it was also at this time, that he told us about the white dove appearing, about the word "eagle" being written on the rock, and how he had taken a picture of the rock with the word written upon it. His words thrilled us greatly, but we still didn't have a complete understanding of the significance of the events in Sabino Canyon.

I returned to Beaumont, and from there flew to Venezuela on a preaching mission. On October 2, I told the people there all that I knew of these experiences in Sabino, but only from the standpoint of my limited knowledge at that time. Then in November, 1965, I moved with my family to Tucson. I visited Sabino for the first time and began to see these places that Brother Branham had spoken of. Then at Thanksgiving, we all went to Shreveport, Louisiana, and it was there, the night that Brother Branham preached *On The Wings Of A Snow-White Dove* that at long last, I fully understood what had happened in Sabino Canyon on September 20, 21, and 22.

On the morning of September 20, after the Lord had reminded him of the squirrel-like creature, he had climbed up into Sabino Canyon, toward the place where the sword appeared. Suddenly as he rounded a curve in the trail, there was the little furry animal. It wasn't a squirrel; in fact, it was different than anything that he had ever seen. The animal had leaped at him, missed, and speared itself on a cholla cactus. A thrill coursed through him as he knew that this was a sign from the Lord that this disease that Dr. Ravensway had declared incurable (after examining his stomach and saying that it was like lead, completely encrusted) would soon leave him. The full revelation was that the "six inches" of the little creature meant that he would have the trouble six times. Since he had suffered with it every seven years and this was his fifty-sixth year, the sixth seven-year period was drawing to a close and he would be free of the malady for the remainder of his days.

The next day, the 21st, he was back again, headed toward the jagged rocks where the sword had appeared. Suddenly he was aware of the presence of the Lord. He removed his hat, looked around, and there on the trail was a little white dove. His mind returned to the dream of the six doves in an "S" formation while he was out west building a house on a hill. He said that he had always known that the seventh dove would appear someday. Now here he was in the west, building a house on a hill and the seventh dove had come to him. He took it as it was intended, a sign from above—of God's pure sweet love—on the wings of a snow-white dove; as God visited Noah—with a dove; as God gave witness at the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan—with a dove.

September 22nd found him again headed up the canyon. He had returned home the day before rejoicing and now he was going back to praise and give thanks to the Lord. He came to a fork in the trail where he had always taken the eastern-bearing branch. This morning he felt strongly attracted to take the west branch at this fork. He spent the entire morning in the grandeur of the canyon, along this western branch of the trail. He had taken a drink of the cool sparkling water at the creek and about noon found himself headed back along the trail. He stopped to rest in the shade, leaning against a rock that he described as weighing about seventy

ton. The voice spoke to him, "What are you leaning against?" Quickly he pushed back from the rock to examine it and there, written in the white quartz in the very side of the rock was the word "eagle." (Remember his message on the eagle and the dove, how he always said the dove would lead the eagle and it would be the eagle message that would take the Bride over to the other side.) How the word "eagle" got on that rock nobody knows, but there, written into the side of the rock at about the height of the prophet's heart as he leaned against the rock, is the word "eagle." The next day he returned to photograph the rock. He took a total of eighteen pictures that day. They were developed shortly after this, but no one knew of the experiences in full until he preached On The Wings Of A Snow-White Dove. Of course, after this sermon, it meant a lot to everyone, because there was never a service where the presence of the Lord was felt any more than that night in Shreveport. How we thought of these experiences during the week of the accident, trying to reconcile the meaning of the Sabino visitations with the contrasting horror of the accident.

Though we couldn't seem to find the significance at that time, there is one thing we can all be sure of, God loved His prophet, for He sent him a sign—on the wings of a dove.

In March, 1966, Brother Billy Paul in relating to me the burden of his loneliness, remarked how he would give anything to be able to find the places in Sabino where God visited his father. We examined the photographs and the negatives

together. As we looked them over, my memory was nudged by some of the scenes. It seemed that I began to recognize them. We came to the one which looked like an eagle perched up high, with his wings pulled back, looking over his right shoulder. I hadn't seen the formation, but I remarked that I thought I would be able to find that outstanding rock, even if I had to charter an airplane to do it. Suddenly, it seemed that the key to Eagle Rock lay somewhere in these photographs. Brother Branham wasn't a camera enthusiast, but he had left us a record of the way to Eagle Rock. The one picture of Eagle Rock showed clearly the word "eagle" written in white on the side (rather, into the side) of the rock. Brother Billy Paul brought that picture to the church on Sunday night to show to the congregation.

This experience of viewing the pictures and talking to Brother Billy Paul had so stirred my heart that I was haunted by it all day Monday. On Tuesday afternoon, March 13, 1966, exactly three years to the day that Brother Branham left Tucson bound for Jeffersonville to preach the Seals, Brother Harold McClintock and I headed up into Sabino to begin our search.

We had no sooner parked the car than I immediately recognized one of the formations that had appeared on one of Brother Branham's photographs, but I realized that the angle was different; he apparently had been up somewhere on the slope looking horizontally at the formation. So it went as we continued our search, with a constant delving into my memory that the prophet had told me was a gift of God, and a meticulous comparison of angles and distances with those revealed by the photographs. Later I discovered that this first picture was of the jagged rocks where the sword had appeared. The massive bluffs in the background, the saddle through which the sun shone to make the sword glisten, both told that this must be the place. (A later test revealed that this was the only spot on the entire eastern slope which would be lighted by the rays of the sun at 9 o'clock in the morning at the date in January when the sword appeared.) Brother Branham had aimed his camera precisely at the jagged rocks where the sunlight strikes at that time in the morning. The evidence was overwhelming.

Delighted at this first discovery. Brother McClintock and I hurried up the trail, intent on reaching the jagged rocks in the photograph. When we came to a fork in the trail, my memory echoed the words of the prophet, (... I was attracted back to the west " We struck out along the western trail, traveled for some distance without another encouraging sign, when looking back along the trail we could see that the angle and distance were both right for the spot from which Brother Branham had photographed the jagged rock formation. It was then I knew that the prophet had walked this trail to the rock with the word "eagle" on it and that behind me was the place, on the eastern trail, where the sword had appeared.

We rounded a curve in the trail and there, clearly, as though painted by an artist, was the great rock formation which so much resembles an eagle, wings folded, looking back over his shoulder. Again, the formation was right, but the angle was wrong. The prophet must have stood directly underneath when he photographed it. Now it was clear beyond any shadow of a doubt that we were on the prophet's trail. "He wasn't here," I shouted, "but he was up ahead looking up at it!"

Our rush along the trail was halted as we saw a great rock which looked like it could be the rock where the word "eagle" had appeared. A careful examination revealed that there could be some small white letters on the rock, maybe a word, but not very clear. The words of the prophet came back, "Give everything the Word test." Now this rock looked like it could be the one, except for one detail; the prophet had said that it weighed seventy ton and this rock wouldn't be more than two ton. Brother McClintock began to make a sketch of the details of the rock for later comparison with the photograph. As he did this, I told him that I would run on up the trail and see if I could find the spot from which the prophet had taken the picture of the great stone eagle.

As I moved off down the trail, I could see other formations that I could easily recognize from the photographs that Brother Branham had taken. Finally, a few yards on, I stopped to call Brother McClintock. Excitedly I said that I believed it was somewhere in this vicinity that the picture had been taken. As I turned to my right, my back to the cliff as it fell away, suddenly I found my eyes focused on a rock, not only a rock, but in the rock, clearly, the letters e-a-g-l-e, written in white in the rock.

Before I could release the words to scream to Brother Harold, I was on my knees thanking God that He had led me by the Holy Ghost to the word "eagle" written in a rock!

Since then, others have taken Brother Branham's photographs and compared them to their satisfaction that this was the place. Remember the words of Jesus where He said that if men were to hold their praise the scones would cry out. I say that Sabino Canyon is a physical testimony against the world to those that denied this message.